

Muzium Negara

The National Museum



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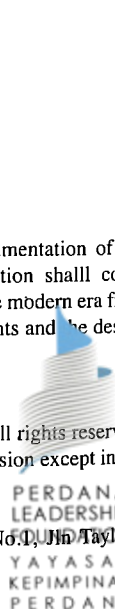
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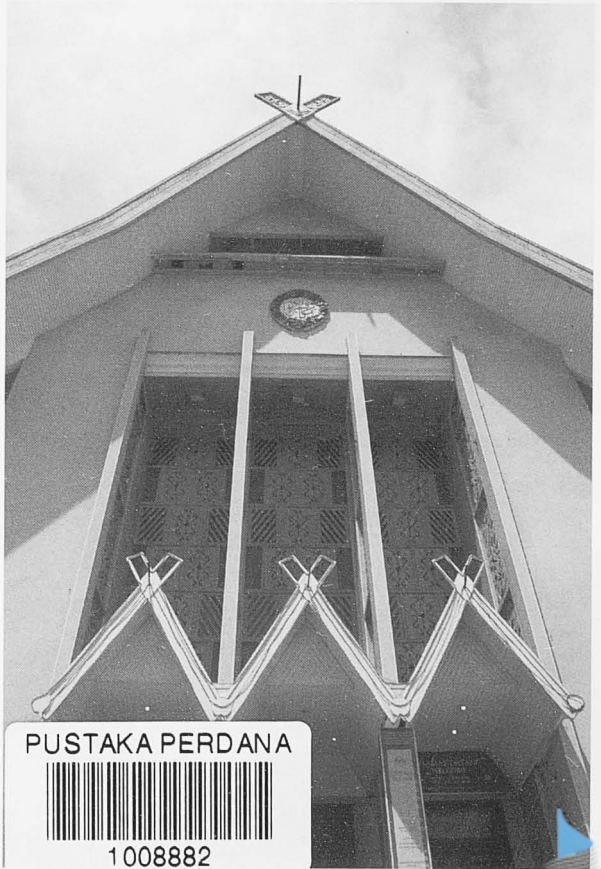
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Preface

The National Museum is not only a page in the nation's modern and traditional architectural heritage but also that of her political history. The building is the first expression of the Malay political power in this country as exemplified by the Sultans of the states and the dominance of the Malay race. It also represents a nation willingness to tolerate many cultures in her search for unity and progress.

The building can be interpreted by architectural historians, critics and architects as a design struggle between creating an artifact of heritage and the ideals of modernism. It demonstrates a clash between the formal languages of the Malay vernacular, the classical heritage of the colonial structures and the syntax of modern design. The use of the East Coast traditional roof forms with stylized pemeleh, tebar layar at the end of the gable roof, concrete carvings on pillars and suggestion of a kolong or stilts of a house as arcade of the exterior corridor, are all vocabularies of the Malay vernacular architecture. The colonialist language of classicism is obvious in adoption of cruciform shape plan of the Roman Basilica, tripartite division of a temple and a heavily symmetrical base. The influence of modernity can be seen in the use of technology and discreet treatment of ornamental carvings.

The sixties were tumultuous years that saw rising criticism of modern architecture spearheaded by the 'regionalists' such as Alvar Aalto who views architecture as spirit of a place in relation to climate, material and smitten of cultural symbolism. The concern of national identity and monumentality echoes Hitler's and Mussolini's drive to spearhead a cultural revolution that place architects as the profession which is tasked to reinterpret tradition. Although Frank Lloyd Wright had already framed his architecture within a regionalist manifesto two thirds of a century ago, it was not caught on

until Le Corbusier came in with his bare faced concrete beton brut and brise soleil architecture of the La Tourette Monastery and the Chandigarh administrative complex. The National Museum was the first example of a monumental architecture pressed by the political clients which would set the country on the path to mold Malaysia more like a Sultanate than a democracy. The adventures of Bank Bumiputra building, the Losong Museum and the National Museum are all examples of the political will and the abstract idea of monumental vernacular revivalism which culminate in the grand scale of Putrajaya four decades later.

The National Museum stands as a kind of tepak sirih. It is a monumental artifact garlanded by the Malay and Colonialist architectural gestures. The message seems to be that the Malays are committed to a path towards unity, tolerance and a strong hold upon the political power of this country.

Professor Dr Mohammad Tajuddin Mohd Rasdi



Pendahuluan

Muzium Negara bukan sahaja menjadi mercu tanda senibina moden dan warisan tradisional negara ini bahkan ia juga melambangkan sejarah pembangunan politiknya. Muzium ini adalah ekspresi pertama mempamerkan kuasa politik Melayu Negara yang boleh dilihat dari kedudukan raja-raja di setiap negeri dan dominasi bangsa Melayu. Ia juga menonjolkan semangat bertoleransi oleh masyarakat di negara ini dalam menjadi satu bangsa yang maju dan beridentiti.

Bangunan ini boleh diinterpretasikan oleh sejarawan senibina, pengkritik dan arkitek sebagai satu rekaan yang mencerminkan perjuangan antara pembentukan artifak sejarah dan pemikiran moden. Ia menunjukkan pertembungan antara bahasa formal vernakular melayu, warisan klasikal dari struktur penjajah dan aturan senibina moden. Penggunaan bentuk bumbung tradisional Pantai Timur bersama stail pemeleh, tebar layar di hujung bumbung gabel, ukiran konkrit di tiang dan imej kolong atau tiang rumah sebagai arked koridor luar, merupakan perbendaharaan kata senibina vernakular Melayu. Bahasa klasikal penjajah jelas kelihatan pada penggunaan plan berbentuk salib mirip bangunan Basilica Roma, pecahan tiga bahagian seperti kuil dan tapak simetri yang kukuh. Pengaruh moden pula dapat dilihat pada penggunaan teknologi dan ukiran hiasan yang tersembunyi.

Era enam puluhan merupakan masa yang tidak menentu yang melawat kemaraan kritikan senibina moden diterajui oleh 'regionalist' seperti Alvar Alalto yang menyifatkan senibina sebagai semangat setempat berlandaskan cuaca, bahan dan beberapa simbol budaya. Keperhatian terhadap identiti nasional dan mercu tanda membayangkan impian Hitler dan Mussolini dalam menerajui revolusi budaya yang menekankan status arkitek sebagai satu profesion yang bertanggung jawab dalam meninterpretasikan semula tradisi.

Walaupun Frank Lloyd Wright telah menyandarkan senibina beliau di dalam manifesto semangat kedaerahan sejak beberapa abad yang lalu, penggunaannya tidak begitu popular sehingga Le Corbusier memperkenalkan penggunaan konkrit 'beton brut' dan 'brise soleil' di biara La Tourette dan kompleks pemerintahan Chandigarh. Muzium Negara adalah contoh pertama senibina monumen dipelopori ahli politik yang membawa negara ini ke arah pembentukan Malaysia mirip kesultanan dan demokrasi. Bangunan Bank Bumiputra, Muzium Losong dan Muzium Negara adalah contoh impian politik dan idea abstrak pemulihan mercu tanda vernacular sehinggalah terhasil Putrajaya empat abad yang lalu.

Muzium Negara seolah-olah sebuah tepak sirih. Ia adalah artifak istimewa yang dijunjung / kalung oleh kaum Melayu dan juga simbol senibina bangsa penjajah. Ia membawa makna komitmen bangsa Melayu dalam menuju ke arah uni dan toleransi, di waktu yang sama berpegang teguh kepada kuasa politik negara ini.

Professor Dr Mohammad Tajuddin Mohd Rasdi



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