

Anti-colonialism During Suharto's New Order Era and its Impact on Conservation of Architecture in Indonesia

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Abstract

Since the New Order Era, the awareness to follow the World Conservation Charter has begun to be implemented in Indonesia. In 1970, the Indonesian government carried out the conservation of Dutch colonial areas and buildings. It was complicated because President Suharto was anti-colonial. In that year, Indonesia received a grant for the conservation of the Old City from the Netherlands. The implementation was discontinued. Then The Indonesian Government focused on the preservation of Native heritage of Indonesian Architecture through the Miniature Park of Beautiful Indonesia. Taman Mini Indonesia Indah-TMII is one manifestation of this anti-colonial spirit by simulating traditional houses from 27 provinces at that time into one thematic Park in the Eastern Part of Jakarta. Each traditional Indonesian building was modelled as per the original traditional house of a region. The Preservation method during the new order period of Suharto is unique, because there was no such preservation precedent in the world at that time.

This paper examines the practice of conservation in Indonesia during New order period which embraced the paradox of anticolonialism. It ascertains how it affected the preservation and conservation programs of traditional Indonesian buildings implemented at that time.

It employs literature studies about Post Colonialism in New order era, and also interview with witnesses.

The findings enrich our knowledge about how conservation was implemented in Indonesia, especially within the concept of anti-colonialism in the new order Regime under Suharto leadership

It concludes that preservation in Suharto era is unique, because the Dutch, relationship with Indonesia was strained. Then Suharto focused on preserving traditional architecture, but only the unique masterpieces Vernacular Architecture became replicas inside the TMII while perishing in the real world.

Keywords: Suharto, New Order Regime, Conservation, Preservation, Traditional Architecture.

Introduction

In 1959, the Dutch began to withdraw back to their country, and Indonesia began to organize itself. In 1965, there was a change of leadership, from Soekarno to Suharto. Suharto declared a new period better known as the New Order period, which began in 1966 (Liddle, 1985). President Suharto, the second President of the Republic of Indonesia who served in the more than two decades, from 1965-1998 was a President with anti-colonial thoughts and followed the political system in Indonesia is called the "new order" as opposed to the "old order" of Sukarno. The basic fact in Indonesian politics, whether the "new" or the "old" order is a search for a viable political system for an identity through which the leaders can shape and modernize society (Ghoshal, 1979)

The new regime promptly made two remarkable policy decisions: economic development must have priority over all else, and civilian experts (rather than the military) would be put in charge of this goal (Coleman, Cornish & Drake, 2007). The Suharto regime lived by foreign capital, and it died by foreign capital. With encouragement from the United States, the regime further liberalized the country's financial system in the late 1980s by relaxing regulations, removing government oversight, and opening it up to foreign capital (Roosa, 2008). At that time, the capitalist economies of the developed world, which for two hundred years transformed human society through unparalleled dynamism, have over the past decades looked deeply dysfunctional. Not only did the financial crash lead to the most profound and longest recession in modern history, but nearly a decade later, few advanced economies have returned to anything like a standard or stable condition, and growth prospects remain deeply uncertain. Even during the pre-crash period, when economic growth was solid, living standards for the majority of households in developed countries barely rose (Jacobs, & Mazzucato, 2016).

During the Suharto era, the focus was more on developing the Indonesian economy so that Indonesia could develop itself. This was accomplished since President Suharto received a lot of cooperation. There was a lot of development with the help of the world bank. The World Bank and UNESCO formed cooperation assistance to promote preservation worldwide. Thus, it automatically supported Indonesia, which became the trustee and extension of funds of Globalization.

In the context of conservation, this financial assistance came with a moral motive to continue the conservation of the Borobudur Temple as a collaborative effort. In 1966, during the Suharto Era, R. Soekmono (Indonesian Archaeologist who graduated in 1953 from the University of Indonesia), asked UNESCO for help so that Borobudur would be included in the world heritage map. President Suharto also continued the thought that Borobudur Restoration as an international diplomacy attract other nations to see Indonesia, and then Borobudur will become known to the world. In 1967, Soekmono, continued efforts for UNESCO to make Borobudur Temple to be recognized as one of the places in the world preservation maps. One year later after Soekmono asked UNESCO to put Borobudur Temple on the world preservation map. In 1968, the Borobudur temple was officially included in the UNESCO map. With this success, it made Borobudur the focus of world conservation.

Meanwhile, in Jakarta, the Capital of Indonesia led by Ali Sadikin, as the governor of Jakarta from 1966 to 1977, played a crucial role in this effort, popularizing the term *wadon* and formalizing its use within the city bureaucracy (Ghoshal, 1979). He wanted to conduct conservation for the historic area of Kota Tua, Jakarta. This is because he had visited several European countries and had seen the success of urban development in those countries. Therefore, Ali Sadikin then founded the Jakarta Department of Museums and History, which placed importance on Urban Conservation and Urban Development. In 1969, the Ali Sadikin brought regulations related to Urban Conservation. In 1970, when the world was booming with conservation charters and many conservation works began to be encouraged.

"The past for the future" applies to Indonesia, especially to Jakarta, the nation's capital. The Department of Museums and History, created by Governor Ali Sadikin in 1968 in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works, has conserved several historic buildings, including the Angke Mosque, Tambora Mosque, Kampung Bandan Mosque, Cilincing Mosque, Zion Church, Monument Church, and Intan city bridge. In terms of regulations, in the New

Order era of 1970, the legal aspects of Cultural Conservation were still under the umbrella of Monumenten Ordonantie 1931, which was adjusted to the circumstances. In the 1970s, the handling of historic buildings and cities was under the Department of Restoration and Development. This service handles several areas, such as Kebayoran Baru, Glodok, Kota Tua, and Menteng.

In 1970, Suharto, who was anti-colonialism, tried to restore relations with the Netherlands by visiting the Netherlands to meet the Queen of the Netherlands (Juliana) and followed Queen Juliana's return by revisiting Indonesia, bringing the Majapahit inscription, which the colonial era had been taken to the Netherlands. In the context of conservation, Queen Juliana plans to preserve heritage buildings from Dutch Colonialism in Indonesia, especially those designed and built by Dutch architects during the colonial era: Kota tua (old Dutch Colonial City in Jakarta), by providing a grant to carry out the project. The old city is included in the DKI Jakarta province under the leadership of Governor Ali Sadikin, who indeed has an Urban Development agreement very well if the Netherlands wanted to provide grant funds to repair Kota tua. Ali Sadikin intended to bring the name Jakarta in the context of an old city that could be as important as Borobudur as something that was a success to be preserved. Then Indonesia would know Jakarta even better.

This paper reveals the existence of several paradoxes that occurred in Suharto's new order period. His approach was anti-colonialism but he also tried to cooperate with the Dutch. Then, the collaboration was discontinued and he focused on returning to preserving traditional Indonesian buildings.



Fig. 1: Suharto visit The Hague
Source: <https://www.kitlv.nl/>

Research Methodology

This paper discusses the paradox of preserving traditional architecture in the post-colonial era, during the Suharto era, the New Order regime. The research methodology uses qualitative descriptive narrative methods. This research uses a historical approach to the colonial and post-colonial periods. Then, it looks at the typical anti-colonial characteristics carried out in President Suharto's leadership era.

The research uses the primary references obtained from the main book: Stubbs, J. H. and Makas, e.g., published in 2011 entitled *Architectural Conservation in Europe and the Americas*, and discusses the history of developing conservation regulations in the Netherlands. In this book, history is discussed during the era of the Suharto era in Indonesia. This is to trace the existing rules between regulations in the Netherlands and their impact in colonial Indonesia. Apart from that, another source was the author's research conclusions, outlined in a paper discussing leadership in the Suharto era. Several essays discuss Suharto's leadership pattern. The political structure of the New Order can be described as a steeply ascending pyramid in which a single office, the presidency, thoroughly dominates the heights. Liddle, R. W. (1985) in the title *Soeharto's Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institutions*. The "New Order"

Government leaders' control at large and over its bureaucratic machinery, app early 1970s. Ghoshal (1979). In his book entitled Indonesia's new order under Suharto. Ghoshal also emphasized that the Suharto Government justified the centralization of power in the hands of the chosen few in the name of "modernization" and "development"- the two concepts, borrowed from the standard political development, became the ideological symbol of the regime. Writers in several journals also strengthened this financial policy in the Suharto Era. Liddle, R. W. wrote about 'The Politics of Economic Development in Indonesia', and Hart, G. wrote 'The Indonesian Economy During the Suharto Era'.

To support this, evidence was sought related to the preservation of historic buildings and areas in the Suharto era. The sources are from historical archives obtained from old newspapers such as Suara Karya Newspaper on Saturday, April 19, 1975. (Indonesian National Library). Photos obtained from the web are old photos from KITLV. Apart from that, some evidence was obtained from old books purchased from the old book market in Jakarta. The book is Kagunan: Adhi Moersid's Architectural Works, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Apart from that, interviews were conducted with living witnesses: Mr. Candrian Ahadiyat Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at 11:00 am and Mr DJahuri Sumintardja on May 5, 2020. The author also conducted a direct survey at the location where the historic buildings were built, took photos, and then digitized them.

From this historical evidence, criticism was made of the Suharto Era policies in preserving traditional architecture. With historical and theoretical evidence from books and journals, gaps and findings were found to tell the paradox in the Suharto era in his decisions regarding preserving Indonesia's historic buildings and areas.

Findings

Anti-colonialism of New Order Era

Queen Juliana gave the grant to carry out work on repairing Kota Tua's canal and the conservation of colonial buildings in Kota Tua. However, when the conservation activities were carried out until the dismantling of the canals and the repair of the pipes, Suharto stopped them. It's because the Queen did not come to the invitation of Indonesia's independence day in 1970. Pak Candrian Ahadiyyat (historian and a living witness)¹ said that the Queen was discouraged from coming to Indonesia because the Netherlands had not recognized Indonesian independence. Suharto and his new order regime had a top-down leadership. Everything was based on Suharto, and all the ministries and governors had to obey him² Needless to say, Suharto was anti-colonial and the entire regime followed suit.

Since then, Suharto transferred his preservation attempts to traditional Indonesian buildings. In his efforts to preserve the traditional house, on March 13, 1970, President Suharto's wife, Mrs. Tien Suharto, gave an idea to create a Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park). Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park) is a miniature of Indonesia with various forms of traditional houses.

Meanwhile, In 1971, while the Taman Mini was being built, the Borobudur conservation plan continued. UNESCO and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) created the 'Save Borobudur campaign'. This was done so that the world can see that Indonesia has an extraordinary wealth of historical buildings to be restored and rescued. This all strengthened the preservation program in the New Order era when it was the preservation of traditional houses and temples.

¹ Interview with Mr. Candrian Ahadiyat, Wednesday 10 Agustus 2022, at 11:00 am

² The main heuristic advantage offered by the notion of hegemony is, (Gavin Smith ,2004) argues, "connectivity." The concept of hegemony allows the researcher to establish relationships between fields (the "political," the "economic," and the "cultural") that appear as separate domains in people's minds. The continuity between economic and political factors cannot be separated in this New Order era. The hidden agenda for Indonesia's efforts to be known to the world with its many historic buildings was also an agenda during the reign of President Suharto. So many efforts to preserve this historic building.



Fig. 2: Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park)
Source: Welcome to Jakarta. Bienvenue a Jakarta's Book

The focus on preserving traditional Indonesian architectural buildings was included in the creation of miniature traditional houses from various regions in Indonesia in the Indonesia Indah mini garden project. The Netherlands did not fund TMII, but the idea came from President Soeharto's wife, who wanted to introduce Indonesian culture to the world and even to the Indonesian people themselves so that they would love the culture of their homeland more than foreign culture. Some original traditional buildings from the area were brought from their place of origin as a gift from the Governor for the Development of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah in 1972. The picture below shows Mrs. Tien Suharto was seen signing the handover of the South Sulawesi traditional house from the Governor of South Sulawesi, H. Achmad Lamo, in the ceremony of handing over all the traditional houses³



Fig. 3: Mrs. Tien Suharto signing the handover of the Indonesia traditional house
Source: Suara Karya Newspaper on Saturday, April 19, 1975
(Indonesia National Library Archives)

Quotes in Suara Karya Newspaper, In President Suharto's opening remarks at the opening of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah said that :

“it is stated that the Indonesian society being developed is a modern society with its personality. A modern society that has no character of its own will feel like a foreign society to us. Those like that will always be restless and

weak, never happy, and unable to stand firm. Therefore it is essential to know one's own culture, which is part of national development. It was hoped that the existence of this 'Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Project' could awaken a sense of pride and love for the homeland in all the nations"

During the Suharto era, one can see the way and concept of preserving Indonesian Traditional Architecture in Taman Mini with replicas of traditional buildings. Even some of the traditional buildings in TMII were brought from their original area and displayed in TMII. Instead of preserving traditional buildings in their original area.⁴ This program was created by moving the residents and emptying their homes, and turning them into museums. Thus, the concept of preservation was by making the original historic house a museum. This is how President Suharto's way of preserving differs from charters in the world.⁵

From the sequence of stories and decision-makers mentioned above, Suharto, who was anti-colonial, wanted to return to the pre-colonial era, where traditional buildings and houses were the targets to be preserved, instead of Dutch colonial buildings. The method of preserving traditional houses by making replicas in TMII is not a conservation method promoted by world charters. This is because the traditional house is only a replica of a new building, not preserving people's lives. So that it can be said that the Conservation and Preservation Method in Taman Mini is not conservation by World's charter Not authentic. But replicate and simulate. And this is showed the hegemony of Suharto as Top Down.

During the Suharto era, many received significant funds from the World Bank. When the World Bank disburses money, of course, a symbiosis of mutualism must occur. Programs that exist worldwide are also inserted so that they can be carried out in all developing countries under the pretext of the term: Development or "Development."

In the context of Suharto's version of conservation, unconsciously and voluntarily, all Indonesian people follow the conservation program launched by UNESCO through the World Bank. However, the Preservation program, by replicating the traditional buildings, was the top-down preservation and conservation version of President Suharto for the Indonesian people. The Indonesian people followed suit without resistance to the correct conservation terminology proclaimed by several charters in the world at that time.

Under these conditions, a paradox occurred when President Suharto, who was anti-colonial, wanted to conserve the Borobudur temple, which incidentally was not a traditional building but an artifact that was the result of traditional Indonesian culture, which the British and the Dutch had previously restored in the era of colonialism.

From Conservation of Borobudur to the Palace

In 1973, the Director General of Culture under the Ministry of Education and Culture tried to maintain historical objects in Jakarta. In 1974, this conservation area was expected to be completed by the Pacific Asian Travel Association Conference. From 1977 to 1982, Jakarta was led by Governor Tjokropranolo. In the era of Governor Tjokropranolo, all of these historical buildings were returned to the central government. For President Suharto, this meant that the governor does not have regulations relating to the development of buildings and areas of cultural heritage in Jakarta. This means that all the decisions were under President Suharto. Jakarta was led by Governor Soeprapto until 1987. In his policy, Governor Soeprapto made the 1985-2005 Masterplan.

This year, while at the Center, the president was still trying to make Borobudur one of the world's cultural heritages with the help of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency)

⁴ The traditional buildings in the area were almost extinct and were replaced with healthy Low income houses built by the government houses with a simple brick-walled house project, that Suharto think is more healthier.

⁵ It is suspected that the program to turn a traditional house into a museum was triggered by the conservation activities of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, in 1960's which was about to be torn down and converted into a museum. Villa Savoye is a 20th-century Architectural landmark for the Modern Architectural Age as a special exception authority The Villa Savoye became the list of historic monuments after the death of Architect Le Corbusier in 1965. The restoration was complete in 1967. However, a further restoration was carried out between 1985-1993 to complete the condition of the previous restoration which was included in the handover by the next generation.. (Stubbs, John and Makas, 2011: 122)

In 1983, Borobudur Temple was completely restored. The opening was carried out by President Suharto. This success gave Archaeologists a funding prestige that has always been the pride of President Suharto. After the restoration of Borobudur Temple in 1983 was completed, Borobudur Temple was included among the seven wonders of the world.

Over time, for the success of the Conservation of Borobudur into a cultural heritage building by UNESCO, President Suharto continued the work on the preservation and conservation of the category of traditional architecture, but not vernacular, but the Palace (Surakarta palace) as a grand building and masterpiece, with the conservation and repair of the Mercukundo Ward in Surakarta Palace.

It all begun because of the fire on the night of January 31 1985, at the Keraton Surakarta. Four main buildings in the palace complex (Dalem Ageng Prabasuyasa, Parasdyas, Sasana Séwaka, and Sasana Handrawina) were destroyed by fire, which is thought to have originated from an electric short circuit, due to old installations. Sinuhun PB XII reported this incident to President Suharto in Jakarta three days later. From a historical point of view, this palace was no longer a unique region and had been listed under the Republic of Indonesia since Indonesia's independence. However, because Mrs. Tien Suharto (Mr Suharto's wife) was still a relative of Mangkunegara, President Suharto's top-down leadership renovated the Keraton Surakarta as his original identity as Surakarta.

In addition to government contributions, the committee collected funds from the private sector (including Suharto's contribution) and then prepared to rebuild the palace buildings that had been burnt down (Setiadi et al., 2000: 126-135).

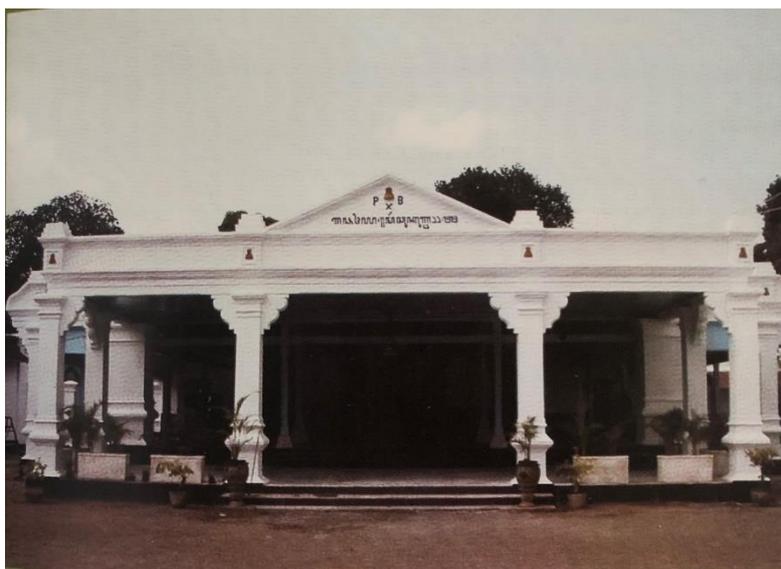


Fig. 4: Bangsal Mercukundo, Surakarta Palace, Central Java.

Source: Book Kagunan (Karya Arsitektur Adhi Moersid)

Bangsals Mercukundo is one of the front faces of the Surakarta Hadiningrat palace, which functions to accommodate activities where the courtiers of the military class gather and as a place for the ranks of the palace's relatives to attend court sessions led by the king besides being the place for the inauguration of his officers. In this, Ward also performed the Supitan ceremony (khutanan ceremony for the sons of the king). Thus, the restoration was significant. Adhi Moersid Architects restored this Ward, with partners, the Surakarta Keraton Care Foundation, and the United States Embassy. The US Embassy offered funds for cultural preservation. Adhi Moersid's approach in this conservation effort takes an adaptive reuse approach. Now this Bangsal accommodates various artistic activities of the youth such as pure wayang rituals, middle gamelan tuning, and the recitation of the Santhi swara song.

The restoration was made very carefully, from data collection and identification of damage to the recording of restoration documentation. From this experience, Adhi Moersid felt

that it was appropriate to carry out an inventory of the entire Surakarta palace complex for a thorough conservation, considering that so many buildings of high value were on the verge of collapse.

From this restoration, there is a unique conservation of Dutch Colonial Buildings requested by Suharto which is anti-colonial, where there are many additions of traditional Indonesian elements to the State Palace with the colonial building genre, to had a more Indonesian nuance.

The same year in 1985 at the Netherland, the National Restoration Fund was established to promote private and institutional investment in heritage conservation and cooperation with the Dutch government.⁶ Then in 1988, a new Monumentenwet replaced the 1961 law referring to the Area of Dutch history. Today, more than 165,000 Dutch heritage sites include more than 62,500 protected monuments (rijksmonumenten), including private houses, farms, churches, windmills, and many others. In the City of Amsterdam then, several companies advertised various housing needs through architectural conservation. This proves that protecting quality architectural heritage can be profitable and socially responsible. The Dutch then wanted to disburse funds or grants to Indonesia to preserve the old city and Dutch heritage.

Meanwhile, at that time in Jakarta, after Governor Soeprpto, the Jakarta leadership relay was replaced by Governor Wijogo from 1987 to 1992. Governor Wijogo had the agenda of destroying several historic buildings. Eventually this led to the birth of Law 5/1992. It regulates Cultural Heritage Buildings, where Architecture is included in the category of Cultural Heritage objects. With its capacity as an object, its treatment is equated with artifacts that should not be allowed to go wrong, only preserved and repaired.

In 1995, which was the year of transition from the New Order to the Reformation, Jakarta was still under the leadership of Suharto, and Jakarta under Governor Sutiyoso. Governor Sutiyoso wanted to continue the spirit of Governor Ali Sadkikin to revitalize the old city. The Dutch Colonial Buiding of ex House of Reiner De Clerk (Gedung Arsip Nasional) is chosen to be conserve. The Grant to conserve this building is a combination of Dutch entrepreneurs gave STICHTING Cadeau Indonesia (Indonesian Prize Foundation) as a gift for the K3-50th anniversary of Indonesia Merdeka.⁷ With the conservation team: PT. han Awal & Partners, Indonesia : Han Awal dipl. Ing., IAI , PT. Budi Lim & Associates, which it was successfully conserved Gedung Arsip Nasional in 1999, is an example of the conservation of Dutch colonial buildings. The success of this Dutch colonial building in 1999 also because Presiden Suharto no longer became President then continued into the Reformation period of Indonesia.

Conclusion

This paper revealed the existence of several paradoxes that occurred in Suharto's new order period, which was anti-colonialism but cooperation with the Dutch. Then discontinuation of cooperation with the Dutch and focusing on returning to the preservation of traditional Indonesian buildings. The decision was all made top down by President Suharto with the mindset of his preservation style

The era of Suharto's leadership in the New Order era adhered to anti-colonialism and a top down approach. From here, there was no correct conservation process based on

⁶ The fund offers grants and low-interest loans and mortgages to owners of historic properties. (Stubbs, John H and G.Makas, 2011: 123),

⁷ The Whole team of Conservation :

- Founding fathers , abn amro bank, akzo nobel ny, bedrijven uit de nederlandse elektriciteits, sector (sep, kema, epon, epz, ezh en una), heineken n.y., kpn (koninklijkept nederland), philips electronics n.v., pt. unilever indonesia,shell
- Local Committee: Stichting cadeau indonesia : Eric hammerstein, pia alisjahbana , christine paauwe - meyer, cor dijkgraaf, dr. noerhadi magetsari prof.dr.edi sedyawati, dr. muchlis paeni, ir. ig ktut alit, dr. anom, hubertus sadirin, cor passchier

conservation charter in the Suharto era, except that the Borobudur temple was successfully conserved with the help of UNESCO and JICA. There also wasn't the correct preservation based on the conservation charter of traditional buildings because Suharto mostly made a replica of it and put it in TMII. The other conservation of other traditional buildings is the Keraton Surakarta (Surakarta Palace) as a grand masterpiece Architectural building, not a traditional indigenous building.

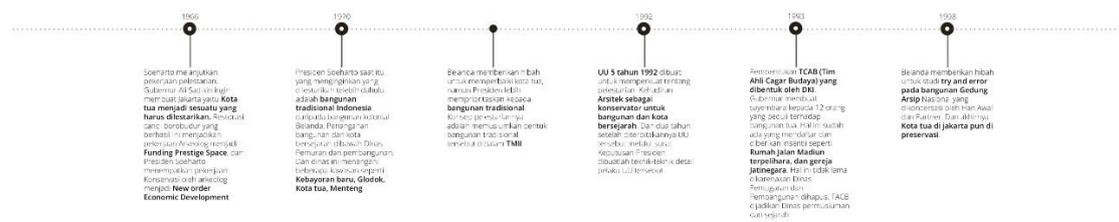


Fig. 5: Montage of Architecture Conservation in Indonesia during Suharto's New Order era.

Source: Digitalization by Author Yanita Mila Ardiani

It can be concluded that there were many paradoxes to the conservation of Suharto as an anticolonial person:

1. In 1970, tried to restore relations with the Netherlands by accepting the grant to restore Kota Tua (Old Dutch Colonial City in Jakarta), but it was discontinued. It then Changed focus on preserving Traditional Architecture by Making miniatures of traditional Indonesian houses in TMII with the budget from the Indonesian government.
2. Suharto continued to restore the Borobudur temple, already restored by the Dutch in the Colonialism era
3. Suharto continued to preserve Indonesia's Traditional buildings in conserving Kraton Surakarta Palace, but The Palace Kraton Surakarta is a grand building, and not an indigenous traditional Indonesia building
4. Suharto conserved his Palace, which has a Dutch colonial style, by adding many Indonesia traditional element to make it more Indonesian nuance
5. At the end of his hegemony as the President of Indonesia, Suharto allowed the Dutch to preserve the Dutch Colonial Buiding of ex-House of Reiner De Clerk (Gedung Arsip Nasional) and succeeded after Suharto no longer became President

Suharto, who is anti-colonial in some of his decisions, still wanted to cooperate with the Dutch. It all discontinued and focused on the traditional Indonesia building even though some of the preservation did not obey the Conservation World's charter and his top-down opinion on conservation. But at the end of his hegemony, his anticolonial thought allowed the Dutch to preserve the Dutch Colonial Building in Indonesia.

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