

The Utilization of Colonial Heritage in Local History Learning in Depok City

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan pemahaman sejarah tentang pentingnya warisan sejarah sebagai argumen mengenai kenangan Depok itu sendiri, terutama selama periode Kolonial Belanda, merekonstruksi dasar dan kontinuitas sejarah Kota Depok selama periode Kolonial Belanda dengan bangunan bersejarah, menginterpretasikan tugas dan kontribusi bangunan bersejarah dari periode Kolonial Belanda dalam penciptaan karakter khusus generasi baru Depok, serta merumuskan kebijakan bersama mengenai upaya untuk melestarikan warisan material dari bangunan bersejarah yang terdaftar dari periode Kolonial Belanda di Kota Depok. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian sejarah khusus tentang sejarah lokal yang berlangsung di Kota Depok. Berdasarkan kategori penelitian, maka metode yang digunakan adalah metode sejarah dengan beberapa tingkatan yaitu heuristik, kritik, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Setelah penelitian dilakukan, maka temuan yang dihasilkan antara lain, Bangunan periode kolonial di Kota Depok berasal dari kondisi fisiknya, beberapa saat ini dirawat, tidak dirawat, hingga telah digantikan oleh bangunan barulainnya. Kedua, bangunan-bangunan ini dapat digunakan untuk meningkatkan sejarah lokal, dan sebagai aset wilayah Depok dalam memajukan zona liburan, terutama pariwisata sejarah.

Kata kunci: sejarah lokal, pemanfaatan, warisan depok.

Abstract

This research aims to develop a historical understanding of the importance of historical heritage as an argument for the memory of Depok itself, especially during the Dutch Colonial period. It reconstructs the historical foundations and continuity of Depok City during the Dutch Colonial period through its historical buildings, interprets the role and contribution of historical buildings from the Dutch Colonial period in the creation of a special character for the new generation of Depok, and formulates a joint policy on efforts to preserve the material heritage of registered historical buildings from the Dutch Colonial period in Depok City. This is a specific historical study on local history that took place in Depok City. Based on the research category, the method used is the historical method with several stages: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. After the research was conducted, the findings include: Colonial period buildings in Depok City vary in their physical condition; some are currently well-maintained, neglected, or have been replaced by other new buildings. Second, these buildings can be used to enhance local history and serve as an asset for the Depok region in promoting holiday zones, especially historical tourism.

Keywords: local history, utilization, depok heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Local history is one of the important aspects of history learning because it provides a direct connection between students and their surrounding environment. Through local history, students not only study major events on

national and global scales, but also understand the social, cultural, and political dynamics that take place in their own communities (Kartodirdjo, 1992). One of the main sources in the development of local history is colonial heritage, which can still be found today in the form of

buildings, infrastructure, and cultural traces.

Depok City is one of the regions that preserves numerous colonial relics, such as old Dutch houses, church buildings, and ancient cemeteries. These relics represent the traces of interaction between the indigenous community and the Dutch colonials from the 17th to the 20th century (Heuken, 2000). However, the use of colonial heritage in school history learning remains limited, both due to the lack of integration in the curriculum and the low awareness of the educational value these historical sites hold (Suhartono, 2012).

Integrating colonial heritage into local history learning has great potential to enhance students' learning interest. Site-based learning allows students to directly observe physical evidence of the past, thereby strengthening historical understanding while also fostering critical awareness of colonial heritage (Widja, 1989). Furthermore, using colonial heritage as a learning medium can also foster a sense of belonging to local identity and reinforce the understanding of national history (Syaharuddin & Susanto, 2019).

Therefore, research on the utilization of colonial heritage in local history learning in Depok City is highly relevant. In addition to describing the potential of existing colonial sites, this research is also important to examine

pedagogical strategies that teachers can use to integrate colonial heritage into the teaching of history in schools. Thus, students are expected to study history not only textually, but also contextually and applicatively.

One of the main ways to write collective memory, both at the local and national level, is by using sources in the form of buildings or relics that we regard as memory. This also applies to recording the history of Depok City during the Dutch colonial period, where several historical buildings still serve as witnesses to reconstruct the memories of the past. Some buildings that remain today include the Immanuel Church of Depok, the Depok Municipality Office, the Cornelis Dehotmain Monument, the Depok Presidential House, the Panus Bridge, and the Cimanggis House.

In addition, there are also colonial buildings that no longer exist physically but still live on in the memory of Depok's people, such as the Office of the Cornelis Chastelein Institution Foundation (YLCC), Eben Haezer, GPIB Immanuel Church, Pancoran Mas Public Elementary School, and the Old Depok Station. Today, in the locations of these former buildings, new constructions have been erected, ranging from hotels, banks, houses, shops, kiosks, to modern shopping centers such as supermarkets and malls. All of these have now become part of the memory heritage. However, the condition of each building

varies: some are still well-preserved by government or private institutions, some appear neglected and even frightening, while others have been destroyed and replaced with new buildings.

Due to the importance of these historical buildings, the researcher deems it necessary to raise them as a study of memory in order to reconstruct the history of Depok, particularly during the Dutch colonial era, so that it becomes part of the national memory. These buildings represent the historical journey of Depok, which should be collectively understood by the people of Depok to foster a sense of belonging and pride in their region.

METHODS

Research his study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of exploring in depth the utilization of colonial heritage as a learning resource for local history in Depok City. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to understand phenomena holistically and contextually through direct interaction with the research subjects (Creswell, 2014).

One of the essential factors in research is the use of qualitative methods. Qualitative research methodology is an effort to investigate and examine a problem by applying scientific procedures carefully and systematically in order to collect, process, analyze data, and draw conclusions in an objective manner. This

process is intended either to solve a problem or to test hypotheses in order to obtain knowledge that is useful for human life (Rifa'i Abubakar, 2021). Based on the approach and type of data used, this study falls under descriptive qualitative research, which produces data in the form of words that are then analyzed descriptively. Qualitative research is designed to collect information related to the phenomena occurring at the time the research is conducted (Arikunto, 1998).

Based on the sources of data collection, this research employs the following techniques:

1. Observation

Observation is a method of systematically analyzing and recording behavior by directly viewing or observing individuals or groups under study. The type of observation used is participant observation, in which the researcher is directly involved with the subjects being observed or studied.

2. Documentation

Documentation refers to the collection of data in the form of records, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines, inscriptions, meeting minutes, ledgers, agendas, and other written sources (Arikunto, 2002). In this research, documentation was obtained by directly visiting schools that became the targets of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Field observations show that the remnants of colonial heritage in Depok City are highly diverse. Based on their location, these colonial archaeological remains tend to follow a centralized pattern. Wooden structures were generally used as residences, while brick or stone structures were built for offices, schools, and water towers. Due to their high accessibility, the centers of governance and economic activity particularly markets became the focal points. Architectural elements that characterize colonial constructions in Depok, especially marking the rise of architectural styles in the early 20th century, include ventilation patterns and pillars. Ventilation openings in these constructions were typically square, with either horizontal profiles or strong vertical curves installed in the middle. In some selected buildings, the ventilation featured perforated lattice designs with geometric motifs, either square or rectangular. Meanwhile, structural pillars were generally round or made of iron bars, often decorated with profiles along their midsections. The presence of these pillars functioned as supports for the roofed terraces (Miftahurrahmat, 2018).

The “Dutch atmosphere” can still be clearly felt in Depok City, particularly along Jalan Pemuda, Pancoranmas District. This road is considered the area of the so-called “original Depok people,” descendants of the 12 clans who inherited

1,244 hectares of land from Cornelis Chastelein, a retired employee of the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), who later became a Dutch landlord in Depok. Chastelein had controlled Depok from 1696 until his death in 1714. For outsiders, Chastelein was no different from other Dutch colonizers or the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies. However, for the Depok community, Chastelein was regarded as a hero. Apart from emancipating them from slavery, he also bequeathed vast land to the 12 clans he established: Bacas, Isakh, Jacob, Jonathans, Joseph, Laurens, Leander, Loen, Samuel, Soedira, Tholense, and Zadokh. Traces of Chastelein’s legacy can still be found in several sites around Depok today.

One of the most prominent colonial legacies is GPIB Immanuel Church on Jalan Pemuda, which was inaugurated by Cornelis Chastelein in 1714, the year of his death. According to Thabitha Loen, a descendant of one of the 12 clans, the church was originally named Jemaat Masehi Depok. It was built so that the 12 clans of Depok would not have to travel to Jakarta for worship. Initially constructed from wood and bamboo, the building was later reconstructed with stone in 1792 to make it more durable. However, after being damaged by an earthquake, it was rebuilt and reopened in 1854, with the inscription “Founded in 1854 Jemaat Masehi Depok” engraved on its front wall.

The church also features 12 doors, each symbolizing one of the Depok clans. Other significant colonial sites in the area include the former Depok Municipality Office (now Harapan Hospital) and the Cornelis Chastelein Monument.

Other notable colonial relics in Depok include:

1. Depok Municipality Office (Gemeente Bestuur)

During his lifetime, Chastelein educated his workers with practical knowledge on village management, agriculture, and taxation. After his death, the 12 heirs began managing the land themselves under a revenue-sharing system overseen by the Depok Municipality (Gemeente Bestuur). The building that once housed the municipality is now Harapan Hospital on Jalan Pemuda, though much of the original structure remains intact.

2. Cornelis Chastelein Monument

Located in front of Harapan Hospital, this cone-shaped monument was erected by the 12 clans to honor Chastelein as their liberator from slavery. Originally named the Monument of Liberation from Slavery, its presence was later contested by the Depok City Government. When the Cornelis Chastelein Foundation (YLCC) attempted to renovate it, the local government objected, arguing that building a monument to honor a colonial figure was unnecessary.

3. The Depok Presidential House

After the establishment of the Gemeente Bestuur, the Depok community was led by a president (chairman) elected every three years. The municipality managed taxation and local autonomy for community welfare. The last presidential residence stood directly across from the municipality office (now Harapan Hospital). Unlike presidential palaces elsewhere, this was simply an ordinary residential house.

4. Panus Bridge

Built in 1917 by engineer Andre Laurens, Panus Bridge connected Bogor and Batavia across the Ciliwung River. Measuring 100 meters long and 5 meters wide, it served as the main crossing route during the colonial period. The name "Panus" derived from Stevanus Leander, a local resident near the bridge, later shortened for convenience. It remained the only connection between Depok, Bogor, and Batavia during Dutch rule.

5. Cimanggis House

Located on Jalan Raya Bogor, Cimanggis House was built in 1775 by Governor-General Petrus Albertus van der Parra as a country villa (landhuis). Although Van der Parra died before its completion, the property was inherited by his widow, Johanna Bake. Built on former rubber plantation land, the house became a notable rest stop due to the modern road constructed alongside it today's Jalan Raya Bogor. Later, Governor-General

Daendels used this road as a model for the Great Post Road (Anyer-Panarukan).

Respecting the history of one's own nation is a sign of humility, wisdom, and morality. It entails honoring, protecting, and preserving all tangible artifacts that represent the local past. This reflects a moral responsibility and accountability to ensure the sustainability of historical heritage for future generations. Such responsibility is particularly relevant in Depok City, where numerous historical buildings from various eras—including the colonial period stand as living reminders of the past. Since these buildings were constructed during Dutch rule, it is imperative for the people of Depok to preserve them as regional assets, ensuring their value endures for present and future generations.

CONCLUSION

Field observations indicate that the remnants of colonial heritage in Depok City are highly diverse. Based on their locations, these colonial archaeological remains exhibit a centralized pattern. Wooden structures were generally used as residences, while stone or brick structures were designated for offices, schools, and water towers. Due to their high accessibility, the centers of government and economic activity, such as the marketplace, became the core of these settlements. The dominant architectural elements of colonial constructions in

Depok that signify the development of architectural style in the early 20th century are the arrangements of ventilation holes and pillars. Ventilation structures in these buildings were typically square-shaped, with horizontal or arched profiles firmly installed in the middle.

One of the sources that can be used to construct positive historical memory whether at the local or national level is the use of tangible heritage in the form of ancient constructions or artifacts, which are often referred to as memory carriers. This also applies to the historical record of Depok during the Dutch colonial period, where examples of historical buildings in the city can be utilized to reconstruct fragments of collective memory from that era.

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