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From Pendopo to Putrajaya: An “Urban” Metamorphosis of a Vernacular Mosque Archetype

[The Urban Vernacular in Southeast Asia: Settlement as Serendipity](#) • Book Chapter • 2025 •

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Abstract

The metamorphosis of the tropical vernacular mosque or masjid tiered form is mapped as variants of the “urban vernacular”-from its ancient “tropical” origins or pendopo or wakaf form to multiple colonial variants to modernising expressions, then finally to its expressionist epitome. It shows the ability of a generic tropical archetype to morph into its urban counterpart and contextual variations according to the pressures of era and place while retaining the ideals of its typology as a sacred space for congregation. The language of its final expression in steel and glass is further discussed in relation to the evolution of an industrialising nation-Putrajaya, true to its core purpose but languid

in its interpretation through time and geography. © 2025 selection and editorial matter, Nor Zalina Harun and Shireen Jahn Kassim; individual chapters, the contributors.

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