Architecture and the Politics of Identity in Indonesia
A Study of the Cultural History of Aceh

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ABSTRACT

While the history of the region of Aceh is intertwined with the history of Indonesia, contemporary literature provides only scanty information on the cultural and architectural heritage of Aceh. This study explores the cultural history of Aceh to reveal, on the one hand, its distinctive richness and the role it has played in shaping the contemporary history of Indonesia, and on the other, the influence of the socio-political developments in post-independence Indonesia on the shaping of Aceh's cultural, urban and architectural identity.

The study focuses on the discourse of architectural identity in post-independence Indonesia in general and the region of Aceh in particular. It examines the ways in which architecture and urban spaces are conceived and represented by Indonesian scholars and politicians, and the ways in which they are politicalised and aesthethicised to represent a uniform Indonesian identity, including that of Aceh. The study argues that such uniform and rigid representation is problematic, for it tends to obliterate differences and to reduce the richness and diversity of the Indonesian culture to a simplified pattern of predictable characteristics. It further argues that cultural identity evolves over time and is difficult to fix within rigid frames and definitions. The main aim is to deconstruct the current conceptions about Aceh, to shed new light on its cultural history, and to explore new ways of understanding architectural and urban identity within a dialogical frame of socio-cultural processes involving local and global forces.

In constructing a cultural and architectural history of Aceh, the study consults modern and premodern sources. It shuttles between precolonial, colonial and postcolonial contexts to analyse the processes of modernity and visionary politics in Indonesia under the regimes of Sukarno and Suharto. It examines Sukarno's emphasis on tradition and Suharto's attempt to re-invent tradition through the notion of "New Order," which tends to re-employs colonial imaginings of precolonial past for political advantages. In this political context, the study examines the rise of the international discourse of regionalism and the related question of identity. It traces its appropriation by architects and scholars in the developing world and articulates the Indonesian voice in the development of this discourse. The study concludes by reflecting on ways of engagements beyond the assumptions and predicaments of culture and identity.

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DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

I consent to the thesis being made available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Izziah Hasan

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Aims and Method

Aceh, an Indonesian province on the northern tip of Sumatra Island, has unique urban and rural environments and a rich cultural tradition.[1] Its population of about five million is predominantly Muslim.[2] Aceh is the region into which Islam is believed to have entered Indonesia in the twelfth century and from which it is believed to have spread throughout Southeast Asia. Aceh's ties with Islam have a long and rich history.[3] In the struggle for autonomy in post-independence Indonesia, the Acehnese have turned to their cultural heritage in search for their difference, and have sought to reconstruct and revitalise their unique Islamic identity. In so doing, they have raised the level of cultural awareness among Acehnese about Aceh's past and its historical and cultural role in shaping the contemporary identity of Indonesia. The search has extended to all aspects of life and cultural production, including art and architecture.[4]

This study is concerned primarily with this search. It explores the cultural history of Aceh to reveal, on the one hand, its distinctive richness and the role it plays in shaping the contemporary history of Indonesia, and, on the other, the influence of the socio-political developments in post-independence Indonesia on the shaping of Aceh's cultural, urban and architectural identity. In general terms, the study aims to examine the issue of architectural identity in the region of Aceh. Specifically, the

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[1] On the history of Aceh, see Muhammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Jakarta: Muhammad Said, 1961). M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1993).

[2] The report of Minority Rifgt Group International indicates that 98% of Aceh population is Muslim. See Lesley McCulloch, "Aceh: Then and Now," (Minority Right Group International, 2005), 11.

[3] See Ibrahim Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1973). Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1929).

[4] The debate on how to define the architectural identity of Aceh has been intensified by the local government since the policies of the New Order. For current discussion, see the preface delivered by the Governor of Aceh in H. Amir Husin, Chahrani, and T. Syafrizal, *Arsitektur Rumoh Aceh Yang Islami* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Perkotaan dan Pemukiman Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, 2003).

research investigates the relationship between Acehnese architecture and local Indonesian culture.[5]

In an essay on the socio-cultural sensitivity of architects, Indonesian architectural theorist Eko Budihardjo posits that: "the prevailing architectural conceptions that focus only on efficiency, technology, economics and aesthetics lead to architectural homogeneity, which results in cultural uniformity for people regardless of lifestyle and unique local characteristics."[6] Budihardjo's statement reflects the concerns of many Indonesians, including Acehnese, who see the rapid modern and urban transformations under the pressure of globalisation as changing the face of their societies and constructed environments.[7] The loss of local character has increasingly become an issue of concern not only in Indonesia but also in many other non-Western countries.

The processes of modernisation and industrialisation are seen to be oblivious to the rich cultural traditions of the countries concerned. In Indonesia, as in many other developing countries, there is a shared view that architecture no longer reflects the cultural diversity of the region and its rich cultural heritage. And for the past two decades the debate on identity in architecture and urbanity has intensified.[8] This debate tends to focus on Indonesia's main urban centres, however, and to assume that the same applies to all regions.[9] Although cultural homogeneity might have become more noticeable in recent years, the rich cultural history of Indonesia calls for

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[5]   The common understanding of Indonesian architecture views architecture as being rooted in the indigenous culture. See Eko Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997). Eko Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur," in *Arsitektur: Pembangunan Dan Konservasi*, ed. Budihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997).

[6]   Eko Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek," in *Perkembangan Arsitek Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1997). Unless otherwise stated, translations are by the author.

[7]   See Parmono Atmadi, "Arsitektur Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia," in *Perkembangan Arsitektur Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur Di Indonesia*, ed. Parmono Atmadi, et al. (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada, 1997).

[8]   See Iwan Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History" (PhD Dissertation, University of Sydney, 1991), 198-213. He refers to a number of national congresses on how to achieve Indonesian identity in architecture. See also Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 90-91.

[9]   For further discussion on this issue, see Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 100-01.

detailed exploration of the diversity of this cultural heritage. This is one of the main concerns of this study: to explore the cultural heritage of the region of Aceh and its role in the making of Indonesia's cultural identity.

Within these intellectual concerns the study aims to examine the merits of a commonly asked question: what is Acehnese or Indonesian architecture?[10] This question is often predicated on a broader question asked by architecture historians: what is Islamic architecture?[11] In dealing with this question the study asks: is it possible to grasp and define the architectural identity of Aceh? How can the concept of identity be thought of and understood within the current global conditions? How and to what extent does the crossing of cultures in the region of Aceh influence its architecture? These are difficult questions that have multiple and often contradictory answers. The study aims to explore some of these answers in contemporary literature on culture, identity and architecture.[12]

In exploring these difficult issues, the study focuses on the discourse of architectural identity in post-independence Indonesia in general and in the region of Aceh in particular. It examines the ways in which architecture and urban spaces are conceived and represented by Indonesian scholars and politicians, and the ways in which they are politicalised and aestheticised to represent a uniform Indonesian identity, including that of Aceh. The study argues that such uniform and rigid representation is problematic, for it tends to obliterate differences and to reduce the

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[10]   The search for Indonesian architecture based on the premodern cultural past was introduced in 1965 by George A. Hinds, an eminent American professor who taught at the first School of Architecture at ITB, Bandung. During the New Order government, President Suharto, through his mega project 'Taman Mini', elevated the traditional aspect of Indonesian identity. For further discussion, see G.A Hinds, "Regional Architecture for a Developing Country," *AIA Journal*, no. February (1965). John Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," *Public Culture* 6 (1994).

[11]   See Muhammad Arkoun, "Islamic Culture, Developing Societies, Modern Thought," in *Expressions of Islam in Building* (The Aga Khan Program for Architecture, 1990). Ismael Serageldin, "Spirituality and Architecture," in *Architecture Beyond Architecture: Creativity and Social Transformations in Islamic Culture*, ed. Cynthia Davidson and Ismael Serageldin (London: Academy Editions, 1995).

[12]   See Samer Akkach, "Useful Obsessions: Architecture as Cultural Critique," in *Architecture Education Today: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Asraf M. A. Salama, William O'Reilly, and Kaj Noschis (Lausanne: 2002). Samer Akkach, "Identity in Exile: The Aga Khan's Search for Excellence in Islamic Architecture" (paper presented at the On What Ground(s)?, Adelaide, 1997).

richness and diversity of Indonesian culture to a simplified pattern of predictable characteristics. The study further argues that cultural identity evolves over time and is difficult to fix within rigid frames and definitions. The main aims are to deconstruct the current conceptions about Aceh, to shed new light on its cultural history, and to explore new ways of understanding its architectural and urban identity within a dialogical frame of socio-cultural processes involving local and global forces. In this exercise, the identity of Acehnese architecture is seen through the lens of multiple encounters between the local cultural tradition and diverse global influences.

With reference to a wide range of sources, this study attempts to reconstruct a cultural and architectural history of Aceh. It shuttles between precolonial, colonial and postcolonial contexts to analyse the processes of modernity and visionary politics in Indonesia under the regimes of Sukarno and Suharto. It examines Sukarno's emphasis on tradition and Suharto's attempt to re-invent tradition through the notion of the 'New Order', which tends to re-employ colonial imaginings of the precolonial past for political advantage. In this political context, the study examines the rise of the international discourse on regionalism and the related question of identity. It traces the appropriation of the regionalism discourse by architects and scholars in the developing world and articulates the Indonesian voice in the development of this discourse. The study concludes by reflecting on ways of engagement beyond the assumptions and predicaments of identity.

Sources

While the history of the region of Aceh is intertwined with the history of Indonesia, contemporary literature provides only scant information on the cultural and architectural heritage of Aceh. Two types of primary sources are used in this study: texts and built fabric. In terms of the built fabric, the study's coverage extends from the precolonial to the postcolonial periods, including both extant and non-extant buildings that have survived in historical literature. In terms of the written sources, a range of modern and premodern texts have been used, which can be classified into four categories: premodern narratives and chronicles, reports of travellers, modern

historical studies, and modern theoretical studies. Some familiarity with these sources helps to understand the background and literary parameters of this research.

Premodern Narratives and Chronicles

Premodern Acehnese sources are important for understanding the cultural setting and significance of Aceh in the precolonial period, and for providing the necessary historical background to trace the pattern of changes in the colonial and postcolonial periods. In constructing Aceh's cultural history, I have relied on three key premodern sources: *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, *Hikayat Aceh* and *Bustanu's-Salatin* (in Arabic, *Bustan al-Salatin)*. Originally, these sources were written in Malay, using *Jawi* characters (similar to Arabic); however, they have been rewritten by Acehnese historians in Latin characters.

Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai ('The Chronicles of Kings of Pasai') is a series of narratives written between 1350 and 1524 by an unknown author(s). The events of the *Hikayat* took place in Pasai, the old capital, located in North Aceh (see Figure 1.2). Here I am referring to the text *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah,* rewritten in Indonesian by Ibrahim Alfian and *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai* translated into English by A.H. Hill.[13] According to Alfian, *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai* was one of the two earliest Muslim literary works in the Malay language. It was written between 1350 and 1524 by an unknown author(s). The text of about thirty thousand words is a chronicle describing the rise of the Islamic Kingdom of Pasai under the rule of various sultans until its decline and conquest by the Javanese Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit (the city of Majapahit was located in East Java). It was a powerful Hindu kingdom in Southeast Asia in the fourteenth century. In covering the Majapahit's raid and the bringing into Java of the Muslim captives, the *Hikayat* traces the spread of Islam into Java.

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[13]   Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah*. A.H. Hill, "Hikayat Raja- Raja Pasai," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 33, no. 2 (1960).

Hikayat Aceh ('The Chronicles of Aceh') is another important premodern source on the history of Aceh written by an unknown author(s).[14] In a book-length study, T. Iskandar has examined this text.[15] He proposes that the narratives were written during the reign of Iskandar Muda (1604–1637), since the text focuses on his personality, virtues and predecessors.[16] The chronicles are particularly instructive with regard to the development of Acehnese literature during the seventeenth century as well as concerning Aceh's ties with other countries. The chronicles first tell the biography of Sultan Iskandar and then give a genealogy of his family. The text relates that before Sultan Iskandar was born there was a prediction of the coming of a magnificent king. In accordance with the prediction, the text portrays Iskandar Muda as the great personality who could lead Aceh to become a powerful country. The *Hikayat* also covers Aceh's relationship with the Ottoman Empire and describes Aceh's urban environment, including the great mosque in the capital city.[17]

The *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai*'s importance for the study lies in providing introductory information on the early history of the Islamic kingdom of Pasai, and in tracing the spread of Islam from Aceh into Java. Its limitation, however, lies in not providing detailed information on the history of the later socio-cultural developments in Aceh. The *Hikayat of Aceh* is important for providing information on the great sultan of Aceh, Iskandar Muda, who brought the kingdom to its most powerful level and established a good relationship with the Ottomans. While providing information on a key architectural feature like the Mosque Baitur-Rahman, for example, the *Hikayat* does not tell us much about the built environment of Aceh as a whole, or about the life style in the seventeenth century and its art and architecture. To fill this gap, the study refers to the *Bustanu's-Salatin*, a source that provides detailed information on the production of art and architecture in seventeenth-century Aceh.

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[14]   T. Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh* (Nederland: N.V. De Nederlandshe Boek-en Steendrukkerij V.H. H. L. Smits, 1959).

[15]   Ibid.

[16]   For further discussion of *Hikayat Aceh*, see Denys Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, trans. Winarsih Arifin, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1991), 26-27.

[17]   Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh*, 161-68.

Bustanu's-Salatin ('The Garden of the Kings'), the third key source, was written by Nuru'd-din Ar-Raniry, a Malay descendant from an Arab-Gujarati family.[18] After finishing his study in Mecca in 1621, Ar-Raniry settled in Pahang in the Malay Peninsula. He became a Sufi master, following the order of Sayyid Umar Ibn Abdullah from Terim, Iran, as well as an eminent Malayan writer. While in Pahang he authored a number of books in Malay.[19] He moved to Aceh in 1637 to become the official scribe of Sultan Iskandar Thani. It was this Sultan who ordered him to write *Bustanu's-Salatin.*[20]

Bustanu's-Salatin is an encyclopaedic work of seven volumes. According to Iskandar, Nuru'd-din Ar-Raniry began to write *Bustanu's-Salatin* in 1638 (1047 H). His writings were regarded as the finest in Malay literature.[21] Here I am referring mainly to chapter thirteen of the second volume, rewritten by Teuku Iskandar,[22] which describes the history of the Sultanate of Aceh, beginning with the founder of Aceh Kingdom, Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah (1517–1532), until Sultan Iskandar Thani (1637–1641). The text also describes the royal court of Aceh, giving valuable information on art and architecture during the ascendancy of Aceh under the reign of Iskandar Thani. It shows the prosperity of the city and the luxurious lifestyle in the Sultan's palace, *Dar al-Dunia*, while referring to many ceremonies and cultural events, including the ceremonial funeral of Sultan Iskandar Thani.[23] It also gives a detailed description of the layout and architectural forms of the palace garden, which was built during the reign of Iskandar Thani.[24] Indian, Turkish and Chinese artisans were involved in the construction of the palace and its garden.[25] Ar-Raniry's

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18   T. Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 1st ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 2.

19   Ibid., 3.

20   Ibid., 4.

21   Ibid. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*.

22   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*.

23   Ibid., 46,47,48-52,63.

24   Ibid., 48-52.

25   Ibid., 51-52. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 181-83.

descriptions of art and architecture have been used as a main reference on the built environment of precolonial Aceh by Indonesian and western scholars.[26]

Iskandar argues that the textual structure of *Bustanu's-Salatin* is similar to that of *Hikayat Aceh*. He explains that the similarity between the two writings can be seen in the main parts of the narratives: both have an introduction describing the rising of the sultans and a main body recounting the sultans' personalities and virtues.[27] This can be explained by the fact that *Hikayat Aceh* was one of the most popular texts at the time when *Bustanu's-Salatin* was written. *Hikayat Aceh* was written during the time of Sultan Iskandar Muda, before Sultan Iskandar Thani rose to the throne.

Reports of Travellers

Valuable and central as they may be, the above premodern sources remain inadequate for constructing a multifaceted picture of premodern Aceh, especially with regard to the built environment. Other sources had to be mined in order to provide complementary materials. Travellers came to northern Sumatra, the region now called Aceh, from all over the world. The accounts of foreign travellers, European and Arab, are found to be particularly instructive. A number of these accounts were written between the thirteenth and the seventeenth centuries.[28] These have informed my reconstruction of the cultural history of Aceh.

Ibnu Battuta, who worked as a theologian in India, visited Pasai in 1345–1346.[29] Having developed strong connections with its rulers, Ibn Battuta was sent by the Indian Sultan Muhammad as his envoy to the most powerful country at the time, the

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[26] Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Ali Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," (Banda Aceh: Majlis Ulama Indonesia Daerah Istimewa Aceh dan Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1995). Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.

[27] Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 6.

[28] See Armando Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pieres: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 2nd series, no. LXXXIX ed., vol. 1 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1944). Ross and Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*.

[29] Ross and Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, 273.

Mongol Empire.[30] On the way to China he stopped over in Aceh and anchored his ship at Syamtalira (Samudra Pasai) for two weeks, waiting until the sailing season.[31] In his account, Ibn Battuta provided some lucid descriptions of the prosperous city and the development of Islamic education during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Malikud-Dhahir (1346–1383). He also gave a detailed picture of the situation of Samudra Pasai port and town, especially of the palace's court.[32] He referred to the Indian traders who came to Pasai long before the advent of Islam. Similar to Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta described the coexistence of both Muslim and non-Muslim—their settlements and culture.[33] He described the areas where non-Muslims lived as being more fertile than those of the Muslims.

Other travel accounts, such as those written in the seventeenth century (during the golden age of Aceh) by John Davis, Peter Mundy and Thomas Browrey, provide useful information on Acehnese traditions and the local built environment.[34] They refer to cross-cultural interactions, to architecture, and to regional geographical conditions.[35] Between 1512 and 1515, Tom Pieres, a Portuguese traveller, journeyed from the Red Sea to Japan, stopping over in Pasai. He recorded that Pasai was a wealthy and rich kingdom and had its own currency, the dirham, which was made from gold with Arabic inscriptions on both sides. He witnessed that most Pasai people were literate, well educated, and spoke Arabic, Malay and Acehnese. As a centre of Islamic studies, Pasai attracted many scholars who came to study and teach Islam. In addition, Pieres found several Muslim settlements in Pasai, such as Arab, Turkish, Gujarati, Bengali, Javanese, Malayan and Siamese. His descriptions of Aceh

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[30]   Ibid., 7, 276.

[31]   Ibid., 276.

[32]   Ibid., 273-76.

[33]   Ibid., 273. Marco Polo observed that Muslim inhabitants lived in the city while the non-Muslims lived in the mountains.

[34]   Albert Hastings Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970). Sir Richard Carnac Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 2nd ed., vol. III Part I (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1919). Sir Richard Carnac Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey* (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1903).

[35]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 147,48,51. Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 121, 32. Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 285-88, 321. S. Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, ed. Shirle Gordon (Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute Ltd., 1963).

are relevant to the study as they provide information on the trade network in Aceh
and the influence of Islam on the society of Pasai.

In 1599, John Davis, an English navigator, came to Aceh as captain of a Dutch ship.
He was employed as a chief pilot of a Dutch expedition to the East to raise profits
from the spice trade. He stayed in Aceh for four months, from June to October. His
account provides useful observations on the trade network that influenced the cross-
cultural makeup of Aceh, including insights into the built environment. His account
describes the busy trade network in Aceh's port, where many foreign merchants met
and exchanged goods and ideas. Davis witnessed some cultural practices, such as a
welcoming ceremony for the Sultan's guests, and described that buildings were
occupied over the whole land and were built of wood. He depicted the country as a
garden of pleasure, very spacious, with temperate weather and lush greenness.

In 1602, James Lancaster came to Aceh Kingdom as an English envoy. He was
instructed by Queen Elizabeth I to build a trade relationship between the two
countries. During his five-month stay in Aceh, Lancaster recorded the trade patterns
and Acehnese customs, providing evidence of the Kingdom's existence and
significance. In 1621, Augustin de Beaulieu, a French captain, visited Aceh between
January and July. Beaulieu's account provided the best picture of Sultan Iskandar
Muda, who brought Aceh to the highest point of its power through intelligent
economic and military strategies. Lancaster also provided observations on the
ceremonies held by the Sultan, on works of literature, and on art and architecture
produced by local and foreign artisans. His information on Acehnese landscape is
useful for examining the regional landscape and geographical conditions.

Another set of sources used in this study includes Denys Lombard's *Kerajaan Aceh
Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636)*, which has been translated from French
to Indonesian, and Anthony Reid's *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.[36]
Lombard's book describes the cultural history of Aceh in the seventeenth century,

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[36]   See Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*. Anthony Reid,
        Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
        And Arun Kumar DasGupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641" (PhD,
        Cornell University, 1962).

particularly during Sultan Iskandar Muda's golden age, providing information on the ruling government and the built environment. Lombard refers to *Hikayat Aceh* and *Bustanu's-Salatin*, to modern sources, and to other travellers' accounts.

Reid's study compiles a number of travellers' accounts on Aceh, translated into English from Arabic, Persian, French, Portuguese, Dutch, German and Indonesian. His book is a valuable resource that provides access to important material. Reid also provides an introduction to each account, giving a brief explanation about the authors, their background and their motivation for travel. By including the travel accounts of Augustine de Beaulieu and William Dampier, Reid's book provides a comprehensive picture of the built environment and daily life of premodern Aceh.

Ibn Battuta's account describes the multi-religious and cross-cultural practices in fourteenth-century Aceh. Yet, the scope of its coverage is limited and must be complemented by the detailed accounts of western travellers, such as those by John Davis, Peter Mundy and Thomas Browrey, and Lancaster Beauleau. The accounts of these travellers provide detailed information on the Acehnese culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including the local built environment, education, cross-cultural interactions, trade networks, and military activities. Lancaster's travel to Aceh as Queen Elizabeth's envoy to build economic and cultural ties between the two countries testifies to the importance of the Kingdom of Aceh at the international level.

In addition to these sources, Denys Lombard's *Kerajaan Aceh Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636)* refers to premodern sources to present ample information on the built environment of Aceh in the seventeenth century. Its extensive textual description is complemented by Anthony Reid's *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology* that provides not only additional information on the built environment of Aceh but also many illustrations of built structures and the daily life in premodern Aceh.

Modern Historical Studies

The premodern records that deal with the early history of Aceh, the Islamic states that emerged in the region, and the socio-cultural development of the communities, including their artistic and architectural traditions, remain limited. In my attempt to reconstruct the precolonial cultural history of Aceh, I have consulted several contemporary Indonesian studies which discuss Aceh's historical origins and golden age.[37] Most important among these studies are Muhammad Said's *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*[38], Barbara Leigh's *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh* and "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences,"[39] Dall's "The Traditional Acehnese House"[40] and Wessing's "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?"[41]

Said's study presents an articulate historical background of Aceh before and after the spread of Islam. He traces the origin of the Acehnese people and the influence of Hinduism on their language and customs.[42] Said refers to several premodern sources and examines early Muslim gravestones to illustrate the spread and development of Islam in Pasai.[43] He also discusses the history of the Acehnese Sultanate, its rise and decline, including the invasion of Samudra Pasai during the reign of the first sultan,[44] and traces the expansion of Acehnese rule during its golden age into several regions in Sumatra Island and the Malay Peninsula.[45]

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[37] R. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan Tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan Bahan Yang Terdapat Dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Pengembangan Permeseuman Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982 / 1983).

[38] Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

[39] Barbara Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1989). Barbara Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," in *The Malay of Islamic World*, ed. J Maxwell (Centre of South East Asian Studies, Monash University, 1982).

[40] Greg Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," in *The Malay - Islamic World of Sumatra: Studies in Polities and Culture*, ed. John Maxwell (Melbourne: Monash University, 1982).

[41] Robert Wessing, "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?," *Archipel* 35 (1988).

[42] Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 8-24.

[43] Ibid., 38-76.

[44] Ibid., 89-216.

[45] For further discussion, see D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1981), 369.

Said's study is limited in its coverage, however, especially with regard to traditional art and architecture of the premodern period. This is covered to some extent by Barbara Leigh in her *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh* and "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences." These well illustrate studies provide information on traditional Acehnese art and architecture, tracing the Islamic and Indian influences, and on the ties Aceh had with other dominant cultures, like the Ottoman. Leigh focuses more on traditional Acehnese art and craft than on traditional architecture, aspects of which are covered in Dall's "The Traditional Acehnese House" and Wessing's article "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?" These studies are important for the detailed descriptions they provide of traditional Acehnese architecture. Dall provides detailed and illustrated explanations of the traditional Acehnese house in relation to its structure, material, and function according to local customs. Wessing, on the other hand, provides detailed and illustrated explanations of the structures built in the garden of the palace.

While the above sources are useful for reconstructing precolonial history, other sources are used to analyse the colonial and postcolonial conditions in Indonesia and Aceh, including cultural, architectural and urban developments. Among the modern Indonesian sources that are pertinent to this research is Ibrahim Alfian's *Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah*, which deals with Aceh's precolonial and early postcolonial history. The book sheds light on the Kingdom of Samudra Pasai on the northeast coast of Sumatra, seen as the centre of international trade and Islamic studies, and its relationships with the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit in East Java.[46] It also sheds some light on Aceh's relationship with the Netherlands towards the end of the sixteenth century, providing information on the lengthy struggle of the Acehnese against colonialism, the role religious leaders played in this struggle, and the agency of the *Hikayat Perang Sabil* ('The Chronicles of Holy War') in motivating the Acehnese people to fight the Dutch occupation.[47]

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[46]   Ibrahim Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 1999), 1-32.

[47]   Ibid., 73-180. See also Ibrahim Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 3rd ed. (Banda Aceh: The Documentation and Information Centre of Aceh, 1997), 68.

On the postcolonial history of Aceh, I have used several sources, the most important of which are Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin's *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam* and Tim Kell's *The Root of Acehnese Rebellions, 1989–1992*. These two studies provide insights into the socio-political and cultural life in Aceh that are necessary for exploring the region's architecture and urbanity.[48] After Indonesia gained its independence from the Dutch in 1949, Aceh lost much of its autonomy under the government's system of centralisation.[49] This led to a revolt against the central government in the hope of Aceh's regaining some of the autonomy it had enjoyed before joining the Republic of Indonesia.[50] Nazaruddin analyses the causes of the conflict and examines the role PUSA (the Aceh Ulama Association) played in the struggle during the early period following Indonesian independence. He also discusses the Acehnese participation in the reform of troops and finance to support the central government's revolution against the Dutch attempts at reoccupation.[51]

Nazaruddin draws attention to the fact that Aceh was the only region in Indonesia free from Dutch colonial influence.[52] The relationship between Aceh and the central government deteriorated after independence mainly because of lack of support from the central government concerning social, economic and cultural issues. Sukarno further worsened the relationship with Aceh when he dissolved the Province of Aceh and incorporated it into the Province of North Sumatra in 1950. The abolition of the provincial status for Aceh, Sjamsuddin says, has made the problem between Aceh and the central government more complex and created a source of great offensive against the central government.[53]

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[48] Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam* (Jakarta: PT Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1990). Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesian Project, 1995).

[49] The Netherlands attempted to re-occupy Indonesia after the country proclaimed its independence on 17 August 1945.

[50] See Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*.

[51] For a similar discussion, see Muhammad Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia" (Master Thesis, International Islamic University, 2000), 56.

[52] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 2. For further study, see Eric Eugene Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Centre-Periphery Relations in Indonesia" (PhD Thesis, Cornell University, 1983).

[53] For further discussion on the roots of the conflict generated by the Acehnese see Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 71-102. M. Isa Sulaiman, "Sejarah Aceh:

Tim Kell's study examines the main factors of the conflict that emerged later during Suharto's New Order.[54] Kell sees the root of the conflict to be in the New Order's strong centralised political approach which brought all powers under its tight control. This strategy further undermined the autonomy to which the Acehnese aspired.[55] Reflecting on the cultural history of Aceh Kell explains that the roots of the conflict between the Acehnese and the ruling regimes extended back to colonial times. He examines the development of Aceh's economy and its contribution to the national economy through revenue from oil and gas production.[56] While rich in natural resources, Aceh remained a poor province under the centralised government, resulting in deep dissatisfaction among the Acehnese, who had no option but to call for autonomy.[57]

In order to maintain national stability, Kell adds, the New Order generated the role of technocrats to "counterbalance and neutralize the power of Ulamas":[58]

> The technocrats would be regional representatives of the New Order regime's ideology of development, and at the same time would counterpart the threat to that ideology posed by the religious agenda of the Islamic leaders in Aceh.[59]

In this regard, Kell demonstrates the government's interest in keeping political stability rather than effectively responding to the Indonesians' diverse cultural and social needs.

Sebuah Gugatan Terhadap Tradisi," (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1997), 247-48. Richard Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story* (Bangkok: FORUM-ASIA and SCHRA, 2000), 18-19.

[54] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 13-32.

[55] Ibid., 28. See also Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 21.

[56] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16. The National Constitution states that natural resources found in any region in Indonesia belonged to, and were for the welfare of, the citizens of Indonesia.

[57] See Ibid., 16-28.

[58] Ibid., 29. See also Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Centre-Periphery Relations in Indonesia", 258.

[59] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 29.

Modern Theoretical Studies

In addition to the above sources on cultural and political history, I have used modern theoretical studies. Two key sources have significantly influenced the course of the study: Abidin Kusno's *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Culture in Indonesia* and Benedict Anderson's *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*.[60] Kusno's study examines the discourse of architecture and urban design in Indonesia during the colonial and postcolonial periods. His main concern is that the constructions of architectural and urban space in Indonesia are presented through 'political memories.' With regard to the colonial period, he discusses the works of Maclane Pond and Thomas Karsten, each of whom was "the 'specific intellectual' or the 'technician' working within a particular constraint of power that makes them appear to be *both* the colonizer and colonized."[61] With regard to the postcolonial period, he examines the architectural representations constructed within the political views of Sukarno and Suharto, the first two presidents of Indonesia, and with the longest terms in power.

Anderson's study illustrates how the concept of power used by the governments of Sukarno and Suharto were in fact derived from the ancient order of Javanese polity.[62] The image of the Javanese polity, as he describes it, is "a cone of light cast downward by a reflector lamp."[63] This centripetal form manifests centre–periphery relationships: the centre or core of power, the ruler, is needed in order to create unity. The two presidents, Anderson says, have constructed monuments, though in different ways, to deliver their messages and to demonstrate a sense of continuity. However, while Sukarno's monuments appear in a modern architectural style, the common elements of Suharto monuments use 'a style of replication.'[64]

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[60] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

[61] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 13.

[62] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 35-45. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 60.

[63] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 36.

[64] Ibid., 174-82.

Sukarno tried to emphasise the centre by creating monumental forms that impressed both the nation and foreigners through "Indonesia's new-found self confidence."[65] In contrast to Sukarno's old order, Suharto's New Order delivered different ideas about the architecture and urban space of Indonesia. Realising the inevitable influences of global capitalism, Suharto "gave birth to the idea of tradition" in architectural culture.[66] The national image raised by Sukarno through monumental architectural representation was reversed by Suharto's traditional architectural image collected from the cultural heritage of Javanese culture and then spread throughout the country.[67] In reconstructing the Indonesian identity, Kusno claims, Suharto promoted architectural representations that showed "the collusion of colonial and postcolonial time and space and the interaction between local and global flows."[68]

In addition to exploring Sukarno's and Suharto's visionary exercises, Kusno traces a number of discursive readings in Indonesian architectural debates, arguing that the discourse of architecture and urban space is formed on national 'reality.' Kusno sees Suharto's ideas of juxtaposing and separating between 'us' and 'them', 'indigenous' and 'foreign', as having influenced the local directions of architectural thinking on culture and identity.[69]

In addition to Kusno's and Anderson's studies, I have referred to Susan Abeyasekere's *Jakarta: A History*,[70] which includes transcripts of President Sukarno's speeches.[71] These political statements are used in the analysis of political

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[65] Ibid., 174.

[66] See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 72-94.

[67] Ibid., 71-78. Further discussion please see Abidin Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World," *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 1 (2003): 62-63. Hugh O'Neill, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order," in *Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia*, ed. Virginia Hooker (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[68] Abidin Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Architecture* 4 (2000): 18.

[69] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 169-89.

[70] Susan Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[71] Ibid., 168,210.

culture and its agency in the making of the built environment of Jakarta, the symbol of national development. Abeyasekere's text also explains the emergence of urban environmental problems in Jakarta during Sukarno's era.[72]

Another important source used in this study is Iwan Sudrajat's unpublished doctoral study, 'A Study of Indonesian Architectural History.'[73] Sudrajat's thesis provides critical insights into the writing of Indonesian architectural history and how architectural writing is closely linked with the country's political framework. While focusing on colonial and postcolonial Indonesia, Sudrajat studies a wide range of colonial legacies, including archaeology, anthropology, urban sociology, town planning and architecture.[74] Sudrajat also discusses the search for a national architecture through various seminars. Like Kusno, Sudrajat argues that there is a continuity of perception in understanding and presenting colonial and postcolonial architecture in Indonesia.[75] Both trace the roots of this perception to the Western architectural discourse concerned with identity. In this regard, Kusno's and Sudrajat's studies highlight the agency of 'tradition' and 'cultural difference' in political debates, while directing attention towards the Western discourse of regionalism that was appropriated by postcolonial Indonesia.[76]

While they focus primarily on modern sources, Kusno's, Anderson's and Sudrajat's studies have at once directed and aided the analyses presented in this thesis of the political context of architecture and urbanity in post-independence Indonesia. Other sets of theoretical studies concerned with the problematics of culture and identity have also informed the study. These include Anthony King's *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*, Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and C.T. Wong's *Postcolonial Spaces*, Samer Akkach's 'Identity in Exile: The Aga Khan's Search for Excellence in Islamic Architecture', and 'A View from Within:

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[72]   Ibid., 196-98.

[73]   Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History."

[74]   Ibid. The aspects of colonial Dutch legacy are discussed in Sudrajat's thesis. Each aspect is presented in a separate chapter.

[75]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 208. Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 84.

[76]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 71-93. Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 196-97.

The Quest for Identity in Contemporary Arab/Islamic Architecture.'[77] These scholars provide critical approaches to the topic informed by postcolonial theories. They provide a critical framework of thinking for re-evaluating and dealing with the legacies of orientalistism.[78]

King's study deals with the colonial strategy for urban development in India between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries. He examines the social, political and cultural processes that affect the production of architecture and urban spaces. Focusing on British colonial influences, King explains how the contact between the colonial and the colonialised cultures resulted in the emergence of a new hybrid culture, a third colonial culture that was different from that of the colonial and the colonialised. King further explains that "the role which colonial third-culture members played in mediating between the societies and in acting as agents by which the two cultures are interpreted and image conveyed has never been examined."[79] Examining the reproduction of bungalows (first built for the European community during the colonial time) in the early period of India's independence, King demonstrates the failure of decolonisation. Post-independence India, King argues, has remained a victim of its colonial past.

Nalbantoglu and Wong's anthology examines the influence of postcolonial critical insights on the writings of architectural history and theory. They point out that the postcolonial spaces created to counter the cultural hegemony of the West in

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[77]   Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976). Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and Chong Thai Wong, "Introduction," in *Postcolonial Space(S)*, ed. G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997). Akkach, "Identity in Exile: The Aga Khan's Search for Excellence in Islamic Architecture." Samer Akkach, "A View from Within: The Quest for Identity in Contemporary Arab/Islamic Architecture" (paper presented at the 3rd 'Other Connections' Conference, Melbourne, 1977).

[78]   Orientalist paradigms of East and West binarism were shared by architectural regionalists. See Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *The Anti-Aesthetic, Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983). Ismail Serageldin, "Introduction: Regionalism," in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, ed. Martin Frisman and Hasan-Uddin Khan (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1994). Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments," in *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalisation*, ed. Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno (West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 2001).

[79]   King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*, 290.

architecture engage with 'issues of difference and identity.' Yet the postcolonial discourse often involves ambivalent interpretations and 'fixed categories.' Through the lens of culture, they argue, "East and West, traditional and modern…intersect and overlap in unprecedented and unexpected ways to produce new modes of spatiality and new architectural expression."[80] They argue furthermore that postcolonial spaces are inferred as an "intervention into those architectural constructions that parade under a universalist guise and either exclude or repress differential spatialities of often disadvantaged ethnicities, communities, or people."[81]

Akkach's essays provide insights into the paradox inherent in the search for cultural identity. He argues that self-awareness manifests only as periodic glances in the continuum of non-self-conscious engagements with the world in daily life. Accordingly, "conceptualising 'how to create a culturally valid architecture' inhibits the spontaneous manifestation of identity."[82] He writes:

> The irony of cultural identity is that awareness of its significance emerges when it is lost and that the self-conscious search for it negates its very essence. The discourse of identity is necessarily problematic. It dichotomises the incessant, spontaneous unfolding of one's being into rationalised polarities of self and other, past and present, heritage and modernity, imitation and creativity, centre and periphery, etc.[83]

The sense of community ownership of identity, he argues, "is irretrievably lost as the intellectual elites become empowered to dictate their views."[84]

Built Fabric

In addition to the textual sources described above, the existing built fabric is yet another source of original data on the cultural history and built environment of Aceh.

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[80]   Nalbantoglu and Wong, "Introduction," 8.

[81]   Ibid., 7.

[82]   Akkach, "Identity in Exile: The Aga Khan's Search for Excellence in Islamic Architecture", 6.

[83]   Akkach, "A View from Within: The Quest for Identity in Contemporary Arab/Islamic Architecture", 169.

[84]   Akkach, "Identity in Exile: The Aga Khan's Search for Excellence in Islamic Architecture." 6

The study involved field work to conduct photographic survey of significant buildings, structures, and sites in Banda Aceh from the precolonial to the postcolonial period. Precolonial buildings and structures are restricted to the Palace complex, whereas colonial and postcolonial buildings and structures are spread throughout Banda Aceh and surrounding suburbs. The following is a brief description of the surveyed built fabric under three categories in each period: residential, religious and public.

Premodern /Precolonial Period (before 1874)

There are only a few structures from the precolonial period that survived in Banda Aceh. These include the artificial mountain (*Gunongan*), the King's enclosure (*Kandang*), and the dome gate (*Pinto Khop*). They were all built in the seventeenth century and are currently located in the garden of the Palace.

Colonial Period (1874 – 1945)

A considerable number and variety of buildings and structures have survived from the colonial period.

Residential

A large number of colonial residential buildings can be found in Banda Aceh. There were originally built for the Dutch military and civil officers. Some of these buildings were ruined, while others had their functions changed. Today, many of these houses have been turned into offices for government departments and private companies.

Religious

Two religious buildings built by the Dutch have survived: the church and the mosque. These two buildings are still in a good condition and in use as places of worship. They are the largest religious buildings found in Banda Aceh.

Public

Colonial public buildings include schools, offices, train stations, assembly rooms, hotels, market places, and supporting facilities, such as water and telecommunication

towers. All of these were constructed mainly to service the needs of the Dutch. Some of these buildings no longer exist, while some of the remaining ones have changed their functions. Yet, some surviving buildings retained their original functions. These are the hospital and the bank. Among those buildings whose function have changed, is the Dutch military and civil governor office. Its function has been changed several times, and is now used as offices for the 1945 Generation Association of Aceh (Gedung Juang) and the Dutch Printing House (*Kantor Percetakan Belanda*). The function of the telecommunication tower has also changed to become a mini market and the secretariat office of the Indonesian Soccer Association of Aceh (*Persiraja – Persatuan Sepak Bola Kuta Raja*).

Postcolonial Period

In this period urbanism in Aceh expanded dramatically. The study focuses on key buildings and large development projects achieved during the Sukarno and Suharto regimes inside and outside Aceh. In Aceh, special attention is given to the extensive urban development led by its governor Ibrahim Hasan (1987 – 1993), during whose reign a large numbers of government-sponsored urban and infrastructure projects were undertaken.

Residential

Many residential developments of various architectural styles were built in Banda Aceh during the Sukarno to Suharto periods. Most of these buildings have by now been either partly or wholly renovated, thus it is not easy to identify the original form in which there were built. From the Sukarno period the study selects a sample containing early as well as late buildings, such as the early houses built in 1959 for government employees and private houses built in later years. From the Suharto period the study focuses specifically on the modern houses that deliberately incorporated traditional Acehnese elements.

Religious

From the Sukarno's and Suharto's periods there exist in Banda Aceh today three styles of mosques. One style reflects the colonial influences of Baitur-Rahman mosque; the second reflects the modern influences of the Istiqlal mosque; while the

third reflects the modern influences of the Pancasila mosque. Special attention is devoted to the renovation of Baitur-Rahman mosque in the late 1980s, which infused the European interior with Acehnese decorative elements.

Public

A large number of public buildings was constructed during the Sukarno's and Suharto's periods. In the Sukarno's period most major public building belonged to the government since the private sector was dormant. These buildings included the provincial governor office, the parliament, and the university. The first two were ruined and later replaced by new buildings during the Suharto's period. Special attention is paid here, first, to the public buildings that attempted to express local identity, a tendency that emerged in the 1980s during the Suharto's period, and second, to a number of government projects constructed during the reign of Ibrahim Hasan as a governor of Aceh. During Hasan's reign, a number of new and renovated modern government buildings sought to express traditional identity. Some of these buildings were destroyed by the earthquake and tsunami of 2004. Also, some mega infrastructure projects were undertaken under Hasan's local government, such as the Krueng Raya project, aimed at protecting the city from regular flooding, and the road connecting city to the student town of Darussalam.

In conclusion, all the sources discussed in this study, from the precolonial to the postcolonial periods, show how the changing culture had influenced and shaped the built environment of Aceh. In the precolonial period the built forms evolved mainly under local cultural influences, whereas in the colonial and postcolonial periods, the sources show that architectural expressions in Aceh evolved predominantly under the cultural influence of the West, displaying a growing awareness of and engagement with issues of difference and identity.

Approach and Structure

Benefiting from the insights of the above studies, the approach adopted to carry out this study is based on critical analysis of historical and theoretical materials. It involves two lines of analyses: first, the precolonial and colonial history of Aceh, and second, the postcolonial discourses of architecture, urbanity and cultural identity. In

examining the precolonial period, the study deals with premodern narratives and chronicles and modern historical studies. In examining the colonial and postcolonial periods, the study refers to modern historical and theoretical studies. In analysing the postcolonial discourse of architectural and cultural identity, the study focuses on the concept of 'regionalism' introduced by Western architectural theorists, and examines the Indonesian appropriation of this concept in articulating its own position and own voice. The postcolonial discourse of architectural identity in Indonesia seems to have perpetuated elements of the orientalist approach. By bonding itself with the cultural past, this discourse reflects the aspirations of Indonesians who, to borrow the insight of Edward Said in an analogous case, "had freed themselves on one level but who remained victims of their past on another."[85]

The study is structured into three main parts and a conclusion. Part 1 presents a reconstruction of Aceh's cultural history, focusing on the golden age in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The discussion locates Aceh in its wider geographical context in order to illustrate the trade patterns in the region, to trace the appearance of Islam, to examine the cultural transformation after Islam, and to analyse the main elements of architecture and urbanity. This Part shows that the roots of Aceh's culture reach deep and wide into the Malay Peninsula, India, China, and the Middle East through a complex international network of commercial and cultural interactions. It is through this network that Islam was brought into the island of Sumatra and along with it a rich cultural diversity. These were the grounds on which the Acehnese community created a unique urban environment and a rich cultural tradition.

Part two focuses on the architectural history of Aceh from the precolonial to the postcolonial eras, when Sukarno and Suharto became the presidents of Indonesia. During precolonial Aceh, the thesis shows that the long interaction between the indigenous people and foreigners such as Indians, Turks, Chinese and Arabs, has coloured the built forms and artistic production in the Kingdom of Aceh. In

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[85]   Edward W. Said, "Representing the Colonialized: Anthropology's Interlocutors," *Critical Inquiry* Winter, no. 15 (1989): 207.

examining the seventeenth century architecture of Aceh, this Part shows how its architectural identity has manifested a dialogical process involving local and global forces.

Regarding the colonial and postcolonial periods, this Part discusses the cultural transformation that influenced the shaping of the built environment in Aceh. It also show how Acehnese became interested in western architectural theory while sharing the political visions of the national leaders, who sought to create a distinguished architectural identity for Indonesia.

Part three focuses on modernity and visionary politics; that is, on the cultural transformations during the late colonial and postcolonial eras that influenced the shaping of the built environment in Indonesia as a whole and in Aceh in particular. It examines the relationships between architecture and socio-political powers, while exploring the political culture of postcolonial Indonesia during the period of the first two presidents, Sukarno and Suharto. Capitalising on the rising sensitivity towards cultural tradition, Suharto's New Order promoted an eclectic trend of collecting tradition, one that is seen to be able to reclaim the Indonesian identity in all of its diversity and richness.[86] With reference sensitivity towards cultural tradition, this part shows how architects and urban planners working during Suharto's era did share, wittingly or unwittingly, the political visions of the ruling regime. They have appropriated the Western discourses of architecture in their positioning of Indonesian architecture.[87]

Part three also examines the agency of Dutch institutions such as the Netherlands East Indies in identifying the colonial territories[88] and the Acehnese resistance up to the early twentieth century. It includes a discussion of the 'Ethical Policy' formed

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[86]   Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)."

[87]   See Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur." Andi Siswanto, "Regionalisme Dan Konservasi," in *Arsitektur, Pembangunan Dan Konservasi*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997). Budi Sukada and Han Awal, "The University of Indonesia," *Mimar* 42, no. March (1992).

[88]   See Josef Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," *Architronic* 5, no. 2 (1996).

and practised by the Dutch colonists.[89] It shows how this policy was used as an instrument of control to influence the 'proper direction' of social change and to achieve cultural unity among the plural societies of the Indies.[90] The policy was intended to form an Indies society that harmonised the Indonesian tradition with Western values. The discussion also shows how the Ethical Policy became a colonial strategy for gaining political and economic advantage, through fabricating a need to modernise native people by educating them through modern Western 'educational values', so that they would become potential consumers of Western products.[91] Part 2 also discusses the results of the Ethical Policy and its echo in the development of Indo-European architecture.[92] Such architectural representations could be seen from the works of Henry Maclaine Pont and Thomas Karsten in the early twentieth century.[93] Their works contribute significantly to the development of native architecture, particularly Javanese vernacular styles. Both Maclaine and Karsten reintroduced certain historical elements, such as various types of indigenous roof forms, building materials and structures. These precolonial images were recompiled and transformed into new forms which served modern rationality.[94] Through the lens of postcolonial studies, this strategy is seen as a colonial effort to emphasise colonial existence and differences in their colony.[95]

Part four focuses on regionalism and the question of identity. It analyses the international discourses of regionalism and critical regionalism that have been used

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[89]   Jacques van Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," in *Indonesian Politic: A Reader*, ed. Christine Doran (North Queensland: Centre for South-East Asian Politics, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987).

[90]   Ibid., 13. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 151-52. For similar discussion, see Frances Gouda, *Dutch Cultural Overseas* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 24.

[91]   Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 152.

[92]   Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 161-62. See also Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," 2.

[93]   Helen Jessup, "Dutch Architectural Visions of the Indonesia Tradition," *Muqarnas* 3 (1985): 140-53. Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 163-68.

[94]   Abidin Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn" (paper presented at the Pos/Kolonialisme: Lingkung-Bina di Indonesia, Denpasar-Bali, 2001), 2.

[95]   See Ibid. For further discussion see Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia."

as theoretical tools for both understanding and designing architecture and urbanity.[96] It examines the appropriation of this discourse by developing countries and locates the Indonesian voices with regard to the question of cultural and national identity. This Part shows how architectural theorists and designers put the discourse of regionalism into practice, and traces the manifestations of the themes of this discourse in the writings of Indonesian theorists.

Contributions

The main contributions of this study lie: first, in reconstructing the cultural history of Aceh to reveal its distinctive richness and the role it plays in shaping the contemporary history of Indonesia; second, in revealing the influence of the socio-political developments in post-independence Indonesia on the shaping of Aceh's cultural, urban and architectural identity; third, in shedding a new light on the ways in which architecture and urban spaces are conceived and represented by Indonesian scholars and politicians, and the ways in which they are politicalised and aestheticised to represent a uniform Indonesian identity, including that of Aceh; and fourth, in exploring new ways of understanding architectural and urban identity within a dialogical frame of socio-cultural processes involving local and global forces. Considering the paucity of studies on Aceh's architecture, urbanism and cultural heritage, this study contributes to addressing this lack in the field.

On another level, this study also contributes to the global project of rewriting the histories of non-Western countries, which have often been distorted through the orientalist tradition and Eurocentric preoccupations. New histories tend to re-examine the often simplified representations of 'tradition' and 'modernisation' that bind them to geographical locations. In this regard, the study presents a fresh perspective on how one can engage with notions of tradition and modernity, identity

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[96]   Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism," in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architecture Theory 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?," in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architecture Theory 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments."

and difference, and self and other, in an increasingly globalised context. Viewing the Indonesian socio-political dynamics from the Acehnese standpoint, the study emphasises the historicity of the Acehnese experience as well as the various social, economic and political influences that lie beyond the bounds of its own history, culture and geography.

PART 1

ISLAM IN ACEH: A CULTURAL HISTORY

ISLAM IN ACEH: A CULTURAL HISTORY

Aceh, one of thirty-two provinces in the Republic of Indonesia, is known as the 'Special Province of Aceh', a title that reflects its uniQueeness, which is often expressed in religion, tradition and education. Aceh lies on the northern part of Sumatra Island. Banda Aceh city, located on the tip of the Island, is its capital. The geographical location of Aceh on the ocean route between the China Sea and the Indian Ocean has, in the past, enabled Aceh to play a significant role in the international trade network (Figure 1.1). Maritime history indicates that the region of northern Sumatra, what is now called Aceh, had a population of cosmopolitan merchants comprised of Arabs, Indians, Southeast Asians, and Chinese.[1]

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NOTE:
This figure is included on page 45 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

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Figure 1.1.   Geographical location of Aceh
Source: Leigh (1989)

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[1]   Armando Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 2nd series, no. LXXXIX ed., vol. 1 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1944).

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This part examines the late precolonial history of Aceh, focusing on the cultural developments that took place during the golden age between the second half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century. It covers Aceh's role in international trade, cross-cultural mix, and its agency in the spread of Islam. The cultural history is constructed mainly from surviving premodern records, which include narratives, chronicles and travel accounts by Western and Arab travellers who visited the region between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries.[2] In the following account of the cultural history, the study focuses on three independent states, encompassing the major coastal cities of northern Sumatra: Lamuri (Ramni), Perlak and Pasai (Figure 1.2). These urban centres played an important role in the process of Islamisation in Aceh in particular and in Indonesia in general.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 46 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.2   The propagation of Islam throughout the Indonesian archipelago
Source: Reid (1996)

The states associated with these cities are considered to be the roots of the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam. The capital city of the Kingdom has now become part of the city of Banda Aceh. The house of the Governor of the province of Aceh is located in

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[2]   See discussion of sources in the Introduction.

the area of the old palace complex (*keraton*). Lamuri was located on the tip of
Sumatra Island. Today, Lamuri has become part of the Great Aceh region, located
near the Krueng Raya port, the biggest port in the province of Aceh. The area of the
Kingdom of Perlak on the northeast coast of Sumatra Island has now become the
capital city of the regency of East Aceh, the so-called Perlak City. Its port was never
developed since the rise of the Kingdom of Pasai in the fourteenth century. The area
of the kingdom of Pasai resides in Lhokseumawe city, the capital of North Aceh. Its
port has been reactivated since the 1980s.

1.1   Historical Origin

The available sources, already identified, enable us to piece together a picture of the
early history of Aceh and to trace the arrival and spread of Islam in the region. They
also enable us to trace the historical origin of the indigenous population, their
languages and customs as well as their cultural mix. One might say that the
indigenous Acehnese people have traits similar to Arab, Turkish, Persian, Indian,
Chinese and Portuguese people. While conducting their trade, foreign merchants had
spread not only their traits but also their religions: Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.
Besides traders, Sufi masters played an important part in the propagation of Islam in
Aceh.[3] Islam was well received by the Acehnese, gradually becoming the dominant
faith in the region. When the Kingdom of Aceh reached its golden age in the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Aceh became a strategic centre of international
trade in Southeast Asia. It also became an important centre of religious study and
learning. Many scholars from Indonesia and abroad came to Aceh to teach Islam
before and after their journeys to Mecca for pilgrimage, hence Aceh's name as the
'gate to the holy land' or the 'verandah of Mecca.'[4]

The geographical location of the Aceh region as the gateway to Malacca Strait
contributed to the rise of its significance and dominance, and its influence reached
deep and wide through the Malay Peninsula into India, China and the Middle East.

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[3]   Tugiono KS, Sutrisno Kutoyo, and Ratna Evy, *Peninggalan Situs Dan Bangunan Bercorak
Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2001), 10, 31.

[4]   D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 219.

The interactions between the indigenous people and foreigners in the formative period led to the heterogeneity of the Acehnese population. After the establishment of Islam a number of Muslim traders accompanied by Muslim missionaries came to the region.[5] Foreign traders procuring Indonesian spices had made Aceh an ideal place for business transactions; especially barter trade among foreign traders and between local and foreign traders.[6] The long period of contact between Muslim traders and native people has confirmed that Islam had first entered Aceh before spreading throughout the region. The history of Indonesia records that the first Islamic kingdom was established in the Aceh region.[7] To trace the continuity and change patterns before the colonial invasion, one needs to investigate Aceh as a trading country, the expansion of Islam, and Islam in Aceh.[8]

Aceh: An Early History

The early records of Aceh date back to the beginning of human explorations in the first century. Sailors and merchants who reached the region used to rest on the tip of Sumatra Island waiting for the monsoon. Ptolemaeus, a renowned Greek traveller and geographer who lived in Alexandria (Iskandariyya in Egypt), was the first Western person to record the discovery of the Indonesian Archipelago, now called *Nusantara*, in the fourth quarter of the first century.[9] He came to the tip of Sumatra Island and reported that there was a trading post located between India and *Tiongkok* (China).[10] Between the first and sixth centuries, a number of Indian and Arab traders passed through the ports of Northern Sumatra on their journey to China, and so did Chinese traders traveling across the Indian Ocean.[11]

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[5]   H. M. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 1st ed. (Medan, Indonesia: Pustaka Iskandar Muda, 1961), 250.

[6]   See Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*. Albert Hastings Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970).

[7]   See Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 250. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1993), 3-4.

[8]   The main sources consulted are Muhammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Jakarta: Muhammad Said, 1961). M. Junus Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Kodam I - Iskandar Muda, 1968). Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*.

[9]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 11.

[10]   Ibid.

[11]   Ibid. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 76.

In his *Tarich Aceh dan Nusantara* Acehnese historian Zainuddin reports that during the 400s, there were Arab, Chinese and Peguan (Burmese) traders living in Aceh and Malacca.[12] After the rise and spread of Islam in the eight century, and particularly between 717 and 724, an increasing number of Muslim traders travelled to Lamuri in north Sumatra on their journey to China.[13] Acehnese historian Ali Hasjmy refers to the Arabic inscriptions these traders had left, and reports that, in 800, a number of Arab and Indian Islamic missionaries, under the leadership of Nachoda Chalifah, came to the coastal city of Pasai.[14] These missionaries played an important role in the establishment of the first Islamic state in Aceh.

Arab and Persian merchants freQueented a place on the tip of Sumatra Island, naming it Rami, Ramni, Lamuri, and Lamri.[15] The identification of this place was reported in several sources, and the most common name was Lamri or Lamuri.[16] For Chinese traders, the name of Lamuri (and Lamli) was found in their records as far back as 960 AD.[17] The annals of the Sung Dynasty indicate that Persian envoys came to Lamri on their way back from China to wait for the northeast monsoon.[18] According to existing records, the Indians discovered Lamuri in the early part of the eleventh century. The place was indicated in the Tanjore inscriptions of India dated 1030.[19] They report the invasion by the King of Chola of a number of states in Sumatra in 1025. The inscriptions described Lamri (written as Ilamuridecam) as a powerful state, being the only state that strongly resisted the Indian attack.[20] The war showed the militant spirit of the Acehnese, which was to continue for many centuries.

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[12]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*.

[13]   Ibid. 250.

[14]   Ali Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," (Banda Aceh: Majlis Ulama Indonesia Daerah Istimewa Aceh dan Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1995), 3.

[15]   Arun Kumar Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641" (PhD, Cornell University, 1962), 3.

[16]   Ibid. Numbers of Acehnese historian indicated this place as Lamuri. See Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*. Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*. Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun."

[17]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 6.

[18]   Ibid.

[19]   Ibid., 5.

[20]   Ibid. See also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of Srivijaya* (Madras: 1949), 78-81.

The Portuguese traveller Tom Pires referred to Lamri as Lambry, explaining that there were two kingdoms on the tip of Sumatra Island: Aceh and Lambry.[21] The Acehnese historian Teuku Iskandar explains that Lamri (Lambry) was located in the coastal area of Krueng Raya near the seaport,[22] in a place that was, as Alfian explains, easily noticeable by sailors and merchants.[23] Located in a strategic spot on the ocean road connecting the eastern and western parts of the globe, Lamri was able to build cultural and commercial ties with China and India at the end of the thirteenth century.[24] The Aceh Kingdom, by contrast, was located in the interior and therefore was less known. The Kingdom of Lamuri then moved from the coastal area to the interior near Aceh River, and the name Lamuri was changed to the Kingdom of Meukuta Alam. The kingdoms of Aceh and Meukuta Alam were united into the Kingdom of Aceh at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The other important kingdoms along the Strait of Malacca were those of Pedir, Pasai and Perlak. By the sixteenth century, these kingdoms had become united and were part of the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam.

The Acehnese

According to the Dutch scholar Van Langen, the indigenous people of Aceh were originally called Mantirs or Mante.[25] With the invasion by the Batak people from the neighbouring region, the Mante inhabitants, who lived in the coastal area, were pushed into the interior. The Bataks' long period of domination over the Mante was ended by the invasion of the Hindus. The date of Hindus' invasion is not clear; however, the coming of the Hindus to Aceh is taken as evidence of their invasion.[26]

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[21] Tom Pires described several kingdoms in Sumatra, starting from these two kingdoms on the tip of Sumatra Island. See Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 135.

[22] T. Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh* (Nederland: N.V. De Nederlandshe Boek-en Steendrukkerij V.H. H. L. Smits, 1959). See also Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 4.

[23] See Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 4.

[24] Ibid., 7.

[25] See Ibid., 2. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 17.

[26] See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641". Both authors dwell on the meaning of "Mante."

According to the well-known Acehnese historian M. Junus Djamil in *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh* (The Chronicles of Aceh's Sultans), the coming of the Hindus was reported in an old Acehnese inscription, the *Umdatul Ilhab*, written by Machdum Djohani.[27] He points out that the original Acehnese people came from countries such as Hindi, Siam, Funan, Kampuchea and Tjampa, whose people were part of the Mon-Khmer race.[28]

Referring to the inscription, Djamil explains that the four descendant brothers of the Siamese King Sjahir Nuwi came to northern Sumatra to build new kingdoms.[29] Djamil adds that the four brothers chose to settle in the Aceh region, and later each built a new Hindu kingdom, in Perlak, Djeumpa (northeast of Aceh), Sama Indra (Pedir or Pidie), and Indra Purwa in Lamuri (in the northernmost part of Aceh). Djamil argues that for this reason the Hindus can be considered as the true racial origin of the Acehnese, and that their kingdoms can be considered as the root of the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam, which was established in 1512.[30] This draws attention to the prominent role Hinduism and Buddhism played in shaping the Acehnese culture and society before the arrival of Islam.

Language and Custom

The influence of foreign cultures is most noticeable in the sphere of language. The long contact with Indian people resulted in a significant impact on the local culture. Dasgupta notes that native people, particularly those who lived in Indrapuri, used to speak the language of the Hindu King Ravana.[31] With reference to Van Langen, Dasgupta also notes that the Hindu influence can be traced in the names of several important places, such as Indrapatra (literally 'XXV Mukims'), Indrapurva ('XXVI Mukims') and Indrapuri ('XXII Mukims'), and in an earlier name of the Aceh River,

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[27]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 3.

[28]   Ibid. For further discussion, see Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 15-19. In explaining the origin of the Acehnese, Said analyses the penetration of foreign languages into Acehnese.

[29]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 3-4.

[30]   Ibid. For further detail, see Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 18-24.

[31]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 2.

the Chera, literally 'lovely river.'[32] Van Langen's observations relate to the research conducted by Snouck Hurgronje in which he found a relationship between the Acehnese language and the Tjam language and the original language of Mon Khmer.[33] These two sources provide insights into how these two languages were integrated into the Acehnese language.[34]

Moreover, the Mon Khmer's ancient racial characteristics and culture have been shown to have similarities with those of the oldest race in India.[35] It is reasonable, therefore, to accept Van Langen's observations that the absorption of Hinduism, among other things, has led to the use of Sanskrit words in the Acehnese language, in literature, in titles, in place names, and in art and crafts.[36] Sharing Van Langen's insight, Western historian D. G. E. Hall further explains that the Acehnese rulers had emulated the designs of Moghul gardens, court dresses, and Moghul titles in some of the Acehnese administrative offices.[37] The meaning of the name Aceh, although it varies, generally relates to Indian words. For instance, Muhammad Said says that the name Aceh comes from *Aca*, a Gujarati word meaning 'beautiful.'[38] According to Krom, however, the word 'Aceh' came from *aci*, an Indian word meaning 'sister.'[39] In this case the Indian influence is conspicuously evident. It is uncertain, however, whether Indian influences came at an early or later period.[40]

The Indian influences are also found in the east coast city of Pasai. In *Summa Oriental*, Tome Pires, who visited the city in 1511, explains the ancient relationship between Pasai and Bengal.[41] He noted that the founder and the first ruler of Samudra

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[32]   See Ibid.

[33]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 15.

[34]   Ibid., 15-16.

[35]   Ibid., 19.

[36]   Ibid., 15.

[37]   Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, 219. See also Barbara Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1989), 5.

[38]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 20.

[39]   Ibid., 77.

[40]   Ibid.

[41]   Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 142.

Pasai were originally Bengalis.[42] He also noted that Bengali merchants were the most influential group in the city. Fatimi's study of a contemporary Chinese Chronicle supports Tom Pires' theory of the Bengali origin of Pasai people.[43] Fatimi adds that the Chinese envoy called the ministe of Samudra Pasai *Thakkur,* a Bengali word from Sanskrit meaning 'chief.'[44]

Referring to the account of the Arab traveller Ibn Battuta, Zainuddin reports on the existence of several foreign settlements—Arab, Persian and Indian—in the city of Pasai. Regarding the integration between local people and foreigners, Ibn Battuta noted that the townspeople could speak Malay, Arabic and Indian.[45] Foreign traders built a good relationship with the local aristocracy and also married into them. Such marriages were advantageous to both sides. Muslim traders could get trading permits easily as well as spread Islam in the region. Due to the significant religious and trading contacts with Aceh, Indian cultures permeated the Acehnese customs along with Islamic influences.[46]

Aceh as a Trading Country

The strategic geographical position of Aceh on the Strait of Malacca brought visitors from many nations, travelling between the east and west of the south part of the globe and using the Strait as a trading and resting post. This enabled Aceh to play an important role in international commercial networking and made it a trading country. The pattern of exchange indicates that a trade network developed between the northern coastal cities and extended down the east coastal cities through the Strait of

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[42]   Ibid. See also S. Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, ed. Shirle Gordon (Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute Ltd., 1963), 12.

[43]   See Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 12-13.

[44]   Ibid., 14.

[45]   See Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 248. Zainuddin does not indicate which version of Battuta's account he refers to. Specific explanations of the Parsian and Indian influences do not appear in the English version of Battuta's account edited by Sir E. Denison and Eileen Power. Zainuddin seems to rely on another version of Ibn Battuta's account that is also used by Fatimi, since both refer to such influences.

[46]   See Ibid. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*.

Malacca to the Malay Peninsula (see Figure 1.1).[47] The coastal cities in northern Sumatra Island, such as Lamuri, Perlak and Pasai, were the busiest cities along the Strait of Malacca: many goods and services and much information were exchanged in these vibrant trading posts. With reference to Marco Polo's travel account, Alfian describes that since the establishment of the Kingdom of Pasai the trade along most of the coastline of northern Sumatra came under the control of the Kingdom. Marco Polo visited Pasai in 1292 on his way from China to Persia, while waiting for favourable weather to cross the Indian Ocean.[48] He witnessed the busy trade in the port, which was regularly visited by local and foreign traders. Sources on the history of Aceh describe the port of Pasai as having been a dominant trade centre since the beginning of the fourteenth century, one century before the Malaccans took over. The port was then known as *Samudra* (Ocean) among Indian traders.

In the middle of the fourteenth century, Pasai was invaded by the Majapahit Kingdom of East Java, which resulted in Pasai being subjugated to the Majapahit's rule. With the takeover, the King of Majapahit did not attempt to regulate the trading practices of Pasai. Instead, he allowed Pasai to grow strongly and to control the trade in the Malacca Strait.[49] Pasai is also described in the account of a Muslim Chinese envoy, Ma Huan, who visited Pasai in 1405. He witnessed a prosperous and wealthy Kingdom of Samudra Pasai.[50] He mentioned a large number of natural products of Pasai, such as pepper, fruits and sulphur. He recorded that Pasai had its own currency. He also witnessed a number of foreign and local ships anchored at the

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[47] See Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515.* Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator.* Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara.* Ibrahim Alfian, "Samudra - Pasai: Bandar Dagang Dan Pusat Budaya," in *Peranan Kerajaan Islam Samudra-Pasai Sebagai Pusat Pengembangan Islam Di Nusantara*, ed. Ali Akbar (Lhokseumawe, Aceh Utara: Pemerintah Daerah Tk II Aceh Utara, 1990). These sources provide information on trade patterns, starting with the coming of foreign travellers who visited the ports in Aceh region and those who developed these into important ports in Southeast Asia.

[48] A. H. Hill, "The Coming of Islam to North Sumatra," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 33 (1960): 6.

[49] See Ibrahim Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M.Hasan Basry, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakara Agung Offset, 1994), 8.

[50] Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 64-66.

Pasai port. Pasai also exported silk, camphor and gold from the hinterlands. The silk industry was introduced to the local inhabitants in Pasai by Chinese traders.[51]

The role of Pasai in international trade grew stronger with the invasion of Malacca in 1511 by the Portuguese. The invasion forced Muslim traders, who had used Malaccan ports as centres of trade, to cross the Strait to Pasai.[52] Pires described how the Kingdom of Pasai became more prosperous when the Portuguese conquered Malacca, while Pedir, a powerful neighbouring kingdom that used to be an important and rich trading centre, was also at war. Pires also described Pasai as an international city with a large population of about twenty thousand inhabitants, including Arabs, Turks, Persians, Gujaratis, Malays, Javanese, Siamese and Bengalis.[53]

According to available sources, much merchandise used to be traded in Samudra Pasai, which exported primarily pepper and silk.[54] Pires reported that Pasai had its own currency made of gold and silver that bore the name of the reigning king.[55] The dominant role of Pasai Port along the Strait of Malacca lasted for two centuries (1300s–1500s) until the Portuguese invasion. Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah, who reigned in the Kingdom of Aceh, was able to successfully lead his troops to drive the Portuguese out of Pasai in 1524. As a result, Samudra Pasai became part of the Kingdom of Aceh, where trade was centred in the port of Aceh. By that time, the port in Aceh was used for international trade and grew into a very large urban centre.[56] In its development under the reign of Sultan Ala'adin Riayat Syah al-Kahar (1539–1571), Aceh became a base of the Muslim trading routes in Southeast Asia. Spices, especially pepper, were shipped to the Red Sea and then transported by caravans along the Mediterranean to Venice.[57] This trade pattern brought al-Kahhar into

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[51]   Antony Reid, "Early Modern History," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture* (1996). 49.

[52]   See D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1981), 215-16. Ibrahim Alfian, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad* (Jakarta: Penerbit Libra, 1996), Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

[53]   Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 142.

[54]   Ibid., 144.

[55]   Ibid.

[56]   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Denys Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, trans. Winarsih Arifin, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1991).

[57]   Reid, "Early Modern History," 50. See also Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

contact with the Turkish rulers and strengthened the relationship between Aceh and Turkey. During this time, many cultures (Turkish, Persian, Egyptian, Chinese, Arabian and Indian) came into contact in the Kingdom of Aceh.[58]

In 1599, the Hotman brothers led the first Dutch expedition to Aceh with the aim of initiating trade relationships between the Dutch and the Acehnese.[59] John Davis, an English traveller who came along with the Hotman brothers, described the busy trade network of the Aceh port and the many foreign merchants who came to the city in search for good deals. They came mostly from *Rum* (Turkey), Arabia, China, Bengal and Pegu. As a result, large amounts of merchandise could be found in the region.[60] Davis noted how the pepper trade led to the port in Aceh to playing an important role in the international trade network.[61] There were many foreign ships anchored in Aceh Bay, considered as the busiest port along the Strait of Malacca. A Western historian, Holly S. Smith, added that merchants from India, Africa, Europe and Arabia passed by in quest of the silk and gold of the Far East, while Chinese traders travelled southwest in search of the spices and gems of Central Asia.[62]

During the golden age, Sultan Iskandar Muda made Aceh a stronger trading centre by expanding its dominance over most parts of Sumatra Island and the Malay Peninsula. He centralised all foreign trades at the main port of Bandar Aceh, resulting in the city becoming the centre of international trade in Southeast Asia.[63] Its port became the busiest port along the Strait of Malacca. Augustine de Beaulieu, a French traveller who visited Aceh in 1621, witnessed that there were at least ten trading ships anchored in Aceh Bay every day.[64] They came from European countries, mainly the Netherlands, Spain, Great Britain and France, and from Asian

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[58]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*. 2-3.

[59]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*. See also Anthony Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 16.

[60]   Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 146-47.

[61]   Ibid., 140,46.

[62]   Holly S. Smith, *Aceh Art and Culture*, *Images of Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[63]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 305.

[64]   See also Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*. William Dampier's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 110. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 272.

countries, mainly Turkey, the Middle East, India, China, Siam and the Philippines.[65] Besides foreign ships, there were hundreds of prows that came from the interior to the main port.[66]

The Expansion of Islam

Muslim traders had frequented parts of Indonesia for several centuries before the native population embraced the new faith. Muslim traders, as already mentioned, came from India, Arabia, Egypt and Persia. However, the debate on when and how Islam spread in Indonesia remains unresolved. Fatimi's theory, which is adopted in this study, proposes that the propagation of Islam in the region of the Malacca Strait was largely due to the marriages between Muslim merchants and members of royal families.[67]

According to *A History of Modern Indonesia*, Muslim Arabs came to China during the reign of the third caliph, 'Uthman, between 644 and 656.[68] The routes to China could have been by land or by sea, with the latter most likely being through the Strait of Malacca. Indian and Arab ships sailing to and from China would, for a number of reasons, have had to stop in Aceh, the gateway to the Strait, enabling Muslim traders to have contact with local communities. It is possible, therefore, that Islam was first established in Aceh before spreading into the other part of Indonesia and the rest of Southeast Asia. If this was so, then Aceh played an important role in Islamising the Indonesian Archipelago.[69]

According to Hill, the date of the early spread of Islam could be traced in Groneveldt's writings, which quote a seventh-century Chinese account (dated 674

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[65] See Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 272. William Dampier's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 107-08.

[66] Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 273.

[67] Cited by Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 87.

[68] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 3.

[69] Ibrahim Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1973). A.H. Hill, "Hikayat Raja- Raja Pasai," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 33, no. 2 (1960). Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 38-75.

AD) that refers to small communities of Arab merchants in northern Sumatra.[70] Hill proposes that these were Indians whose ancestors had come from southern Arabia and had formed themselves into small settlements in the ports all around the coast of India.[71] Later merchants, Hill argues, proceeded on the journey to the northern part of Sumatra Island and resided on the coast of the Strait of Malacca. As a trade link between India and Arabia was established quite early, Hill's proposition is plausible. This was followed by the opening of a trade network between China and India. Although the sources indicate the presence of Muslim settlement, Hill does not confirm whether or not the inhabitants had converted to Islam.[72]

The propagation of Islam in Indonesia can also be traced in travellers' accounts and the inscriptions on Muslim tombstones.[73] Most of these sources indicate that the Aceh region was the first to embrace Islam. The *Hikayat Raja-Raja* and the accounts of Ibn Battuta report the earliest time of the presence of Islam in the city of Pasai. All these records point to Aceh as the early home of Islamic preachers who propagated Islam throughout the Indonesian Archipelago into the Malayan Peninsula (Figure 1.1.1). With reference to a Javanese manuscript, *Tapel Adam*, Alfian asserts that the residents of Pasai were the first Islamic proselytisers.[74]

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[70]   Hill, "The Coming of Islam to North Sumatra," 6.

[71]   Ibid.: 17.

[72]   Ibid.

[73]   This matter is raised in several writings. See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 38-53. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 3-4. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 9-17. Hill, "The Coming of Islam to North Sumatra," 6-14. Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 10-19.

[74]   Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," 6.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 59 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.1.1   Distribution of early Islamic cities
Source: Tjahjono (1998)

Historical evidence indicates that the rise of Islam as a political power coincided with
the development of the Islamic Kingdom of Samudra Pasai in the fourteenth
century.[75] The rise of Samudra Pasai resulted in the Hindu Kingdom of Srivijaya in
southern Sumatra, which had controlled Sumatra Island since the eleventh century,
losing its domination over the northern regions.[76] With the expansion of Pasai's
domination during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Malikud-Dhahir, Islam spread from
Pasai to Beunua, later known as Tamiang, located on the east side of Pasai.[77] Islam
then spread from Samudra Pasai to East Java, with the invasion of the powerful
Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit between 1378 and 1389.[78] The invasion forced the
Sultan to abandon his palace, and many Acehnese were taken to Java as captives.
The presence of these captives in Java is believed to have initiated the process of its
Islamisation.[79]

Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai, however, does not give further details about Acehnese
captives. With reference to the *Tapel Adam* manuscript, Alfian suggests that the
relationship between the two kingdoms was strengthened after the Majapahit King
married the daughter of the Pasai Sultan.[80] Alfian adds that, when his wife's brother

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[75]   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Hill, "The Coming of Islam to North Sumatra." Dasgupta,
        "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641".
[76]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 10,15.
[77]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*.
[78]   Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," 4-7.
[79]   Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah*.
[80]   Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah." 6

visited the Majapahit kingdom, the King awarded his brother-in-law with land in Ampel, the region that has now become part of Surabaya city.[81] During its development, Ampel became the centre of Islamic studies in Java. From Ampel, Islam spread into Gresik in East Java and then to Kudus and Demak in Central Java. Zainuddin explains that the Acehnese Muslim scholars strengthened the existence of Islam in Java.[82] He says that the Pasai Sultan Zainal Abidin, a son of Sultan Ahmad, who left the Pasai Kingdom because of Majapahit's invasion, sent a contingent of Islamic preachers to the region of Gresik in East Java. The Acehnese contingent was led by Maulana Malik Ibrahim, a well-known Muslim scholar. In Ampel, Maulana Malik Ibrahim established the Islamic school. In Java conversion to Islam was achieved mainly by the nine great Sufis, the so-called *Sunans*. Maulana Malik Ibrahim was one of them.[83] Through Sufi teachings Islam spread to other parts of the Island, particularly to the northern coastal areas of Sumatra and the coastal cities. By the 1400s, Islam had reached Malacca through marriages between members of royal and merchant families.[84]

In summary, the rise of Islam between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries started from Aceh, spreading from Perlak to Java and Malacca, and then through the agency of Sufi saints to other parts of the Indonesian Archipelago.[85]

Islam in Aceh

The surviving records, such as travellers' accounts, premodern sources and the inscriptions found on early Islamic tombs in north Sumatra, provide evidence of the early conversion of the Acehnese to Islam.[86] By embracing Islam the Acehnese provided the impetus for the expansion of Islam. The first Acehnese converts were involved in trade networks not just as merchants and crewmen but also as aristocrats

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[81]   Ibid., 6-7.

[82]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 253-54.

[83]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 75.

[84]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 252. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 87.

[85]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 93-96.

[86]   See Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 11-12. Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah*, 49-53.

and senior officials.[87] In the early days of Islam in Aceh Sufi masters played an important role in adapting Islam to the new host culture. Their approach must have seemed acceptable to the local communities, and Islam gradually gained credibility to become the main religion in Aceh.[88]

Besides the accounts of Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, and *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai*, old Acehnese inscriptions are instructive with regard to how Peureulak and Pasai inhabitants converted to Islam, and how Islam developed in the region and spread throughout the Indonesian Archipelago and the Malayan Peninsula. The inscriptions describe the role of Muslim missionaries and traders from Arabia, India and Persia, under the leadership of Captain (*Nachoda*) Chalifah, in propagating Islam in Peureulak, East Aceh.[89] In addition to promoting the new religion, the missionaries taught the local inhabitants skills relating to agriculture, trade, government administration, health and war.[90] Referring to the Muslim missionaries, Ali Hasjmy writes:

> They presented themselves as merchants. They taught the people of Perlak the proper methods of farming, trading, keeping healthy and hygiene, of having independent thought, and of sharing with and caring for others… more or less these are the Islamic teachings introduced by the Prophet Muhammad.[91]

Their mission was successful. According to the inscriptions, within forty years (by 840), most people in Perlak had converted to Islam.[92] The process of Islamisation, as Hasjmy explains, started with the marriage of young Muslim missionaries to local females, including the princess of Perlak. She was married to an Arabic preacher and had a son, named Sayid Abdul Aziz, who in 840 became the first sultan of the

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[87]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 87.

[88]   Ibid., 94.

[89]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 3-4. See also Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 4.

[90]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 3.

[91]   Ibid.

[92]   Ibid., 4. See also Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 4.

Islamic Kingdom of Perlak and was given a title Sultan Alaidin Saiyid Maulana Abdul Aziz Syah. The capital of the new kingdom was moved to the interior and was given the new name Bandar Chalifah, after Captain Chalifah, the leader of the Islamic missionaries.[93] Ali Hasjmy mentions that the Islamic Kingdom of Perlak is regarded as the oldest Islamic kingdom in Southeast Asia.[94] The inscriptions describe the involvement of Arabic, Persian and Indian Muslim scholars in the Kingdom to develop human resources and education.

In the eleventh century, Teungku Muhammad Amin, a member of Perlak royal family, who was also one of the *ulama* (religious leaders), established an Islamic institution, the so-called *Dayah* (Islamic boarding school), in Cot Kala, the region located near the Kingdom of Peureulak. This school is considered to be the first centre of Islamic education in Southeast Asia.[95] In the second half of the thirteenth century, Sultan Makhdum Alaiddin Malik Muhammad Amin Syah II, who was the seventeenth Perlak ruler, continued to spread Islam in Pasai by marrying his daughter to the Sultan of Pasai Kingdom, Malik al-Salih.[96] During the reign of Malik al-Dhahir (1297–1326), the kingdoms of Pasai and Samudra were united and called the Kingdom of Samudra Pasai.[97] In its development, the Kingdom carried on Perlak's prominent role in the Malacca Strait.[98] Malik al-Dhahir also extended his authority up to Merdu, a neighbouring state in the west of Pasai.[99] Trade was developed in Pasai, resulting in much prosperity and security in the Kingdom, which had its own gold currency, the coin of which was called *Dirham*.[100] Samudra Pasai thus became the centre of Islamic prosperity, attracting Islamic scholars from Persia, Gujurat, and Arabia. Ibn Battuta, who was in Pasai in the thirteenth century, provided valuable

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[93]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 4.

[94]   Ibid.

[95]   Ibid., 5.

[96]   Alfian, *Kronika Pasai: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah*. Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 7. See also Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*.

[97]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun."

[98]   Ibid., 8.

[99]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 14.

[100]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 52. Alfian, "Samudra - Pasai: Bandar Dagang Dan Pusat Budaya," 27.

insights into how Islam developed in the Kingdom of Samudra Pasai along with Persian and Indian influences.[101]

With reference to Ibn Battuta's account, Fatimi traces a strong Persian influence at the court of Pasai in 1345.[102] He says that Sultan Malik al-Dhalir had at least two Persian scholars advising him on the ruling of the Kingdom. They were Qadi Sharif Amir Said of Shiraz and Taj al-Din of Isfahan.[103] The most striking influence of Arab and Persian cultures was the title of Samudra Pasai sultans. The official title 'Sultan' that was adopted by the Acehnese kings derives from the Arabic *saltana* ('to dominate'). The title was inscribed along with poems or prayers on the kings' graves. Fatimi also explains that the names of Sultans Malik al-Salih, Malik al-Zahir, and Malik al-Mansur were the same as the names of their Arab contemporaries, the kings of Syria and Egypt.[104] Fatimi adds that the Arab kings were seen as heroes who played vital roles in the restoration and propagation of Islam. Accordingly, the strong relationships with the Arabs, Persians and Indians brought rich influences from the southern coast of India as well as the maritime Arabian cities.[105]

In the fifteenth century, Samudra Pasai became the centre of Islamic study and Malay literature and culture.[106] Foreign Islamic scholars came to Pasai either to study or to teach Islam. When Pasai was dominated by the Kingdom of Aceh in the sixteenth century, the centre of Islam moved from Pasai to the city of Aceh. Islamic study rapidly developed in the Kingdom of Aceh, and many Islamic scholars went there to study Islam before and after visiting the holy city of Mecca. Aceh has thus

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[101]   Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1929). See also the version of Ibn Batutta's account studied by Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 11-12. In presenting Ibn Batutta's account, Fatimi refers to the French text *Voyage d'Ibn Batoutah*. This version, which explains the penetration of Iranian culture into Acehnese society, is also referred to by Acehnese historians Zainuddin and Junus Djamil. However, the study *Ibn Batutta: Travel in Asia and Africa* does not explicitly refer to Persian influences.

[102]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 12.

[103]   Ibid. See also Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*.

[104]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 11.

[105]   See Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 247.

[106]   See T. Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 1st ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 2. Alfian, "Samudra - Pasai: Bandar Dagang Dan Pusat Budaya," 5.

acquired the name 'Gateway to Mecca.'[107] Besides religious scholars, many literary scholars, poets and men of letters from several Islamic countries came to Pasai. In this prosperous context, art and literature thrived.

The gravestones and burial sites of the early period of Islam enable us to trace the relationship between Aceh and other countries that influenced the shaping of the built environment in the precolonial period.[108] These include the early burial sites found in north Aceh, particularly in the area of Samudra Pasai Kingdom dated from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. Djamil found four thirteenth century Islamic tombs in north Sumatra that provide evidence of the early conversion of the Acehnese to Islam.[109] Three of them belonged to royal members of the Samudra Kingdom.

One, dated 1210, was identified as that of Sultan Al-Kamil. The tomb was found in Meunasah Manyang, Geudong, in north Sumatra.[110] Sultan Al-Kamil was the ruler of the Kingdom of Sumatra between 1155 and 1210. The Arabic inscriptions on the tomb indicate that the owner of the tomb was a Muslim.[111] According to Djamil, after the Sultan's death, the kingdom fell into small divisions due to some chaos. Malik al-Salih re-united these divided kingdoms and established a new Kingdom of Samudra. The second tomb, dated 1213, belonged to Maulana Adjuddaulah Quthubulma'aaly Abdurrahman Al-Pasy.[112] He was a minister (*wazir*) in the Kingdom of Samudra during the period of Sultan al-Kamil.[113] The third tomb, dated 1226 (623 H), belonged to Maulana Naina bin Naina al-Malabary, who came from Malabar. He was appointed by Sultan al-Kamil as the chief of armed forces of Samudra.[114] The fourth, dated 1233, was an Islamic tomb that belonged to Teungku Ja'cub Blang Perya.

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107 Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, 219.
108 See Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 10-17. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 31-36. Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," 2-3. Ibrahim Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M.Hasan Basry, and T. Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakara Agung Offset, 1994), 16-17.
109 Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 10-12.
110 Ibid., 10.
111 Ibid., 12.
112 Ibid., 11.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid.

Djamil says that he was a well-known scholar, a man of letters as well as an Islamic missionary who spread Islam in Samudra and nearby kingdoms.

Some existing gravestones from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth century belonged to Sultan Malik al-Salih (Figure 1.1.2) and some of his descendants. Both sides of two of Sultan Malik al-Salih's gravestones have Arabic inscriptions: Quranic verses and an Arabic poem. The inscriptions on one side of the headstone declare that the Sultan was a Muslim and the founder of Samudra Pasai, and on the other side give the date of his death.[115] Another gravestone in the same place belonged to Sultan Muhammad, who died in 1306. The inscriptions on the stone inform us that the Sultan was the son of Malik al-Tahir. The stone has rough carvings and calligraphy.

The tomb of Queen Nur Ilah, dated 1380 (Figure 1.1.3), has two gravestones, placed at the head and the foot ends. The inscriptions are written in old Javanese on one stone and in Arabic script on the other. The gravestones, indicate, in addition to the influence of Islam in Pasai, that there was a relationship between the Javanese and Pasai kingdoms at that time.[116] They also indicate that the Queen was a Muslim and had reigned over the Kingdom of Pasai as well as Kedah on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula.[117]

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[115]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 30.
[116]   Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," 2-11.
[117]   Ibid., 2-3.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 66 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure1.1.2   The headstone of Sultan Malik Al-Salih, dated 1297
Source: Leigh (1989)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 66 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.1.3   The gravestone of Queen Nur Ilah, dated 1380
Source: Alfian (1994)

The Javanese characters on one stone point to a Javanese Hindu influence in Pasai.

With reference to the fourteenth century Javanese inscriptions *Negarakartagama*,

written by Prapanca, and to *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, Alfian describes the invasion of Samudra Pasai by the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit.[118] Before the Majapahit troops left Pasai for their home country a high-ranking officer appointed Queen Nur Ilah, a descendant of Sultan Malik al-Dhahir, to rule over the Pasai kingdom.[119]

Another tomb, dated 1428, which belonged to Queen Nahrasiyah (Figure 1.1.4), points to the Acehnese conversion to Islam. Quranic inscriptions from chapters of *Yasin*, *al-Imran* and *al-Baqarah* are chiselled on her stones.[120] In 1912, J.P. Moquette, a Dutch historian, discovered that the type of the Queen's tombstone was similar to some found in East Java that were owned by Maulana Malik Ibrahim, who originally came from Pasai and died in 1419.[121]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 67 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.1.4   The gravestone of Queen Nahrasiyah, dated 1428
Source: Alfian (1994)

Moquette also found that these two gravestones were identical to some found in Cambay, Gujarat. Supporting Moquette's point of view, Alfian argued that the Queen's gravestone is a duplicate of that of King Umar Ibn Akhmad al-Kazaruni from Gujarat, India, who died in 1333, almost a century earlier than Queen Nahrasiyah.[122] Moquette's discovery has enabled Alfian to conclude that Gujaratis

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[118]   Ibid., 4-6.
[119]   Ibid., 7.
[120]   Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 20-21.
[121]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 31. See also Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 16.
[122]   See Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 31. Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 16.

produced gravestones not only for the national market, but also for the Muslim markets overseas in Java and Sumatra. This seems plausible since the trade with India had been established before Islam came to Aceh. Moquette seems to concur with Ibn Battuta's view regarding the Indian and Moghul influences in Pasai.

1.2   The Golden Age

Among the travellers who visited and described Aceh, the French merchant Augustin de Beaulieu provided valuable descriptions of Sultan Iskandar Muda's reign, during what might be considered as the golden age of Aceh in terms of the economy, culture and military power.[123] The prosperity and dominance of the Kingdom are reflected internally in the court culture and externally in the ties with the Ottomans. The sultanate of Aceh reached its zenith under the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636). Although he was to be credited with the greatest prosperity and power in Aceh, one cannot ignore the roles of the previous sultans. By the time Iskandar Muda rose to power, Aceh already had a strong army which had been in the making since the first Sultan, Ali Mughayat Syah, who ruled in 1512. During 1536–1571, under the reign of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah al-Kahhar, who had a close relationship with the Ottomans, the Acehnese army was strengthened by Turkish troops that included instructors in military tactics, military engineering and artillery.[124]

The influx of men and guns sent by the Ottoman Sultan Sulaiman Khan to Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah al-Kahhar helped Iskandar Muda later on to establish militaries academy in several places.[125] This seemed to have enabled Aceh to become a powerful kingdom with an expanding empire. As a result, Aceh became the centre of international trade and one of the wealthiest maritime cities in Asia at the time. Several foreign countries, such as the Netherlands and

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[123]   Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*. 65-80. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.

[124]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 31-32. For more detail, see Anthony Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* X, no. 3 (1969): 396-97. Ali Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975), 88.

[125]   Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 93-94.

Great Britain rushed to develop economic ties and to establish diplomatic relationships with Aceh.[126] The kingdom's stability gradually deteriorated after the death of Iskandar Muda, however, due mainly to the intervention of the Dutch who successfully defeated Malacca and expelled the Portuguese from the region.[127]

The Kingdom of Aceh

Before the fifteenth century, there were two kingdoms in Aceh Valley, separated by Aceh River: the Kingdom of Lamuri, which was later called Meukuta Alam, and the Kingdom of Dar al-Kamal (the Abode of Perfection).[128] In 1512 the two kingdoms were united, forming an Islamic kingdom, the so-called Aceh Darussalam (in Arabic, Dar al-Salam, 'the Abode of Peace'). In *Bustanu's-Salatin*, ar-Raniry mentioned that the first sultan was Ali Mughayat Syah, under whose rule the Kingdom grew stronger. By 1520, Aceh ruled over the small nearby kingdoms Pedir, Daya and Beunua, and unified them under the Sultanate of Aceh.

On the east coast of Sumatra were the kingdoms of Perlak and Samudra, the earliest Islamic kingdoms in the Archipelago. The Kingdom of Perlak, however, gradually vanished with the expansion of Samudra. According to *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, the Samudra Kingdom was established at the time Muslims arrived in the region, which, according to Moquette, was between 1270 and 1275. Under the first ruler, Malik al-Salih, the Kingdom was well developed and rich. According to *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, Sultan Malik al-Salih built another kingdom, the so-called Pasai Kingdom, for his son.

By the fifteenth century, Samudra Pasai reached its highest point, and it began to control the trade network in the Malacca Strait.[129] The ruling dynasty had also turned

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126   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 118-40. Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 88-90.

127   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 194-95.

128   Ibid., 76-79. These two states are also indicated in Tom Pires's account. See Cortesao, ed., *The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 135.

129   Ibn Batutta's account proves that the two kingdoms, Pasai and Samudra, were united and it was called the kingdom of Samudra Pasai. See Ross and Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*.

the Kingdom into a centre of study of the Malay language and literature and of Islamic law and theology.[130] *Ulama* from various Islamic countries flocked to the Kingdom to work and interact with each other. The people were well educated and led prosperous lives.[131] The classical Malay language, which has now become Indonesian and Malay, was regarded as the official language in the Kingdom.[132]

In the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese invaded Samudra Pasai in order to control trade along the Strait. In 1512, however, the Acehnese Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah was able to take over Samudra Pasai and to expel the Portuguese, thereby increasing the Kingdom's power and dominance over trade and accumulating greater wealth. When Sultan Alauddin Riayatsyah al-Kahhar ruled, between 1553 and 1571, Aceh's territories extended to include the region of Aru in Deli, and he appointed his son, Abdullah, as governor of the newly acquired territories.[133] Having expanded to Deli, the Sultan had to confront the Portuguese, who also wanted to have a trade monopoly in the region. Fighting the Portuguese, Sultan Alauddin received military support from the Ottomans, who sent troops and cannons to Aceh.[134] During this time, the country had its own currency, the gold *dirham* and the lead *keuh*.[135]

The Rise of the Kingdom

Iskandar Muda had great aspirations. He wanted Aceh to dominate the west coast of Sumatra Island and the Malay Peninsula (Figure 1.2.1). His fleet attacked Johor in 1613 and 1623 and Malacca in 1614 and 1629.[136] He expanded Aceh's influence throughout the Malay Peninsula in order to create a stronger trade base in the western

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[130]   See Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 2. T. Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad* (Jakarta: Libra, 1996), xxiv. Anthony Reid (Editor). Early Modern History." In *Indonesian Heritage*.

[131]   Ibnu Batutah cited by Anthony Reid, 1969.

[132]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 44.

[133]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 398.

[134]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 31-32. Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 396.

[135]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*.

[136]   See Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 44-45. Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 305. Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 91-94.

part of the Archipelago, and to centralise all foreign trade at the main port of Bandar Aceh (Now called Banda Aceh). He was able to take control of the trade over the subjugated regions and to require them to pay tax. During his reign, the kingdom's authority expanded over the coastal states along Malacca Strait.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 71 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.2.1   Aceh authority under Sultan Iskandar Muda's reign
Source: Lombard (1991)

Iskandar Muda also succeeded in monopolising the pepper trade and in dictating prices. He introduced trade regulations, established a licensing system, and used commercial taxes to build his institutions. During his rule the Kingdom had full control over ports along the Strait of Malacca on the east coast as well as the west coast of Sumatra. Any foreign merchant wanting to trade in any of the other ports had to obtain a permit from the capital. Iskandar Muda thus marked the highest level in Aceh's political, economic and military history. Western travellers such as

Beaulieu, John Davis and Peter Mundy wrote that Aceh was a powerful and wealthy state during Muda's reign.[137]

The sultan's powerful status was evident in the Kingdom's nine-fold seal, which had a circle in the centre identifying the name of the sultan in power and eight circles bearing the names of the eight previous illustrious rulers (Figure 1.2.2).[138] The design of the seal was adapted from the Moguls during the rule of Sultan Akbar.[139] The seal represented the sultan's authority. However, no example of Sultan Iskandar Muda's seal has survived. High officials in the administration were given a dagger by the sultan, symbolising his authority. This protocol was introduced before Sultan Iskandar Muda rose to the throne. John Davis, who visited Aceh during the reign of Sultan Alau'ddin Ri'ayat Syah in 1598, referred to this protocol and described the dagger.[140]

The Kingdom of Aceh had a powerful army. The French commander Augustin de Beaulieu, who visited the Aceh Kingdom in 1621 as the French King's envoy, described how Sultan Iskandar Muda had the best soldiers in the Archipelago. He mentioned that the Acehnese army had 900 well-trained elephant troops which were not afraid of fire and gunfire. John Davis added that these elephants were used as the Kingdom's fortress. In the sea, Beaulieu witnessed that the Acehnese navy had a big combat fleet.[141] The largest ship could bring six to eight hundred passengers, and each ship was equipped with three cannon filled with forty pounds of bullets. According to the Portuguese traveller Pinto, vessels were used in the Acehnese

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[137] Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 53-90.

[138] See Ibid., 105. Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 72.

[139] In the text of *Akbar Namah*, Indian biographer Abu'l Fazl described a seal that bore the names of the ruler and his illustrious predecessors. See Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 106.

[140] He wrote: "This Cryse is a kind of Dagger, whose haft and handle (for it hath no crosse no hilt) is made of a kind of metal, which the King esteemeth farre beyond Gold, and is set with Rubbies. This mettal hath a fine lustre: it is death to weare this Cryse, but from the Kings gift: and having it, there is absolute freedome to take Victualls without money, and to command the rest as slaves." Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 140-41.

[141] Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 113-14.

Kingdom to travel and export merchandise to, and import guns from, the Ottomans.[142]

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NOTE:

This figure is included on page 73 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.
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Figure 1.2.2 This Aceh Sultan's stamp, the Nine-Fold Seal belonged to Ratu Taj al-Alam Safiat al-Din (1641–1675) Source: Alfian et al, eds (1997)

Court Culture

The coming of foreign traders, mostly Muslim, to Aceh and the intensive interactions with the Ottomans, the Indians and the Chinese had created a rich cultural tradition. Foreign scholars and artisans played an important role in the development of the unique Acehnese cultural and intellectual environment.[143] During the golden age there developed in Aceh a sophisticated court culture within and outside the richly embellished palaces.[144] Acehnese writers such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syam al-Din al-Sumatrani and Abd al-Rauf were well-known figures in the Malay Islamic world.

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[142] See Pinto's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 29-30. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.

[143] The following is based on the account of Western travellers, particularly those of Augustin de Beaulieu and William Dampier which are represented in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*. See also Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

[144] Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.

Beaulieu wrote that most Acehnese were literate, well-educated, and spoke Arabic and Malay.[145]

In the fifteenth century, under the patronage of the sultans of Samudra Pasai, Aceh seemed to have developed into a centre of Islamic studies. In the seventeenth century, theological study and religious discussions continued to develop, involving foreign scholars as well as the Sumatran *ulama*. The Acehnese, as Beaulieu reports, loved not only literature but also industry. They developed both light and heavy industries. Light industry included handicraft while heavy industry included shipbuilding. According to Beaulieu, the Acehnese were able to make delicate vessels with six-inch thick wood.[146] The Acehnese galleys, unlike those in Europe, were very long and tall.[147]

Culture and art also flourished. Many city dwellers were artisans and goldsmiths. Beaulieu reported that Sultan Iskandar Muda employed three hundred goldsmiths.[148] The court hired hundreds of local and foreign artisans, including spinners, weavers, goldsmiths, silversmiths and wood carvers.[149] These artisans, mostly Chinese and Turks, were formed into guilds. An industrial expert or a craftsman was called *pande*, as *pande meuh* (goldmith expert), *pande beuso* (skilled ironsmith or blacksmith), *pande kayu* (carpenter and wood craftsman) and *pande gapai* (skilled in building galleys).[150] Turkish gunsmiths were sent by an Ottoman sultan in the seventeenth century to produce artefacts and teach Acehnese artisans how to make guns. They resided in quarters of the city called *Gampong Pande* (industrial areas).

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[145]   Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*.54.

[146]   See the account of Augustin de Beaulieu in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 73. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 113-14.

[147]   Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 73. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 114.

[148]   See Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 87.

[149]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 151. See also Beaulieu's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 65. William Dampier's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 108.

[150]   Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 80-81.

The palace complex was a place of freQueent official, solemn receptions, court spectacles and lavish feasts.[151] According to Beaulieu, customary ceremonies were held every week and all ceremonies and rituals took place according to official regulations. The reception of guests who were intended to meet the Sultan followed set procedures. It started with a visit by the *syahbandar* (harbour master), together with tax officials and clerks, to the shore where the guests' ship was anchored. They noted the items and gifts the guests would present to the Sultan. The procession continued the next day with the visit of the *orang kayas* (aristocrats), who took the guests to the palace on elephants in cortege. The gifts were collected and put on a tray covered with yellow silk. If there was an official letter, it was put on a silver tray covered with cloth embroidered with gold thread. Usually the Sultan bestowed on his guests a set of garments that consisted of a long ornamented robe, a turban, and a belt made of cloth with golden embroidery. The guests were expected to wear these clothes while staying in Aceh.[152]

Beaulieu also describes how the Sultan received his guests' contingent with a lavish welcoming party.[153] The assembly room of the palace, where ceremonies were often held, was well prepared and heavily decorated. The gate and the pavilions were decorated with silver leaves and cloth of gold. The walls were covered with gold cloth and the floor was covered by Turkish rugs. The guests were entertained with food and a performance was staged, with the dancers wearing gold-embroidered costumes, gold earrings and bracelets (Figure 1.2.3).[154]

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[151]   The account of Beaulieu in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.

[152]   Ross and Power, eds., *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, 274. Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 142.

[153]   See Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

[154]   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.181.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 76 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.2.3   The Acehnese traditional dance that was performed in the Sultan's palace
Source: Davis (1976)

Another common ceremony was the royal ritual, which mixed some practices
surviving from pre-Islamic tradition with Islamic customs, such as prayer at the
mosque.[155] This ceremony, as witnessed by John Davis in 1599, was the annual
solemn procession to the mosque, held by the sultan and his noblemen in order to
commemorate 'the arrival of the Prophet' (Figure 1.2.4).[156] The noblemen rode
elephants that were richly covered with silk, velvet and golden cloth. Two elephants,
prepared for the sultan and the Prophet, were covered with richly embroidered cloth
and "a small golden castle" attached on the back of each elephant.[157] After praying in
the mosque, and "the Prophet of course not having shown up, the sultan rode the
elephant prepared for the Prophet."[158]

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[155]   Ibid. 140-1

[156]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 197-98. John Davis, *De Outste Reizen Van De Zeeuwen Naar Ost-Indie 1598-1604* (Banda Aceh. Indonesia: Printed for Pusat Dokumentasi Aceh (The Centre of Aceh Ducumentation), translated in English, 1976).

[157]   Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*.

[158]   Ibid., 152-53. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 198.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 77 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.2.4   The annual parade, 1602, held by Sultan Alaiddin Riayatsjah
Source: Zainuddin (1961).

In 1641, Graaf witnessed the grand funeral procession of Sultan Iskandar Thani and
provided a visual description of the event (Figure 1.2.5).[159]

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[159]   Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 37.

Figure 1.2.5   The funeral procession of Sultan Iskandar Thani
Source: Warnsinck (1930)

Aceh under the Rule of the Four Queens

Although Islam played an important role in shaping the Acehnese way of life, the role of women as social and political leaders was also conspicuous in the history of Aceh. Between 1661 and 1699 Aceh was governed by four *sultanah* (queens).[160] They were Queen Sri Ratu Taj al-Alam Safiatuddin (1641–1675), Queen Sri Ratu Nur al-Alam Naqiatuddin (1675–1678), Queen Sri Ratu Zakiatuddin Inayat Syah (1678–1688) and Queen Sri Ratu Kamalat Syah (1688–1699). The important role of women in Aceh, however, can be traced to the fourteenth century.[161] In this century the Kingdom of Pasai was also governed by Queens. Moreover, several other prominent women, such as war leaders and a naval admiral, played important roles in the history of Aceh.[162] Evidence of their existence has survived on their gravestones,

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[160]   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 191-215. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 406-09. Ali Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977), 44-215.

[161]   See Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah," 2-11. Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 16-23.

[162]   See Rusdi Sufi, "Cut Nyak Dhien," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim

their seals, and the gold coins minted during their reigns. The significant role played by Acehnese women and their contributions to the development of Islam in Indonesia stand in some contrast to the current stereotype of the low status of women in Islam. Their leadership role shows the uniQueeness of the social history of Aceh.[163]

According to Zainuddin, there was some disagreement among the court authorities of Aceh at the seventeenth century regarding the rights of women in Islam. Some argued that according to Islamic law women were not permitted to be *imam* (religious leaders), or legally responsible for a bride, and even less to be able to become the head of a kingdom.[164] Such authorities would obviously have disagreed with the appointment of a woman as leader of a kingdom. The prominent religious leader Teungku Abd al-Rauf, however, was able to give a legal opinion based on the *shari'a* that argued for political and religious issues to be kept apart, thus paving the way for the reign of the four remarkable queens over fifty-nine years.[165] But for political reasons, the internal conflicts did not stop. The long period of conflict was generated by the *ulee balang* (the aristocrats) who wanted to lead the country. This circumstance was not helped by the foreigners who were always waiting to take advantage of any situation that allowed them to monopolise trade in the region.[166] It was the strong leadership of Queen Safiatuddin, however, that established the significant role of women in the social and political life of Aceh.

Queen Safiatuddin was the daughter of Sultan Iskandar Muda. She rose to the throne after the death of her husband, Sultan Iskandar Thani, and ruled the Kingdom for

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Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 78-95. Nasruddin Sulaiman, "Cut Nyak Meutia," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 100-24. Nasruddin Sulaiman, "Pocut Baren," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 128-40.

[163]   See further discussion about the roles of the queens in Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*.

[164]   Zainuddin, cited in Rusdi Sufi, "Sultanah Safiatiddin Syah," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 43.

[165]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 404-09.

[166]   Sufi, "Sultanah Safiatiddin Syah," 44.

thirty-five years (1641–1675). *Bustanu's-Salatin* praised the Queen's personality, saying that she "had several praise worthy characteristics, and had rendered considerable service to her people. Moreover, she feared Allah, read Allah's Book and had instructed her people to do good deeds and forbade them to commit felonies."[167]

Safiatuddin compelled Acehnese females to seek high education. A large number of educational books written in the Jawi language were produced during this time which included translations of Arabic texts of Quranic interpretations *(tafsir)*.[168] She encouraged the *ulama*, including those who opposed her authority, to establish private educational institutions. She also sent Acehnese *ulama* to Thailand to spread Islam through teaching and education.[169]

Zainuddin has pointed out that Queen Safiatuddin loved to write poems and prose. At the University of Baitur-Rahman she learned history, civil and Islamic law, Islamic philosophy, *tasawwuf* (Sufism) and literature. Her masters were Nuru'd-din Ar-Raniry and Shaikh Abdul Rauf, the two prominent Sufi writers in the seventeenth century, who taught literature and *fiqih* (jurisprudence) and acted as the Queen's advisors.[170] Her development of the educational sector was continued by her three female successors. Their role was important in developing the quality of the *dayahs* (Islamic educational institutions) in the region. They activated the function of the mosque and *meunasah* as the places of education. (*meunasah,* small mosques, were religious centres located in the villages to serve the rural communities.) This way education was made available at all levels of society.[171] Safiatuddin's era was one of prosperity and rapid development in literature, art and Islamic education.[172]

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[167]   Cited in Ibid., 45.

[168]   Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 99-120.

[169]   Sufi, "Sultanah Safiatiddin Syah," 45-46.

[170]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 46-47. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 121.

[171]   Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 201.

[172]   See Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*.

The other three queens, who were also of noble descent, were prepared and trained by Queen Safiatuddin to be her successors.[173] Like Queen Safiatuddin, the three queens were well educated. They spoke several languages, particularly Arabic, Persian, English and Spanish.[174] The legacy of the four queens in raising the status of women in Aceh was remarkable. Their efforts to give women status resulted in increasing numbers of women assuming leadership roles in the economic, social and political domains. For example, the number of women in the Kingdom's parliament (*Majlis Mahkamah Rakyat*), established during Iskandar Muda's reign, increased significantly.[175]

Hasjmy also noted that the queens were religious, bright, wise and caring. Yet, they were also resolute and strong. They did not hesitate to punish those found guilty of wrongdoing, nor were they afraid of facing the threat of foreign intervention. For example, Zakiatuddin Inayat Syah did not hesitate to reject the request of English traders to build a fort in Aceh.[176] And while the fourth queen, Kamalat Syah, allowed the English East India Company to establish a trading base in Aceh, she imposed a hefty tax on it that significantly reducing its profit margin.[177]

To strengthen the Kingdom, the queens continued to build relationships with neighbouring countries, and to consolidate the regional powers against European threats, interventions and desire to monopolise trade along the Strait of Malacca. In order to regain control over trade, Queen Zakiatuddin expelled the Dutch trade company VOC, which was based in west Sumatra and successfully extended Aceh's sovereignty over the region of Bayang in west Sumatra.[178] Under the reign of the four queens the Kingdom was said to have good administration and a good governing system.[179] People lived safely and prosperously. The English traveller William Dampier reported that in governing the Kingdom, the queens were helped by twelve

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[173] Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 200.
[174] Ibid., 95, 199.
[175] Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 192.
[176] Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 202.
[177] Ibid., 214.
[178] Ibid., 201.
[179] Ibid., 202-03. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*.

orangkayas ('great lords').[180] These lords had authority to control certain provinces.[181] Djamil gives details of the division of the territories and the leaders who controlled each of them. The territories, which were divided into many *mukims* (districts) before, were grouped into three federations during the reign of Queen Nurul Alam Naqiatuddin (1675–1678), with each federation being controlled by a district chief called a *Panglima Sagoe*.[182] The roles of the three *Panglima Sagoes* were profoundly significant. They were, among other things, to vote for the rulers, and held authority to dismiss the rulers from their duties under certain circumstances.[183]

In 1683, during the reign of Queen Zakiatuddin Inayat Syah, Sharif Barakat of Hijaz (Mecca and Medina) sent an envoy to Aceh to observe and evaluate the Queen's government. The envoy was led by Yusuf al-Qudsi, and sent upon a request from an Acehnese group that resisted the role of women as rulers. This group requested the Sharif in Mecca to dismiss the Queen. After visiting Aceh and evaluating conditions under the Queen, however, the Sharif's envoy confirmed that the Queen was capable of leading the Kingdom.[184] They could not fault the Queen's leadership on the basis of Islamic law. In fact, the Meccan envoy found the role of women in the government to be important. According to Hasjmy, when the envoy had a chance to meet the Queen, they noted that the Queen's bodyguards comprised women soldiers, riding horses covered with gold and embroidered clothes.[185]

In addition to the existence of the four queens, Aceh had several prominent female leaders defending the sovereignty of the Kingdom. Between the end of the sixteenth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries, Malahayati, a female military official, was promoted to the position of naval admiral. She led Aceh's fleet in the fight against the Portuguese intervention in the Strait of Malacca.[186] Even later, during the

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[180]   Clennel Wilkinson, ed., *Voyage and Discoveries by William Dampier* (London: 1931), 114.

[181]   Ibid. See also Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 212-13.

[182]   Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh*, 47. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 213.

[183]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 213.

[184]   Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu*, 205-06.

[185]   Ibid., 207.

[186]   Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 9.

Dutch intervention in the nineteenth century, several women became war leaders. They were Cut Nyak Dhien, Cut Meutia and Pocut Baren.[187]

Ties with the Ottomans

Aceh's long contact with the Ottomans had impacted on its cultural and military development. In many ways, the Ottomans' contributions helped Aceh reach its golden age. A number of sources discuss the historical relationship between the two countries. *Bustanu's-Salatin* gives valuable information on the cultural exchange concerning art and architecture, on the envoys sent to the Ottoman capital, on the Ottoman's fleet arriving in Aceh, on the introduction of weapon production by the Ottoman troops, and on the Ottoman influence on the art and crafts in Aceh.[188]

The diplomatic and military relationships between the Muslim countries in Southeast Asia, particularly Aceh, and the Ottoman Empire continued from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. In the sixteenth century the figure of Raja Rum (the Ottoman sultan), who was indicated in the earliest Indonesian and Malayan Muslim literature, was represented as one of the great kings of the world.[189] When Aceh was entering the golden age in the sixteenth century, the Ottomans were also in their phase of ascendancy. It is not surprising that, therefore, Aceh was keen to build ties with the Ottomans. According to Anthony Reid, who has examined the role of the Ottomans in Aceh, the Acehnese wanted to obtain cannons, troops and vessels in order to strengthen their Kingdom. With the help of Turkish troops, Aceh was able to attack the Portuguese in Malacca, and to expand Aceh's control of the pepper trade in west Sumatra.[190]

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[187]   Sufi, "Cut Nyak Dhien," 78-96. Sulaiman, "Cut Nyak Meutia," 100-24. Sulaiman, "Pocut Baren," 128-40.

[188]   Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh*.

[189]   Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 395.See also Snouck Hurgronje, *Aceh Di Mata Kolonial*, trans. Ng. Singarimbun, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Yayasan Soko Guru, 1885).

[190]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13).*

Bustanu's-Salatin confirms that the relations between Aceh and the Ottomans began in the sixteenth century. It was particularly in the period of Sultan Alauddin Riayatsyah al-Kahhar (1537-1571),[191] of whom *Bustanu's-Salatin* says:

> He it was who created the system of government of Atjeh Daru's-Salam and sent a mission to Sultan Rum, to the state of Istanbul, in order to strengthen the Muslim religion. The Sultan Rum sent various craftsmen and experts who knew how to make guns. It was at the time that the large guns were cast. It was also he who first built a fort of Atjeh Daru's-Salam, and he who first fought all unbelievers, to the extent of going to attack Malacca in person.[192]

Through their exchange with the Ottomans, the Acehnese were able to make guns and to produce artwork and other weaponry. Barbara Leigh describes the shape of the Acehnese dagger's (*rencong*) blade as being similar to that of the Turkish sabre.[193]

During the reign of Sultan Alaudin Riayatsyah al-Kahhar the Aceh military was strengthened by Turkish troops, which included instructors in military tactics, military engineering and artillery. According to Djajadiningrat, in the last conquest Sultan Alauddin Riayatsyah al-Kahhar conscripted his troops, which comprised fifteen thousand Acehnese and four hundred Turks, and were armed with two hundred cannons of different sizes. The Ottoman Sultan Selim I led the Acehnese to raise the Ottoman flags on their war ships.[194] Later, Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636) continued to develop Aceh's relationship with the Ottomans to strengthen the country. The influx of men and guns, sent by the Ottoman sultans, helped Iskandar Muda to establish military schools in several places in his Kingdom.[195]

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[191]   Ibid., 31-32.

[192]   Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 396-97.

[193]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*. 46.

[194]   See Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 398.

[195]   Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam*, 94.

The Sultan's call for help from the Ottomans in order to strengthen the country is described in *Hikayat Meukuta Alam,* which describes the Sultan of Aceh sending a ship loaded with grain, rice and pepper as a tribute to the Ottoman Sultan. He also sent money to support the holy places in Mecca. During this time, Mecca and Medina were under Ottoman rule. Aceh's envoys, however, had such difficulty on their journey that it took them two years to arrive in Istanbul. By that time they had consumed most of the tributes that were intended for the Ottoman Sultan: they had spent the money, eaten all of the rice, and sold most of the pepper. Only several sacks of pepper, described as *si cupak*, remained on the ship. The envoys were mortified to inform the Ottoman Sultan of the situation. But the Sultan magnanimously welcomed the Acehnese contingent as his guests and warmly received the remaining Acehnese tribute.[196]

In return, the Ottoman Sultan sent the Sultan of Aceh great cannons, which had Turkish star motifs along the barrels,[197] and twelve war leaders, including the ship's captain, to lead the Acehnese envoys home. The greatest cannon was called *lada sichupak*, which makes reference to the experience of the Acehnese envoys to Turkey. In Aceh, the Turkish soldiers helped the Acehnese Sultan not only in wars but also to build a fort, a palace and mosques. In *Bustanu's-Salatin* Nuru'd-din ar-Raniry notes that the Turkish artisans participated in building architectural forms in the palace garden complex. Reid records that the Turkish soldiers and craftsmen did not return to Turkey; rather they lived in an area designated by the Sultan.[198]

The relationship between the two countries continued in the following centuries. De Beaulieu commented that Aceh's relationship with Turkey grew stronger, resulting in Aceh having strong armed forces.[199] Snouck Hurgronje notes that the Acehnese followed the Ottoman Sultan's instructions to honour Muhammad's birthday celebration with special enthusiasm. In return, the Ottoman Sultan discharged the

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[196]   Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 102. Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 397. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 276-77.

[197]   Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 397.

[198]   Ibid.

[199]   The account of Augustin de Beaulieu, represented by Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.

Acehnese from sending regular tributes to him. The Acehnese people still celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (*Maulid Nabi*) every year. Every village in Aceh holds a *Maulid* celebration in its *meunasah*.

Many high-ranking Acehnese officers visited the Ottoman caliphs and many Turks were in return sent to Aceh. They were sent not only to help Aceh fight against the Portuguese and the Dutch, but also to work in the city as ammunition makers, steel casters, ship captains and gunsmiths. Hurgronje points to the existence of a Turkish village in Aceh, named Bitay, from Baitul Mukaddis, Jerussalem.[200] He adds that the Turks who lived in this place were sent by the Ottoman Sultan to teach art and craft to the Acehnese people. Hill and Hurgronje concur that the Turkish inhabitants were of Syrian descent. The strong ties with the Ottomans have resulted in deep and significant influences on the Acehnese culture and history.[201]

The Decline of the Sultanate

The golden age of Aceh did not end until the end of seventeenth century. However, the death of Sultan Iskandar Muda in 1636 marked the starting point of decline. His absence gradually led to the erosion of Aceh's political and commercial power.[202] The weakening of the Kingdom of Aceh, Darussalam, was caused by two major threats, from outside and inside the Kingdom. The outside threat was the intervention of European powers, particularly the Dutch and the British, in their struggle to dominate trade in Southeast Asia. The international trade along the Strait of Malacca was in turmoil after the Dutch invaded Malacca in 1640. Aceh was then governed by Muda's successor, Sultan Iskandar Thani. Long periods of war weakened the Kingdom and decreased the capability of its armed forces. Internally, a conflict emerged after the death of Sultan Iskandar Thani, stirred up by the male *ulee balang*, (district leaders), who disagreed with leadership by queens.

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[200]   S. Hurgronje, *Atjehers*, trans. 1906. The Late A.W.S. O' Sullivan. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2 vols., vol. I (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906). See also Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 101.

[201]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13).*

[202]   Richard Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story* (Bangkok: FORUM-ASIA and SCHRA, 2000), 12.

Although Aceh was developing steadily in many areas, the internal and external threats eroded the Kingdom's economic and military powers. During the reigns of the four queens, a number of coups occurred. The aristocrats and merchants attempting to undermine the queens' leadership attracted the sympathy of the influential religious group (*wujudiah*). Together they made a case that women's leadership was against Islamic law. Their revolt against women's leadership culminated during the reign of Queen Naqiatuddin (1675–1678) when they set fire to the capital and destroyed most parts of the city, including the palace complex and the great mosque of Baiturrahman University.[203] The long period of conflict was exacerbated by the Dutch intention to claim Aceh as a colony.[204] Although the Acehnese never accepted Dutch authority, the Kingdom of Aceh ended when the Dutch successfully invaded the palace and captured the last Sultan, Muhammad Daud Syah, in 1903, after about sixty years of fighting.

1.3   Literature, Art and Architecture

The early period of Islam in Aceh produced a rich and unique cultural heritage that was inspired by both Islamic and pre-Islamic ideas. The histories of Indonesia often acknowledge the unique mixture of Hindu, Malay and Islamic cultural influences throughout the region of Sumatra.[205] This is evident in the cultural legacy of the seventeenth century, which can be traced in literature, art, architecture and urbanity. How this cultural mix has affected the development of literature, art, architecture and urbanity is the main question here.

Literature

Acehnese literature has its roots deep in the classical Malay literature, commonly considered the oldest in Indonesian and the Malay Peninsula. Its roots go back to the seventh century in the Kingdom of Sriwijaya in East Sumatra.[206] Between the seventh and twelfth centuries, Sriwijaya was a powerful Hindu kingdom in the Archipelago.

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[203]   Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 408. Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*, 209.
[204]   See the discussion on this matter in the section Colonialism in Aceh in Part 2
[205]   Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 50.
[206]   Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad*, xxii.

The Chinese missionaries who visited Sriwijaya on their journey to India in the middle of seventh century described Malay literature as being influenced by Hindu and Buddhist cultures.[207] Generally, religious literature was written in Sanskrit, although classical Malay was also used in commentaries and expositions.

In the thirteenth century, the early period of Islam, Malay literature was coloured by Islamic ideas. The Kingdom of Pasai became the centre of Malay culture and literature in the fourteenth century, and the Malay language was then used in literary works. Early texts were religious narratives translated from Arabic and Persian into Malay. These include, among other things, the biography of the Prophet Muhammad, the legends of his friends, and the orthodox teachings on man and God.[208] Later, Acehnese narratives were developed using Arabic and Persian references.[209] The influence of Islamic literature on classic Malay can be found in the inscriptions on early Islamic tombs and in the writing of *Hikayat Aceh*. For example, one of the earliest gravestones in Samudra Pasai, which belonged to Na'ina Husam al-Din (1420), was chiselled with elaborated stylised plant forms and the Persian poetry of Shaikh Muslih al-Din Sa'adi (1193–1292). This shows that Persian literature was in circulation among the Acehnese at the time.[210]

By the seventeenth century, Persian literature was well known among Acehnese writers, and the popular text of *Hikayat Aceh* shows this. According to Iskandar, the basic structure of *Hikayat Aceh* is similar to that of the Persian chronicles *Akbarnamah*, written between 1596 and 1602, which praise the Moghul ruler Akbar, who reigned from 1556 to 1605.[211] This similarity is not surprising since classical Malay literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was influenced by Persian literature. Iskandar adds that the author of the *Hikayat Aceh* showed his or her familiarity not only with *Akbarnamah* but also with the older work of Malay

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[207] Ibid., xxii-xxiii.

[208] Ibid., xxiv.

[209] Ibid., 311-13. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 51.

[210] Ibrahim Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 1999), 14.

[211] See Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh*. Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad*, 393. Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad,* Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 26,212.

literature, such as *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* and *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain.* The *Hikayat Aceh's* myth of origin, which mentions Alexander the Great as Iskandar Muda's ancestor, shows the author's familiarity with *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain*.[212]

In the *Hikayat* of Acehnese writers, the depiction of birds' life became a common theme. For example, the *Hikayat Bayeun* (the Tales of the Parrot) is a story of a parrot who rescues heroes. Leigh mentions that the use of the parrot as a theme has its root in Persian tales.[213] Hurgronje also includes the depiction of a dove among the themes of Hikayat, one of which describes a golden dove that came from paradise to teach the prince the religion of Islam.[214] Iskandar also refers to the depiction of birds in several poems which were written by the prominent seventeenth-century figure Hamzah Fansuri.[215] The common use of bird life in literature might have inspired the Acehnese artists to reproduce the theme in art and design works.

Art and crafts

Foreign influences, as we have seen, have been integrated into the indigenous culture in Aceh.[216] The early Islamic gravestones show the presence of Arab, Hindu, Javanese, Indian and Persian influences in Acehnese art.[217] In her studies of art and crafts in Aceh, Leigh shows that the main influences between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries were Islamic and Hindu–Indian. This can be seen in the formal characteristics of symmetry, geometric patterning and repetition. Leigh observes that the design motifs used in Aceh comprised five categories: "Geometric, vegetable life,

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[212] Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh*, 24.

[213] Barbara Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," in *The Malay of Islamic World*, ed. J Maxwell (Centre of South East Asian Studies, Monash University, 1982), 8.

[214] Hurgronje, *Atjehers*, 134.

[215] Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad*, 359-62.

[216] See Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*. Alfian, "Ratu Nur Ilah." Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah."

[217] The following is based mainly on Barbara Leigh's work. Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*. While living in Aceh, Barbara Leigh conducted research on Acehnese art and crafts over seven years. Her work contributes to our knowledge of the history of art and crafts in the region. Her book seems to be the only published book that gives a comprehensive explanation of Acehnese art and crafts within the context of cultural development before the colonial period.

bird life, other faunal life, and finally, explicitly Islamic motifs."[218] The Islamic motifs are often shown in the form of stars and crescents and Arabic calligraphy (Figure 1.3.1). These motifs decorate surfaces, such as wood, metal, gravestones, and fabrics, with elaborate carving or weaving.[219] Even weaponry, such as cannons sent by the Ottomans, had geometric motifs, as the *Hikayat Malem Dagang* describes.[220]

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Figure 1.3.1   Calligraphy on a gable
Source: Leigh (1989)

Regarding textiles and weaving, Davis wrote that he was given white linen robes, richly embroidered with gold threads,[221] whereas Lancaster described the presents given by the Sultan as gold-embroidered cloth with Turkish design motifs.[222] The Sultan sent with Lancaster to Queen Elizabeth I three pieces of cloth embroidered with gold thread. Davis also saw the interior of the King's palace, and noted that its walls were covered by cloth of gold. Leigh observed that the practice of using gold thread on cloth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had its roots in Aceh's trading partners, such as Ottoman Turkey, Moghul India and China.

According to Leigh, the geometric patterns that were freQueently used during the period of Islamisation took the form of scrolls, spirals, stylish plants or a mixture of

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[218]   Ibid., 151.

[219]   See Ibid., 24-144. For further studies of Islamic art, see Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1991).

[220]   See Reid, "Sixteen Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," 397.

[221]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 142.

[222]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 29.

these.[223] Often, decorations used abstract designs. The emphasis on the abstract form has resulted in a concentration on geometric schemas as a basis of design composition. Repetitive squares, circles and triangles are carefully arranged into patterns (Figure 1.3.2). From Leigh's various examples, neatness seems to be a particular characteristic of traditional Acehnese design.

Some examples of seventeenth century Acehnese art forms can be seen in the motifs found in the remains of the royal palace and garden complex. According to *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Turkish and Chinese artisans were involved in decorating the buildings.[224] The Turkish artisans, as *Bustanu's-Salatin* describes, decorated the wall surfaces of a cemetery enclosure, named Kandang, by engraving it with interwoven lines and inlaying *belazuardi* (white colour) stones. The tradition of tiling, carving and stone inlaying, using a range of techniques and colours, was well developed in Ottoman Turkey between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries.[225] Chinese artisans, *Bustanu's-Salatin* adds, were assigned to decorate the wall surfaces of an assembly room, named *Balai Rakan*. In contrast to their Ottoman colleagues, the Chinese artisans used motifs of fighting elephants, lions, flying birds, entwined dragons on posts, and tigers in pouncing positions.[226] This building no longer exists.

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[223]   Ibid.

[224]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 50-51. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 181,83.

[225]   Nurhan Atasoy, Afif Bahnassi, and Michael Roger, *The Art of Islam* (Paris: UNESCO and Flammarion, 1990), 63-66.

[226]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 51. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 183.

Figure 1.3.2   Acehnese ornament
Source: Author's collection

 Ornamentation with plant forms often portrayed lotus flowers and lotus buds (*boh ru).* The representation of lotus motifs reveals a Hindu influence, wherein the lotus symbolises "the seat of the highest divinity" and "the birth of the Universe."[227] Another Hindu influence can also be seen in the representation of a range of birds in various designs. Leigh explains that in Hindu mythology the depiction of birds symbolises Heaven.[228] And in Islamic religious symbolism, Leigh states, birds are associated with "the soul or spirit."[229] Leigh mentions that the peacock symbolises "immortality, for the feathers on the peacock's tail renew by themselves, which is an allusion to resurrection or rebirth."[230] As in traditional literature, the depiction of birds was also popular in traditional Acehnese art.

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[227]   "The Early Root of Indonesian Art," in *Indonesian Heritage: Visual Art* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1998), 12.

[228]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 162.

[229]   Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," 8. Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 162.

[230]   Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," 8. Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 162.

Generally, the patterns found in traditional Acehnese art are similar to those found in traditional Islamic art. However, the geometric schemes in traditional Islamic art are different from those in Southeast Asian art, particularly Acehnese traditional art.[231] In both contexts, however, ornamentation is found on building surfaces, gravestones, utilitarian objects and artillery (Figure 1.3.3). The earliest examples of surviving Acehnese ornamentation can be seen on Islamic gravestones and artillery pieces. Since the crafted stones were often imported from India, particularly from Bengal and Cambay, traditional Acehnese art shows Indian influences.

The strongest Islamic influence on Acehnese art can be seen in the fourteenth century of gravestone of Queen Nahrasiyah, which is covered with elaborate motifs and beautiful Arabic inscriptions (verses from the chapters of *Yasin*, *Al-Imran* and *Al-Baqarah*).[232] In addition to the Islamic influence, an Indian–Hindu influence can also be seen on her stone in its triangle-like shape, which is reminiscent of the lotus bud or the shape of 'Mount Meru', the Hindu symbol of the centre of the universe. In 1912, Moquette discovered that the Queen's tombstone was similar in type to some found in East Java that belonged to Maulana Malik Ibrahim, who originally came from Pasai and died in 1419.[233] Moquette also found that these two gravestones were identical to some found in Cambay, Gujarat. In support of Moquette's view, Alfian argued that the Queen's gravestone is a duplicate of that of King Umar Ibn Akhmad al-Kazaruni from Gujarat, India, who died in 1333, almost a century earlier than Queen Nurharsiah.[234]

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[231]   For geometric motifs of traditional Islamic art found in Arab countries; for example, see Issam El-Said and Ayse Parman, *Geometric Concepts in Islamic Art* (Guildford: World of Islam Festival Trust and Scorpion Publishing Ltd, 1976).

[232]   Calligraphy used as design motifs is regarded as a predominant feature in Islamic art. See Brend, *Islamic Art*, 33-34.

[233]   Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 31. See also Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 16.

[234]   See Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 31. Alfian, "Ratu Nahrasiah," 16.

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the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.3.3 An example of traditional Acehnese art on artillery pieces
Source: Alfian (1997)

Moquette's discovery enabled Alfian to conclude that Gujaratis produced
gravestones not only for the national market, but also for the Muslim market
overseas in Java and Sumatra. This seems plausible since trade with India had been
established before Islam came to Aceh. Moquette seems to concur with Ibn Battuta's
view regarding the strong Indian, particularly Moghol influences in Pasai. Earlier,
before the death of Queen Nahrasiyah, the tombs of Malik al-Salih and Na'ina
Husam al-Din (1420) in Samudra Pasai also showed both Hindu and Islamic
influences on art production. They are decorated with elaborate stylised plant forms,
depicting lotus buds, curled scrolls and calligraphy (Figure 1.3.4).

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This figure is included on page 95 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 1.3.4   The tomb of Na'ina Husam al-Din
Source: Alfian (1999)

With a long relationship between Aceh and Hindustan, the motifs on the gravestones echoed those found in Hindu and Buddhist art works. The most striking Islamic reference is in the Arabic calligraphy found on the tombstones. Leigh observed that since the eighteenth century some traditional houses had been decorated with carved wood. She cites an Acehnese poem written during that period to show some of the meanings associated with these art forms:

Carved flowers were visible, interlaced with one another as was the *poetio'*
awan miga (triangular cloud) motif,
One was amazed at the figures on the walls,
Here and there the moon had been occupied, and the scorpion constellation
was stamped through the wall.[235]

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[235]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 67.

1.4   Conclusion

The study of the cultural history of Aceh in this Part has shown how the roots of the rich cultural tradition of the Acehnese extended far, to the Malay Peninsula, India, China and the Middle East, bringing together a diversity of influences that has shaped Acehnese history, conditioned the Acehnese society, and created a unique urban environment. This part has also shown the cross-cultural interactions between indigenous people and foreigners that also contributed to the shaping of the Acehnese identity. In the following chapter, the study will examine how a dialogical frame of socio-cultural processes had affected the built environment of Aceh.

The study of the cultural history of Aceh gives evidence that cultural identity cannot be defined within a rigid definition. As Aceh has been part of Indonesia since the late period of Dutch colonialisation, it is crucial to explore the Acehnese cultural development in order to reveal the influence of the socio-political developments during these times on the shaping of urban and architectural identity in Aceh.

PART 2

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF ACEH

2.1   Architecture and Urbanity

Examining the developments of architecture and urbanity in Aceh, and particularly in Banda Aceh, from pre- to postcolonial periods, one encounters the paucity of literature on Aceh's architectural and urban history. There are no comprehensive historical studies covering Aceh's architecture and urban development, nor are there field surveys to compensate for the lack of information. This Part aims to contribute to the bridging of this gap in knowledge by providing a historical account of Aceh's architecture and urban development supported by field observations.

In reconstructing a picture of precolonial architecture and urban environment, the study refers mainly to Dall's "The Traditional Acehnese House" and Wessing's "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?"[1] Further information is sourced from the accounts of seventeenth-century western travellers presented in Anthony Reid's *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.[2] These sources, which have been briefly identified and examined in the introduction, cover religious, residential and palatial buildings. The history of this period's architecture and urbanity show the impact of cultural interactions between locals and outsiders.

Regarding the colonial period, the study refers mainly to Ibrahim Alfian's *Perang Colonial Belanda di Aceh*, Rusdi Sufi and Agus Budi Wibowo's *Pesona Banda Aceh,* and Hugh O'Neil's "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." Alfian includes a number of references to the built environment of

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[1]   Greg Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," in *The Malay - Islamic World of Sumatra: Studies in Polities and Culture*, ed. John Maxwell (Melbourne: Monash University, 1982). Robert Wessing, "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?," *Archipel* 35 (1988). Robert Wessing, "An Enclosure in the Garden of Love," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (1991).

[2]   The accounts of William Dampier and Augustine de Beaulieu, rewritten in Anthony Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 107-16. see Peter J. M. Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," in *Ethnic Identity in Urban Architecture. Generation of Architects in Banda Aceh* (Leiden: Leiden University, 1999).

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Aceh during the colonial period.[3] His work covers the palace complex during the beginning period of the Dutch invasion. Rusdi Sufi and Agus Budi Wibowo document the architectural development in the pre and postcolonial up to Suharto's reign.[4] While, Hugh O'Neil describes the cosmopolitan of Kuta Raja (now Banda Aceh) and the first infrastructure facilities built by the Dutch.[5] These sources, however, are not well illustrated to show the built forms that existed during the colonial period. The study, therefore, provides visual documentation of the Dutch buildings sourced from to the Centre of Documentation and Information of Aceh (PDIA, Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh) as well as from my private collection taken during field works.

Reviewing the above sources, it is apparent that most representations of the built forms during colonial time are based on the views of the two Dutch architects, Maclain Pont and Thomas Karsten, who insisted on preserving and developing traditional skill in order to maintain connection with the traditional root of the Indonesian society.[6] We shall return to these two architects in chapter three.

As for architecture and urbaninty during the postcolonial period, the study refers mainly to Peter J.M. Nas's "Ethnic Identity in Urban Architecture: Generation of Architects in Banda Aceh," published in *Indonesian Houses: Tradition and Transformation in Vernacular Architecture*,[7] and to Amir Husin, Chairani TA and Syafrizal's *Arsitektur*

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[3] Ibrahim Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 3rd ed. (Banda Aceh: The Documentation and Information Centre of Aceh, 1997).

[4] Rusdi Sufi and Agus Budi Wibowo, *Pesona Banda Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Parawisata, 2003). The book is one of a few that records the architectural history of Aceh. Rusdi Sufi, the main author, is a well known Acehnese historian who has been actively writing on the history of Aceh.

[5] Hugh O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." (paper presented at the Islamic Expression in Indonesian Architecture: Tectonic Dimension in Islamic Architecture Tradition in Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia., 2000), 23.

[6] See Wastu Praganta, "Dua Tokoh Pembentuk Arsitektur Indonesia," in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996), 163.

[7] Peter J.M. Nas, "Ethnic Identity in Urban Architecture: Generation of Architects in Banda Aceh," in *Indonesian Houses: Tradition and Transformation in Vernacular Architecture*, ed. Reimar Schefold, Gaudenz Domenig, and Peter J.M. Nas (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004).

Rumoh Aceh yang Islami.[8] These two studies reveal that in the late twentieth century, the built environment in Aceh showed visible tendencies of returning to vernacular form, and of giving special attention to the forms and aesthetic of indigenous buildings. These tendencies are traceable through the selection of traditional traits, such as roof shape, traditional Acehnese motifs, row of pillars, and their applications into modern buildings. Nas observes that the changes of social values among the Acehnese have stimulated them to move away from tradition yet to appeal for a modern built environment adorned with traditional forms. The use of an eclectic style on modern buildings becomes "symbolic" of ethnicity or nationality.[9] In his preface to *Arsitektur Rumoh Aceh yang Islam*, Governor of Aceh praised the authors of the book for their efforts to remind the readers of the value of creating local identity by introducing vernacular references into the modern built environment. These two studies show how Aceh's postcolonial architecture and urbanity have evolved from the colonial experience, carrying forward the colonial commitment and sensitivity to local identity.[10]

2.2   The Precolonial Period

In reconstructing a picture of precolonial architecture and urban environment, particularly of the seventeenth century, this study examines three types of building: religious, residential and palatial.[11]

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[8]   Amir Husin, Chairani TA, and T. Syafrizal, *Arsitektur Rumoh Aceh Yang Islami* (BAnda Aceh: Dinas Perkotaan dan Pemukiman Propinsi NAD, 2003).

[9]   Paul Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xxiv.

[10]   See Helen Jessup, "Dutch Architectural Visions of the Indonesia Tradition," *Muqarnas* 3 (1985): 144. See also Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 44. Iwan Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History" (PhD Dissertation, University of Sydney, 1991), 167.

[11]   I refer here to available traditional and contemporary sources written in Malay and English. For premodern sources see T. Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 1st ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 48-74. Sir Richard Carnac Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 2nd ed., vol. III Part I (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1919), 114-35. William Dampier's account, rewritten in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 107-16. Augustine de Beaulieu's account, rewritten in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 64-80. Albert Hastings Markham, ed., *Voyages and*

Religious Buildings

From the early period of Islamisation a number of mosques were built in the capital city. Djamil recorded that the earliest mosque was built during the reign of Sultan Alaidin Mahmud Syah I (1267–1309) in the court of his palace, Darud-dunia, now located in Banda Aceh. The Sultan named the mosque Baiturrahman (the House of the Merciful).[12] Later, another mosque, Baiturrahim (the House of the Compassionate) was built by Sultan Alaiddin Syamsu Syah (1497–1511) in the palace court Kuta Alam, now also located in Banda Aceh.[13] During the seventeenth century several other mosques were built in the city of Aceh. Iskandar Muda rebuilt the mosque Baitur-Rahman, then located in the city of Aceh (Figure 2.2.1), and built the Indrapuri mosque, which was named after the place where it was built, about thirty kilometres outside the capital city (Figure 2.2.2).

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 101 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.1   The Great Mosque Bait al-Rahman, built by Sultan Iskandar Muda
in the seventeenth century
Source: Smith (1997)

Works of John Davis the Navigator (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 140-55. For contemporary sources, see Barbara Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1989). Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House." Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia."

[12]   M. Junus Djamil, *Tawarich Radja Radja Kerajaan Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Kodam I - Iskandar Muda, 1968), 37.

[13]   Ibid., 38.

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Figure 2.2.2   The Indrapuri Mosque, built by Sultan Iskandar Muda
Source: Alfian et al (1997)

Hikayat Aceh cites the report of the Turkish envoys in which they described the great mosque of Aceh as follows:

> In the country, there is an immensely large and very high mosque, of which the roof top is made of plated silver and it has crystal mirrors. Large numbers of people come here to pray. According to us only the mosque in Mecca can hold as many believers. The other mosques of the world cannot rival with this one. It extends as far as the eye can see; the minbar… is made partly of gold and partly of *suasa*… During the prayer every one repeats: "Our master is the Sultan Perkasa Alam who controls both worlds and both seas, east and west."[14]

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[14]   As cited and translated by Wilhelmina Remke Raap, "The Great Mosque of Banda Aceh: Its History, Architecture and Its Relationship to the Development of Islam in Northern Sumatra" (Master of Arts, University of Victoria, 1994), 40-41.

The mosque was also described by the English traveller Peter Mundy. When he visited Aceh in 1637, he witnessed the ceremonial procession of the sacrifice of the buffaloes to celebrate the great Islamic feast of *Ied Adha* ('Buckree Eede', according to Mundy). In his account he included a drawing of the ceremonial procession, in which he also sketched the mosque, thereby giving us a picture of seventeenth century mosque architecture in Aceh. The great mosque (Baitur-Rahman*)* was destroyed by the Dutch in 1873. The *Indrapuri* mosque, however, survived, later served as the Sultan's palace, and was reconstructed in the nineteenth century.

The mosque drawn by Mundy was square in form, surrounded by a wall, and covered with a four-storey roof structure. Based on Mundy's drawing, the form of this mosque was similar to that of the Demak Mosque, the oldest Javanese mosque, built in the seventeenth century (Figure 2.2.3). According to de Graaf, this type, with multi-storey roofs, can be found throughout Indonesia (Figure 2.2.4).[15] This type of mosque became the common prototype of the traditional Acehnese mosque up to the end of the nineteenth century.

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This figure is included on page 103 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.3   The Demak Mosque
Source: de Graff (1962)

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[15]   H. J. de Graaf, "The Origin of Javanese Mosque," *Journal Southeast Asian History* March, no. 4 (1962): 1.

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 104 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.4   The Jepara Mosque, Central Java
Source: de Graff (1962)

The type of building with various forms of multi-storey roofs exhibits Hindu influences. The mosque character was clearly closer to that of a Balinese temple than a Middle Eastern mosque (Figure 2.2.5).

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 104 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.5   A Balinese temple
Source: Tjahjono (1998)

William Dampier, who visited Aceh between 1698 and 1699, reported that Acehnese mosques had no turret,[16] but there was usually a drum placed on the mosque's terrace.[17] The call for prayer was announced by beating the drum. It consisted of a log of palm wood that was hollowed and covered with hide. Meanwhile, De Graff assumed that, since Acehnese mosques had no minaret, the call for prayer might take place from the top of the single or multi-storey roof structure. In some cases, Graff explained, "mosques in capital cities had or still have as a rule more roofs than simple village mosques. The great number of roofs, rising above each other, was the reason why in the 17th century one sometime[s] spoke of *towers* instead of mosques."[18]

In addition to the large mosques, *meunasahs* were considered important buildings in Acehnese village life. A *meunasah* is a place where people came together for daily praying and social activities. Formerly, the *meunasah* was used as a night gathering place for the men of the village, who often slept in the *meunasah* instead of in their home. This place was also used to lodge visitors when no other shelter was available in the village.

Residential Buildings

Most of the seventeenth century Acehnese houses were built mainly of reed and bamboo; however, some houses were constructed of stone.[19] In his travel account Peter Mundy included a drawing of a traditional Acehnese house (Figure 2.2.6)[20] Similar to other Western travellers' accounts, Mundy described the house as an enclosed wooden

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[16]   See the account of William Dampier in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 108. Graaf, "The Origin of Javanese Mosque," 2.

[17]   See Graaf, "The Origin of Javanese Mosque." Tugiono KS, Sutrisno Kutoyo, and Ratna Evy, *Peninggalan Situs Dan Bangunan Bercorak Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2001), 33.

[18]   Graaf, "The Origin of Javanese Mosque," 2.

[19]   William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966). Arun Kumar Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641" (PhD, Cornell University, 1962), 80.

[20]   Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667.*

structure, with frames and posts built of wood, walls of mat or bamboo, and roof covering of thatch.[21] The house was raised on poles of about eight feet in height, with a free passage underneath it.[22]
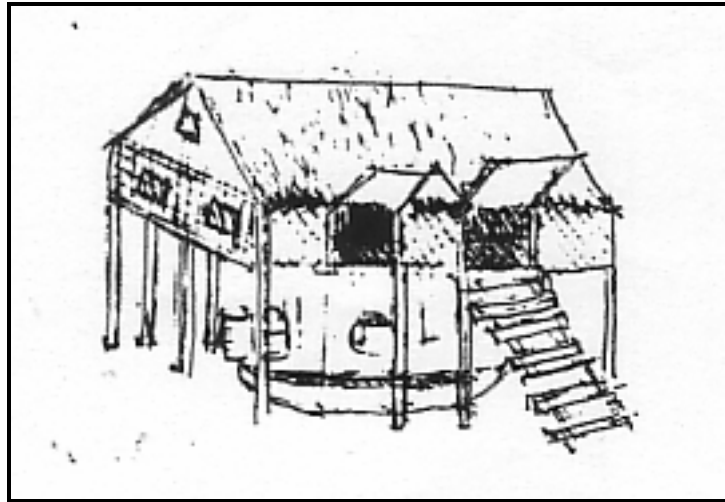
Figure 2.2.6   A traditional Acehnese house, sketched by Peter Mundy
in the seventeenth century
Source: Temple (1919)

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[21]   Ibid., 132.

[22]   See John Davis, *De Outste Reizen Van De Zeeuwen Naar Ost-Indie 1598-1604* (Banda Aceh. Indonesia: Printed for Pusat Dokumentasi Aceh (The Centre of Aceh Ducumentation), translated in English, 1976), 141. Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 147. Sir Richard Carnac Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey* (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1903), 321. Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 132.

The floor was made of bamboo or timber slats spaced at certain intervals. The floor construction allowed cooling breezes to pass underneath while it kept the dwelling high enough to avoid flooding during the rainy season.[23] Flooding occurred almost every year and people had to move from one place to another by boat.[24] According to contemporary source, written by Greg Dall, this type of construction was designed not only to protect the residents from wild animals, but also to address climatic needs. Building a house upon stilts raises the house floor, allowing the cool moist air to be drawn up through the slatted floor to reduce the hot currents created from heated roof space.[25]

All joints were held together without using iron nails; they were lashed with *ijuk* (palm fibre from the sugar palm) twine and supported by wooden pegs and wedges (Figure 2.2.7).[26] According to Dall, this construction method made it easier for the owners to dismantle their houses, move them to other places and rebuild them again. Using this joining technique "the structure has considerable flexibility and can survive the destructive force of earthquakes."[27] The gables of a traditional house are placed on the long side of the building with the gable screens slanting outward. Gable screens were perforated to allow the wind to pass through the roof to cool off the inside air (Figure 2.2.8).[28]

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[23] Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 132. See also the account of William Dampier in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.

[24] Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 132. Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 80.

[25] Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 37. Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 56.

[26] Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 50. Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 63.

[27] Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 50.

[28] Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 56.

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NOTE:
This figure is included on page 108 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.
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Figure 2.2.7   Construction detail of the traditional Acehnese house
Source: Dall (1982)

From the studies conducted by Nas, Leigh and Dall, and the travel accounts of Mundy, Davis and Bowrey, it can be inferred that the traditional method of house construction did not change radically until the nineteenth century. Dall gives a detailed explanation of the individual sections of traditional Acehnese house.[29] Vertically, the house comprised three main sections: upper, middle and lower (Figure 2.2.9). As in most Southeast Asian domestic buildings, these three sections were considered as representing the sacred, the human and the nether worlds.[30]

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[29]   Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 35-53. See also Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," 1-20.

[30]   Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House."p.51

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 109 of the print copy of
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Figure 2.2.8   Ornamentation on the gable screen served as house ventilation
Source: Smith (1997)

NOTE:
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the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.9   Elevation of a traditional Acehnese house
Source: Dall (1982)

Undan undan was the roof area, which was considered the most sacred domain, that of
the Deity. The space was used to store the family's valuable items such as their
heirlooms. Daily life, which was considered to comprise profane activities, was placed

in the middle section. The lower section, underneath the house, was used for several functions. It used to be used for storage and keeping pets and animals. Keeping the animals closed to human living space is meant to "protect them from predatory wild animals and deterring thieves."[31] In addition, this area was used as a temporary resting place, an extension of the gathering space when the two verandas (*seuramoes*) were full, and a space for funeral ceremonies where "the mourners receive the condolences of relatives and friends."[32]

Horizontally, in most cases, traditional Acehnese houses consisted of three divisions. Dall observes that each division had a different degree of privacy (Figure 2.2.10). The divisions were the male veranda (*seuramoe agam*), the central area (*dalam*) and the female veranda (*seuramoe inong*). The place of the kitchen was in the female veranda since this was considered as a female domain. Occasionally, a house had an annex that was built behind the house, attached to the female veranda. This additional room was used as a kitchen. Each division was separated by a wall with an opening at the centre, making the divisions accessible from one to another. Both male and female verandas were spacious, stretching along the long sides of the house. The male veranda was considered as a public space and was used for performing daily prayer and holding social gatherings.

Dall explains that visitors who were not members of the family or close friends were not allowed to enter beyond the male veranda. The female veranda was a private part of the house. This room belonged to women and their children who lived in the house. When the owner of the house held a feast (*kenduri*) the female veranda was used as an additional gathering room for women guests only.

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[31]   Ibid., 37.

[32]   Ibid.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 111 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.10   Floor plan of a traditional Acehnese house
Source: Dall (1982)

The most important area in the house was the *dalam*.[33] This area consisted of two
bedrooms that were separated by a narrow central hall way, running between the male
and the female veranda. Some houses had only one enclosed room, placed on one side of
the *dalam.* The *dalam* was elevated about half a metre higher than the two verandas. One
of these rooms was used for newly weds or for the family as a place to wash a corpse
before burial. In most cases, the horizontal divisions were clearly identified from outside
the building (Figure 2.2.11).

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[33]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*, 72. See also Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 40.

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 112 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.11   Horizontal division of a traditional Acehnese house
Source: Dall (1982)

Entrance into the house was via the main stairway, which led directly to the male veranda. Male visitors use the main entry to reach the male veranda, whereas female visitors use a rear entry to reach the female veranda. In current times, the segregation of male and female is more flexible. Female and male visitors may use the main entrance to enter the house by using the main stairway. Dall observes:

> Acehnese superstition demands that there be an odd number of steps in the stairway. According to the ubiquitous precedence of right over left, the correct customary way to leave the house is to lead with the right foot on descending the steps so that the right foot is the first foot to reach the ground. If this occurs, the Acehnese believe that luck will accompany the person and make his journey safe.[34]

In traditional Acehnese society odd numbers seemed to have been generally preferred over even numbers. For example, the number of bays between the posts was invariably

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[34]   Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 37.

uneven, and the length of the posts and the beams were also odd numbers.[35] Traditional carpenters also used parts of the human body as measurements. Three basic measurements were used, the width of one finger (*jaroe*), the width of the back of the hand (*paleut*), and the length from the elbow to the end of the middle finger (*hah*). Occasionally, builders also used the length of the hand span (*jeungkai*), the arm span (*lheuk*) and the chest width (*deupa*).[36]

The construction process was associated with ritual ceremonies. Nas explains that it was crucial that house construction "was carried out at the proper time in accordance with religious beliefs and accompanied by required ritual ceremony."[37] These ceremonies were important in traditional Acehnese society, wherein a house was seen as "a refuge from the powers of evil and their influence."[38] Nas describes the construction ceremony as having three stages: the first is when the builder begins to work on the posts and beams; the second is when the erection of the house starts; and the third is when the house is finished. According to Nas, the first two ceremonies are minor, whereas the third is major. The house owner provides plenty of food for the guests who come to celebrate the new house.

The Acehnese considered the house a clean space because the interior is where daily prayers are performed. Before entering the house one had to clean one's feet. A water vessel was often placed near the bottom of the stairs for this purpose. Traditional Acehnese houses were commonly set in an east–west orientation. According to local belief, this orientation had a ritual function.[39] The east–west orientation, as Dall says,

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[35] Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," 10.

[36] Ibid., 9.

[37] Ibid. See also Adnan Abdullah, "Konsepsi Masyarakat Aceh Tentang Tata Ruang," *Sinar Darussalam* 1989, 199. Abdullah gives detailed explanation of how Acehnese used to choose the best dates to erect houses with reference to religious principles.

[38] Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," 9.

[39] This belief was passed from one generation to another. See Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House," 35.

continued to be used by Muslims for religious reasons. When Muslims perform daily prayer, they are required to face Mecca, which is located to the west. Thus building orientation identifies the ritual direction for daily prayers (see Figure 2.2.9).

 In the Hindu tradition, an east–west orientation was chosen to avoid the building entrance directly facing the sunset, since Hindus see east and sunrise as signifying life, whereas west and sunset signify death. Hence, orienting the doorway towards the west became undesirable.[40] Moreover, an east–west orientation was also necessary to prevent house damage, especially to the roof, by the strong force of the northern and eastern winds. This orientation let the northern and eastern winds pass from underneath the house through the living area to the top of the roof.[41] The breeze from inside the house travelled out without any obstruction through the perforated gable screens[42].

The Royal Palace

In contrast to the Acehnese traditional house, the palace was large and built with stone in the Indian style (Figure 2.2.12).[43] Beaulieu, who visited Aceh in the seventeenth century, reported that the palace had a circumference of about two miles in an oval shape.[44] The palace complex included several halls, pavilions and large courtyards where branches of the main river ran through. Beaulieu described that the Sultan had diverted the river to pass through the palace complex.[45] Beaulieu provides details of steps that were made of black stones on the sides of the river, allowing people to reach down to the river to bathe. The palace complex gates were about twelve feet high and were made of thick

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[40]   Ibid.

[41]   Ibid.

[42]   Ibid.

[43]   Dampier's account, written in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*. p.108 See also Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 85.

[44]   See Beaulieu's account in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 71. De Graff's account studied by Denys Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, trans. Winarsih Arifin, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1991), 59.

[45]   Beaulieu's account, written in Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 175-76.

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wood, while the walls, which were as high as the gates, were made of stone.[46]To reach the royal palace, one had to pass through three zones of open green spaces, each of which had a post guard.[47]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 115 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.12   The seventeenth century palace court of Aceh
Source: Lombard (1991)

Beaulieu wrote that the first open space, located after reaching the main gate, was so large that it could hold four thousand soldiers and three hundred elephants (Figure 2.2.13).[48] In this area there were an artillery room, a brick house with a terrace, and four large halls. Beaulieu observed that one of the halls was a place for entertainment where people had to take their shoes off to enter, and that the hall gate was engraved with silver-plated motifs, the walls covered by gold, velvet and damask cloth, and the floor covered by Turkish rugs.[49] In this hall the Sultan entertained his guests with food and

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[46]   See Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 85.

[47]   Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 148. Davis, *De Outste Reizen Van De Zeeuwen Naar Ost-Indie 1598-1604*, 54.

[48]   Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 176.

[49]   See Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 148. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 176.

music and dancing performances. The Sultan's household was large.[50] Dasgupta recorded that the palace great yard was guarded by about 500 eunuchs, and that inside the Sultan's domain there were about 300 women, most of whom were guards. These guards were "grouped under several captains and had their civil judges and night officers."[51]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 116 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.2.13   The open space within the palace complex
Source: Lombard (1991)

This palace complex included a beautiful garden called the Pleasure Garden (*Taman Gairah*). The garden was located to the south of the palace. In the *Bustan al-Salatin*, Ar-Raniry gave a long description of the palace garden, detailing how the garden design echoed those of the Moghuls. He described the garden as being square and surrounded by glowing stone walls; the ground was covered with coloured stones and planted with about fifty kinds of flowers and fruit trees, while the Aceh River

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[50]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 86.
[51]   Ibid.

(then called *Darul Ishki*) ran through the garden and the palace.[52] Several structures were erected in the palace garden, only four of which have remained. These are the artificial mountain (*Gunongan*), placed in the centre of the garden, the mortar stone (*Leusong*), located at the foot of the *Gunongan*, the King's enclosure (*Kandang*), located to the north of the garden complex, and the dome gate (*Pinto Khob*), which connected the palace and the garden.

The Gunongan was constructed by Iskandar Muda for his wife and daughters (Figure 2.2.14).[53] Some elements of the Gunongan which were made of gold disappeared. In the *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Ar-Raniry tells that the building had copper pillars and a silver roof with ornaments on the top.[54] He adds that the people of Aceh participated in finishing off the work on this structure by applying one finger full of white-wash each to whiten the whole monument.[55]

Lombard noted that the structure of the Gunongan reveals Hindu influences: it represented a cosmic mountain. 'Gunongan' means 'artificial mountain', and it is located in the centre of the garden, so it is possible that it was conceived and built to represent a cosmic mountain, although there are no traditional sources that support this suggestion. A contemporary study by Robert Wessing proposes that, while the complex was used as a pleasure garden for the royal family, the Gunongan was also used by the Sultan to judge criminals.[56] His explanation is based on *Hikayat Meukuta Alam*, which mentions that it was in this place where Sultan Iskandar Muda brought to justice *si Ujud*, a prince from Johor, Malacca, who fought against Aceh during the Sultan's reign.[57]

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[52] Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 40. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.

[53] See Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 180.

[54] Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*.

[55] Wessing, "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise?," 160.

[56] Ibid.: 161.

[57] Ibid.: 161-63.

Figure 2.2.14   The *Gunongan* (artificial mountain)
Source: Author's collection

Next to the Gunongan there was a walled enclosure called *Kandang,* the sultans'
cemetery (Figure 1.30). The *Bustanu's-Salatin* gives a detailed picture of the glorious
structure and the richness of the Kingdom.[58] It says that the exterior walls were
decorated with white stones and colourful ornamentations. The inner walls were inlaid
with white stones (*belazuardi*). The Kandang was crafted by Turkish artisans. Its roof
consisted of two layers: one was constructed of board painted in black with *lumerek* so
that its colour sparkled brightly during the day; the other was painted in emerald green.
The top of the roof was layered with golden colour and its ornamentations were made of
silver.[59]

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[58]   Iskandar, *Nuru'd-Din Ar-Raniry: Bustanu's-Salatin Bab Ii, Fasal 13 (Nuru'd-Din, Ar-Raniry: Garden of Kings Vol. Ii, Chapter 13)*, 50.

[59]   Ibid.

Figure 2.15   The sultan's walled cemetery enclosure (*kandang*)
Source: Author's collection

According to Lombard, the gravestones of the sultans who lived in the golden age were ornamented with precious metal. With reference to Davis's account, Lombard explains that Sultan Alaidin Riayat Syah IV instructed the artisans who were to make his gravestones to use one thousand pounds of gold.[60] Referring to de Graaff, who attended Sultan Iskandar Thani's funeral, Lombard also says that the Sultan's coffin was made of gold and copper alloy (*tembago soasa*). However, none of the luxurious gravestones has survived, probably because of their preciousness. According to the *Bustanu's-Salatin*, the other buildings erected in the palace garden were called the *Balai Gading* and the *Balai Cermin*. These were built with the help of Indian and Chinese artisans and have not survived.

The Urban Environment

Aceh had a developed urban environment during its golden age in the seventeenth century (Figure 2.16). The town, as did most Southeast Asian cities that served

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[60]   Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.182.

international trade, grew into a large urban centre. It became the centre of exchange between Muslim traders from the West and Chinese traders from the East. According Thomas Bowrey, in the seventeenth century Aceh was a very populous metropolitan city.[61] Bowrey estimated that by the end of the seventeenth century there were about seven or eight thousand houses in the capital city.[62] Reid adds that the population of the city of Aceh at that time was about one hundred thousand people.[63] The population comprised, in addition to the local inhabitants, foreign traders, artisans, writers and scholars, from the Middle East, Turkey, China, Gujarat, Bengal, Pegu, Portugal, Burma and Java.[64]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 120 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.16   Lithograph of the kingdom of Aceh before the eighteenth century
Source: Alfian et al (1997)

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[61]   Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 285. See also Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 81.

[62]   Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 293. Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 81.

[63]   Anthony Reid, "The Structure of Cities in Southeast Asia, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* XI, no. 2 (1980).237.

[64]   See Davis, *De Outste Reizen Van De Zeeuwen Naar Ost-Indie 1598-1604*, 57. Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 288.

Seventeenth-century travellers' accounts, such as those of Dampier and Mundy, give a picture of an Islamic ambience in the city of Aceh.[65] Dampier recorded the number of mosques in the city and referred to his hearing of the calls for prayer in the mornings. The Sultan encouraged the Acehnese to build as many houses in the city as possible in order to accommodate the visitors who were interested in living in the city. With reference to Beaulieu's account, Lombard wrote that it was the Sultan himself who designed the houses.[66] Each house, Lombard explains, was built with simple wood construction and had woven bamboo walls.

There was a unit of defence in individual compounds that consisted of a group of buildings surrounded by a bamboo fence. Like other palaces in Indonesia, the palace complex (*keraton*) in Aceh was located at the core of the urban hierarchy. In early times, Indonesians assumed that the sultan was identical with God *(dewa)*.[67] Although the Acehnese had converted to Islam, Hindu beliefs, somewhat subdued, have remained part of Acehnese culture. In terms of urban design, the city of Aceh displayed the typical characteristics of traditional towns in the region, with the mosque, the palace complex, and the market placed near an open public space.

Islamic scholars came to and lived in Aceh either temporarily or permanently, and worked in the city court after completing their pilgrimage. They taught primarily theology and arithmetic.[68] According to Dasgupta, there were many schools in the city that taught in Arabic. The city of Aceh was located in a wide valley, with a circumference of about sixteen miles.[69] It was "formed like an amphitheatre by lofty

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[65] See the account of William Dampier, written in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology.*108. Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667.* Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 322.

[66] Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 62.

[67] Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Kota Kota Muslim Di Indonesia Dari Abad 13 Sampai 18 Masehi* (Kudus, Central Java: Menara Kudus, 2000).

[68] Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 81.

[69] Temple, ed., *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-1979 by Thomas Bowrey*, 286.

ranges of hills."[70] It was situated within a dense forest described as spacious and green, and there was no distinct boundary between the city and countryside. The thick foliage hid the houses and made them invisible from the seashore.[71] Ibn Muhammad Ibrahim, a Persian traveller in 1685, depicted the peaceful city of Aceh:

> Evening is never sultry, noon is never hot
> And trees sway gently in cool breezes.
> The happy grove smiles to see new spring
> And raises a canopy of a dew-fresh branches.
> Everywhere the trees are heavy, laden with bright fruits.
> Their heads bow to the ground to thank God for His bounty. [72]

The city was located along the side of the Aceh River, three kilometres away from the bay and about five kilometres from the foothills. Craft such as rowboats and rafts were the only transportation along the Aceh River, which linked the city to the port. The river was the centre of urban activity. Access to the city from the port was not easy since the seafarers had to pass the hazardous delta of the Aceh River, and many of them drowned.[73] People also encountered difficulties reaching the shore of the Aceh port, with many islands in the bay creating a natural protective barrier.[74]

The interior land was covered, as Beaulieu observed, by rivers, swampy lands and woods and was also difficult to penetrate. This natural protection, strengthened by a fort

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[70]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 80.

[71]   See Davis, *De Outste Reizen Van De Zeeuwen Naar Ost-Indie 1598-1604*, 53. See also Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 141. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.53.

[72]   Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*.91

[73]   De Graff's account, described in Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 54.

[74]   See Tom Pieres, *The Summa Oriental of Tom Pieres: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512-1515*, 2nd series, no. LXXXIX ed., vol. 1 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1944). Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*. Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.53-54.

at the river mouth, helped to protect the country from external attacks. In 1599, John Davis recorded that the fort by the river was a simple construction. It was a round shape, and looked like a pound with low walls.[75] When Augustin de Beaulieu came to Aceh in 1621, he noted that the port was protected by cannons, had several pounds and was enhanced by parks with beautiful pavements. As a trading port, Aceh's harbour was busy. There were many trading ships anchored in Aceh harbour every day from places such as Surat, the Malabar Coast, Bangala, Pegu, Syam, China, Java and Borneo.[76] The Portuguese came to Aceh in the sixteenth century, followed by the Dutch and the English in the following century.[77]

Dasgupta, in his study of seventeenth century trade and politic in Aceh, explains that the city included a large open space for foreign traders. There were two main markets, selling merchandise from both inside and outside the country. One market was located on the river mouth, which was at its northern end, and the other was in the city.[78] The market places consisted of "a few streets with a row of houses closely joined together."[79] Each trader paid a monthly tax of a chip of gold to the royal officials. Davis and Dampier recorded that the Chinese, who were one of the largest trading groups, had their own quarter.[80] Dampier gave a detailed description of the Chinese traders' presence in Aceh.

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[75]   See Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*. p.54

[76]   Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, 288. H. M. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh Dan Nusantara*, 1st ed. (Medan, Indonesia: Pustaka Iskandar Muda, 1961), 272. William Dampier rewritten in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 110. Dampier indicated that there were about ten to fifteen trading ships anchored in Aceh port daily.

[77]   Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 83.

[78]   Ibid., 81.

[79]   Ibid., 81-82.

[80]   Markham, ed., *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, 143. William Dampier, rewritten in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 111.

Their settlement was located near the sea at the northern end of the city, and their community included mechanics, carpenters and painters.[81] When they arrived in Aceh, Dampier adds, they produced chests, drawers, cabinets and Chinese toys, and sold them in their shops and doorways. Their temporary presence in Aceh with their large amount of merchandise attracted people to come to the place. Dampier wrote, "for about two months this Place is like a Fair, full of Shops stuff with all sort of vendible Commodities, and People resorting hither to buy."[82]

The city and the palace did not have fortification. For protection the palace court was surrounded by a ditch three metres deep and three metres wide. The excavated soil was used as a court wall.[83] According to Beaulieu, this method of construction was introduced by the Dutch. The top surface of the mound was planted with bamboo so that the palace was rendered invisible.[84] Beaulieu also described the beautiful natural setting of the palace, with luxurious pavilions and four large courts. The palace was situated on the northwest side of the city. It was placed near a small mountain stream, carrying an abundance of water into the palace complex.[85] The mosque, placed on the west side of the city plaza, became the centre for the community.

The productive interaction between the indigenous people and foreigners, such as Indians, Turks, Chinese and Arabs, has coloured the built forms in the Kingdom of Aceh. This Part has also shown that the production of the seventeenth century built environment, as well as the making of the Acehnese architectural and urban identity during the precolonial period, were achieved within a dialogical frame of a socio-cultural process involving local and global forces.

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[81]   William Dampier represented in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 111. See also Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 83.

[82]   William Dampier represented in Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 111.

[83]   See Dasgupta, "Acheh in Indonesian Trade and Politics: 1600-1641", 85. See also Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, 173.

[84] Beaulieu's account cited in Lombard, *Kerajaan Aceh: Jaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*.173

[85]   Ibid.

2.3   The Colonial Period

During the Dutch occupation, the Acehnese persistently resisted the presence of Europeans in their region. This led to the Dutch spending their energy and efforts on warfare rather than on development. Therefore, the built environment of Aceh did not develop during this period as did that of the Javanese cities, and only a few sources exist on the colonial architecture of Aceh. [86] The writings on the colonial architecture in Indonesia and works of some Dutch architects at the end of the nineteenth century are relevant here.

In *Perang Colonial Belanda di Aceh*, which tends to focus on the Acehnese resistance, Alfian included a number of references to the built environment of Aceh during the colonial period.[87] As mentioned in the previous Part, most parts of the city of Aceh, including the palace complex, were burned down during the coup in the reign of Queen Naqiatuddin in the late of seventeenth century. These unfavorable conditions, the conflicts and wars, continued in the colonial time. The effects of this reflected on the built environment of Aceh. This part discusses the urban environment, specifically the centre of Dutch government complex, religious buildings, and residential buildings.

The Urban Environment

During the colonial era, the name Banda Aceh was changed to Kuta Raja and the city became the centre of the Dutch government administration for Banda Aceh and Great Aceh areas.[88] The colonial government administration was led by a Dutch military and civil governor. The period of the colonial government in Aceh, from 1874 to 1945, was relatively short compared to other regions in Indonesia. For instance, in Java the Dutch colonial government stayed for about 360 years. However, the legacy of the colonial presence formed the foundation for the development of the city in the post colonial time.

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[86]   In examining colonial buildings, I have conducted a field survey of the city of Banda Aceh.

[87]   Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*.

[88]   Kota Raja ("King city") the name given by the Ducth to symbolize the place as "the centre of power." See Kamal A. Arif, "Arketipe Arsitektural Kota Banda Aceh," in *Aceh Kembali Ke Masa Depan*, ed. Bambang Bujono (Jakarta: Ikatan Kesenian Jakarta Press, 2006).

During the colonial period, many traders came to Aceh to trade, and the traces of their activities can still be seen in the existing China Town. Hugh O'Neil, referring to the reports of a French mineral prospector from Perak who came to Aceh in 1880, describes the cosmopolitan city of Kuta Raja, and various traders from Ambon (Maluku), Java, Armenia, Iran, India and China.[89] O'Neil describes that the non-local settlements were located between the town centre and the port settlements of Ulee Lheu.

Physically the development of the city during the Dutch period was concentrated in the area of the Sultan of Aceh's palace (Figure 2.3.1). The lowland of the city of Banda Aceh grew around the Aceh River (Krueng Aceh), which regularly flooded, causing considerable damage. The city was divided by Aceh River into two parts, western and eastern. The old part of the city was located on the western side of the river.

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[89]   O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." 23.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 127 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.1   Ground plan of the palace compound
Sorce: Alfian et al (1977)

The book *Pesona Aceh*[90] records various new developments such as the civil
administration buildings, military and civil housings, entertainment facilities, and offices
buildings. Later, the city grew in population and expanded into the eastern side of the
river, where civil housing projects were constructed for the new comers, particularly
European, including military facilities such as a hospital, an army barrack, an office
building, a water tower, a market place, and a prison.[91]

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[90]   Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House.", Sufi and Wibowo, *Pesona Banda Aceh*.
[91]   See Sufi and Wibowo, *Pesona Banda Aceh*.

Beside these buildings, the Dutch also created public facilities such as parks and schools.[92] *Pesona Aceh* records that the urban developments in the city of Kuta Raja was significant during colonial period.[93] New urban infrastructure projects, such as roads, a drainage system, and public facilities, were completed in response to the growing demands of urban activities.[94] The existing development of the colonial city became the starting point, an embryo, for further development of the city of Banda Aceh during the postcolonial era.

At the beginning of colonial occupation, in 1874, the Dutch built the landing port to cater for their commercial interests and the need for supply, such as food, military equipments, and other goods. The pier was also later upgraded in order to allow the docking of large steamships (Figure 2.3.2).[95] In the same year, the upgrade of Aceh's urban infrastructure commenced, as the construction of new roads and railway lines were commissioned by the colonial government, but mainly to serve their military needs.[96] A five-kilometre long and 1.067-meter wide railway line, extending from Ulee Lheu port to the city centre, was built in 1874 (Figure 2.3.3 and 2.3.4).

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[92]   *De Atjeh - Omlusten in 1896*, (Rotterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, No year). See also *Pesona Banda Aceh*, 40.

[93]   Sufi and Wibowo, *Pesona Banda Aceh.*

[94]   Ibid., 39.

[95]   As explained in the previous chapter, before the Dutch invasion large ships used to anchor off-shore, and the cargo to be transferred to the land up the river in small boats. See Part I.

[96]   Rusdi Sufi, *Pasang Surut Saudagar Aceh - Menyambut Kongres Saudagar Aceh Serantau, Kebangkitan Saudagar Aceh - Mengamankan Aceh Melalui Perbaikan Ekonomi* (Banda Aceh: 2007), 27-29.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 129 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.2   The Ulee Lheue port
Source: Centre of Documentation and Information of Aceh (PDIA)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 129 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.3   A railway from centre city of Kuta Raja to Ulee Lheue
Source: Jong (2001)

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 130 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.4   Railway from Kuta Raja (Banda Aceh) to the northern part of Aceh
Source: Jong (2001)

In over a decade, between 1884 and 1896, during the so-called defensive phase, the Dutch military built a "concentration line" of defensive forts linked by a railway line, going through and around Lambaro and Lamnyong (today both are part of Banda Aceh) and extending to the west of Ulee Lheue (Figure 2.3.5).[97] And in the first decade of the 1900, the Dutch extended the railway line outside Banda Aceh, reaching Sigly and Lhokseumawe, which are located in the northern part of Aceh.[98] However, some of the constructions were destroyed by the Acehnese (Figure 2.3.6).

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[97]   Michiel van Ballegoijen de Jong, *Station En Spoorbruggen Op Sumatra 1876 - 1941* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Lfeuw, 2001).

[98]   Ibid.

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 131 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.5   A train station in Ulee Lheue during the colonial period
Source: Collection of the Centre of Documentation and Information Aceh (PDIA)

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 131 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.6   A railroad bridge sabotaged by Acehnese fighters
Source: Alfian (1997)

Being a part of the city centre, the port of Ulee Lheue became a lively hub. Traders and visitors generated lively social environment in Ulee Lheue, as documented in some existing sources. According to "Dari Olee Lheue ke Kota Raja," an article that appeared in *Tanling* magazine, the port area of Ulee Lheue, which was part of the Kuta Raja,

became a lively and densely populated urban centre during the colonial period.[99] The article records that the environment of Ulee Lheue was clean. A housing development, comprising no less than 120 dwellings, were built near the port (Figure 2.3.7), giving the place a Dutch character. This housing complex no longer exists. The article also mentions that a famous band called "Atjeh Band" performed regularly in the city port of Ulee Lheue.

The book *De Atjeh – Omlusten in1896,* written in Dutch, mentions that the resettlement area in Ulee Lheue was mostly inhabited first by the Dutch and then by the Chinese. The information on Ulee Lheue provided in this article is supported by Abu Bakar's *Perang Belanda in Aceh,*[100] a source that describes the port as a place of entertainment, where groups of musicians performed and a hotel called Hotel Kagulman owned by a Dutch was built in 1930s.[101]

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[99] "Dari Olee Lheue ke Kota Raja" in *Tanlung magazine*, fourth edition, November – December 1977. The The Tangling is education magazine published by the department of Education in Aceh. The magazine was provided for Acehnese teachers. The article was based on the article *Van Ulee Lheue nar Kuta Raja* (From Ulee Lheue to Kuta Raja). It was written by a Dutch press who stopped by at Ulee Lheue in his journey from Dutch to Java and witnessed the life in Ulee Lheue. In additions, the article was written based on the author's interview with the Mr Ilyas Rayeuk, the Olee Lheue community leader who witnessed the life in Ulee Lheue during colonial time.

[100] Abubakar, *Perang Belanda Di Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1977). The book was written based on the original book *De Atjeh Oorlog* written in Dutch by Pau Van'T Veer.

[101] Ibid.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 133 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.7   A resettlement area in Ulee Lheue
Source: Collection of the Centre of Documentation and Information Aceh (PDIA)

Pendopo and the centre of colonial government complex

This complex, located on the site of the Sultan palace, includes the governor's house, named Pendopo, his office, and a number of Dutch military houses. The house and office of the governor and examples of the military houses will be discussed here. After the Dutch were able to capture the royal palace, they turned the complex into a centre for the colonial government.[102] The condition of the palace complex during the early time of the Dutch invasion was rather poor, as shown in Figure 2.3.8. It was different from other palace complexes during the golden age of Aceh: luxoriousness in the palace no longer existed. The buildings were constructed in wood similar to ordinary traditional Acehnese houses.

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[102]   Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*.

NOTE:
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the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.8   The northern part of the Sultan of Aceh's Palace in the colonial time
Source: Alfian et al (1997)

In 1879, the Dutch first redeveloped the complex to accommodate the head quarter of the colonial government in Great Aceh (*Aceh Besar*), adding a residence (Figure 2.3.9), an office for the civil and military governor (Figure 2.3.10), and military houses (Figure 2.3.11 and 2.3.12). The architectural forms of this complex reveal a shift from the traditional local to the colonial style.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 134 of the print copy of
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Figure 2.3.9   The governor's house in 1927
Source: Pusat Ducumentasi dan Information Aceh collection

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Figure 2.3.10   The office of civil-military governor in 2003
Source: Author's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 135 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.11   A Dutch colonial building within the centre of colonial government
in Banda Aceh
Source: Masdar's collection

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Figure 2.3.12   A Dutch colonial house within the centre of colonial government
in Banda Aceh
Source: Author's collection

The most striking characteristics of the colonial style that appear in these buildings are their large size when compared to the previous traditional buildings of the Palace complex. The new buildings (the residential and office of the governor) have relatively tall wood and glass windows and double wooden doors. These houses, like any other colonial houses in Aceh, were built either on the ground and made of stone (the Baperis building) or built about 1 meter above the ground and made of wood (the Pendopo).[103]

Built in 1880,[104] the Pendopo and the Baperis were constructed on the site of the Aceh's Sultan palace that was ruined by the Dutch. The Pendopo was built on the branch of the Aceh River dug by the Sultan in the seventeenth century,[105] whereas the office of the governor, located next to the house, was constructed at the same time of the Pendopo. The Pendopo is now used for the provincial governor of Aceh, while the governor office is used for the office of the 1945 Generation Association of Aceh (Gedung Juang or

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[103]   This model has existed in Java since the nineteenth century. However, while in Java the houses were built of stone and on the ground, in Aceh such buildings were built of wood.

[104]   It is written on the floor of the building at the main entrance that Pendopo was built in 1880.

[105]   Sufi and Wibowo, *Pesona Banda Aceh*. See Part 1, Islam in Aceh: A Cultural History particularly on the section of the Royal Palace.

Baperis). These two buildings have been renovated several times,[106] the structure of the building, however, has remained unchanged. Later in 1900s, the governor's house was guarded by a numbers of Dutch military houses, mostly built from wood, too, but a few of them were built from brick (see Figures 2.3.11 & 2.3.12), and located around the western side of the governor's house.

Religious Building

The mosque of Bait al-Rahman (Figure 2.3.13) was the first monumental work built by the Dutch during the colonial time.[107] It was designed by the French architect de Brunc, and was constructed between 1879 and 1883, after the Dutch destroyed the old mosque in 1877. For the Dutch, the construction of the mosque was a symbol of reconciliation, an attempt to persuade the Acehnese to end their uprising.[108] The Dutch mosque was built on the ruins of the mosque, built by Sultan Iskandar Muda in the seventeenth century, as previously explained.[109]

NOTE:
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the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.13   The Great Mosque of Bait al-Rahman
Source: De Atjeh – Omlusten in 1896

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[106]   The biggest renovation of Pendopo was done in 1987. This renovation changed its appearance as well as the interior dramatically, especially with the deliberate replacement of the European elements with Achenese decoration. This will be discussed in detailed later.

[107]   O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." 22.

[108]   Ibid. See Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 38.

[109]   See Part 2, The Precolonial Period: Religious Building.

The building integrates local and foreign elements. The idea of an enclosed square plan seems to derive from the former mosque built in the seventeenth century. The external appearance borrows from the Indian Moghul styles.[110] The mosque was constructed of non-local materials. O'Neil explains that the tiles were marble from China, the major structures were timber from Burma, and the metal components were brought from Surabaya.[111] The fine tracery, O'Neil adds, was manufactured in Belgium. He indicates that the character of the mosque shows Hindu influences in the lotus petal ornaments on its capital, the abstracted motifs on which were derived from the ancient *Kala* head of Indic origin.[112]

According to O'Neil, the appearance of the mosque, with its foreign materials, was totally alien to local people. He reports that for several years the mosque was empty. O'Neil argues that the unfamiliar building style made the religious leaders ban Acehnese people from using the mosque as a place for worship.[113] The argument that the mosque was abandoned because of its unfamiliarity is questionable. However, the cultural history of Aceh shows that the Acehnese had no difficulty absorbing and productively engaging with cross-cultural influences.[114]

The rejection of the mosque was more likely to have been motivated by the political circumstances of the time: it was an expression of the Acehnese rejection of the Dutch occupation, a gesture of refusal to be colonised. All contributions by the Dutch, including the construction of the mosque, were rejected by the Acehnese, whose resentment of the Dutch was expressed at many levels and in many forms. Abandoning the new mosque was only one such expression. The continuous Acehnese revolts

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[110] O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." 23.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] William Dampier recorded that the palace of Aceh Kingdom was built in an Indian style, see Reid, *Witnesses to Sumatra: A Traveller's Anthology*, 108. *Bustanu's-Salatin* describes the influence of Turkish and Chinese arts on the seventeenth century architectural forms constructed in the palace garden.

resulted in slowing the pace of development. The buildings which were constructed served the needs of the Dutch more than those of the Acehnese. The construction of mosque, as mentioned above, was more a symbol of reconciliation rather than for fulfilling local needs. As most of the buildings and infrastructure projects were constructed mainly to serve the Dutch civilian and military needs, the mosque was the only building that served the needs of the Acehnese.[115] In 1904, the Dutch also built a church near the great mosque of Bait al-Rahman (Figure 2.3.14). The modern church shows the designer's sensitivity toward local climate.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 139 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.14   Church Hati Kudus
Source: Masdar's collection

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[115]   See J Jongejans, *Land En Volk Van Atjeh - Vroeger En Nu* (Hollandia Drukkerij: NV. Baarn, 1939). Sufi, *Pasang Surut Saudagar Aceh - Menyambut Kongres Saudagar Aceh Serantau*, 27-29.

Public Buildings

The colonial architecture of the early twentieth century included private and public buildings. As in Java, these buildings were of two different types: one followed the Western tradition, while the other responded to the tropical conditions.[116] Of the type that followed the Western tradition, most designs copied the prevailing neoclassical style. Some examples of neoclassical style are the high school SMA Negeri I built in the 1890s (Figure 2.3.15), the two-story, heptagonal telecommunication tower (Menara telekomunikasi) built in 1903 (Figure 2.3.16),[117] and the Printing House (Gedung Percetakan) built in 1920[118] (Figure 2.3.17). Other buildings of the same architectural style were the Abattoir (Figure 2.3.18) and the middle school SMPN 4, both of which were destroyed by the tsunami (figure 2.3.29).

Figure 2.3.15   SMAN I Banda Aceh
Source Author's collection

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[116] For further discussion of this, see in Yulianto Somalyo, "Attempted Synthesis: Dutch Architects in the Indies," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunawan Tjahjono (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1998), 122-23.

[117] It is noted on the building that it was built in 1903.

[118] The Building has changed its function into the Grocery market

Figure 2.3.16   Telecommunication tower
Source: Author's collection

NOTE:
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the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.17   Gedung Percetakan in 1930
Source: Collection of the Centre of Documentation and Information Aceh (PDIA)

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Figure 2.3.18   The abattoir located in Kampung Jawa, Banda Aceh.
Source: Masdar's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 142 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.19   SMPN 4 Banda Aceh
Source: Masdar's collection

The attempts to adapt to the local climate can be seen in a number of buildings built in the second decade of twentieth century. The architects working in this new style found the nineteenth-century neoclassical form, the cubist form, flat roofs, and towers to be inappropriate to the hot and humid tropical climate.[119] The building that is now used for

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[119]   Budi A Sukada, "The Emergence of a New Indies Style," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunawan Tjahjono, Julian Davison, and Goh Geok Yian (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1996), 120-21.

Aceh's regional office of the Central Bank of Indonesia demonstrates a starting point in adapting to the local climate, by providing cross-ventilation and reducing direct solar radiation (Figure 2.3.20). Other buildings of the same period presenting a growing sensitivity to local conditions and traditional forms are the military hospital in Kuta Alam on the side of Aceh River (Figures 2.3.21). This building is placed on the eastern side of the river, whereas Atjeh Hotel and Atjeh Club, the Dutch assembly room, were located on the western side, across the great mosque of Baitur-Rahman (Figure 2.3.22, 2.3.23).

Figure 2.3.20   The Central Bank of Indonesia: A 'New Indies Style' Building
Source: Author's collection

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NOTE:
This figure is included on page 143 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.
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Figure 2.3.21   The military hospital in 1962
Source: Winkler's collection

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Figure 2.3.22   Hotel Aceh in 1930
Source: Collection of the Centre of Documentation and Information Aceh (PDIA)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 144 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.3.23   The Aceh Club in 1930
Source Collection of the Centre of Documentation and Information Aceh (PDIA)

Residential Buildings

In addition to the public buildings, there remain some residential buildings in Banda
Aceh built during this period. The early residential buildings were constructed from non-
permanent (wood) semi-permanent materials ('the base' in stone and 'the body' in
wood), and permanent building. Generally, these buildings were raised about one to one

and a half metres above the ground. This typology was dissimilar to that of the Javanese colonial houses, which were generally built of stone and on the ground. Raising the floor might have been to avoid flooding during the rainy season.

The governor's house, as shown in figure 2.3.9 reveals efforts to adapt to local conditions. The house has large verandas at the front and its floor is raised above the ground. Other houses display some common features of the Indies-style country house (Figure 2.3.24, 2.3.25),[120] which became the main model emulated throughout Banda Aceh during the Dutch occupation. Yet, some permanent brick houses had no verandas and were built on the ground.

Figure 2.3.24   A colonial residential building in Banda Aceh
Source: Author's collection

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[120]   This model has existed in Java since the nineteenth century. However, while in Java the houses were built of stone and on the ground, in Aceh such buildings were built of wood)

Figure 2.3.25   A colonial residential building in Banda Aceh, built in the
second decade of the twentieth century
Source: Author's collection

In conclusion, there emerged during the colonial period two main architectural styles in
Banda Aceh: one evolved under western influences, the other under local conditions.
Adapting to local conditions was an approach followed by the Dutch architects in order
to respond to local climate as well as to appear more relevant to the subjects of their
colonies.[121] The sensitivity towards local conditions has its roots in the Ethical Policy
introduced by the Dutch in order to deal with the social mix with the intention of uniting
the Indonesian and Western traditions in the "tropical Netherlands."[122] In a sense, the
Dutch invented Indies architecture as a medium to calm down the Acehnese people
against the foreignness of their colonial presence so that they can protect their colonial
interests from possible intervention by the locals.[123]

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[121]   See detailed discussion on the Ethical Policy and Dutch legacy in Architecture and Urban Planning
in Part 3.

[122]   Jacques van Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia,"
in *Indonesian Politic: A Reader*, ed. Christine Doran (North Queensland: Centre for South-East
Asian Politics, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987).

[123]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*,
28.

2.4   The Postcolonial Period

The postcolonial period covers the reign of two Indonesian presidents: Sukarno and Suharto. During Sukarno's reign, the built forms in Banda Aceh city showed a rapid move from the Indies to modern styles. The spirit of freedom in Indonesia following the independence is also reflected in the architecture of Aceh. During this era, modernity first emerged with the adoption of the international style and later evolved in several directions.[124] During Suharto's reign, however, and particularly in its first decade, the city of Banda Aceh witnessed some architectural development that showed the growing interest in the crossings between modernity and tradition. The preoccupation with tradition, which was stimulated by the New Order's emphasis on Indonesia's cultural identity, prompted the architects working in Aceh to seek inspirations from the local tradition.[125] Such efforts encouraged the rooting of modern designs in Indonesian cultural heritage.[126] Many architects, however, adopted an eclectic approach, whereby traditional architectural elements were selected and incorporated into modern buildings according to individual whims and talents.[127]

Sukarno's Era (1945-1965)

Being far removed from the centre of power, Aceh received much less of the 'radiance' of Sukarno's nation building than did other regions. Together with the Acehnese revolt this slowed down the rate of development considerably.[128] Therefore, there were only slight changes in the built environment during Sukarno's time in office.[129] Most of the constructions that did take place were built for and commissioned mostly by the

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[124]   See Part 3, Sukarno's Old Order.

[125]   See Part 3, Suharto's New Order.

[126]   Architectural forms and the political view under Suharto New Order will be discussed in the next chapter under Part, Modernity and Visionary Politics.

[127]   Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," 11. *See also* Kamal A. Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya" (Universitas Katolik Parahiyangan, 2006), 90.

[128]   See A. Hasjmi, *Semangat Merdeka: 70 Tahun Menempuh Jalan Pergolakan & Perjuangan Kemerdekaan* (Banda Aceh: 1985).

[129]   There are limited sources on the built environment of Aceh. Therefore, the analysis presented here is based on the author's observations in Banda Aceh.

provincial government, and most buildings were concentrated in the capital city, Banda Aceh. Architectural construction started to impact upon the built environment of the capital city at the beginning of the 1960s.

Public Buildings and Urbanism

In general, the early postcolonial architecture in Aceh, particularly in Banda Aceh shows the connection with modernism. The buildings appeared mostly as box forms and with a grid system regulating the elements of the external walls (Figure 2.4.1). Some evidence of Cubism and Art Decco architectural styles, which emerged in Banda Aceh in the 50s and 60s, can still be found today. These styles carried the influence of the Delft School and were found mostly in public buildings (Figure 2.4.2).

NOTE:
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Figure 2.4.1   The Aceh Parliament Office in the mid 60s
Source: *Indonesia 1945 – Indinesia 1995: The first Fifty Years 1945 – 1995*

Figure 2.4.2   The office of shipping company in Ulee Lheue
Source: Author's collection

Darussalam's Student Town

With the declaration of Aceh as a special region[130] and the motto to shine Acehnese with education, the Student Town (Kota Pelajar Mahasiswa) of Darussalam was initiated by the high ranks of the provincial government staff, among whom was the Governor, Ali Hasjmi, and the Head of Aceh Military Reagent (Panglima Komando Daerah Militer Aceh), Sjamaun Gaharu.[131] Occupying about 200 hectare of land, the location of the Student Town was chosen to be on the outskirts of Banda Aceh in a place called Darussalam, from which came the name of the project *Kota Pelajar Mahasiswa*.[132]

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[130]   In order to end the insurgency in Aceh against central government, the central government granted the Aceh region as the 'special province' allowing the region to have autonomy in religion, customary law and education. See thesis part 2: Economic and Political Issues.

[131]   M. Junus Djamil, *Gajah Putih* (Kuta Raja: Lembaga Kebudayaan Atjeh, 1959), 27-37.

[132]   Governor Ali Hasjmi, supported by the Head of Military of Aceh, general Gaharu, asked the Acehnese people to participate in the development of the Town, and a large number of Acehnese volunteered. The works included land clearing, building roads and drainage, building houses, classes, and offices, and erecting the monument, with all expenses being provided by the Acehnese, primarily by Acehnese entrepreneurs through the fund of Yayasan Dana Kesejahteraan Aceh (YDKA). Laying the first stone occurred on the 17th of August 1958. See Hasjmi, *Semangat*

In order to finance the project, the governor established a foundation called Yayasan Dana Kesejahteraan Aceh (YDKA).[133] At the beginning of its establishment, the Student Town was facilitated by educational institutions from Kindergarten to University level. The Faculties of Economic, Law, Islamic Law, Education (including Islamic Education), and Veterinary Science were first established.[134] These faculties formed the embryo of two Universities: the University of Syiah Kuala (Unsyiah) and the National Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN). Each University was lead by a director.

The faculties mentioned above were resourced by staffs and lecturers from other institutions inside and outside Aceh, such as Medan, Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta. External staffs came to Banda Aceh on a regular basis and were paid by the government of Aceh as well as the contribution from Acehnese people through the YDKA.[135] In additions, an inter-governmental agreement between Indonesia and Australia, the Volunteer Graduate Scheme, coincided with the expanding of the educational program in Aceh. Through this agreement, the Australian Government sent graduate students to Indonesia, including Aceh, and Acehnese students were thus exposed to Australian lecturers. Many of these volunteer workers were enthusiastic Christians, who saw this as a service to others that went along with their religious beliefs.[136] This interaction showed Aceh and the Acehnese as open to the West, an image that stood in contrast to the relentless resistance of the Dutch occupation.

The Student Town of Darussalam was inaugurated by the President of Indonesia, Sukarno. The president flew to Banda Aceh at a time when air travel was not common in

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Merdeka: 70 Tahun Menempuh Jalan Pergolakan & Perjuangan Kemerdekaan. See also Djamil, *Gajah Putih*.

[133] See Djamil, *Gajah Putih*. Information on the Student Town of Darussalam was also obtained from interviews with Ms Husna Hasan and Mr and Ms Winkler, who have taught at the Universities and lived in the Student Town since the beginning of its establishment.

[134] Hasjmi, *Semangat Merdeka: 70 Tahun Menempuh Jalan Pergolakan & Perjuangan Kemerdekaan*, 540. The author was the founder of the Student Town.

[135] Ibid., 542.

[136] Based on the information from Mr and Mrs Winkler, fresh graduated students from Melbourne, who were the two of several volunteer workers.

Indonesia. The Seulawah aeroplane that flew him over was donated by the Acehnese.[137] The monument, which was constructed in the centre, marked the establishment of the Student Town of Darussalam (Figure 2.4.3). Sukarno's hand writing and signature was attached to the monument (Figure 2.4.4). His writing reveals a desire to motivate the Acehnese to look to the future and to seek to achieve their goals. His coming to the inauguration also reveals his support for the emerging technocrats in Indonesia, and especially in Aceh (Figures 2.4.5).

Figure 2.4.3   The monument that remark the establishment
of the student town of Darussalam.
Source: Author's collection

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[137]   The plane landed at the airport built by the Dutch near the beach of Lhoknga, of the Lampu'uk subdistrict.
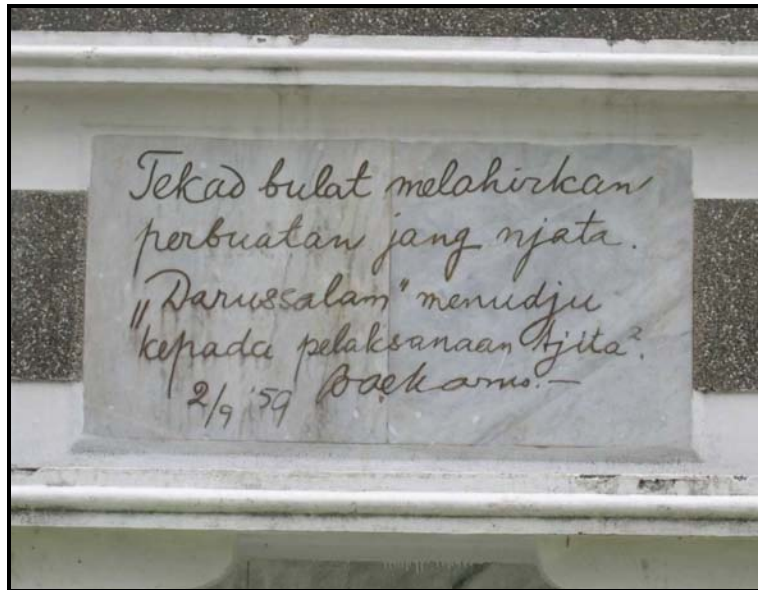
Figure 2.4.4   Sukarno's massage and signature on
the plaque attached to the monument
Source: Author's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 152 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.5   The President was about to leave the inauguration
place at the assembly room (*aula*)
Source: Winkler's collection

Sukarno was not interested in forming an Islamic state in Aceh, and, therefore, the
central government tried to eliminate the influential role of the *ulama* in the Acehnese

society.[138] The impetus to have higher educational institutions in Aceh came from the Acehnese themselves, yet the President supported the Acehnese in this matter.[139] His writing on the plaque attached to the monument stressed the necessity of advancing university education and raising the level of learning.

With the establishment of the university, the educational project commissioned by the provincial government turned into a reality. Several structures were constructed, such as the lecturers' houses, the Faculty of Economics together with the assembly room *(aula)*, the monument, the guest houses, and the joint building for the Faculties of Law and Education (Figures 2.4.6, 2.4.7, 2.4.8). Of these buildings, only the joint building, shown in Figure 2.4.8, have later been demolished and replaced with new buildings for the administrative offices. The architectural style of the campus showed the influence of the Dutch modern architectural forms – A box form, grid system, and glass window. This was because the majority of Indonesian architects at that time studied with Dutch educators and worked for Dutch architects. Most of the Dutch architects left the country at the end of 1950s, following the Indonesian government's programs of collective nationalisation.

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[138]   See Part 2. As Sukarno was not interested in developing an Islamic political system in Aceh, he sought to replace the *ulama* with a group of technocrats. See also Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam* (Jakarta: PT Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1990), 49-67.

[139]   President Sukarno refused the Acehnese people's intention, particularly the *Ulama's*, to form an Islamic state in 1950. See Part 2, Economic and Political Issue. See also Ibid.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 154 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.6   A lecturer's house
Source: Winkler's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 154 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure2.4.7   The Faculty of Economic
Source: Winkler's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 155 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure2.4.8   The Faculties of Law, Islamic Law, Veterinary, and Education
Source Masdar's Collection

Residential Buildings

Regarding domestic architecture, the 1920s–1930s Dutch colonial houses in Java were
replicated in Aceh in 1960s. The main characteristics of the house were a single storey
with tiled roof, plastered walls, and glass doors and windows with teak frames. This type
of house, which had been designed for middle-class European families, was built in
Aceh for the Indonesian government employees. This architectural style can be seen in a
number of houses built in the early 60s in Lamprit (Figure 2.4.9, 2.4.10).[140] A few
private houses built between 50s and 60s carrying the influence of Cubism can also
found in Banda Aceh (Figure 2.4.11).

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[140]   According to Ibu Husna, one of few government employees who have lived in Lamprit since 1958,
Lamprit was the first housing area to be built in Banda Aceh in the third quarter of 1950. Personal
interview, Banda Aceh, October 2008.

Figure 2.4.9   An early house built for the government employee
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.10   An early house in Lamprit, Banda Aceh built in 1960s
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.11   A private house in the mid 60s
Source: Author's collection

In the 1960s a distinctive architectural style known as the "Jengki" (from Yankee) emerged. The first buildings of such a style first appeared in a housing project at Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta, in the 1950s (Figure 2.4.12). This architectural style, which was used in both public and private building, expressed the spirit of freedom among Indonesians (Figures 2.4.13, 2.4.14, 2.4.15).[141] The spirit of freedom was translated into an architecture that differed from what the Dutch had done.

The main characteristics of this style were cubic and geometric forms, transformed into pentagon and irregular solid forms, pitched roofs, and festive composition of surfaces.[142] Houses built in this style were designed mostly by construction companies employing architectural graduates from the Bandung Institute of Technology.[143] Traces of this architectural style can be found in the buildings within the University complex from the

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[141]   Johan Silas, cited in Josef Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," *Architronic* 5, no. 2 (1996): 6.

[142]   See Ibid.

[143]   Ibid.: 6.

early period of its establishment (figure 2.4.8). Examining a range of buildings that existed from the early period of independence during Sukarno's reign, a rapid move from the colonial Indies to postcolonial modernism can be detected.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 158 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.12   Architectural style of Jengki in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta
Source: Sukada, 1996

Figure 2.4.13   The 'Jengki' style: a common architectural style
in the early 1960s
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.14   The 'Jengki' style: a common architectural style in mid 1960s
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.15   The 'Jengki' style: a common architectural style in the early 1960s
Source: Author's collection

Religious Buildings

As for religious buildings, the precolonial traditional type of mosque architecture with multi-storey roofs was common in Aceh. In additions to that, a few Baitur-Rahman type of mosques were erected in Banda Aceh (see Figure 2.3.13). This type of religious

building, using arches and domes characteristics of both Middle Eastern and Indosaracenic styles, became a model for Islamic architectural forms in Aceh.[144]

2.4.2   Suharto's Period (1965-1998)

Until the mid-1980s, the built environment in Aceh was developing slowly.[145] This was the reverse of what was happening in the capital, Jakarta, despite Aceh being one of the richest regions in Indonesia. For the reasons discussed above, Aceh was geographically and politically alienated. In spite of that, over fifty years from the Indonesian independence until Suharto's era, various architectural style coloured the built environment of Banda Aceh. During Suharto's period there were conscious efforts to develop the built environment of Banda Aceh with regard to the quest for local identity. Here we shall discuss how modern architecture of Aceh deliberately incorporated traditional Acehnese elements. We will also discusses a number of government projects constructed during the reign of Ibrahim Hasan, the governor of Aceh. During Hasan's reign, a number of new and renovated modern government buildings sought to express traditional identity. These will be discusses under three topics: The Built Environment of Aceh, Returning to Tradition, and Ibrahim Hasan's Influence

The Built Environment of Aceh
Public Buildings and Urbanism

During the early New Order era, particularly in 1970s, a few government buildings were erected in the capital city, Banda Aceh. Most of them were influenced by the Le Corbusian style of the *Unite d'Habitation,* characterised by geometric shapes and repetition of façade elements (Figures 2.4.16, 2.4.17). The buildings of this period tended to orient themselves towards modern architecture. Generally, buildings were designed with reference to tropical architecture, taking into account ventilation and sunlight. For example, the two entrances as annexes to the main building of the

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[144]   This style was considered a popular Islamic architectural idiom during the first half of the twentieth century. See O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra."

[145]   This part is based largely on the author's personal observations in the field.

government office in Taman Sari, Banda Aceh, shown in Figure 2.4.16 are constructed later at the end of 1990s and the roof of the government building shown in Figure 2.4.17 was also added later in 1990s in order to incorporate local characteristics.[146] These became common architectural features in Banda Aceh.

Figure 2.4.16   The government office in Taman Sari built in 1970s
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.17   The government office in Simpang Lima built in 1970s
Source: Author's collection

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[146]   Based on the author's field observation.

The President Instruction Programs on education, health and infrastructure resulted in a significant impact on the built environment of Aceh. In addition, a number of primary school, healthcare centres in the subdistricts (Puskesmas), market buildings, roads, and bridges were erected in Aceh in 1970s.[147] Yet most of these constructions were replaced by new buildings due to their old conditions.

Revisiting Local Tradition

In the mid 1970s, the city of Banda Aceh started to colour its built environment with a traditional accent. The preoccupation with tradition, which was stimulated by the New Order's emphasis on Indonesia's cultural identity, prompted the architects working in Aceh to seek inspirations from the local tradition. This resulted in many of them adopting an eclectic approach, whereby traditional architectural elements were selected and incorporated into modern buildings according to individual whims and talents.[148] The traditional elements that were most frequently used in contemporary buildings in Aceh, both public and private, were triangular gable screens, posts, ornamentations and a variety of roof designs (Figures 2.4.18 and).

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[147] *Indonesia 1945 - Indinesia 1995: The First Fifty Years 1945 - 1995*, (Jakarta: Buku Antar Bangsa, 1995).

[148] Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia," 11. See also Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 190.

Figure 2.4.18   A modern building and its traditional traits, built in the beginning of 1990s
Source: Author's collection

The reference to the local tradition first appeared in government projects that sought architectural imageries closely connected with vernacular forms. The parliament office building, wherein the provincial governor's office was added to the parliament offices, is one of the early efforts to build with local accent (Figure 2.4.19). The building was built in 1975, under Aceh governor Muzakkir Walad.[149] As a representative of the central government, Walad's orientation followed Suharto's directives.

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[149]   The buildings were built after President Suharto inaugurated the mega project "Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park"(*Taman Mini Indonesia Indah*). See Part 2, Suharto's Period. In Mrs Suharto's speech for the working conference of provincial governor in 1971, she instructed the provincial governor to retain support the TMII project.

Figure 2.4.19: The parliament office, built in the mid of 1970s
Source: Author's collection

Several government buildings of the 80s followed the same trend of inserting traditional elements, such as gable roofs, row of columns, and traditional Aceh motifs in order to present local identity.[150] In addition, the involvement of young architects who had received their education in ITS Surabaya, East Java, began to enrich the built environment of Banda Aceh. The architectural works of the 1980s reveal a widespread concern with demonstrating a sense of belonging, with expressing a sense of being Acehnese.[151] A large number of public buildings were often decorated with Acehnese ornamentation, particularly on the triangular gable screen. Some buildings also included heavily decorated columns, whether free-standings or attached to walls. In some cases, in order to enhance the traditional character, a number of contemporary buildings have their main entrances marked by two rows of columns supporting an additional roof attached to the main building (Figures 2.4.20 and 2.4.21).

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[150]   Husin, Chairani TA, and Syafrizal, *Arsitektur Rumoh Aceh Yang Islami*.

[151]   See Nas, "Ethnic Identity in Urban Architecture: Generation of Architects in Banda Aceh," 142-51.

This design trend spread throughout Banda Aceh, particularly in the buildings that flanked the road from the city centre to the Student Town of Darussalam. The new office building of the provincial governor, built in the beginning 1990s, is also located along this road (Figure 2.4.22). As designed from the outside, the interior of this office was also decorated with traditional Acehnese motifs (Figure 2.4.23). By the 90s, both public and private buildings increasingly appeared to insist on the reproduction of local identity with an eclectic style.

Figure 2.4.20   A row of an eclectic building style along the road
from the city centre to Darussalam
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.21   One of eclectic building styles located along the road
from city centre to Darussalam
Source: Author's collection

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Figure 2.4.22   The Governor's office building in Banda Aceh,
built in the beginning of 1990s
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.23   The traditional Acehnese motifs on the surfaces
Source: Author's collection

With the growing interest in local identity, the Pendopo complex was renovated.[152] In the renovation the appearance as well as the interior of Meuligo changed dramatically, especially with the deliberate replacement of the European decorations with Acehnese motifs. The surfaces of the interior, wall, doors, and windows, were decorated with traditional Acehnese art (Figures 2.4.24 and 2.4.25). After the renovation, the Pendopo was renamed as Meuligo, "palace" in Acehnese.[153]

Figure 2.4.24   The present Governor House (Pendopo/Meuligoe), 2006
Source: Author's collection

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[152]   After the colonial era, the Pendopo is mostly used as the governor's residential building. A couple of rooms were provided as the governor's guest rooms. Beside the Pendopo, several buildings were constructed within the Pendopo complex: the guest houses, the meeting room, a convention hall (Anjong Mon Mata). This complex was renovated in the late 1980s in order to emphasise local identity.

[153]   The name of Meuligoe is written in the right and left exterior wall on the building main entrance.

Figure 2.4.25   The interior of Pendopo and the traditional Acehnese art
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.26   The guest room of the Pendopo and the Acehnese traditional art
Source: Author's collection

The oldest University in Aceh, University of Syiah Kuala, located in Banda Aceh also participated in expressing local identity.[154] Its architectural style shows the then prevailing interest in combining traditional references with modern design (Figure

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[154]   It is indicated in the master plan that the University should reflect local characteristics.

2.4.27, 2.4.28, and 2.4.29). Several older buildings, mostly built in the early period of establishment (See Figure 2.4.8), were demolished and rebuilt following the new trend. The planning and design of the University was prepared by the University's project office, where some staff from the School of Architecture used to work.

Figure 2.4.27   Directorate building, University of Syiah Kuala, built in 1990s
with the reference of traditional
Source: Author's collection

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 169 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.28   One of the medical school buildings built in the early 1990s.
Source: Meutia's collection

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NOTE:
This figure is included on page 170 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.29   The building of School of Architecture within faculties
of engineering
Source: Masdar's collection

The tendency to reproduce traditional architectural forms in new designs resulted in
somewhat monotonous contemporary architecture and a dull urban environment.
Traditional references – the gable, rows of columns, ornamentations – found in modern
architectural forms show, as Chris Abel argues, a mere "pre-selection of the supposedly
more pure elements of regional or national culture."[155] While the use of the gable screen
in premodern time might relate to its function,[156] its use in modern buildings serves "a
token" for local belonging. This approach produced a brand of architecture concerned
more with tectonic and visual imageries than with intrinsic cultural development.[157]

Residential Buildings

The residential buildings of the Suharto's period found in Aceh were built by individual
or private sector and by the Indonesian government. In domestic architecture, there was
a shift towards building in twentieth-century modern styles and materials and for using
modern construction techniques.[158] Brick walls, glass windows, and building on ground
represented the modern trend (Figure 2.4.30). This is particularly noticeable in the

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[155]   Chris Abel, *Architecture and Identity*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2000), 164.
[156]   Leigh, *Hands of Time: The Craft of Aceh*. Dall, "The Traditional Acehnese House."
[157]   See Nas, "Ethnic Identity in Urban Architecture: Generation of Architects in Banda Aceh."
[158]   Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia."

houses within the city of Banda Aceh as well as in the surrounding suburbs. Although many Acehnese would have grown up in the traditional houses of their parents, the young generations preferred to build new houses or additions according to the new trend. Practicality, affordability, and speed of construction were the main reasons for abandoning the traditional forms and building techniques.[159]

Figure 2.4.30   The Acehnese house
Source: Author's collection

The production of modern houses was also supported by the government's effort to deal with the growth of the urban population. In 1970s, the first housing project during the Suharto's regime was undertaken by the Perusahaan Rumah Nasional (the National Housing Company), and was constructed on the suburb of Banda Aceh in Lingke.[160] The 45 square meters brick house with its two bed rooms were initially provided for middle class suburban dwellers. Yet, this project failed to address the needs of the poor as the low-income group could not afford the houses. Most houses were bought by minority groups for investment purposes, and the project failed to achieve its professed aim of providing affordable housing for the growing low-income urban population. Another

[159]   Ibid, 2-3. Such a trend became visible in the field observations conducted in 2006.
[160]   This area was severely damaged by the tsunami and the original houses disappeared.

government plan for urban development was the Kampung Improvement Project. The project was meant to improve the living conditions in *kampung* by providing good infrastructure, clean water, sanitation, and streets and parks, but the project was discontinued.

In addition to these modern houses, domestic architecture in Banda Aceh in the late 80s also reveal a reproduction of some traditional traits, such as wood carving on the surfaces, inside or outside the house, and modified multiple roof design. The building owners' desire to have a main entrance marked by two rows of columns was also becoming a dominant feature in Banda Aceh (Figures 2.4.31). In the 1990s, there was a growing interest of Banda Aceh residents to built modern houses with the inclusion of traditional references (Figure 2.4.32).

Figure 2.4.31   Traditional Acehnese style in a contemporary context in Banda Aceh
Source: Author's collection

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Figure 2.4.32   Traditional Acehnese style in a contemporary form in Banda Aceh
Source: Author's collection

Religious Buildings

Several religious buildings from Suharto's period can be found in Aceh. They carry the influences of Baitur-Rahman (formerly called Bait al-Rahman), the Istiqlal, and the Pancasila mosques. The most prestigious mosque of Baitur-Rahman was renovated and upgraded several times. Ironically, the architectural style of the nineteenth-century Baitur-Rahman mosque, built by the Dutch and rejected by Acehnese for many years, turned to become a model for the architectural harmony between tradition and modernity. It became one of the most popular buildings, with its architectural style being imitated in religious buildings throughout Indonesia, and particularly in Aceh. During the New Order there was a strong shift in emphasis toward cultural identity among Indonesians in general and Acehnese in particular. The mosque of Baitur-Rahman became the focal point of the city of Banda Aceh and the pride of all Acehnese (Figure 2.4.33 and 2.4.34). The architectural style of this building was considered to be a popular expression of Islamic architecture since the first half of the twentieth century.[161]

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[161]   See O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." See also Hooker, "Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia" and Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 191-92.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 174 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.33   The great mosque as a focal point of the Banda Aceh city
Source: Development Progress of Province DI Aceh – 40 Tahun Derap Langkah
Pembangunan1959 – 1998/99

Figure 2.4.34   The great mosque of Baitur-Rahman, Banda Aceh, in 2003
Source: Author collection

The great mosque of Baitur-Rahman, considered as one of the most important buildings
in Banda Aceh, was renovated and upgraded, placing strong emphasis on local forms.
The mosque's appearance was deliberately changed from Euro-Indian to Acehnese in

character, by covering the internal surfaces with traditional Acehnese art (fig 2.4.35 and 2.4.36).

Figure 2.4.35   The traditional Acehnese motifs on the mosque's interior
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.36   The traditional Acehnese motifs on the mosque's interior.
Source: Author's collection

The architectural style of Baitu-Rahman mosque was considered to be a popular expression of Islamic architecture since the first half of the twentieth century.[162] This architectural style of mosque has become dominant in religious architecture with many examples exhibiting their main features built along the East coast road from Banda Aceh to Medan (Figures 2.4.37 and 2.4.38). Another form of mosques that also became popular was that of the Istiqlal mosque. (figure 2.4.39)[163]

Figure 2.4.37   Sample of Baitur-Rahman style of mosque in Pidie
Source: Author's collection

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[162]   See O'Neil, "Diadem or Dome: Sovereignty and the Transformation of the Mosque in Sumatra." See also Hooker, "Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia" and Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 191-92.

[163]   See Part 3.3, Suharto's Mosque Building Program.

Figure 2.4.38   Sample of Baitur-Rahman style of mosque in North Aceh
Source: Author's collection

Figure 2.4.39   Sample of the Iqtiqlal style of mosque
Source: Author's collection

In his article "Islamic Architecture during the New Order," O'Neil argues that the increased prosperity of Indonesians during the New Order era enabled them to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca more frequently. This in turn led to their exposure to the

architectural style of the mosques in the holy land of Mecca, which they brought back home and expressed it in their new designs. "Many new buildings and renovations" O'Neil writes, "have incorporated elements such as arches, decorative parapets, and dome characteristic of both Middle Eastern and Indo-Saracenic styles. In numerous cases, they have been grafted onto buildings belonging to the old Indonesian timber tradition"[164] (Figure 2.4.40).

Figure 2.4.40   A traditional timber mosque in Banda Aceh built in 1880s
Source: Author's collection

A few architects adopted an eclectic approach in their works, as can be seen in figure 2.4.41, wherein the traditional Acehnese hat was selected and used as a roof design.

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[164]   Hugh O'Neil, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order," in *Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia*, ed. Virginia Hooker (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993), 153.

Figure 2.4.41   A modern mosque and its traditional traits
Source: Author's collection

Ibrahim Hasan's Influence

Suharto's policy for national development translated into many significant urban projects and investments in human resources in Aceh, especially during the reign of Ibrahim Hasan's governance from 1987 to1993. Governor Hasan's vision was to encourage young Acehnese to acquire the necessary knowledge and technical skills in order to participate in the development of Aceh's built environment.[165] He also initiated a number of new projects and buildings, roads, and bridges were constructed in Aceh in general and in the capital Banda Aceh in particular.[166] Hasan's top priority was, first, to protect Banda Aceh from the destruction of the annual flooding, and, second, to provide road access, transport and electricity to remote areas. At the beginning of his reign, he

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[165]   The author conducted several interviews with Ibrahim Hasan in Jakarta in 2006-2007, prior to his untimely death on January 20, 2007.

[166]   See *Development Progress of Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh - 40 Tahun Derap Langkah Pembangunan 1959 - 1998/99.*, (Banda Aceh: Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1998). *Proyek Pengaturan Dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh*, (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pekerjaan Umum Direktorat Jendral Pengairan, 1992). The information on Ibrahim Hasan's works was also sourced through informal interviews with him conducted in July 2006.

developed a plan for a major project for the River of Aceh, Krueng Aceh, to deal with the problem of flooding[167] (Figure 2.4.42 and 2.4.43).

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 180 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.42   Flooding in Banda Aceh before the Krueng Raya project.
Source: Proyek Pengaturan Dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh, 1992

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 180 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.43   Flooding in Banda Aceh before the Krueng Raya project
was conducted
Source: Proyek Pengaturan dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh, 1992

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[167]   *Proyek Pengaturan Dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh.*

The project aimed to upgrade the condition of the 145-kilometre-long River, which springs from the Mountain of Suekek and terminates at the Straight of Malacca (Figure 2.4.44). [168] The work included the constructions of river embankments and tidal gates in order to normalize the running of the river and to provide no less than 60 sluices placed along the embankment.[169] It also included the construction of 25-kilometre-long inspection road and 21 bridges with spans ranging from 16 to 310 meters.[170] After completing the project, Banda Aceh had a number of long-span and wide bridges, some of which are shown in Figures 2.4.45 and 2.4.46. [171]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 181 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.44   Plan of the Krueng Aceh project
Source: Proyek Pengaturan dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh, 1992

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[168]   Ibid.
[169]   Ibid.
[170]   Ibid.
[171]   The author used to cross the narrow bridge form home in Darussalam to the middle school located at the city of Banda Aceh in 1975. The bridge was very narrow allowing only one bus to pass.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 182 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.45   Part of the Krueng Aceh project located in Lamnyong
Source: Proyek Pengaturan dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh, 1992

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 182 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 2.4.46   Krueng Aceh which run through the city centre
Source: Proyek Pengaturan Dan Pemeliharaan Sungai Krueng Aceh, 1992

While the bridges were under construction, Hasan initiated the construction of a wide
road from Banda Aceh to Darussalam, the place of the two oldest Universities (Figure
2.4.47).[172] The existing road was widened from two to six lanes with a median strip. He
also commissioned the construction of a network of roads connecting several towns with

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[172]   Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan
Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 190. The construction of the road was mention in the Governor's speech
for Panitia Anggaran 1991/1991. See "Kumpulan Pidato Gubernur Bulan Februari 1991," (Banda
Aceh: Biro Hubungan Masyarakat Sekretariat Wilayah/Daerah Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh.,
1991).

remote areas.[173] The impact of the new road, which was financed mostly from the provincial budget, was evident: it enlarged the scale of the capital and made distant facilities within close reach. The two campuses at Darussalam, for instance, which were relatively far from the city become part of the city's expanding metropolis. The construction of the new road also changed the situation of the places along the way: quite gradually these areas became busy places as a large number of buildings, public and private, were built along the road all the way to Darussalam. Along with the construction of the main road, Hasan also initiated the construction of the outer road, designed to avoid the passing of heavy vehicles through the city and to connect the city with the airport.

Figure 2.4.47   The road connecting the city centre to Darussalam
Source: Author's Collection

In addition to the infrastructure projects, Hasan's investment in human resources was also notable. In 1991, during the tenth conference of the Indonesian Teacher Association in Banda Aceh, he launched a policy to raise the level of human skills and resources in the educational sector.[174] Around 300 high-ranking graduates from high schools willing to further their education at tertiary level and to earn Bachelor, Masters, or Doctorate

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[173]   "Kumpulan Pidato Gubernur Bulan Februari 1991."
[174]   Ibid.

degrees were, as he announced, to receive scholarships from a foundation he established in 1987, the Yayasan Malem Putra.[175] In the same policy launch, Hasan stressed that priority in granting the scholarships would be given to those accepted in the best universities in Indonesia.

His ambitions and efforts to raise the level of education among Acehnese began when he was the director of Syiah Kuala University. He continued with the educational program established by the previous director, the late Madjid Ibrahim, who was his senior colleague. He established relationships with other universities abroad, primarily with the universities in Japan, in order to improve the teaching standard and to upgrade the teaching facilities, including laboratories and equipments. More scholarships to study abroad were introduced, offering staff the opportunity to continue their higher education outside Indonesia.

Under Hasan's leadership and with the support of the provincial government, the University of Syiah Kuala sought to establish an architecture school in Aceh.[176] The aim was to enable young Acehnese to acquire the necessary knowledge and technical skills that enable them to participate in the development of Aceh's built environment. To achieve this, Hasan first established strong educational ties with one of the best universities in Indonesia, the November 10 Technology Institute of Surabaya (Institut Teknologi 10 November Surabaya – ITS), and sent several high school graduates from Aceh there to study architecture.[177] This program started in 1980, and in 1986 the first wave of architecture students graduated and went back to work in Aceh.[178] This was Hasan's last year as the University Director, and he was succeeded by Abdullah Ali.

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[175] Governor Ibrahim Hasan was one of the founders of this foundation. Built in 1987, the Yayasan aimed to give financial support to university students in Indonesia, who have financial problem.

[176] Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 190.

[177] The author was one of the scholarship recipients who studied architecture at ITS Surabaya, East Java.

[178] Nas, "Design and Meaning of Architecture and Space among Ethnic Groups of Western Indonesia."

The School of Architecture was officially established in 1996.[179] In 1997, the first sixty new students enrolled in the four-and-a-half-year architecture program.[180] Between 1991 and 1996, prior to its establishment, the School of Architecture was affiliated with the School of Civil Engineering. During this preparatory state, most of the lecturers were young architects who graduated from ITS in Surabaya. To address the problem of qualified staff shortage, the University Director, Abdullah Ali, invited several senior lecturers from ITS to support the young staff at the new school. Invited senior staff travelled regularly to Aceh for guest lectures, seminars and design studios. New lecturers with different specialization, primarily in civil engineering, town planning, fine art and interior design, were also recruited.

Along with establishing the School of Architecture, Hasan also initiated the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine at Syiah Kuala University.[181] He lobbied the Education Ministry office to establish educational links with several of the best universities in Indonesia. Once these links were in place, the University of Syiah Kuala sent a large number of high school graduates from Aceh to undertake their medical training.[182] The University of Syiah Kuala was supported by the Mobil Oil Company, whose generous financial contributions enabled the University to fund its scholarship program. To insure medical graduates' commitments to serve in Aceh, recipients of scholarships were obligated to return to Aceh and teach at the newly established medical School. In 1986, after the return of the first group of medical graduates, the medical School was opened and became one of the several new faculties at the University of Syiah Kuala.

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[179] *Faculty of Engineering, Department of Architecture Syllabus 2004 - 2008*, (Banda Aceh: Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Syiah Kuala, 2004).

[180] The author was one of the first lecturers at the School of Architecture, Unsyiah.

[181] Ibrahim Hasan, *Namaku Ibrahim Hasan: Menebah Tantangan Zaman* (Jakarta: Yayasan Malem Putra, 2003). Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya".

[182] Hasan, *Namaku Ibrahim Hasan: Menebah Tantangan Zaman*.

In order to introduce local identity into the built environment, Governor Hasan placed a strong emphasis on the return to tradition in the development of art and architecture. He highly recommended the use of traditional references in new designs. He aspired for a type of modernity that incorporates local cultural heritage and traditional values.[183] He saw meanings and values in the Acehnese traditional house and wanted all Acehnese to learn and understand them. He believed that young generations should not abandon their cultural heritage and traditional values for the sake of progressive, modern lifestyle. At the beginning of his term in 1987, Hasan initiated the construction and renovation of several important buildings, placing strong emphasis on local forms.[184] These included the building of the governor office, the renovation of Pendopo (the governor house) with the addition of the meeting halls (*Anjongs)* and the guest houses,[185] and the renovation of the great mosque of Baitur-Rahman.[186] The preoccupation with vernacular forms, however, like all such efforts seeking to create local character, was primarily an exercise in aesthetics.

In addition to the government projects, Hasan expressed his attraction to the cultural heritage of Aceh in the design of his own residence in Banda Aceh in 1992. As other modern building with its traditional accent, the house was replete with traditional references, such as the gable roofs, the row of columns, and traditional Aceh motifs (see Figure 2.4.31). In addition, Hasan built in the backyard of this residence a self-standing traditional Acehnese house (Figure 2.4.48), together with a *meunasah*, and a rice barn and filled it with fine examples of traditional Acehnese art and craft. Yet, this was not a

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[183]   See the Speech by Ibrahim Hasan during the ceremony of weekly Assembly among provincial government employees. "Pidato Gubernur Kepala Daerah Istimewa Aceh," Banda Aceh: Biro Hubungan Masyarakat Sekretariat Wilayah/Daerah Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh, February 1991. The information was collected through informal discussion with Ibrahim Hasan held on July 12, 2007.

[184]   These projects were funded from the provincial budget.

[185]   The guest houses and the meeting halls were built in June 1981 when Aceh was led by the late Majid Ibrahim, governor of Aceh before Ibrahim Hasan, to facilitate activities of the National Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an held in Aceh. Though the buildings are in a modern style, they show the use of traditional motifs in the roof and on the surfaces.

[186]   Arif, "Ragam Citra Kota Banda Aceh-Interpretasi Terhadap Sejarah, Memori Kolektif Dan Arketipe Arsitekturnya", 191-92.

typical traditional house and did not represent Acehnese architecture. This house was not used as a living space, but rather as a museum.

Figure 2.4.48   Traditional Acehnese house
Source: Author's collection

In wanting to lead by example, Hasan hoped that the Acehnese would follow in his footsteps and express their strong sense of belonging to the long and rich tradition of Aceh. In fact, his approach was followed by a number of Acehnese, especially of the middle and upper class, not only in Aceh but also Acehnese living outside Aceh, primarily in Medan and Jakarta (Figure 2.4.49). Such attempts were expensive and beyond the reach of the lower class. Yet, the enthusiasm he generated among influential members of the community for the cultural heritage raised the popularity of traditional arts and crafts among most Acehnese, promoting them to include traditional references in their modern houses.

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NOTE:
This figure is included on page 188 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.
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Figure 2.4.49.   Modern "Acehnese house" in Jakarta
Source: Nyssa's Collection

At another level, Hasan strongly encouraged the establishment of home industries that produced embroideries, cloth and traditional Acehnese food, which helped in improving household income. Craftsmen were encouraged to increase their knowledge of traditional art as well as their skills through training at the village, provincial and national levels.[187] Once trained, skilled artists were granted access to low-interest loans from the local Banks. As a result, a number of souvenir stores have opened in Aceh since 1987 and Acehnese became more motivated to wear embroidery clothes adorned with traditional motifs. To further promote Acehnese crafts outside Aceh, several craftsmen were sent to other cities or countries to participate in a number of exhibitions, such as the annual exhibition of Indonesian art and crafts held in Jakarta. Locally, products of traditional Acehnese crafts were offered by the official circles of Meuligo as souvenirs to the governor's guests. Traditional food was also always offered to the governor's guests.

Being one of the New Order's most important figures at the provincial level, whose view reflected the government's directions, Hasan, together with the previous governor, shared Suharto's view on creating a built environment that embrace traditional values.

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[187]   Hasan's strong recommendation to return to traditional value is also recorded when he conducted Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh II (the Traditional Folk Festival II). See *Development Progress of Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh - 40 Tahun Derap Langkah Pembangunan 1959 - 1998/99.*

In celebrating national identity, such traditional values become reflective of the richness of local characteristics. Hasan's drive for sensitivity toward local value has, in many ways, led to the eclectic tendency in the modern architecture of Aceh. His recommendation to preserve cultural heritage was predicated on the need to understand and remember what the Acehnese's ancestors had achieved. However, simple and straightforward approach to isolate culture within its regional boundaries has become increasingly problematic in the current globalised conditions.

Conclusion

The discussions of the architectural history of Aceh from the precolonial to the postcolonial eras have shown how cross-cultural issues as well as the political views of national leaders affected the built environment of Aceh. During the precolonial period, as the study showed, the roots of the Acehnese rich cultural tradition extended far to the Malay Peninsula, India, China and the Middle East, bringing together a diversity of influences that shaped the built environment of Aceh. During the colonial and postcolonial periods, the study discussed the cultural transformation of the Acehnese people that also left its own marks on the built environment of Aceh. During the modern era, however, a new dynamics emerged: the Dutch reintroduced certain traditional elements, such as various types of indigenous roof forms and traditional building materials and structures. The precolonial images were reconstructed and transformed into new forms that served modern rationality.[188]

During the postcolonial era, this the study showed how historical memory and sensitivity toward cultural tradition became the underlying trend that shaped the modern architecture of Aceh. While sharing the political visions of the national leaders, Acehnese architects and educators became interested in western architectural theory, and this was reflected in the many attempts to reconcile tradition with modernity.

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[188] Abidin Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn" (paper presented at the Pos/Kolonialisme: Lingkung-Bina di Indonesia, Denpasar-Bali, 2001), 2.

PART 3

MODERNITY AND VISIONARY POLITICS

MODERNITY AND VISIONARY POLITICS

The emergence of modernity in Indonesia is associated with the arrival and absorption of Western ideas and values through cultural interactions with Europe, which took place during the Dutch colonial presence in the nineteenth century. Dutch educational institutions, established at the primary level in Java in 1820, were among the early instigators of modernisation.[1] It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century, however, that large numbers of young Indonesians obtained Western-style education at the primary level.[2] With regard to architecture, the development of an awareness of Indonesian architectural history could not be separated from Dutch colonial practices in the region.[3] Dutch legacies and influences on the basic concepts, theories and methods of understanding and making architecture remained evident even in postcolonial times.

Both colonial and postcolonial architectural representations have a close relationship with economic and social-political aspects of life. Sudrajat argues that architecture is a domain of "cultural practice in which the artistic, the technological and political are forced into union."[4] Within these intertwined relationships, this Part explores the ideas of modernity and visionary politics that have affected the production and shaping of the built environment in the colonial and postcolonial periods. The preceding Part discussed the rise of the Acehnese Kingdom and its decline, which coincided with the colonial intervention. This Part discusses the emergence of modernism and how Western hegemony has controlled knowledge production, and particularly that of architectural knowledge, throughout Indonesia. This is followed by an exploration of postcolonial architecture in relation to the question of national identity.

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[1]   Bambang Oetomo, "Some Remarks on Modern Indonesian Historiography," in *Historian of South East Asia*, ed. D. G. E. Hall (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 73.

[2]   For further explanation of this matter please see Ibid., 73-74.

[3]   During the colonial period, the country was called the Netherlands-Indie—the Netherlands that lies in the Indie—commonly called the Indies.

[4]   Iwan Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History" (PhD Dissertation, University of Sydney, 1991), 155.

On 17 August 1945, Sukarno declared the independence of the state of Indonesian. Since then, Aceh, along with twenty-four other provinces, has been part of Indonesia. In 1962, the province of Irian Jaya was added. Aceh's relationship with the independent state of Indonesia remains critical for understanding both Indonesia's colonial and its postcolonial history. It is also central to our understanding of how Western modes of architectural representation have continued to influence perceptions and constructions of Indonesian national identity.

After independence, the notion of national identity became prominent in the domains of architectural education and practice. The search for national identity became an important task to forge a sense of shared nationhood and common values among the population throughout the Indonesian Archipelago, regardless of differences in ethnic background, customs, world views and religious orientations.[5] This common sense of nationhood provides a meaningful symbol that aids the production of 'we' in Indonesia and the casting of a national pride into a specific symbolic form.[6] Here I examine the socio-political scene in postcolonial Indonesia that facilitated the casting of nationalism into the built environment, and explore the complicated questions of power and identity embedded in architectural representations.[7] My focus is the occupancies of the first two presidents, Sukarno (1945–1966) and Suharto (1966–1998), as they both led the nation for a long period of time and made a powerful symbolic use of the built environment.

Both presidents engaged the question of national identity in a different manner, and the urban and architectural forms they produced demonstrated their different approaches. While Sukarno tended to privilege an international style, with the aim of internationalising Indonesia's capability in architecture and urbanity, Suharto revealed an interest in culture and tradition, with the aim of constructing a national identity that was rooted in Indonesian tradition. However, the two national leaders

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[5]   See Ibid., 179.

[6]   Bennedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 173-77.

[7]   See Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000). Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*. Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History."

were both keen to define a sense of national identity by manipulating architecture
and urban form in order to advance their political causes.[8]

Although architectural representations of national identity painted Suharto's New
Order as the antithesis of Sukarno's Old Order, there was an important continuity
between the two regimes: a broad sense of nation with the domination of the ancient
tradition of the Javanese.[9] In the following discussion, I examine the built
environment in Aceh under these two regimes in order to demonstrate the conflict
between society's needs and the 'cultural imagining' created by the ruling regimes.[10]

3.1   Global Changes and Local Transformations

The infiltration of modernity into Indonesia coincided with global changes and local
transformations in the fields of architecture and urban planning. In the early
twentieth century, the Dutch Ethical Policy, under the banner of modernisation,
instigated Indonesian thinking about the identity of the Indies societies (Indonesian
and Dutch), through raising sensitivity towards native traditional culture.[11] The
concerns for cultural identity among the Dutch people coincided with the stimulation
of national consciousness by Indonesian nationalists. This was reflected in the
representations and practices of architecture and urbanity, particularly in the late
colonial period with the Dutch efforts to construct an 'Indish' identity. Architects
concerned with the construction and representation of an Indish identity worked on
transforming traditional forms into a modern language. The colonial imagining of

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[8]   A number of movements of national liberation have used architecture and urban design to
       advance their status after independence. For further discussion of this, see Lawrence J. Vale,
       Architecture, Power and National Identity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 44-55.

[9]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*.

[10]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in
       Indonesia*. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*. Sudrajat,
       "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History." M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia
       since C.1300* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1993). Susan Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A
       History* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[11]   For further discussion, see Jacques van Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and
       Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," in *Indonesian Politic: A Reader*, ed. Christine Doran
       (North Queensland: Centre for South-East Asian Politics, James Cook University of North
       Queensland, 1987).

'tradition,' as shown in Indish architecture, pervaded the works of architects and urban designers, who were practising within the political culture of the New Order.[12]

The chapter begins with a discussion of colonialism in Indonesia in general and in Aceh in particular. Since this period also marks the emergence of Indonesian nationalists, the study includes a discussion of the politics of independence in Indonesia. This is followed by an examination of the Dutch legacy in the built environment of Aceh and of the continuation of the Dutch influence after the independence. This is illustrated by the search for a unique architectural style that was introduced by influential figures, such as the Dutch professor Vincent Van Romont, who taught architecture in Indonesian schools for many years.

Colonialism in Indonesia

The coming of the Europeans to Asia was prompted by economic as well as political motives. The Europeans had attempted to control the international trade network of Asia since the fifteen hundreds. Their intervention diverted trade profits from Asia to Europe, resulting in the European countries becoming stronger and technologically advanced. By the eighteen hundreds, European countries, such as Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Great Britain, France and the United States, were able to expand their authority throughout Asia, and particularly in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.[13]

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to come to Indonesia, in search for spices in 1511, after conquering the Islamic Kingdom of Malacca on the Malay Peninsula. The coming of the Portuguese to the Indonesian Archipelago was followed by that of Spanish traders. At the beginning of the sixteen hundreds, the Dutch came to Maluku, for the same reason, to obtain spices, after successfully defeating the Portuguese, who at the time had their stronghold on that island. By 1812, the British occupied the region of Bengkulu in West Sumatra and had built a fort. Indonesia was

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[12]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*.

[13]   Constance Wilson, *Colonialism and Nationalism in Southeast Asia* (www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/wilson/colonialism.htm, [cited 20 February 2004]).

under the rule of the British East India Company until 1816, when Holland was occupied by France. Sir Thomas Stanford was assigned to become the Lieutenant Governor General of Java, a subordinate to the Governor General in Bengal, India. On 13 August 1824, the British and the Dutch signed a treaty in London, agreeing that British authority over Indonesia should be returned to the Dutch administration in Batavia. The Dutch had thus occupied Indonesia for almost three and a half centuries (1605-1942). Although Japan occupied the country for the next three years there were no significant developments by the Japanese in the Archipelago during this short period.[14]

The study focuses on the developments in the built environment in the early twentieth century under Dutch colonialism. During this time, the Dutch started to raise the question of the Indish identity in its colonies. This marked a shift in the direction of thinking and knowledge production in Indonesia which was accompanied by a new mode of architectural representations that was to continue in the postcolonial period. Dutch architects became interested in preserving what was considered to be the authentic indigenous domain, which enabled Indonesians, as Kusno explains, to carve out "an authoritative realm for the later postcolonial architects to insert the national self."[15]

Dutch Colonialism

In the Indonesian Archipelago, the Dutch influences were longer and stronger than those of other occupying Europeans, the British and the Portuguese. The Dutch occupation of Indonesia extended from 1605 until 1942, during which time two periods can be distinguished. The first period was during the control of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC—*Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie*), and the second was after the takeover by the Dutch government in Batavia in 1800. The main interest of VOC was, of course, to control the spice trade in the region and to seek wealth in Indonesia. The company was established first in East Indonesia, on the

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[14]   The Dutch occupation of Indonesia ended during World War II when Japan occupied the country.

[15]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 25.

spice island of Maluku (*Molucca*). Gradually, the Dutch broadened their hold over the main regions in the Archipelago. Due to mismanagement and corruption, however, the company collapsed in 1799. The Dutch government in Batavia stepped in and took over the monopoly of trade in 1800.[16] The Dutch government was concerned not only with maximising profits through its tight monopoly but also with enforcing its authority and administration onto the Indonesian territories.[17] It was the Dutch government that gave the name 'Indonesia' to the territories of the Archipelago that were under its authority. Soon after, the Dutch intensified their colonial rule, sparking many wars with locals who were seeking their freedom. The wars against the occupation flared in various regions and were led by local leaders, such as, among many others, *Kapiten* (Captain) Pattimura from Maluku, *Pangeran* (Prince) Diponegoro from Mataram, Tuanku Imam Bonjol from West Sumatra, Teuku Umar from Aceh, and Sisingamangaraja from Batak.[18]

Colonialism in Aceh

The Dutch were able to occupy Aceh only at the end of the nineteenth century, three centuries after establishing the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC). The invasion was a follow-up of the Treaty of London, signed by the British and the Dutch in 1824, and the Treaty of Sumatra, in 1871, which allowed the whole of Sumatra to be under Dutch sovereignty.[19] These treaties, in exchange, required the Dutch to give up their control over India and Singapore. At the time Aceh was internationally recognised as an independent state. In 1603, Great Britain even had a diplomatic relationship with Aceh, and Aceh also maintained diplomatic relationships with other European and Asian countries. The Dutch troops, led by General Kohler, were keen to occupy

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[16]   Ronald Gill, "Town Formation in 19th Century Java," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunawan Tjahjono (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1998), 106.

[17]   Ibid.

[18]   To raise awareness among the younger generation, the history of the Indonesian struggle against colonialism has been introduced at primary levels. This history includes mainly the names of national heroes and their roles in warfare.

[19]   See Ibrahim Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 3rd ed. (Banda Aceh: The Documentation and Information Centre of Aceh, 1997), 57. Richard Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story* (Bangkok: FORUM-ASIA and SCHRA, 2000), 13.

Aceh, but found the Acehnese resistance too strong to break.[20] Their late presence in Aceh explains the lack of colonial legacy and the weak influence on the development of the built environment in the region.

The War in Aceh and the **Hikayat Perang Sabil**

After three attempts to invade Aceh, the Dutch troops were finally able to capture the capital city and seize the royal palace in 1874, when the Acehnese had fled the city to escape a cholera outbreak.[21] On 29 January 1874, Sultan Mahmud Syah died of the disease. Taking advantage of the situation, on 30 January 1874, the Dutch declared that the Kingdom of Aceh had been subjugated to the Dutch, that the status of the Kingdom had been altered, and that the territory of Aceh Besar had become "the property of the East Indies Government."[22] In spite of the Dutch proclamation, the Acehnese resistance grew stronger and the Dutch found it more difficult than they had expected to spread their colonial administration and gain control throughout the region of Aceh.[23]

In a tactical move to deny the Dutch authority control over Aceh, the Acehnese appointed Tuanku Muhammad Daud Syah as the new Sultan of Aceh in 1878.[24] The official ceremony was held at the Indrapuri Mosque, about thirty kilometres away from the capital, Banda Aceh.[25] After almost two decades of resistance, however, Sultan Muhammad Daud Syah was finally captured and forced to make peace with the Dutch in 1903.[26] Substituting the Sultan, the Dutch appointed a governor to rule over Aceh and instructed a number Acehnese working for the Dutch to act as district chiefs. Although the Sultan was captured, the resistance against the Dutch rule inspired many guerrilla fighters. The Acehnese continued to fight against the Dutch

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[20]   See Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 58. Ibrahim Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 1999), 82. See Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah." Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*.

[21]   Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 39, 60.

[22]   Cited in Ibid., 60.

[23]   Ibid., 61-74. See also Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 73-166.

[24]   Alfian et al., eds., *Perang Kolonial Belanda Di Aceh (Dutch Colonial War in Aceh)*, 62.

[25]   Ibid.

[26]   Ibid., 72.

in many areas even after the Sultan's surrender and until the Dutch surrendered to the Japanese in 1942.

The Acehnese relentlessly resisted Dutch occupation, sustaining the longest war ever fought by the Dutch. Alfian records that during forty years of battle, 1874–1914, about 37,500 Dutch troops and 70,000 Acehnese were killed.[27] Among the Acehnese who fought against colonialism, a number of women were actively involved in the battles. Cut Nyak Dhien and Cut Meutia are two women among the many national heroes of Indonesia. Cut Nyak Dhien chose to continue her husband's struggle to fight against colonialism from 1896 until she was captured in 1905.[28] She died in exile in West Java in 1908. Cut Meutia and her husband, Teuku Chiek di Tunong, according to Sulaiman, "had the talent for planning strategies to fight against the Dutch."[29] Two other women who actively participated in the warfare against the Dutch were Pocut Baren and Pocut Meurah Intan. These women, similar to Cut Nyak Dhien, continued their husbands' struggle and led several campaigns between 1903 and 1910.[30]

The *ulama* (religious leaders) played a significant role in the wars against the Dutch.[31] They motivated the Acehnese to sustain their struggle, which they described as "the fight in the path of Allah."[32] To encourage people to be involved in wars, the *ulama* cited verses from the Quran and the lyrics of the *Hikayat Perang Sabil* (Narrative of Holy War).[33] The *Hikayat* stresses that those who died in the war

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[27]   Ibid., 74.

[28]   Rusdi Sufi, "Cut Nyak Dhien," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 80, 94.

[29]   Nasruddin Sulaiman, "Cut Nyak Meutia," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 112.

[30]   Nasruddin Sulaiman, "Pocut Baren," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara Dalam Lintasan Sejarah (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basri, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 130-40. Rusdi Sufi, "Pocut Meurah Intan," in *Wanita Utama Nusantara (Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History)*, ed. Ismail Sofyan, M. Hasan Basry, and Ibrahim Alfian (Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset, 1994), 144-54.

[31]   Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 81.

[32]   Ibid., 176.

[33]   Ibid., 171. See also Ali Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," (Banda Aceh: Majlis Ulama Indonesia Daerah Istimewa Aceh dan Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1995), 58.

against the infidel colonisers would die as *syuhada* (martyrs), and Allah would give them *pahala* (privileges/rewards) and place them in heaven, where they would reside in peace and happiness.[34] The *Hikayat* also stresses that those who gave donations for the holy war would also be rewarded by Allah.[35]

The *Hikayat Perang Sabil* was written in several periods. According to Alfian, many narratives of the holy war were composed during the time of Dutch colonialism.[36] The *Hikayat* were written in a way that motivated the Acehnese to fight and maintain their struggle against the Dutch.[37] They provided insights into the Acehnese ideologies and strong patriotic sentiment in defending their independence, and showed the Islamic values that underpinned the Acehnese way of life.[38] During Dutch colonisation, the Acehnese generated a *jihat* spirit by intensively relating narratives of war. Usually, these narratives were read in *dayah* (Islamic boarding schools), *meunasahs* (religious buildings other than large mosques), houses, and in public areas.[39] Prior to that, the Dutch had forbidden the Acehnese to read the narratives of war and the Dutch destroyed those texts in fear of their safety.

The Ethical Policy and Modernising Native People

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the segmentation of Indies society on the basis of ethnic background, region and religion.[40] In dealing with the social mix that emerged among the Indonesians and the Dutch, the Dutch colonial government introduced the Ethical Policy. The policy was aimed at controlling the 'proper direction' of social change in the plural Indies societies, in order to achieve social integration and to build 'cultural unity.'[41] The introduction of the Ethical Policy

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[34]   Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 168, 69.

[35]See Hasjmy et al., "50 Tahun Aceh Membangun," 58-59. Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 168, 71. Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 169.

[36]   Alfian, "Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah," 168.

[37]   Ibid.

[38]   Ibid., 167.

[39]   Ibid., 174.

[40]   Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," 10.

[41]   See Ibid., 13. Iwan Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History" (PhD Dissertation, University of Sydney, 1991), 156.

mediated the Dutch 'pacification' of their colonies, the forming of the Indies 'new society' and the securing of colonial authority.

'Colonial benevolence,' intended to be the basis of the vision for this 'new society,' was conceived as a strategy to perpetuate colonial rule.[42] At the heart of this strategy lay the desire to assimilate local traditions, including Indonesian traditions, into Western civilisation.[43] Indies society, as Doorn explains, was made up of "a synthesis of interests and ideas to be borne by an increasing number of the archipelago's resident, a synthesis, therefore, neither 'Indonesian' nor 'Dutch,' but a combination of what all the participants had to offer."[44] Sharing Doorn's perspective, Sudradjat described that this new society, which drew its cultural strength from both traditional Indonesian and Western sources, was hoped to "be able to contend with the pressures of the modern world."[45] The drive to create an Indies society, one that was still willing to allow changes, was associated with a concern to protect the indigenous society and to preserve local culture within the new context of Western enterprise.[46]

Another concern of the Dutch was to unite the Indonesian and Western traditions "with the Western element as the major impetus to a positive promotion of change."[47] The ultimate outcome of this was the construction of the 'Tropical Netherlands.'[48] In uniting the two different cultural backgrounds—where technology was identified with the West and tradition with the East—there emerged a need to modernise the native population by exposing them to modern Western 'educational values,'[49] The long-term aim was to create a society where "there will be only Eastern and Western Netherlands, a unity in the political and national sense."[50] This cultural synthesis was strongly linked to political interests: it was the Dutch attempt to hinder the

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[42]   Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia."

[43]   Ibid.

[44]   Ibid., 13.

[45]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 156.

[46]   See Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," 9-13. Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 156-58.

[47]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 157.

[48]   Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," 13.

[49]   Ibid.

[50]   Ibid., 13.

development of Indonesian nationalism. At the turn of the twentieth century, national consciousness among the Indonesians was rising,[51] and the Ethical Policy was introduced to protect the colonial interests from possible interventions by the locals.[52] The Ethical Policy was indeed an effective tool that secured the colonial authority through a "peaceful, righteous, and enlightened administration."[53]

The Ethical Policy generated a need and desire to define the core 'Indies-ness' that would unite the plural society. This was problematical, as political interests mediated the defining of the cultural identity of the Indies society. Here the colonial administration paid special attention to making people learn their own culture and improving their level of education. They believed that the local people were ignorant of their own culture and that there was a need for 'colonial tutelage.' Doorn explains that political interest seemed to have been the ultimate goal of the Ethical Policy. It attracted more Europeans, who either came from Europe or were born in the Indies, to settle and live in the Indies.[54] Indonesia started to be seen as a great place for a world market, and there emerged a need to increase "the living standard including the provision of communication, stability and safety."[55]

The Politics of Independence in Indonesia

The term 'nationalism' in Indonesia emerged with the rise of national consciousness. Its emergence coincided with the establishment of the Ethical Policy. The notion of nationalism spread in the colonial period as a viable tool of reaction against the Dutch. Nationalism, as Khoo Kay Hock puts it, "was a movement for the construction of a new society and the creation of a new identity."[56] The struggle for political independence was very much a struggle of the Indonesian nationalists, with their widely shared commitment to a national agenda. The advent of the twentieth

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[51]   Ibid., 11.

[52]   See Ibid., 10. Frances Gouda, *Dutch Cultural Overseas* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 24. Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 157.

[53]   Gouda, *Dutch Cultural Overseas*, 24.

[54]   Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia," 13.

[55]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 28.

[56]   Hock, *The Development of Indonesian Nationalism* 1977, 62.

century witnessed the emergence of a number of organizations under the banner of nationalism. The first generation of nationalist leaders were the product of organisations such as *Boedi Utomo* (Lofty Endeavour), which was established in 1908 by a group of Javanese graduates from the Java Medical School.[57] On the other hand, the Islamic organisation *Syarekat Islam* (Islamic Union), established in 1912, became the first 'mass-based movement' in the Archipelago.[58]

Later on, the national movements recruited graduates from Bandung Higher Technical School and the Batavia Law School. Among these recruits was Sukarno, who further stimulated national consciousness through his attempt to generate 'subversive action' against the Dutch colonial rule.[59] In his leadership, Sukarno articulated a three-way strategy. He assured, "first we point out to the people that they have a glorious past, secondly we intensify the notion among our people that the present is dark, and the third way is to show them the promising, pure and luminous future and how to get there."[60] In re-presenting the 'glorious past' of the great kingdoms of Sriwijaya, Majapahit and Singosari, Sukarno raised the people's awareness of national bonds, which, he believed, could generate a new spirit and new powers. [61]

Sukarno, who received a Dutch education, led a group of Dutch-educated nationalists and established the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) in 1927. The party demanded "a new political identity that…transcended and encompassed the many societies of the Indies."[62] Concerning the term 'Indies', Oetomo explains that the PNI emphasised "the principle of self determination" and the formation of an independent Indonesian government.[63] A significant impetus for the awakening of Indonesian

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[57] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 165. Oetomo, "Some Remarks on Modern Indonesian Historiography," 74.

[58] Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 4. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 166.

[59] Oetomo, "Some Remarks on Modern Indonesian Historiography," 75.

[60] Cited in Ibid.

[61] Ibid., 75-76.

[62] Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 4.

[63] Oetomo, "Some Remarks on Modern Indonesian Historiography," 74.

nationalism was the *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Pledge) congress, held on 28 October 1928, organised by Indonesian cultural and political movements.

The congress formed the concept of national unity of the various populations throughout the Indonesian Archipelago and adopted three ideals in one echoing phrase: "one nation—Indonesia, one homeland—Indonesia, and one language—Indonesia."[64] The PNI, led by Sukarno, played a significant role in formalising the quest for national identity. It was also the party members of PNI who promoted the Malay language—the language that has been used as a 'trading language' in the precolonial past—and adopted it as the 'national language,' the so-called *Bahasa Indonesia.* They also created "the national flag and anthem…"[65]

The Dutch Legacy in Architecture and Urban Planning

During the colonial period, Dutch architects responded to contemporary aspirations with their 'moral obligation' to represent Indonesian-ness in their architectural works. Examining the approaches of prominent European architectural figures such as Thomas Karsten and H. Maclaine Pont provides insights into the Dutch architectural and urban legacies as well as the debate on the Indo-European architectural style. Iwan Sudradjat's thorough study of the Dutch legacy is a key source for understanding the meaning of the Indo-European architectural style. Introduced by Dutch and Indo-European architects and theorists, this architectural style can be seen as a direct outcome of the Ethical Policy.[66] The architecture of this style, as Sudradjat puts it, epitomises "the sprit of the period" and reflects the "collective architectural characteristics expressing the cultural identity of an ideal post-plural colonial society."[67]

Up to the first two decades of the twentieth century, the typical Indies architecture demonstrated the architects' dissatisfaction with the neoclassical style, characterised

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[64]   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 4.

[65]   Ibid.

[66]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 155. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 31.

[67]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 155.

by monumental architectural forms and symmetrical formal arrangements.[68]
Architectural theorists and other scholars who were interested in the built
environments of the former Indies were also concerned about the gradual
disappearance of indigenous art and architecture. S. Snuijft, an engineer from the
Public Works Department, complained that:

> …no national colonial architecture exists at present even after the three
> centuries during which the Dutch were established in the East. Political and
> economic conditions have never promoted this, whereas the mild climate
> and fertility of the soil have never created anxiety on the part of the
> uncivilised population to acquire better and more permanent dwellings.[69]

At the beginning of 1920s, the debate on the architectural developments in relation to
the process of cultural integration in the Indies society was intensified. It overlapped
with another debate, concerning the political significance of the 'new society' vision.
The main aim of the debates was to provide an appropriate direction for the
architectural developments in the Indies that could lead to the production of Indo-
European architecture. It was an architectural concept that underpinned the process
of cultural integration in the Indies society. As the debate over the merits of the
Ethical Policy of the new society intensified, views on the possible development of
an Indo-European architecture began to take shape.[70]

One view emphasised rediscovering the significance of the surviving indigenous
architecture, particularly that of the Javanese. Javanese culture had been at the centre
of Dutch colonial concerns since the invasion of Java in the seventeenth century, and
was thus accorded higher significance than and priority over that of other regions.
Another opinion, by contrast, resisted the sole focus on the indigenous architectural
tradition. It proposed that a proper Indo-European architecture lay somewhere

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[68]   Budi A Sukada, "The Emergence of a New Indies Style," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*,
       ed. Gunawan Tjahjono, Julian Davison, and Goh Geok Yian (Singapore: Archipelago Press,
       1996), 120.

[69]   Cited by Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 159.

[70]   Doorn, "A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia."

between Western architecture and ancient Hindu-Javanese architecture.[71] C. P. Wolff Shoemaker, an advocate of this view, argued that, in comparison with Indian, Chinese and Japanese architectures, the ornamented Javanese wooden buildings could not be considered as architecture, but rather as "an embryonic form of architecture."[72]

The two prominent architectural figures of the Indies architectural movement, who were concerned particularly with cultivating native architecture, were H. Maclaine Pont (1884–1971) and Thomas Karsten (1884–1945).[73] Both obtained their architectural degrees from the Technische Hoogeschool at Delft and were sympathetic towards Javanese culture. They not only helped the Javanese to regain self-confidence and protect their own architectural heritage but also contributed significantly to modernising Javanese architecture.[74] Maclaine Pont was born and grew up in the Indies. During his study Pont searched for the aspects of Western architecture that were suitable for indigenous architecture. He examined the Javanese architectural tradition using the principles of modern rational approaches.[75] He focused on the mathematics and physics of traditional Javanese architecture, analysed it, and then related it to modern theory of architecture. Through his comprehensive study, he discovered the secrets of the traditional Javanese structural system, which provides greater bearing capacity through relatively light and economical construction.[76]

In his architectural work, Pont strongly expressed his commitment to the local sensitivity of the Indies society by paying special attention to local conditions, such

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[71]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 162.

[72]   Ibid., 172.

[73]   See Ibid., 162-68. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 32-46. Yulianto Somalyo, "Attempted Synthesis: Dutch Architects in the Indies," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunawan Tjahjono (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1998), 122-23. Josef Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," *Architronic* 5, no. 2 (1996): 4-5.

[74]   See Sudrajat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 162. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 39.

[75]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 39.

[76]   Ibid.

as climate, labour and materials. He was also concerned with the forms and
aesthetics of the indigenous building, particularly the traditional roof types (Figure
3.1.1).[77] His two most famous designs were the Bandoeng Technishe Hoogeschool
(today's Institute of Technology of Bandung) and the Pohsarang Catholic Church,
both built between 1910 and 1930.

Figure 3.1.1   The Institute Technology of Bandung
Source: Author's collection

Pont's architectural representations dominated the Indies architectural movement and
became the cornerstone of the modern architectural movement in Indonesia. His
architectural works showed his concerns for modernising indigenous architecture by
approaching it in a scientific and rational way. The spirituality of the indigenous
architectural tradition had no place in the modern rational framework. Yet Pont
managed to maintain the familiarity of the indigenous architectural images despite
representing them through a modern rational framework.

Through his works, Pont always insisted on the importance of unifying form and
function and on their relationship to the environment. He also insisted on preserving
and developing traditional skills in order to maintain connections with the traditional

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[77]   Helen Jessup, "Dutch Architectural Visions of the Indonesia Tradition," *Muqarnas* 3 (1985):
         144. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political
         Cultures in Indonesia*, 44. Abidin Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn"
         (paper presented at the Pos/Kolonialisme: Lingkung-Bina di Indonesia, Denpasar-Bali, 2001).
         Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 167.

roots of the spiritual society.[78] Pont's sensitivity towards the local context and tradition was accompanied by a critical attitude towards colonial rule:

> We Dutchmen…have been able to monopolise commerce, shipping and transport… As pseudo-friends we have protected for a long time here the bleakest and worst administration and thereby made ourselves gradually indispensable… In the end it became unthinkable that anything important could be achieved without Dutch government interference.[79]

Pont also complained that "the lack of insight on the part of the colonial policy maker into the character of the various institutions, customs and needs of the native society had brought native building activity to the point of desolation in the last decade."[80]

Sudradjat showed how Pont paid special attention to resolving the acute shortage of *kampong* (native housing), and how he disagreed with the Indies government's policies and building regulations. Imposed to fight the epidemic of bubonic plague, the regulations banned the use of bamboo structures and natural roof coverings, considering them to provide a fertile ground for rat infestation. In his argument against the regulations, Pont assured readers that "Javanese architecture…is adaptable to present day purposes and suits well with the Javanese way of life. Although this architecture does not yet fulfil modern hygienic, economic, and constructional requirements, through significant modification some limited adjustments can be made."[81]

Pont encouraged the colonial government to improve native housing conditions in order to achieve its requirement of a healthy living environment. The improvements he suggested involved measures such as "maximum building density, ventilation and

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[78]   Wastu Praganta, "Dua Tokoh Pembentuk Arsitektur Indonesia," in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996), 163.

[79]   Cited in Ibid., 162-63.

[80]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 168. Sudradjat noted Pond's deep concern for the survival of the native building method.

[81]   Cited in Ibid., 172.

the use of more or less fire resistant material."[82] He described methods of improving the quality of local materials used in housing construction, such as bamboo. Before using the bamboo, he suggested soaking it in seawater for a few days, in order to preserve it and protect it from destruction by insects.

Pont's views on maintaining the ingenuity of native building structures did not always resonate with the views of other Dutch Indies architects. C. P. Wolff Schoemaker, for example, argued that, "we, the European, have enough interest in the people of Java to support and encourage their further striving for development and professional knowledge. But let us do it with discretion."[83] Pont expressed his position in a slightly different way: "We, Dutchmen, in our support for the strivings of Javanese craftsmen and technicians for development and professional knowledge, have enough critical sense to discern and point out all that has become routine and continues to exist as untruthful ballast. But let us do it wisely."[84]

Pont's counterpart, Karsten, tried to properly develop the indigenous building tradition by collecting information and studying the art and culture of the Indies. In analysing the ideas of Indies architecture, Karsten discovered the advantage of colourful 'architectural narratives' and the achievements of the indigenous civilisation. Witnessing that the native building tradition had lost its strength to exist, Karsten attempted to provide a significant contribution to the development of native architecture. Not unlike Pont, Karsten was able to help native architecture to stand on its own feet and prove its usefulness.[85] Karsten searched for the advantages of the various narratives of the native architectural tradition and for the achievements of the native civilisation and adapted them to modern conditions.[86]

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[82]   Maclaine Pont, cited in Ibid., 168.

[83]   Cited by Ibid., 174.

[84]   Maclaine Pont, cited in Ibid.

[85]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 33.

[86]   Ibid., 32. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 32.

In a cultural congress held in Solo in 1910, Karsten unfolded his vision for the possibility of the establishment of an "independent Indies," which could provide an opportunity "to revive and develop its own culture and architecture."[87] He strongly suggested the involvement of Western architects, through their dedication and political will, to turn the possibility of an independent Indies into reality. The important considerations were, among other things, the appreciation of the Indies' own art forms, the development of the native arts, and the creation of a tropical feel appropriate to the specific local conditions of climate, light and scale.[88] Most important, however, as Sudradjat noted, was the consideration of educating the indigenous people to produce fully fledged Indies architects.

Towards the possibility of creating an ideal Indies architecture, Karsten emphasised that Western influences could be integrated into indigenous art and architecture without affecting their identity.[89] Such integration, according to Karsten, was regarded as *enrichment*. However, Karsten insisted "there is no question of imitating an earlier historic style, not an eclectic working method of the type which has done so much harm to European architecture in the nineteenth century. It is a matter of the rejuvenation and renewal of a living but repressed art."[90] He warned that there was a danger in copying foreign forms. He also disapproved of various efforts by contemporary architects to use Hindu Javanese ornaments on their building designs, as, for instance, in the placement of a *Kala* head above a building entrance. He insisted that Hindu Javanese art had religious and symbolic meanings that could not be understood by Westerners, to whom these elements would remain foreign.[91]

To elevate the status of Javanese architectural tradition, Karsten worked on the possibility of developing the late Javanese tradition and its "living architecture."[92] He worked on developing the structure and appearance of the traditional Javanese

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[87]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 163.
[88]   Ibid.
[89]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 33.
[90]   Cited by Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 166.
[91]   Ibid., 164-65.
[92]   Ibid., 164.

pendopo, or *pendapa*—an open space supported by four central columns that serves as a public space in the Javanese house—into a modern architectural type.[93] Karsten found in the late Javanese architectural type of *pendopo* was a potent example of living indigenous architecture that was appropriate for further development. The colonial initiation of rediscovering indigenous art and culture, as an implementation of the Ethical Policy, gave Karsten the opportunity to present two architectural works representing his vision of Indies architecture. These were the Javanese folk theatre in Semarang (1920) and Museum Sana Boedaja in Jogyakarta (1935) (Figure 3.1.2). The project aimed at addressing his question, "Has native architecture sufficient vitality to form a starting point for further development?"[94]

In the Semarang theatre project, which was intended to preserve the *wayang* (puppet) performance, Karsten selected elements of the Javanese traditional culture and represented them in a modern form, thereby fulfilling his desire to modernise Javanese cultural performances. By designing the Semarang theatre, Karsten sought to transform the image of a private upper-class performance into a public commercial event free from aristocratic patronage.[95] In his design, Karsten sought to replan and redefine the spatial organisation of the indigenous architectural form of *pendapa,* in order to modernise it, but without losing its own characteristics.[96] This way, he argued, the theatre would become "a most useful public building which has a typical characteristic of its own, the realisation of which would have idealistic, national and practical value."**[97]**

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[93]   Ibid., 165.

[94]   Ibid.

[95]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 34.

[96]   Traditionally, the setting for *wayang* performances, of both puppeteers and gamelans, took place in the *pendapa*. The screen for casting the puppet shadows was located in the *pringgitan*, the space between the *pendapa* and the *dalem*, a private place in the house. The viewers, in this case the members of the family, were placed in the *dalem*. The show was originally performed by *kraton* (palace) dancers.

[97]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 165. For further discussion, see Helen Jessup, "Four Dutch Buildings in Indonesia Ii: Thomas Karsten's Folk Theatre, Semarang," *Orientations* 13, no. 10 (1982): 32.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 211 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.1.2   The Javanese Folk Theatre: Plan and section,
designed by Thomas Karsten, 1921
Source: Sudradjat (1991)

The Indonesian Architectural Style

Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed Indonesia's independence on 17 August 1945, two
days after the Japanese surrendered. Since then modes of architectural representation
in Indonesia have inevitably been linked to the rise of nationalism and the quest for
national identity.[98] Generally, there were two distinctive approaches to architectural
representation. The first, concerned with presenting a universal image of a modern

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[98]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 179-80.

international style, emerged and was fostered during Sukarno's government in order to promote national pride and self-esteem among Indonesians.[99] The second was concerned with creating Indonesian architecture (*arsitektur Indonesia*) that represented Indonesian culture and "epitomised the State's ideology (*Pancasila*) of unity in diversity."[100] These approaches show, on the one hand, the continuation of the architectural legacy of Dutch colonialism and, on the other, the rise of Indonesian awareness of being different from the West. The second approach favoured the concept of regionalism in architecture as an alternative to the prevailing modernist international style, which was advocated by Western architects searching for ways to develop the third world while accounting for the specificity of its diverse local cultures.[101] This was promoted in a number of studies, mostly done by regionalists from developed countries, focusing on traditional settlements and vernacular architecture.

The echoes of the quest for local differences in architecture reached Indonesia in the 1960s. According to Kusno, this issue was discussed in the first architectural journal published by the School of Architecture in Bandung.[102] The journal, as Kusno explains, provided an article on the development of modern architecture in first-world countries. The article asked the Indonesians to be aware of the threats from the West that they were facing at the time. As a counter-strategy, the article suggested to Indonesian architects that they should be able to create an architecture that expressed "the aspiration of the inner self of the Indonesian people."[103] Here the notion of cultural difference became the central premise in the efforts to revitalise Indonesia's own tradition.

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[99] Ibid., 190-93. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 54-60.

[100] Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 195-97. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 71-78.

[101] Abidin Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Architecture* 4 (2000).

[102] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 176-78.

[103] Ibid., 76.

Within the nationalistic fever of independence, Indonesian architects began to explore the notion of national identity, which led them to adopt traditional architectural forms rather than working with the international style. During the first decade of the New Order, in the mid-1970s, the government exerted much influence on the debate of modern architecture in Indonesia.[104] As this decade witnessed a building boom, with many buildings still following the international style, the government activated a search for architectural expressions of national identity through "stimulating awareness of, and pride in, the traditional" built environment.[105]

Van Romondt: Architecture and the New Society

In the post-independence climate, Vincent van Romondt, a prominent Dutch scholar, played a significant role in the search for an architectural identity appropriate for Indonesia's new society.[106] The 'new society' refers here to the new social environment of postcolonialism, which was supposed to have an "appropriate architectural form."[107] As a lecturer in the School of Architecture at Bandung, van Romondt had the primary ambition of creating a new Indonesian architecture based on local traditional values and regional conditions. Van Romondt's approach to creating Indonesian architecture by rediscovering the significant aspects of traditional architecture, was aligned with those of Karsten and Pont.[108] In his inaugural lecture in 1954, van Romondt initiated a discussion of Indonesian architecture, claiming that Indonesia was suffering from a cultural crisis. After a long period of colonial time the Indonesian architectural environment was very much that of a Dutch colony. Although Indonesia was free from Western controls, Indonesians showed an inability to develop their own culture.

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[104]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 197.
[105]   Ibid., 195.
[106]   See Ibid., 187-89. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 172-75.
[107]   The term 'new society' was also used during the time of the Ethical Policy to describe the plurality of Indies society, in the official attempt to look for a proper identity.
[108]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 187.

In the lecture, van Romondt argued that the Indonesian people had undergone a cultural transition.[109] He said that Indonesia's own culture had obviously disappeared with the existence of office buildings, shopping centres and hotels. He was concerned that the Indonesians were satisfied with copying Western culture in order to show that they were developing and modern. He saw this as problematic and asked, "does Indonesia really need these sorts of facilities and do they conform to Indonesian life?"[110] He insisted that the Dutch colonial architectural heritage, especially in the urban areas, was alien to the Indonesian culture and that this might create a "conflict" in the development of Indonesian society.[111]

In the transitional period, van Romondt suggested, the Indonesians needed to articulate a new framework for the development of national culture, and find new strategies to deal with "the heterogeneity" of Indonesian communities. As for Indonesian architecture, he emphasised:

> It is with the [Indonesian] architects to give it [the new cultural norm] a form. An honest one… For they have to be responsible for what those forms convey. They have to search for what is now glorifying the heart of Indonesia… Indonesian architects should enter through the main gate into their Indonesian realm… I can only bring you to the gate, which we [van Romondt and other 'foreign' professors teaching in Bandung] do not enter.[112]

Van Romondt was keen to isolate the local from the foreign. He believed that the postcolonial Indonesian culture still had strong connections to its own heterogeneous precolonial past, during which it was free from the hegemony of Western culture. In a paper written in 1958, he further articulated his position, claiming that the richest sources for developing architecture in Indonesia were to be found in traditional architecture, particularly with regard to the ideals of functionalism and rationalism,

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[109]   Cited in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 173.
[110]   Ibid.
[111]   Ibid.
[112]   Ibid., 175.

which were concerned with structure, plan and aesthetics.[113] In the graduation ceremony held in 1962, van Romondt gave a farewell lecture in which he strongly encouraged the new Indonesian architects to face the current architectural challenges and to look to the future. To overcome the current crisis, he suggested that Indonesian architects and urban planners should rethink the new Indonesia's built environment. The rethinking should aim at creating a built environment that conformed to the national culture and "the aspirations of their home country (*tjita-tjita tanah air*)," which should present itself in away that was different from the West.[114]

In essence, the approach of van Romondt underscored the difference between foreign and indigenous, modern and traditional.[115]

To become modern, according to van Romondt, Indonesia should be able to construct its own authentic culture rather than keeping itself aligned with universal colonial culture. To move from the transitional period to the world community of nations, van Romondt suggested, Indonesia should first be able to construct its own world based on the real needs of the Indonesian society rather than following those of the West.[116] It was crucial for Indonesia, he believed, to form a new cultural reference for the newly born State and its appropriate modern architecture, a built environment that was distinctively specific to Indonesia. The contemporary architecture should be rooted in traditional principles yet developed upon modern approaches, neither foreign nor indigenous but an appropriate combination of both.[117] Van Romondt's vision for the making of Indonesia's national identity involved, as Anderson puts it, "a complex project of juxtapositions and separations between the 'foreign' and the 'indigenous.'" [118]

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[113]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 188.
[114]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 173.
[115]   Ibid., 175.
[116]   Ibid., 174.
[117]   Ibid.
[118]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 166.

Capitalising on the rising sensitivity towards cultural tradition, van Romondt emphasised the cultural difference between East and West as a basis for creating Indonesian architecture. Zaenuddin, a first-generation Indonesian architect, was profoundly influenced by his teacher, van Romondt. He wrote that Indonesia was undergoing massive changes during the transitional period while moving from a traditional and agrarian society to a modern and industrial one. This transition had an impact on the shaping of architectural development, and newly trained architects mediated the changes and influenced the creation of the new built environment.[119]

Over eight years of teaching in the School of Architecture, van Romondt's influence in shaping the minds of the new architects was significant. His vision for Indonesian architecture was reflected in his teaching method. He instructed students to incorporate aesthetic, cultural and historical considerations, especially their cultural heritage, into their architectural design exercises.[120] He introduced excursions to other regions in order to broaden the students' knowledge of the Indonesian cultural heritage and to make them appreciate their own culture.[121]

Van Romondt's vision of creating Indonesian architecture involved many contradictions and remained ambiguous. While raising awareness of traditional forms and culture, he enthusiastically introduced a modern perspective to create architecture. He persistently challenged his students to discover 'beauty' within the rational and functional form and to ignore excessive and un-needed ornamentations. Although he admired the architectural form of the Hindu-Javanese temple, he claimed that this building type could not be considered as *living architecture*. The most important reason to create a new Indonesian architecture, he insisted, was to offer comfort and to improve the condition of human life.[122]

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[119]   Zaenuddin Kartadiwiria, "Gejala-Gejala Transisional: Faktor Penentu Dalam Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia," in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996), 125-26.

[120]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 187.

[121]   Ibid.

[122]   See Ibid., 189.

Van Romondt's legacy was far reaching. He not only shaped the minds of the first generation of Indonesian architects but, through his students, also the minds of the subsequent generations.[123] His efforts to raise the cultural sensitivity of Indonesians generated a genuine desire to return to vernacular architecture as a source for reinventing Indonesian architecture.[124] This shows how Indonesian architects continued to be dominated by the Dutch in their post-independence search for an architectural identity for their new society.

3.2 Sukarno's Old Order

Although the Indonesians gained their independence in 1945, the Dutch returned to reclaim their former colony for another five years after the departure of the Japanese. Sukarno was acknowledged internationally as the first President of Indonesia only in 1950. His regime constituted what might be called the 'Old Order', in contrast to Suharto's 'New Order.'[125] In 1957 Sukarno introduced the policy of Guided Democracy.[126] In practice, however, the policy was an affirmation of his personal rule that was "reminiscent of Javanese feudalism," particularly with regard to maintaining his central authority.[127] On one occasion, Sukarno said:

> In Guided Democracy…the key ingredient is leadership. The Guider…incorporates a spoonful of so-and-so with a dash of such-and-such, always taking care to incorporate a *soupcon* of the opposition. Then he cooks it and serves his final summation with "OK, now my dear brothers, it is like this and I hope you agree…" It's still democratic because every body has given his comment.[128]

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[123] See Ibid., 187.

[124] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. For discussion on returning to the vernacular as the search for identity, see Paul Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[125] See Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 2-3, 6.

[126] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 257.

[127] Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 6, 16. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 257.

[128] Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 16-17.

Examining the central power of Sukarno's Guided Democracy is necessary for understanding the process of modernising Indonesian architecture. This period shows Sukarno's centralised political power and the development of the built environment as expressions of national identity.[129] It also shows Sukarno's aim of using the capital city to compete with the imageries of other world centres. In this regard, Ricklefs explains that Sukarno's Guided Democracy projects, which will be discussed later:

> represented a centre of legitimacy which others needed. Conspicuous display was the outward expression of legitimacy; stadium, statues and great public occasions were perhaps similar in function to the court ceremonial and buildings of an older age.[130]

Independence and the Politics of Economic Crisis

Having achieved independence, Indonesia began to face the difficult task of how to govern the country.[131] With centralising the government administration in the capital, Jakarta, the city began to experience economic and social pressures.[132] In the wake of independence, serious economic and social problems arose. Accelerated population growth—most of them were 'illiterate and poor'—after the struggle for independence was among the many problems the new national government faced.[133] In addition, the farmers no longer had sufficient land for their livelihood.[134] The unrest that plagued people in the countryside caused them to migrate to the capital city of Jakarta in search of work opportunities and a better life style.[135] The nationalists had already promised the Indonesians a prosperous future after

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[129] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 54-60. See also J Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search for Meaning in the Monuments and Great Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," in *Urban Symbolism*, ed. P Nas (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993).

[130] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 257.

[131] Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 5.

[132] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 167.

[133] See Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 237. Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 171-72.

[134] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 238.

[135] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 173.

independence and the time had come for them to live up to their promise.[136] Jakarta, which was called Batavia during colonial times and served as the centre of colonial government, was selected as the country's capital and the seat for the 'new nationalist government.' Thus Jakarta appeared as the place that could deliver the nationalists' promise to provide the long-awaited opportunities for country-dwellers. The massive influx of people to central Jakarta—mostly from the extremely densely populated regions of Java—marked the most rapid growth in population in the city's history.[137] In 1950 the boundaries of the new municipality of Greater Jakarta were altered to include an area three times the size of the old one. The majority of population, however, remained within the old municipality.[138]

In general, the rapid expansion exerted great pressures on the city infrastructure and facilities. The most critical issue was the housing shortage,[139] which inevitably led to the spread of illegal settlements in the city.[140] It became a common practice for newcomers to share existing housing. More over, as Abeyasekere observes, they shared living in unsanitary huts in muddy areas where rubbish and sewage disposal was still at its precolonial level.[141] The Indonesian poet Ayip Rosidi, who was among the immigrants to Jakarta in 1951, was horrified at his encounter with the living environment in Jakarta. He wrote:

> It was entirely beyond anything I had imagined before actually coming to Djakarta, and I felt nauseated. I had never, never thought I could live in such squalor. Yet little by little…I grew familiar with Djakarta housing, knowing

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[136] In intensifying national consciousness Sukarno as a nationalist leader had generated a 'subversive action' which among other things was the promising of a luminous future. For further discussion see Ibid. See also Oetomo, "Some Remarks on Modern Indonesian Historiography," 75.

[137] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 171.

[138] Ibid. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 53.

[139] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 173, 75.

[140] Ibid., 174.

[141] Ibid., 175. For more detail, see Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 53.

that it was sometimes possible to live in a row of shacks, as we did, only after some stroke of good luck.[142]

Looking from Rosidi's perspective, which was shared by other immigrants, Jakarta might have seemed disappointing at first encounter, yet he still regarded it as a privileged place in the nation. In fact, Rosidi's opinion was expressive of the wider perception. After the rise of the new nationalist government, Jakarta received the biggest share of Indonesian investment**.**[143] The history of Indonesia shows that almost two-thirds of the total government loans in 1956 were allocated to the capital city, Jakarta. It is therefore not surprising for Jakarta to be seen as the most privileged place in fulfilling Indonesians' dreams. This favouritism towards Jakarta, however, created social unrest in other parts of the country, particularly in the areas outside the Javanese island, the so-called outer islands, which felt neglected by the government.[144] This lack of social justice was a source of great offence against Jakarta, the locus of the new government.[145]

The Minangkabau intellectual Sutan Takdir Ali Sjahbana, from the outer islands, cynically criticised Jakarta. He wrote:

> Not only has most of the revenue of the new State accumulated in Djakarta, but most of it has also been spent there. Djakarta has become the centre where the money collected from the rest of the country is divided up. It is not surprising that anyone who wants to do business of any kind must make his way to Djakarta because only there…is there access to finance; only there are decisions made… Djakarta, with its population of top officials and business leaders who are all tied to each other by a whole range of political and financial connections, is like a fat leech sucking on the head of fish, the fish being Indonesia.[146]

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[142] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 174. 'Djakarta' is the old spelling of Jakarta.

[143] Ibid., 182.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 238.

[146] Cited in H Feith and L Castle, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), 322.

Since Java had the capital city and the majority (about 61 per cent in 1961) of the Indonesian population, and had produced the most civilian politicians, the outer islands tended to be low on the government's list of priorities.[147] In terms of national commodities, the Indonesian government's policy "sought to redistribute the wealth of the export-producing but under-populated Outer Islands in favour of the majority of the population in the island of Java."[148] This biased government policy drew the wrath of the outer islanders, particularly in those regions that sought to produce the largest amount of national resources.[149]

Moreover, in the political realm, resentment on the part of Islamic groups towards the national leadership inevitably emerged. The early 1960s witnessed the rise of Islam as a political force, although it was still in a state of confusion.[150] The Masyumi Party, one of the largest Islamic groups, was banned, whereas the Communist Party, which was attracting a growing number of supporters, received protection from the government. This raised serious concerns among the Islamic groups and made the Muslims in Indonesia increasingly disappointed with the Sukarno's regime.[151] A social and political crisis was developing and posing an increasing threat to national unity, eventually culminating in the uprising of the rebels who resisted the authority of the republican government.[152] In the mind of Sukarno such a crisis emerged because of 'looseness' in the central power.[153] He therefore sought to tighten his central control in a way that "should be bold enough to re-establish the instinctive and natural respect for authority."[154] Sukarno tried strongly to convince his people

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[147]   Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 182. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 238.

[148]   Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 182.

[149]   See Ibid.

[150]   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 17.

[151]   Ibid.

[152]   Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 273.

[153]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 100.

[154]   Cited in Feith and Castle, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking*, 75.

that he and the whole nation were the same.[155] In addressing a mass meeting in 1959, he said:

> My friends and my children, I am no Communist… I am not prejudiced. I am no dictator. I am no holy man or reincarnation of God. I am just an ordinary human being like you and you and you…When I die…do not write on the tombstone: 'Here rests His Most Exalted Excellency Dr. Ir. Raden Sukarno, the first President of the Republic Indonesia'…[but] write… 'Here rests Bung (brother) Karno, the *Tongue of the Indonesian People*.[156]

On another occasion, Sukarno said, "I merely wish that the Indonesian Nation may become whole again, that the state may becomes whole again… I want to propose something that is in harmony with the Indonesian spirit, the real spirit of the Indonesian Nation, that is: the spirit of family life."[157]

The City and the Politics of Nationalism

In an effort to respond to the conditions existing in Jakarta, a team of urban planners sponsored by the United Nations was appointed in 1956to work out a master plan for Jakarta. Abeyasekere explains the group's main tasks:

> It began by pointing to what it considered the main problem areas: employment, traffic congestion, housing, social facilities. In each of these areas it made recommendations: expansion of industrialization on the basis of a regional plan which would also provide employment in Jakarta's catchment areas; investment in a housing program; a system of ring roads for Jakarta; schemes for extension of the water supply, drainage and

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[155] Examining Sukarno's personality in governing the country, Ricklefs sees him as "a skilled manipulator of men and of symbol." Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 257.

[156] As cited in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 101.

[157] Feith and Castle, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking*, 88-89, Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 100.

electricity systems and for rubbish collection; and a proposal to create a Green Belt around the planned built-up area of the city.[158]

Although the outline plan was finalised and approved by the municipality in 1958, it was never put into practice.[159] This was because President Sukarno, after introducing the government policy of Guided Democracy, imposed his own set of priorities on Jakarta's master plan. Sukarno preferred to focus on building up the capital city as "the idealised centre of power" He decided to rebuild the central part of Jakarta to include monuments, a hotel, a department store and a convention centre, which he believed to be of higher priority in his project of nation building (*pembangunan*) than the recommendations of the urban planners.[160] In his focus on nation building Sukarno called on Indonesians to join in building the necessary national spirit: "We are building the city of Jakarta, building our fatherland (*'tanah air'*), building our state, and building our society. We are now undergoing an extraordinary nation-building revolution."[161] All of Sukarno's buildings were built in a modernist style and located along the main road in the centre of Jakarta.

On another occasion, Sukarno continued the discussion on the significance of the modern city, revealing his vision for Jakarta as the 'lighthouse' that epitomised the new spirit of the nation. He said:

> Comrades from Jakarta, let us build Jakarta into the greatest city possible. Great, not just from a material point of view; great, not just because of its skyscrapers; great not just because it has boulevards and beautiful streets; great not just because it has beautiful monuments; great in every aspect, even in the little houses of the workers of Jakarta there must be a sense of greatness… Give Jakarta an extraordinary place in the minds of Indonesian the people, because Jakarta belongs to people of Jakarta, Jakarta belongs to the whole Indonesian people. More than that, Jakarta is becoming the

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[158] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 200.

[159] Ibid., 200-01.

[160] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 102.

[161] Sukarno, quoted by Ibid.

beacon of the whole of human kind. Yes, the bacon of the New Emerging Forces.[162]

Sukarno was an architectural engineer who graduated from the Bandoeng Technishe Hoogeschool (now the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB)), and his transformation of the built form of Jakarta delivered his vision of a new society. Kusno observes that "a "universal" modernist vision of a capital city was appropriated to establish a new centre of power, externally for the gaze of neighbouring rulers, and internally for the admiration of national territorial subjects."[163] However, the concentration of the country's development being centred on the capital city inevitably created more problems. With such mega-projects being undertaken in the capital city in unfavourable economic conditions, Jakarta "witnessed the most rapid population expansion in the city's history, bringing tremendous urban pressure on the municipality."[164]

Alternative Modernity

The development of the built environment of the capital city, Jakarta, was the priority of Sukarno's policies. During the time of Guided Democracy, 1959–1965, Sukarno set up a national project, the nation-building Guided Democracy, in central Jakarta and rebuilt the city in order to "demonstrate the regime's commitment to a form of national discipline and the need to attract international recognition" through a great deal of monumental construction.[165] The political climate at that time had accepted modernity as a powerful medium for achieving national strength. Accordingly, Sukarno instructed Indonesian architects to demonstrate their capability to create modern architecture in order to prove that modern Indonesia could match the West.

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[162] Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 168.

[163] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 60.

[164] Ibid., 52. For further discussion, see Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 171. Abeyasekere explains that the population of Jakarta had increased rapidly since the earliest time of Indonesian independence.

[165] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 51.

He said, "Indonesia can also build the country like Europeans and Americans do because we are equal."[166]

Sukarno's project of nation-building Guided Democracy was a massive national program covering central Jakarta with representative buildings. The intent was to modernise the capital city and to raise the self-esteem of the Indonesian people after three and half centuries of colonial oppression.[167] The transformation of the built forms of Jakarta, which all emerged in modern style, was to foster a progressive sense of national unity and to provide a sense of identity to Indonesia's newly independent capital.[168] Sukarno's initiation of modernisation coincided with the coming back of Indonesian graduates from American universities at the end of the 1950s. During this time, the School of Architecture at ITB, which was initially established under Dutch leadership, was under American management. At the beginning of the 1960s, Western literature started to infiltrate architectural education in Indonesia.[169] Architecture graduates were as a matter of course influenced by Western ideas. By the beginning of 1970s, their designs represented the general stream of architectural style inspired by the works and concepts of architectural masters such as Walter Gropius, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. Their modern buildings expressed strict geometry and formal repetition.

In spatial representations, Sukarno also facilitated the re-introduction of an old concept related to the traditional polity of the ancient Javanese kingdom.[170] In doing so, as Kusno explains, Sukarno was able to show that "he (and his government) embodied traditional Javanese conceptions of power," yet at the same time he was able to evade the traditional architectural image associated with that conception.[171] This way the modernity and monumentality of the capital city demonstrated a link

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[166] Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," 5.

[167] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 51-52.

[168] Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 190-94.

[169] Ibid., 190.

[170] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 73. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 51.

[171] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 52.

both to the concept of traditional polity and to the global trend of modernism that dominated political vision throughout the world. In this sense, Kusno further explains, Sukarno's project of nation-building was paradoxical in dealing with issues of identity and difference by juxtaposing local tradition and global modernity.[172]

Restoring Traditional Authority

The cultural values of postcolonial Indonesia, particularly during Sukarno's and Suharto's periods, were still to some degree aligned with ancient Javanese polity.[173] Anderson indicates that the spatial representation of power in classical Java as well as in the mainland of Southeast Asia before European colonialism was based upon the concept of the *mandala.* This concept was derived from Indian political theory and was based on the structural relationships between a centre and its peripheries.[174] Anderson explains:

> Perhaps the exact image of the ordered Javanese polity is that of a cone of light cast downward by a reflector lamp… The gradual, even diminution of the radiance of the lamp with increasing distance from the bulb is an apt metaphor for the Javanese conception not only of the structure of the state but also of centre–periphery relationships and territorial sovereignty.[175]

Associating the radiating light with the central authority, the concentration of power in the centre reflects the absolute power of the king. Standing on the peripheries, the states assume less and less authority as the distance of their positions from the centre increases. However, within a centralised system, the "citizen at the periphery should share status equally with [the] citizen at the centre, and legal obligations should apply uniformly throughout the territory."[176] The centre and peripheries composition represents a clear division within the country into two types of states, Javanese and

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172   Ibid.

173   See Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 35-45. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 60.

174   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 43.

175   Ibid., 36.

176   Ibid., 42.

non-Javanese. Non-Javanese states are known as *Sabrang* (literally, 'Overseas').[177]
Anderson explains that the supreme authority a ruler had in the traditional Javanese
polity embodied "the unity of society"; it was an obsessive concern with the
"oneness" of the ruler.[178] This unity was considered as "a central symbol of power
itself" so that multiplicity was regarded as weakness, which in turn threatened the
integration of power.[179]

Within the traditional Javanese concept of power, Sukarno appealed for 'national
unity', trying to dismiss his anxiety about a dispersion of power as a result of the
continuous hostility towards his government. Kusno comments that "to avoid the
dispersion of power, which indicates the looseness of the centre, a representation of a
central symbol of power is necessary."[180] Kusno argues that Sukarno's unease about
the scattering of power drew him to the idea of centralism. The idea of creating
Jakarta as the beacon of the country to establish a centre of power seemed crucial for
Sukarno. It at once demonstrated the development of the country and obscured the
internal conflicts.[181]

Sukarno's Symbolic City

Between 1946 and 1950 the city of Yogyakarta in Central Java served as the
provisional capital of the Republic of Indonesia. On the second day of his stay in
Yogyakarta, Sukarno gave a speech to share his thoughts on the national state and the
function of the capital city as a centre of power and leadership. He emphasised that
"No 'nationale staat' can endure without coordination. No 'nationale staat' can exist
without centralism. Russia has Moscow, America has Washington, England has
London, Mojopahit had Wilwo Tikkto."[182] Sukarno's political vision appealed to the

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[177]   Ibid.

[178]   Ibid., 36.

[179]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 61. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 36.

[180]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 61.

[181]   For discussion of internal conflict in relation to the built environment, please see Ibid.

[182]   Cited in Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search for Meaning in the Monuments and Great Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," 56. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 62.

ancient Javanese political power of the Majapahit as much as it did to examples from the modern world. Jakarta, as the capital of the country, was thus imagined by Sukarno as the centre of the Archipelago, recalling the image of ancient Wilwo Tiko.[183] In addition to that, Jakarta, externally, had to be a "beacon" for the international gaze of the world community."[184]

Sukarno also wanted to erase the image of the capital as a colonial city and to transform it into one that made it the pride of the independent nation.[185] In his attempt to construct a new progressive image equal to other world capitals, he initiated his nation-building project in 1960. With the aim of putting Jakarta on the map of world cities and making it the portal of the country, Sukarno transformed the centre of the city with monumental projects. In 1962, he announced publicly:

> Build up Djakarta as beautiful as possible, built it as spectacularly as possible, so that this city, which has become the centre of the struggle of the Indonesian people, will be an inspiration and beacon to the whole of struggling mankind and to all the emerging forces. If Egypt was able to construct Cairo as its capital, Italy its Rome, France its Paris and Brazil its Brasilia, then Indonesia must also proudly present Djakarta as the portal of the country.[186]

To accomplish his goal, he gathered a number of architects and artists to produce a master plan of Jakarta. Although Sukarno opened his projects for discussion, at the end the decisions were always his. Every project had to be approved by Sukarno; no action could be taken without his approval.[187] Sukarno's initial idea was to develop the 900,000 square metres of grass fields in the heart of Jakarta, which in 1950 Sukarno had renamed *Lapangan Merdeka* (Independence Square) (Figure 3.2.1).

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[183]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 62.

[184]   Ibid., 54.

[185]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 190.

[186]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 54.

[187]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 192.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 229 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.2.1   Independence Square in Jakarta
Source: Wiryomartono (1995)

During the Dutch occupation this central space was called *Koningsplein* (King's
Square) and was regarded as the centre of the Dutch administration.[188] In the
surrounding spaces, several important buildings were built, such as government
buildings, the palace of the Governor-General, a Roman Catholic cathedral, police

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[188] Gerald M. Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built
Environment," *Antipode* 27, no. 3 (1995): 274. Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search
for Meaning in the Monuments and Great Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," 38.

headquarters, and the Prince Frederick Castle, which was destroyed during Sukarno's era in order to build the national Mosque of Istiqlal [189].

Independence Square was located in the centre of Jakarta. Its position was significant: it represented the idea of central power, demonstrating the outspread of a new hierarchy. In a broader perspective, the square was located, as Macdonald observes, "in the heart of Jakarta, on the Island of Java, in the state of Indonesia, in the modern world."[190] The square and its monumental structures embodied the spirit of Indonesian nationalism.[191]

After independence, Sukarno built the National Monument, called *Monas* (abbreviated from Monumen Nasional) in Independence Square, which he imagined to be equivalent to "the Eiffel Tower in France."[192] The monument was built in the city's central square to stand as a landmark for Sukarno's nation building.[193] It consisted of a base and a 115-metre high marble obelisk, the top of which was crowned with a 14-metre high 32-kilogram gold-plated flame (Figure 3.2.2)[194]. The monument was designed to commemorate Indonesian independence and the flame was intended to be the emblem of the Indonesians' spirit in their struggle to reach freedom.[195] The dimensions of its structure, which are based on the numerals of the date of the proclamation of Indonesian independence—17-8-45—were repeated frequently.[196] The temporary buildings located around the plaza were cleared in order to give an imposing and forceful presence to the monument.

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[189]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 55. Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 275.

[190]   Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 276.

[191]   Ibid.: 289.

[192]   Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 169.

[193]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 55.

[194]   Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 278.

[195]   Ibid.

[196]   Ibid. See also Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search for Meaning in the Monuments and Great Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," 42.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 231 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.2.2   The National Monument
Source: www.travelmark.com.id

The monument is not without some paradox and ambiguity. It is traditional in form,

yet it appears as a modern expression. It reflected Sukarno's ambivalence towards

the West. On the one hand, Sukarno often appeared anti-Western, frequently pointing

to the United States, yet the monument presents a recognisable image of Western

patriotic obelisks,[197] reminiscent of the Washington monument.[198] On the other hand

the form of the monument adopts the ancient Javanese art form of the *linggam-*

yoni.[199] Sukarno explained:

> *Lingam* and *yoni* are ancient symbols which denote eternal life: there is a
>
> positive principle (*lingam*) and a negative one (*yoni*), as day and night, male

[197] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 75. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia.* Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 278.

[198] See Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 278.

[199] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 175. Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment."

and female, good and evil… lingam is the pestle-like 'tugu' which soars
high up into the sky, and 'yoni' the mortal-like bowl-shaped hall. Mortars
and pestles are everyday utensils owned by every Indonesian family,
particularly in the country-side.[200]

Sukarno's interpretation presents the monument through an ancient iconographic
frame to see the future of modern Indonesia.[201] Through the monument, Sukarno
delivered a message of *continuity* between past and present Indonesia.[202] In addition
to Monas, Sukarno executed a number of other monumental projects, such as high-
rise office buildings, Hotel Indonesia, Sarinah department store, thoroughfares, the
clover-leaf overpass (called Semanggi), the grand Mosque of Istiqlal, the Asian
games complex (called Senayan), the planetarium at the Taman Ismail Marzuki, and
the Ancol fun fare. These projects embodied in monumental ways Sukarno's vision
of progressive modernity, and were financed mostly from foreign aid. [203]

As part of his nation-building project, Sukarno also initiated a plan to host
international events. This idea of demonstrating to other nations his achievements in
transforming Jakarta into a new emerging force in Asia seemed important to
Sukarno.[204] For the first time, Indonesia hosted an Asian Games, the Fourth, in 1962.
A year later, Indonesia hosted the first Games of the New Emerging Forces
(GANEFO), inviting its neighbouring nations to witness Jakarta's transformation
into a modern city. To welcome the visitors, Sukarno commissioned the building of
the Welcome Statue, situated in front of Hotel Indonesia (Figure 3.2.3).

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[200]   Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search for Meaning in the Monuments and Great
Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," 44.

[201]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 175.

[202]   Ibid.

[203]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 191. Kusno, *Behind the
Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 56.

[204]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in
Indonesia*, 56.
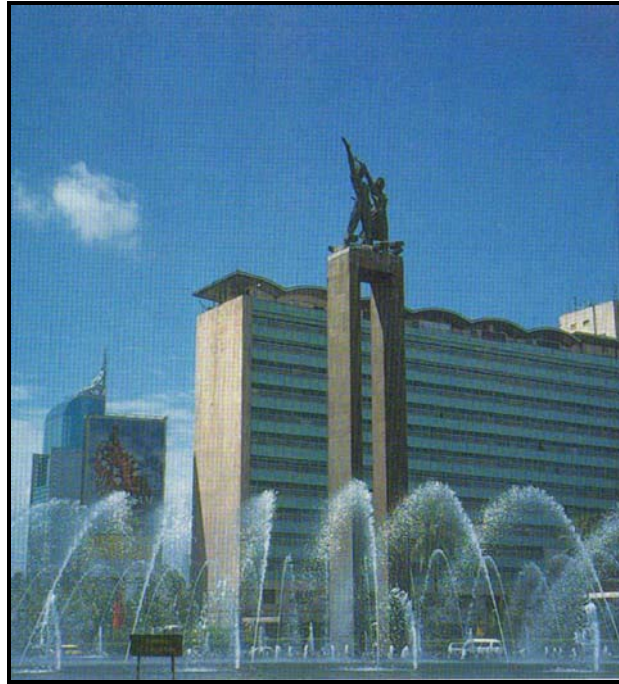
Figure 3.2.3   The Welcome Statue with Hotel Indonesia in the background
Source: Author's collection

Explaining the symbolic meanings behind his grand architectural and urban vision, Sukarno said:

> Projects such as the Asian Games, the National Monument, Independence
> Mosque, the Jakarta By-pass, and so on, are examples of 'Nation-Building'
> and 'Character Building'…of the whole Indonesian people striving to
> recover our national identity…Who is not aware that every people in the
> world is always striving to enhance its greatness and lofty ideal? Do you
> remember that a great leader of a foreign country told me that monuments
> are an absolute necessity to develop the people's spirit, as necessary as pants
> for somebody naked, pants and not a tie? Look at New York and Moscow,
> look at any State capital, East and West it makes no matter, and you always
> find the centre of nations' greatness in the form of buildings, material
> buildings to be proud of.[205]

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[205]   Leclerc, "Mirror and the Light House: A Search for Meaning in the Monuments and Great
Works of Sukarno, 1960-1966," 52.

In 1963, when Dutch New Guinea was integrated into the territory of Indonesia, Sukarno commissioned the construction of a 35-metre high commemorative monument, Tugu Irian Barat (the Liberation of West Irian). This is the next best-known monument after Monas, one that had special significance for the Indonesian nationalists. Located in the centre of Jakarta, Tugu Irian Barat is a rugged human figure that stands on a concrete base with broken chains on his feet and arms, which are raised up high (Figure 3.2.4). The monument, with its realistic style, represents a specific historical event, showing Sukarno's preoccupation with romanticising revolutionary Indonesia.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 234 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.2.4   Tugu Irian Barat
Source: Leclerc (1993)

Like the 1962 Asian Games, this project was conceived by Sukarno to represent the city as a beacon to the globe. He said:

> Who is not proud that he is a member that is not stagnant, of a nation that is moving, moving, moving on swiftly towards the building of a great state, whole and strong, that stretches from Sabang to Merauke, a great state that moves forward fast toward a life that is noble and respected…and

prosperous, that is a beacon to others…and that is rapidly becoming one of the champions of the new emerging forces, a nation that is moving to realise socialism based on its own national identity? Who is not proud of this?[206]

Sukarno's final project was the construction of the national Mosque of Independence, *Masjid Istiqlal* (Figure 3.2.5). As the leader of the world's most populous Muslim country, Sukarno felt the obligation to include a grand national mosque in his list of monuments. At the time it was built the mosque was the largest mosque in Southeast Asia and the second largest in the world. Sukarno chose its location to be in the centre of the capital city on the northeastern side of Independence Square. The mosque holds about twenty thousand people and its courtyard could fit one hundred thousand people.[207]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 235 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.2.5   The National Mosque 'Istiqlal'
Source: Sukada (1998)

The mosque was designed by Frederick Silaban, a Christian from Tapanuli in North Sumatra. Its construction started in 1962, and Sukarno was just as keen about it as he was about his other monuments. He said:

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[206]   Feith and Castle, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking*, 118-19.

[207]   Hugh O'Neill, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order," in *Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia*, ed. Virginia Hooker (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993), 156.

What! Would we build a Friday Mosque like the Masjid Demak, or Masjid Banten. I'm sorry! What if I approach Masjid Banten! When it was built it was already great. But if erected today how would it rank, technical colleagues? And in the history of Islam, Masjid Banten, or Masjid Ciparai, Majalaya, or Masjid Bogor, colleagues, near the *sate* seller…No! It is my wish, together with the Islamic community here to erect a Friday Mosque which is larger than the Mohammad Ali Mosque [Cairo], larger than the Salim Mosque. Larger! And why? We have a great nation! My wish is to build with all the populace, one Indonesian nation which proclaims the Islamic religion. We are always amazed! If we come to Cairo brother! If we go to Makatamon, on the left there is a mosque on the hill. My God it is splendid! Why can't we build a mosque which is larger and more beautiful than that?[208]

Sukarno saw Islam as a global religion but only through the lens of Java: through the mosques of Demak in Central Java and Banten in West Java. The Istiqlal Mosque presented in modern style the global image of the mosque and became a significant element of Sukarno's imagined national image. In its modern style, however, the mosque ignored the traditional Indonesian architectural forms. Explaining his choice of style and size, Sukarno said:

Let us built a Friday Mosque which doesn't use roof tiles, but one which is built from reinforced concrete…which is finished with marble, and paved with marble, whose doors are from bronze. And not only must the material be concrete, bronze and fine stones but of grand dimensions, not just a Friday Mosque which we already have for Friday prayers or special celebrations, for three or four thousand people, no. Build a Friday Mosque, let us build a Friday Mosque which is the largest in the world, the largest in the world![209]

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208   Ibid., 157.
209   Ibid., 158.

The mosque, completed in 1978 during Suharto's reign, showed Sukarno's obsession with monumentality and with transforming Jakarta into a city of modern and international character. In his design, architect Silaban followed a modern rational approach concerned primarily with function, comfort, efficiency and simplicity.[210] The type of the Masjid Istiqlal can be found in many contemporary mosques throughout Indonesia. The building is characterised by spacious horizontal interior spaces, opening up in the centre under cupolas of diverse shapes and sizes. The building exterior is dominated by a long facade capped with a heavy frame. As we have seen, Sukarno's vision for material progress during the nation-building period, with its Western outlook, was embodied primarily in architectural and urban forms. This showed Sukarno's concern for creating a national political culture that brought together spatial and political representations.[211] Sukarno's interest in creating Indonesian architecture was also a way of addressing the national crises and social unrest that were threatening his authority.[212]

Imagination and Reality in Sukarno's Vision

Soon after Sukarno started building up Jakarta many urban and environmental problems emerged. The authorities concerned with urban regulations faced three daunting problems caused mainly by the overcrowded state of the city: "illegal occupation of land, homeless people and street traders and buskers."[213] To address these problems, the mayor of Jakarta intended to beautify the city and "took steps to clean it of homeless people," who were "sleeping in shop verandahs, under bridges, in little huts alongside railway lines, so that foreign people stared at them and they lowered the status of the nation."[214]

The land allocated for the master plan of Jakarta was already occupied by squatters and had to be vacated. The evacuation was swiftly done after the "martial law of

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[210]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 193.

[211]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 67.

[212]   See Ibid.

[213]   Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History*, 197.

[214]   Ibid., 198.

Guided Democracy introduced an era of authoritarianism."[215] According to Abeyasekere, about forty thousand people were evacuated in 1962 when the building of the Asian Games complex began, and hundreds of temporary houses, located on the site of the Jakarta bypass project, also had to be removed. The residents had to be resettled elsewhere or even sent away to newly opened land in South Sumatra.[216] Many returned to the same place as homeless people, and large numbers of immigrants created the rotten *kampongs* which showed a grim side of Sukarno's modern city. Their presence showed how little relevance Sukarno's visions of the symbolic city had to the realities of life in Jakarta. The young Indonesian poet Taufik Ismail captured the reality of Indonesians' life:

> What we ask is just a dike
> No monuments or football stadiums
> Or coloured fountains
> Send us lime and cement.[217]

Instead of dealing with urgent needs, with providing a dike, lime and cement, the concern with monuments reflected the needs of the central authority. The dignity of Jakarta as the symbol of the nation was related more to Sukarno's role as the apex of the political hierarchy than to the base. Ironically, it was in Jakarta in 1965 that a coup was to end his power and authority. Sukarno's monumental program, envisioned to raise the self-esteem of the Indonesian people, created equally monumental problems. Sukarno's concern with the construction of the Indonesian identity was at the expense of the people's essential needs. Other contradictions were also at work. While the construction of the Istiqlal Mosque was under way the government banned one of the biggest Islamic political parties and imprisoned many of its leaders.[218] Likewise, the monument of the Liberation of West Irian did not represent the aspirations of the Irian Jaya people, who today are still fighting for their

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[215]   Ibid.

[216]   Ibid., 80, Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia," 60.

[217]   A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1967), 254.

[218]   See Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 17. Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 290.

independence.[219] With regard to the building of national unity, the monumental building program of the 'exemplary centre' in the end led to the disintegration and failure of Sukarno's regime.

Aceh under Sukarno's Rule

After independence Aceh experienced many economic and political problems that impacted upon its social and built environment. Conflicts with the central government arose over its lack of attention and resources given to health, education and other urban and rural necessities in Aceh.

Economic and Political Issues

Although the Dutch resumed their rule immediately after the departure of the Japanese troops, Aceh remained almost free from the renewed Dutch colonial influence.[220] During this time the local government of Aceh was dominated by the religious elites, who were keen to change Acehnese society from its Western–colonial character to an Islamic one. As Aceh was free from the Dutch reinvasion it attempted to increase its influence in the neighbouring regions. Tengku Daud Beureuh, then leader of PUSA (the Aceh Ulama Association), was appointed as the military governor of the regions of Aceh, Langkat and Tanah Karo (the latter two regions were part of the province of North Sumatra). This strengthened the significant role of PUSA in the administration of Aceh. Although Aceh was not recolonised by the Dutch, the spirit of nationalism spread among the Acehnese leaders, who shared the nation's desire for free and independent Indonesia.[221]

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[219] Macdonald, "Indonesia's Medan Merdeka: National Identity and the Built Environment," 290.

[220] Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam* (Jakarta: PT Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1990), 32-33. Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesian Project, 1995), 10. Eric Eugene Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Centre-Periphery Relations in Indonesia" (PhD Thesis, Cornell University, 1983), 54-114.

[221] See Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*. Nur El-Ibrahimy, *Teungku Muhammad Daud Beureueh. Jakarta: Gunung Agung.* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung., 1986). M. Isa Sulaiman, "Sejarah Aceh: Sebuah Gugatan Terhadap Tradisi," (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1997). Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*. Morris, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Centre-Periphery Relations in Indonesia."

Aceh played an important role in the struggle towards Indonesia's independence, by providing troops and funds to the central government to support the 'Indonesian independence movement.' Militarily, Aceh *ulama*, under the leadership of Tengku Daud Beureueh, signed the "declaration of Ulama throughout Aceh," emphasising the holy war against the Dutch reimposition.[222] Economically, Aceh's contribution to funding 'national security bonds' for the Indonesian government was greater than that of all other regions.[223] The funds contributed by the Acehnese included support for the central government's expenses for international diplomatic missions.[224] After Sukarno's visit to Aceh in 1948, he raised the topic of the central government's need for aircraft, and the Acehnese responded with generous financial contributions to support the purchase of two aircraft. Such contributions were achieved through the involvement of Acehnese businessmen who donated money and gold. (The price of two aircraft was at the time equal in value to twenty kilograms of gold.)[225] With the Acehnese contributions, two Dakota aeroplanes, RI 001 and RI 002 *Seulawahs*, were bought. These were the first Indonesian aircraft that formed the beginning of the national airline, Garuda Indonesia Airways.[226] These contributions showed that the Acehnese economy was stable.

With reference to Aceh's significant contributions to both the national economy and the struggle for independence, Sukarno called the province of Aceh Indonesia's financial capital. Since Aceh was the only region free from Dutch occupation, the announcement of the capital of the Republic of Indonesia in 1948 took place in Kuta Raja, now known as Banda Aceh.[227] At the time the city had a radio transmitter, which was important to maintain communications with the fighters throughout Indonesia and with the Indonesian representative at the United Nations, whose

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[222]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 9.

[223]   See Muhammad Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia" (Master Thesis, International Islamic University, 2000), 55.

[224]   See Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*. Sulaiman, "Sejarah Aceh: Sebuah Gugatan Terhadap Tradisi."

[225]   Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia," 56.

[226]   Ibid.

[227]   Ibid., 57.

offices were located in foreign countries.[228] Acehnese loyalty to the central government was also shown when the Acehnese, represented by Teungku Daud Beureueh as the leader of PUSA, refused to attend the Sumatran leaders' conference in 1949, planned to discuss Sumatra's independence.[229] This is despite being offered the chance to seek Aceh's independence.

The relationship between Aceh and the central government began to deteriorate when Indonesia gained its official independence. The Acehnese, and particularly the *ulama* of PUSA, were disappointed by the central government's intention not to form an Islamic state. The relationship worsened in 1950 when Sukarno dissolved the status of the Province of Aceh and incorporated it into the Province of North Sumatra.[230] In doing so, the central government stripped the *ulama* of their official administrative role in Aceh and eliminated their influential role in Acehnese society.[231]

The abolition of the provincial status of Aceh caused serious problems and threatened the region's social and economic development.[232] Socially, the influx of non-Acehnese government officials irritated the Acehnese, who adhered to the Islamic value system. *Tegas*, the most established and prominent newspaper, reported the offensive practices of many of these government officials, who were often involved with prostitutes brought from other provinces.[233] According to Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, it was these practices that led to the institutionalisation of prostitution in the capital city, Kuta Raja (Banda Aceh).

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[228] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*. El-Ibrahimy, *Teungku Muhammad Daud Beureueh. Jakarta: Gunung Agung.*, 44. A. K. Jakobi, *Aceh Daerah Modal: Long March Ke Medan Area Jakarta: Yayasan "Seulawah " Ri-001.* (Jakarta: Yayasan "Seulawah " RI-001., 1992), 281-84.

[229] See Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*. Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia," 51-52.

[230] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 49-67.

[231] See Ibid., 50-51.

[232] Ibid., 67-82. Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 17.

[233] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 71. See also Sulaiman, "Sejarah Aceh: Sebuah Gugatan Terhadap Tradisi," 247-48.

While it was part of North Sumatra province, Aceh's development was slow.[234] The Acehnese officials were not involved in making decisions for their own region's needs. For the Acehnese, the government policies did not provide adequate resources for Aceh's development and social needs.[235] An increasing demand for more educational institutions in Aceh was not met by the government. Aceh had only six middle schools, which could not cope with the local demand. The only high school in Kuta Raja was closed down by the central government in middle of 1951.[236] The government gave twenty-six scholarships to students wanting to further their education in Medan, the capital city of North Sumatra.[237]

Thus, the early 1950s marked the departure of the youth of Aceh to other cities, particularly Medan and Yogyakarta, and many eventually had to drop out from school because of financial problems. These circumstances angered many Acehnese and increased their resentment of the central government.[238] They began to realise that the central government policy was worse than the colonial government had been in improving social and economic conditions.[239] The public health care sector was also deteriorating: in the capital, Kuta Raja, the health care system was in bad condition,[240] with inadequate hospital facilities and medical personnel. Nazaruddin explains that there was one midwife for every 170,000 people. This was far below the standard rate in the health care system in Indonesia at the time, which was one midwife for 50,000 people.[241] These bad conditions prompted the majority of the Acehnese to side with members of PUSA and to react against Sukarno's government.

The escalation of the Acehnese resentment towards the central government increased when the latter disregarded an Acehnese appeal for the reconstruction of infrastructure, primarily roads and irrigation systems.[242] The Acehnese economy

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[234] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 71-74.
[235] Ibid., 71.
[236] Ibid., 72.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Ibid., 73-74.
[239] Ibid., 74.
[240] Ibid., 74-75.
[241] Ibid., 75.
[242] Ibid., 76, 77, 82.

depended on agriculture.[243] It suffered badly when the central government forbade barter trading and closed Aceh's ports, which were used for local trading. [244] These were the main lifelines that brought prosperity to the Acehnese farmers and merchants. These measures and other neglect slowed down Acehnese economic activities considerably and accelerated the decline towards poverty.

The disappointment of the Acehnese with the injustice of the central government prompted them to react. Having contributed funds and men to the central government to expel the Dutch, the Acehnese now turned against the government. The Acehnese rebels were led by Tengku Daud Beureueh, and joined the Darul Islam (House of Islam) movement in calling for the formation of an Islamic State of Indonesia.[245] Hundreds of thousands of Acehnese, comprising youth, students, teachers and villagers, were involved in the battle against Indonesian police officers and the army troops. To retaliate against the Acehnese rebels, the Indonesian military set up detention camps and detained women and children whose families were suspected of being members of the Darul Islam rebellion. Among these was the wife of the leader of the Darul Islam movement.[246] In addition, the killing of suspected men and the burning of villages became regular occurrences. The harshness of the government actions in responding to the rebellion increased the popularity of the Darul Islam struggle among the Acehnese, and an increasing number either supported or joined the struggle.

Twelve years after the uprising, in 1965, the central government, wanting to end the insurgency, reinstated the region as the 'special province' of Aceh. Sukarno declared the region to have autonomy in religion, customary law and education.[247] Yet the government maintained the centralisation of power and no benefit of having this special status materialised. It was meaningless for Aceh and its people. As it turned

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[243] This sector was rapidly developed during Dutch colonialism. During the Japanese occupation and national revolution, however, agricultural production declined drastically.

[244] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 77. See also Ibrahim Hasan, *Namaku Ibrahim Hasan: Menebah Tantangan Zaman* (Jakarta: Yayasan Malem Putra, 2003).

[245] Sjamsuddin, *Pemberontakan Kaum Republik: Kasus Darul Islam*, 84-102. See also Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 18-19.

[246] Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 19.

[247] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 11.

out, Sukarno's provision of special status for Aceh in fact gave more advantage to the central government.

This period marked the decline of the *ulama's* role in the administration of Aceh and also the emergence of a new Acehnese elite, who graduated from the well-known universities in Yogyakarta and Jakarta. The coming back of the Acehnese technocrats to Banda Aceh, together with other scholars as educators, played a significant role in developing Aceh's resources.[248] This return was warmly welcomed by the Acehnese, including the leader of the Darul Islam movement, Tuanku Daud Beureueh, who had struggled to obtain high-quality education for the young generations of Acehnese.[249]

3.3   Suharto's New Order

Suharto became the second President of Indonesia immediately after Sukarno was dislodged from power in 1965. The period during the regime of Suharto, 1965–1998, was officially named Indonesia's New Order, contrasting it with the Old Older of Sukarno's era.[250] After economic difficulties and political crisis, followed by the September 1965 coup, the arrival of the New Order received widespread support from the Indonesian people. Suharto's visionary politics sustained the government's interest, albeit in a different way, in a distinctive architectural and urban identity. Suharto devoted much effort to stabilise the economy and political unrest in order to proceed with his agenda of national development. Unlike his predecessor, Suharto paid special attention to tradition, which he viewed as the main source for the creation of the distinctive Indonesian built environment.

The New Order gave priority to economic development and enhancing the political institutions.[251] Suharto raised the notion of national stability and linked it to national development and the national economy.[252] To emphasise security and economic

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248   Hasan, *Namaku Ibrahim Hasan: Menebah Tantangan Zaman*.
249   Ibid.
250   Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 286.
251   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*.
252   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 71-72.

development, Suharto introduced the so-called *dwifungsi* (dual function) of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI), combining ABRI's political and security functions in a way that ensured the security of the New Order regime.[253] Having empowered the military, Suharto then delegated aspects of his authority to the provinces by appointing provincial governors, so that the interests of the central government were protected.[254] The political hierarchy included *kabupatens* (district levels) led by a *bupati* (district chief), and villages led by a village chief. The intention of this still highly centralised governing system was to provide political stability, which would deliver economic development.[255]

In implementing this hierarchy throughout the country, Suharto applied a top-down instruction system. The processes of transformation into the new system were supported by seminars and training, research, and providing infrastructure facilities and architectural projects, all of which were carried out with government funds. At the beginning of his presidency, Suharto sought advice from Indonesian Western-trained economists to solve the economic crisis, and he was able to increase economic growth and raise education, literacy and health standards.[256] Yet the economic growth was undermined by corruption, mismanagement and conflict.[257]

Suharto's political vision of the New Order revealed a keen interest in national identity, which was vigorously pursued in architecture and urban design.[258] Capitalising on a rising sensitivity towards cultural tradition, the New Order promoted an eclectic trend of 'collecting tradition', a trend that was seen to be able to reclaim the Indonesian identity in all of its diversity and richness. A repertoire of traditional architectural forms and ideas were rediscovered under Suharto's New Order programs. In examining these forms we can see how Suharto's political interest appropriated the global trend of regionalism, how he envisioned the

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253   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 30. Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 21.

254   Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 22.

255   Ibid.

256   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 30.

257   Ibid., 33-34.

258   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 190-97. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 49-93.

architectural and urban embodiment of national unity, and how the New Order politics provided the impetus to reframe and reinterpret the Indonesian cultural tradition.

A number of scholars, such as Anderson and Schwars, have examined Suharto's presidency and pointed out that, unlike Sukarno's Old Order, Suharto's New Order was also influenced by ancient Javanese polity.[259] This is evidenced in the centralised government system and the spatial representations of power, as already discussed.[260] In the ancient Javanese culture, the king had absolute power. "Power descends on one who rules… The Javanese ruler does not have some of the power, he has all of it."[261] This conception was believed to provide harmony and unity within Javanese society.[262]

To achieve harmony and unity, Suharto linked political leadership to family leadership by presented the Indonesian society as a big family, of which he was the head and guiding father. He also repackaged the traditional educational method, the so-called *tut wuri handayani* (guiding from behind). Hinged on an authentic sense of Javanese wisdom, this method was devised and taught by the eighteenth century Javanese King Mangkunegoro.[263] The method invokes the image of parents guiding their children from behind to their destinations and making sure that they are on the right path.[264] In this context, each child should be given the opportunity to develop self-discipline. As the leader of the nation and the head of a 'family', Suharto had the role of considerately watching over his people. In this way Suharto's visionary politic, Kusno argues, appeals to tradition for legitimising of the authority of the New Order, which is at once enabled and haunted by the colonial legacies.

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[259]   See Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 28-52. Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 44-46.

[260]   See Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 36.

[261]   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 45.

[262]   Being originally from the centre of Java, Suharto was comfortable with using such traditional concepts of power in governing the country and developing the built environment. For further treatment of this point, see Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 17-74, 1174-188.

[263]   Cited in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 106.

[264]   See Ibid., 107.

Stability and the Birth of the National Family

National stability received high priority in the New Order's program. The failures of the previous regime provided important lessons that neither political liberation nor the authoritarian rules of Guided Democracy, which was followed by the bloodbath of the September 1965 coup, were appropriate for the Indonesians. At the beginning of his term, Suharto built the monument Lubang Buaya (literally Crocodile Hole—named after the place where it was located), marking the days when Indonesians were convulsed with violence and unbridled rage. The monument seemed to remind the nation of the times of instability during Sukarno's government, and consequently to commemorate the establishment of the new regime that aimed to bring harmony and unity.[265]

After building the monument, Suharto instructed the Minister of Education and Culture to revise school history books in order to emphasise the instability of the previous rule,[266] thereby using education as a tool to strengthen the nationalistic sentiment and fortify national unity.[267] These efforts enabled Suharto to prepare the new government system and to emphasise stability.[268] They also mediated his efforts to create a new socio-political order and instigate economic development.[269] To further consolidate its power, Suharto's government began to restrict political activities generated by Indonesian people and, instead, reconstructed the political scene in a way that allowed the central government to tighten its control.[270]

Compared to those of the previous government, Suharto's policies increased the standard of living of the average Indonesian.[271] The oil boom in the early seventies increased the national income. Foreign investors began to invest in Indonesia,[272] as

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265   Ibid., 71.

266   Barbara Leigh, "Making the Indonesian State: The Role of School Texts," *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affair*, no. 25 (1991): 29.

267   Ibid.: 17.

268   See Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 30-48.

269   Ibid., 30, 41.For similar discussion see also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 71,72.

270   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 41.

271   Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 304-05.

272   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, 41.

political stability and a "low-wage home for their capital" provided incentive for long-term projects.[273] Most importantly, through the notion of national stability, Suharto was able to put forward a national ideology Pancasila as a form of leadership and appropriated it as the reflection of the state and society. Macdonal reports that by 1984 Suharto had ordered that "all social–political organisations, including the civilian political parties, must declare Pancasila as their sole ideology."[274] Suharto declared, "the democracy that we practice is Pancasila. Briefly its major characteristics are its rejection of poverty, backwardness, conflicts, exploitation, capitalism, feudalism, dictatorship, colonialism, and imperialism. This is the policy I have chosen with confidence."[275] By obliging all levels of the Indonesian society to swear allegiance to Pancasila, Suharto attempted to guide Indonesians to endorse the same view about protection of national unity. The perpetrators of any political activities that might be seen to pose a threat to national security or considered to be dangerous to the goal of national development, could be accused of being anti-Pancasila.[276] These measures of control were supported by a large number of seminars and training sessions held regularly, most often annually, particularly among the circles of government employees.[277]

Despite his highly centralised power structure, Suharto could not have everything neatly under control. A series of internal conflicts flared up and violence re-emerged. Jakarta's dominance over political and economic policies fuelled the separatist sentiment in several provinces outside Java, particularly in Kalimantan, Irian Jaya, Sumatra, and of course Aceh.[278] The 1970s witnessed, along with the oil boom, many internal conflicts generated by the young generations who were against government policy. The riots of January 1974 were the first student demonstration, appealing the

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[273]   Ibid.

[274]   Ibid., 36.

[275]   Cited in Ibid., 24.

[276]   Ibid., 40.

[277]   The most popular training was the so-called P4. It was the compulsory indoctrination in the "state of philosophy" for most citizens, particularly civil servants and students. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1300*, 306.

[278]   Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, xi.

government's attention to fight corruption and the increasingly authoritarian stance of Suharto.[279]

The students demanded that the New Order government pay attention to supporting the needs of Indonesian youth and to promoting their aspirations for a progressive and developed Indonesia.[280] For those in power, the re-emergence of the conflicts warned of a real threat to national stability, security and unity. Realising the seriousness of the situation, Suharto, the head of the national family, acknowledged "the present grave danger."[281] Suharto acknowledged that the conflict was centred on the young generation, who ironically were included in his plan for national economic development. The young were clearly losing faith in the older generation's wisdom in their reformation of national identity. To stabilise the country, Suharto kept reminding the youth of Indonesia of the outside threats of alien culture that would eventually lead to losing Indonesian national identity.[282]

Suharto as well as his advisers claimed that national stability could be achieved by adhering to their beliefs in nationalism and Indonesia's own traditional heritage. In a seminar held by the Indonesian armed forces in 1972, Suharto stressed the importance of keeping the tradition, saying that, while knowledge could be obtained from anywhere in the world, "the source of leadership, character and determination as a people building its future must continue to be drawn from the history of our own struggle and our own identity."[283] To support his view, he cited the *Tri Darma* (Three Obligations) philosophy of the Javanese king Mangkunegoro I:

> The first Darma is *rumongso handuweni*—to feel that one has a share of
> something which is the property or interest of the state and nation. From this

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[279]   Ibid., 34.

[280]   The Indonesian youths were agitated by the corruption and the increasingly authoritarian nature of Suharto's regime. See Ibid., 34-36.

[281]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 184. Based on Anderson's writing, Kusno raised a similar discussion. See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 73.

[282]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 184.

[283]   Ibid. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 73.

feeling there arises the second Dharma—*wajib melu hangrukebi*—meaning

to share responsibility for defending and sustaining this common property or

interest. To carry out this first and second Darma, a third is needed, in other

words, *mulat sariro hangrosowan*, meaning to have the courage constantly

to examine our selves to see how far we have really acted to defend the

common property or interest.[284]

It was important for Suharto to keep a sense of origin and tradition in order to

achieve national stability, including "the development of the younger generation."

National development was initiated to stabilise the economy by restoring some sense

of order into social life, instead of giving attention to what the society needed. In the

urban realm, a peculiar way of thinking about architecture in relation to Indonesia's

own identity was articulated and promoted.[285]

The Rebirth of Tradition

In contrast to Sukarno's internationalisation of Indonesian architecture, the New

Order of Suharto preferred to gather the colourful heritage of art and architecture

from all provinces in Indonesia in order to reconstruct a collective national tradition.

To help fulfil Suharto's vision, in 1980 the Ministry of Education and Cultural

Affairs funded a national research project that attempted "to collect data and

information on traditional architecture in order to make an inventory and

documentation of local cultures that form the constituent parts of national culture."[286]

Towards the mid-1970s, the government made an important step forward in the

debate about modern architecture in Indonesia. It argued that Indonesian architecture

should not merely copy modern architecture from the West, but should also re-

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[284] Cited in Bennedict R. O'G. Anderson, "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political
       Communication," *Indonesia*, no. 16 (1973). Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring
       Political Culture in Indonesia*, 184.

[285] See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in
       Indonesia*. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*.

[286] Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 101.

present the richness of indigenous architecture.[287] An eminent Indonesian architect, Budihardjo, although he might not have been politically motivated, shared the government's view and suggested that contemporary architectural forms in Indonesia should be based on the roots of its cultural heritage.[288] Against the global image of the current architectural representations in Indonesia, Budihardjo strongly argued that Indonesians should pay attention to the impact of globalisation so that the outlook of their cities "will not be the same as cities such as New York, L.A., and Washington."[289] The New Order's mega-projects, among them the Taman Mini Indonesia, showed the government's efforts to promote ethnicity as Indonesian identity. Following this project, a number of seminars were held on how to recreate an Indonesian vernacular architecture, by reworking the rich and colourful heritage from all provinces in Indonesia. This marked the rebirth of tradition.[290]

This approach was first followed in the construction projects financed by the government, manifesting architectural images closely connected with vernacular forms. The buildings appeared to have a square plan and distinctive traditional roof forms, single or multiple. In seeking to redefine national architecture by recovering Indonesia's own traditional forms, the New Order in a way revived the colonial arguments of Indonesian architecture. A repertoire of traditional architectural forms and ideas were rediscovered under Suharto's New Order government. Its argument concerning an Indonesian architectural identity demonstrated the appropriateness of the New Order toward the Western architectural discourse that put architecture into the service of creating local difference.

Though a large number of national project conducted during Suharto's period, there are three main national projects constructed within the period of the New Order that

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[287]   See Ibid., 195. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 74. Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," 7.

[288]   Eko Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek," in *Perkembangan Arsitek Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1997).

[289]   Cited in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 72.

[290]   Sudradjat refers to a number of national seminars on national identity in architecture. See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History," 197-211.

were concerned primarily with delivering the message of being Indonesian. The projects were the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park, the Pancasila mosques, and the new campus of the University of Indonesia. These projects provide two important hints. First, they are overshadowed by the works of colonial architects, particularly Maclaine Pont, bringing precolonial culture and colonial institutions into touch.[291] Second, they demonstrate how the global trend of regionalism in postcolonial studies, invoked as an appropriate tool to reclaim one's cultural identity, was also appropriated for the visionary politics of Suharto's New Order. In postcolonial architecture, the vernacular form was curiously juxtaposed against imported forms of Western architecture.

The Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park

The Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park project, commonly known as Taman Mini, was constructed by the Yayasan Harapan Kita (Our Hope Foundation), which was chaired by Mrs Suharto. The project was inaugurated on 20 April 1975 by President Suharto. The ultimate aim of the project was to create *Kawasan Wisata Budaya* (the Cultural Park) that reflected Indonesia.[292] The Taman Mini is located about twenty-four kilometres south of Jakarta. The idea of creating the project was initiated by Mrs Suharto in August 1971 after she had joined the President's foreign visit to Disneyland.[293]

Impressed by the representation of Disneyland Mrs Suharto said, "I was inspired to build a project of that sort in Indonesia, only *more* complete and *more* perfect, adapted to fit the situation and developments in Indonesia, both materially and spiritually."[294] Thus, the project was constructed in an attempt to develop a way of

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[291]   See Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn." Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*.

[292]   "Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park," *Indonesian Perspectives: Trade, Industry & Tourism* 1975, 119-23.

[293]   Anderson, "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political Communication," 64. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 74. John Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," *Public Culture* 6 (1994): 260.

[294]   Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 241.

reconstructing Indonesian architecture by displaying the richness of the cultural heritage. Supporting Mrs Suharto's view, the *Indonesian Perspective* magazine, in its article on the Taman Mini, explained that the project represented a 'little Indonesia' which fully reflected the country's history, the nation's struggle and aspirations and traditional living and achievement.[295] Most importantly, the project, as reported in *Indonesian Perspective*, was intended to promote international tourism as well as to raise national awareness.[296] The project was monumental in scale, costed at 10.5 billion Rupiahs or 25 million US dollars in 1971.[297] The opening ceremony was attended by guests of honour, such as the wives of the presidents of the neighbouring states, people from the diplomatic corps, the twenty-six governors from all provinces of Indonesia, and high-ranking officials.

From the beginning, the idea of constructing this mega-project was resisted by a large number of young Indonesians, particularly students, who considered it as wasting money.[298] They believed that spending such large amounts of money on a cultural dream project was inappropriate, considering the state of the Indonesian economy. They wanted the government to devote such resources to providing employment and improving health and education. Pemberton reports that a delegation of the *Gerakan Penghematan* (the Economising Movement) protested to the board administering the project. This delegation argued that such funds could help establish either 52 small industries that could employ hundreds of workers, or seven universities.[299]

The youth demonstrations and critical comments in the press impacted upon the level of funding.[300] But Mrs Suharto still saw the project's significant as being much higher than its monetary value. In the 1971 working conference of provincial governors, Mrs Suharto insisted on the importance of the project for the development

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[295]   "Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park," 119.

[296]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 177.

[297]   Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 243.

[298]   Ibid.

[299]   Ibid.

[300]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 176. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 74.

of the Indonesian people and appealed to the conference delegates to cooperate with her and to contribute financially to supporting this national project.[301] Responding to the controversy over the project, Mrs Suharto said:

> Whatever happens, I won't retreat an inch! This project must go through! Its implementation won't retreat a single step! For this project is not a prestige project—some of its purposes are to be of service to the people. The timing of its construction is also just right—so long as I am alive. For someone's conception cannot possibly be carried out by someone else, only by the conceiver herself—unless I am summoned by God in the meantime.[302]

In supporting Mrs Suharto's idea, President Suharto emphasised the importance of representing 'our' national culture. Suharto strongly believed that creating a modern Indonesia could only be accomplished by retaining its own identity. At the opening ceremony of the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park, the President said:

> Economic development alone is not enough. Life will not have a beautiful and deep meaning with material sufficiency alone, however abundant that sufficiency might become. On the contrary, the pursuit of material things on its own will make life cruel and painful… One's life, therefore, will be calm and complete only when it is accompanied by spiritual welfare. The direction and guidance towards that spiritual welfare is, in fact, already in our possession; it lies in our beautiful and noble national inheritance… We need…to ask whether we really have done or contributed anything to help perfect and enhance this 'Beauty Indonesia' in miniature Park: a Park that depicts Our People, a Park that makes us proud to be Indonesians, a Park that will bequeath to future generations.[303]

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[301] Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 176.

[302] Ibid., 177.

[303] Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 244.

Suharto wanted the Indonesian people to become modern as long as they retained their traditional cultural identity, and the Park project was meant to help do that. He insisted that the project would be built "by the people and for the people" and that it would represent Indonesia and encompass its history and aspirations. It was clear that, in the vision of the President and his wife, Indonesia's cultural heritage was more valuable than the monetary aspects of the project. Much effort was devoted to promoting the project and selling it to the public. After its completion, the Park became the most important place to visit, and was included in a tour package for national conferences, training seminars and other official activities funded by the government.[304]

The Taman Mini was meant to narrate the history of Indonesia and exhibit its unique and rich cultural traditions. As a cultural dream park, it appeared different from people's expectations, just like Mrs Suharto's experience of Disneyland. Its representation was coloured by the wealth of traditional houses that make up the nation's architectural heritage. It materialised the dream of Mrs Suharto, who wished it to be still more complete and perfect, both materially and spiritually.[305] Yet, the Park appeared more like a museum than a living space that celebrated the achievements of Indonesians throughout its recorded history. At the opening ceremony, the President and his wife stressed their sense of belonging. Suharto wore a brown batik jacket (a batik garment is a national trademark) while Mrs Suharto, like most attending women guests, was dressed in the national costume, the *kebaya*. The twenty-six governors who attended also wore the traditional costumes of their regions, and all were entertained by traditional performances.

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[304] As a student representative from Aceh, I was one of the members of the *Pengibar Bendera Pusaka* in the presidential palace, *Istana Merdeka*, who was invited to visit the Taman Mini twice in 1978. One visit was for the reception to commemorate Independence Day, where Suharto was one of the speakers. The other was a tour to the complex in order to know 'our identity' through traditional and partly historical representations.

[305] Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 241.

The Taman Mini complex occupied a site measuring 150 hectares.[306] It included 27 pavilions located around an 8.4-hectare pond, within which there were miniature representations of the islands of the Indonesian Archipelago (Figures 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). The pond was surrounded by the traditional houses from throughout the Indonesian Archipelago, complemented by a number of service buildings and an amusement park. These buildings included a museum, a mosque, a church and a temple.

Figure 3.3.1   A site plan of the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park
Source: Kusno (2000)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 256 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.3.2   Another site Plan of the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park
Source: www.tamanmini.com

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[306]   When the project was inaugurated, the complex was to occupy 120 hectares of land. See "Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park," 119.

To enhance the experience of being in a traditional village, traditional transportation, such as *andong* (four-wheeled horse carts) and *dokar* (two-wheeled horse carts), were used to travel around. In addition to emphasising traditional Indonesia, the Taman Mini also exhibited Indonesian interest in modern technology, through such elements as cable cars, a mini-train, a monorail, contemporary hotels, museums and an Imax theatre.

At the main entrance of the Park, visitors' attention is caught by the *Tugu Api Pancasila* (the Pancasila Torch Monument), which stands on a one-hectare area at the foreground of the Park (Figure 3.3.3). At first glance the monument looks similar to Sukarno's national monument. It is 45 meters in height, 17 metres in circumference, and eight meters in diameter at its base, which comprises five pods.[307] The measurements of the monument signify again the sacred numbers of the date of Indonesian independence, 17-8-45, and the five pods at the base signify the five principles of Pancasila.[308] The monument expressed Suharto's political desire to raise national awareness of the importance of his government's approach and policies for national unity. The opening ceremony, where about 5000 people gathered, was held in the Pancasila Square. Facing the monument, the crowd were reminded of the significance and the importance of adhering to the unifying and stabilising national ideology.

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[307]   Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 246.
[308]   Ibid.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 258 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.3.3   The *Tugu Api Pancasila*
Source: www.tamanmini.com

When the Park project was inaugurated, there were 26 pavilions or houses
representing as many cultural traditions of Indonesia (see Figure 3.3.4). These houses
were built in life size on one hectare of land and each was labelled to indicate its
region. Each house served as a showroom, equipped and furnished with its own local
crafts and historical articles.
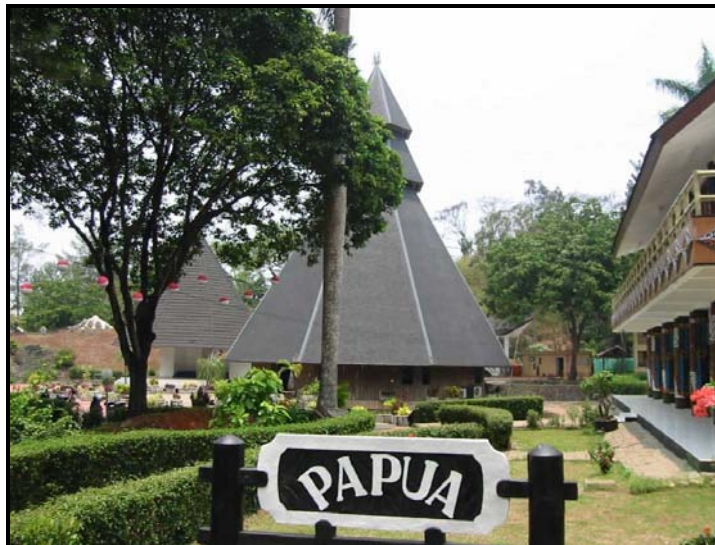
Figure 3.3.4   The traditional house of Irian Barat (Papua) in the Beautiful Indonesia
Source: Author's collection

The pavilion of Aceh was labelled *Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam*.[309] It consisted of
four buildings: two traditional Acehnese houses, a *meunasah* (religious building) and

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[309]   Due to the initiative of the Acehnese local government, the name of Aceh was changed to
Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam during the presidency of Megawati Sukarno Putri. The description
of the Acehnese traditional house is based largely on the author's field observations.

a modern administrative building. One of two traditional houses in the Acehnese pavilion (Figure 3.3.5) belonged to the Acehnese woman warrior Cut Meutia. She was one of the war leaders who fought against the Dutch occupation. The house was dismantled, moved from Aceh to the Taman Mini, and reassembled. This house was located near the *meunasah* and a rice barn and rice mortar were constructed nearby. The pavilion of Aceh was meant to represent a typical traditional Acehnese residential setting. But of course these house components were not always found in each traditional Acehnese house. Even the type of the houses, the *meunasah*, the ornaments and colours did not represent traditional Acehnese buildings as a whole. They could only represent particular vernacular types of a certain period and in a certain context.

Figure 3.3.5   Cut Meutia's house, representing an Acehnese traditional house
Source: Author's collection

Interestingly, the modern building found in this pavilion served as a living space. It is used for an administrative function and as a canteen. This shows the continuously evolving needs and views of the residents, who did not always see their life as an extension of their ancestors.' The two traditional houses also served as museums, displaying a collection of traditional costumes, accessories and weapons. They also provided some historical record of Aceh, such as a nineteenth-century letter from Prince Mouris of the Netherlands to the Sultan of Aceh, expressing his country's interest in establishing friendly relations and expand its trade exchanges with Aceh.

In the pavilion's yard the first Indonesian aeroplane was on display in acknowledgment of the contributions the Acehnese had made to the newly independent government.

On the successful completion of the Taman Mini, Mrs Suharto expressed her gratitude to both the supporters and the critics of the project. She said, "the supporters' approval stimulated us to work hard and the critics reminded us not to make mistakes in visualizing the grand idea."[310] As the grand idea had now been realised, Suharto asked the Indonesians to preserve it as a part and a reminder of their cultural heritage. He assured them that Taman Mini would have high value for many generations to come. For him, the project "reflects the spirit of the nation's development which also looks far ahead to its future program."[311]

Travelling through the Beautiful Indonesia Park one can be made to feel as if one is in a colourful traditional village where people live harmoniously together. This imaginary environment, as Kusno observes, gives the impression of being "somewhere in Indonesia," and of experiencing "the everlasting authentic culture."[312] Realising her utopian dream, Mrs Suharto said:

> As all of us can witness, here we can find the traditional houses and other
> buildings which are found in our country from one end to the other, and
> which constitute the heritage of our invaluable national culture. We feel it
> necessary to preserve this cultural heritage of ours in order to prevent its
> possible extermination as a result of the demand for the development of
> modern society… All this will serve to increase our love for our country and
> motherland—*a sine qua non* for a strong growth of our nation in future.[313]

The Taman Mini was intended to serve as a reference for many generations to come. Both the President and his wife saw the Taman Mini as a valuable tool for the

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[310]   "Inauguration of "Beautiful Indonesia" in Miniature Park," *Indonesia Perspectives* 1975, 45.

[311]   Ibid.

[312]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 76.

[313]   Ibid., 77.

preservation of the cultural heritage and traditional values for future generations. The presentation of 'authentic' Indonesia in the Taman Mini, however, was executed with some expediency and superficiality. The Taman Mini was described as presenting "a replica of the myriad cultures and arts from all parts of Indonesia."[314] The project cannot represent the original 'essence' of Indonesia. The traditional houses in the complex were presented as timeless categories of past, present and future. The Taman Mini project lies in style of replication, designed to reveal an essence of continuity rather than record existence and change [315]

Appealing to traditional forms and customary behaviour to invoke national unity revealed, in a sense, the insecurity of the New Order regime. As Anderson observes, the 26 traditional houses in the complex appeared to show "a sweeping impression" of being Indonesian, outside time and context. "These houses," Anderson adds, "are becoming monuments, in the sense that they are no longer lived in, have become museums, or are mechanically reconstructed to advertise the essence of tradition."[316] Sharing Anderson's view, Kusno argues that the picture of the little country of Indonesia presented in Taman Mini is no more than an imagining by the ruling party.[317] These traditional forms, as Kusno observes, should not be taken "as authentic as Mrs Suharto wanted them to be."[318]

As part of the national development several modern buildings and transportation terminals were planned outside the traditional residential areas. In the Taman Mini, the arrangement of these buildings seemed to reflect the centre–periphery power structure. The artificial Indonesian Islands, the centre of power, was placed at the centre. They were surrounded by traditional houses, whereas temporary buildings and transportation hubs were located on the periphery of the complex. The Taman Mini delivered a clear political message: that national and technological development can only occur through adherence to traditional values.

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[314]   "Inauguration of "Beautiful Indonesia" in Miniature Park," 45.

[315]   Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Culture in Indonesia*, 182.

[316]   Ibid.

[317]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*.

[318]   Ibid., 76.

Pemberton has analysed the relationship between the architectural settings of the Taman Mini and Suharto's visionary politics. He explains that the peaceful image of the traditional life as the central premise of the quest for identity was used as a shield to secure the cultural and political legitimacy of Suharto's government.[319] Taman Mini was built not long after Suharto constructed the Lubang Buaya monument to commemorate the riots of 1965–1966 to remind people of the instability of the previous regime.[320] While acknowledging the historical achievements and the harmony of traditional life, Taman Mini enabled the Indonesians to romanticise the stability of their past. With the rise of regional sensitivity, Taman Mini served as a visual commodity that addressed a tourist demand for rich and unique traditional environments.[321]

Suharto's Mosque Building Program

Suharto's second attempt in the quest for architectural identity was the design of mosques as a national model (Figure 3.3.6).[322] Unlike Sukarno's appropriation of the international style in the Istiqlal Mosque, Suharto's mosque projects aimed at modernising the indigenous Javanese forms, particularly of the ancient Demak Mosque.[323] The modernisation of the mosque typology was used as an example for modernising Indonesian architecture.[324] The idea of constructing a national mosque was introduced by Suharto during the celebration of renovating the Demak Mosque

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[319] Pemberton, "Recollections from "Beautiful Indonesia" (Somewhere Beyond the Postmodern)," 261.

[320] As explained in the previous discussion, the Lubang Buaya monument was built to emphasise the instability of the previous government. Moreover, to achieve stability the members and participants of the Communist Party, who were accused of the emergence of national instability were killed.

[321] See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*.

[322] Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)," 7.

[323] Abidin Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World," *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 1 (2003): 62.

[324] See O'Neill, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order." Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World." Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)."

in 1987. On this occasion, Suharto reminded the Indonesian people that this ancient mosque is "the only heritage and should not disappear from Java."[325] Suharto thought it was important to build national mosques throughout the country and replicate the Javanese Demak architectural form.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 263 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 3.3.6   An example of Suharto's Mosque of Pancasila
Source: Hugh O'Neill (1998)

In the 1980s 450 mosques were built by Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila (the Pancasila Muslim Charity Foundation) throughout the country, and particularly in the remote and less prosperous regions.[326] Copying the set national model, the mosques looked similar to one another. The prototypes were available in three sizes: fifteen, seventeen and nineteen metres square in plan.[327] The most striking characteristics of the mosques were the geometric forms of the main body, pointed arched windows and tiered pyramidal roof forms. The interior of the buildings was column free, which was different from that of the prevailing contemporary type that followed the Istiqlal Mosque, or of the Indian-inspired Baiturrahman type in Banda Aceh, which had a large number of columns and arches supporting the domes.

These national mosques were constructed from timber and reinforced concrete, with cement rendering for the body, and steel for the roof structure. At the top of each

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[325]   Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World," 62.

[326]   O'Neill, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order," 160.

[327]   Ibid.

roof, a lightning conductor was installed, and attached to its end was a hollow pentagonal frame that enclosed the Arabic word Allah. The acceptance of the new architectural style, which made bold references to vernacular architecture, was part of the architectural development during the 1980s. This acceptance showed how Suharto's approach managed to appropriate the global view of postcolonial regionalism and at the same time adhere to the Javanese culture.[328]

The construction of the Pancasila mosques, however, was not popular among Indonesians in all regions. For instance, in the remote areas of Aceh fewer Muslims used the Pancasila mosques that were built than used the existing older mosques.[329] The association of these mosques with Javanese tradition made them less popular among regional people. According to O'Neill, the mosques delivered a political message.[330] Architecture was presented through a negotiation between Islam and nationhood, which can be seen in the form of the lightning conductor and framed inscription of Allah. This political point, as O'Neill explains, presents Muslim Indonesians' belief in Allah and the nation's five principles of nationhood, the Pancasila. Kusno makes an interesting point that Suharto tried to remind the Indonesian people that "Islam is part of Indonesia. We are not seeking Islam to transform our society, but we seek a transformation of Islam to fit our own (or old)…concept of life."[331]

The University of Indonesia

The campus of the University of Indonesia is located on the outskirts of Jakarta city. It was built in 1980 and was inaugurated by Suharto in 1985. As one of the major projects completed during the period of the New Order, the University of Indonesia revealed, perhaps more than other projects, the search for modern Indonesian architecture. Since it bore the name of the nation, its design was expected to express

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[328]   Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World," 62.

[329]   The discussion on the Pancasila mosque in Aceh is based on the author's field observations in the 1980s.

[330]   O'Neill, "Islamic Architecture under the New Order."

[331]   Kusno, "The Reality of One-Which-Is Two -- the Mosque Battles and Other Stories: Notes on Architecture, Religion, and Politics in the Javanese World," 62.

the Indonesian character.[332] It involved references to some typological characteristics of local architecture, but mainly those of traditional Java.[333] According to a special report on the campus project, the spatial concept of the campus was derived from the centre–periphery relationships of the power structure, revealing connection with classical Javanese spatiality.[334] According to Sukada and Awal, "in the Javanese context, heaven and wholeness have to be represented by the one-point pyramidal roof, which suggests a strong central power commanding its four quarters."[335] This concept seemed to have been applied in the design of the campus plan (Figure 3.3.7). However, the architectural references of the buildings' features, roof shapes and patterns were, as was the case with the Taman Mini, selected arbitrarily.
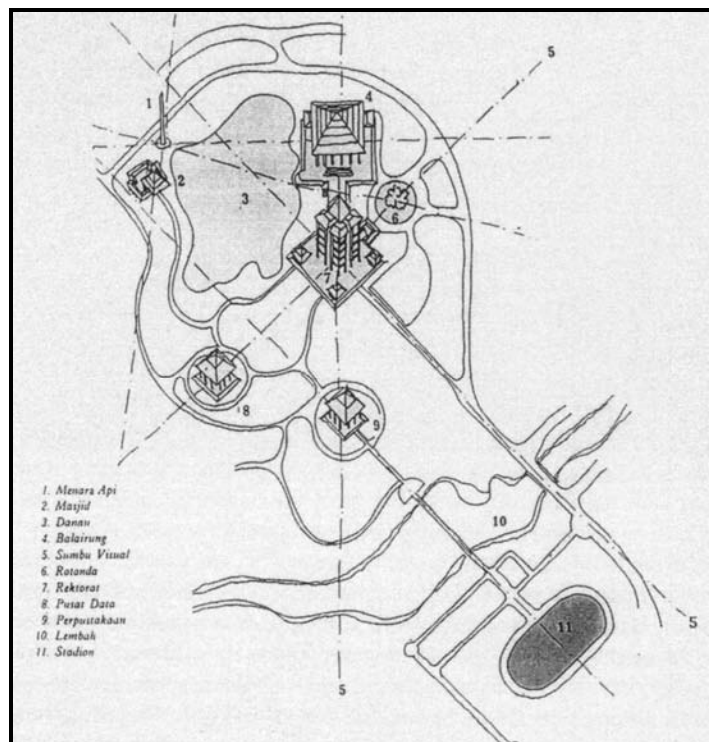
Figure 3.3.7   Site plan of the University of Indonesia: representing national architecture
Source: Kusno (2000)

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[332]   Lembaga Teknologi Universitas Indonesia, "Universitas Indonesia Jakarta: Penuntun Khusus Perencanaan," (1986), 3. Budi Sukada and Han Awal, "The University of Indonesia," *Mimar* 42, no. March (1992): 65-69.

[333]   See Sukada and Awal, "The University of Indonesia," 42, 66.

[334]   Lembaga Teknologi Universitas Indonesia, "Universitas Indonesia Jakarta: Penuntun Khusus Perencanaan," 3.

[335]   Sukada and Awal, "The University of Indonesia," 42, 65.

The tower of the main administration building, where the rector is located, seemed to be the most significant building on the campus (Figure 3.3.8). In the cosmology of classical Java, the centre represents the most significant position in the world, be it at the cosmic or earthly level. Constructed as the tallest building in the campus and surrounded by other, lower buildings, the tower emerges as a focal point and centre of orientation. The campus' site plan thus tends to reveal the spatiality of classical Javanese power structure.[336] The symbolic centrality of the tower is further articulated by surrounding it with four buildings, and this central group is surrounded by free-standing smaller, ancillary buildings, such as a mosque, an auditorium, the central library and a computer centre. The faculty buildings encircle these ancillary buildings.

Figure 3.3.8   The Rectorate Tower of the University of Indonesia: representing authority
Source: Author's collection

The tower design followed the characteristics of Indonesian or even Southeast Asian traditional building typology. Vertically, it is divided into three components: the base, the body and the head. Considerations of local climate and familiar ornamentations have given the building an Indonesian accent.[337] The influence of ancient Javanese forms can be seen in this building. The plan of the tower, which

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[336]   Ibid.

[337]   See Lembaga Teknologi Universitas Indonesia, "Universitas Indonesia Jakarta: Penuntun Khusus Perencanaan."

comprises four squares around a central square, refers to the concept of organising *sokoguru* columns in traditional Javanese architecture.[338] The pagoda-like stacked roofs of the tower echo the image of a Javanese Hindu temple. The other important building on the campus is the mosque. The mosque's appearance is similar to the Pancasila mosques introduced by Suharto's New Order as a reconstruction of Indonesian architecture. The university mosque is an open pavilion within an enclosed court, maintaining conscious reference to the traditional Javanese mosque.

In its reference to Javanese spatiality embodied in a familiar vernacular image, the University of Indonesia adhered to the Javanese cultural inheritance. By showing a familiar image of Javanese traditional architecture, the authenticity of postcolonial Indonesia was conveyed as a national message through the University that carries the national name. The representations of postcolonial architecture implied the regime's anxiety about its own lack of authenticity. As Kusno observes, the buildings of the University of Indonesia, while using traditional architectural elements, have been emptied from their historical construction.[339]

Aceh under Suharto's Rule

As was the case throughout Indonesia, the Acehnese warmly welcomed the new government. They hoped that the arrival of Suharto's regime might result in change of direction and in realising their local autonomy.[340] But soon they began to realise that their hopes were not on the agenda of the central government, and that the New Order presented hardly anything new for the future of Aceh.[341] The New Order's strong centralised political system brought power under even tighter control, and the Acehnese hopes for autonomy and an Islamic socio-political system were as remote from achievement as ever.[342]

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[338] Budi A Sukada, "The Architecture of Early Independence," in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunawan Tjahjono, Julian Davison, and Goh Geok Yian (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1996), 42, 66.

[339] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 88.

[340] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 13.

[341] See Ibid.

[342] Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 21. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 28.

Suharto's views were similar to those of Sukarno and the Dutch colonialists concerning the role of the *ulama* in Indonesian society. He saw them as a threat to the processes of modernisation, economic development and political stability.[343] In the 1980s, the Interior Minister, General Rudini, said the special region status granted by Sukarno's regime (Law No. 5/1974), was practically "in the name only."[344] The blatant disregard of Aceh's special status, of the Acehnese desire for autonomous right to religion, education and customary law prompted a strong reaction that threatened national unity.

Aceh's Contribution to the National Economy

Known for its fertile soil, Aceh was designated for development as an agricultural region in the five-year plan introduced in 1969.[345] This regional classification changed to the classification of industrial zone, however, with the discovery of vast natural gas reserves in Lhokseumawe, North Aceh, in 1971. The production of liquefied natural gas (LNG) started in 1977, making Aceh : "Indonesia's resource bank," whose contributions to the national economy became significant.[346] Aceh was recognised as "a resource rich province."[347] By the end of 1980, the region produced 30 per cent of national oil and gas exports.[348] According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review,* in 1999, from gas exports alone, Aceh contributed $US 1.3 billion to the national economy.[349] Thus Indonesia, as Kell reports, became a country that supplied 40 per cent of the world's liquefied natural gas.[350]

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[343]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 29.

[344]   Ibid.

[345]   Ibid., 13. Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 23.

[346]   Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 23. Matthew N. Davies, *Indonesia's War over Aceh* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 13.

[347]   Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 23. Davies, *Indonesia's War over Aceh*, 13.

[348]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16.

[349]   Margot Kohen, "Alarm in Asia: The Genie Is out of the Bottle - Separatist Demands in Indonesia's Restive Province Will Test the Nation's Fragile Unity," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 18 November 1999.

[350]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 14.

In addition to natural oil and gas exports, Aceh's contribution to the national economy included resources from several industries, such as fertiliser chemicals, cement and several different species of timber. These generated significant foreign exchange earnings.[351] With the administration centralised, the region was not entitled to use its own regional revenue, which was collected by the central government. Based on the Estimated Regional Revenue and Expenditure *(Anggaran Pendapatan dan Perbelanjaan Daerah)* in 1997–1998, Aceh was entitled to only 0.05% of its regional revenue.[352] Centralised control over the regional economy was one of the many issues that compounded the Acehnese resentment of Suharto's New Order and led to the current conflict.

Centralisation and Development Costs

Exploitation of Acehnese resources by the central government inevitably caused a negative impact on the development of Aceh. As noted by Dawood and Syafrizal, the economy of Aceh "is more oriented toward the capital of Banda Aceh and, through it, to Medan, Jakarta, and the international economy, than it is to the rest of Aceh."[353] Such a pattern of development affected economic progress in the region. In addition to that, local livelihoods were annihilated by inappropriate local resettlement and insufficient compensation received by the local people for the appropriation of land for industrial use. For example, local people had to move to other locations to allow the construction of the ASEAN Aceh Fertilizer plant. However, many of these people then had to leave their new location when they found that it was not what they expected or when they failed to deal with a new livelihood.[354]

From its inception, the *zona industri* (the industrial zone) in Lhok Seumawe, North Aceh, created under the authority of the central government, did not help the majority of local people to improve their living conditions. Before the industrial zone

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[351]   Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 23.

[352]   See Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia," 82.

[353]   Dayan Dawood and Syafrizal, "Aceh: The Lng Boom," in *Unity and Diversity: Regional Economic Development in Indonesia since 1970*, ed. Hal Hill (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 116. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 22.

[354]   Budhy Tjahjati S. Soegijoko, "Zona Industri Lhok Seumawe," *Prisma* Juli, no. 7 (1987): 88-89. See also Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16.

was established, the majority of local inhabitants, primarily in the coastal area, were fishers. By 1991, after more than a decade of the establishment of a number of industries in the area, 60% of local fishermen in the villages around the industrial zone lived in poverty.[355] Referring to a survey conducted by *Yayasan Lambaga Hukum* in 1990, Abubakar explains that the LNG refinery in Lhok Seumawe, which contributed US$7 million a day to the Indonesian government, ironically brought environmental devastation that ruined the livelihoods of the local people.[356]

In spite of being one of the richest regions of Indonesia, Aceh was impoverished under the centralised administration.[357] This could be seen in the lack of adequate health and educational facilities. This unfavourable condition directly impacted on population growth, resulting in a low birth rate and a high mortality rate.[358] The lack of educational facilities resulted in local people becoming merely outsiders and spectators in the process of development.[359] The multinational industries found in most parts of Aceh, particularly in North Aceh, East Aceh, Aceh Besar and Central Aceh, did not bring large-scale employment to the local workforce. The local populations were not sufficiently prepared for the coming of modern industry.[360] In the beginning the new industries provided jobs for local people, but these were mainly temporary. Once the factories were operational, only a few local people were recruited due to the lack of a skilled workforce.[361]

The socio-cultural impact of the industrial development in Aceh could be seen in the widening gap between "a high-income, capital-intensive, urban, non-Muslim, non-Acehnese enclave," and "a basically low-income, labour-intensive, rural, Muslim,

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[355] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 17. See also Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia," 84.

[356] Abu Bakar, "Politics of National Integration: The Case of Aceh in Indonesia," 84.

[357] Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 26. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16-21.

[358] Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 26.

[359] See Budhy Tjahjati S. Soegijoko, "Zona Industri Lhokseumawe," *Prisma* Juli, no. 7 (1987): 99. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16.

[360] Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16. See also Lesley McCulloch, "Aceh: Then and Now," (Minority Right Group International, 2005), 11.

[361] For detailed information see Soegijoko, "Zona Industri Lhok Seumawe," 99. Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 16. Al-Chaidar and et al, *Aceh Bersimbah Darah* (Jakarta: Pustaka Kautsar, 1998), 14.

Acehnese province."[362] In contrast to those living in the industrial employees'
complexes, the majority of residents in Aceh did not have a steady supply of
electricity and clean water.[363] Well water was the only water source for most
residents living in villages adjoining industrial areas. The use of well water became a
problem because it was contaminated by waste discharge from the factories.
Moreover, the pollution produced from the refineries destroyed farmers' fish and
shrimp ponds and extinguished the local people's means of livelihood.[364] These
conditions naturally resulted in widespread poverty.

Another example of a social cost, Kell reports, was related to the absence of
occupational health and safety measures, as many workers became severely ill
because of an ammonia gas leak in 1991[365]. Many fires also destroyed many people's
lives, houses, crops and livestock.[366] As in the coastal areas, where the industries
were based, the natural resources from the vast tropical forests did not yield
prosperity to Aceh either. Instead, the villagers often experienced physical
destruction as unlimited deforestation caused floods and landslides.[367] Unfortunately,
these environmental crises impacted on the livelihood of many villagers who were
mostly farmers.

Addressing these unfavourable conditions was not a priority of the central
government. The New Order government even intended to strengthen the national
stability in another way. Suharto requested the rewriting of Indonesian history to
downplay the role of the Acehnese in the struggle against colonialism.[368] In terms of
architecture, he commissioned the TNI soldiers' monument to commemorate those
who were killed during the war against Darul Islam rebellions. This monument was

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[362]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 17. See also McCulloch, "Aceh: Then and Now," 11.

[363]   Dawood and Syafrizal, "Aceh: The Lng Boom," 122. See also Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 17. Budhy Tjahjati S. Soegijoko, "The Impact of the Development of Large Scale Industrial Projects: The Case of the Lhok Seumawe Industrial Zone," *Prisma*, no. 12 (1985): 71.

[364]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 17.

[365]   Ibid., 18.

[366]   Ibid., 19.

[367]   Barber, ed., *Aceh: The Untold Story*, 24.

[368]   Ibid., 27.

built on the site of the Independence monument which itself was built to commemorate the Indonesian people who died in the battle against the Dutch and the Japanese.[369]

Since the New Order was not interested in developing an Islamic political system, Suharto moved to replace the role of the *ulama* with a new group of technocrats.[370] By sidelining the *ulama*, the government was able to foreground the technocrats, who became the "regional representatives of the New Order regime's ideology of development."[371] The introduction of this group was seen as an effective measure to counter any threat that might be posed by the Islamic political strength of the Acehnese *ulama*. These technocrats mediated the unfair distribution of "the national economic cake" by the central government, without being, as were the *ulama*, "a thorn in the flesh" of the New Order government[372]

3.4   Conclusions

The discussion in Part three has shed some light on the intricacies of the political debates in modern Indonesia and on the official attempts to reconstruct a unique urban identity by invoking regional imageries. With reference to the colonial and postcolonial experiences, the discussion has shown how identity formation provided legitimacy for some government policies and practices. The study has revealed how, in modern independent Indonesia and particularly during the office of the first two presidents, the new built forms of Indonesian cities emerged at the intersection of global influences and colonial legacies, and has explored how the socio-political scenes in postcolonial Indonesia have influenced architectural production. Although the first two presidents followed different approaches to the development of Indonesia's modern urban environment, they revealed similar preoccupations with respect to the issue of architectural identity. Both appealed to historical memory and raised sensitivity towards cultural tradition.

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[369]   Ibid., 26.

[370]   Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*.

[371]   Ibid., 29.

[372]   Ibid., 30.

Part three has also shown how the political interests of the two ruling regimes appropriated the global trend of regionalism, the roots of which are often traced in both Western and Indonesian discourses of architecture. This leads us, in part four, to trace the emergence and evolution of the concept of regionalism and its agency in architectural thinking, and to examine the ways in which Indonesian scholars and elites appropriated the discourse of regionalism to articulate a unique Indonesian voice.

PART 4

REGIONALISM AND THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY

REGIONALISM AND THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY

Since the first half of the twentieth century, a large number of studies on architectural regionalism have appeared in Western and non-Western academic circles. Most studies were conducted by cultural and architectural theorists with Western training, promoting an understanding of the autonomous regions of culture that are rooted in specific geographies. This generated a discourse concerned with cultural identity and related architectural expressions. The discourse has come under criticism from postcolonial theorists, who revealed its predicaments and contradictions.[1] In spite of the postcolonial critique, however, the discourse on identity and architectural regionalism, as we have seen in the previous discussion, has remained current and prevalent in Indonesia. The interest in regional culture and the search for identity seem to have served and have continued to serve the political aspirations of both the Indonesian regime and its oppositions.

This Part examines how Indonesian architects and urban planners have appropriated the international discourse of regionalism and critical regionalism as a tool for the definition and engagement of the Indonesian identity. After examining the Western discourse of regionalism I explore the ways in which scholars of the third world have appropriated this discourse, and then how Indonesian thinkers have articulated the 'Indonesian voices.'

4.1   Western Discourse

The Western discourse of regionalism emerged in the first half of the twentieth century, and the desire to express cultural identity in architecture was intensified with the spread of the international style. Many saw the universal image of architecture promoted by the early modernists as a threat to the world's rich mosaics of cultural identities. The discourse of regionalism and critical regionalism emerged as a vision to counter the uniformity promoted by the champions of modernism.

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[1]   Anthony D. King, "Rethinking Colonialism: An Epilogue", in *Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise*, ed. Nazar AlSayyad (Aldershot: Avebury, 1992), 339.

Architecture and the Politics of Independence

Decolonisation and the stimulation of national consciousness in the mid-twentieth century intensified the search for identity in Indonesia. With the rise of the nationalistic sentiment people sought to speak and express themselves independently. Politics was naturally the central domain of postcolonial debates.[2] Architecture and urbanism, as we have seen, were not removed from the politics of independence, as they were seen as potent and expressive tools of national identity. The postcolonial discourse has contributed to the understanding of the relationship between architecture and the politics of independence. This relationship presents architecture as a double-sided political strategy that serves both colonialism and independence.[3] The politics of independence remained the central premise of architectural and urban development in many parts of the world.[4]

During the aftermath of independence, the ruling leaders of newly born countries, together with their government elites, used architecture and urban planning as tools to establish the credibility of their regimes. "Whether through the design of an entire new capital city or, more modestly, through the design of a capitol complex, government leaders have attempted to define a sense of national identity by careful manipulation of the built environment."[5] In most countries in Southeast Asia, the strong desire to express national identity in the new capital cities was motivated mostly by dreams of economic development. Examining this tendency, Vale states, "the bold venture of capital city construction has been connected to the ruling elites' attempts to consolidate national unity and cultivate national identity in the face of multiple contending groups located in rival urban centers."[6]

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[2] Abidin Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn" (paper presented at the Pos/Kolonialisme: Lingkung-Bina di Indonesia, Denpasar-Bali, 2001).

[3] Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976).

[4] For further discussion see Ibid.

[5] Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 44.

[6] Ibid. In the case of Indonesia, this context in discussed in Part 2 of the thesis. See the section Sukarno's Old Order.

The dream of economic development has led to the worldwide dissemination of the same building technologies and codes, bringing similarities to the built environment throughout the world. It is within this drive for a universal form of production that the quest for national identity was generated and the stimulation of cultural consciousness occurred. Different nations began to explore and rediscover their traditional aspect in their search for their distinctive architectural and urban forms. The return to the vernacular grew, leading to the emergence of a regionalist approach in the second half of twentieth century that emphasised locality and regional character. Regionalists claim that "universalist doctrines of modern architecture are interpreted as 'cosmopolitan' and therefore as subversive to national identity."[7] Here, in the mind of regionalists, the notion of national identity is achieved through the link between culture and geographical boundary. "It massively employed typified folkloristic motif", romanticising the ancient form into present build environment.[8] In this regard, the adjective 'national' seems to be excluded from the diverse elements of its conception.

Anthony King, for instance, in his study of the social, political and cultural processes that affect architecture and urban space in India, sees Western oppression of Indian cultural society as the failure of being decolonised. Post-independence India, as he points out, still remains a victim of its colonial past. King's study demonstrates that post-independence India inevitably undermines the existence of the ethnicities and communities of the present.[9] The discourse of regionalism, which seeks authenticity through the link between architecture and geographical boundary, seems to create an oversimplified image of a complex cultural situation. Thus, the intervention of Western regionalists in addressing the architectural identity of non-Western societies has continued to represent Western hegemony after independence.

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[7]   Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", in *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalisation*, ed. Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno (West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 2001), 5. For a description of the vernacular that is linked to national building see Paul Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[8]   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", 5.

[9]   Similar argumentation on postcolonial architectural representation is raised in Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and Chong Thai Wong, "Introduction", in *Postcolonial Space(S)*, ed. G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 7.

Regionalism and the Problem of Globalisation

The development of the modern international style movement spread the influences of modernism in architecture and urbanity worldwide, and its accompanied discourse neglected regional cultures (see Figure 4.1.1).[10] Western European countries and the United States began to experience the impact of industrialisation in the nineteenth century. This paved the way for the emergence of the avant-garde movement, which adopted modernisation in its attempts to deal with the rapidly changing social conditions. The products of industrialisation were copied throughout the globe, although, as Curtis claimed, some parts of the world, such as third-world countries, were not industrialised.[11]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 278 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.1   The Al Badawi Investment Building, Dubai
Source: Mimar 42 (1992)

In the early modern industrial era American architects played a significant role in disseminating modern architecture throughout the world.[12] Within a couple of decades between the 1960s and the 1970s, third-world cities were transformed, passing from location in rural and agricultural economies to urban and industrial

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[10]   See King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*. Abidin Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia", *Journal of Southeast Asian Architecture* 4 (2000).

[11]   William J R Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Phaidon Press Limited, 1987), 356.

[12]   See "U.S. Building Abroad", *Architectural Forum* January, no. 102 (1955).

cities.[13] In these circumstances, Curtis claims, third-world countries have been contaminated by foreign elements; they have been persuaded to adopt "vulgar versions of Western architectural dress."[14] On this point, Curtis notes that, during the transition era, transfer of knowledge about how buildings were designed and put up from an industrialised to an industrialising nation inevitably created conflict.[15] Curtis comments that components conceived in European countries which require expensive mass production might be inappropriate to use in developing countries whose societies deal with local labour and patterns of construction. In addition, Curtis argues, the result—presenting universal industrial forms—is immediately at odds with centuries-old traditions of craftsmanship. In this regard, Curtis argues that third-world countries were burdened by difficulties of cultural identity.

The dissemination of modern design outside Europe and the United States occurred in a number of ways. It emerged, as Curtis mentions, through rapid economic development, continuing Western colonisation of non-Western counties, and through the penetration of Western images and ideas into native cultures. Universal modernity, as Curtis notes, can be considered as a continuation of Western hegemony. He adds that the transplantation of Western ideas into non-Western cultures, through elite circles, promoted the start of an era of "backwardness and stagnation."[16]

In his book *Modern Architecture since 1900* Curtis reminds readers that "the arrival of modern architecture was usually linked to foreign business."[17] Aspects of modernity such as multistorey buildings and air-conditioned offices, he explains, could generate status symbols for the countries that wanted to attract international capital. However, such forms, Curtis argues, were considered as modern artifacts and therefore not appropriate to be applied in non-Western countries in the third world

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[13]   Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, 356.
[14]   Ibid., 357.
[15]   Ibid.
[16]   Ibid., 356.
[17]   Ibid.

since they might result in built forms "lacking in sensitivity to local conditions, values, and climate."[18]

Sharing Curtis' insight, Peter Buchanan, a Western architectural theorist, claims that the modern industrialisation created places throughout the globe that have rapidly been interlocked into a single global civilisation. He claims that "the most visible evidence of this universal industrialism is that everywhere there is the same curtain-wall of office blocks and apartments."[19] For this reason, Buchanan says, "the very concept of International style was a dreadful mistake" as it was concerned with the "commercial packaging that everywhere substitutes for architecture."[20]

The Development of the Regionalism Discourse

Western industrialisation generated apathy towards modernism and that interest in the vernacular and regional character grew. Industrialisation tended to blur regional specificities and differences and thus resulted in uniformity of the built environment. Concerning this matter, North American and European scholars conducted research into regional identity. The development of the discourse of regionalism shows how the global trend of regionalism became a tool to define architectural identity.

The term 'regional' in architecture was introduced by Vitruvius in the first century BC, who emphasised 'locality' and 'climate' as a guide to the construction of buildings.[21] His regional concerns were pursued in a large number of studies by modern architectural scholars and writers.[22] Lewis Mumford, Alexandre Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, Kenneth Frampton, and William J.R. Curtis are among the most eminent names associated with the development and articulation of the discourse of

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Peter Buchanan, "With Due Respect: Regionalism", *Architectural Review* 173 (1983): 15.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Keith L. Eggener, "Resisting Critical Regionalism: A Postcolonial Perspective" (paper presented at the Self, Place and Imagination: Cross-Cultural Thinking in Architecture. The 2nd Symposium of the Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture, Adelaide, 1999), 2.

[22] Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", 3.

regionalism.[23] Although these theorists have made many attempts to define the concepts of 'regionalism' and 'critical regionalism', their definitions have remained obscure in that they tend to emphasise certain localised constituents that are not equivalent to the vernacular.[24]

At the beginning of the 1940s, Lewis Mumford, an American writer, cultural historian and critic, entered the debate on regionalism. He presented regionalism as a way of acting against the homogenised built environment of the modern industrialised society. His desire was to enable architects and urban planners to create architecture and urbanity that took account of both global and regional concerns. In his account *The South in Architecture* Mumford argues that regionalism does not merely deal with the ancestors' cultural tradition. It is also a theory of how to create architectures that "most closely meet the actual conditions of life and which most fully succeed in making a people feel at home in their environment: they do not merely utilize the soil but they reflect the current conditions of culture in the region."[25] In his writings, Mumford emphasises the significance of regionalism as a balance between local conditions and global influences. He writes:

> The philosophic problem of the general and the particular has its counterpart
> in architecture; and during the last century that problem has shaped itself
> more and more into the question of what weight should be given to the

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[23] See Lewis Mumford, *The South in Architecture* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1941). Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?", in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architecture Theory 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nasbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "The Suppression and Rethinking of Regionalism and Tropicalism after 1945", in *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalisation*, ed. Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stugno (West Sussex: Johan Willey & Sons, 2001). Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism", in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architecture Theory 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nasbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985). William J.R. Curtis, "Toward an Authentic Regionalism", *Mimar: Architecture in Development* March, no. 19 (1986).

[24] See Alan Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism", in *Postcolonial Space(S)*, ed. G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).

[25] Mumford, *The South in Architecture*, 30.

universal imprint of the machine and the local imprint of the region and the community.[26]

Mumford's view was supported by postcolonial architectural scholars. Among them was Gideon, who at the time was a professor at Harvard University. He brought the discourse of regionalism into the history and theory of architecture as an alternative to the universal model of modernism, which at the time had been widely spread throughout the world by American architects.[27] Along with Gideon's writings, a number of studies were conducted in the United States that emphasised regional specificity and the return to traditional settlements and vernacular architecture.[28]

In the 1980s, Alexandre Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre advanced Mumford's vision in a new approach. They introduced the idea of critical regionalism in order to cultivate an 'identity giving' in tectonic forms. They resisted a nostalgic return to a precolonial context in the search for lost traditional forms. For Tzonis and Lefaivre, the term 'critical' employed defamiliarisation rather than constructing a sentimental scene of romantic regionalism.[29] The commitment to 'place' here not only opposed universal industrial forms but also contained a new idea that moved beyond 'ethnicity.'[30] Critical regionalism is concerned with presenting "regional elements in an unfamiliar light" so that "the building appears to enter into an imagined dialogue with the viewer."[31]

Along with Tzonis and Lefaivre, Frampton has attempted to systematise the discourse of regionalism into a theory. Agreeing with Tzonis and Lefaivre, Frampton

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[26]   Cited in Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", 28.

[27]   See Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 92. Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", 21.

[28]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 92. Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia."

[29]   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?", 483. See also Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "The Grid and the Pathway: An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Susana Antonakakis, with Prolegomena to a History of Culture of Modern Greek Architecture", in *Architecture in Greece* (1981).

[30]   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?", 486.

[31]   Ibid., 483,89.

opposed sentimental regionalism that attempted to revive lost vernacular forms. He explains that "the fundamental strategy of critical regionalism is to mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived *indirectly* from the peculiarities of a particular place."[32] His central premise is "how to become modern and to return to source."[33] He argues that critical regionalism is an "architecture of resistance", which is fuelled by "not only a certain prosperity but also some kind of anti-centrist consensus."[34] Both regionalism and resisting regionalism are acts of opposing a ubiquitous "universal order of architecture."[35] Nonetheless, both are bound to the commitment to 'placeness' and 'difference' and suggest the consideration of using regional elements.[36]

Alan Colquhoun, in his careful examination of the concept of regionalism, points to the term 'essential model', which is used in the doctrine of regionalism. The model, as he explains, seeks the core or the essence of the society, which "must be discovered and preserved."[37] This essence is often conflated with "local geography, climate, and custom, involving the use and transformation of local, natural material."[38] These aspects are assumed to provide an 'authentic' built environment. This doctrine has driven many cultural and architectural theorists to establish theory that aims to "keep people *culturally in place*."[39] In relation to the built environment, the relationship between architecture, culture and place falls into a definable and fixed form. In this regard, the theory of regionalism encourages societies to remain isolated in their own world.[40] In fact, in the post-industrial context, where people live

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[32] Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance", in *The Anti-Aesthetic, Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 21.

[33] Ibid., 17.

[34] Cited in Eggener, "Resisting Critical Regionalism: A Postcolonial Perspective", 3.

[35] Tzonis and Lefaivre, "The Grid and the Pathway: An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Susana Antonakakis, with Prolegomena to a History of Culture of Modern Greek Architecture." Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance."

[36] See Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism."

[37] Ibid., 17.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Samer Akkach, "On Culture" (paper presented at the De-placing Difference: Architecture, Culture and Imaginative Geography. The 3rd Symposium of the Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture - the University of Adelaide, Adelaide, 2002), 184.

[40] For further discussion see Ibid.

in the era of high-speed mass transit and electronic communications, "the needs for industrial society…demand a high degree of uniformity."[41] On this point the notion of local difference tends to obscure, and it is therefore irrelevant to link "cultural codes with geographical region."[42]

Regionalism and International Postcolonial Trends

In the postcolonial context, the discourse of regionalism and the search for cultural identity have led to the recognition of the legitimacy of cultural plurality. As a response to global cultural flow, the discourse encouraged people to think independently about their cultural identity in architecture and urbanity without external interference.[43] Concerning this, since the first half of the twentieth century, there have been a large number of studies on architectural regionalism—mostly conducted by cultural and architectural theorists from developed countries—that insist on an "autonomous region of culture" that is rooted in a specific geography. Paul Rudolf, an eminent American architect, shares this view. He insists that such a study becomes a significant solution to human problems, not something that is imposed from the outside.[44]

Such arguments seem understandable. They encourage people to obtain an independent mind. However, the discourse of regional identity emerges through the reconstruction of cultural tradition and the reconstitution of cultural heritage based on local traits and topography.[45] As a result, the search for regional identity turns out to be irrelevant. It "dichotomises the incessant, spontaneous unfolding of one's being into rationalized polarities of oneself and other…heritage and modernity…centre and

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41   Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism", 21.

42   Nalbantoglu and Wong, "Introduction", 8. Eggener, "Resisting Critical Regionalism: A Postcolonial Perspective", 4. see also Colquhoun, 23

43   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?." Tzonis and Lefaivre, "The Suppression and Rethinking of Regionalism and Tropicalism after 1945." Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism." Curtis, "Toward an Authentic Regionalism."

44   Paul Rudolf, *Regionalism in Architecture* (ArchNet, [cited).

45   Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia", 45.

periphery."[46] Architectural forms are seen as being based on "a historical category, as something of the past and as a complete given construct awaiting discovery and 'authentic' interpretation, and can only lead to further isolation from current practices and theoretical developments."[47]

For many architectural theorists and critics, such as Kenneth Frampton, Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre and William Curtis, the discourse of regionalism emerged to refute the development of sameness in the built environment due to modernisation of machinery and building construction. Emphasising regional sensitivity, Frampton sought to see architecture "with capacity to condense the artistic potential of the region while reinterpreting cultural influence coming from the outside."[48]

In order to take part as a modern society, Frampton explains, is a "paradox… it has to root itself in the soil of its past, forge a national spirit, and unfurl this spiritual and cultural revindication before the colonialist's personality. But…it is necessary at the same time to take part in scientific, technical, and political rationality."[49] Frampton reminds architects to play a mediating role, to be conscious of the global situation and to be responsive to local conditions. Quoting Recoeur, Frampton writes:

> No one can say what will become our civilization when it has really met different civilizations by means other than the shock of conquest and domination. But we have to admit that this encounter has not yet taken place at the level of an authentic dialogue. That is why we are in a kind of lull or interregnum in which we can no longer practice the dogmatism of a single truth and in which we are not yet capable of conquering the scepticism into which we have stepped.[50]

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[46]   Samer Akkach, "A View from Within: The Quest for Identity in Contemporary Arab/Islamic Architecture" (paper presented at the 3rd 'Other Connections' Conference, Melbourne, 1977), 172.

[47]   Ibid.

[48]   Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism", 469.

[49]   Ibid., 470.

[50]   Ibid., 471.

Frampton, along with many architectural regionalists, have attempted to expand the given boundaries of knowledge. Here the regionalists' positions "are critical of the conventional hierarchies that privilege the modern over the traditional and the international over the local, their interest lies more in finding a reconciliatory middle term than in questioning the very systems of privilege."[51] Similar to the Islamic context, the regionalists' conceptualisation of the third world as contrasting with the United States and Europe indicates "a sense of mutual exclusion."[52]

Moreover, western sources on the architectural discourses that are preoccupied with traditional culture can be seen in the works of Kostof and Fletcher who show the centrality of the West.[53] Their works reveal the deep-seated Eurocentrism in the writing of architectural and urban history.[54] In these histories, non-western architecture and urbanity of the third world appear as "fragments of architectural history," and can only be understood by setting it up against the European models to show "sameness" and "difference."[55] This approach, thus, emphasises the polarisation of West and East/non-West, Europe and the other. As Kusno observes, Kostof's and Fletcher's writings represent a genre of history that is still based on an account of European hegemony, thus undercutting the attempts of the third world subject in mediating the effects of Europe.[56]

Regionalism and the Question of Difference

The primary purpose of the regionalist approach is to maintain 'difference.' In responding to the triumph of modern architecture in the United States, academics such as Mumford, Tzonis, Lefaivre and Frampton conducted research on regional identity in architecture that insisted upon 'autonomous regions of culture.' The

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[51]   Nalbantoglu and Wong, "Introduction", 8.

[52]   Akkach, "A View from Within: The Quest for Identity in Contemporary Arab/Islamic Architecture", 172.

[53]   See Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 15th ed. (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1950).

[54]   See Kusno's examination on Kostof's and Fletcher's works in Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia," 178.

[55]   Ibid.: 48.

[56]   Ibid.

discourse discusses the expression of difference through rediscovering the cultural authenticity of specific regions of the non-Western world.[57] For example, Curtis emphasises the multicultural nature of postcolonial architecture, which creates difference, and this becomes a central premise in constructing the built environment. In the following I will examine the idea of recollecting cultural authenticity and discuss vernacular and tropical architectural forms that have served as important tools for recollecting identity. The aim is to show how, for the West, the non-West becomes the imagining region. In this case, Western architectural theorists reveal their tendency to speak on behalf of others.

Recollecting Origin

The search for cultural differentiation is inextricably linked to the determination of geographical bounds.[58] In the case of Southeast Asia, the notion of difference was emphasised in Walter's book *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, in which he describes the Southeast Asian regions as becoming subjects in the process of localisation. Interestingly, through their contact with the west in modern times, Southeast Asians have rediscovered the cultural identity that belonged to their ancestors.[59] In terms of architecture, a similar argument is presented in Rapoport's *House Form and Culture.* His main idea was to reconsider vernacular study in architectural discourse, which has become the most divergent issue in the modern movement (Figure 4.1.2).

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[57]   See Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism", 18.

[58]   See A Rapoport, *House Form and Culture* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969). Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*.

[59]   O. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspetives* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian, 1982), 52-94.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 288 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.2 Reconsidering Vernacular: A House in Iquitos, Peru
Source: Amos Rapoport (1969)

Rapoport insists that the construction of the built environment should deal with historical aspects of architecture as evidence of the past. Such insight, he argues, enables people to be "aware of the complexity and overlapping of things" and gives an understanding of elements which remain constant and which do change.[60] The globalisation era of modern technologies and cultural paradigms that increasingly predominate in urban centres also affect rural areas. Within these societies different historical times exist together, and under these circumstances it is not relevant "to speak of 'authentic' local traditions in a cultural field such as architecture."[61] The distribution of knowledge in the era of high-speed communication tends to produce stereotypes of living. In this regard, Colquhoun argues that "uniform, highly centralized cultural/political entities within which differences of an unpredictable, unstable, and apparently random kind tend to develop."[62] Living within such conditions, as Colquhoun explains, provides society with the opportunity to tolerate differences through numbers of messages. However, tolerating these differences in postindustrial era, Colquhoun insists, do not follow "the same law that

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[60] Rapoport, *House Form and Culture*, 11.
[61] Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism", 21.
[62] Ibid., 22.

accommodated for difference within traditional society."[63] Therefore, whether such local authenticity ever existed in the global era is questionable.

Vernacularism

The discourse of vernacular architecture constructs a version of the 'reality' of a region's being different from other regions. The term 'vernacular architecture', as referred to by Oliver, means "indigenous, tribal, folk, peasant and traditional architecture."[64] As the word vernacular means native (in Latin, *vernacululus*), its architectural forms are used to convey local authenticity. In his edited book *Vernacular Architecture of the World* Oliver compiles chapters on traditional buildings around the world, covering self-built and community-built buildings. These chapters demonstrate aspects of social structure and cultural systems which affect the heterogeneity of the built environment. In the trend of regionalism, vernacular architecture re-emerged and became prevalent in contemporary architectural design in the 1930s. Since these years, which coincided with post-industrial expansion, vernacular forms re-emerged and were romanticised (Figure 4.1.3).

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 289 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.3   An open air theatre, Tanzania
Source: Mimar 41 (1991)

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[63]   Ibid.

[64]   Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, xxi.

Oliver records that vernacular forms were mostly gentrified as second and retreat houses. As Oliver indicates, many vernacular details were replicated and used in new buildings. Of this tendency Oliver says "romantic image replaces the authentic."[65] In addition to this, the drives of romanticism, as Oliver explains, have saved many great ancient buildings since they have been transformed into "objects of display." Moreover, in some parts of the world, particularly Southeast Asia, vernacular forms are used to convey ethnic or national identity."[66]

Later, during the 1960s and 1970s, vernacularism became the most popular trend in non-Western cities, with the increasing demand for local difference. Rapoport was an important figure whose work focused on traditional settlement and became the influential work of the 1960s. He claims that vernacular patterns tend to lose their existence and are regarded as a background to the 'high style' of the modern architectural movement. Rapoport claims:

> Architectural theory and history have traditionally been concerned with the study of monument. They have emphasized the work of men of genius…Although this is only right, it has meant that we have tended to forget that the work of the designer, let alone of the designer of genius, has represented a small, often significant, portion of the building activity at any given period. The physical environment of man, especially the built environment, has not been, still is not, controlled by the designer. This environment is the result of vernacular…architecture, and it has been largely ignored in architectural history and theory.[67]

Rapoport argues that vernacular architecture links to socio-cultural aspects and concludes there is a close relationship between culture and form. His research helps to elevate non-Western vernacular architecture and has directed the attention of non-Western societies to their cultural traditions, thereby raising their cultural sensitivity towards their built environment. He observes that third-world countries tend to lose

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[65]   Ibid., xxiv.
[66]   Ibid.
[67]   Rapoport, *House Form and Culture*, 1.

their "folk arts, which cease to have symbolic value and hence no longer communicate."[68] For this reason, Rapoport admits that "there is a danger in applying a Western concept which represents only one choice among many possible, to the problems of other areas, instead of looking at them in terms of local way of life, specific needs, and ways of doing things"[69] (see Figure 4.1.4). Instead, folk art, as Rapoport mentions, should be regarded as the result of having choices among a limited number of approved alternatives.[70]

The idea of returning to vernacular here indicates that the non-West not only becomes the imagining region for the West but also an "ideal means for recollecting origin and for recovering the contradiction of the region's own creation."[71] The idea of pre-civilisational civilisation of the third world is assumed by the West and taken as a basis for rewriting histories and reconstructing the built forms of the third world. The effort to demonstrate cultural transformation has resulted in the imagining of the specificity of the regions through recollecting their origins.

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[68]   Ibid., 128.

[69]   Ibid., 129.

[70]   Ibid., 128-29.

[71]   See Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-Fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia", 45. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 191-92. For further discussion on the contradictory creation of a region in Asia by Euro–American forces, see A Dirlik, "The Asia Pasific Idea: Reality and Representation in the Invention of a Regional Structure", *Journal of World History* 3, no. 1 (1992).

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 292 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.4   The Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi
Source: Mimar 41 (1991)

The discourse of vernacular architecture was intensified by a number of conferences
that were held regularly, starting in Britain and subsequently in the United States,
France, Germany and Scandinavia. By the 1980s several international conferences on
vernacular and cultural issues related to architecture had also been held in countries
around the world.[72] These gatherings focused on the building's relation with material
culture. Oliver's writing acknowledges the effort of ethnographical research to turn
to the vernacular in designing postcolonial built forms. Such insights, which address
vernacularism as a source of local authenticity, seem to create an oversimplified
picture of a complex cultural existence.

Tropical Conditions

The idea of 'tropicality' as an important presupposition for distinguishing the identity
of tropical regions emerged in the late eighteenth century, particularly when the
British transformed architectural representation in the tropics from the Bengali
traditional house to the colonial bungalow. As a reaction to globalisation the
tropicalists try to search for architecture that sustains "a sense of place…without
falling back on a nostalgic retreat into extinct definitions of 'tradition'" (see Figure

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[72]   Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, xxiv.

4.1.5).[73] Here, the term 'tropics', in accordance with Tzonis and Lefaivre, is identified as "a family region."[74] This means that people who live in the tropical zone—the regions that stretch throughout the middle of the globe—share common attributes. These regions, Tzonis and Lefaivre explain, share a "humid climate" so that architectural representation adapts to the tropical climate. In addition the regions share "historical and political fact: they are all ex colony", so that they have a colonial architectural heritage.[75]

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 293 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.5   The Bank of San Jose, Rohrmoser
Source: Bruno Stagno (2001)

Concerning postcolonial architecture, Tzonis and Lefaivre claim that there is a common need to "overcome the postcolonial frame of mind of these societies", which are dealing with their own "cultural structures after the departure of the colonial power." According to Tzonis and Lefaivre, the vestiges of long periods of domination still remain in the minds of people in these societies so that their architectural work is "as if driven by an automatic pilot inherited from the colonial period."[76] Tzonis and Lefaivre point out that tropical architecture "has been allowed

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73   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "The Suppression and Rethinking of Regionalism and Tropicalism after 1945", 16.
74   Ibid.
75   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments", 2.
76   Ibid., 3.

to evolve out of specific local cultural and economic conditions and meet the specific cultural and economic needs."[77] Paul Rudolf, a prominent American architect, regards such climate, local material and cultural property as primary concerns in creating tropical architecture. He says that "orientation, shade, the changing directions of wind, humidity considerations can be as important for conditioning the air as naturally controlled space…the concept of controlled air with its impact on the use of energy in relationship to regionalism remains a rich theme for architectural exploration."[78]

Architect Ken Yeang seeks an identity for Southeast Asia cities through the demonstrations of the self-conscious project of image-making of high-rise buildings. To achieve an identity for Southeast Asia in the wake of industrialisation and globalisation, he says:

> For the 80s and early 90s… Asian economies would likely rank first in the world in terms of expansion. In an economic environment…the need to develop an architectural urban aggregate form and fabric whose image and functions are related to the Asian life-style and independent identity of the local communities that it serves. Otherwise the consequence would be a bland urban regional environment that is simply a repeat of the built mediocrities of international architecture found everywhere.[79]

Coinciding with the development of the Southeast Asian economy, Yeang attempts to address the notion of 'tropical city', which could presumably give Southeast Asian architecture distinctive characteristics in challenging the universal form of the international style. In this regard, according to Yeang, the notion of 'tropicality' would also apply to other regions that have a similar climatic environment. With the increased demand for the construction of high-rise buildings, Yeang argues, Southeast Asia's regional specificity could be reached by responding to the climate.

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[77]   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "The Suppression and Rethinking of Regionalism and Tropicalism after 1945", 14.

[78]   Rudolf, *Regionalism in Architecture* ([cited).

[79]   Ken Yeang, *The Tropical Verandah City: Some Urban Design Ideas for Kuala Lumpur* (Petaling Jaya: Longman Malaysia, 1987), 1.

To stamp Southeast Asia's identity on its high-rise buildings, Yeang includes climatic filtering such as louvred screens, wind shields and vegetation (Figure 4.1.6).[80] These 'climatic devices' are designed and placed on building surfaces so that the bright sunlight and wind penetrate indirectly into the building.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 295 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.1.6   Menara Mesiniaga, Kuala Lumpur
Source: Peter Eisenman (1995)

Among Western architectural theorists, Powell shares Ken Yeang's idea of the tropical city in his effort to create a distinctive local identity. Powell explains that a tropical city stands for the locality and specificity of its region, which are memorable, vivid and different from those of cities in other locations.[81] He emphasises: "the test of a place's identity is not the novelty of its appearance, but the degree to which it is vividly remembered, used and identified by people. This is the

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[80]   Ken Yeang, *Tropical Urban Regionalism: Building in South-East Asian City* (Kuala Lumpur: Concept Media Pte Ltd, 1987). Yeang, *The Tropical Verandah City: Some Urban Design Ideas for Kuala Lumpur*.

[81]   Tzonis and Lefaivre, "The Suppression and Rethinking of Regionalism and Tropicalism after 1945." The discussion on the global discourse of tropical architecture in Southeast Asia, see Yeang, *Tropical Urban Regionalism: Building in South-East Asian City*.

aesthetic justification for the 'tropical city.'"[82] However, to seek for Southeast Asia its own identity, Yeang tries to 'climatise' buildings to suit their environment. In this regard, his representation of the buildings is derived from "a 'Western' discourse that is used and appropriated as a strategy to inform…[his] own position and subjectivity.[83] In this regard, Yeang does not "resist the idiom of 'Western' discourses; instead…[he] appropriate[s] them by finding local parallels."[84]

The formations of high-rise buildings, which are considered as representing tropical architecture, in fact, show their similarity to modern international style architecture. The structure of the building typology is similar to that of buildings constructed all over the world. The addition of climatic devices that are placed on the surfaces of the high-rise building seems to become a tool to fade away universal industrial images. This is relevant to Kusno's argument, in a statement that responds to Yeang's regionalism, which claims that the modernist box-like architecture lying behind the 'climatic device' is created in order to speak a language beyond that of universal modernism and that it is used to express identity.[85]

4.2   The Indonesian Voice

Indonesia, like other third-world countries, responded to the global discourse of regionalism by appropriating its principles and imperatives to articulate its own voice. Since independence an increasing number of studies have emerged, attempting to reconstruct the architecture of Indonesia with reference to Indonesian history and culture.[86] The discourse of national identity has served as a frame and context for

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[82]   R. Powell, *Ken Yeang: Rethinking the Environmnetal Filter* (Singapore: Landmark Books, 1989), 105.

[83]   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 202.

[84]   Ibid.

[85]   See Ibid., 201.

[86]   See Sidharta, "Arsitektur Indonesia Modern Yang Kita Dambakan", in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit alumni, 1996). Sidharta, "Landasan Pengembangan Arsitektur Indonesia", in *Arsitektur Pembanguban Dan Konservasi*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997). Parmono Atmadi, "Arsitektur Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia", in *Perkembangan Arsitektur Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur Di Indonesia*, ed. Parmono Atmadi, et al. (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada, 1997). Eko Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-

these studies. In articulating the Indonesian voice, these studies reveal how the issue of architectural identity was engaged in certain architectural circles and shaped through the mediation of Western influences. They also reveal the cultural framework and sense of 'national inspiration' within and with reference to which Indonesian architects have viewed the production of contemporary architecture. In appropriating the discourse of regionalism the search naturally focused on the Indonesian vernacular and related cultural heritage, while criticism focused on modern universalism.[87]

Universalism and 'Instant Culture'

The crisis of architectural identity in Indonesia was seen to be associated with the emergence of the universal architectural language that is dominated by economy and technology and based on function and efficiency, one that has obscured any sense of specificity and otherness. It was also associated with what Budihardjo calls 'instant culture.' By this Budihardjo means the eclectic representation of architectural styles in order to foreground the cultural past and construct an intended identity. In Indonesia, similar to other Southeast Asian countries, the rate of development after independence and industrialisation has stimulated the proliferation of uniform modern built forms in order to meet the increasing demand for buildings (see Figure 4.2.1). For example, in the 1970s the *Jakarta Post* ran a headline on the issue of the internationalisation of the city with a title 'RI [Republic of Indonesia] Enters Post-Modern in Architecture', reporting that:

> Indonesia is entering the age of the Post-Modern with a combination of
> other styles… The lifestyle of Indonesians is similar to Singaporeans,
> Indians, Europeans, Americans, Australians and Arabs. People in these
> countries achieve material value through trade and industrialization. They
> talk the same language of trade and economics, and emphasize efficiency

Kultural Arsitek", in *Perkembangan Arsitek Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1997).

[87]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. Kusno, "Writing Architecture at the Postcolonial Turn." For further discussion, see King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*.

and productivity…99 per cent of condominiums and houses are sold to locals, who are not interested in the Indonesian style… Clients want to be international, because of their extensive travel to Europe, and the US. They are also highly influenced by television.[88]

Figure 4.2.1   Bank BNI City Tower, Jakarta
Source: http://www.budowle.pl/najwyzsze/grafika/bni_city_tower.jpg

The article points to Indonesia's cultural transformation and the emerging new conditions that reflect the influence of the architectural and urban developments around the globe. Such conditions, the newspaper describes, have emerged through the high-speed communication and transportation technologies, through travel to Europe and the United States, and even through watching television. Notwithstanding the new conditions, the article adds, the Indonesian character can be achieved by maintaining a 'local flavour' in interior decoration.

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[88]   "R I Enters Post-Mo in Architecture", *Jakarta Post*, 16 March 1995, 1.

As discussed in Part two, Suharto's New Order resulted in intensive modernisation of Jakarta and in widespread use of international style architecture, as was the case in the previous regime of Sukarno. The governor of Jakarta, Ali Sadikin, while completing several unfinished building projects of the previous government, extended Jakarta's development with several multistorey office buildings and shopping centres. The mushrooming of high-rise buildings with high technology was seen as an expression of national development. However, the wide spread of modernism drew a wave of protest not only among Indonesian architects, urban planners and government elites but also among Western scholars, who began to reflect on third-world environmental conditions.[89] Indonesian architects in particular claimed that universalism in the era of globalisation, seen as a product of Western hegemony, did not reflect the distinctive elements of Indonesian culture.[90]

In a number of architectural seminars and academic discussions, senior Indonesian architect Djauhari Sumintardja argued that the ubiquitous use of foreign styles was the result of the lack of architectural research and this had led to the misconstruction of architectural identity.[91] Indonesian architecture, he said, had been contaminated by impurity.[92] Furthermore, eminent architectural theorist Budihardjo has fiercely accused Indonesian architects of having 'a love affair' with Industrial mechanism, mass production, and international materials such as steel, glass and aluminium.[93] He argues that modern architects, generally speaking, belittle local culture, crafts and materials, and the interaction between architecture and environment.[94] To support his viewpoint, Budihardjo referred to a Western architect, Arnold Koerte, stating that the tendency to universal homogeneity constitutes an architectural pornography, providing architecture in a completely plain, nude and insensitive condition that does not enrich its environment.[95] Budihardjo adds that the modern movement of

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[89] Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*.

[90] For example see Djauhari, "Arsitektur Indonesia: Pranata Ilmiahnya Belum Memadai", in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996). Eko Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997).

[91] Djauhari, "Arsitektur Indonesia: Pranata Ilmiahnya Belum Memadai", 146-47.

[92] Ibid., 147.

[93] Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 29.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

architecture is problematic. Its uniformity, which provides monotony throughout the globe, is trapped by un-human technology, ignoring the unique human behaviour.[96] Budihardjo further argues that many constructive aspects of the precolonial past, such as art and crafts, religion, and aristocracy, which played important roles in creating architecture, have been eliminated in modern times. This circumstance, he adds, denies today's architects the chance to develop their creativity, resulting in a built environment that is stereotyped and uniform.[97]

Economic development, Budihardjo explains, increases the demand for architectural planning and design. In terms of domestic architecture, this developmental tendency has encouraged the upper and middle classes to express their status in monumental fashion. The houses revealed an eclectic design approach, borrowing foreign elements, particularly from Greek, Roman and Spanish architectural styles.[98] The ubiquitous use of these architectural forms in all their 'Eurocentricity' seem, as Atmadi points out in his inaugural lecture at Gadjah Mada University, significant to determine "the development of Indonesian architecture."[99]

In 1980s, Rudini, the Minister for Home Affairs during Suharto's presidency, raised similar issues regarding the excessive fondness for foreign styles. In the Congress of the Indonesian Architects Association, Rudini criticised the existing unfriendly built environment, which, according to him, was alien to the Indonesian society.[100] He pointed particularly to the Western 'white house' style surrounded by fort-like fences. He claimed that this architectural style, which does not respond to the local climate, showed people's egoism as if they were living in another world. The friendly tropical climate, he said, was forgotten by prioritising artificial aspects such as air conditioning that impact negatively on the environment. Being one of the New Order's most important figures, whose view reflects the government's directions, he

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[96] Eko Budihardjo, "Arsitektur Bukan Sekedar Bangunan", in *Arsitektur, Pembangunan Dan Konservasi*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997), 61.

[97] Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 54.

[98] The terms Greek column is Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian, while Spanish window designated by round arch window.

[99] Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 178.

[100] Rudini, as described in Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 26-27.

criticised this architectural tendency for not reflecting Indonesia, since it did not adopt or express the Indonesian environment and national ideology, the Pancasila (the five principles of Indonesian ideology).[101]

In response to the growth of architectural development, Budihardjo explains that living in the era of globalisation is inevitably coloured by conflict, change and confusion.[102] This confusion reflects on architecture and urbanity. There is support for his views from western architectural theorist Norberg-Schultz: "the present situation of architecture is confused and puzzling. From the client we hear constant complaints about the architects' lack of ability to satisfy him, from a practical as well as from an aesthetical and economical point of view."[103]

Having been influenced by the Western discourse of regionalism and local identity, Budihardjo expresses dissatisfaction with both the universal form and the eclectic tendency in modern domestic architecture. He laments that contemporary Indonesian architectural forms obscure Indonesia's' own identity. In a number of articles, Budihardjo encourages Indonesian architects to search for an Indonesian architecture that has its own specificity. Such an effort, which suited the political directions of the New Order, not surprisingly, had a good opportunity to be developed.[104] Although he may not subscribe to the regime's political view, Budihardjo's insistence on constructing an architecture that reflects the Indonesian society, with its rich and unique cultural tradition, serves the wider political agenda.[105]

While architects and urban planners have revealed an interest in seeking Indonesian architecture and urbanity, Budihardjo still sees their efforts as being restricted to the physical appearance of built forms, to the façade and the manipulation of traditional

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[101] The New Order Government of Suharto pursued a policy based on Pancasila; see part 2.

[102] Eko Budihardjo, "Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia", in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996), 153.

[103] Norberg-Schultz, cited in Ibid.

[104] See the discussion of the political vision of the New Order in creating Indonesian architecture in Part 2.3.

[105] Eko Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", in *Arsitektur: Pembangunan Dan Konservasi*, ed. Budihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997), 50-56. Budihardjo, "Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia", 155-57.

traits in order to present the specificity of regional character. For Budihardjo, this is a superficial approach, in which architecture presents "eyesores in the city", and remains trapped within the desire for "instant culture." "Instant culture" refers here to the erosion and undermining of the authenticity of Indonesian architecture, by reducing it to a matter of eclecticism. The trend of instant culture, Budihardjo adds, is characterised by the use of traditional forms as physical attachments on modern box-like buildings, as for example in the case of a high-rise building with a Javanese traditional *joglo* roof, or a modern building with traditional roofs and Ionic, Doric and Corinthian columns.[106]

The presence of foreign elements in these architectural forms is seen as not reflecting the Indonesian "personality."[107] They are described as an "urban blight" on the environment, since they also disregard the local climate.[108] Sharing Budihardjo's view, Sastrowardoyo, a prominent Indonesian architect, sees this tendency as a result of the lack of appreciation by the Indonesian people of their cultural heritage and local tradition. Sastrowardoyo sees this circumstance to be the result of an improper way of transferring knowledge from one generation to another and the lack of understanding of local architectural tradition.[109] Yet the local architectural knowledge, Sastrowardoyo explains, is limited to indigenous roof types, building structures, materials and ornamentations, which tend create a sense of nostalgia.[110]

Responding to Sastrowardoyo's observations, Budihardjo strongly suggests that architects should combine the principles of traditional design and high technology with new materials and other outside impacts in ways that suit the Indonesian conditions (see Figure 4.2.2). This way an architectural work may be able to present

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[106] Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 14.

[107] Eko Budihardjo, "Arsitektur Yang Berakar Tradisi", in *Arsitektur: Pembangunan Dan Konservasi*, ed. Eko Bidihardjo (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1997), 33.

[108] Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 21.

[109] Robi Sularto Sastrowardoyo, "Regionalisme & Arsitektur", in *Beberapa Masalah Dan Latar Belakang Arsitektur Lokal Dan Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Kardono (Surabaya: ITS, 1983).

[110] See Robi Sularto Sastrowardoyo, "Indonesia: Identity in Diversity within Unity" (paper presented at the Exploring Architecture in Islamic Culture I: Architecute and Indentity. Regional Seminar in the series Exploring Architecture in Islamic Culture sponsored by the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, Kuala Lumpur, 1983).

its modernity as well as keeping its harmony with local context and characteristics.[111] These viewpoints reflected a collective Indonesian desire for regional distinctiveness and local identity, which was pursued and nourished in the circles of educational institutions.

Figure 4.2.2   A Residential Building: Modernity and Local Context
Source: Author's Collection

Architectural Education

In this Part, this study examines cultural frameworks through which Indonesian postcolonial architecture scholars imagine contemporary Indonesian architecture in relation to the notion of 'development.' To this end the study shows how architectural intellectuals appropriate New Order policy in searching for 'appropriate architecture' for postcolonial Indonesia.

In his discussion of the 'Indonesian architectural style', Sudradjat explains that "educational institutions were the sites where the stirring of interest in the political relevance of architecture occurred. The educator saw the political involvement of architecture not as something to be avoided, but rather as something to be considered

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[111]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 38-44.

seriously."[112] Sudrajat's statement draws attention to the political climates during the Sukarno and Suharto regimes that sought to produce an architecture of power to emphasise 'national identity.' A historical background of the establishment of architectural education in Indonesia provides an understanding of its mission and journey, its interaction with Western architectural concepts and theories, and its agency in the construction of the Indonesian voice.

Historical Background

The first architectural school in Indonesia was established in October 1950 at Bandung University of Technology, now known as the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Sudradjat's writing on the architectural history of Indonesia includes a brief overview of the early development of architectural education in the country.[113] Before the school was established, he explains, architecture was taught as one of the subjects in the discipline of civil engineering. An architecture school was then established, with a training program. It was attended by twenty students and taught by three Dutch lecturers, including Vincent van Romondt, who graduated from Technische Hoogeschool at Delf, the Netherlands. The program was centred on the subject of architectural design and taught modern architectural principles, such as "function, climate, construction, and materials."[114] The School's teaching approach gradually changed from a training program to coursework focusing on design studios.

In 1951, several new lecturers joined the School, two of whom, Hadinoto and Susilo, were Indonesian. By 1958, the School of Architecture at Bandung had graduated 12 architects, and by the 1980s there were about twenty architecture schools throughout the Archipelago which had graduated at least two thousand architects. The first Head of School at Bandung, F. Dicke, promoted modern ideals. He taught that culture changes over time, and thus the principles of ancient cultures cannot be taken as the basis for creating present architecture. He maintained that, in the modern era,

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112   Iwan Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History" (PhD Dissertation, University of Sydney, 1991), 200.
113   Ibid., 185-90.
114   Ibid., 186.

Indonesia "should not situated itself in an isolated position" without interacting with the concerns of the modern world.[115] Yet, he was also keen for the students to be able to design contemporary architecture that reflected Indonesia's cultural and spiritual values. He encouraged architects to consider their cultural past as a source for contextualising modern architecture. While architects could learn how problems were solved in the past, they should also be able to think critically about new solutions that are suitable for modern situations.[116]

Due to the political conflict between Indonesia and the Netherlands in the middle of 1950s, the Dutch withdrew all of their experts, including architects and educators, from Indonesia. Van Romondt, however, chose to stay and teach architecture at ITB, which he did until 1962. For a short period, a German professor assumed the headship of the School. By the end of the 1950s, the School was taken over by American lecturers and Indonesian architects who had graduated mostly from the universities in the United States and Europe.[117] By 1961, the headship of the Architecture School at ITB was taken over by an Indonesian architect, Sujudi, who had graduated from a German University. Together with junior staff from ITB, Sujudi established other architecture schools in several places, such as Yogyakarta and Semarang in 1962, Ujung Pandang in 1963, Jakarta, and Surabaya in 1965.[118]

The first generation of Indonesian architecture educators continued their interest in the modernist agenda already introduced by the Dutch professors. The return of a new generation of architecture graduates from Europe and America in the early 1960s also contributed to the introduction of Western literature into architecture education in Indonesia. They promoted the works and thoughts of architectural figures, such as the German Bauhaus masters, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, the French architect Le Corbusier and the American architect Frank Lloyd

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[115]   Ibid.

[116]   Ibid., 186-87.

[117]   Josef Prijotomo, "When West Meets East: One Century of Architecture in Indonesia (1890s-1990s)", *Architronic* 5, no. 2 (1996): 6. Yuswadi Saliya, "Modernism and International Style", in *Indonesian Heritage: Architecture*, ed. Gunaran Tjahyono, Julian Davison, and Goh Geok Yian (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1998), 126.

[118]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 190.

Wright. These became the main references for the formation of the 'normative academic.'[119] With the prevailing Western influences, the constructed buildings revealed, generally speaking, an interest in tropical architecture and a preoccupation with ventilation and sunlight (see Figure 4.2.3).

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 306 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.3   The Finance Ministry Building in Jakarta
                     Source: Sukada (1996)

With the full support of the political climate of Sukarno's Guided Democracy, the modern architectural movement promoted by these young Indonesian architects developed significantly.[120] It was in the 1960s that the first skyscrapers, complete with elevators and air conditioning systems, were erected. Architecture education during the early years of independence seemed to have become a vehicle to achieve the new spirit of development in modern Indonesia.

While the modern movement rapidly developed, the return to the vernacular received a boost after Mrs Suharto proclaimed her idea of constructing the massive TMII project, which re-introduced rural Indonesia and celebrated its traditional houses. In the 1975 national architectural seminar, which was held in Bandung to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of architectural education in Indonesia, the majority of the speakers agreed that "architectural education in Indonesia had to be relevant to the social and cultural condition of the country, and not orientated toward any

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[119]   Ibid. See also Saliya, "Modernism and International Style", 126-27.
[120]   See Saliya, "Modernism and International Style", 126-27.

foreign ideals."[121] In the following years, the discourse of traditional architecture was widely discussed among architects, urban planners and policy makers.

The Building Research Institutions

The 1970s witnessed an upsurge of interest in 'traditional architecture.' The mega-project Taman Mini played an important role in popularising the traditional style in Indonesia's contemporary architecture. Such an interest resulted in the revival of the Building Research Institute, which was established in the mid-1950s to provide an 'appropriate method' for improving housing conditions in Indonesia.[122] The Research Institute was discontinued for about two decades and was reinstated in the early 1970s. Since then a number of research projects have been conducted with the aim of rediscovering Indonesia's traditional architecture.[123] Sudrajat explains that the researchers worked mainly on compiling data. They inventoried the geographical location and condition of traditional buildings, art and architectural forms, including the ritual processing involved in constructing buildings. The collected information was meant to raise the Indonesians' consciousness with regard to their splendid cultural and architectural heritage, so that people might be stimulated to create a 'proper' Indonesian architecture.

Within two years of the opening of the Building Research Institute, the research work on traditional architecture received further support from a number of universities and other research institutions.[124] Sudrajat explains that the Building Research Institute's descriptive method of researching traditional architecture was used in almost all provinces of Indonesia.[125] In the 1980s, Sudrajat adds, the production of architectural knowledge reached its highest point through a nation-wide research project instituted and funded by the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs. The purpose of the research was "to collect data and information on

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[121]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 200.

[122]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 78.

[123]   Ibid., 99.

[124]   Ibid., 100.

[125]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 100.

traditional architecture, in order to make inventory and documentation of local cultures that form the constituent parts of national culture."[126] Within six years, the research work conducted by several teams was published.

Before the project was started, the government, with its central authority, conducted a one-week training program for the leader of each team, aiming to deliver some research guidelines. Under the authority of the government, predictably, the final outcome was 'standardised.' The research procedures drew "limited freedom for each research team to organise and present their data and analysis."[127] As had happened with the Taman Mini project, this standardisation exposed the logical structure of the buildings in order to make local specificity visible. Interestingly, such standardisation, which marginalised socio-cultural order, ended up becoming part of the scientific demands of the architecture discipline.

Western Agency

Western interest in the built environment of Indonesia goes back to the colonial period. The two Dutch architects Henri Maclaine Pont and Thomas Karsten, as discussed earlier, were architectural pioneers who reconsidered Javanese traditional culture in their attempts to modernise Indonesian architecture. They tried to preserve Indonesian architecture as an "authentic indigenous domain."[128] In postcolonial times, Dutch architectural academic van Romondt promoted the development of Indonesian architecture within its own culture.

In addition to the roles of these architects, the role of George A. Hinds was important in the dissemination of the Western architectural discourse of regionalism. Hinds was an architecture professor from Kentucky, United States, who was appointed during the 1960s to restructure the first architecture school at Bandung, West Java, following the departure of the Dutch professor. In 1965, during his tenure, he wrote

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126   Ibid.
127   Ibid., 101.
128   Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 33-48.

an article titled 'Regional Architecture for a Developing Country', in which he raised the issue of the cultural identity of Indonesia based on what architectural theorists and regionalists were advocating at the time. Hinds reflected on the effects of Western intervention in shaping the architectural identity of non-Western others. His article starts with the question, "How can a contemporary architecture in a newly developing country such as Indonesia be truly Indonesian?" Opposing the universal industrial forms of modern architecture, Hinds promoted his regionalist intentions. He seemed interested in the vernacular and the inherent characteristics of topography, climate and cultural tradition.[129]

While living in Indonesia, Hinds observed and interviewed people living in urban compounds along the Cikapundung River in Bandung in order to find out what standard facilities were required for modern cities. He found that most people were agrarian-oriented although they had moved from a rural to an urban context. According to Hinds, their compounds "have a very well-organized and cooperative administrative system", in comparison with other housing areas where "urban-minded people" lived.[130] He recommended that such a system be applied in large cities such as Jakarta, because it could be "used in bridging the gap between rural and urban characteristics of a changing population."[131] He believed that Indonesians needed a period of time to find urban facilities that would satisfy their living patterns.

During this transition phase, it is important, he suggests, to understand the background of local communities by exploring the conditions of vernacular living. According to Hinds, such knowledge can direct architects to design a built environment "using the forms and materials which are appropriate to modern function, while at the same time using the local artistic skills and the space concepts influence by historic and regional architecture."[132] In support of Hinds' insights concerning Indonesian architecture, the editor of the journal wrote:

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[129] G.A Hinds, "Regional Architecture for a Developing Country", *AIA Journal*, no. February (1965): 31.
[130] Ibid.: 33.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.: 35.

> By studying the development of a contemporary architecture in an ancient culture newly exposed to twentieth century civilization, perhaps we can find a guide toward rediscovering regionalism which seems to have been lost in current American and European architecture.[133]

The interest in other cultures by the west, while serving nostalgic dreams, affirms Western authority in desiring the "authentic" culture of others. The authentic culture of Indonesia has been used as "raw material" for architectural approach aiming to surpass the homogenising force of industrialisation.

Indonesian Architectural Style and Cultural Imagining

The high speed of the flow of information and the rapid development of the educational system draw out the contribution of the Indonesian architectural repertory. Within this circumstance, its architectural style appears either to be merely copying foreign architecture, in the combination of modern and traditional forms, or purely to be derived from traditional forms.

The search for an architectural identity reflects a collective concern in modern Indonesia about the erosion of cultural identity under the pressures of Western influences. Indonesian architectural scholars have responded by strongly demanding that the meanings and functions of Indonesian architecture should reflect the national culture.[134] As a nation, with its variety of ethnic backgrounds, Indonesia sought to repossess its unique cultural traditions and share its 'nationhood' and 'common values.'[135]

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[133]   Ingunn Moser, "Introduction: Mobilizing Critical Communities and Discourse on Modern Biotechnology", in *Biopolitics: A Feminist and Ecological Reader on Biotecnology*, ed. Vandana Shiva and Ingunn Moser (London: Zed Books, 1995), 3.

[134]   See Atmadi, "Arsitektur Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia", 8. Sidharta, "Peran Arsitek, Pendidikan Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia", *Media IAI*, no. October (1984): 87. Sidharta, "Arsitektur Indonesia Modern Yang Kita Dambakan", 101. Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", 52-53.

[135]   Budihardjo, "Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia", 153.

As discussed earlier, the notion of cultural difference has been raised since 1960, particularly in the early period of the first architectural school. Interest in the traditional aspects of architecture flourished with the search for national identity following the re-establishment of the Building Research Institute in Bandung in the early 1970s. The emphasis on the relationship between architecture and cultural tradition continued to manifest in different forms, one of which was the 1977 Seminar on the Education of Architects in Indonesia. The seminar concluded that the development of architectural education should provide solutions for architectural problems. Architects should be socially and culturally aware and responsible and should understand the conditions and processes of traditional architecture.[136]

The beginning of the 1980s witnessed the awakening of cultural consciousness of the need for a search for an appropriate conceptual framework for architectural development. Thus, several decades after the establishment of the first architectural school, the interest in the discourse of architectural identity remained. The search for national architecture and identity was intensified through national congresses, panel discussions, articles and exhibitions). The cartoons in Figures 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 represent the architect searching for an architectural identity that is lost somewhere within the nation—under the ground or on the top of the hill, it is somewhere in the country.

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[136]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 200. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 172.

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 312 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.4   Researching for a 'proper' identity
Source: Budihardjo (1997)

> NOTE:
> This figure is included on page 312 of the print copy of
> the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.5   Missing: Searching for Indonesian identity
Source: Budihardjo (1997)

The decade of the 1980s marked the significance of traditional architecture and values and then conceived these as national culture.[137] This circumstance of emphasising local identity shows how Kostof's and Fletcher's tenets have been

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[137]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 200-03.

widespread their circulation to Indonesia and used as the main references for the writers in searching local characteristics in architecture.

Sudrajat, however, seems to have been dissatisfied with the discourse of Indonesian architectural identity. Arguments, theories and hypotheses concerned with the national architectural style, he wrote, "immediately plunged into a complicated and controversial morass, as there was no consensus even on such apparently elementary questions as: 'what is Indonesian architecture?'"[138] He added that the materials of the discussion were not "placed in any coherent analytical framework", and as a result the outcomes of the discussion tended to blur the overall issue and search for national identity.

According to Sudrajat, the discourse of national architecture and identity in Indonesia includes three main groups of opinions.[139] The first group sees Indonesian architecture as comprising various vernacular architectural styles throughout the Archipelago. This opinion is based on its proponents having noted the use of formal architecture elements such as traditional roofs and ornamentations. The trend of returning to traditional styles flourished in architectural practice in the late 1970s, particularly after the realisation of the cultural park Taman Mini.

The second group of opinions doubts the ability to achieve a national architecture that reflects Indonesia's own character. This opinion comes with two different perspectives.[140] One perspective considers the impact of globalisation and the universalisation of architectural styles. As eminent Indonesian architect Ciputra puts it, it becomes just an 'illusion' to create architectural specificity in the global era.[141] The second perspective sees the importance of architectural development as "a reflection of the society", which would be better off focusing on improving social conditions rather that searching for a distinctive identity. Mangunwijaya, a well-known socialist architect, says that contemporary architecture of Indonesia will

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138   Ibid., 197.
139   Ibid., 198-99.
140   Ibid., 199.
141   Cited in Ibid., 198.

always be "an illusion" as long as Indonesian people cannot "escape from its chaotic and corrupt condition."[142]

The third group of opinions, although it presents a different approach, shares the aim of the first group. This group emphasises traditional values as the basis of the development of architecture. It sees contemporary Indonesian architecture as being still in the process of formation. Members of this group argue that in coping with foreign influences the creation of modern Indonesian architecture should be rooted in traditional culture and values. This insight, which is reminiscence of what Dutch architects had promoted in the late colonial period and at the beginning of the establishment of architectural schools,[143] was apparently shared by most architecture academics in the 1980s.[144] For example, Robi Soelarto Sastrowardojo, in the 1982 panel discussion 'Architectural Ideal and Reality in Indonesia', stressed the importance of a traditional context for the development of architecture in Indonesia.[145] He argued that architecture involved complex social processes and that architects themselves should not determine the future of Indonesian architecture. He insisted that Indonesia's rich heritage should be taken as "an appropriate cultural foundation to provide the formation of ideal Indonesian architecture" (see Figure 4.2.6).[146].

In addition to considering local value, Indonesian architects have constructed the idea of Indonesian architectural identity with reference to the national constitution, Pancasila.[147] Supporting such a view, Budihardjo argues that the Indonesian national culture is explicitly stated in the constitution. The so-called *Undang Undang Dasar* 1945, section 32, says that "ancient and original cultures which are considered as cultural zeniths found throughout the country are regarded as national culture."[148]

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[142]   Ibid., 199.

[143]   See part 2.1, particularly the discussion of 'Dutch Legacy in Architecture and Urban Planning", and "Van Romondt: Architecture and the New Society" pages 99-102.

[144]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*. Josef Prijotomo, *Dinamika Arsitektur Indonesia* (Surabaya: Surabaya Institute of Technology, 1987).

[145]   Reported in Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 202.

[146]   As reported in Ibid., 202-03.

[147]   Ibid., 203.

[148]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 20. Translated by the author.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 315 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.6   The Novotel Hotel, Surabaya
Source: http://www.aroundasia.com/NovotelSurabaya/NovotelSurabayaExterior2.jpg

To create a unique identity, "Indonesian architecture should be rooted in the indigenous culture, and should have a unique identity which reflects the Indonesian way of life and national principles Pancasila."[149] In this regard, national architecture was considered as part of the society's commitment to its traditional and cultural values. Accordingly, Sudradjat writes, Indonesian architectural history was for the first time to be included as a course in the architecture schools.[150]

Architect and educator Prijotomo presents a different perspective. As a second-generation Indonesian architectural scholar, Prijotomo is one of a large number of contemporary architectural critics who see postmodern architecture in Indonesia as an independent domain rather than as an instrument of national politics. Prijotomo distances his reflection on contemporary architecture from the scope of political interest.[151] Instead, he sees the diversity of Indonesian heritage as enriching and improving modern architecture:

> Architectural modernism has to be accepted cautiously and with alertness,
> while the treasury of Indonesian classical architecture has to be
> (re)activated. Thus, in essence, modernizing classical Indonesian

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[149]   See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 203.
[150]   Ibid.
[151]   Prijotomo, *Dinamika Arsitektur Indonesia*. See also Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 182.

architecture is expected much more than Indonesianizing modern
architecture… The formal elements and components of regional
architecture, including its non-physical symbols and meanings, are indeed
richer than the sources of 'Western' architecture itself. 'Western'
architecture only has Roman and Greek architecture as resources, while we,
in Indonesia, owned not less than twenty seven primary sources for
architecture.[152]

Prijotomo seems to accept the penetration of modernism to create Indonesia's
contemporary architecture as long as it elevates the Indonesian traditional culture.[153]
He regards the national character as pluralistic, as expressed in phrase '*Bhinneka
Tunggal Ika'* (unity in diversity). It is irrelevant to search for a single form of
national architecture, Prijotomo argues, because of the great number of ethnic
groups. An Indonesian architecture has therefore to include a great diversity and to
express the richness of regional characteristics. Prijotomo's idea of modern
Indonesian architecture is thus definable with some certainty, similar to the ideas of
Atmadi, Sidharta and Sastrowardoyo. He emphasises the collectiveness of 'we' to
describe locality and tradition that is culturally different from 'they.'

The question of national architecture and traditional culture has received some
insightful inputs from Indonesian sociologists and anthropologists.[154] Concerning the
system of Indonesian culture as a whole, a prominent Indonesian sociologist, Harsya
Bachtiar, contributed to the 1986 'National Seminar on Indonesian Traditional
Architecture.'[155] According to Bachtiar, Indonesia has four different cultural systems,
within which he finds conflict and opposition. The first is the indigenous or ethnic
cultural system. The second are the Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian cultures
that have been brought by foreigners. The third is an Indonesian culture that emerged

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[152] Prijotomo, translated in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and
Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 183. The twenty seven primary sources are the number of
provinces in Indonesia at the time Prijotomo wrote the article.

[153] Prijotomo, *Dinamika Arsitektur Indonesia*, 105.

[154] On this matter, Sudrajat includes seminars on architecture in relation to national cultural
identity. See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 210-13.

[155] Harsya W. Bachtiar, "Arsitektur Dan Kebudayaan Di Tanah Air Kita" (paper presented at the
Seminar National Arsitektur Traditional, Surabaya, Indonesia, 5-9 Januari 1986).

through the integration into a nation of people throughout the Archipelago. The fourth is the penetration of Western cultural systems.

Interestingly, Bachtiar suggests that Indonesian architects should include the first three of the cultural systems mentioned above in "appropriate portions" in order to properly express national identity. The reason for this, Bachtiar explained, is that there should be a continual effort to link national culture and local traditional cultures. In terms of architectural knowledge, he explained the importance of studying traditional architecture so that one is able to develop historical perspective and understand the real needs of the society. This way one is able to find motivations and inspirations for the development of Indonesian architecture.

Sharing Bachtiar's view, archaeologist Edi Sedyawati, in her contribution to a 'Seminar on Culture', emphasised the possibility of defining "Indonesia-ness."[156] Describing different approaches, she concluded that it was important to conduct a study of traditional cultures throughout Indonesia, in order to rediscover the essences of those cultures and to use them as the basis for "new purposes and needs."[157] This approach considers a wide range of cultural inheritance that provides a rich outcome, one that has been adopted by many professionals and scholars to create the ideal Indonesian architecture. Both Bachtiar and Sedyawati view national culture as something that is bounded by place and geography (see Figure 4.2.7).

In contrast to these views, Indonesian architectural scholar Andi Siswanto stresses the pluralistic expressions of the architecture of Indonesia through its traditional, colonial and modern contexts.[158] He warns that one should not eliminate these colourful architectural phenomena in order to construct a single expression of what is called 'Indonesian architecture.' To achieve an appropriate Indonesian cultural identity, he instead introduces the concept of Indonesian tropical architecture and

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[156] Edi Sedyawati's article is reported in Sudrajat's writing. See Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 211.

[157] See Ibid.

[158] Andy Siswanto, "Arsitektur Tropis Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Kebudayaan", *Harian Kompas*, 15 Mei 1985.

integrates it into his pluralistic perspective. He argues that this concept, which derives from local references, fits the era of modern technology.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 318 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.7   The Wisma Dharmala, Jakarta
Source: http://www.wiratman.co.id/ximages/xdharmala.jpg

The inclusion of the colonial context within the framework of national heritage marks its revival in 1986. Colonial buildings, like the traditional and the modern, must be regarded as a part of the Indonesian heritage, the source of inspiration for possible new directions.[159] The idea of national architecture, although delivered in different ways, always emphasises cultural difference. The Indonesians have appropriated the regionalist perspective to articulate their own voice. They share this view with Western regionalists, dichotomising the elements of 'local' and 'foreign', 'cultural heritage' and 'modern.' By examining their points of view, I have shown how the preoccupation with the discourse of regionalism and cultural identity presented the indigenous cultural heritage in parallel with Western technology, creating a problematic and unresolvable polarity.

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[159]   Budihardjo, "Arsitektur Bukan Sekedar Bangunan", 63.

Architectural Identity and National Development

Several important figures have attempted to link the debates on architectural identity to national development in Indonesia.[160] Of special interest here are the theories developed by two senior academics, Parmono Atmadi and Sidharta. At Gajah Mada University in Central Java, Atmadi presented an inaugural lecture titled 'Architecture and its Development.'[161] In this lecture he explained the significant impact of the universal forms of Western modernism on the development of architecture in Indonesia.[162] His criticism of Western influences implies a preference for the precolonial cultural tradition, while accommodating Western architectural thought. Yet, Atmadi's view of placing Indonesian architecture on the solid ground of the precolonial tradition is itself a Western idea.

While integrating foreign technology into native tradition Atmadi demands that the architectural debates in Indonesia be concerned with national development.[163] In other words, the architectural discourse should not be concerned only with tradition and identity but also with foreign materials and ideas that are appropriate for national development. He seems to consider national development and its problems to be the concern of architects, whose role in addressing this issue becomes indispensable. He says that "the will of the nation (cita-cita bangsa) is also the will of architect(ure)."[164] He explains:

> The rapid growth of population and the large numbers of those who live
> below an acceptable standard has instructed architects to pay most of their
> attention to these problems, so that their works could be enjoyed by all
> members of the society… For that reason, particular attention should be paid

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160 See Atmadi, "Arsitektur Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia." Sidharta, "Arsitektur Indonesia Modern Yang Kita Dambakan." Adhi Moersid, "Arsitektur Tepat Guna", in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996). Sastrowardoyo, "Indonesia: Identity in Diversity within Unity."

161 See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 178-79.

162 Ibid., 178. Djauhari, "Arsitektur Indonesia: Pranata Ilmiahnya Belum Memadai", 146.

163 Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 178.

164 Ibid., 179.

to planning and design concepts so that their 'pembangunan' (development which is according to the government plan) could support the cultivation of the culture and civilization of nation… Architects should not just focus on monumental buildings in the urban center, but also buildings that could be found in the rural area ('per-desa-an'). In this way the image of architects can be re-established *as a public servant*.[165]

Atmadi's anxiety about the gap between the rural areas and urban centres is reasonable. Significant attention is needed to improve living conditions in rural areas as much as it is needed in the urban centres. However, linking the identity debate to national development, while focusing on certain areas and speaking on behalf of the whole nation, would compromise the quality of Indonesian architecture. Atmadi's insights are supported by his fellow architect Sidharta, an equally eminent figure in architectural education.

Sidharta agrees with the idea of integrating foreign influences into native traditions to construct modern Indonesian architecture, and with linking them to national development. [166] Sidharta sees the role of architects and their responsibility in all sectors of society as one of demanding "an attitude that is honest, ethical and neutral."[167] Because of their great responsibility, as Sidharta argues, architects should have a broad knowledge in order to be able to communicate with all levels of society. In his inaugural lecture in 1984, when he became Head of the School of Architecture at Semarang, Central Java, Sidharta said:

> I personally think that the word 'modern' can be used for the future of Indonesian architecture, because 'modern' comes from the Latin word 'modo' which means 'just now.' I take 'modern' as a condition of not closing oneself off from new innovations that can be adapted into our condition… Indonesian architects should synthesize the innovation of

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[165] Cited in and translated by Ibid.

[166] Sidharta, "Peran Arsitek, Pendidikannya Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia", in *Perkembangan Arsitektur Dan Pendidikan Arsitektur Di Indonesia*, ed. Parmono Admadi, et al. (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1997), 70.

[167] Ibid., 44.

advanced technology with architectural norms derived from the local conditions and the cultural norms of the user.[168]

In linking Indonesian architecture to both traditional and modern principles, Sidharta's insight clearly shows the influence of van Romondt's idea of how Indonesian architecture should be. Sidharta argues that modernity is essential in constructing the architectural identity of any region or nation, and it is not adequate to draw only on the images of the vernacular for the development of modern Indonesia. He insists that, "traditional society is trapped under a static world view, saturated with magical power and thus does not have the courage to challenge the power on the top… In these circumstances, architectural expression will be static and deprived of change."[169]

Concerning national identity, Sidharta argues that the central premise to guide the reconstruction and the development of modern Indonesian architecture is "national aspiration ('cita-cita national'), regional condition, value, and climate", and that all of these mark the uniqueness of Indonesia.[170] Sidharta emphasises that traditional Indonesian architecture has different theories from those of the West and that they are not suitable to use in architectural education in Indonesia. He therefore recommends that Indonesian architects synthesise the advanced technology of the West with local architectural design principles. Such synthesis should take into consideration the norms and values related to the religious systems and the society's way of life.[171]

Sharing Atmadi's and Sidharta's sentiment, architect Adhi Moersid, a recipient of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, points out that it is crucial to develop an

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[168] As translated by Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 180. For a similar discussion, see also Sidharta, "Arsitektur Indonesia Modern Yang Kita Dambakan", 101. Sidharta, "Peran Arsitek, Pendidikannya Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia", 70.

[169] As cited in Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, 181.

[170] Sidharta, "Peran Arsitek, Pendidikannya Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia", 72.

[171] See Sidharta, "Landasan Pengembangan Arsitektur Indonesia", 39. See also Sidharta, "Peran Arsitek, Pendidikan Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia", 4.

appropriate architectural design solution that pays attention to social conditions in both rural and urban communities. He insists that it is important for Indonesian architects and urban planners to anticipate the emergence of housing problems that might occur in the future. Such problems, Moersid claims, could be anticipated by reconsidering some relevant aspects of traditional life, such as harmony, quiet and safety, and community self-help. He suggests that architects and urban planners make optimal use of space as well as revitalising and preserving traditional built forms.[172]

Moersid's views became the main concern of the 1985 national congress, held to commemorate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of architectural education in Indonesia.[173] As an outcome, the congress recommended the creation of an Indonesian architecture with distinctive character, the studying of traditional architecture in its complexity, and the improving of the technological and environmental awareness of Indonesian architects. The congress also demanded that architects serve the society's different kinds of aspirations and needs.[174]

As we have seen, the views and recommendations concerning Indonesian architecture reveal the architects' sympathy towards the New Order policy of national development. The Indonesian indigenous cultural heritage was seen as a key reference in architectural development and the search for national identity. Traditional Indonesian architecture thus assumed a privileged position in the formation of modern architecture, and in guiding the imaginative Indonesian architecture. In this development, local and traditional values were seen as equal, in the design context, to the advanced technology of the West. To educate the Indonesian people about their architectural heritage, the history of Indonesian architecture was included as a compulsory subject in architecture courses. Architectural history, theory and criticism were later introduced to better equip graduates for dealing with the future of Indonesian architecture.[175]

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[172]   Moersid, "Arsitektur Tepat Guna", 37.
[173]   Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 208.
[174]   See Ibid., 209.
[175]   Ibid.

Regionalism within a Traditional Frame

In the development of architecture in Indonesia, the Western discourse of regionalism has been used as a stepping stone to reach an acceptable expression of national identity.[176] The concept of regionalism is "essentially, to search for the meaning of architecture through the link between physical configuration, aesthetics, historical and cultural heritage of a certain region and existing built environment."[177] This concept has its basis in the region's climate and socio-cultural and historical conditions, viewed from a Western perspective. It is a way to rediscover or re-invent the cultural past of a geographically bounded society. Rediscovering Indonesia's cultural roots has become the main task in the search for regional identity. Citing Frampton, Budihardjo writes:

> The concept of a local or national culture is a paradoxical proposition, not only because of the present obvious antithesis between rooted culture and universal civilization, but also because all cultures, both ancient and modern, seem to have depended on cross-fertilization with other cultures for their intrinsic development.[178]

According to Budihardjo, the discourse of regionalism is concerned not only with resisting the international style or Western architecture but also with re-observing history and rediscovering the forgotten cultural aspects.[179] Budihardjo recognises the need to produce modern architecture and to use high technology and contemporary building materials, yet he also recognises the need for 'cultural resonance' that

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[176] The discourse of regional architecture is found predominantly in the works of Budihardjo, architectural theorist and critic who became well known after returning from study in England through his works from the 1980s onwards. See Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur." Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*. Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek."

[177] Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 24. Translated by author. Similar explanation also described in Sidharta, "Arsitektur Indonesia Modern Yang Kita Dambakan", 101-03. Atmadi, "Arsitektur Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia", 8. Wastu Praganta, "Dua Tokoh Pembentuk Arsitektur Indonesia", in *Menuju Arsitektur Indonesia*, ed. Eko Budihardjo (Bandung: Penerbit Alumni, 1996), 159-66.

[178] As cited in Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", 51.

[179] Ibid., 52.

provides a sense of continuity with the past.[180] Although he does not give particular explanation about what he means by 'cultural resonance', the term tends to indicate his interest in the local tradition in the natural process of cultural development. In another context he explains that regionalism promotes mutual interaction of cultures, so that one is able to keep the roots of one's local tradition while aspiring to become modern.[181] He demands from architects that they understand the concerns of their society and uphold the interests of the Indonesian people by understanding their perceptions, aspirations, norms and values.[182] He also recommends that Indonesian architects promote the richness and heterogeneity of the Indonesian traditions in their attempts to create modern Indonesian architecture.

To legitimise his own views, Budihardjo cites Suharto's words: "nations that forget their cultural heritage lose their identity… We need to preserve our [traditional] culture so that it will never be extinct in the advanced period of technological challenge."[183] He then insists that the idea of regionalism as a way to search for local identity is valid and that it should be supported. Architect Andi Siswanto agrees with Budihardjo, giving further explanation: he suggests that architects and urban planners should return to the Indonesian vernacular and the rich manifestations throughout the country, from Sabang (the island on the northern tip of Sumatra) to Marauke, Irian Jaya. The vernacular forms are to be used as raw materials in designing the new national architecture of modern Indonesia.[184]

In his book *Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur*, Budihardjo reminds the readers that the West is well developed in technology and economy, with which it is difficult for the Indonesians to compete. Developing countries such as Indonesia, he argues, should, on the one hand, adopt Western advanced technology and, on the other, articulate

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[180]   Ibid., 52-53.
[181]   Ibid., 50.
[182]   Ibid., 65.
[183]   Ibid., 20. Translated and emphasises added by author
[184]   Darwis Khudori, "Dikotomi Arsitek Kota Besar: Peluang Bagi Tampilnya Arsitektur Kebangsaan", in *Upaya Membangun Citra: Arsitektur, Interior & Seni Rupa Indonesia*, ed. Edi Supriyatna Marizal (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1996), 14.

their cultural uniqueness, which the West lacks.[185] He insists on the potential of the rich local architectural styles for the architectural development of the Indonesian personality. This way, the relationship between architecture and local culture, Budihardjo says, becomes a central premise in creating an identity that has people placed in the centre.

The idea of placing people in the centre seems relevant; however, his argument becomes problematic when he differentiates culture on the basis of spatial boundaries, ignoring the current social conditions. Budihardjo sees traditionality as crucial in the process of discovering meanings and symbols, the intangible aspects of architecture, and expressing them in new forms.[186] In the making of architecture, Budihardjo explains, creativity, the ability to see the intangible aspects, and unique imagination, which he refers to as "high touch", all have to be balanced with scientific knowledge and high tech, and *vice versa*.[187]

Under the banner of regional architecture, Budihardjo insists that architects and urban planners should be creative, honest and sensitive towards the environment and cultural development. He emphasises the dynamics of architectural plurality, which should not be frozen into a single and definite form, but must be continuously developing with creativity and innovation.[188] He advocates architectural works that address specific problems and are adaptable to the situation, location, and the culture of users. He seems to have been influenced by MacKinnen, who also recommends that "an architect designs real buildings to go on real sites for real clients. He should not design unspecified buildings on an undefined site for an unknown client."[189]

Revealing Western influences, Budihardjo argues that the uniqueness of small traditional cities in Eastern countries lies in what he calls the five 'Cs'; that is, continuity, connection, culture, climate and craft.[190] He considers these to be the key

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[185]   Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", 20.
[186]   See Ibid., 52. Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek", 129.
[187]   Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek", 117.
[188]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 36.
[189]   Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", 50.
[190]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 68.

factors in addressing the crisis of identity. He tends to agree with Henric Skolimowski's wisdom that modifies the famous modern epithet 'form follows function' into 'form follows culture.'[191] Budihardjo says that the intangible essence of the spirit of traditional forms, regarded as the working of culture, needs to be manifested in new forms. He maintains that the search for identity is not only to look for prototypes of traditional architecture, but also to understand the processes of the society's cultural transformation.

Sharing the Western regionalists' view, Budihardjo argues that regionalism is important in order to mediate the negative impact of the modern international style, which is not appropriate to local cultures. Thus, the search for identity as a process of cultural development inevitably involves certain targets, and "identity is a moving target."[192] Although he does not explicitly explain this slogan, his most frequent recommendation regarding the target is to identify the penetration of foreign culture that does not reflect the required 'Indonesianness.' Adhi Moersid, for instance, agrees that, although "traditional architecture…will be physically transformed to accommodate new demands, but its original identity and diversity will be retained."[193]

Sharing Moersid's view, Hindro T. Sumardjan, in his paper 'The Role of Cultural Identity in Architecture', presented at the 1984 architecture symposium, proposes that to address the question of identity in its cultural settings architects should be able to "recognise the cultural formation."[194] Although he argues that architects should not attempt to define architectural identity, since it pertains to a wider cultural context, he says that architects can recognise the cultural formation and make a decision whether to follow the current trends or to take up new directions in their contributions to the national cultural development.[195]

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[191]   Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Socio-Kultural Arsitek."132-133.
[192]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 34, 67.
[193]   As cited in Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 206.
[194]   Hindro T. Sumardjan, "Arsitektur Dan Kebudayaan" (paper presented at the Simposium Peranan Identitas Kebudayaan Dalam Arsitektur, Jakarta, September 1984), 15.
[195]   Ibid. See also Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History", 206.

Moreover, in emphasising local specificity, Sidharta argues that Indonesian architects should consider the potentiality of local inhabitants.[196] Sidharta claims that the adoption of advanced technology might create problems in terms of providing employment, as machinery could cause labour-force redundancies.[197] And he imagines local specificity as something that is associated with traditional cultures of precolonial past: tradition belongs to us whereas the modern belongs to them.

Within this context, it is not surprising that a number of research projects were conducted to rediscover the traditional roots that were to be used as a source of inspiration in creating an architectural identity. Many interesting contemporary designs refer to local materials, typologies and morphologies. In this exercise the architects were not trying to express the essence of particular regions. Rather they were composing traditional traits in order to construct a new collective identity. Within the superficial character of such architectural representations, Robi Sularto Sastrowardoyo points out that the attempts to express an identity in architecture have been misinterpreted. Architectural representations, he says, appear as a slogan rather than as a process of cultural development. The architectural identity of Indonesia has been reduced to some traditional traits such as roof forms and ornaments (see Figure 4.2.8)[198].

In the process of cultural development and the search for architectural identity, Budihardjo refers to the notion of 'cultural resonance.'[199] In his article 'Arsitektur Sebagai warisan Budaya', Budihardjo explains that, in the process of cultural development, architecture evolves concurrently with time and society. Accordingly, cultural resonance manifests a sense of creativity through the development of culture rather than through exhibiting the eternal characteristics of architectural production.[200]

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[196]   See Sidharta, "Landasan Pengembangan Arsitektur Indonesia", 38-39. Budihardjo, "Arsitektur Bukan Sekedar Bangunan", 64.

[197]   Sidharta, "Landasan Pengembangan Arsitektur Indonesia", 38.

[198]   Sastrowardoyo, "Indonesia: Identity in Diversity within Unity."

[199]   Budihardjo, "Regionalisme Dalam Arsitektur", 52-53.

[200]   Budihardjo, *Arsitektur Sebagai Warisan Budaya*, 40.

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 328 of the print copy of
the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 4.2.8   Banda Aceh Museum
Source: Nyssa's collection

To support his statement, Budihardjo refers to G. Broadbent's view and insists that
the works of architecture should not be trapped within the representation of visual
and physical forms. Architects should create architecture by responding to the *genius
loci* (the spirit of the place) and the feeling of the society.[201] Budihardjo believes that
architects should not trap themselves on their drawing boards. Rather, they need to
involve themselves in architectural research including professional discussions and
public debates. His views concerning the process of cultural transformation are
reasonable; however, his commitment to the spirit of the place and the essence of
traditional forms is questionable.

Budihardjo, as well as other architects mentioned above, seems to see the
development of architecture as a result of a continuing process of cultural
development from the precolonial past rather than as something new and
unprecedented that might bring change and uncertainties. In the case of Indonesia,
the attention to the development of local tradition might represent a sign of the
national identity. Such insight seems "an "ideal" proposition for the future of modern
Indonesia, whose development needs…a stable image of tradition."*[202]* However, in

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[201]   Budihardjo, "Arsitektur Bukan Sekedar Bangunan", 65.

[202]   See Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in
Indonesia*, 94.

the quest for cultural identity in architecture where the process of cultural interaction involved, belonging should naturally arise.

4.3   Conclusion

As an international postcolonial trend, the discourse of regionalism has led to the recognition of the legitimacy of cultural plurality. This discourse inevitably juxtaposes and polarises between 'West' and 'East', 'foreign' and 'indigenous', 'modern' and 'traditional.' Thus, sharing a Western perspective with an Eastern one, such aspects become important to the configuration of the postcolonial built environment in Indonesia. Although there is wide acceptance of Western modern styles, the basic premise for the search for Indonesian architectural forms has been 'vernacular' and is conceived as the 'national cultural heritage.' The representation of Indonesian architecture, particularly in the past three decades, is "most usefully read as an implicit struggle between the professional and the whole emerging structure of hegemony of Suharto's 'ancient regime.'"[203] Through the hegemony of the ruling regime, architectural practices in Indonesia have appropriated the international discourse of regionalism.

In the global context, this Part demonstrates how the non-West, in finding a non-Western identity, is seen as subject to Western academic experiments. It provides evidence of a Western interest in entering the space of 'otherness' in order to reconstruct the identity of the 'other.' This is evidence of the endless hegemonic power of the West. This Part concludes that decolonisation, within which post-independence Indonesia has remained a victim of colonialism, has failed.

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[203]   Ibid., 188.

CONCLUSION: BEYOND IDENTITY

CONCLUSION: BEYOND IDENTITY

In the preceding discussion I have attempted to highlight the problems involved in aspects of the current modes of thinking about architecture and urbanity, and particularly the predicament of polarising West and East, modernity and tradition. I have explored the implications of seeking to define what Acehnese or Indonesian architecture is, arguing that it is not possible to grasp and define an architectural identity except in a reductive and simplistic way. I have also discussed some of the difficulties involved in thinking about the concept of identity within the current global conditions, and explored the impact of the crossing of cultures on architecture and urbanity in the region of Aceh. With the adoption of Islam as the main religion in Indonesia, and after several years of visionary politics trying to define the Indonesian identity, the question of identity remains as elusive and perplexing as ever.

As I was writing the final chapter of the thesis Aceh witnessed the worst devastation imaginable with the tsunami disaster of December 26, 2004. Temporarily, I was unable to continue focusing on my work with the knowledge of such suffering and destruction. So much, not only the physical fabric of the architectural this study has addressed, but the archival record and cultural memory if its past had so suddenly been destroyed. From the insular comforts of distant Adelaide I flew back to Aceh and witnessed first hand the level of destruction that had taken place in the coastal areas and especially in Banda Aceh. I also witnessed the evident international solidarity with the people of the region and the tremendous efforts of the relief agencies, working together to help the people of Aceh without concern for geography, religion, race or colour. Their humanitarian actions have made me realise the core human values that unite humanity in today's global village. The experience has also shown me that in our fragile, war-torn world it is this unity that matters most.

Aceh now faces a new challenge that is different in nature and scale from the one I was contemplating when I began writing the thesis. The challenge now is not so much how to think of Aceh's local identity within the Indonesian, regional and global contexts, but rather how to rebuild a whole new Aceh and how to construct its

new future. Although the questions of tradition and religion will not disappear, the Acehnese will be seeking to speak freely and credibly as international citizens. They will be seeking to articulate their own positions and voices, drawing on Aceh's rich cultural history, with a new understanding of their encounter with the West.

In his *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Tariq Ramadan reflects on the existence of Muslims in the modern world, providing valuable insights to enable us to think beyond the question of identity. He attempts to provide a positive interpretation of Muslims' encounter with the West, arguing that in the global era Islamic society has become in many ways similar to other societies in the world, Western and non-Western. He thus encourages Muslims to learn to live together side by side with others and to actively integrate with others. Ramadan refers to the tendency to cultural transformation experienced by younger generations who live in the West. Through their interactions with Western culture, many young Muslims have been distancing themselves from their culture of origin while studying and claiming allegiance to Islam.[1] This experience, Ramadan says, is difficult for the older Muslim generation to understand as they have continued to perpetuate the customs of their culture of 'origin' in order to remain faithful to Islam.

Muslims, Ramadan argues, must not only be part of the world society but must also contribute positively to changing the world. To be a Muslim, as Ramadan says, "entails adopting and articulating a perception of life based on faith, spirituality, and a basic understanding of moral injunctions."[2] In this sense, Islam encourages Muslims to practise both religious and secular activities that support every aspect of social, economic and political life. According to Ramadan, Muslim societies constantly interact with the wider society. "There is nothing in Islam that commands a Muslim to withdraw from society in order to be closer to God."[3] Thus, the elements that identify Muslims "perceived in the light of the Islamic principle of integration,

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[1]   Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 215.

[2]   Ibid., 81.

[3]   Ibid.

appear to be very open and in constant interaction with society" as long as that does not contradict what they are and what they believe.[4]

Being a Muslim is not being different from but in fact being similar to others. Thus Muslims are required to promote solidarity with others in their societies. This view promotes people living together respectfully and safely as well as competing to challenge the world, without considering differences between them. This circumstance reflects what has been happening in connection with the 2004 Tsunami disaster: people are united in their humanitarian concerns and have been putting core human values ahead of politics and religion. Muslims are encouraged to live harmoniously and to expect their identities to evolve with cultural interaction. In this circumstance differentiating categories are becoming difficult to maintain as people's defining references tend to disappear in the current global context and as the boundaries they have once designated are beginning to fade away.[5]

In Islam, Ramadan writes, the ability to improve one's intellect is required and thus could elevate "the very foundation of Islamic teachings."[6] Therefore, he claims, Muslim identity is not closed and confined within rigid, inflexible principles.[7] It is restrictive to define Muslim identity based on religious references. Being an international citizen who recognises otherness, one should "regain confidence in oneself, one's values…reclaiming one's right and respect."[8] Within this perspective, it is possible to present Indonesia and Aceh as part of the global patrimony, living together with other nations rather than oppressing differences and isolating themselves in their own world. It is only in going beyond their own identity that the people of Indonesia as well as of Aceh can adequately address the complex problems of their societies and the challenges that lie ahead.

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[4]   Ibid., 216.

[5]   Samer Akkach, "On Culture" (paper presented at the De-placing Difference: Architecture, Culture and Imaginative Geography. The 3rd Symposium of the Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture - the University of Adelaide, Adelaide, 2002), 184.

[6]   Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, 80.

[7]   Ibid.

[8]   Ibid., 225.

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