

Research Article

The Perception of the Grandeur of Mosque Architecture: A Barthesian Semiotic Analysis of Traditional and Modern Mosques in Pidie, Aceh

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Abstract

A comparative study on grandeur perception in mosque architecture in Aceh, specifically between historic and modern buildings through a semiotic approach, has not previously been conducted. This study aims to identify and compare the architectural and non-architectural elements that constitute the perception of grandeur in Masjid Po Teumeureuhom (17th century) and Masjid Raya Pidie-Labui (1984), using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The research question posed is: how is the perception of grandeur formed in traditional and modern mosques in Pidie through architectural composition analysis and Barthes' two-order semiotic model? A qualitative descriptive-comparative study was conducted through three procedures: 1. Facade composition analysis based on five architectural composition principles (scale, balance, proportion, harmony, and contrast); 2. Barthesian two-order semiotic reading (denotation, connotation, myth) applied to nine facade elements; and 3. In-depth interviews with 8 informants, consisting of 3 key informants (mosque leaders and local historical sources) and 5 participant informants (congregants and visitors). Data triangulation was performed between physical observation, semiotic readings, and informant narratives. Results show that Masjid Po Teumeureuhom achieved grandeur in 7 of 9 compositional elements studied, whereas Masjid Raya Pidie-Labui achieved grandeur in only 3 elements, with its primary weakness being the inconsistency of style adoption that obscures architectural identity. These findings imply that architectural grandeur in mosques is not solely determined by building size, but by the consistency of meaning, integrity of cultural identity, and historical depth embedded in each architectural element.

Keywords

Mosque Architecture, Architectural Grandeur, Barthesian Semiotics, Traditional Acehese Architecture, Sacred Space Perception, Comparative Architecture

1. Introduction

The architecture of mosques is the most tangible expression of spiritual identity and Muslim community culture. In Aceh, known as the Veranda of Mecca, the presence of mosques is not only a place of worship but also a center of civilization,

political strategy, and symbols of Islamic royal power [13]. The grandeur of mosque architecture becomes a crucial dimension not only as an aesthetic measure but as a medium for conveying cultural, spiritual, and historical meanings to its

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users.

The concept of grandeur in architecture is closely related to how a building creates an impression that surpasses its physical scale. Grandeur can be achieved through four perceptual dimensions: an impressive and majestic impression through proportion and scale, a sacred and spiritual impression through harmony of elements, a sense of strength and resilience through balance and contrast, and a sense of beauty through unity of composition [15]. Similar studies show that the perception of grandeur is built cumulatively through the interaction of various architectural elements that shape the spatial experience [9].

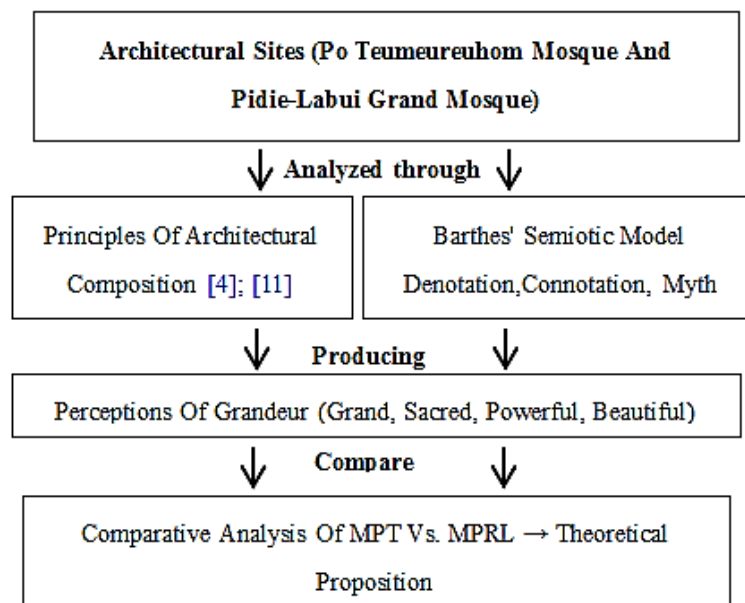
The phenomenon in Aceh presents an interesting architectural paradox. On one hand, Aceh has a rich traditional mosque architectural heritage, such as Masjid Po Teumeureuhom, a 17th-century mosque built by order of Sultan Iskandar Muda in Labui Village, Pidie Regency. On the other hand, modernization waves push for new mosques that are physically larger but tend to adopt diverse architectural styles eclectically without consistent identity. The role model for mosques in Aceh is oriented toward Masjid Raya Baiturrahman [2], so many modern mosques adopt its elements partially without full meaning integration.

Different like the study by [2] that focuses on typology form and Rahmayani [14] which emphasize physical preservation, this study specifically applies the two-stage signification

model of Roland Barthes as an analytical instrument to uncover layers of grandeur meaning that cannot be captured by typological analysis alone and thus needs to be analyzed through a semiotic approach.

The semiotics approach of Roland Barthes was chosen as the analytical tool because its ability to reveal not only literal meaning (denotation), but also meaning cultural and emotional (connotation) and the ideological values contained in architectural signs (myths). As Eco, U. [7] asserted in the study of architectural semiotics, buildings not only function utilitarianly but buildings can also communicate, conveying messages about the values held by their makers. In the context of the Aceh mosque, this semiotic reading allows the unveiling of how cultural identity and history are translated into the language of architecture.

Based on this background, this study poses the questions: how the perception of grandeur is formed at Po Teumeureuhom Mosque and the Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque through architectural composition analysis and Barthes' two-stage semiotics reading, and what are the implications of their differences for contemporary mosque design in Aceh? This study aims to identify the elements that shape grandeur in each mosque, compare their differences comparatively, and formulate findings that contribute to understanding the relationship between cultural identity, architectural coherence, and the perception of grandeur.



Source: Author, 2024

Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework Model.

2. Literature Review

Grandeur in architecture is a quality produced by the interaction between the physical elements of a building and

the perceptual experience of the observer. Linguistically, the word grand means great, noble, and noble [17], while in architectural terms, grandeur goes beyond physical size and touches spiritual and emotional dimensions. Sacred space has the character of genius loci, capable of presenting an existence

that transcends its physical materiality, a concept relevant for understanding how traditional mosques create grandeur [12].

Saefudin et al. [15] Identify four dimensions of grandeur perception in mosque architecture: 1. An impression of majesty and impressive through proportions and scale; 2. An impression of sacrality and spirituality through harmony and alignment of elements; 3. An impression of strength and resilience through balance and contrast; and 4. An impression of beauty through unity and harmony of composition. Kahir et al. [9] complement this understanding with five factors shaping the perception of grandeur: scale and size, form and design, material and texture, lighting, and cultural context. lighting, as well as cultural context.

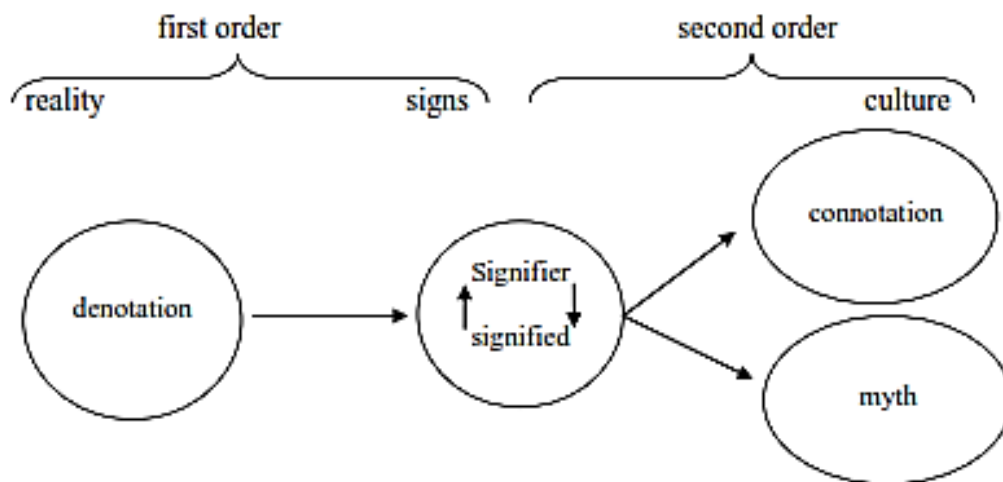
Architectural composition theory provides an analytical framework to unravel how grandeur is built formally. identify five principles of composition that are relevant [11] and [4]. First, balance is achieved through determining axis lines and arranging facade elements symmetrically, producing a stable and harmonious impression. Second, proportion refers to the proportional fit among building elements, referring to the head-body-legs tripartite, yielding a majestic sense of wholeness [8]. Third, harmony is produced from the alignment of rhythm and scale among architectural elements. Fourth, contrast through differences in color and shape create

an impression of steadfastness [6]. Fifth, unity is achieved through directing elements vertically and horizontally to produce an aesthetic impression.

Color as a visual element also plays a role in shaping the perception of grandeur. Based on the Prang system, color has three dimensions: hue, value, and saturation, each contributing to the impression produced [16]. In mosque architecture, the selection of appropriate colors can reinforce or weaken the sense of grandeur built by other formal elements.

Semiotics as the science of signs provides a conceptual toolkit for reading meanings hidden behind architectural forms. [7] asserts that architecture is a sign system with dual functions: utilitarian (primary function) and communicative (secondary function). Each architectural element used can convey messages about community values.

Roland Barthes developed a two-stage signification model (two orders of signification). The first stage is denotation: the direct relationship between signifier and signified that refers to the literal, clear meaning. The second stage is connotation: the interaction between signs and cultural values as well as the reader's emotional experience that yields deeper, cultural meaning [3] at [10]. Above these two layers, the concept of myth as a system of ideological values contained in the sign [3].



Source: Barthes, R, 1977

Figure 2. Two-Stage Signification (Two Orders of Signification).

In the context of mosque architecture, the Barthes model allows researchers not only to describe what appears visually (denotation), but also to reveal the cultural meanings contained in those elements (connotation) and the socio-religious values embedded in the design (myth). Dariwu and Rengkung [5] assert that semiotics in architecture is a symbolic language that provides information to observers about the cultural and historical context of a building, making it a suitable tool to study the grandeur of Aceh mosque architecture.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design and Approach

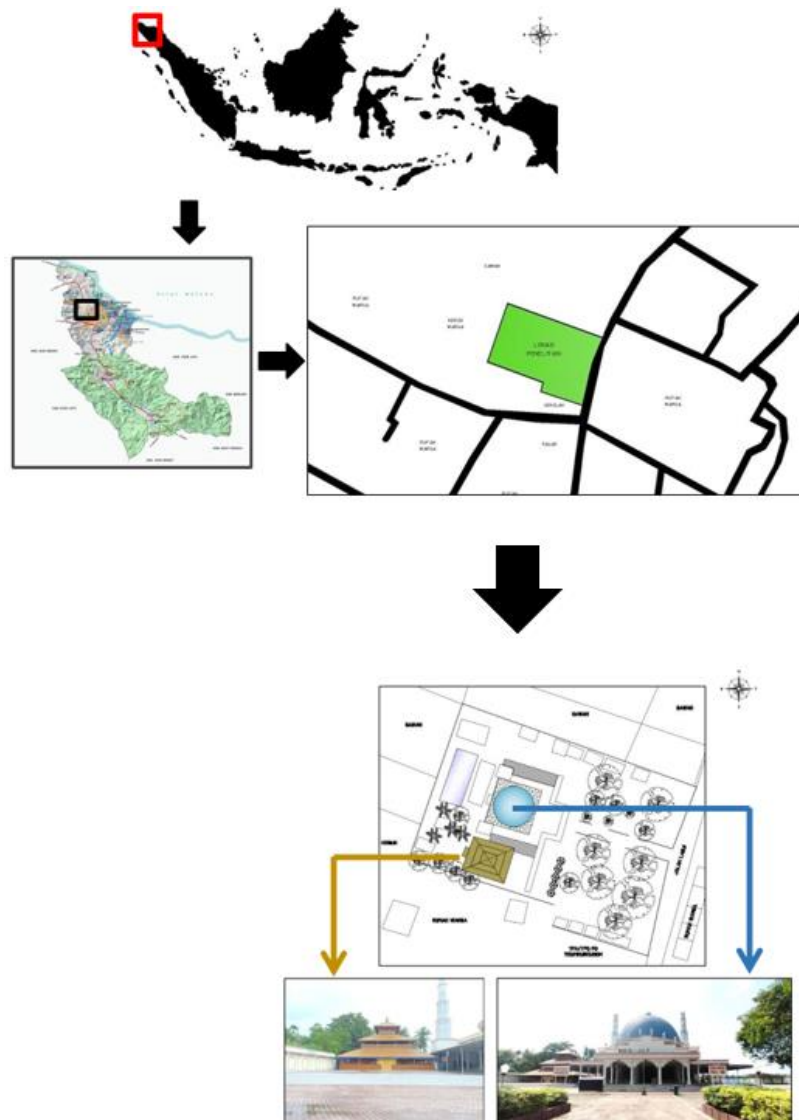
This research uses a descriptive-comparative qualitative design with a Roland Barthes semiotics approach. The comparative design was chosen because the study aims to reveal similarities and differences in the perception of grandeur between two mosque objects from different periods and construction

contexts. Barthes' semiotics approach serves as the main analytical tool enabling layered reading of architectural elements from literal meaning to cultural and ideological meanings.

3.2. Location and Research Object

The research was conducted in Labui Village, Pidie District, Pidie Regency, Province Aceh, about 4 km from the center of

Sigli City (approx. 10 minutes by travel). The two research objects were purposively selected based on representativeness: Po Teumeureuhom Mosque as a representation of historic traditional mosque architecture (17th century, Aceh Darussalam era) and Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque as a representation of modern mosque architecture (built in 1984, renovated gradually). Both mosques are in the same area, so contextual comparison can be undertaken on an even basis.



Source: documentation, 2024

Figure 3. Research Location Point.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected through three complementary techniques, including:

1) Physical observation and structured documentation: direct observation of the physical condition of both

mosques based on the observation protocol of nine architectural composition elements. Documentation was carried out through photos at close, medium, and long distances, as well as analytical sketches.

2) In-depth semi-structured interviews: conducted with 8 informants selected through purposive sampling. The main informants (3 people) consisted of 2 men as

mosque elders (I-U1 and I-U2) and 1 woman as a local history resource person (I-P1). The participant informants (5 people) consisted of 3 men and 2 women, aged 35–90 years, who are regular congregants and visitors.

3) Historical document study: examining historical sources about the Pidie Kingdom, the context of the construction of both mosques, and traditional Acehese architectural ornaments.

3.4. Research Variables

Table 1. Variables and Architectural Composition Elements.

| Category Composition | Element | Observation Criteria | Analysis Variable |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| Facade Appearance | Scale | Facade elements: roof, body, lower | Intimate, normal, grand, monumental |
| | Balance | Axis line, composition facade elements | Symmetrical / asymmetrical on plan and facade |
| | Proportion | Building appearance (head-of-body-foot) | Proportion suitability between building section |
| Composition Form Mass | Shape Geometric | Mass appearance and facade elements | The impression created each form |
| | Mass Harmony | Rhythm and visual unity mass | Identity consistency architectural |
| Object Composition & Environment | Viewing distance | Object towards surrounding environment | Visual impression from distance near and far |
| | Color Contrast | Building color vs. environment | Dominance / color harmony |
| Non-Architectural | History | Pledging context building | Influence of historical background towards meaning |
| | Culture | Ornament and symbol culture | Cultural identity in architectural 4 elements |

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is carried out in four stages. The first stage is data reduction through grouping observation findings based on nine composition elements. The second stage is Barthes' two-stage semiotics reading where each element is analyzed through the denotation, connotation and myth matrices. The third stage is a comparative analysis that compares results between the two mosques. The fourth stage is synthesis by matching physical analysis findings with interview data from informants. Data validity is ensured through triangulation of three sources: physical data from observations, results of semiotics readings, and informants' narratives from interviews. Member checking is carried out by conveying the initial findings back to the main informant for interpretation verification.

As a researcher with an architectural background, semiotics reading in the study this is done from the perspective of the architecture discipline. To minimize interpretation bias, each reading of denotation, connotation, and myth is verified through triangulation with informant interview data and relevant historical source studies (member checking and triangulation of sources).

4. Result

4.1. Description of the Research Object

Pidie Regency is one of the seven powerful kingdoms in Sumatra before joined to the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam. During the height of the Aceh Darussalam Kingdom (1607–1636) under Sultan Iskandar Muda, the sultan actively built mosques in every region he visited as a strategy to strengthen royal influence and spiritual ties with the people [14].

Po Teumeureuhom Mosque was built in the 17th century by order of Sultan Iskandar Muda village. This mosque serves a dual function: as a place of worship and as a center for war strategy deliberations, evidenced by the presence of a wai (fort) in the surrounding complex [14]. The Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque is the third renovation completed in 1984 at the initiative of Aceh Governor Prof. Syamsuddin Mahmud and led by Pidie Regent Drs. Nurdin Abdul Rahman, designed by Ir. H. Asballah Tgk Abdullah Asyek, a native son of Pidie. The original name of this mosque was Masjid Raya Poe Teumeureuhom, later changed after the regency mosque function moved to Al-Falah Grand Mosque in Sigli.



Figure 4. Po Teumeureuhom Mosque, Source: documentation, 2024.



Figure 5. Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque, Source: documentation, 2024.

4.2. Facade Appearance Analysis

4.2.1. Scale

Scale analysis shows meaningful differences between the two mosques in the exterior realm. Po Teumeureuhom Mosque (MPT) has a height about 5 times human height, in the grand scale category. Interior is of normal scale (door 1.80 x 90 cm; window 60 x 60 cm; pulpit 90 x 120 cm), so visitors have ample movement space yet still feel the presence of space surrounding them.

Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque (MRPL) reaches a height about 8 times human height on the exterior, including a monumental scale. The interior scale is also monumental, creating the impression of humans being small before the vastness of God, a meaning that is theologically relevant yet different from the grandeur that is “within reach” at MPT.

4.2.2. Balance

The plan of the second mosque uses a square grid base with axis points symmetrical in the center. Significant differences appear in the composition of facade elements. MPT shows a consistent balance: every facade element from ventilation ornament, windows, to columns corresponds symmetrically and proportionally. The three-ridge roof elements shaped like a pyramid embody the Islamic creed: Faith, Practice, and Companionship. MRPL, although its basic plan is symmetric, has composition of elements is less consistent due to the addition of elements from various renovation periods.

4.2.3. Proportion

The MPT proportion displays a harmonious and coherent tripartite head-body-legs unity and consistent from all viewing distances. No significant difference in impression between near and far distances was found.

At MRPL, the proportions show an interesting phenomenon: from a near distance, the proportions appear stable. However from a far viewing distance, the large-diameter dome creates a 1:1 ratio between the dome and the building body, giving an impression of proportion instability. This phenomenon weakens the sense of grandeur precisely when the building should appear most majestic in the landscape.

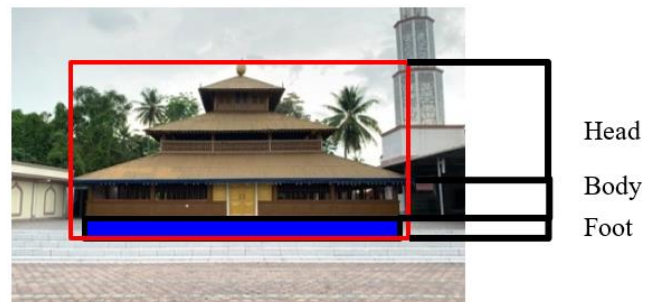


Figure 6. Proportion of Po Teumeureuhom Mosque, Source: documentation, 2024.

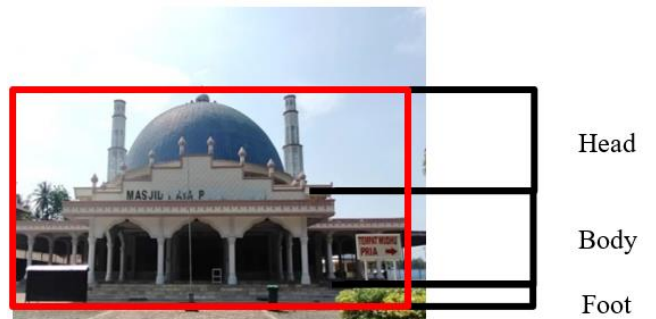


Figure 7. Proportion of Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque in Near Viewing Distance, Source: documentation, 2024.



Figure 8. Proportion of RPL Mosque from a Distant View, Source: documentation, 2024.

4.3. Analysis of Mass Composition Form

4.3.1. Geometric Form

MPT uses a composition of geometric forms dominated by sharp lines and squares, giving an impression of order, firmness, and stability. The use of vertical forms in hexagonal columns and window openings gives an impression of grandeur and wisdom. MRPL displays a more varied diversity of geometric forms: circular domes, arched openings, and square bodies. This diversity provides visual dynamics, but also creates a contradiction in the perception of order that is expected to clash with the less integrated variety of forms.

4.3.2. Mass Harmony

Mass harmony is the sharpest aspect that distinguishes the two mosques. MPT displays a complete and consistent mass harmony through the 15th-century mosque typology inspired by meru architecture, a symbol of the sacred mountain in the Nusantara cosmology that is acculturated with Islamic values. The triple-tiered pyramidal roof rises as the axis mundi, simple yet meaningful ornaments (oen cirih, bungong meulu, bungong ayu-ayu), and an architectural identity that can be historically traced, forming a coherent architectural narrative.

MRPL displays prominent inconsistencies. Almost every part of the main mosque adopts design references from different sources. This inconsistency reflects architectural identity uncertainty rooted in a gradual construction process based on available funds, not from an integrated design vision.

4.4. Analysis of Object Composition with the Environment

4.4.1. Sight Distance

MPT physically smaller than surrounding buildings, but from both sight distances (near and far), this mosque still exudes majesty. This occurs because the strong integration of architectural elements makes this building 'speak' in the landscape even when this mosque is not the largest, dominance through coherence of composition, not through size.

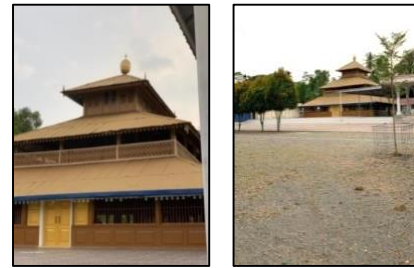


Figure 9. Close and Far Sight of Po Teumeureuhom Mosque, Source: documentation, 2024.

MRPL shows the opposite phenomenon: at a close distance, there are no facade elements that sufficiently draw attention in an integrated way. Only from afar does the large dome become a dominant visual marker. However, the dome that is larger in proportion to its body creates a sense of imbalance, not majesty.



Figure 10. Close and Far Vision of the Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque, Source: documentation, 2024.

4.4.2. Color Contrast

Po Teumeureuhom Mosque uses a golden brown color. The gold color connotes luxury and majesty, while brown connotes nature, stability, and sturdiness. This combination creates a strong contrast against the surrounding environment, which is generally light-colored, making the mosque appear dominant and characterful.



Figure 11. Brown-Gold Colors MPT, Source: documentation, 2024.

Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque uses a dominance of white-cream colors with a dome colored sky blue. These bright colors connote openness and purity of values relevant to a mosque. However, the white-blue combination resembling the color of the sky actually makes the mosque blend with its surroundings, especially during the day. The lack of contrast weakens the sense of majesty expected.



Figure 12. White-Blue Colors MRPL, Source: documentation, 2024.

4.5. Non-Architectural Elements Analysis

Non-architectural dimensions of history and culture provide a layer of meaning that cannot be detached from perceptions of grandeur. In interviews, almost all informants mentioned this dimension spontaneously.

Po Teumeureuhom Mosque has a very strong historical capital: built directly by Sultan Iskandar Muda, the leader of the

Aceh Kingdom at the height of its glory. A Key Informant 1 ((I-U1), Male, 65 years old, mosque elder) stated: “That Po Teumeureuhom Mosque was built with a single intention, by a single leader, with the hands of a single community. Each part has the same story. The Great Mosque was built little by little, from many donors, with diverse tastes, which is why we find it hard to feel a single spirit there.” This statement indirectly confirms the findings of semiotics analysis: grandeur arises from narrative consistency, not from the accumulation of elements.

Acehnese culture is organically embedded in the architectural elements of MPT through ornament oen cirih (peace and social warmth), bungong meulu (fragrance and sanctity), and bungong ayu-ayu which are direct expressions of Acehnese society’s value system [1]. In the Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque, Acehnese culture appears through ornaments on the wall columns and pucok reubong on the lisplank, but both are adaptations from the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque, not direct expressions of Labui local tradition.

A Participating Informant 1 ((I-P1), Female, 46 years old, Labui resident) stated: “If I enter Po Teumeureuhom Mosque, I always remember Sultan Iskandar Muda. It feels as if his aura is still here. That is why I am more devout here than at the Grand Mosque. This narrative confirms the myth in Barthes’ sense that a building is the arena of the presence of a pious sultan as a component that strengthens the perception of grandeur manifold beyond the physical dimension.

4.6. Recapitulation of Comparative Findings

Table 2. Recapitulation of Architectural Grandeur Findings through Barthes Semiotic Analysis.

| Element Composition | MPT (Connotation Grandeur) | MRPL (Connotation Grandeur) | Note |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Façade Appearance | | | |
| Scale | [+] Majestic yet humane | [+] Monumental, abstract grandeur | Both mosques achieve grandeur through scale, in a way different |
| Balance | [+] Facade symmetry consistent and convincing | [-] Partial symmetry; additional elements not consistent | MPT significantly superior |
| Proportion | [+] Tripartite head- full body and legs from all distances | [-] Dome 1: 1 with body from a distance; unstable | MPT significantly superior |
| Composition Form Mass | | | |
| Shape Geometric | [+] Geometric sharp; sense of order and steadfastness | [+] Varied; dynamic but less integrated | Both have majesty value |
| Mass Harmony | [+] One typology consistent: meru, Aceh, Islam | [-] Eclectic; 4+ sources different references; | MPT excels greatly significant |
| Object Composition & Environment | | | |
| Visibility | [+] Grandeur consistent of all distance | [-] Grandeur only felt from a distance via dome | MPT superior |

| Element Composition | MPT (Connotation Grandeur) | MRPL (Connotation Grandeur) | Note |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| Color Contrast | [+] Brown-gold strong contrast; characterful and dignified | [-] White-blue merge to the environment; lacking contrast | MPT superior |
| Non-Architectural | | | |
| History | [+] Sultan Myth Iskandar Muda; historical presence strong | [-] No myths strong historical background; backdrop functional back | MPT excels greatly significant |
| Culture | [+] Acehese Ornament organic and deeply meaningful | [+/-] Acehese Ornament present via mediation Baiturrahman | MPT superior |
| Total Elements Greatness | 7 of 9 elements | 3 of 9 elements | [+] = create greatness [-] = not create |

Table 3. Barthes Semiotics Matrix on Key Architecture Elements.

| Element | Mosque | Denotation | Connotation | Myth |
|-----------------------------|--------|--|--|--|
| Roof intersecting threefold | MPT | Three-layered roof made of wood, pyramidal shape tiered | Three layers: Faith, Islam, Ihsan; form Meru mountain that sacred | Mosque as representation of the order spiritual below the sultan's power that is pious |
| Blue dome large | MRPL | Half-dome large circle, colored blue sky, at the top main building | | Modernization following the trend global; aspirations appearing 'Islamic' according to standard contemporary |
| Ornament oen cirih | MPT | betel leaf ornament at the vent hole second-level roof, refined wood carving | Betel: peace, social warmth, respect in Acehese culture | Mosque as a space community social; Aceh identity that unites tradition local and Islam |
| Pucok reubong (lisplank) | MRPL | bamboo shoot ornament bamboo on board building lisplank | Beauty, growth, and steadfastness (bamboo that is flexible but strong) | Fragmentation of identity local: the only Aceh organic elements among references global eclectic |

5. Discussion

5.1. Consistency of Meaning as the Primary Determinant of Magnificence

This study's findings yield an important theoretical proposition: magnificence mosque architecture is not determined solely by the size of the building, but by the consistency of meaning emanating from each architectural element. Po Mosque Teumeureuhom, which is physically much smaller than the Great Mosque of Pidie-Labui, reaches a higher and more consistent level of grandeur because all elements speak in a single coherent narrative: an Islamic identity rooted in Acehese tradition, built by the highest authority, with ornaments whose meanings can be historically traced.

This finding aligns with Norberg-Schulz [12] view of genius loci. that a space with a strong character is a space capable of expressing the 'spirit of place' authentically. Po Teumeureuhom Mosque has a genius loci formed by the accumulation

of historical, spiritual, and cultural layers that reinforce each other. This also confirms Eco's [7] argument that architecture, as a system of signs, is most effective when its signs form a coherent system.

5.2. The Role of Collective Memory and Historical Capital

The case of the Great Mosque of Pidie-Labui provides important lessons about the risks of uncontrolled architectural eclecticism. Drawing design inspiration from various sources without strong conceptual integration produces buildings that are visually rich but semiotically ambiguous. As Barthes [3] formulated, myths are born from a coherent system of signs; when signs do not form a system, what is born is ambiguity of meaning, not the myth of grandeur.

This phenomenon is not unique to Aceh. Azzahra dan Natusion [2] note that the mosque typology in Banda Aceh is dominated by imitation of Baiturrahman without independent architectural identity exploration. This study deepens that understanding by showing that imitation from several sources

simultaneously actively weakens the grandeur that is sought.

5.3. Implications for Contemporary Mosque Design in Aceh

This research finding provides three practical implications. First, mosque architects should prioritize consistency of architectural identity over diversity of references. Choose one typology rooted in local tradition and develop it. Consistency will yield greater majesty than presenting many references in an eclectic manner.

Second, scale and modernity are not prerequisites of grandeur. Masjid Po Teumeureuhom proves that a smaller building with the right composition can yield a sense of grandeur that surpasses much larger buildings. This opens opportunities for communities with limited resources to build architecturally magnificent mosques.

Third, meaningful local ornament is an asset, not a burden. Ornament traditional Acehese ornaments such as oen cirih, pucok reubong, and bungong meulu not only beautify the building but become a sign system that conveys community values to its users. The integration of authentic/local ornaments not adoptive into modern mosque design is one path to grandeur rooted in identity.

5.4. Limitations of the Research

This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the analysis limited to the exterior facade elements and not covering the interior of both mosques, so the findings cannot be generalized to the entire architectural dimension. Second, semiotics as an interpretive method contains researcher subjectivity that cannot be fully eliminated, though addressed through triangulation and member checking. Third, the use of 8 informants in a qualitative context has reached data saturation, but representation of younger age groups (under 35) remains limited.

6. Conclusions

This study answers the posed questions with three main findings. First, Masjid Po Teumeureuhom achieves a perception of grandeur in 7 of 9 elements of the analyzed composition, derived from the consistency of Acehese meru-Islam architectural typology, overall balance and proportion from all vantage points, strong color contrast with the surroundings, and deep cultural-historic capital directly linked to Sultan Iskandar Muda and organic Acehese ornaments. Barthes' semiotics reading reveals that all MPT elements form a coherent sign system with a strong myth: the mosque as the center of spiritual and cultural power in Aceh under the leadership of a pious sultan.

Second, Masjid Raya Pidie-Labui achieves the perception of grandeur only on 3 of 9 elements: monumental scale, meaningful variety of geometric forms, and the presence of

Acehnese culture through lisplank elements. The main weakness is design eclecticism that adopts references from four different sources without conceptual integration, producing an architectural identity that is semiotically ambiguous.

Third, this study yields a theoretical proposition that architectural grandeur of a mosque is a function of meaning consistency, not a function of physical size or material luxury. This proposition broadens the understanding of the grandeur of architecture by emphasizing its semiotic and historical dimensions, beyond the formal dimension that has long dominated architectural studies.

Thus, this research contributes to the development of an evaluation model. the grandeur of architecture based on semiotics that can be applied to comparative studies of mosque architecture in Indonesia.

Recommendations: For future research, it is suggested: 1. Expanded comparative study to historical mosques in Aceh to test the generalizability of the theoretical propositions; 2. In-depth study of interior ornaments of the two mosques using the same semiotic matrix; 3. Research combining semiotic analysis with quantitative perception measurements (such as an aesthetics rating scale) for a more comprehensive understanding; and 4. A study on how the transmission of historical narratives to the younger generation affects the perception of the grandeur of historic buildings over time.

For mosque architecture practitioners in Aceh, these findings emphasize the importance of research. in-depth study of local typology and architectural ornamentation before planning, as well as the importance of consistency in design vision throughout the staged construction process. One way is through the development of a local identity-based design guideline before planning.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Po Teumeureuhom | The Title Given to Sultan Iskandar Muda, a Leader of the Aceh Darussalam kingdom Who Ruled in the 17th Century |
| MPT | Masjid Po Teumeureuhom/Po Teumeureuhom Mosque |
| MRPL | Masjid Raya Pidie-Labui/ Pidie-Labui Grand Mosque |

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Author Contributions

Putri Puspa Sari: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

Elysa Wulandari: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Methodology, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing

Safwan: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Methodology, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Biography



Putri Puspa Sari is a 2022 master's student in architecture at Syiah Kuala University in Indonesia. She earned her bachelor's degree in architecture from Muhammadiyah University of Aceh in 2019. While pursuing her master's degree, she worked as a freelance 2D draftsman and as an editor of reports related to cultural heritage. Currently, she works as an architecture lecturer at Prima Indonesia University in Medan. In addition to her role as a lecturer, future research also presents a challenge for her in advancing knowledge in the field of architecture and, specifically, for her professional career. Her research areas include architectural conservation, traditional ornamentation, traditional houses, and the history of Islamic architecture.

Research Field

Putri Puspa Sari: Architectural Conservation, Traditional ornament, traditional house and Historical Architecture.

Elysa Wulandari: History and Theory of Architecture, Urban Design and Ecology Coastal City.

Safwan: Architectural Design, History and Critics of Architecture and Islamic Architecture.