CONTESTING PERCEPTION: THE GENESIS OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IDIOMS IN THE SULTANATES MOSQUES OF BRITISH MALAYA 1874-1957

Harlina Md Sharif
Assistant Professor
Kulliyyah of Architecture & Environmental Design (KAED)
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)
msharlina@iium.edu.my

ABSTRACT

The advent of the 20th century witnessed the emergence of congregation mosques (masjid al’jami’), built in Neo-classical, Avant-Garde and Mughal repertoires, replacing traditional-vernacular styles. Mosques especially attributed to the Malay Sultans, were particularly outstanding for their scale, materials and design. Many of them were fully or partially funded by the British rule, or presented to the Malay ruler as a gift. The study looks at the transformations of the mosque idioms as seen in sultanate mosques built during the British Rule. By carrying out visual survey on these mosques, the study highlights factors causing the morphology of a mosque’s physical language and characteristics, and argues that the genesis of the “Islamic Architecture” idioms in Malaysia was actually founded during the British administration in pre-independence Malaysia.
Study Background

In pre-modern Nusantara, mosques in the vernacular model, especially the tajug (pyramidal) prototype, were widely applied throughout the archipelago. This model gained its popularity not merely due to its cultural connotation or historical significance. Its adaptability with regards to religious and cultural demands made it a popular design choice. The form is fundamentally a result of synthesis from the architectural heritage and available building techniques, in search of a suitable design that satisfy the requirements of both culture and religion. For this reason, the tajug prototype is considered as an ingenious and original design solution (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Masjid Agung Demak – the prototype for tajug mosques - in a photograph taken around 1800 A.D. before the inclusion of gateway (gapura – built in 1804) and minaret (built 1932). (Source: Information Centre of Masjid Agung Demak)](image)

In the Malay Peninsula the vernacular mosque architecture is found in two archetypes: the tajug and the traditional house typology. Mosques built in the long-roof house typology, however, are mainly found in community mosques. The principal expressions of the tajug architectural quality are embedded in its scale, form and proportion. Due to its structural configuration, it produces a low-scale building that is human-friendly and adaptable to socio-religious requirements. It responds to the need for expansion by incorporating additional structures to the core unit, thus creating a group of buildings that complement each other in scale, form and proportion. The interplay of solids and voids, building heights and form prove to be an attractive feature to users of the mosque. This feature is best demonstrated in Masjid Kampung Laut, which displays various forms employed, both in plan and elevation, for the main prayer hall (square plan), the serambi (rectangular floor plan), the minaret (octagonal floor plan) and several wakafs located in its compound (square and rectangular) (Figures 2).
The uniqueness of this vernacular type is also embedded in its established pattern of design. In contrast to the Prophet’s Mosque, which expands inwards, the vernacular mosque expands from the core outwards. While the solid walls forming a boundary define the sacred zone of the Prophet’s Mosque, the vernacular mosque’s boundary is defined by its surrounding open space. Therefore, the optimum arrangement for a vernacular model is for the mosque to be provided ample open space that allows it the potential to grow and expand.

In contrast to the *tajug* model, which is concentric in nature, the long-roof prototype is linear. In circumstances where strict protocol is not required, the linear arrangement allows the mosque to be approached from all sides (except the *qibla* wall) (Figure 4). This arrangement is most suitable for
community mosques, which is why it is a popular application in this type of mosque. Similarly, the long-roof prototype allows limited expansion of the prayer space and offers limited possibilities for spaces to be converted according to the multi-varied functions of the mosque. It is therefore more suitable to serving a smaller congregation such as a village (Figure 5).

(a) Masjid Langgar – south elevation

(b) Masjid Langgar – west elevation

Figure 4. Masjid Langgar Kota Bharu was built in the long roof house prototype

Source: KALAM.

Figure 5. Masjid Teluk Manok: Entry to the prayer hall from the south.
Research Problem

In the 19th and 20th century period, European architecture was used in the service of securing colonial rule, through the expansion of building programmes to include major urban creation and the development of existing trading ports (Wuisman 2007, p.31). In British Malaya – the term given to the Malay Peninsula after the implementation of British bureaucracy order in the periods between 1874 and 1919 (Andaya and Andaya 1982, p. 157) – British policy resulted in a widening gap between the native elite groups and the peasants (Andaya and Andaya 1982, p. 175). The cleavage was initially evident from a material perspective. By the third quarter of the 19th century, there was a pronounced change in the living styles of the Malay elites. Through their constant association with the British officials and their exposure to more lavish living (demonstrated by cities like Singapore and Penang), as well as their access to new capital brought by the development of tin mining activities, the cleavage between the Malay rulers and their subjects widened.

Embodied in this conflict are the dichotomies between tradition and innovation, old and new, old-fashioned and modern. The notion of ‘civilisation’ and being ‘civilised’ brought different meanings to the divisions in society. While in the Federal Malay States (FMS)1 under the British authority, ‘being civilised’ indicated a willingness to ‘adopt the English law, English government and, as far as possible, an English way of life’ (Andaya and Andaya 1982, p. 151), the criteria of ‘civilisation’ as measured by the Malays of Kelantan and Terengganu was the ability to achieve higher learning by travelling to the Middle East (Andaya & Andaya, 1982, p. 194).

When the Europeans formed their enclaves in the important cities throughout the region, they brought with them the architecture of their motherland, with minor adjustments according to climatic conditions. Even building materials and labour were imported from abroad. The building codes were also formulated according to the European building practices (Passchier 2007, p. 51). Its influence on local architecture was soon to be revealed. The dominance of European architecture had a significant impact on the tastes and styles of ordinary people. The classical architectural order used in public buildings became the fashion of the era. The neoclassical colonnade was popular to the extent that prefabricated concrete columns could be found sold along the roadside of poor kampongs (Passchier 2007, p. 102). As this peculiar style was identifiable with social status and was the prerogative of the ruling class, it found its audience among the Malay royals, even within the Chinese diaspora communities, which were keen to identify themselves through European architecture (Pratiwo 2007, p. 81).

1 Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang.
Research Methodology

The mosques are analysed based on salient physical characteristics based on 5 parameters:
- Roof elements
- Minarets
- Openings
- Column Types
- Decorative Arts

The study looks at six selected sultanate mosques as listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Mosque</th>
<th>Patron</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Architectual Influence</th>
<th>Architect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar, Johor</td>
<td>Sultan Abu Bakar</td>
<td>1892-1900</td>
<td>Mamluk, Moorish, Victorian</td>
<td>Hj. Tiwak, Hj. Md. Arif bin Punak; Datuk Yahya bin Awaluddin (engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Masjid Zahir, Kedah</td>
<td>Tunku Mahmud ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Tajuddin Mukarram Shah</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Mughal, Moorish, Colonial-European</td>
<td>-not found-Inspired by Masjid Azizi, Langkat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masjid Ubudiah, Kuala Kangsar</td>
<td>Sultan Idris Shah</td>
<td>1913-7</td>
<td>Mughal, Moorish, Colonial-European</td>
<td>Colonel Huxley (planning), Hubback (architect). Caufield (engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Masjid Jamek Sultan Ibrahim Muar</td>
<td>Sultan Ismail/ Sultan Ibrahim</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Classical, Victorian, Neo-classical</td>
<td>Encik Sulaiman Hj Ilyas Messrs G.C Gammons (contractor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Masjid Sultan Sulaiman, Klang</td>
<td>Sultan Sir Alaeddin Sulaiman Shah</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Art Deco, Neo-classical</td>
<td>L.Keste Vend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings: Visual Elements and Ornamentations in Sultanate Mosque

Based on the visual analyses, the visual characteristics of the mosques are analysed and the architectural grammar are grouped into these categories:

a) Facade

Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar, Johor Bharu
Masjid Zahir, Alor Setar
Masjid Ubudiah, Kuala Kangsar
Masjid Jamek Sultan Ibrahim, Muar
Masjid Sultan Sulaiman, Klang
Masjid Syed Alwi, Kangar

Figure 6
b) Roof Elements

Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar
- Gable roof
- Multi domed towers
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative minarets/ spires
- Victorian, neo-classical detailing

Masjid Zahir
- Central onion dome
- Multi mini domes
- Domed foyer/entrance
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative verandas
- Chattris

Masjid Ubudiah
- Central Onion dome
- Multi mini domes
- Domed foyer/entrance
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative minarets/ spires
- Chattris
- Banded (ablaq) finish

Masjid Sultan Ibrahim
- Hybrid gable roof, flat and domes
- Multi mini domes
- Domed foyer/entrance
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative verandas
- Victorian dome
- Chattris

Masjid Sultan Sulaiman
- Central Venetian dome
- Multi mini domes
- Domed foyer/entrance
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative minarets/ spires

Masjid Syed Alwi
- Central onion dome
- Multi mini domes
- Domed foyer/entrance
- Crenelated parapet
- Decorative minarets/ spires

Figure 7
c) Minaret

Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar
- Domed pavilion on hexagonal plan
- Tripartite division on tower that sits on square base

Masjid Zahir
- Domed open pavilion, enlarged chattri
- Crenelated parapet
- Multifoil arches and classical columns

Masjid Ubudiah
- Domed pavilion on hexagonal plan
- Multifoil arched opening

Masjid Sultan Ibrahim
- Domed round-based minaret
- Crenelated parapet
- Victorian detailing

Masjid Sultan Sulaiman
- Gothic-like tower with small dome
- Vertical small slits opening

Masjid Syed Alwi
- Domed pavilion top with classical columns

Figure 8
d) Openings

Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar
- Arched opening with keystone
- Classical decorative columns
- Ribbon windows
- Decorative mouldings

Masjid Zahir
- Projected veranda with multifoil arches
- Classical decorative columns
- Decorative mouldings

Masjid Ubudiah
- Projected veranda with horse shoe arch openings
- Classical decorative columns
- Decorative parapet over arch openings

Masjid Sultan Ibrahim
- Double hung windows with projected sun-screen

Masjid Sultan Sulaiman
- Projected veranda with arch openings
- Classical decorative columns
- Decorative parapet over arch openings

Masjid Syed Alwi
- Pointed arch on classical columns
- Extended veranda
- Rose windows on upper level

Figure 9
e) Columns

Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar
- Classical column (stylised Corinthian) with ornate top and grooved column – supporting simple arch

Masjid Zahir
- Classical (Doric) twin column supporting crenellated multifoil arch

Masjid Ubudiah
- Corinthian columns with hexagonal cross-sections, appearing sometimes in pairs

Masjid Sultan Ibrahim
- Classical (Ionic) with volutes supporting arches

Masjid Sultan Sulaiman
- Classical column (Doric) without base supporting simple arch

Masjid Syed Alwi
- Neo-Classical column supporting pointed arch
Factors Causing the Change in Idioms:

a) Shift in Economic Patterns

In order to understand the factors causing the mosque’s morphology, it is essential to review the socio-political and economic conditions contributing to the change in architectural vocabularies. In the Malay Peninsula, a new bureaucratic order was implemented following the Pangkor Engagement 1874, which gave way to direct British intervention on the affairs of the Malay states, beginning with Perak. Under this agreement, the Malay ruler is required to administer his country (negeri) under the advice of a British Resident which must be ‘asked and acted upon all questions other than those touching Malay Religion and Custom’ (Gullick 1992).

The consequence of the Pangkor Engagement was that it gave the British complete authority over the Malay states, while leaving the traditional social order i.e. the Malay religion and custom, under the prerogative of the Sultans. The effect of such arrangement is that, the British was the de facto ruler, while the Malay’s traditional life style was preserved by means of channelling, thereby limiting the role of the Malay Sultan to administering the Malay’s customs (adat) and religion. The outcome was reflected in the increased significance of the Malay Sultan in the daily lives of the indigenous society, whom in the past was merely a de jure ruler upon the people (Steinberg ed.1987, pp. 198-199).

The Perak Annual Report 1894 adequately captured this development: “The power of the governing classes is, in one sense, far less than it was when British assistance was invoked, but their influence is certainly wider” (Gullick 1992, p.1)

British intervention was considered as timely and desired, mainly by the foreign merchants of the Straits Settlements, in the face of imminent threats caused by rivalling Chinese secret societies over tin mines, as well as growing international interests on the regions’ raw materials (Sundaram 1986, pp.142-3, Andaya & Andaya 1982, pp. 154-5). This treaty paved way for increased growth of capitalist enterprises under colonialism. Within 20 years from the signing of the treaty, Perak and Selangor witnessed an unprecedented surge of population, from about 72,000 in 1874 to 295,840 in 1891 (Sundaram 1986, p.56). Majority of them were Chinese. The new towns were the focus of new intensified economies, in which the Chinese labourers were specially brought in. In 1891, the population of Kuala Lumpur was 43,786; from which 79% were Chinese (Andaya & Andaya 1982, p.176). Taiping and Seremban were both new towns that emerged from growing tin mines, and these are both substantially Chinese towns (Steinberg ed., 1987, p. 255).

The new towns however were centres for primarily extractive economy and not manufacturing or industrial focus (Steinberg 1987, p.256). In fact, evidences pointed out to the reluctance of the British colonials to encourage the growth of local manufacturing, in their move to protect the interests of British manufactures. With the exception of various ‘exotic and unsubstitutable products’, imported goods (especially of British products) were favoured over local produce as they were cheaper and of better quality (Sundaram 1986, p.219).

The new economies resulted in the displacement of not merely local goods, but more importantly a drastic change in economic and income patterns. All sectors of production in British Malaya were geared towards producing raw materials for Western manufacturing needs. As a result, traditional occupations of the indigenous people were severely threatened, as the colonial economic initiatives
not only created a wholly new economic paradigm, they demolished traditional commerce patterns – both input and output.

Much handicraft production of the Malays was not able to survive under the new economic system. The Malay society, which was mainly agrarian and village-based, was never exposed to large-scale production-based economy nor waged labour practices. In their kampongs, the Malays were generally involved in small-scale plantations or trades, enough for personal consumptions and necessities. Professions as full-time craftsmen, such as silversmith and woodworker, were only made possible with the sponsorship of wealthy patrons, and their number was generally small. As with other handmade products, their productions were slow. Gullick reported of a village of Korinchi near Kuala Kangsar, Perak that was famous for its knives and spears (Gullick 1965 p.31). With only 6 or 7 craftsmen, it took them approximately 3 months to fulfil an order for 10 spears and 20 knives worth $125. Even with the intervention of a wealthy sultan, such as Sultan Idris of Perak who attempted to revive Malay crafts in the early 1900's, the new economies effectively severed local industry (Gullick 1992, p.236).

b) Access to New Building Materials

Access to new building materials and techniques was mainly possible as a consequence of the establishment of European rules in the coastal trading ports of the Malay World. George Town in Penang, for example, was the first township in the Malay Peninsula to have had architectural transformation through the introduction of tall public buildings, constructed in bricks in the Victorian architectural style of the late 18th and 19th century (Fee 1998, p. 64). According to Salmon and Lombard (1985) the colonial rulers were more comfortable engaging Chinese carpenters and brick masons for building works, than to employ indigenous labour. The fact that the Malay people were already set in their kampongs and traditional occupations also meant that there was no mechanism to move them in big numbers from their kampongs to the new towns to work as labourers, without causing disruptions to the traditional patterns. The use of ‘alien labour’ was thereby considered a solution.

As a result, a shift in economic pattern was witnessed by the late 19th century. The Malays were administratively and economically displaced in the midst of new developments taking place in their homeland. With the advent of industrialisation, the arrival of imported goods as well as Chinese artisans effectively destroyed traditional Malay crafts. In 1898, Ambrose Rathborne wrote in ‘Camping and Tramping in Malaya: Fifteen Years Pioneering in the Native States of the Malay Peninsula’ that occupations which traditionally were dominated by the Malays such as silversmiths, blacksmiths and carpenters “[were] fast being superseded by Chinese” (Gullick 1958, p.162). By the turn of the 20th century, according to Annual Report Kedah (1906-1908), carpentry and bricklaying were almost entirely controlled by Chinese workers (Gullick 1958, p.162-3).

2 This book recorded Ambrose Rathborne’s travelling and encounters in the western Malay states from around 1880 to 1895. Rathborne came to Malaya in 1880, and was in partnership with Thomas Heslop Hill venturing in coffee estates of Sungei Ujong in Selangor in 1879, as well as building constructions. J.M. Gullick considers this book ‘a readable and most informative book' of the developments in Malaya during that period (J.M. Gullick, A History of Kuala Lumpur (1857-1939), MBRAS Monograph No. 29, Selangor, 2000, pp.71-2).
c) The Impact of Urbanisation on Local Architectural Characteristics

In the Malay Peninsula, the creation of new town centres as a result of tin mining and rubber plantation activities, resulted in the change of demographic patterns. Major public works were carried out mainly focusing on improving infrastructure – an effort that the colonialist power invested in order to move resources from the interiors to the ports; as well as improving the living standard of the people in their bid to facilitate in making the region a potential future market in the new world order of liberalism that began to take charge beginning of 1900 (Ricklefs 2001).

The introduction of roads significantly altered the economic trends of the Malay people. With the introduction of infrastructure to serve between the new towns and the ports, the significance of rivers as the main communication network for the indigenous people soon diminished. The British administration noticed that as soon as roads were built in the 1880’s, the Malays began to build houses alongside the new roads, in places which were initially uninhabited (Gullick 1958, p.27). By the advent of the 20th century, the disintegration of kampong was evident, with many of the men were known to have moved to new towns in search for better-paid jobs (Gullick 1987; Kim 2001).

In these urban centres, a new architecture began to take form. Mining towns such as Taiping, Ipoh, Batu Gajah, Bentong and Kuala Lipis were among the first towns that witnessed an upsurge in public and commercial buildings. Victorian and Neo-classical architectural styles dominated the scene, replacing wood and thatch buildings. Foreigners, mainly from China, controlled the new towns and they lived in two-storey terraced brick shop-houses aligned neatly along the main roads. In these town centres, administrative buildings with their imposing scale and ostentatious design were often placed near a public square, which was an innovation brought in by the British as a public symbol of ‘British officialdom’ (Fee 1998, pp. 70-3).

Urbanisation has also led to the change in lifestyle as well as taste, for the native people of the region. Kuala Lumpur³ paved the way in setting the architectural trends of buildings to come. Its rebuilding programme that escalated beginning of 1884 had witnessed the preclusion of vernacular materials, such as wood and attap roofing, within the centre of the town. In September 1884, regulations made by the Selangor Resident on the architectural features of Kuala Lumpur required mandatory conversion of the town to building of bricks with tiled roofs (Gullick 2000, p.45, n. 4-5).

Based on experimentation done by several architects working in India, the British had found a suitable architectural expression for the creation of new architectural identity for pre-modern Malaysia. The embodiment of these experimentations can be seen in the early public buildings of Kuala Lumpur, where the Indian-Moghul style was considered appropriate in representing the new Malay-Muslim identity. By early 20th century, a series of public buildings adopting Moorish-Indian-Mughal architectural styles designed by British engineers and architects appeared in Kuala Lumpur. Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad (completed 1897)⁴, the old Town Hall (1904), the General Post Office (1907), the Public Works Department (1910), and Kuala Lumpur Railway Station (1911) were among the series of buildings designed and built by British engineers and architects (Figure 2).

³ Kuala Lumpur was elected as the capital for British administration for the Federal Malay States (FMS) in 1880. It is currently the capital of Malaysia, and referred to as Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur or Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur.

⁴ Originally called the New Government Offices when first built, and later became the Federal Secretariat. Upon independence, it was renamed as a tribute to the late Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Abdul Samad, who reigned between 1857 and 1898, at the time of its construction. J.M. Gullick, A History of Kuala Lumpur, 2000, p.156, n.13.

It is evident that in the pursuit of development and formulation of new identity, the indigenous architecture had been sidelined from the outset. The architectural styles promoted by the Europeans undoubtedly left a staggering effect on the traditional building practices, to the extent that the traditional architecture was left to decay in the midst of the nation searching for a renewed identity.

d) Colonial Imperialism

During the late three quarter of the 19th century, new bureaucratic systems were imposed as a foundation to prepare the societies for the formation of modern nation states. Through the expansions of building programmes to include major urban creation and development of existing ports, the 19th and 20th period witnessed European architecture being used in the service of securing colonial rule (Wuisman 2007, p.31).

The change in architectural styles of the mosques was concurrent with the bigger changes that were overtaking the world with the advent of Industrial Revolution and the Modern Movement. At the same time, the colonial administrations in the Island Southeast Asian regions, felt the need and in fact pressure, to mark their presence by embedding architectural visions through various building programmes. Such urgency was felt through the arguments that took place in the region, especially recorded among the Dutch officials and intellectuals in Java. This impression was reflected in the arguments of Wolff Schoemaker, a Professor of Architecture at the Technical College in Bandung, West Java in the 1920s, when he said;

“The Indies does not have an architectural tradition...Old forms are often no longer suitable to satisfy the practical and spiritual needs, anyway, so far as one can say about indigenous building methods. Architecture in the sense that it has for us does not exist in Java” – cited in (Kusno 2000, p.30).

In a report by the colonial Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce produced in 1914, S. Snuijf, an architectural engineer in the Public Works Department, pointed out the lack of architectural representation when he deplored;

“No national colonial architecture exists at present even after the three centuries during which the Dutch have been established in the East. Political and economical conditions have never promoted this, whereas the mild climate and the fertility of the soil have never created anxiety on the part of the uncivilised population to acquire better and more permanent dwellings...” – cited in (Kusno 2000, p.29).

The embodiment of such architectural concerns came in the form of new architectural identity created by the Europeans for the indigenous people; an architecture that restored colonial image as the sponsor of prosperity, peace, progress and achievement, sought by the introduction of the Ethical Policy (1920-40). The outcome was in the emergence of “New Indies Style” (Sukada 1999, p.120) which was sympathetic towards Indonesian cultures within the overall vision of Dutch colonisation. For a short period of time (1920-30s) a new synthesised hybrid architecture programme was executed by “exposing and cultivating the civilisation of the colonised people” to be reorganised using modern technological developments based on Eurocentric architectural vision of the “Tropical Netherlands” (Sukada 1999, p.120).

The British in the Malay Peninsula, on the other hand, had more success than the Dutch in Java. With the formation of the Federated Malay States (Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang), Kuala Lumpur was elected as the federal capital. In the efforts to define a new legacy for the new
city, an architectural style that had come out of years of experimentation in India was effectively used to serve the colonial purpose.

C.E. Spooner, the State Engineer, was an intelligent man who opted for what he called ‘Mahometan’ design instead of ‘Classic Renaissance’, in his efforts to capture the new Malay-Muslim civilisation. The outcome is a series of fine public buildings, built in the Moorish-Mughal repertoire that gave Kuala Lumpur its identity. It should come as no surprise that the architectural development used by the British colonials, as a statement of British superiority, consequently received recognition and approval from the Malay ruling elites.
Other public buildings under the administration of the Malay rulers began to follow suit. As the rulers were heads of states especially in matters concerning Malay religion and customs, mosques were naturally objects of early experimentations. The Indian Jamek Mosque of Kuala Lumpur was the first domed mosque in Malaya. Completed in 1909, it was set at the confluence of two rivers, the Gombak and Klang Rivers, echoing the placement of traditional Malay mosque’s placement. Indeed, there was previously, at the same site, an original wooden mosque completed in 1881, which had to make way for this larger mosque. The new Jamek Mosque however came with pointed-arches, colonnades and domes, with horizontal bands (ablaq) wall rendering. It was the first mosque of its kind in British Malaya, and considered a successful application of Moghul repertoire (Gullick 2000, pp.164-5).

Masjid Ubudiah Kuala Kangsar, built in 1917, was also credited to Hubback’s tested Indian-Mughal architectural repertoire. Other sultanate mosques such as Masjid Sultan Suleiman of Kelang in Selangor, was built in Art-Deco style and presented to the sultan as a gift in 1930’s (Dijk 2007, p.60). Masjid Jamik in Muar, Johor, was designed in Baroque style. Masjid Sultan Ibrahim in Johor Bahru, although designed and completed several years before Johor finally joined the Federal Malayan States,
was built in Victorian style, probably in a pomp gesture to rival (or imitate) the British designs. It was built between 1892 and 1901 in a Victorian-Moorish style, displaying strong European architectural flavour. The cost of construction was $400,000; with its marbles imported from Italy, the coloured glasses from Venice, the decorative copper *mimbar* from Turkey and the chandeliers from Czechoslovakia (Masjid Sultan Abu Bakar, Information Booklet).

Figure 13. Masjid Ubudiah, Kuala Kangsar
(Source: Harlina Sharif & Hazman Hazumi)

Figure 14. Masjid Ubudiah with various arches. A squashed horseshoe arch (right); more pointed and squashed arches, at the main porch dedicated for royal entry (left). (Source: Harlina Sharif & Hazman Hazumi)

Masjid Kapitan Keling in Penang (completed 1918) was designed by a German architect, H.A. Neubronner, in Moorish-Indian architectural idioms (Dijk 2007; p.60). Masjid Zahir Kedah (completed 1918) was built under the initiatives of Tunku Mahmud ibni Almarhum Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin. Its design and construction was overseen by a committee made up of Tunku Ibrahim, Hassan Shahabuddin the Chief Qadhi, Muhammad Ariffin bin Muhammad Arshad the State Secretary, W. C. Maxwell the British Resident and Adviser; and J. German as the State’s Engineer. It sits by the river of Sungai Kedah, within the complex of Kedah’s Islamic court (*Mahkamah Syari’ah*) serving as the Kedah state mosque.

The mosques’ architectural styles in Malaya were finally set, with other mosques, whether belonging to the Malay ruler or communities living in the region, quickly embracing this new development.
Conclusion

The British-Malaya period has witnessed the emergence of monumental mosque architecture under the sponsorship of the colonial bureaucracy. Architectural innovations and development of art and craftsmanship consequentially were undertaken by royal patrons and charismatic individuals with gigantic capitals. It was not unusual, as evident from the study, for foreign architects who had little knowledge on how a mosque functions culturally and liturgically, were commissioned to execute the design of the mosque. It should not come as a surprise, when basic requirements of a mosque’s functions, such as sahaf alignments, were not met in the mosque. In retrospect, although the Colonial innovation has opened up wider design avenues with respect to the availability of design choices, technologies and material applications; its impact on local artistic traditions as well as the building industry has left significant cultural conflict and a renewed struggle in search of architectural identity.
Bibliography


