

Interview by Jemma Purdey with Boediono Soebroto, Seminyak, Bali, 7 August 2014

**BA, Architecture, Melbourne University, 1963-1968**



**PART 1**

[00:00:21]	Grew up in Jakarta, his parents were from Central Java. His father was a teacher and worked for the education department as the Indonesian representative to UNESCO. Pak Boedi has five older sisters and a younger brother. He had a strict upbringing and, as the first boy, was expected to do well. His father was a theosophist and brought the children up to be open-minded about religion. Pak Boedi went to a Protestant primary school, state junior high school and Catholic senior high school – Kanisius College in Jakarta.	Childhood; Family background; Early education
[00:03:25]	Pak Boedi's father often went to Paris, to UNESCO Asia headquarters. Before independence he was a high school teacher in Central Java and Aceh, and after independence he was principal of a Dutch–Chinese school in Jakarta, then joined the department and worked his way up. Pak Boedi's mother was a housewife. Pak Boedi was born in 1944, in Jakarta.	Childhood; Family background
[00:06:53]	After finishing school he went to Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) to do architecture. [Comments about how expensive it was to go to university, only one sister went.] Pak Boedi looked for a scholarship, there were plenty available with Sukarno playing the West off against the East, and his father knew a Colombo Plan official, Prettyman. There were two choices: Russia and Australia, he didn't want to go to Russia, language was important so he wanted to go to Australia.	Undergraduate education; Scholarships opportunities; Colombo Plan; Motives for going to Australia
[00:12:29]	Maybe his father had contacts within the Colombo Plan. The application process involved	Scholarships application process

	an English test and an interview. He applied to ITB and the Colombo Plan around the same time, 1962. [Comments about people who went to Russia not daring to come back after the coup and anecdote about Benny Moerdani's brother Yanto getting a scholarship.]	
[00:15:33]	Went to Australia early in 1963, the same cohort as Vice President Boediono. Before going he went to 'indoktrinasi' for a week, to learn Indonesian ideology and how to use a knife and fork. The message was they should be proud of their identity, of Indonesia and the national ideology. [Anecdote about being invited to dinner by Prettyman, when he was back in Australia, and very defensive when Prettyman was critical of the army, discussion about accepting state ideology.]	Arriving in Australia; Networks; Pre-departure preparations
[00:21:24]	Didn't know anything about Australia before going. Thought it was a desert and was surprised to see water. He went to Sydney first, with about a hundred others, to learn English. Alistair Badinack, from the Commonwealth Office of Education, took some of the Indonesian students under his wing and they kept in touch after Alistair was married. [Reminiscing about the office and the principal and the language classes.]	Previous knowledge of Australia; Arriving in Australia; Scholarships agents in Australia
[00:25:16]	[Remembering boarding with a host couple, anecdotes about the other boarders (two Australians, a Chinese and two other Indonesians); the food (stew and mashed potato); watching football on black and white television; jumping on their beds; the bald, unfriendly landlord.]	Arriving in Australia; Living in Australia
[00:32:29]	Got to language classes by train, the station was very close to the house. Was in Sydney at least a month, got to know the shops. They got lots of money, £54 a fortnight. [Digression about his best friend in Melbourne, Robert Marshall, (they're still in touch) and pies and fish and chips.]	Living in Australia; Friendship
[00:35:37]	In Sydney was taken for a traditional Australian barbecue on the harbour. Went to Bondi, stared at girls in bikinis. [Anecdote about a guy from Aceh being shocked.] It was an easy time, he had everything he needed and study wasn't too hard.	Socialising in Australia
[00:38:03]	Didn't know he was going to Melbourne when he left Jakarta, was told in Sydney. Melbourne and Sydney were considered good destinations,	Studying in Australia

	Indonesian students thought Perth was the outback and Tasmania was low status. Everyone went to university, if they failed they were sent to technical college. They looked down on Geelong and RMIT. Hadn't met anyone who studied in Melbourne but was happy to go there, it was a great chance.	
[00:41:02]	[Anecdote about a handsome, playboy classmate and comments about different levels of motivation.]	Studying in Australia; Socialising
[00:43:30]	In Melbourne, he lived at International House. He chose to live there rather than in a share house so he could improve his English. Sam Dymock was the warden. [Discussion about Sam Dymock and his adopted son.] There were people from all over the world living at International House as well as some Australians.	Living in Australia; Accommodation; International House, Melbourne
[00:47:12]	Sometimes there was rice, and horsemeat. They ate in Bourke St sometimes, at King Wa, always ordered the cheapest dish. The rooms at International House had electric kettles but they couldn't cook. They played soccer, had parties. Was engaged to Meta Smith but she broke it off. [Discussion about mutual friends, Meta Smith, Charles and Tanya Coppel.]	Living in Australia; International House; Socialising

## PART 2

[00:00:00]	Started first year architecture in Melbourne, it was less difficult than at ITB. [Expands on reasons for this.]	Studying in Australia
[00:04:04]	Had to buy his own equipment for the course, the scholarship money was enough. Hugh O'Neill was teaching, he invited the students to his house. [Comments about other alumni from Indonesia – Adi, John [?] and Pane.] There were so few Indonesians at the university then, they did things together. Also made friends with others, e.g. Robert Marshall. The faculty was in a horrible old army shed, at that time, and he shared the small studio with other students in his year. John Denton, [Bill] Corker and Barrie Marshall, who formed the well-known firm, were in that year.	Studying in Australia; Indonesians in Melbourne; Friendships
[00:09:18]	His first project was a boat shed in Albert Park, another was a clinic. Robert Marshall took Pak Boedi to meet his parents on their hobby farm, taught him to ride a horse. Robert lived at Ridley College but was from the country. Pak Boedi preferred people like that to rich city folk.	Post-scholarship career; Friendships

[00:13:01]	Pak Boedi had a holiday job at the paper mills and another at the abattoir, cleaning the guts out of the carcasses. It was good pay because it was dirty and smelly and Australians didn't want to do it. Some friends went fruit picking but it sounded too hard. Joined the Indonesian Students Association and did things at International House. In his first or second year he got his picture in The Age as the winner of a tricycle race around the uni.	Work experience in Australia; Indonesian community in Melbourne; International House
[00:17:13]	Yanto, Adi, Mustakim (married to Marilyn) and Rudi formed a band. They all sang, a couple of Indonesian songs, in the architecture review. He took five years to do his degree then did a year work experience. After International House he lived at 44 Grattan St (Indonesians downstairs and Australians upstairs) for two years.	Indonesian community in Melbourne; Socialising; Studying in Australia; Living in Australia
[00:21:26]	They had to cook and do their laundry by hand. The landlords were a couple from Cyprus. Preferred not to live with friends, to preserve the friendship. Suarmo lived at Grattan St too. [Chatting about Jemma's travels interviewing alumni.]	Living in Australia; Friendships
[00:26:53]	He had to resubmit his final assignment, of an office in the Southern Cross Hotel, so he got a three-month extension. He went to see the Beatles in Festival Hall in [1964]. Likes going to museums. His wife was English and he went to the Tate Gallery and the British Museum. In Melbourne, there wasn't much like that. When he did work experience, he had some money and liked going to restaurants in Carlton and Bourke St.	Studying in Australia; Social life in Australia; Family
[00:31:59]	His wife was a ten-pound migrant from England, she went out with Suarmo then started going out with Pak Boedi. His son, Andrew, was born in The Alfred Hospital in 1971. Then they moved to England and had a daughter, Chris. Then they went to Kuching, for two years, to work on a hotel. Got back to Indonesia in 1978. [Discussion about resistance to going back to Indonesia because of the economic instability but also knowing that Indonesia was still home and that to go as far in Australia would involve working twice as hard and less creative work.]	Family; Marriage; International mobility; Living overseas; Returning to Indonesia
[00:38:12]	Jobs overseas were good, they added value. Is more in favour of doing postgraduate studies overseas because the undergraduate years are when you build your professional network and Pak Boedi feels at a disadvantage because he	Post-scholarship career; Returning to Indonesia; Alumni network

	missed out on that and access to valuable contacts and the establishment. Mustakim, Yanto and Adi did go back to Indonesia and formed a company, they got their first job through Benny Moerdani. Pak Boedi was invited to form the company with them but he declined, he worked for a private development company in Jakarta instead.	
[00:42:32]	The company belonged to Subud and Pak Boedi was always involved in projects that had a lot foreigners involved, he could act as liaison between local and expat people. His son, Andrew, also gets jobs bridging local and foreign thinking. Andrew went to Jakarta International School when they came back so he doesn't know much about Indonesian culture. [Story about Pak Boedi's boss, Sharif Horthy, the last king of Hungary.]	Post-scholarship career; Professional networks; International mobility; Family
[00:48:17]	His wife worked at the Australian Embassy and they socialised with foreigners so the children missed out on the Indonesian part. Andrew is more western than Asian, not half and half. [Comments about his son being a jack-of-all-trades and master of none.] Chris did biology at Gajah Mada University. Since 1979 they have lived in Indonesia but Sheila bought a house in Brisbane to have a break from Indonesia.	Family; Social networks; Connections with Australia
[00:51:20]	He doesn't go back to Australia. Keeps in touch with architect friends, Mustakim and Adi. He was invited to the 50th anniversary of the 1963 cohort but he didn't go. [Signing the form and looking at photo of 1963 cohort arriving in Sydney.]	Alumni network; Friendships

### PART 3

[00:00:00]	Didn't go to the reunion because felt people just wanted to be with Vice President Boediono. Melbourne University invited him to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1963 architecture graduates. Finds reunions disappointing and Australia's a long way away. Still has friends from high school.	Alumni network
[00:03:45]	While in Australia he got given the fare to go home every two years, for the summer holidays. In between visits he wrote letters to his mum, and some to his girlfriend. He used to send things home, things that weren't available in Indonesia e.g. disposable nappies for his sister, something to increase the size of his sister's breasts (by mail order).	Living in Australia; Scholarship experience

[00:06:59]	The Colombo Plan was administered from Sydney. The scholars could claim for some equipment for their study. One of them tried to claim for household goods when he got married. The education office checked that they passed their courses but there was no personal relationship, no liaison officer on campus, unless it was Alistair. For Pak Boedi, Alistair was like a friend. The scholars only got in touch with the education office to claim expenses and organise trips home.	Scholarship experience; Friendship
[00:09:56]	Challenges? There was a sense that they fitted in but not completely, different language and culture. People who were close to them were interested in their culture but most people were not interested and language was a limitation. He got on better with women than men because he didn't share their passion for drinking and football and surfing. He tried, went to the pub after work, but he didn't really like it. [Comments about other Indonesians getting more into it, drinking and horse racing, difference between Indonesian and Australian male culture.]	Living in Australia; Challenges; Socialising in Australia
[00:14:38]	[Comparing Indonesian scholarship students from then and now, and the increased prominence of religion in Indonesia.] Pak Boedi was not brought up in a religious family. He never encountered overt racism. [Story about hitch-hiking to Adelaide with his friend, Chris, and a car driving away when the driver saw Pak Boedi, and a pub refusing to serve him.]	Living in Australia; Friendship; Racism
[00:20:15]	They hitchhiked from Melbourne to Adelaide and mostly got lifts. Sometimes they slept out. Also went to Canberra to visit friends and see the Australian capital, and to Byron Bay to see Stuart Graham. Pak Boedi's son is good friends with Stuart's son.	Travel in Australia; Friendship; Ongoing connections with Australia
[00:24:37]	Knew several people at Monash. [Discussion about Professor Sangkot Marzuki, did a PhD at Monash with the Colombo Plan, now working for the Eijkman Institute.]	Indonesian community in Melbourne
[00:26:33]	Pak Boedi's mother died in 1967, of a heart attack, when she was 56. He was in the middle of exams and his father didn't tell him she had died until after the funeral. His father died in 1986. He was the only one of his siblings who went overseas, except for his sister who worked in the embassy in the US for a couple of years. She had two children, still in Indonesia, and her	Family; Living in Australia

	father put pressure on her to go home. His father had been offered a job in Paris as the Indonesian ambassador but he turned it down because the children were all in school. His father was a strong person, Pak Boedi was obedient to him but his brother rebelled.	
[00:30:38]	Other Indonesian scholars tried to get their siblings to come and study in Australia but Pak Boedi didn't because his brother wasn't academic and his sisters were getting married etc. [Comments about Robert Marshall specialising in mud brick houses, his connection to Alistair Knox in Eltham and his farm with a restored railway station.]	Family; Friendships; Ongoing connections with Australia
[00:33:58]	Pak Boedi's early house designs were very Indonesian, lots of wood, lots of overhangs, lots of terraces. Then he got bored with that. He's project manager now, for building hotels. [Comments about buildings in Bali getting tied up in tradition, e.g. the airport, and his house.]	Career; Leadership
[00:37:39]	His first buildings were very influenced by Australian architecture, with skylights and big verandahs, then he went Indonesian, the first was his own house in Jakarta. [Discussion about how where he lives has changed from a rural area to a built up area, and Jemma's Californian bungalow in Brunswick.]	Connections with Australia
[00:41:54]	[Jemma looking for photos of her house and describes her place.]	
[00:45:04]	[Comments about Mustafa Sabaroedin, Helmy and Adi, and how it's difficult to build a new life in Indonesia after spending a long time in Australia, and vice versa.]	Alumni network
[00:49:00]	[Comments about Abdu Pane, going back to Medan with his Australian wife, Margaret.] Pak Boedi had trouble fitting in when he came back to Indonesia in 1978. Sheila came with him but was never fully happy in Indonesia. [Story about Pane meeting Margaret at International House.] Pane was still at International House when Pak Boedi got there.	Returning to Indonesia; Family; International House; Friendship
[00:53:58]	[Comments about other Colombo Plan alumni – Sukrisman and Ezra – and discussion about how these interviews will be used and the point of the project.]	Alumni network
[00:58:09]	END	