

Aesthetic hegemony of the new order: A critical review of cultural politics in Indonesia (1966-1998)



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ABSTRACT

This research studies the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order in Indonesia. Thus far, the understanding has been that aesthetic matters are not related to the capital and feudal assets that construct them. To the contrary, this research analyzes how these two assets played a strategic role in establishing the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order. The research is conducted in the qualitative tradition, through a content analysis with a critical paradigm perspective. The data include documents in the form of literature, government policies, and the results of interviews. The results show that the United States of America, through the Ford Foundation, played an active role and contributed significantly to the establishment of aesthetic hegemony in the New Order. The United States was an agent that provided scholarships for art academics, young scientists, and artists to study art and philosophy in America and Europe. The style of abstract expressionism and the philosophy of absurdism were developed in Indonesia as a result of the active role of the United States of America. On the other hand, the New Order also built cultural centers on a central and regional level, including cultural parks and arts councils that were used as tools of cooptation. Through the function of “mentoring and development”, the role of cultural parks was to control the aesthetic activities of Indonesian citizens to suit the tastes of the ruler. The research results show that the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order had a double face, one with a character of modernism based on Western aesthetics, and the other with a noble *adiluhung* character of traditionalism based on traditional art.



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1. Introduction

New Order aesthetics were marked by cultural politics which maintained a distance between art and politics. Aesthetics were directed towards the “apolitical”, in which art had to remain free from any interests outside the function of art itself. Art was not allowed to allude to politics, or to reveal the reality of injustice that was occurring in society. Art forms became abstract expressionist, born out of the artists’ contemplative reflections and exhaustive explorations in laboratories. The creative activities of artists were steered towards the interests of the ruler for the success of national development. Various cultural policies were formulated to support the national development program. Art education, practices, and discourse were oriented towards and founded on Western ideas. The United States of America, through the Ford Foundation, was active in providing scholarships for studying abroad, as well as sponsoring book translation projects and other activities. Government institutions were used as tools of cooptation. The military was involved in the revival of traditional arts after the traumatic events of 1965. The New Order implemented aesthetic hegemony by involving

various forces from both outside and inside the country. Thus far, discussions on the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order have been inclined to ignore the participation of foreign powers. Existing studies tend to look at the use of state institutions as tools of cooptation [1]; the cultural centers that determined aesthetic standards [2]; the role of the mass media in the perpetuation of hegemony [3]; dominant aesthetic values as a universal standard [4]; the role of education [5]; and the neglect of local aesthetics [6]. This shows that there have not yet been any studies on the foreign powers involved in shaping the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order. This study investigates the simultaneous role of foreign and traditional powers that were used to build the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order. The aim of this paper is to provide scientific discourse which shows the previously ignored involvement and role of foreign powers in the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order.

The research was carried out by examining the participation of the Ford Foundation and the use of culture-based government institutions. During the mid-1960s, foreign foundations provided support in the form of postgraduate scholarships for young scientists (Goenawan Mohamad and Arief Budiman), artists (W.S. Rendra and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri), and art lecturers (A.D. Pirous and Sadali), who were sent to study philosophy and art at institutions of higher education in Europe and the United States of America. The research also looks at the philosophy book translation project funded by foreign agencies, as well as the role of tradition-based government and non-government institutions/organizations as tools of cooptation. The concept of performance, guidance, and order (*tontonan*, *tuntunan* and *tatanan*) is a continuous part of the discussion, and related to the role of politicians, academics, and artists. Through these two powers, the research aims to look specifically at the process of establishment of aesthetic hegemony in the New Order.

The research is based on the assumption that the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order involved various parties who had mutual interests. Each of these parties, using their own powers, played a part in building aesthetic hegemony. The United States of America used its capital power, through financial foundations such as the Ford Foundation [7], and Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) [8], to play an active role in instilling its ideology in Indonesia. These two institutions were foreign philanthropies that operated under the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to infiltrate the world of academics and art in order to oppose the influence of socialism that formed the ideology of the Soviet Union [8]. After World War II, the United States of America endeavored to develop an international knowledge network, which was oriented towards helping to consolidate hegemony, and developing values, methods, and research institutions [9]. Meanwhile, cultural parks were established as a tool for the government to control art activities in different regions. Feudal power was also revived through the experiences, meanings, and values that were shaped by the past, and continued to exist and be practiced in the present day [10]. As such, the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order had political interests both for foreign “capitalism” and the “developmentalism” of the New Order.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Aesthetic Hegemony

Aesthetic hegemony is a concept that describes the domination or huge influence of certain aesthetic values, which are determined by a dominant group or culture, and subsequently become widely accepted and regarded as the standard or norm by society in general. Mouffe, views hegemony as a concept which refers to the domination or extensive influence that a group or country has on another group or country, whether in a political, economic, cultural, or social context [11]. In the context of aesthetics, hegemony includes views on beauty, art, design, and cultural expression that are adopted and promoted as a key benchmark [12]. Standards of beauty and fashion that are set by the fashion industry in cities such as Paris, Milan, and New York frequently dominate global trends, directing tastes and preferences across all corners of the world [13]. Modernist architectural styles, which first appeared in Europe and the United States of America at the turn of the 20th century, have become the standard in architectural design all over the world, influencing urban development and building aesthetics [14]. The aesthetic values that are adhered to by the global art market, large galleries, and well-known curators often dictate what is regarded as high-quality contemporary art [15]. Aesthetic hegemony tends to have a number of characteristics. First, the domination of the aesthetic values of a particular area which is a center of dominant culture often leads it to become a cultural center that sets trends and aesthetic standards. Second, mass media and promotions by influencers play an important role in perpetuating aesthetic hegemony [3]. Third, the tendency of

society at large is to accept and internalize dominant aesthetic values as a universal standard, frequently without much intervention [4]. Fourth, education institutions are a medium for the promotion of dominant esthetic values, both through formal curricula and extracurricular activities [5]. Fifth, aesthetic hegemony leads to the neglect of local aesthetics [6]. The description above shows the characteristics of aesthetic hegemony.

2.2. Political Stage

A political stage is an arena or environment where political activities take place. Rancière states that political stages include all places, situations, and contexts in which political actors, such as politicians, political parties, voters, and interest groups interact, debate, and compete to gain power, influence policies, and realize their agendas [16]. A political stage includes various elements and actors that are involved in the political process. It is an arena in which important decisions are made, power is gained and maintained, and public issues are discussed and resolved [17]. A political stage is an arena where political symbols, rhetoric, and performance are used to shape public opinions and legitimacy of power [18], [19]. It can also be seen as a public space where individuals act together in a political capacity [20]. In line with this, a political stage is a place where various forms of knowledge are used to legitimize and challenge power, and to regulate the behavior and actions of individuals in a community [21]. As a place where various political activities take place, and where various actors and elements interact to influence policies, government, and public opinion, a political stage has a number of characteristics. First, the participation of political actors, which includes politicians, political parties, groups representing particular interests, and citizens of a country [22]–[24]. Second, political issues and agendas that are manifested in public policies which are discussed by stakeholders in the government [25]–[27]. Third, political institutions such as government agencies and sets of laws which regulate the implementation of all the movement in the political stage [28]–[30]. With the presence of all these aspects, a political stage can be used as an arena of participation.

2.3. New Order

The New Order is a term which refers to the period of government in Indonesia that began after the end of the Old Order in 1966 and continued until 1998. Poczter, *et al*, explain that this period was marked by political, economic, and social policies which differed from those of the previous era [31]. The New Order was the period of President Soeharto's leadership, which was characterized by and focused on political stability, economic development, and the eradication of communism. It was a time colored by authoritarianism, centralization of power, violation of human rights, and widespread corruption [32]. Soeharto's government enforced tight control of the media and restricted freedom of opinion while the highly centralized power system exacerbated practices of corruption, collusion, and nepotism at various government levels [33]. In addition, there were numerous cases of detention without trial, torture, and oppression of opposition groups and pro-democracy activists all of which created a climate of fear and repression in society [34]. Economic policies which prioritized growth also frequently ignored social welfare, causing a significant economic gap and intensifying social injustice in Indonesia [35]. A number of studies have outlined the characteristics of the New Order. First, Soeharto held complete control over the highly centralized power of the government, and all political decisions and economic policies were under his supervision [36]. Second, Soeharto's government carried out a purge of communists and their sympathizers after the events of G30S/PKI, with a large number of arrests and executions [37]. Third, Soeharto strived to create high economic growth as a means of legitimizing his government, while frequently ignoring aspects of social and economic welfare [38]. Fourth, there was tight control of the mass media, with strict censoring of news and information that was critical of the government [39]. Fifth, violations of human rights, such as detention without trial, torture, and enforced disappearance of political activists and opposition groups, were widespread [40]. These characteristics created a stable yet repressive political climate, with economic growth that was often unequal and full of social injustice.

3. Method

This research focuses on various events that demonstrate the process of formation of aesthetic hegemony in the New Order. The units of analysis used are qualitative data from literature, which show the role of foreign agencies in supplying assistance; policies relating to the establishment of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, cultural parks, arts councils, and tradition-based art organizations; and data taken from statements issued by members of the New Order elite, academics, and traditional art

practitioners. These data were chosen to see what was hidden behind the financial assistance and policies created by the New Order. The units of analysis were limited to data from the period of the New Order government (1966-1998). The analysis was carried out using a content analysis model, which is used in qualitative research that involves the reading of written documents or recordings in the form of photos, videos, and other media. In a content analysis, the main task of the researcher is to reveal the hidden meaning behind the text [41]. Every text is regarded as having meaning for someone, and is produced by someone to have meaning for others, and as such, these meanings should not be ignored, nor should they violate the reason why the text exists [42]. The data obtained from the two data sources were grouped according to the subject matter to be analyzed. The data analysis consisted of three stages, namely identification, evaluation, and judgment [42]. A critical approach was used because it emphasizes an ontology based on historic realism, a transactional epistemology, and a dialogic methodology [41].

The first stage of the research was the identification, which was carried out by rearranging the data that had been obtained systematically. The data included literature, in the form of journal articles, books, newspapers, texts of speeches, legislation, and visual data from the works of artists who had been recipients of scholarships to study art in America and Europe. The data were then sorted to select which data would be used and which would not be used. The final stage was to carry out a judgment of the data used, then present the data to build an argument. The analytical work was based on a critical paradigm which involved a dialogic method that discussed the various data relationships between the data that indicated the foreign participation and the data showing the various cultural political policies of the New Order. Through these three stages, with a critical paradigm framework, it is hoped to reveal the invisible reality behind the awarding of postgraduate scholarships and sponsoring projects for the translation of philosophy books by the Ford Foundation, and the establishment of cultural centers in different regions. It is hoped that all the stages of the analysis will be able to answer the research goal by providing scientific discourse on the previously overlooked involvement and role of foreign powers in the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order. These foreign powers aligned with the political interests of the New Order, as both had the same desire to steer clear of socialism, which they believed would interfere with the projects of foreign capitalism and the developmentalism of the New Order.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Ford Foundation and Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) as Capital Assets

During the New Order era, aesthetics experienced a shift from art that was characterized by socialism to art that was characterized by liberalism. This shift occurred as a result of the effect of the global political situation caused by the ideological tension between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. The United States, which was behind the New Order, instilled an ideology of liberalism by offering scholarships and book translation projects. During the first half of the 1960s, art academics, young scientists, and artists were sent to study art and philosophy at reputable universities in America and Europe. On returning from their studies, they brought Western artistic styles and philosophical doctrines back with them to Indonesia. Arief Budiman and Goenawan Mohamad brought Albert Camus's ideas of absurdism. Artists and academics, such as A.D. Pirous and Sadali, introduced the style of abstract expressionism. After returning from America, W.S. Rendra immediately created his experimental "mini-word" theater performance. An experimental design using a play on words also appeared in the poetry of Sutardji Calzoum Bachri. Table 1 shows the role of foreign involvement and the various philosophical ideas and Western arts that appeared during the early years of the New Order government. Table 1 shows the involvement and important role of foreign agencies such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) and the Ford Foundation in establishing the philosophy and aesthetics of the post Soekarno government. These donors awarded postgraduate scholarships to young scientists, artists, and art lecturers in Indonesia, including the likes of Arief Budiman, Goenawan Mohamad, A. D. Pirous, Sadali, W.S. Rendra, and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, to study philosophy and art at universities in Europe and the United States of America. The thoughts and ideas acquired during their studies colored their styles of absurdism, abstract expressionism, and experimental art. A number of them also received grants for the translation of philosophy and literature books from the Torch Foundation in Indonesia. In his writings, Martin shows the letters exchanged between Goenawan Mohamad and Ivan Kats. In these letters, Kats specifically asks Goenawan to translate the books of Albert Camus and to write a foreword. Kats promises Goenawan an advance payment of \$50 and another \$50 on completion of the work [43].

The data in Table 1 shows three patterns of relationship in the involvement of foreign parties: (1) the philosophical discourse and aesthetics of the New Order were influenced by western thoughts and ideas; (2) the capital power obtained from foreign agencies played a part in building the aesthetic practices and discourse of the New Order; and (3) the philosophical discourse and aesthetics of the New Order were instilled through education. Hence, the involvement of foreign parties in building aesthetic practices and discourse had a large influence on shaping the color of Indonesian arts.

Table 1. Foreign Involvement

Recipient	Provider	Form of Grant	Resulting Idea
Arief Budiman	Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF)	Scholarship to College of Europe in Belgium	Philosophy
Goenawan Mohamad	Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF)	Scholarship to College of Europe in Belgium	Philosophy
A. D. Pirous	United States of America	Scholarship to Rochester Institute of Technology, NY, USA	Abstract expressionism
Sadali	United States of America	Fine Art scholarship to State University, Iowa, USA	Abstract expressionism
W.S. Rendra	United States of America	Scholarship to American Academy of Dramatic Art (AADA) in New York	Experimentalism
Sutardji Calzoum Bachri	United States of America	Scholarship to International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, USA	Experimentalism
Goenawan Mohamad	International Torch Foundation	Translation of <i>Mythe Sisifus, Krisis Kebebasan</i> (Albert Camus)	Absurdism

4.2. Establishment of Regional Cultural Parks and Arts Councils

The New Order kept a close watch on the aesthetic practices and discourse of its citizens. This surveillance was carried out by building art and cultural institutions and organizations, some of which were under the direct control of the government while others were managed by non-government bodies. Art and cultural institutions were often given the name “taman” (park/garden), and included Taman Ismail Marzuki (1968), Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (1975), and cultural parks (taman budaya) in all provinces throughout Indonesia (1978). Regional art councils (Dewan Kesenian Daerah) were also formed in every province, right down to a district level (1993). The puppetry organization Ganasidi was established in 1969, pioneered by Major General Surono, who at the time held the position of Commander in Chief of the Diponegoro VII Military Command. This puppetry organization, which originally existed only in Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, was expanded in 1971 to become a national organization and its name was changed to the Indonesian Puppetry Association (*Persatuan Pedalangan Indonesia/Pepadi*). The Diponegoro VII Military Command also sponsored the establishment of the *Sapta Mandala kethoprak* group (1971).

Table 2 shows the use of traditional-based art and cultural institutions/organizations that were used as tools of cooptation. Table 2 shows the cooptation implemented by the government through both government and non-government institutions/organizations such as Taman Ismail Marzuki, Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, cultural parks, regional arts councils, and organizations of traditional artists. The basis for the establishment of Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) was the awareness about the importance of representing Indonesian culture in an international arena. Cooptation was also carried out through the formation of organizations for traditional puppetry (*Pepadi*) and *kethoprak* (*Sapta Mandala*), under the control of Diponegoro VII Military Command. In addition, Taman Mini Indonesia Indah was built as a cultural center that represented various traditional cultures from the whole of Indonesia in the framework of national culture. The basis for the establishment of cultural parks was a decree by the Minister of Education and Culture in 1978, while the establishment of regional arts councils was based on instruction of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 5 of 1993. Three patterns of relationship can be seen in the use of government and non-government institutions/organizations as tools of cooptation of the New Order: (1) the New Order used government and non-government institutions as tools of cooptation; (2) the New Order used military powers to create organizations of traditional-based arts; (3) through cultural parks and arts councils, the New Order controlled the arts activities of citizens throughout the whole of Indonesia. In this way, the use

of government and non-government institutions/organizations as tools of cooptation created aesthetic uniformity.

Table 2. Aesthetic Cooptation through Institutions/Organizations

Policy	Government Institution/Organization	Non-Government Organization
To represent Indonesian culture on the international arena (1968)	Taman Ismail Marzuki Jakarta Arts Council, Jakarta Academy	Jakarta Arts Council, Jakarta Academy
Establishment of traditional art organizations under the control of Diponegoro VII Military Command (1969-1971)		Ganasidi, Pepadi, Sapta Mandala
A cultural center that represented various traditional cultures from the whole of Indonesia (1975)	Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII)	-
Decree by the Minister of Education and Culture, 1978, about the establishment of Cultural Parks	Regional Cultural Parks	-
Instruction by the Minister of Home Affairs, No. 5 of 1993, about Regional Arts Councils	Regional Arts Councils	-

4.3. Concept of art as Performance, Guidance, and Order (*Tontonan, Tuntunan, and Tataan*)

The New Order used feudal power that originated from Javanese culture. Soeharto was a Javanese puritan who used Javanese cultural values in his governmental system. These values were based on traditional culture which positioned art not only as a form of entertainment but also required it to contain moral teachings. The concept of art as performance, guidance, and order was an ongoing discourse which involved politicians, academics, and artists. Harmoko was one of the politicians who frequently presented this concept at various events. Umar Kayam was among the academics who also communicated this concept, and it was also acknowledged by puppeteer Ki Manteb Soedarsono. Table 3 shows the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order involving politicians, academics, and practitioners. Table 3 shows the various opinions of politicians, academics, and practitioners about the art concept of the New Order. Minister of Information during the Soeharto era, Harmoko, stated on numerous occasions in every speech he made that art must include an element of both performance and guidance.

Table 3. Concept of Performance, Guidance, and Order

Name	Statement	Explanation	Role
Harmoko	"Film and other moving image media are not merely commodities but should also contain an element of guidance, as well as performance."	Speech at inauguration ceremony for members of the Film Censorship Board for the period 1989-1991, Jakarta, 11 July 1989	Politician
Umar Kayam	"The New Order positions one as an instrument of control over the other, as though pitting them against each other. Freedom of expression can bring art to the quality of performance value, but is limited by another value that must contain guidance; likewise, while having to fulfil the value of guidance, art must also have the ability to present an entertainment value to the audience; and finally, both of these values, whether performance or guidance, should be within the aesthetic structure of the New Order".	Umar Kayam, in <i>Kelir Tanpa Batas</i> , Yogyakarta: Gamma Media, 2001, page 71.	Academic
Ki Manteb Soedarsono	"Soeharto has a great concern for puppet theater (<i>wayang</i>). <i>Wayang</i> is both a performance and guidance."	Interview (2019)	Practitioner

In one of his speeches, at the inauguration ceremony for members of the Film Censorship Board for the period 1989-1991, which took place in Jakarta on 11 July 1989, Harmoko stated that in addition to containing an element of performance, art should also contain guidance. A similar statement was expressed by Umar Kayam, an academic and Indonesian cultural expert. In one of his books, Kayam

stated that the value of performance of an art should be limited with the value of guidance, and ultimately the values of performance and guidance must exist within the aesthetic structure of the New Order. Meanwhile, puppeteer Ki Manteb Soedarsono, who was often summoned to perform at the State Palace, stated in an interview that puppet theater, as asserted by Soeharto, should contain elements of both performance and guidance. Overall, Table 3 shows three patterns of relationship in the concept of performance, guidance, and order in the practice and discourse of New Order aesthetics: (1) politicians, as representatives of the government, provided political legitimization; (2) academics at universities provided academic legitimization; and (3) practitioners such as puppeteers provided cultural and artistic legitimization. Hence, from this political, academic, and artistic-cultural legitimization, performance, guidance, and order became the sole discourse of New Order aesthetics which had a widespread influence on the practice of artists. Political legitimization received academic justification, and became a practice in the creative activities of art practitioners.

4.4. Discussion

The research into the aesthetic hegemony implemented by the New Order investigates a series of cultural political policies. The cultural politics referred to here are the cultural policies that are formulated with the assumption that the majority of the subjects of a particular country do not have the ability to practice responsible citizenship, and need the guidance of the state in making their cultural choices [44]. This is where Murtopo conceptualized the authority of the state and legitimized an authoritarian approach in cultural policies [44]. This authoritarian approach positioned the relationship between the state and artists, as perceived by Jennifer Lindsay, as a “patron-client” relationship [45]. As the patron, the state had the right to determine the themes of performances, to censor various things, and to allocate funding to performances that were considered to align with state interests, while refusing to support performances that went against the state. From the results of the research, it was found that (1) foreign involvement produced philosophy and art scholars from universities in Europe and the United States of America, which influenced aesthetic practices and discourse in Indonesia; (2) government and non-government institutions/organizations based on traditional arts were used as tools of cooptation; (3) the concept of performance, guidance, and order displayed something of a paradox. Thus, the research findings show that New Order aesthetic hegemony was double-faced, with Western-based modernism on one side and noble (*adiluhung*) tradition-based traditionalism on the other.

Cultural political policies were the main capital in the implementation of hegemony. The foreign powers that entered through the route of education, by way of scholars who had graduated from European and American universities, introduced philosophical and artistic thoughts and ideas that had been developed in the West. Styles of abstract expressionism, absurdism, and experimentalism that were introduced in Indonesia were in line with the cultural politics of the New Order, which wished to separate art from politics. Works by the visual artists A.D. Pirous and Sadali, along with W.S. Rendra’s theater works and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri’s poetry carried a spirit of aesthetic formalism that was presented through experimental forms. At the time when these Indonesian artists and academics were studying in America, abstract art was becoming widespread. Modern and influential art galleries in the United States, such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, played a huge role in the development of abstract works. Through art institutions such as MoMA, the CIA played a role in campaigning for freedom and individualism [46]. Meanwhile, through the works of Albert Camus, discourse on absurdism was used as a criticism of communism, stating that the “heaven on earth” dreamed of would never come true. Sisyphus is not only portrayed a person downtrodden by fate but more than that, Sisyphus is aware of his own oppression. When his long journey reaches the desired end, the end moves out of reach once again [47]. Camus’s interpretation of Sisyphus is an endless, continuous human struggle in which the end does not exist but is only a utopia that can never be reached. At this point, a strong criticism of communism was expressed by artists who supported the Cultural Manifesto (*Manifesto Kebudayaan/Manikebu*). The art principles formulated by *Manikebu* maintained a distance with the criticism of power (apoliticism), by providing more opportunities for freedom of individual expression based on an outpouring of emotion.

Cultural politics were a means of encouraging the growth of traditional arts through the establishment of cultural parks, arts councils, and non-government organizations as tools of cooptation to enforce aesthetic uniformity. The establishment of cultural parks began with a speech by Minister of Education and Culture in the era of the third Development Cabinet (1978-1983), Dr. Daoed Yoesoef (1978), who stated that as a democratic country, Indonesia should facilitate non-government

organizations to carry out cultural activities. One month after his speech, Dr. Daoed Joesoef issued Decree by Minister of Education and Culture to the Republic of Indonesia number 0276/0/1978 dated 16 August 1978, about the Organizational Structure and Work Procedure of Cultural Parks. As government institutions, cultural parks were given the authority to oversee the life of the arts and culture in different regions. After the end of the G30S/PKI Movement, many traditional arts died out and many artists were traumatized. The New Order government, however, was aware that the majority of Indonesian citizens in rural areas felt a close connection to traditional arts, so it was easy for traditional puppeteers and artists to exert their influence. On this basis, the Diponegoro VII Military Command began a revival of traditional arts through the establishment of organizations of traditional artists which were used as tools of cooptation. The foundation of government and non-government institutions/organization in different regions successfully established the standardization of national aesthetic taste. Soeharto, as the leader of the New Order, directed and regulated the aesthetic choices of Indonesian citizens. The aesthetic practices and discourse of the people were tailored to suit the tastes of the ruler. The aesthetic taste of the ruler determined national aesthetic taste. As an admirer of shadow puppet theater (*wayang kulit*), Soeharto's tastes were followed by government bureaucrats all over Indonesia. *Wayang kulit* performances were commonly held at government events, right down to the lowest level of government.

Cultural parks and arts councils played an important role in aesthetic standardization. The Directorate of Culture focused on fields that the state determined to be culture, while the Department of Home Affairs was responsible for allocating funds for cultural activities at a provincial level. The Directorate of Culture managed all cultural parks across Indonesia, while the Department of Home Affairs facilitated the establishment of regional arts councils and their budgets in every area. Through technical instructions and direction from the Director General of Culture, cultural parks served to carry out "mentoring and development" of arts in different regions. Technical instructions were directed towards creating works of art that were tidy, orderly, disciplined, not offensive, attractive or impressive to watch, and pleasant to hear [48]. Cultural parks became places where indigenous ethnic art was reshaped so that it matched the government discourse of the New Order regime [49]. The implementation of training programs for regional artists, documentation of art and cultural activities, along with performances and exhibitions were the main duties of cultural parks in different regions. The existence of these cultural parks provided a place for implementing the practice and discourse of aesthetic hegemony. The discourse of art as "performance, guidance, and order" was introduced and encouraged. This discourse became stronger after gaining legitimation from circles of academics and practitioners. Good art was not only determined by its entertainment value as a performance, but was also required to contain moral teachings as a form of guidance. It had to find a balance between a performance that allowed room for creativity and guidance that constrained that room for creativity, thereby remaining within the structure stipulated by the New Order. This structure balanced the value of creativity and the requirement to convey moral values. In this case, the relationship between the state and its artists was one of "patron-client" [45], where the artist (client) in his or her work had to adhere to the order stipulated by the state, as the patron. Meanwhile, foreign involvement in the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order can be read as an attempt by the United States of America to block Indonesia from the influence of communist ideology. Soekarno's government, which made "politics the commander in chief" [50]–[52], provided an easy pathway for the development of communist ideology in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Soeharto, who was supported by liberal artists, was of the opinion that the autonomy of artists as individuals, free from political intervention, was conditional to the achievement of real aesthetics [53]. Abstract expressionism and other experimental styles that allowed room for freedom of expression kept artists away from the reality of politics. The New Order gave space for individual freedom rooted in Western liberalism. Liberalism was the gateway for capitalism. It was in the interests of capitalism that the United States of America became involved in the establishment of aesthetic hegemony, which on one side also supported the perpetuation of power of the New Order.

The process through which New Order aesthetic hegemony was established has not been previously investigated by other researchers. In this context, the results of this present research are important. The research findings, which point to foreign involvement in the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order, demonstrate the novelty of the research. The research results show that New Order hegemony produced paradoxical aesthetics; aesthetics which on one side were characterized by Western modernism, but on the other had the face of traditional noble values. Western modernism and

capital powers paved the way for the ideologies of liberalism and capitalism. Meanwhile, the noble values of tradition, which had feudal origins, created principles of detail, complexity, and refinement. Modernism encouraged people to make advancements by accepting developments, while on the other side these developments were bound by traditional values. Artists were in a state of confusion, with the desire to accept modernism accompanied simultaneously by the acceptance of tradition. On one hand, the New Order revived traditional arts to support national culture, but on the other it provided the space for modern artists to be a part of this support [54]. Modernism and the noble *adiluhung* tradition are two of the keywords in New Order aesthetics, in which freedom was given but limits were also set.

5. Conclusion

This research provides awareness that the aesthetics of the New Order were not independent but rather the result of a negotiation between various parties which all shared political interests. The United States of America, through the CIA, used cultural institutions to instill its ideology in Indonesia. On one hand, this foreign involvement enabled the perpetuation of New Order power. The ideology of liberalism that paved the way for capitalism was translated through the concept of performance, guidance, and order. The freedom provided was bound together with noble values based on moral teachings, which created a unified structure that was not contradictory but instead created harmony. The harmonious structure of aesthetic practices appears to have created power for the New Order to protect its political and governmental system. In this case, aesthetic structure acted as a support for the political system of the New Order. The contribution of this research is to provide an explanation about the establishment of New Order aesthetics. One view that has previously escaped attention is the foreign involvement in creating the aesthetics of the New Order, and the acceptance of this foreign involvement by the New Order. New Order aesthetics were the product of negotiation and compromise that took place through a process of mutual appraisal and examination between foreign parties and the Indonesian government. Each party had its own implicit political and economic interests, and each provided a way for the other party's interests. Foreign powers, through the Ford Foundation, were in a dominant position, while the New Order held a subordinate role. On the other hand, by establishing cultural parks in different regions, as a tool of control to carry out mentoring and development of the arts in order to ensure that they did not go against the government, the New Order continued to promote the idea of noble *adiluhung* discourse through the concept of performance, guidance, and order, which involved bureaucrats, academics, and traditional artists as agents of hegemony. Education was the most effective medium for implementing hegemony. The role of art education in the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order is interesting to investigate further, as is the role of art academics who were recipients of scholarships to study in America, specifically in building the art education curriculum in Indonesia. The limitations of data in this study mean that it has not yet been possible to reveal the aesthetic hegemony of the New Order through the art education curriculum in Indonesia. This research recommends further studies related to aesthetic hegemony in art education during the New Order era. In this way, art education in Indonesia can be critical of itself and all the material that is used in its learning.

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