



## 6. Jakarta History Museum Platform dungeons Dirk Teeuwen Msc



### 6.1 Introduction

Walk to the Town Hall, climb the platform, look around there and discover the entrance of the dungeons under the platform.

A part of all Town Halls served as a prison from the start in the 17<sup>th</sup> century until 1846. The prisons in the wings of the ground floor were meant for offences with an economic character. Other offences were punished by many kinds of cruelties, as usual in those olden days all over the world. So, before 1800 imprisonments (pending executions) in the dungeons in the basement - and in the dungeons under the platform in front of the Town Hall - were usual. The basement dungeons were meant for slaves also, mostly sentenced for a short time because of misbehaviour: well, from their owners' point of view.

### 2.2 Pictures



1. Look around and discover an entrance of the dungeons, located under the platform

Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
The dungeons under the platform  
of the old Town Hall

**2. The entrance**  
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

**3. Interior of the platform dungeons**  
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006

## 2.3 Tour Guide

## **Tour Guide**

**Nose around on the platform of the Town Hall. Do it, because under the platform adjacent to the Town Hall Square you will perceive dungeons. These dungeons are filled up with natural ground water, up to about fifty cm. Slaves, who had aroused their master's wrath – justly or not - as well as ordinary criminals, were secured in the dungeons in the basements and in the dungeons under the platform. The basement dungeons have an access at the rear of the building. Imprisonments were always short. Instead of imprisonments, corporal punishments were more important in the Far East as well as in Europe. On the platform, and in front of it, executions took place from time to time. Cruel punishments - like tortures to force confessions - took place in Batavia just as was usual in Europe; nothing special. Mostly the public could enjoy this kind of spectacles in the southern courtyard of the Batavia Castle. There came an end to most of the cruelties (more or less) from about the year of 1800: thanks to a liberal Napoleon in Europe and the growing influence of the English. In Great Britain trial by jury was normal, such trial made torture unnecessary.**

**Ending**