

ISLAM, INDONESIANITY, AND MODERNITY IN ARCHITECTURE OF ACHMAD NOE'MAN

Representing Modern Islamic Movement Narration beyond the Modern Islamic Architecture Heritage in Indonesia

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PROLOGUE: GUESSES AND FACTS ABOUT ACHMAD NOE'MAN'S ARCHITECTURE "ISLAMITY"

As an Islamic activist student in Senior High school, my architecture studies in ITB had been bringing a searching a question about what is "Islamic Architecture". My acquaintanceship with Islamic thinkers and activist in Salman Mosque guided me into well known Islamic intellectual thinking, such as Ismail al Faruqi, Seyyed Hosen Nasr, and Philip K. Hitti, about the existence of Islamic Culture and Architecture sense of beauty and spirituality.

I tried to combine what was found in the Mosque with what was studied in the school. I asked my lecturer about "Islamic Architecture".¹ He didn't answer, but suggested me to meet Achmad Noe'man directly. Why must Achmad Noe'man? I had known him as Salman Mosque Architect and his activities in Istiqlal Festival 1991. Before it, my Islamic teacher² also suggested to visit Achmad Noe'man. For this time, I percept, may be also most Indonesian Muslim and most architecture society, Achmad Noe'man's figure represented "Indonesian Islamic Architecture".

When I met him, and asked what is "Islamic Architecture", his answer was outside of my frame of thinking. He said, "Islamic Architecture is Architecture that doesn't have no contradiction with Quran and Sunnah".³ Then he added the importance the "Ijtihad" (Interpretation of Quran and Hadits textual meaning to answer the recent problems) in architectural working, that was exemplified in Salman Mosque design, such as simplicity form, avoiding "mubadzir" (inefficiency), designing interior space without internal columns (he used wide-span structures) to make the straight and continuing "shaf" (prayers row), and pedestrian sequences in the term interpretation God's order to go hurry to the mosque in Friday.

¹ The lecturer was Ir. Eko Poerwono. I was 2nd year in Architecture Department, 1992.

² He is Dr. Abdullah Salim Zarkasyi, ex-Vice Rector of Sultan Agung University in Semarang.

³ Interview with Achmad Noe'man, Ramadhan 1993.

For this moment, I considered that Noe'man's statement more represented common architectural concepts rather than specific concepts of relationship between Islamic values and architectural forms. He argued the Prophet Muhammad's hadits "Antum a'lamu bi 'umur al duniyakum (You know better of your business)" to explain that Islam give a lot of freedom for the architect to express their ideas. Architecture had been developed as its own knowledge discipline that could be used to understand the law of nature (ayat Kauniyah). Here I guessed Achmad Noe'man didn't put special order of Islamic Architecture. Islam had been more reflected on personal attitude, included in professional architect work.

I began to be hesitant about Noe'man's concept of Islamic Architecture, because of another expert opposite opinion. Historian Ahmad Mansyur Suryanegara criticized Noe'man's architectural style, which is presenting the symbol of Christian cross (honesty of structure unconsciously imagine the Christian cross). On the other side, according to Mansyur, Prophet Muhammad prohibited using other religions symbol.

Interesting reference came from Taufiq Hidayat's paper. By analyzing Salman Mosque architecture, Hidayat explained that Islamic concept here was only "Mubadzirism" that must be avoided, as like as justification of Modern Architecture into Islamic thinking. Basic problems that must be expressed physically in designing mosque as Muslim's place to pray was not get more attention. Concept of facing to qiblat and self-purified by ablution, was not appeared in space and form character. Hidayat concluded, that Salman Mosque became "the victim of Modern Architecture".⁴

Discourse of Noe'man's architecture had been continued. I had chance to meet him again in some event (I had already been an apprentice in his architecture bureau as junior architect). Then I conclude some facts about Achmad Noe'man. Fact, that he is a Muslim who grown in Islamic Modernist environment (his father was a Muhammadiyah activist in Garut)⁵ that build his basic religious believe. Fact, that he was Bauhaus admirer, so he proclaimed as Modernist Architect (he had been educated for six years in ITB, when Modern Architecture ideology most influenced). Fact, that he designed a lot of mosques. And fact, that he tries to put Quran and Hadits as highest references in his living, including in architectural working.

Achmad Noe'man's architecture explanation (with its masterpiece Salman Mosque) becomes interesting if related to Modern Islamic movement in Indonesia. The existence of Achmad Noe'man becomes unique, because he is only Muslim that was born and grown in modernist Islam environment (Muhammadiyah), studied architecture in well-known technical education institute, and got chance to design Islamic building (Salman Mosque) in Indonesian nation building and modernization context.⁶ In spite of the short moment of civilization time frame, Modern Islamic Movement in Indonesia has architectural manifestation through Achamad Noe'man. If Islamic modernist thinker is most influenced by modern thinking, so Noe'man's architecture is logically influenced by Modern Architecture concepts.

When Modernism is going enfeebled, Noe'man's architecture has been going to be heritages. The most importance effort in documenting the heritage is inserting narration beyond architectural forms. This paper is aimed to describe a grand narration about Modern Islamic movement in Indonesia that manifested in Noe'man Architecture, especially Salman Mosque. I

⁴ Taufiq Hidayat, "Masjid Salman: Korban Arsitektur Modern?". Lecture paper Architecture Department ITB, 1991.

⁵ Islamic Modernist is often represented by Muhammadiyah, opposite of Islamic Traditionalist represented by Nahdlatul Ulama .

⁶ President Soekarno supported Salman Mosque development in the term of spirit of nation building. Soekarno also supported many monuments and modern building to express the nationality.

suggest, this paper contributes references to providing architectural place for dynamical Indonesian Islamic life after modernism, striving to the better life in the future.

MODERN ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA: AN OVERVIEW

The term of “Modern Islam” was actually begun by “Reformation Movement (*Tajdid*)” started in Arabia and India 1700s then spread around the world. The *Tajdid* movement was run in the context of Islamic Civilization declining (because of Mongol expansion to Middle East and Western Colonialism). In the other side, in Europe appeared “Renaissance era” that enlightened Western World, and then created Modernism that most influences the human life now.

The Reformer (Mujaddid) was known as Syaikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1700-1787) in Arabia and Qutb al-Din Ahmad Syah Wali Allah (1703-1783) in India. This movement based of awareness of Moslem retardation, which was caused by *jumud* (stagnant attitude) and *taqlid* (followed leader’s statement without reserving). Most Moslem in that moment was run-out from existing problems, going to the mystical grave, closing the critical thinking to solve the problems. Reformers’ slogan is “Return to Quran and Sunnah”, the highest Islamic reference. They rejected *taqlid* and previous traditions that have contradiction with Quran and Sunnah.

Rejection of previous Islamic stagnant tradition brought the reformers to consider the better concepts to progress Islamic world, although it came from other civilization, especially from Western Enlightenment. This enlightenment basically gave the awareness about the most important human potency, the ratio. The Islamic reformers also used rationality to translate religion textual messages. They re-opened the “*Ijtihad*”, text interpretation of Quran and Hadits to answer recent problems.

Modern Islamic movement influenced many Indonesian Ulama and common Muslims. We knew H.O.S Tjokroaminoto (Soekarno’s first political teacher, also founder of first Indonesian modern organization, Syarikat Islam) as early Indonesian Islamic Modernist. Other person was K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, who founded Muhammadiyah. In ritual activities, Muhammadiyah purified Islamic ritual practice, defeated *bid’ah* attitude. In social activities, Muhammadiyah forerun social organization, such as orphan houses, formal school, and Muslims hospital. Now, we know a lot of Indonesian Islamic Intellectuals came form Islamic Modern environment, such as HAMKA, M. Natsir, Nurcholish Madjid, Amien Rais, Harun Nasution, or Imaduddin Abdulrahim.

There are some descriptions about spirit and values of Modernist Islam in Indonesia:

- Returning all of Islamic teaching to the highest references, Quran and Sunnah.
- Prohibiting *taqlid* (following the religious practice without reserving), rejecting tradition, which contains contradiction with Quran and Sunnah.
- Re-opening *Ijtihad*, reinterpreting textual meaning of Quran and Sunnah to answer recent problems.
- Rational, most Muslim Intellectuals are modernist.
- Progressive, willing to progress Islamic World to better life.

However, the struggle of Modern Islamic movement reaches the anticlimax in the end of 20th century. Armahedi Mahzar describes, Islamic modernism will failed as Muslim movement, because of its syncretism thinking and elitism leadership. Most Islamic modernists study in

formal school, which is adopted from colonial system, then unconsciously socially and economically separated them from the common people, which is still suppressed by economical and industrial imperialism.⁷

Mahzar continues, that is just a way to connect reformer elites to their people: there is tradition. Tradition is people language of living. Future of Islamic civilization, the Modernists will lead the reconstruction together with traditionalists who lead the revitalization and unified with the people of Islam.⁸

Modernization is rationalization to get benefit in thinking and working maximally, refer to God's law (Sunatullah). Knowledge is constructed by human ratio, so modern refer to scientific. To be modern is also to be progressive and dynamic, no stagnancy in existing thing and deconstruct incorrect tradition. To be modern is an absolute necessity, but modern is relative. Modernity is taken on process of finding the relative truth, go to findings the Absolute Truth (Nurcholish Madjid).⁹

ACHMAD NOE'MAN'S ARCHITECTURAL THINKING: BETWEEN ISLAMIC "IJTIHAD" AND MODERNISM BAUHAUS INFLUENCES

Achmad Noe'man was born and grown in good Islamic environment. His father was a merchant and also Muhammadiyah organizer in Garut. This atmosphere raised Noe'man's Islamic values: put Quran and Hadits as the highest Islamic references and rejected incorrect tradition. He often followed his father to build the mosque, and then became the most impressive experience. He had a good sense of art since he was a kid.

His sense of art and his spirit of beauty made him choosing Architecture field when studied in ITB 1952, moved from Civil Engineering with full of "strictness". Here, he introduced with lecturers of "Kentucky Contract Team", who brought Modernist Architects ideas such as Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, dan Oscar Niemeyer. His art exploration, and also influenced by learning atmosphere on that time, brought him to Bauhaus aesthetic concept admiration: beauty from simplicity.

A year after his graduation, a young Noe'man got a great chance: designing first university mosque in Indonesia! President Soekarno supported this mosque, and named it as Salman Mosque (referred to Salman al Farisi, the first Islamic Technologist interpreted by Soekarno). Achmad Noe'man was chosen as the architect, although he was still young, because he was only architect who had much Islamic activities.¹⁰ As an Islamic activist, he tried to apply Islamic values into his life and work, included his design. But in the other side, he was also Bauhaus admirer. Ha also needed to apply architectural principles from his school into his mosque design.

Achmad Noe'man started his "Islamic Architecture" thinking. His Islamic principle is prohibition of *taqlid*, as the meaning of Quran Surat al Baqarah 170 that God prohibit to follow

⁷ Armahedi Mahzar. *Islam Masa Depan*. Bandung: Pustaka: 1993. Pg. 89-90

⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 91

⁹ Nurcholish Madjid. *Islam Keindonesian dan Kemodernan*. Bandung: Mizan, 1983. Pg. 173-174.

¹⁰ In the time of before Salman Mosque was built, secularly way of life was more dominant. Islamic students, who often took the activity in the mosque, was often became ridicule target.

the incorrect ancestors traditions. So, Noe'man appraised critically, some architecture was assumed as "Islamic Architecture" actually didn't refer to Islamic values. For example, the Taj Mahal, a great grave built by Shah Jehan for his beloved wife, existed with contradiction with Prophet Muhammad prohibition to build the tombs, because it tended to do *syirik* practices.¹¹ According to him, Islamic Architecture was not possibly found in Islamic people, for the other side it precisely grown and developed in non-Islamic culture. This was the consequence of Islamic universality, as "Rahmah li al alamin (mercy to the universe)"

Then he found Islamic values exactly in Bauhaus concepts. He considered, Bauhaus' terms of simplicity, properly thinking, anti-ornament, and anti-eclectics were possibly appropriated to Islamic values. Nothing pretended, express material honesty, just like Islamic concept of avoiding "mubadzir" (inefficient).¹²

Based on this consideration, he dared to design Salman Mosque with defying previous traditional mosque form: without dome, without ornament (included calligraphy), and strong expression as modern building (with "International Style"). His aim was creating a beautiful mosque. Mies van der Rohe's ideas most influenced young Noe'man's design, such as credo "Less is More", monumentalizing structural technique, basic shape was like Crown Hall IIT Chicago, using the wide stairs, lifting the floors (pilotis), and using flat roof on service building.¹³

Here he also started his Islamic architectural interpretation (*ijtihad*). He interpreted Prophet Muhammad order to make prayers row (*shaf*) straight and continuing with designed space with internal columns. Columns could be interrupted close rank prayers row.¹⁴ He put women's place to pray in the backside but lifted as mezzanine, to protect them from men's sight. He used wood parquet as floor material to keep the prayers warm and the floor was easy to clean. This interpretation adjusted with modern architecture ideas: space without internal columns with "monumentalizing structural techniques", women's place to pray mezzanine with "continuous space" (by le Corbusier), and wood parquet floor with "material honesty". Spirit of structural technique exploration, simplicity forms, and material honesty was applied into next Noe'man's Mosque design, such as An Nur Jatiluhur Mosque, KTSM Mosque Banjaran Bandung, IKIP Malang Mosque, Great Mosque of Pati, Amir Hamzah Mosque at TIM Jakarta, Pupuk Kujang Mosque Cikampek, and other mosques until 1990s.

Is Achmad Noe'mans actually a modernist? He doesn't disagree, because modern principles even appropriate with Islamic principles. Modernist critical perspective of history appropriates with *taqlid* prohibition in Islam. Modernist spirit of creativity is also suitable with Islamic order to follow God's attitudes: one is creative (God is called Creator, so he must be "Creative" – *ed.*). Be a modern make Noe'man chose a Professional Architect way of life, and keep firmly the professional attitude: Integrity, Independency, Competence, and Corporateness, appropriate with Prophet Muhammad's attitude *Shiddiq* (truth), *Amanah* (trust), *Tabligh* (reported) and *Fathanah* (smart).¹⁵

¹¹ Noe'man's perspective is based on his Muhammadiyah background. Just like Wahhabi principle: going to the tomb will tend people to pray to the spirit of the death person, not to the only God anymore.

¹² Noe'man's statements on article "Arsitektur Islam: Tantangan bagi Arsitek Muslim", in *Konstruksi*, April 1992.

¹³ Taufiq Hidayat. "Op. cit". Pg 6.

¹⁴ Noe'man and his Birano PT defend this principle until now. The story of Caliph Umar ibn Khattab controlled close rank of prayers row with his sword is asserted his principle.

¹⁵ Interview with Achmad Noe'man, June 2003.

Achmad Noe'man is a professional architect: he is most influenced by Modern Architecture. He is also a good Moslem and Islamic activist, who try to relate Islamic values into his life, includes in architectural working. Relation effort can be successful or not, Wallahu a'lam.

NOE'MAN'S ARCHITECTURAL INTERPRETATION INFLUENCES: BETWEEN ISLAMIC MODERNIZATION SPIRIT AND RECENT RELIGIOUS AWARENESS AWAKENING

Noe'man's interpretation daring finally manifested successfully the first Islamic religious building with almost consistence modern architecture concept: relatively released from traditional mosque forms dogma. Actually before it, Silaban had already tried to apply modern concept of "International Style" into Istiqlal Mosque design: flat roof without dome. But Muslim people rejected Silaban's idea, so a big dome was put on the mosque roof, supported with six structural columns inside the internal space. In Salman Misque case, Noe'man successfully removed dome on his design, with argument Salman Mosques was a science and technology institute campus mosque, so the mosque should be expressed the progress of modern technologies, different from common mosques.

The success of Salman Mosque design in ITB exactly influenced the other progressive Islamic activities. In Bandung, some activist (most came from modernist Islamic Organization, such as Persatuan Islam), planned to build a mosque named Istiqamah.¹⁶ Most Muslim in that moment more liked Syuhada and Al Azhar mosque figure (building with modern technology but keep Middle East traditional style) rather than Istiqlal or Salman mosque (Modern Architecture representation). The modernist activist struggled the argument that there is no special order in Quran and Hadits about mosque forms. So, mosque form could be expressed freely and creatively, adjusted to the era. Figure of Salman and Istiqlal mosque was more represented the modern and progressive life. The struggle was succeeded, Istiqamah mosque presented with many Salman mosque's architecture influences: flat roof, simple form, structural expression, lifted floor, an almost without ornament.

Islamic activist Bambang Pranggono was influenced by Achmad Noe'man's modern progressive architectural thinking. He predicted (in 1975), for next twenty-five year, future mosque would be presented more functional. Mosque would exist without columns, with sophisticated sound systems, flat roof would became low because rooms would be serviced by air conditioning, and mihrab wouldn't be needed, changed by a wide-screen. Extremely, future "functional mosque" wouldn't be accompanied by tower (minaret) anymore, because adzan (praying call) would be proclaimed via broadcast relays. Mosque year 2000 would be only one level floor in a skyscraper, with sign "mosque".¹⁷

The prediction was being too extremely, even does not happen in recent days. But "functional mosque" in skyscraper phenomena has already happened, such as 7th floor in Hyatt Hotel in Mecca or 3rd floor in Telkom Building in Bandung. The most important thing, modernization spirit of mosque architecture have been inspired most later architect to design

¹⁶ The architect was Gustaf Abbas. Bambang Pranggono (who inform the story behind it), Islamic activist and also an architect, was involved in final design.

¹⁷ Bambang Pranggono "Masjid tahun 2000". Article in *Pola*. 1975.

the mosque more creative, releasing the “strict dogma” of traditional mosque. The spirit can be found in architecture of Said Naum Mosque Jakarta, Baitul Amin Mosque Jember, dan Great Mosque of Pondok Indah Jakarta.¹⁸

Noe'man thinking in interpreting Prophet Muhammad reference and critical perspective about tradition influences great Mosque of Pondok Indah Jakarta design. The architects consider, that conventional mihrab niche shape will make difficulty the prayers in the edge-side to see the Imam (praying leader). From the journey to Prophet Muhammad's original mosque ruins, they found that front wall was flat, no niche room for mihrab. They translated it into mosque design, there's no special place to Imam, and so the prayers in edge-side can see Imam well.¹⁹

However, the greatest influence of Salman Mosque is the existence of Islamic university student movement 1980s, then brought the recent Indonesian religious awareness and stated as “Islamic Awakening in 16th Hijrah Century”. Islamic student movement had been supporting many Indonesian Muslims pride to apply Islamic order (syariah) in their living: spends their children to Islamic schools, wears Muslim clothes, and activates Islamic studies forum in their neighborhood and office environment. Salman mosque architecture also contributes, through the designed place for Islamic activities. Mosque verandah gives comfortable micro space for student to study, discuss, teaching and learning, and establishes the Islamic organizations by grouped team (*halaqah*).

There are many controversies about Salman mosque architecture, especially came from common Indonesian Muslims. But, there is the fact that its existence brought positive influences for recent Islamic religious living.

ISLAMIC TRADITION CRITIQUES ABOUT ACHMAD NOE'MAN'S ARCHITECTURAL INTERPRETATION: CRITIQUES ABOUT MODERNISM?

Noe'man's ideas are based on interpretation willing to explore creative forms. It consequences, Noe'man's design doesn't adopt Islamic culture tradition values so much. Some Muslim intellectuals tell that Noe'man's have released many good aspects in Islamic tradition in mosque design.

Historian Ahmad Mansyur Suryanegara (Professor of History in Padjadjaran University) states that a lot of recent architects inserting a symbol of Christian Cross (*salib*) in their buildings design, even mosques design. Christian Cross symbol is unconsciously presented in vertical and horizontal crossing element, as effect from Modernist credo “Form Follow Function”. Besides, Prophet Muhammad disliked Muslim to use other religion symbols. And Islamic culture and tradition have successfully presented architecture without “salib” symbol. “Salibisme” was appeared in Spanish architecture after Islamic occupation Middle Age, then spread among the world. Mansyur notes, that symbol of “salib” was often presented in

¹⁸ Utami. *Op cit.* Pg 39-40.

¹⁹ Ir. Ismail Sofyan and Metropolitan Development team described this in a guest lecture in Architecture Department ITB, 1994.

architecture of Silaban and Noe'man. He evaluates, the "salib" excess in recent Muslim's architecture because many recent architects don't understand and concern architectural symbolical meanings.²⁰

Especially for Salman Mosque, Mansyur criticizes the church-like atmosphere in architecture. Obscure lighting in interior with more bright lighting in a *mihrab* and "T" shape of *mimbar*, is imagining common church architecture.

Mansyur's critiques to Noe'man's architecture are in accordance with Ismail al Faruqi's critiques to Western Architecture. Western Architecture, according to Faruqi, tends to construct "man power of space", in case "separates a building with surround spaces" with giving distance view of the building or arranging other buildings to define "building domination autonomy in the space". In the other side, Islamic Architecture presents egalitarian sense, gives priority of empty space to represent oneness of God, and rejects single matter monumentalizing. Muslims people construct their greatest buildings inner the city, united with shops and houses. In narrow alleys, somebody can't see a building except standing straight in front of this building. Islamic tradition values make many Islamic building, such as mosques, exists among the city without making spatial distance from the others and creating its own "exclusive space".²¹

Faruqi also describes Islamic architecture tradition contains other wisdom in building illumination. God compares himself with Light (Quran 24:35), so for centuries Muslims people have stated all of Islamic teaching is "Illumination for Awareness". This heritage causes Islamic buildings always open and rich of light. Islam hates darkness. It is opposite from Western Architecture reflected on Christian church with dark or obscure interior. Creating the bright in focal point and make the others part dark, so Western Architecture needs dark arranging to create organic center from internal space.²² (Compare with Mansyur's critiques to Salam mosque lighting design!)

Islamic art and architecture main spirit is presenting "emptiness sense" as a manifestation the God oneness. Seyyed Hossen Nasr says, positive meaning about "emptiness" is reflected in Islamic architectural and urban morphology. In classic, middle age, and modern Western Architecture, space is defined by exact shape such as buildings or statues. Object defines surrounding space and gives the meaning and determination on that space. In Islamic Architecture, space has negative meaning. Space isn't defined by positive objects, but by corporeality nonentity. This is emptiness aspect, or can be described as "negative space".²³

Refer to Islamic tradition, some intellectual note that many Islamic architecture principles isn't attended exactly by Noe'man's architectural interpretation. Taufiq Hidayat describes, Noe'man forgot some fundamental basic of the mosque building:

- Facing to Qiblat as praying perquisite. In case of Salman mosque, this orientation wasn't concerned in exterior space, such non-existence of supporting element, plaza pattern, fence element, other buildings wall, or other landscape elements.
- Place for ablution and self-purifying. In case of Salman mosque, ablution place wasn't concerned well, too narrow, crowded by queuing prayers. The holy floor seemed dirty by

²⁰ Mansyur's argument of anti-"Salibi" is based on Quran Surah an Nisa 157, "Isa (Jesus) was not dead by crossing" and Hadits about prohibition in using other religion symbols.

²¹ Ismail Raji al Faruqi. "Islam dan Arsitektur", in Abdul Jabbar Beg. *Seni dan Peradaban Islam*. Bandung: Pustaka. 1986 Pg. 103-105

²² "Ibid". Pg 109-110.

²³ Seyyed Hossen Nasr. *Spiritualitas dan Seni Islam*. Bandung: Mizan. 1993. Pgs 207.

unclean people footsteps, passed by clean people. Exposed concrete stairs doesn't reflect the holy and clean, manure is difficult to be identified and cleaned.

- Mihrab and place for sermon. Some Muslim scholars stated preacher must be closed to make prayers concentrated to hear the sermon and understood the meaning. In the case of Salman mosque, shape of mimbar was designed open and preacher can be seen. This shape seems as modern sculpture expression.²⁴

After Achmad Noe'man, the younger Islamic based architects appeared and contributed critiques. M. Prasetiyo Effendi Yassin.²⁵, criticizes Noe'man's concept of space without internal columns as further (too far? – *ed*) interpretation from textual meaning of referred Hadits. According to Prasetiyo, for a long time, Islamic scholars didn't question about mosques internal columns existence. The non-existence of internal columns, which is happen in all Noe'man's design, creates a gigantic effect: mosque scale is not humane anymore. Refers to Hadits "Prophet Muhammad had already pray in the desert, stuck his stick, and *sujud* near the stick". Prasetiyo interprets that Prophet Muhammad created a micro space for praying. Internal columns –analogized with Prophet's stick- beside its structural function, are also contribute to create psychological comfortable micro spaces for prayers activities like sit, lean, and read Quran, making the living activities in the mosque.

The most important and clear critique is the strike changes on his architectural expression after 1990s. Before it, Achmad Noe'man consistently brings beauty spirit in simplicity and rejects "mubadzirism". But recent Noe'man's mosques (such as al al Markaz in Mosque Makassar, Bait al Quran and Tin Mosque in TMII complex Jakarta, Bimantara Mosque in Jakarta, and H.M. Suharto Mosque in Bosnia) appear exactly with great, luxurious, and full-ornamental building. An inconsistency? This phenomenon can be explained that too many external imperative and dominant factors like the power, owner's preference, and economic factor. His position as a professional makes him subordinate from the owner, and then reduce his independency in architectural expression decision.²⁶

These external factors also influence in conceptual level. In previous mosque design, he holds "anti-Mubadzir" principle strictly. But, when he meets a client who asks him to design a glorious luxurious mosque, he can't reject it. His argument, "Mubadzir is actually relative". Although causes justification and inconsistency impression, that statement really reflects his wisdom and large perspectives in perceive the problems.²⁷

Empirically, Achmad Noe'man's Architecture Bureau also reviews and auto-criticizes about his previous design:

- Flat roof is not used anymore, changed with "tumpang" roof as like as Indonesian traditional mosques roof, because the shape is suitable with tropical climate.
- Exposed concrete is not expressed anymore, changed with metal or ceramic cladding, considering the building maintenance.

²⁴ Taufiq Hidayat. "Op cit". Pg 14-17.

²⁵ M. Prasetiyo Effendi Yassin, ex-Salman activist in 1980s also architecture lecturer in ITB

²⁶ Utami. *Op cit*. Pg. 149.

²⁷ Noe'man's Mubadzir relativity concept appears when he joined the group to rewrite the Quran mushaf in Istiqlal Festival by President Suharto order (1991-1995). He was asked to use golden ink. Noe'man was in hesitant, is it profuse attitude (refer to *mubadzir*) or not. A conglomerate said, if Noe'man could contribute his design capability to glory the God, he (the conglomerate) also wanted to glory the God with his wealth capability. This consideration was brought in his further luxurious mosques design.

- Dome shape is not rejected anymore, by contextual consideration (Suharto Mosque at Bosnia) or owner's preference (at Tin Mosque).
- Qiblat orientation behind the *mihrab* strictly preserved, to make a guidance space for prayers wherever they pray in the mosque
- Space without internal columns is preserved, because of technological capability and clearly references from Hadits.
- "Anti-salibi" (avoiding Christian Cross image) shape is also accommodated. (It looks at window frame design in Salman Mosque new buildings).
- Aesthetics element like calligraphy, Islamic geometry, and arabesque, is inserting into mosque design.

Islamic traditional based critiques about Noe'man's architectural interpretation actually are critiques about Modernism itself, including its architecture ideology. Achmad Noe'man factually a beauty lover, and modernity becomes the media and context of his beauty expression.

ACHMAD NOE'MAN NOW, AMONG MODERNISM ENFEEBLED: REVIEWING THE ARCHITECTURAL INTERPRETATION

This writing contains multi years Achmad Noe'man design thinking explanation (1975-2003). There could be three phases of Noe'man's thinking: first is progressive phase (1970s) when Noe'man struggled his ideas with his design acts, second is defensive phase (1980s) when Noe'man more explained his design to defend his interpretation, and third is reinterpretation phases (1995-s) when Noe'man reviewed and auto-criticized his previous design.

Now, Achmad Noe'man has already reduced his architectural working activities. He delegates many design responsibilities to his third son, Fauzan, to develop and continue his professional architecture field. He becomes a senior architect, who criticizes and guides young architects in his bureau. Outside that, he occupies art of Islamic calligraphy much.

Thus, Achmad Noe'man can look at himself more clearly, releasing any external ideology influenced. There are three facts about Achmad Noe'man: he is a good Muslim and always tries to apply Islamic values on his life. He is also a beauty lover, since he was a kid. He is also a modernist, because according to him many modern values appropriate with his Islamic principles.

His great obsession is to build beauty mosques. Life has been bringing him passed the time accompanied his father constructing mosque in his hometown, studied architecture in most-known technology institute, and then trusted to design a lot of mosques. If Muhammad Iqbal expressed Divine Beautiful by his literature writing, Noe'man also tries the Divine Beautiful into his architectural design.²⁸ And in his old age, he thanks to God because one of his sons will to continue his effort to design and build beautiful mosques.

People may debate about Achmad Noe'man's architecture "Islamity". But as personal figure, especially as professional architect, many Islamic values are

²⁸ This statement is describing his spirit behind sunlight design playing on Suharto Mosque roof in Bosnia.

reflected to him. More than that, he is proper to be called as a "Teacher" in professional architecture.

EPILOGUE: ISLAM IN INDONESIA AFTER MODERNISM: HOW DOES ITS ARCHITECTURE REPRESENT?

Architecture represents its era and its civilization. If Achmad Noe'man's architecture represents Indonesian Modern Islamic Movement era, so what will be the architectural manifestation of post modernism Islam in Indonesia? This writing tries to present the recent map, also some ideas for the future.

First map is about Indonesian architecture phenomena after Modernism (Indonesian modernist Architect can be mentioned as F.Silaban, Suyudi, Suwondo B. Sutedjo, Adhi Moersid, and so on). Some most interesting phenomena are:

- "Architecture for People" movement by Hasan Poerbo and his colleagues.²⁹ Flat in Dupak and Samba by Johan Silas can be mentioned as its architectural representation.
- "Wastu Architecture" by Mangunwijaya, which is more popular in cultural observer and social volunteer. The architecture of "Kampung Kali Code" can be mentioned as architectural representation of Mangunwijaya's "Wastu" concept.
- "Young Indonesian Architect (AMI – Arsitek Muda Indonesia) who emphasize freedom and creativity in exploring design ideas."³⁰

Second map is contemporary discourse about recent Islamic Architecture in the world, which is represented by Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Aga Khan gives a special award for architecture excellent in Islamic societies. In Indonesia, the awards have already given for some categories:

- Architecture and built environment that is empowering local societies, such as Pondok Pesantren Pabelan in Magelang, Kampung Kebalen in Surabaya, Kampung Kali Code in Yogyakarta, and Citra Niaga in Samarinda.
- Architecture that is adapting local genius in design, such as Said Naum Mosque in Jakarta and Citra Niaga Complex.
- Architecture that expressed harmony between progression and local tradition, such as Soekarno Hatta International Airport.

The third map is Indonesian Muslim people condition now. After Islamic young activist movement in 1980s, Indonesian Muslim people have experienced Islamic Awakening phase in 16th Hijrah century. This awakening creates most Muslim religious awareness, especially in urban and intellectual context. Even, the rich level people of Indonesian Muslim have already felt no dishonor to join Islamic activities, to spend a lot of money to enroll expensive Islamic study forum. Many children are educated in the good Islamic school, and know we can see

²⁹ This movement can be mentioned as anti-thesis to Architecture Department ITB supporting Soekarno's ideas about Modernism and his "Lighthouses" projects. Head of Department Suyudi and some lecturers were joined to design Conefo Building. Hasan Poerbo stated his disagree. Opinion difference between Suyudi's (modernist) and Hasan Poerbo's (populist) continued until now.

³⁰ This spirit is reflected in caricature by Bobby R. Irandita, "Arsitektur Modern in the Coffin", This caricature illustrates a sleeping Mummy says "Form Follow ...uhm Function".

many glorious Islamic school buildings (such as school of al Azhar in Jakarta and other cities, Ma'had al Zaitun in Indramayu, school of Darul Hikam in Bandung, and so on).

Are the glorious Islamic school buildings reflecting post modernism Indonesian Islamic architecture? Or it is reflected on the glorious city mosques, such as Great Mosque of Surabaya, Great Mosque of Bandung, and West Java Islamic Center in Bandung (PUSDAI), within political controversies in design and construction process? Or reflected in pure and exclusive "Islamic Settlement" such as suggested by extreme group like Darul Arqam or Indonesian Islamic State organization (NII – Negara Islam Indonesia)?

Learning from Indonesian Modern Islam movement, Armahedi Mahzar tries to map recent Islamic movements into three groups: Traditionalist, Fundamentalist, and Modernist. The traditionalists are who grow in traditional environment and try to preserve it, but also try to look recent live context. The Fundamentalists are who try to return all to Quran and Hadits and reject tradition and other truth outside both of them. The Modernists are who try to integrate Islamic teaching with Modern philosophy, science, and knowledge. The three groups show the differences opinion, but they have their own role: Fundamentalists lead in Islamic awareness as al-Din reintegration, the Modernists lead in wisdom reconstruction, and the Traditionalists lead in civilization revitalization.³¹ The new Islamic civilization must be engineered with religious spirit, used a sophisticated science and technology, and rooted to people.

This idea will be transformed into architectural manifestation as architectural concept that represents "Divine love and beauty, supported by science and technology competence, and rooted and solved people problems". And the main Indonesian people, most are Muslims, problems is their underdevelopment condition against the progressive era.

In spite of its appearance on various contexts, Islamic Architecture has a basic principle: to understand the Divine Beautiful and try to manifest it into space and form composition. Discussion, discourse, and opinion difference appear as the consequences of applying the principle into spirit of the era. Here, man is arranging his knowledge about "Islamic Architecture".

We can learn it from Achmad Noe'man. He described, "When I started to design Salman mosque, I imagine the mosque on the water pond. When morning sunshine touched the water surface, water will reflect the shining. And mosque shadow would be shown in the water, its motion adjusted with water ripples." Is the spirit to transform Divine Beautiful (including into built environment creation) possibly to be a spirit to answer and solve our people underdevelopment problems? Wallahu a'lam.

Bandung, June 30, 2003.

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³¹ Armahedi Mahzar. *Op.cit.* Pg. 91

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