

URBAN HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN ACEH, INDONESIA: CONSERVING PEUNAYONG FOR TOURISM

HARYO WINARSO

School of Architecture, Planning and Policy Development
Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia

CUTDEWI

Department of Architecture
Syiah Kuala University Banda Aceh, Indonesia

It has been more than a half decade that the very destructive tsunami hit Banda Aceh, the capital city of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province, located at the northern part of Sumatra Island. So far the urban planning and development in the city is focusing on reconstruction and rehabilitation, which can be absolutely understandable considering the devastating impact of tsunami at that time, however as the time passes by, a new intention has to be created to the conservation effort not only to uphold the value that Aceh once had, but also as an attraction to boost tourism.

The paper argues that, despites some challenges in the interpretation and institution side, Puenayong would be the suitable place for conservation in Banda Aceh. Peunayong old shop-houses still retain the heritage architectural value. The long history of the area and the typical old Chinese architectural type of shop-houses make the area just the place for conservation. The regular maintenance by the owner such as painting, cleaning, and other efforts to protect old materials from decay have enabled this old shop-houses still stand at its architectural value today. As the economic value of the area is now increasing, reuse strategy could be used to maintain the character and the architectural value of the shop-houses and at the same time enhancing the environment quality of the site for tourist attraction.

Conservation, Aceh, reuse strategy, tourism, Peunayong

INTRODUCTION: ISSUES OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION IN BANDA ACEH

On the morning of December 26, 2004, the world witnessed one of the most destructive acts of mother-nature in the earth; two inter-connected disasters, a powerful earthquake followed by a massive tsunami hit the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The result was devastating; one report said that the economic loss resulting from the disaster amounted to US\$4.5 billion or 2.3 per cent of Indonesia's GDP. Between 90,000 and 125,000 new houses needed to be built, and another 40,000 had to be repaired (ADB, 2005). But the most appalling impact of this catastrophe was the loss of live. More

Address correspondence to Haryo Winarso, Urban Planning and Design Research Group, School of Architecture, Planning and Policy Development, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia, Gedung Labtek IX A, Jalan Ganesha 10, Bandung 40132. Phone 022 2509171, Fax 022 2501263. Email: hwinarso@pl.itb.ac.id

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than 110,000 dead have been buried, 132,000 were missing and more than 500,000 persons were made homeless.

It is absolutely understandable therefore that the first urban planning and development for Aceh after tsunami were focused on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the city. Rebuilding or providing houses for the people was one of the primary priorities. The Aceh Nias Settlements Support Programme (ANSSP) for instance, was aimed to assist approximately 3,600 households in 21 communities affected by the tsunami disaster in six affected districts, including Nias and Simeulue, which were most affected by the second earthquake in March 2005.

Accordingly, the overall planning and development objectives in Aceh, at that time, were to strengthen government response capacity to reduce vulnerability resulting from the loss of housing, livelihoods and displacement. This aims was carried out by promoting good governance and management at local government level; recover livelihoods by rebuilding communities and improving environmental and social conditions in the affected settlements which were the important issues for urban planning and development in Aceh after tsunami.

After more than half decade, the recovery and rebuilding have somehow taken place. People have rebuilt their lives. Infrastructures have been reconstructed and rebuilt. The BRR (Aceh Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Board) reported that the board had completed the constructions of around 134,000 houses, 3,600 km long roads, 273 bridges, 12 airstrips, 20 seaports, 3,193 places of worship, and 987 government office buildings. Besides, it had also constructed more than 1,400 school buildings and gave training facilities to around 40,000 teachers (Sina English, 2009). Concern to the culture and heritage which was somehow forgotten for sometime has now arisen again.

Before tsunami hit Aceh, the Government has held a *Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh* (Aceh Cultural Week-PKA). PKA utilised Acehnese traditional houses as the exhibition venue and opened daily for visitors. Some of the houses are authentic taken from villages around Banda Aceh and the rest are artificial or refurbished old houses that are built with modern technology and material, but with the traditional architecture style. One of the aims of this celebration was to up-held the cultural heritage of Aceh. Conservation of heritage buildings has also been regulated by the Indonesian Government by the enactment of The Act No.5, 1992 Concerning Cultural Objects and Government Regulation No.10, 1993 for the implementation of Act No.5/1992. The acts provide definition of heritage objects and procedures for transfer of ownership of listed buildings.

Some of the Banda Aceh areas still retain buildings that have heritage value, like the area of the typical Chinese shop-houses in *Peunayong*, Chinatown of Banda Aceh. This area was also hit by tsunami; some of the shop-houses even inundated by the sea water that flooded into the area. *Peunayong* is one of two oldest markets in Banda Aceh; as Davis quoted in a report (1625), for instance, reported that there were three markets in Banda Aceh; although this report was slightly different from a report by Graaf when he visited Banda Aceh in 1704, in which he noted there were two markets, both of them are noted that *Peunayong* was one of the markets (Lombard, 1991).

These shop-houses are organized in a group of buildings that have strong character of space instead of single building. These old shops have a long history of development and cross-cultural assimilation amongst Dutch Colonial administrators, Chinese immigrants, and amongst the Acehnese indigenous people. Therefore, the shops have a rich and unique architectural styles, Chinese-European and the modern 60s *Jengki* house (some said the word *Jengki* is derived from *Yankee*), that enrich the urban landscape character of Banda Aceh. These shop-houses are designated as protected architectural heritage and listed as protected building by BKP (*Badan Pengembangan Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata*, - Cultural and Tourism Development Board). The designation is also made clear in the proposed RTRW (Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah-Urban Spatial Planning) which will be enacted in a *Qanun* (local

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bye law) of Banda Aceh. However, this conservation concern was vanished after the devastating event in 2004.

Other issue of urban development in Banda Aceh despite the rebuilding and reconstruction as mentioned above is the identity making. A topic widely discussed by scholars (see for instance Abel, 1994). It is evident that Banda Aceh needs to maintain its identity after the development of mass housing and government offices that are not showing local identity, which are acceptable at that time in reason for fast development the much needed houses and government building for the running of life and governance. It is just the time now that consideration to the heritage value of Aceh has to be amplified again, particularly because there is now a growing awareness on the socio ecological aspect of urban planning in Banda Aceh particularly to show the local identity.

This paper argues that despite some challenges in the interpretation, institution and technical difficulties, *Puenayong* is the suitable place for starting, again, the conservation effort in Banda Aceh. Reuse strategy would be the desirable way for conserving the area as this strategy can suit with the increasing land value while at the same time retaining the essential character and appearance. In so doing the paper will be presented in four parts. Part two, after the introduction, presents the debate on the conservation effort, particularly the importance of interpretation. Part three presents the *Peunayong* case, its history and architectural legacy; followed by discussion on the importance of *Peunayong* for conservation. Finally a concluding remark is presented at the end.

URBAN CONSERVATION: INTERPRETATION, CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

Heritage interpretation

The fast growing urban development almost always destructive to the identity making of an urban area, if effort to maintain the old fabric of the urban areas is not carried out. Changes in value and physical identity of a city cannot be avoided as Larkham (1996) once mentioned, therefore, effort for conserving part of the urban fabric is important. However, as Martokusumo (2006) maintained, preservation and conservation of urban fabric in developing countries are still based on trial and error rather than through a well formulated public policy guidelines.

Urban identity can be constructed through several approaches, tangible as well as intangible; heritage is one of the important aspects of a tangible identity construction that can be used for identity making. However, the construction of identity through heritage needs an interpretation process as basically heritage is neutral without meanings before somebody able to give meanings. A heritage object becomes known to public when observers or participants ascribe meaning to heritage and categorizes them to historical, beautiful, important, etc; heritage can then exist as something valuable (Nuryanti, 1996). The interpretation process involves preserving meaning of past events, cross-cultural sensitivity, professionalism, and education or training (Sayers, 1989; Uzzell, 1989 in Nuryanti, 1996). Interpretation can also be approached through architectural design, spiritual truth, emotional response, deeper meaning, and understanding (Nuryanti, 1996). And thus are fully influenced by the interpreters' environment and their value. Legacy of the past and associations with cultural and political identity are aspects of the user when constructing and interpreting a 'heritage' object (Graham *et al.*, 2000; Halim, 2005). Therefore interpretation process is complex in that change occurs over time according to the changing agreed values among man (McCall and Simmons, 1996). These values are also not understood and defined in the same way by individuals; the individual values are influenced by many factors including personal view, social status, educational attainment and cultural background.

Unlike that of private, public and institutional heritages received more attention; history, memory, and identity interpretation for these kinds of heritages are usually formulated by professionals. They are often the most involved actors in the designation of protected heritage; historic cities, for instance, are marked out by the formal designations of government authorities and international organizations such as UNESCO (Ashworth, 1991). The officials' designations vary extremely in their criteria, depending on their experience, values and background (Ashworth 1991). Thus, private heritages, are generally not designated as protected heritage and are ignored as one of significant identity markers.

Cultural heritage in Indonesia to some may be regarded as the symbol of colonization; acceptance in the local socio political environment is therefore important. To save colonial products can be seen as saving the memory of imperialism power and will influence the future generations (Arshish, 2006; Graham *et al.*, 2000). In the early independence of Indonesia, such colonial buildings were ignored and replaced by a more modern and international style such as *Jengki* style (Kusno, 2000) and a more indigenous style such as some Indonesia's emerging traditional styles.

Heritage buildings were created by people in the past, interpreted by people at present time for past appreciation and future needs; therefore, users' interpretation as to whether the conservation is significant or not is a must. Obviously, heritage and community intersect with each other (Ashworth, 1988; 1991). Agreed value in the interpretation of old building is thus very important and as long as heritage buildings can accommodate the current needs of users, they will still exist.

Conservation and designation

Cultural heritage have an important role, not only in shaping the urban fabric, but also in the identity making. The physical attributes of buildings, public spaces and urban morphology and they are experienced by users or inheritors in the present and next generation (Orbasli, 2000). The question is how heritage objects can be designated and conserved? Man-made objects that are designated to be of heritage value are not only "monuments" such as churches, temples, all sorts of religious buildings, palaces, castles, fortresses, historic city walls or gates and other types of institutional buildings, but also a wide range of buildings such as residential areas and other old small buildings that are usually owned by private individuals. Major historic buildings have been frequently owned by state rather than private (Orbasli, 2000). Therefore some heritage, especially public heritage is easier to be designated for conservation rather than private one.

However, there is a chance for previously ignored old private buildings to be designated as heritage sites even though there might be dispute between stakeholders on the designation. Moreover, different groups of people will contest, reinterpret and recreate heritage in a context of social and cultural values that always change (Nuryanti, 1996). In Indonesian context, there is a growing trend towards heritage designation not only based on old, aesthetic values, and representative of a distinctive style, but also based on information and significant values for increasing knowledge, understanding history, and appreciating culture (see for instance Martokusumo, 2006: 2000). Hence, remnants of old buildings that represent a minority ethnic group, that has a long history and information even though architecturally less attractive than others could also significant to be conserved to show an identity. For that reason, private shop-houses in European-Chinese and *Jengki* are also important to be conserved. Such shop-houses provide historical information and are distinctive in style.

Nevertheless, conservation of private old buildings which have historical or architectural value is problematic as maintained by Orbasli (2000). Public intervention on private old buildings has to consider the ownership rights. Owners have the main legal right and power, while most of city governments in developing countries are not well equipped with tools for conservation in the sense

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of resources and legislation. Adaptation or reuse may solve the ownership problem as this approach enable the owner to earn more while the value of the building still retained.

Conservation and tourism: reuse strategy

In the last two or three decades cultural heritage tourism industry are growing, creating heritage product for heritage consumer as mentioned by Ashworth (1991). And thus the need for heritage conservation is shifted from merely the way to preserve old objects to conservation that can also mean economic business; heritage can have economic potentials. So, as maintained by Martokusumo (2006), the conception of conservation is now based on the positive change and imaginative reuse of the historic, while retaining their essential character and appearance.

Approaches for conserving heritage area are varies depending on the context and condition of the conservation area. If the objects are grouped in a central activity of a city a Tourism Business District development approach may be advisable as it was suggested for Jakarta (Winarso *et al.*, 2003). The approach basically is an integration of a mixed used development and reuse strategy as it is widely practiced in heritage conservation worldwide, and this is especially easier for remarkable heritage with good condition, space flexible and the special interest settlement (Casal, 2003). A building will remain empty unless there is a demand for structure of that type, thus reuse of heritage involves a sympathetic approach to historic unity and a creative use of space (Orbasli, 2000; Nasser, 2003), and this will include the reuse for tourism attractions. It is widely practiced the reuse of palaces, castles, mansions and religious buildings monasteries, for an alternative form of visitor accommodation in unique and authentic settings.

For reuse to have a positive impact, the consumer interpretation and behavior play an important role (Poria *et al.*, 2003). The interpretation by middle class people as the main market of heritage is very important in heritage tourism (Ashworth, 1998). Therefore, education, in form of information and signage is important (Nuryanti, 1996). The interpretation is also influenced by institutional arrangement of government institutions such as tourism and conservation board. If the tourism board is independent from government it usually motivated more by economic value and ignores the intangible value of heritage.

Criticism to conservation for tourism is centered on the argument that the driving force of reuse heritage for tourism is dominated by economic objectives, employment generation and revenue creation (Chang *et al.*, 1996) and the worry that although tourism-based activity could revitalize traditional buildings, it could also demolish them (Orbasli, 2000). The tourism industry can also push on demolishing heritage when it cannot fulfill economic requirement and the building cannot be converted for its need. Conservation for tourism is also criticized for its potential for damaging the environment as Tiesdell (1996) argues, that due to the limited capacity of the heritage environment in the sense of its architecture context, and environmental consideration, exploitation of heritage for tourism will caused excessive traffic generation and pressure for land use change. The space and infrastructure limitation, such as the narrow street that is not ideal for cars and tourist buses are also prone to create damage in historic area because the area was not designed for modern community and its intervention (Orbasli, 2000).

Moreover, Nasser (2003) argues that heritage reuse causes two problems from conservation perspective. The first problem is selectivity of land use generated by paying more attention to the conservation of the historic city areas intensively used for tourism. Second, inflationary pressure to local economic, price of land and property, as well as the goods are being sold based on tourist willingness to pay. This phenomenon will lead to higher land and building prices around heritage tourism areas. The

lower income community that is usually the main inhabitants in the conservation area has to go out to the outskirts of the city. The reuse is only for the rich people, no empowerment of local and minority people, so that it cannot be seen as economic development.

The special interest of tourism heritage is characterized by two seemingly contradictory phenomena, the unique and the universal; heritage will contest, reinterpret and recreate in a context of social and cultural values (Nuryanti, 1996). "The more heritages enable one to anticipate and adapt to changes, the more powerful that heritage becomes" (Nuryanti, 1996:258). Therefore, to achieve a balance and good heritage for tourism, the various functional demands as well as between form and function have to be maintained through a sensitive and responsive management.

THE PEUNAYONG: INTERPRETATION AND CONSERVATION CHALLENGE

Historical and architectural value: an interpretation

The relationship between Chinese and Acehnese has been developed since the 5th century; then in the 13th century it improved to become a bureaucratic relationship. During this era, the Asia's leading figure in exploration, Admiral Cheng Ho, sailed to South Asia, including Aceh. Between 15th and 18th century Aceh and China developed stronger trading activities (Usman, 2009). The Chinese who came to Aceh were also an integral part of the existence of Chinese Straits' settlement within the whole archipelago, in order to find new economic resources, such as pepper production (Khoo, 1998). Trading in South East Asia was concentrated in large urban centres in both the Dutch and British colonies; Singapore, Malacca, and Penang were the colonial British Straits Settlement, while centres in Java and Sumatra were under the jurisdiction of the Dutch colonial government. Besides being attracted by trading, during the European colonial era (particularly British, Dutch, and Portuguese), a numbers of Chinese came to Aceh to fill the demand for labour for developing colonial facilities and infrastructure, such as *Baiturrahman*, the central mosque in Aceh. The Chinese immigrants that moved to the Indonesian archipelago including Aceh were primarily from the lower classes - such as farmers, fisherman, and other labourers (Hadinoto, 2009). They came to Aceh from South China, Penang, Batavia, Malacca, Singapore (Lombard, 1991; Alfian, 2004) and Medan. Most of them were of the linguistic group -Khek or Hakka (Usman, 2009; Ahok, 1988).

By their trading skills, Chinese contributed substantially to the income for the colonial government through taxes. Thus, the Chinese were able to attract attention from the Dutch and gain a significant place in their colonial policies. For that reason, Chinese together with Christian Indonesian, *ulee balang* (a sultanate staff with higher strata in the Acehnese Sultanese while during colonial period was considered to be a Dutch ally), and other non-native, non-european communities consisting of Arabs, Bengalis, and Moors were recognized as higher class in the Dutch race-based hierarchical society than local people (Silver, 2008; Munawiah, 2007). Thus, Dutch colonial policy allowed a specific area for those non-indigenous eastern communities. The Chinese occupied most parts of *Peunayong*, while others were located in their neighborhoods. It is believed that *Peunayong* or *Pendayung* in Indonesian word, was the place of the paddlers of the sultan's ships (Manguin, 1999). This place was very strategic as a frontier during the Dutch-Acehnese war and as a place for warehouses and shops in the early period of the Chinese coming to Banda Aceh during Sultanate eras. Foreign traders found it easy to ship their goods to and from the port near *Peunayong*.

During the Colonial era, 1873-1942, Chinese culture in Banda Aceh continued to flourish in *Peunayong*. The then formerly commercially-based Chinese area expanded to become a space that accommodating Chinese institutions such as their own school and a religious building, *Tao Pe kong*. At that time, the

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majority of Acehese were busy with the guerilla war. They were fighting for their land rights seized by Dutch Colonial government. Furthermore, Dutch policy located the Acehese in the periphery of the city and accorded them a lower class. Most Acehese were positioned in the agricultural sector to support the increase in colonial resources. While some Chinese enjoyed economic prosperity with access to power and politics, most Acehese did not. Acehese also were separated from other non-European immigrants to diminish the struggle of Acehese cooperation with other stronger immigrants and powers.

From 1835 to 1910, *Wijkenstelsel*, the Dutch policy to separate non-european and non-indigenous people in one concentrated area (Hadinoto, 2009), restricted Chinese area in one particular part of the colonial cities. Shop-houses, narrow street frontage shop, were the way to adapt to the policy. The buildings comprise an association of ground-floor shops – with a commercial function - and above the shops are the houses – residential service. In the early era of the Chinese coming to Banda Aceh, shop-houses were one storey building made of wooden wall and structure. Then the structure of the buildings changed to two stories made of a brick wall for the first floor and a wooden structure and walls for the second floor. In the 19th century, there was an improvement in shop-house materials with a brick wall for the first and second floors, and timber for the upper floor structure. This building type (see Figure 1) which presumably was built under *wijkenstelsel* period is similar with early shop-house style during 1800 – 1850s in Penang and Malacca (Koh-Lim, 1989).

The shop-houses belong to a group of colonial old buildings that are designated as protected colonial heritage by BKP and have been stated in the bill of *Qanun* of Banda Aceh. In the past, the European-Chinese style of shop-houses were owned and built by Chinese, as a minority ethnic group and colonial ally in divided Indonesia, during the period of Dutch power. Therefore, the 19th century shop-houses are regarded by the local people as colonial inheritances, with their technology and architecture style used are the same with majority Dutch buildings.



Figure 1.
Shop-house in Penang (left) and in Banda Aceh (right)
Source : author collection

In the mid 1960s, to reduce the spreading of communist ideas, the Chinese school in *Peunayong* was closed and rationalised from Chinese to Indonesian Government ownership. Following this policy, there was also a gradual shift in ownership from shop-houses owned by Chinese traders' to Acehnese and gave them chances to involve in trading activities. It is believed that the closing of the Chinese school have influenced the development of Chinese culture (Usman, 2009; Hadinoto, 2009). The policy has also made many Chinese, from South China and Straits Settlement, who were not born in Aceh pushed to leave Banda Aceh. Some of them went to Medan, Jakarta, other South East Asia countries, and back to China. The old generation sold, rented, and bestowed the shops to Acehnese and their relatives or families.

One of the impact of Soekarno (the first president of Indonesia) urbanistic policy carried out right after the independence, was the transformation of style from Chinese-European architecture of shop-houses to the 1960s *Jengki* style (Hadinoto, 2009). It transformed again to the more modular international, the 1980s style. In addition, some roads that existed during the colonial era were also changed, demolished or resized. When the road was a narrow street, it was functioned as side alley; after the enlargement in the 1960s, the alley become main road and attracted new shop developments. The change of the road influences the architectural landscape of *Peunayong*.

It is believed that Chinese architects have undergone Western education particularly from European countries, the birth place of modern architecture in the 1920s. Apparently, some architects were then adopted this modern thought into their architectural design and at the same time to make Chinese akin with European in social hierarchical system.

After the independence, the awareness of the indigenous and national spirit were growing, thus during the 1960s and the 1980s the next development of shop-houses showed variations of modernism thought completed with ornamental decorations and were more often designed for utilitarian purposes. Some old shop-houses, like in Jl.A.Yani and Jl.Kartini (see Figure 2) were changed into the architecture of *Jengki* Style. The 1960s onwards was the dark period of Chinese culture and architecture in Indonesia. Thus, the *Peunayong* now consists of dwellings of the 80s and the 2000s era of shop-houses.

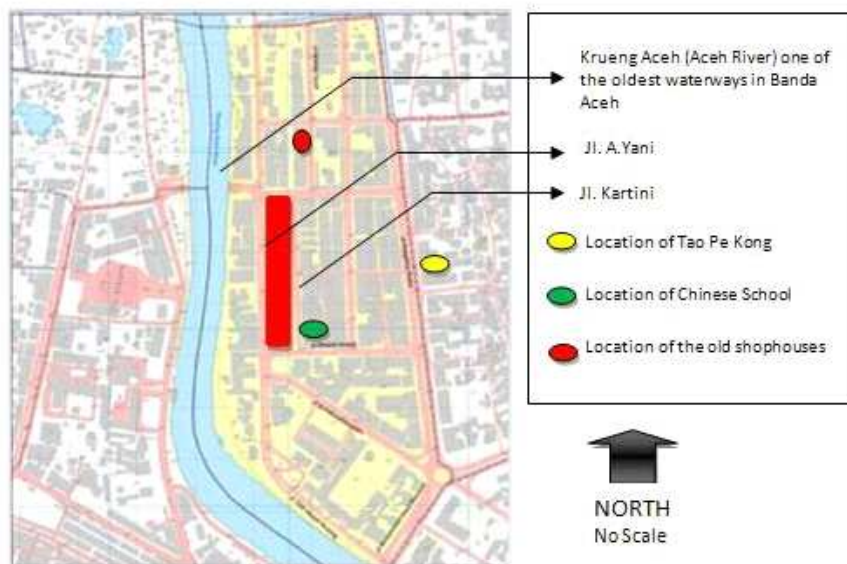


Figure 2 :
Map of Peunayong
Source : Biro Administrasi Pembangunan Aceh

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During the New Order (1966 – 1998), the Indonesian Government treated Chinese differently; they were seen as an alien to Indonesian, isolated and have limited access to politics. In Banda Aceh, the rejection of the Chinese continued during the long conflict between separatist Acehnese and Indonesian Government, and this had an impact in the maintenance of *Peunayong* shop-houses. Another significant era of change in *Peunayong* was after tsunami. During the rehabilitation and reconstruction era some buildings in *Peunayong* got a ‘facelift’, a reconstruction with a new architectural style. Thus, there is a decline in the “authenticity” of the Colonial-Chinese architectural character and appearances (see Figure 3).

Value and challenge for conservation

From the government and conservationist perspectives such as AHC (Aceh Heritage Community), *Bustanulsalatin* (a local NGO), and other scholarly organizations, *Peunanyong* is one of the valuable places to be conserved. *Peunayong* has a long history and represent both a cosmopolitan Aceh (some literatures and day to day discussion say that Aceh is an acronym for Arab, China, European, and Hindia), but more specifically *Peunayong* represents Chinese communities. Therefore, In the Urban Spatial Planning (RTRW) *Peunayong* is designated as a heritage conservation area.



Figure 3 :
Late 19th–Early 20th Century Style (left) 1960s “Jengki” Style (middle)
2000s “After reconstruction (right)
Source : Author collection

Do people in *Peunayong* aware to this designation? Interview to some people in the area revealed that the interpretations of this area are varied; some regard these old shop-houses as just a shop, a remnant of past history; other consider the shop-houses as an old and dirty Dutch colonial buildings; nevertheless there are also people who regards the shop-houses as a house or shops that have a value as a historical building, or have a strong and beautiful architecture from the past.

Owners of these shop-houses have been undertaking some upgrading to have a more livable and modern living space and also for accommodating the growing economic activities. However, the upgrading activities were particularly carried out to rebuild the collapsed building after the devastating tsunami; regrettably, the upgrading and reconstructions were not considering that the building and the area are listed and designated as conservation area.

The main reasons for the upgrading are more on the use value of the shop houses in the sense of livability and economic activity purposes. *Peunayong* is located in the fast growing economic area of Banda Aceh; rehabilitation, thus means upgrading the economic value. For this reason the owners even made use of all parts of the shop - some part for housing, other parts for a warehouse, and the front part for a shop. Even more, they also make the supposed to be a pedestrian way for display and cover up the beautiful facade of the old buildings with advertisement board (see Figure 4).

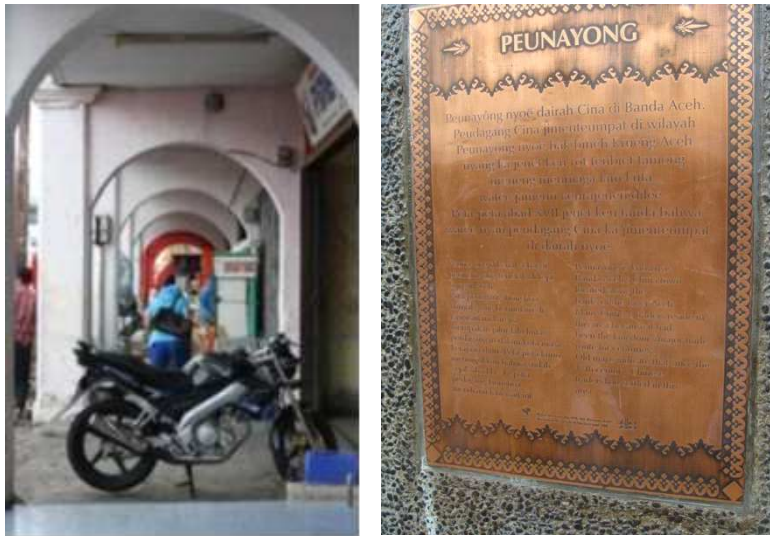


Figure 4.

The plate of Bustanussalatin (right) and recently reuse of five-foot way (left)

Source: Author's collection

After the tsunami people also aware that the structure of *Peunayong* shop-houses are strong; the building is incredibly well-built; it did not crumble and all inside were safe when the earthquake and tsunami hit Banda Aceh. Although after the tsunami some shops-houses have been upgraded, but the old character and architecture appearance of the area are still easy to be noted. Some owners are also still retaining a strong feeling that the shops are an integral part of the image or landmarks of *Peunayong*. There are some examples of shop reconstruction in *Peunayong* trying to adopt a traditional style to a minimum level. To remind people that *Peunayong* is a conservation area, *Bustanussalatin*, with the permission from the owners, placed a plate with a written interpretation of the area in the 19th Century (see Figure 4). There are some examples of shop reconstruction in *Peunayong* trying to adopt a traditional style to a minimum level (see Figure 5).

Peunayong, is undoubtedly has the value to be conserved, not only because of the architectural value, but also because of its significant historical value. However, as all shops-houses are privately owned, conservation for this area faces challenges: from owner occupiers who are not aware of the importance of conservation nor willing to conserve because of the maintenance cost; and tenant who thinks that conservation should be carried out by the owner, not himself. There is also a political issue surrounding the designation of *Peunayong* as conservation area which makes it difficult for the implementation enforcement.

This condition is worsened by the fact that the government, although has designated *Peunayong* as conservation area, has inadequate expertise and funds to enforce the plan. There is no conservation

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guideline and zoning regulation that can prohibit developments that are not in accordance with the plan.



Figure 5:

Shophouses in Jl. Kartini before tsunami (left), after tsunami (middle), and rebuilt shophouses tend to adopt Chinese Architectural Style (right)

Source : Deni Sutrisna, SS, Balai Arkeologi Medan and author's collection

Reuse Strategy

Peunayong, as aforementioned, is one of the fast growing economic areas in the city. Based on the interviews to some shop owners in 2010, the prices of land is increasing because on the increasing demand for economic activities. The current rent prices of one unit shop-houses is in a range of 20 million rupiah to 30 million rupiah or 2,000 to 3,000 USD (1 USD=10 thousand rupiah), depending on the quality and position of the shops, while the same unit shop-house was priced at 15 million to 22 million rupiah (1,500 to 2,200 USD) before tsunami in 2004 and around 8 million to 12 million rupiah (8,000 to 120,000 USD) in the 90s. The selling price is also increasing significantly; from 80 to 120 million rupiah (80,000 to 120,000 USD) in the 1990s, to 150 to 400 million rupiah (150,000 to 400,000 USD) before tsunami, and now the price can reach 600 million rupiah (600,000 USD). This condition can endanger the conservation effort, creates pressure for the new use, thus generates the alteration into the new architecture.

To avoid the demolition of the old buildings and jeopardizing the conservation area, a reuse strategy can be utilized. As discussed, reuse strategy can avoid the alteration in the architecture of the buildings; also reuse strategy allows changing in the activities of the building without jeopardizing its architectural and historical value. Many historical area in the world, particularly those in developed countries have use reuse strategy (see for instance Dewi, 2007). Regrettably, sound regulations to enable reuse strategy in Banda Aceh are not in existence. The RTRW and RDTR which are available now are not yet in accordance with the law No. 26 of 2007 regarding spatial planning. Furthermore, there is no detailed conservation guideline for the area not to mention the zoning regulation.

Reuse strategy for *Peunayong* area can be imposed by providing the enacted and enforced new regulations. Some of the requirements are:

1. The new RTRW which has to be made statutory by *Qanun* has to be mentioned clearly that *Peunayong* is a conservation area
2. Zoning regulation followed RDTR as regulated in the Law no 26 of 2007 regarding Spatial Planning has to be made and implemented. This zoning regulation has to made clear on what kind of development that is permissible or prohibit in the area

3. A detailed conservation guideline for *Peunayong* should be made to guide the new or reuse development in the area.

Beside these new regulations, reuse strategy demand an integrated development policy of the government. Reuse strategy for *Peunayong* can be integrated to the tourism development in Aceh. This can be seen from the Growth Rate of Economy by Industrial Origin of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province in 2005 –2008 where the economic growth rate of trade, hotel and restaurant increased at 4.50% in 2008, after a low growth at 1.7 % in 2007. For this reason, promoting the area for tourism is important.

If those requirements are met, the commercial use of the area can also adapt to the new development easily.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There have been many transformations in *Peunayong* since it was developed in the 19th century: the roads are changing: from its size, position, and into its name; some buildings are changes: from its style, its function, into its structure. Demographic compositions are also changing from previously Chinese majority to mixed ethnic groups. Nevertheless, its Chinese character and appearance are retained.

Before the colonial period, *Peunayong* was the place for Acehnese paddler's community along the waterway that connected port and Sultanate Palace. Then, during the colonial war, the area was used as a frontier for Dutch colonial troops. During the Dutch colonial era, *Peunayong* underwent a development and change; the one-storey shops-houses with wooden structure had changed to two-storey brick structure shop-houses. After the independence, some buildings were demolished. There were some conversion in its function and ownership, likewise the transformation of the architecture style and structure.

Looking from its historical and architectural value, undoubtedly, *Peunayong* and its attributes have shown significant history and richness of architectural heritage which demands a conservation. But since many *Peunayong* shop-houses are privately owned, the suitable conservation strategy have to be made. Since the economic activities in this shop-houses are integrated to the economic infrastructure of the city, and located in the city centre where economic development is growing, a reuse strategy for conservation and connects the conservation to the growing tourism industry in Banda Aceh is seen as the most suitable strategy. However, such strategy will only be effective if new regulations and policy are imposed.

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