

## NURTURING THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF PLANTATION TRACES

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### ABSTRACT

The article aims to explore and to discuss strategies for nurturing collective memory and identity in Medan City. The problem is focused on strategies to care for the collective memory and identity of the city while preserving cultural heritage buildings in Medan City. The theoretical references used are the collective memory and city identity approaches of Kusno. The study found that the collective memory and identity of the plantation are attached to the grandeur of the shape and variety of building architecture. The variety of architecture refers to masterpieces of internationally renowned architects, while the forms and patterns represent the climate, aesthetics, and success of the plantation. Novelty studies that the lack of protection of cultural heritage buildings has implications for the waning of collective memory and city identity. Economic and business battles, lack of government political will, and synergy with the private sector have an impact on the destruction of cultural heritage buildings. Cultural heritage buildings are an integral part of the history of Medan City with plantations. The study concluded that maintaining collective memory and plantation identity is a preservation activity of cultural heritage buildings. The strategy of nurturing for cultural heritage buildings is not enough through local regulations, utilization as public spaces, but also providing incentives for cultural heritage building owners.

**Keywords:** architects, heritage, identity, plantation, memory

### ABSTRAK

Artikel bertujuan mengeksplorasi dan mendiskusikan strategi merawat memori kolektif dan identitas perkebunan di Kota Medan. Permasalahan difokuskan pada strategi merawat memori kolektif dan identitas kota sekaligus melestarikan bangunan pusaka budaya di Kota Medan. Acuan teoritis dipergunakan adalah pendekatan memori kolektif dan identitas kota dari Kusno. Kajian menemukan bahwa memori kolektif dan identitas perkebunan terlampir pada kemegahan bentuk dan ragam arsitektur bangunan. Ragam arsitektur menunjuk pada mahakarya arsitek kenamaan mancanegara; sedang bentuk dan pola merepresentasi iklim, estetika dan keberhasilan perkebunan. Novelty kajian bahwa kurangnya perlindungan bangunan pusaka budaya berimplikasi bagi memudarnya memori kolektif dan identitas kota. Perlawanan ekonomi dan bisnis, kurangnya political-will pemerintah serta sinergi dengan swasta berdampak bagi pemusnahan bangunan pusaka budaya. Bangunan pusaka budaya merupakan bagian integral sejarah Kota Medan dengan perkebunan. Kajian menyimpulkan bahwa memelihara memori kolektif dan identitas perkebunan adalah aktifitas pelestarian bangunan pusaka budaya. Strategi merawat bangunan pusaka budaya tidak cukup melalui Peraturan Daerah, pemanfaatan sebagai ruang publik, tetapi juga pemberian insentif bagi pemilik bangunan pusaka budaya.

**Kata kunci:** arsitek, identitas, memori, perkebunan, pusaka

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## INTRODUCTION

The study is based on the fact of intensive destruction of plantation period buildings in Medan City. Plantations are a factor in transforming traditional villages into developed, magnificent, and popular areas. One marker of the success of the plantation is attached to the plantation building in Medan City. The building is more than 50 years old, representing distinctive style and architecture, and contributes to history, knowledge, economy, social, and religion. Referring to Law No. 11 the year 2010, buildings in the Medan City included in the Cultural Heritage Buildings (*Bangunan Cagar Budaya*), must be protected, preserved, and maintained.

In Medan City, buildings represent a collective memory and identity, namely Plantation City (*Kota Perkebunan*). However, economic and business battles, lack of political will, limited synergy with the private sector, have implications for the removal of buildings. The lack of use of buildings as public spaces has consequences for the lack of recognition of the city's identity. Buildings are faced with omission, destruction, and disappearance. Medan City is slowly losing its collective memory and identity.

The buildings originated from the colonial period (1863-1942). This building is in the form of government offices, plantation offices, railway company offices, drinking water companies, electricity, telephones, post offices, shops, banks, schools, hospitals, houses of worship, swimming pools, highways, bridges, cinemas, ports, airports, and others. The entire building funded two things; first, the beginning of modernization in the Medan City, which began with the opening of plantations in 1863, and second, utilization and spatial planning according to the growth of the city. Both become an integral part of the history of the city and become the memory and identity of the city built by the plantation.

This study has been conducted for three years at the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) of Medan City. The author has submitted the results

of the research in the form of 3 reports namely; "the History of Medan City" (*Sejarah Kota Medan*) in 2011, "Historical Buildings in Medan City" (*Bangunan Bersejarah di Kota Medan*) in 2012, and "City Hall: The Symbols of Modernization in Medan City" (*Balaikota: Simbol Modernisasi di Kota Medan*) in 2014. This article is another side of research that is not widely studied. This study is intended as an explanation of the urgency of collective memory and the city's identity towards its past. The importance is to connect the past with the future.

The collective memory in Medan City is only seen from the plantation traces, which is a heritage building that stands in various parts of the city. This building is a landmark of the plantation. He became an icon of history, a city embryo, a symbol of modernization, and the struggle of a typical population. Therefore, preserving heritage buildings to care for the collective memory of the plantations, as well as taking care of the masterpieces of foreign architects who dedicate themselves to the city.

Refer to the Medan City planning map in 1913/1945. There were 112 building units. However, 55 of the buildings on the map have been destroyed. Anti-Dutch sentiment after the Nationalization (1958-1962) had an impact on the existence of heritage buildings. For example, changing the names of buildings, schools, and street names into Indonesian, or also changing the anniversary of Medan City according to the local version. For the record, through the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD) Decree No. 4/DPRD/1975, dated March 26, 1975, the anniversary of the city of April 1, 1909, was changed to July 1, 1590. The economic and political interests of the city tend to be impartial to heritage buildings. During the mayor's time, Bahtiar Djafar, Abdillah, and until now are no one who has shown the political will and commitment to the heritage buildings. Since 2000, the Sumatra Heritage Agency (BWS) has protested the destruction of the building. In 2008-2011, the Center for Historical

Studies and the Social Sciences of Universitas Negeri Medan (Pussis-Unimed) also protested the act of destruction. Also, the various elements of the heritage community held demonstrations, but damage still occurred.

The destruction of buildings is in an attempt to erase the masterpiece of some well-known famous architects. Various architectures from the colonial, transitional and modern eras are found in Medan City. Some architects designed buildings, such as Th.van Erp, J.M. Hans Groenewegen, J.H. van der Valk, J.A. Dingemans, Thomas Karsten, S. Snuyf, C. Boon, Hulswitt-Fermont and Cuypers, van Ouwend, G. Bos, G.H. Muller, Liem Bwan Tjie, Klingenberg, Rosenberg, van Hgy Tema, Herman van Heussen, and other. The efforts to eradicate heritage buildings can be interpreted as (i) eliminating the collective memory of plantation traces, (ii) removing historical and civilization icons, (iii) the failure of the government to care for cultural heritage buildings, and (iv) eliminating historical and cultural tourism potential. This destruction resulted in some legitimacy efforts as Heritage City (*Kota Pusaka*) and Cultural Heritage Buildings according to the Law No. 11/2010 concerning the Cultural Heritage.

State of the arts distinguishes this study from previous ones. Conservation of Tjong A Fie mansion supports the sustainability of historical buildings in Medan City (Hutauruk, 2017). Another study emphasizes the exploration of the image of the Kesawan segment, the embryo of Medan City (Tampubolon, 2020). Other studies focused on the aesthetics of historical buildings in Medan City (Hidayat, 2018), as well as the use of the Ahmad Yani Street corridor as a tourist attraction (Liyushiana, 2017). Another study is in the form of making 3D animations of several historical buildings in Medan City (Syahputra, 2020). Another research focuses on the mapping of colonial period buildings in Medan City (Fitri, 2020). Finally, a specific study explores the potential for tourism development of historical

buildings in Medan City (Surbakti, 2008). This study is focused on nurturing collective memory of plantations attached to cultural heritage buildings. Nurturing emphasizes the use of buildings as public spaces; offices, museums, galleries, restaurants, tourist attractions, salons, coffee shops, shops, and others. The utilization into an open space, apart from caring for the building as a cultural heritage, as well as preserving the city's identity.

This study intends to describe and to understand the importance of nurturing for the collective memory of plantation traces, especially heritage buildings. The heritage buildings are historical nuances of the glory of plantations. The effort to eliminate heritage is part of removing plantation icons. The loss of buildings is breaking the collective memory of plantations. Therefore, the shots are needed to treat collective memory and city identity. This building has historical and economic values. It can be optimized into public spaces such as coffee shops, souvenir shops, art performances, galleries, restaurants, or offices. This whole purpose is a part of the preservation of tourist destination objects through city tours. Finally, plantation traces that appear in heritage become identities in which the memory of plantations can be preserved.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The technique of data collection is conducted through documentation studies and interviews. Documentation is intended to track and to study the photos and information available in Medan City, namely the Sumatra Heritage Agency (BWS), the Center for History and Social Sciences of the State University of Medan (Pussis-Unimed), and the Regional Planning and Development Agency (Bappeda) of the Medan City. In Jakarta, research was carried out in the KITLV library.

The data from this documentation are photos, maps, architects and architecture, and spatial planning. The information was obtained from this documentation study dates back to the period of colonialism and post-colonialism until

2017. The second technique of data collection interviews. The purpose of the interview was to obtain facts that were not recorded in the colonial archives or non-colonial written sources. The focus of the interview is related to the topic and life experience about the collective memory of plantation traces in Medan City. Interviews are intended to find out the existence of historic buildings and their benefits as collective memory such as preservation, utilization, and even destruction. These buildings are offices, hospitals, schools, shops, printing, corporate offices, banks, trains, ports, airports, and others. Witnesses conducted interviews with the history and preservation of historical buildings in Medan City. These people are people who have knowledge and information about the existence of historic buildings in Medan City. These are academics, architects, city planners, and others who have an interest in the collective memory of plantation traces of the Medan City. Key interviews were carried out by the preservation of historic buildings and historical witnesses. They are BWS members, State Plantation Company (PTPN) 2-3, Socfindo, London Sumatera, Musperin, and Bappeda of the Medan City.

The analysis used is chronological, namely an explanation of the formation of a collective memory of plantation traces in Medan City. This analysis is related to the embryo of colonial buildings, developments experienced, or conservation efforts, including the destruction of historic buildings. The paradigm used is collective memory and city identity, which is intended as part of caring for historic buildings in Medan City. This research was funded and carried out for three years and has been reported to Bappeda of Medan City. This article is another theme, expanded from previous research as a description and a strategy of building cultural heritage as a collective memory and the identity of the city.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The plantation factors**

Medan is no longer a plantation city until

today. This fact is caused by none of the plantations in the city. However, it cannot be denied that the city embryo is a plantation contribution (Buiskool, 2005, 2006; Colombijn, 2005). The history notes that tobacco in 1863 changed the village named "Meidan" with a population of 200 people in 1823 (Anderson, 1971) to "Paris van Sumatra" (Loderics, 1997) and "Dollarland" (Aulia, 2006; Kian-wie, 1979; Lulofs, 1932; Schadee, 1918; Szekely, 1937). Medan is a colonial city that developed due to plantation factors (Dunn, 2003; Hartono, 2005; Passchier, 1995; Whright, 1909). The same reality occurs in Semarang (Wijanarka, 2007) and Surabaya (Handinoto, 1996). In contrast to *Batavia* (Jakarta), the city embryo was more caused as a center of colonial administration and economic activity in Indonesia (Taylor, 2008).

The colonialism in Medan City originated from Tobacco Plantation since July 17, 1863. The success of tobacco became indications; (i) the beginning of capitalism namely the flow of vast amounts of foreign capital, (ii) the modernization namely revolutionary change from wilderness to the modern city, (iii) the beginning of ethnic, cultural and religious heterogeneity, (iv) the beginning of the modern plantation systems, and (v) the introduction of contract labor systems. The overall indications are recorded in the heritage objects such as; (i) the existence of plantations in North Sumatra, (ii) the presence of some infrastructure such as trains, ports, airports, schools, hospitals, banking, shops, press, drinking water, telephone and telegraph, hotels, roads and bridges, restaurants, market centers, ice factories, houses of worship, etc., (iii) the emergence of plantation cities during the colonial era such as Medan, Pematangsiantar, Tebingtinggi, Kisaran and Binjai, and (iv) cultural heritage icons such as heritage buildings.

During the plantation period, some issues have been debated up until today. The land disputes (Pelzer, 1985), for example, coolies and slavery (Breman, 1992; Devi, 2004) or poverty of coolies (Stoler,

2002). Besides, social ailments such as gambling practices, prostitution, plantation money (*Oeang Keboen*), mobile cinema (*Layar Tancap*), and moneylenders impoverish in the plantation (Said, 1974). Opium is sold to coolies and becomes an integral part of the history of the plantation (Damanik, 2018). The social stratification, namely the separation of society in racial terms, occurs between Europeans, Chinese, Indians, and indigenous (Hamdani, 2013; Malaka, 1980; Sairin, 1991). The plantation raises place names according to the origin of entrepreneurs such as Marelán (Maryland, United States), Helvetia (Helvetica, Switzerland), Polonia (Poland), Tanjungmorawa (Moravia, Switzerland), Arnhem (Netherlands), Madras (India) and the Kota Cina (China).

For the first time, “Meidan” was a village that was not looked at by entrepreneurs. Jacob Nienhuij was a pioneer of tobacco plantations on July 17, 1862, the center for local administration and tobacco cultivation in Labuhandeli. The successful Tobacco trial in 1863, Nienhuijs, Clement, and Jansen founded Deli Company (*de Deli Maatschappij*). The company was founded in 1869 in Amsterdam but had a representative office in Deli. In the same year, the company obtained a concession, namely the Mabar-Delitua Contract. This 99-year concession starts from the Ular River in Deliserdang to Wampu River in Langkat. The area is half of the Deliserdang Regency, all of Medan and Binjai to half of Langkat Regency (Sinar, 2005; Waard, 1934). Furthermore, J. Th. Cremer, in 1871 was appointed as commissioner of Deli Company. The flooding in Labuhandeli made Cremer move its representative office to Medan. His office is located between the Patani and Babura River, namely the Merdeka Square segment. From this location, the Deli River flows to Labuhandeli and empties into the Malacca Strait.

As a core of the economy, Medan and North Sumatra are supported by two main industrial sectors; (i) plantations since 1862, and (ii) petroleum exploration

in Langkat since 1885. These two factors encourage very high foreign migration. A large number of Europeans, Chinese, Indians and local migrants from Indonesian entered to Medan. The plantations spread across the eastern coast of North Sumatra such as Langkat, Binjai, Deli, Serdang, Bedagai, Siantar, Simalungun, Batubara, Asahan, Kisaran, and Labuhanbatu. Various commodities such as tobacco (1863), coffee (1890), tea (1907), rubber (1911), oil palm (1914), sisal (1924), and copra and chocolate are found in this region (Erond L. Damanik, 2016). The birth of the city in Java began in the early 20th century (Damayanti, 2005), but Medan occurred in the late 20th century.

Medan is a new city that is planned in a modern manner in the plantation era. The birth of the city became the answer to economic problems and settlements in Labuhandeli. The descent is not intended as a cultural center but the basis of the economy or settlements (Sutardjo, 1993). The plantation is the reason for the establishment of the capital of the East Sumatra Residency in 1887, a Municipality (*Gemeente*) on April 1, 1909, and Big City (*Stads Gemeente*) in 1939. Furthermore, in 1956 was designated a municipality in North Sumatra Province. In this city, there are plantation traces of such historical buildings. This building keeps a memory of the plantations that were carried out by some famous architects. The building is an identity that refers to the morphology of the city. However, the absence of the government's political will cause destruction, which was feared to eliminate its collective memory.

#### **Famous architectural masterpieces**

Medan City has a collective memory of plantations. This collective memory is written on the architectural variety of heritage buildings. The plantation became the main base of modifiers Medan Village (*Kampung Medan*) to become a modern city. Plantations turn forests into modern cities in North Sumatra, so they are called “Paris van Sumatra” and “Dollarland.” Inside this city, various buildings are con-

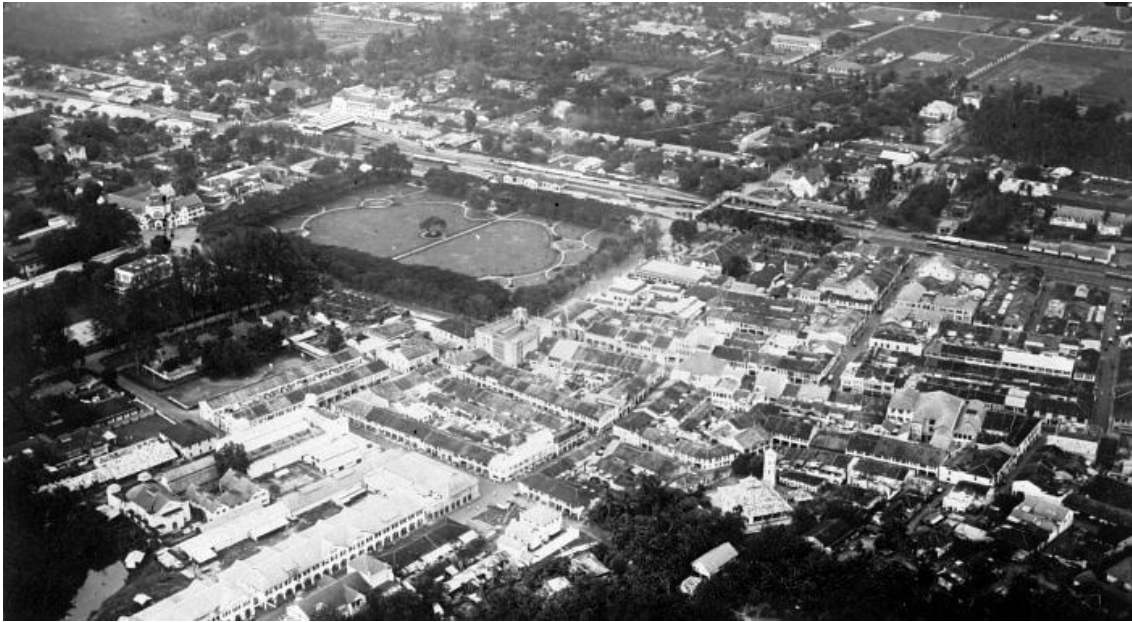


Figure 1. Merdeka Square and its surroundings in 1920.  
Source: Collectie Tropenmuseum online. Collection Number 10015040

temporary with plantations. The building functions is as an office, administrative center, headquarters, post office, hotel, school, hospital and laboratory, printing, transportation, communication, warehousing, shops, housing, and others.

The history records that the first infrastructure developed was the port of Belawan in 1879. This port connected East Sumatra to Europe. Furthermore, in 1883, a railway from Medan-Labuhandeli was built and integrated with the port of Belawan. The telephone and telegraph were established in 1885. The first newspaper in North Sumatera was "*de Deli Courant*" and Varekamp bookstore in 1885. Deli Tobacco Hospital was built in 1871, the cluster of Witte Societeit in 1879. Other facilities were schools, banks, plantation offices, shops, hotels, research centers, restaurants, sports fields, houses of worship, including flower gardens and sports fields. In 1928, the airport of Polonia was built in Medan City. Until the years 1930, namely before the economic recession and afterward, *millions of guilders* flowed from Medan City to foreign countries (Waard, 1934). This fact makes Medan City the commercial center outside of Java.

As mentioned above, the transfer of the office of Deli Company in 1871 became the developing embryo of Medan City. The first development was seen in the Merdeka Square segment, namely the urban core. Merdeka Square (Indonesian era), Esplanade (Dutch era), or Fukuraido (Japanese period) is a public space. The location is in the heart of Medan. Merdeka square surrounded by Trembesi trees (*Samanea Saman*), imported from Latin America to add aesthetics and freshness. The Esplanade design resembles cities in Europe. There are always hotels, banks, town halls, post offices, trains, cinemas, and restaurants. In Medan City, Esplanade is surrounded by town hall, *De Javasche Bank*, *De Boer hotel*, Grand hotel, post office, train station, Stoomvaart companies, NHM Bank, Harrison and Crossfield, Orange Theater and White Societeit. Behind the post office were telephone and telegraph offices and printing of the *de Deli Courant*. Figure 1 is Merdeka Square in 1920, the heart of the city that reflects European civilization in Medan City.

The Esplanade is a sports area in the afternoon called to go around (in Medan called *raun-raun*), to the north is Hanging Bride (*Titi Gantung*) on the railroad tracks.





Figure 2. Twin Villa's on Imam Bonjol Road, demolished in 2009  
Source: Author's documentation, 2009

This bridge is a place to relax for planters, administrators, or guests. A term arises from this habit, namely, eat wind (*makan angin*). In the middle of the city hall triangle, the post office and Hotel De Boer stand the Nienhuijs Monument in the form of a fountain. This monument is the zero point in the city. From the heart of the developing city of settlements such as Kesawan called Chinese settlement (*Chinesewijk*), Polonia as European settlement (*Europeanwijk*), Madras, or little India as Indian settlement (*Indianwijk*), Kota Maksu as native settlement (*Inlanderswijk*) for Malays.

In the Kotamaksum, there stand Maimoon Palace, Great Mosque, Deli Courts (*Kerapatan Deli*), Derikan park swimming pool, municipal houses, water tank, and other facilities. Towards the path of Green Princes (*Putri Hijau*) being the area of the hospital and laboratory owned by Deli Company. To the east being the Petisah Market (*Pasar Bundar*), to the west, there is the Medan Central Market (Sambu) and to the south being Colonial Government Offices, home planters, St. Elisabeth Hospitals and Princess Beatrix School. Meanwhile, around the Perintis Kemerdekaan road becomes the office of the Deli Railway. Around Kampung Madras, there are High Courts, military

barracks, Benteng Square, Shri Mariamman Temple, sports fields, and others.

Today, Merdeka Square has been surrounded by superblock and condominiums. The building functions as a hotel, apartment, office, recreation, entertainment, and shopping. Hotels, shopping centers, and offices around Merdeka Square are J.W. Marriot Hotels, Grand Aston City Hall and Hotels, Center Points, Mandiri Building, Podomoro Deli City superblock, and Reiz Condo. The whole new building has changed the face of the Esplanade from its original shape. The Merdeka Square looks smaller because of the food court on the west side and the bookstore and parking on the east side. Figure 2 below is Twin Villa's (*Villa Kembar*), a former Deli Railway administration building, demolished in 2009, and replaced with the Adimulia Hotel.

The entire heritage buildings in Medan City are more than 1000 units. This amount must be separated between government, private and individual buildings. The historical records of monumental buildings tend to refer to the Medan City planning map in 1913/1945, which contained 112 building units. This map does not include buildings on Brayan Island, Labuhandeli, or Belawan. If it is accumulated, more than 2000 units of heritage

buildings will be established in Medan City. The heritage buildings are grouped into 6 segments, namely: (i) Merdeka Square segment consisting of 13 units, (ii) Maimoon segment consisting of 12 units, (iii) Benteng segment consisting of 15 units, (iv) Pemuda segment consisting of 14 units, (v) the Polonia segment consists of 11 units, and (vi) the Sambu-Petisah segment consists of 19 units. The outside of this segment, there are still historical buildings such as in Padang Bulan, Brayan Island, Labuhandeli, and Belawan. The 112 building units on the Medan City planning map, 55 of them have been destroyed.

Some buildings have been destroyed and replaced by new buildings. The reasons for extermination consist of; (1) building assumptions are inefficient and ineffective, (2) buildings are at the core of the city, so they have high economic value, (3) high tax and maintenance costs if owned by individuals, (4) erode feudalism, colonialism and slavery during plantations, (5) lack of desire to preserve historical values, and (5) the lack of political will of the government. Based on the above five facts, there are three patterns of building removal, namely: (1) allowing buildings to be damaged, without painting and maintenance to be more vulnerable, (2) intentionally destroying and replacing them with new buildings, and (3) reasons for buildings that are already vulnerable. Buildings located in the core of the city are most susceptible to disappearances. In addition to its strategic location, it is also economically profitable in the heart of Medan City.

The cultural heritage is a masterpiece of some architects. The aspect of its architecture, the ornaments show the Colonial, Transitional to Modern Styles. Some architectures like Indische Empire Style, Art and Craft, Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Renaissance, Classic, Neo Classic, Morris, Modern, and Romantic consist of the Medan City. Some buildings are not available records of the architect, such as the Rubber Plantation Entrepreneurs Association on the East Coast of Sumatra

(*Algemeene Vereniging van Rubberplanters ter Ooskust van Sumatra, AVROS*) office (today it is known Sumatra Plantation Company Cooperation Agency, BKS-PPS). The AVROS Research Center (*Proefstation*) (today it is known Palm Oil Research Center, PPKS), the Deli Research Center at Diponegoro Road, the Railway Headquarters at M. Yamin Road, the railway complex at Sena Road, the Tip Top Restaurant and Tjong A Fie Mansion at Ahmad Yani Road, the Sumatra Post newspaper office at Gudang Road, building at the location of Danau Toba hotel, building ex-consul of the United States at Imam Bonjol Road, buildings controlled by Mandiri Bank, church, houses, or offices (Damanik, 2013).

The heritage has important meanings for the city, namely; (i) collective memory and identity of the city built by plantations, (ii) the symbol of modernization namely the revolution of a village into a modern city in the late 20th century; (iii) connecting the past to the future through the history of plantations, (iv) icons, signs, and symbols of urban civilization, (v) recordings of the dedication some architects namely the architectural of historical buildings, and (vi) object of the tourist destination.

The influence of the Dutch in the city is seen in the adaptation of various architectural (Handinoto, 2010). The Indische Empire Style is a manifestation of Indische Culture that developed in the late 18th century. This architectural style was seen in Seng Hap or the Governor's residence. In the mid-19th century in Europe, such as Germany and the Netherlands, developed modern architecture such as Art and Craft, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Bauhaus, Amsterdam School, de Stijl, and others. In the early 20th century, modern architecture was developed by Wright in the United States. This architectural style was seen in the Teladan Stadium, designed by Liem Bwan Tjie. Besides, there is a Transitional Architectural Style pioneered by the Public Works Department (*Burgelijke Openbare Werken, BOW*) graduate from the T.H. Delft, Netherlands. This



style was seen in the Post Office designed by Snuff.

Besides, there are foreign architectures that are integrated into one building, such as the Tjong A Fie Mansion (Christywyaty, 2011), Maimoon Palace, or the Grand Mosque. This architecture shows Chinese, Malay, Indische Empire Style, and Arabic styles. The architecture is a recording device of all activities and movements that occur in space (Muhammad, 2016). Architecture is recorded in stages of development (Wijanarka, 2007), namely the history of city formation. Therefore, a pleasant city has memories of the city's morphology. The product story is put on a typical urban architecture periodically. Architecture is the materialization of culture that is a mirror of civilization. Therefore, architecture is a silent witness of the history and events experienced by the community (Handinoto, 2010). The presence of various architectures are not only modernization symbols but also becomes a collective memory. That way, heritage buildings should not be destroyed because there is a memory in the city.

### **Nurturing the collective memory and identity of the city**

The six significance of heritage buildings in the plantation era has been mentioned above. However, the fate of the heritage began to undergo destruction after the Nationalization (1958-1962). This multi-purpose policy was felt in the form of taking over former colonial plantation lands into private property (Damanik, 2017). Furthermore, after the Nationalization, there was a strengthening of Anti-Dutch sentiments, which had an impact on the destruction of heritage. The planning as modern cities since the New Order marginalized historical buildings. There is a kind of desire to eliminate the memory of plantations, which is equated with colonialism.

In 1982, an urban metropolitan project was developed in the form of the construction of a Toll Road connecting Medan, Binjai, and Deliserdang (Mebidang).

This policy has implications for the destruction of heritage buildings. Since 2000, the second urban metropolitan stage has been developed by entering Karo, namely Medan-Binjai-Deliserdang-Karo (Mebidangro). Ironically, this policy has implications for the destruction of several heritage buildings. In 2010, metropolitan projects were developed for sanitation and health. In this policy, heritages are "cleaned" because they are considered the source of the city's ugliness.

Arranging the city under the pretext of development removes heritage buildings. The city planners collaborate with private parties, corporates, and individuals. Through the strength of its capital, the entrepreneurs easily bribe city planners to get development permits on heritage buildings. If there is a protest, the employer pays thugs to drive away. Towards this syndicate, city planners and thugs get a deposit from the collaboration. Thugs are paid to secure development projects. This fact is not a secret in Medan. Through these methods, the superbloc building has surrounded the Merdeka Square segment, such as the establishment of Center Points, Aston Cityhall, etc. Even though the Railway has disputed in court to appeal, but the superbloc remains standing. This fact indicates the weakness of the government in guarding heritage buildings.

The destruction of heritage has an impact on its designation as Heritage City. A similar reality occurs in the Cultural Heritage Register in the form of heritage buildings protected following Article 5 of Law No. 11 the year 2010 concerning Cultural Heritage (Fitri, 2015). Although some heritage buildings have been legitimized as National Cultural Reserves such as Maimoon Palace, Al Mashoem Grand Mosque, and Mayor's Office House, most have not succeeded. Another problem is the failure of the Merdeka Square segment as a heritage city. The crash was caused by the destruction of historic buildings in the proposed zone. There is no landmark zoning in Medan City.

There have been regulations govern-

ing heritage buildings. The Regional Regulation (*Perda*) of the Medan Municipality No. 6/1988 concerning Preservation of Buildings. Also the Mayor's Decree (*S.K.*) No.1883/382/SK/1989, namely the implementation of *Perda* No.6/1988. In both of these regulations, 42 heritage buildings have been established which must be protected. However, this regulation is feeble and helpless. The loss of six protected buildings evidences this fact according to the list. Other points were compounded by the loss of 55 heritage buildings listed on the Medan City planning map in 1913/1945. It should be noted, by the aspect of criteria for historic buildings, the entire building has passed the age of 50 years. Similarly, the whole building has historical, economic, social, and knowledge values for the citizens of the city. However, the effort to care for these heritage buildings did not get a positive appreciation of the city's structure.

It cannot be denied that urban development requires changes in spatial planning. The spatial planning reflects the development process (Tohjiwa, 2010). The changes in urban spatial planning are the passage of time and daily life (Soetomo, 2002). However, city development should not eliminate the identity of the city. Factors of modernization are certainly driving urbanization (Rappoport, 1997; Sukanti, 1979; Tjiptoherianto., 1999). Urbanization requires relatively large settlements. In the city, the housing needs are answered through the emergence of apartments in the urban core. The concentration of settlements in the urban core is the reason for the destruction of heritage buildings. Meanwhile, the planning for new cities outside the urban core is still very limited. Finally, in the urban core, there is a population buildup and economic activity and slum settlements (Basundoro, 2005). The urban planners failed to design expansion outside the urban core to unravel density and congestion as well as one way to care for heritage buildings (Setyohadi, 2007).

The cities become the arena of actors, forming identity, and even collective

memory (Kusno, 2009). The city became a silent witness who was not completely mute in the fight that occurred. He spoke through the physical landscape built by humans. He was the subject of power, but he provided space for resistance and negotiation. Streets, buildings, and designs tell interesting, complex stories and tensions about how the city is forced to play the role of both protagonists and antagonists. Each ruler's hand scrambles to carve out a narrative above the text of urban life. However, the development must appreciate its collective memory (Basundoro, 2005; Widjaja, 2010). The collective memory is a reflection of the city's identity.

The lesson studies from the destruction of heritage; the fundamental problem lies in the structure of urban planners. This structure does not have a political will and tends to accommodate the wishes of entrepreneurs. The weak political will has an impact on the preservation of heritage buildings. Although institutions such as the Sumatra Heritage Agency (BWS), university research institutes, or some heritage institutions have reacted, it has not been able to reduce the destruction. Finally, the heritage buildings disappeared. The city lost its identity. The city loses its icons. The city lost the nuances of its past. The problem facing the city today is how to treat heritage buildings on the economic interests of the city?

The city planners still have hope to save the remaining heritage. At least, existing buildings can be preserved as monuments about plantations. Proactive policies are needed by forming synergies between the government and employers. The policy referred to political will in the form of the legitimacy of protected heritage. Every protected is given a sign so that it cannot be destroyed. Heritage cannot be replaced, especially the facade. The function can be changed, but the facade is maintained. Such policies apply firmly to every building owned by the government, private sector, or individuals. This political will is implemented through (i) firmness of regional regulations governing

building and historic areas, (ii) making signs or inscriptions on each building and historical area, (iii) providing incentives in the form of tax relief, water, electricity to each building and historic area, (iv) assistance with painting, renovation and revitalization of building and historic areas, and (v) cancellation of permits and giving strict assertions to any attempts to destroy and to change the shape of buildings.

Every protected heritage is used as a public space. Even if it functions as an office, its nature must be exclusive so that it can be visited. As a public space, historical buildings function as coffee shops, souvenir shops, art performances, galleries, or other functions are exclusive. This utilization is a part of optimizing tourist destination objects in the form of city tours. An inclusive heritage building will make it difficult for visitors so that its economic functions will be lost. To support political will, it is necessary to determine the building and historical areas. The building is registered as a Cultural Heritage Building, while the historical area is designated as a Cultural Heritage Area. Through these two actions, the core zone or support zone is determined by the Heritage City Nomination (*Nominasi Kota Pusaka*). We offer the Merdeka Square segment as a core area, while Kesawan, Madras Village, Kota Maksu to Polonia as a supporting area. It should be noted that heritage cities such as in Jakarta and Semarang have not yet been found in Medan. This omission refers to the absence of the government's political will to treat collective memory. If the city government does not have a proactive policy, the city will lose its collective memory.

The private institutions such as the BWS have collaborated with the Dutch to revitalize Medan City Hall. Besides, BWS worked with Dutch and American conservation experts to identify historic buildings. The photographs of the city were reproduced, periodically exhibited, and discussed in a seminar forum. The presence of BWS since 2000 has inspired the importance of protecting heritage buildings in the city. In addition to BWS, there

is the Indonesian Plantation Museum Foundation, which established a museum in the city. The museum building uses two historical buildings, namely the PPKS complex and BKS-PPS. The museum initiated by Soedjai Kartasmita is concerned with maintaining the collective memory of plantations. This museum collection is all plantation artifacts originating from government-owned (PTPN 1-4) and private plantations, especially Socfindo, London Sumatra, PPKS, BKS-PPS, Bakrie Sumatra Plantations (BSP) and others. Figure 3 below is the home of the Director of the AVROS Research Center in 1926, used as an Indonesian Plantation Museum building in Medan City.

The collection of the museum is photos from the plantations era and exhibited in this museum. Airplanes donated by PTPN-2 used to spray tobacco in the 1950s, locomotives carrying palm oil donations from PTPN-2, and Socfindo were exhibited in the museum yard. Other collections are examples of contracts for coolies, fingerprints, or plantation money on display. The various newspapers published during the plantation period were also exhibited. Activities such as Agro Tourism aim to bring people closer to the plantations. Other activities include seminars, discussions, and exhibitions about plantations. Companies like Socfindo pay great attention to the preservation of heritage in Medan City.

The Musperin cooperated with the D'Liyod, the Dutch Shipping Museum in Amsterdam. In December 2018, the D'Liyod donated 150 artifacts like photos, books, dioramas, and various other collections. Willem Jansen, namely great-grandson Peter Jansen, one of the founders of Deli Company, visited Musperin to reminisce about his grandfather's story. His writing articles in newspapers published in Singapore. Similarly, the television from the Netherlands collaborated with Musperin to make heritage documenter. In short, the presence of Musperin became a partner of the Medan City Government to preserve heritage while maintaining the collective memory of planta-



Figure 3. Utilization of Heritage Buildings into the Indonesian Plantation Museum

Source: Author's documentation, 2019

tions. Without the synergy between the government, the private sector, and individuals, caring for the collective memory of plantations is a necessity. However, the main factor in caring for collective memory must arise from the government's political will and supported by stakeholders like heritage institutions, private companies, and individuals.

The Cultural Heritage Building holds a collective memory and is useful as a city identity. However, continued destruction has implications for the loss of collective memory, and ultimately loss of identity. The collective memory and identity of the Medan City, namely the City of Plantations, can only be maintained if the available buildings are used for private and public purposes. Without utilization, buildings will lose value and meaning, and ultimately eliminate the memory and identity of the city. The continuous destruction of cultural heritage buildings has made the city lose its identity. However, the utilization of a small number of buildings as public facilities; museums, cafes, restaurants, banks, and others, more or less leaving the memory and identity of plantations in the Medan City. Cultural heritage buildings, in addition to being preserved, require protection, short and long term utilization plans. The findings

of the study confirm that the strategy of nurturing for collective memory and city identity requires collaboration between individuals, the private sector, and the government.

### **CONCLUSION**

The heritage building is a masterpiece of famous architects, in the building, written collective memory, city identity, and also the modernization factor of the city. The conceptions like Paris van Sumatra and Dollarland are attached to the heritage building. The heritage has important values on history, economy, politics, social, and knowledge. This building is a cultural heritage that must be treated. Preserving heritage means caring for the collective memory of the city from the past. Heritage buildings are useful for connecting the past with the future. Nurturing for collective memory requires synergies between government, the private sector, heritage institutions, and individuals. The government, with its political will, creates strict regulating the protection of heritage and providing incentives for conservation efforts. Private institutions are obliged to care for and to develop heritage through their resources or establish cooperation with heritage conservation institutions. The individuals are obliged to preserve

heritage to maintain collective memory. The heritage is used as public spaces that can be accessed in city tourism programs.

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