

# MALAY IDENTITY IN THE EXPLORATION OF MINIATURE CREATION AS SOUVENIRS: CONTEXTUAL MINIATURE OF MALAY ARCHITECTURE OF NORTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA

Zulkifli ZULKIFLI<sup>1</sup> , Gamal KARTONO , Misgiya MISGIYA<sup>3</sup>, Barli KIFLI <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>*Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Medan, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Kenangan Baru, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, 20221 Sumatera Utara, Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia*


<sup>4</sup>*Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Medan, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Kenangan Baru, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, 20221 Sumatera Utara, Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia*

## Article History:

- received 24 August 2022
- accepted 12 July 2023

**Abstract.** As a testament to the past Malay glory, there are monumental architectures in Medan (North Sumatra, Indonesia), Langkat (North Sumatra, Indonesia) and Batubara Regencies (North Sumatra, Indonesia) that have become Malay icons. The city of Medan and several areas in North Sumatra are known as tourist destinations since the early 20th century. The tourism has strong potential but it has not been supported by representative souvenir products. This article discusses the preservation of Malay identity through research into the manufacture of miniatures as souvenirs. The aim is to explore the potential of Malay architectural forms to be explored in the production of miniature souvenirs to revitalize North Sumatra's Malay identity. The replicated research methods are survey, creation (creative experiment), and conservation methods in the socio-cultural approach. Research data was collected from various sources and analyzed using an interactive model. The results of the study explain that the potential identity of Malay architecture can be mapped based on its type (function) and structure. Its exploratory potential, both technically and aesthetically, lies in the dynamic visualization of roof forms and architectural facades. As it is researched based on the iconic Malay architectural figures, the miniature products are exclusive in the form of unique souvenirs with a strong Malay identity.

**Keywords:** architecture, culture, Malay identity, miniatures, North Sumatra, society, souvenirs.

 Corresponding author. E-mail: [zulkiflifbs@unimed.ac.id](mailto:zulkiflifbs@unimed.ac.id)

## 1. Introduction

North Sumatra (NS) is a province in Indonesia made up of two major ethnic groups, the Malay and Toba Batak people (Simanjuntak, 2011, p. 157). NS is an area of natural beauty and rich in cultural diversity. Because of its natural beauty and cultural diversity, NS has been visited by European tourists since the 1920s (Damanik, 2014). The area around Lake Toba in Parapat (NS), Berastagi in Karo Regency (NS), Nias (Sumatra, Indonesia), and the city of Medan have been known as tourist destinations since the Dutch colonial empire era. The city of Medan is not only the capital of NS province but also known as the Malay city (Azmi, 2012, pp. 6–8; Fitri Handayani et al., 2019). Over time, Medan city has developed into a modern city, the third largest in Indonesia, with a diverse and multi-ethnic population. Its geographical location is also very strategic as it is close to Malaysia and Singapore as neighboring countries.

The development of tourism in Medan city and other Malay areas of NS has not been consistent with the existence of supporting elements, especially the availability of unique souvenir products. While the availability of unique souvenir products as part of the local identity greatly supports the advancement of tourism. Based on surveys conducted at several locations, they are known to generally sell products that do not represent Malay identity. Some are imported from other areas like Yogyakarta (Java, Indonesia) in the form of batik and wood crafts. In particular, products sold in malls and supermarkets are generally products that do not have a local identity.

Based on the above problem, it is necessary to develop the types and forms of souvenirs that reflect local Malay characteristics. There are many visual references for its development that can be used as a source of inspiration. Many iconic architectural forms are known to the public as signified and signifier of Malay civilization. This iconic architecture is mainly located in Medan city, Langkat Regency (LR) and Batubara Regency (BR). In this regard, the purpose of this research is: 1) to find out the potential of iconic Malay architectural forms which is explored in the creation of miniatures as souvenirs, in order to revitalize the Malay identity of NS; 2) creatively doing technical and aesthetic miniature creation to identify the technical and aesthetic and economic potential; and 3) to find out the contribution of the miniature towards the development of the souvenir products and Malay identity preservation.

As the main capital for the creation and the development souvenir products, creative human resources are available in NS. There are those who have skills as students of visual arts and there are also students of vocational schools. In addition, there are many people to rely on when it comes to developing the creative industries. Thus, the potential for the development of exclusive Malay souvenirs to support tourism in NS can be maximized.

This souvenir product is developed based on the principle of tourism art. The development of miniatures as souvenirs aims to help preserve Malay identity and provide a solution for sourcing unique and original tourism products. This is important because wherever tourism is developed, it is always supported by the contribution of its souvenir products (Rahajeng, 2018). This is part of efforts to revitalize Malay identity related to the preservation of local culture in synergy with efforts to develop creative industries to support tourism in NS.

Recent developments as a basis for this research include research on painting based on ethnic art forms from NS, including ethnic group Malays. Among other things, this research discusses the visual culture of the Malay ethnic group which is expressed in their architecture (Zulkifli et al., 2020). Subsequently, there are other studies to develop touristic souvenirs based on the iconic shapes of Medan city, including the iconic Deli Malay shape such as Maimun Palace (Medan) and Grand Mosque of Medan (Medan) (Zulkifli et al., 2021). This study demonstrates the artistic character of the iconic form that defines the identity of Deli Malay architecture.

## **2. Malay identity in its architecture**

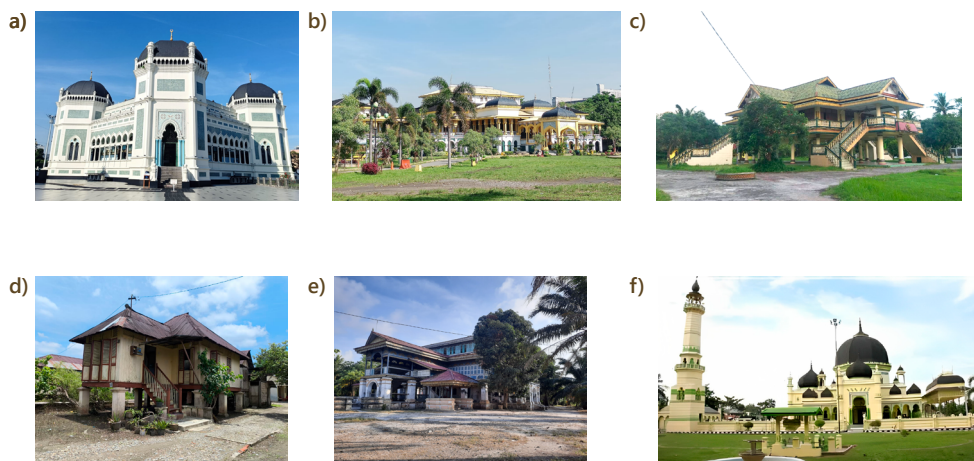
Malay civilization has created a distinctive architectural form which can be expressed as iconic. The definition of iconic is often understood in semiotics which is the science of the relationship of signs. The iconic form is a form that shows the similarity between the

representamen and the object (Budiman, 2011, p. 20). Iconic form can also be understood as a form that represents a specific object, character or identity. In this way, the iconic form simultaneously becomes the identity of the object or figure it represents. In terms of an architecture or a building, a building can be categorized as iconic when it follows two defining characteristics. The first one is that it is famous, at least for some constituencies. The second one is the judgment of iconicity is a symbolic or aesthetic judgment which means an architectural icon is imbued with a special meaning that is symbolic for a culture and/or a time, and that this special meaning has an aesthetic component (Sklaier, 2006, 2010).

The city of Medan and the east coast of NS have forms that can be categorized as iconic Malay forms, particularly monumental architecture. The iconic architectures especially include the Malay Palace for Sultan of Deli, namely the Maimun Palace, the Grand Mosque of Medan (Medan), and the Azizi Mosque (NS), as a symbol of the religiosity of the Malay community, the Niat Lima Laras Palace (NS), the Traditional Council (Mabmi) Building in Stabat (TCMBS, NS), and the traditional houses of the Malay community (Figure 1).

The six forms of Malay architecture above are prominent and primarily represent the identity of NS Malays, and are well known in Indonesia and neighboring Malaysia and Singapore. Sociologically, this architecture represents a place to live, a place of worship, and a place for community meetings and Malay leaders in NS. Although the existence of these iconic Malay architectures is already legendary, it has not been explored as a reference for tourist souvenir products. Souvenirs that are widely available in Medan city and other Malay areas are products of a general nature that do not specifically represent Malay identity.

The existence of Malay architecture can be identified and analyzed based on horizontal and vertical approach. Horizontal approach is related to the patterns or models of the occupancy such as a building that is directed towards the wind direction, or the one placed



**Figure 1.** Some forms of iconic Malay architecture in North Sumatra (Indonesia): a – Grand Mosque of Medan (Medan); b – Maimun Palace (Medan); c – Traditional Council (Mabmi) Building in Stabat (Langkat Regency); d – Malay House; e – Niat Lima Laras Palace; f – Azizi Mosque (source: created by authors)

to face the main road. As for the vertical approach, it is an approach that groups an architecture based on the top, middle and bottom parts including the inside and outside part of the architecture (Fitri Handayani et al., 2019). In regards with this study which is a study of Malay iconic architectural forms as a reference of miniature development, the analysis follows the vertical approach covering the top, middle and bottom parts from the outside of the buildings as well as the ornaments of the buildings.

Through this research, tourist souvenirs will be developed in the form of miniatures of iconic Malay architecture. Many artistic sides or perspectives of iconic Malay architectural forms can be explored. The results of collecting and identifying the iconic Malay architectural forms are managed in a database. In order for conservation efforts to be ongoing and sustainable through the revitalization of Malay identity, digital development models were created.

### 3. Malay tourism souvenir

Tourism souvenirs are products that are produced and consumed in the context of tourism (Zulkifli et al., 2010, p. 7). Souvenirs that can promote tourism progress are those that present the local social and cultural environment as a tourism experience. Tourist souvenirs, in this case, are objects that recall experiences, as traces of experiences that cannot be repeated (Causey, 2006, p. 64).

As a tourism product, souvenirs have practical principles to bear (Yulianto, 2015). R. M. Soedarsono says, that the characteristics of tourist souvenir products are: 1) imitation of the original; 2) short, compact or miniature form of the original; 3) varied; 4) the sacred, magical and symbolic values are left behind; and 5) inexpensive (Tri Atmojo, 2007). Accordingly, the principles of tourism are representative, simple, practical, varied, and relatively inexpensive (Zulkifli et al., 2021).

The research on tourism souvenirs from NS so far has been related to two things, the form of the creation and the reference base. Generally, the developed form of work is the exploration of batik, ceramics and handicrafts in general. The base of reference is generally ethnic ornaments and artefacts from NS. There has not been a specially-designed souvenirs based on the iconic Malay architectural form, especially those who explore it on a small scale by using different mediums and techniques.

In Indonesia, areas with tourist souvenirs are Bali (Indonesia) and Yogyakarta. These two areas are known as tourist destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists. The souvenirs vary greatly in style and form but all reflect the social and cultural conditions of the community and surrounding area. When it comes to NS, the typical souvenirs are in the tourism spot of Samosir, especially in Tuk Tuk. In other areas, the souvenirs have not yet optimally explored the peculiarities of the region. Products that are general in nature certainly do not represent a specific area so they are not considered souvenir products (Pelly, 2015, p. 147; Rahajeng, 2018). By developing souvenirs in the form of architectural miniatures, it is hoped that NS will have unique souvenirs with a Malay identity, like Bali, Yogyakarta, and other regions with their own characteristics.

Miniature can be understood as a small form that is similar to the reference form and can be made more attractive (Imawati et al., 2021). In its function, the miniature becomes the model of a real object to be manufactured or built or a representation of an existing monumental form. As a model of the original form, the presence of the miniature is linked to its size and scale which is exactly as the architect made it. In contrast to miniatures as representations of monumental forms, like miniatures as souvenirs, they can be adapted to specific conditions and purposes as well as materials and techniques can be developed.

In various places that have developed tourism, many offer tourist souvenirs in the form of miniatures depicting iconic architecture. For example, miniatures of the Eiffel Tower (Paris, France), Big Ben (London, England, United Kingdom), and Tower Bridge (London), the shape of windmill in the Netherlands, Menara Kembar Petronas (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), and in Indonesia like the miniature of Garuda Wisnu Kencana Cultural Park (Bali), or Tugu Yogyakarta (Yogyakarta). Miniature forms like this are potential alternatives to be developed as tourist souvenirs in NS.

This miniature manifests itself in the examination of different media and techniques such as wood, cardboard and clay flour. Of course, these three media also have different characters but they offer an alternative for a more flexible development through creative industry, including home industry as a way of sustainability. This miniature model is in three-dimensional form as a display on a table or showcase. Three-dimensional shapes are shapes with length, width and height visible from all directions (Sutiono et al., 2021). This applied art product is realized in realistic proportions, adapted to the character of the material and the technique. Aside from being a tangible souvenir, this product is loaded with cultural revitalization that is preserving Malay identity which in turn will boost tourism in NS.

#### 4. Research method

In general, this research applies a socio-cultural approach which was done through creative experiments, analyzed and expressed a descriptive-qualitative manner. This research was conducted in Medan city, LR and BR and in the studio/workshop of the Department of Fine Arts of the State University of Medan (Medan). The methods developed are collection methods, creation method and conservation method.

The survey method was applied when collecting socio-cultural data on Malay identity in the form of their iconic architecture to be developed into miniatures as tourist souvenirs. Next was when data on appreciative reactions were received from observers using questionnaire after the creation of the miniature was completed. Observers were asked to provide their responses to the miniatures created based on visual elements, compositional principles and the principles of tourism art. In addition, the creation or the experiment method follows the Graham Wallas' creativity theory by mapping the process of creating miniatures of preparation, incubation, illumination, execution, confirmation, validation and development (Damajanti, 2006, pp. 23–24). Then the preservation of culture and traditional identity through conservation methods (Dharsono, 2018).

Research data was collected from various sources, in the form of written data, photos, interview results, notes on the development process and appraisal assessments by the

observers. The research informants and the observers of miniature products are eight experts whose research concentration is related to Malay socio-culture, especially related to architecture, as well as art observers in NS. To ensure the validity of the data, data triangulation was carried out by comparing the data obtained from different sources. Finally, the data were analyzed according to the interactive model, including data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusions.

## 5. Findings and discussion

To explain the results of the analysis and the discussion of the findings of this research related to the formulated problem, several aspects of the study are described, including: 1) the potential character of iconic Malay architectural forms to be developed into souvenir products as well as their exploration in miniature visualization as souvenirs for tourism in NS; 2) exploring the potential of materials and techniques, and exploring the aesthetic and economic potential of miniatures as souvenirs; and 3) small contribution to preservation of Malay identity and development of souvenir products from NS.

### 5.1. Potential forms of Malay architecture

In general, Malay architecture can be classified into several types and structures, distinguished by their dominant character. Based on the type, Malay architecture can be classified into residential buildings, place of worship (mosque buildings) and assembly halls. There are residential buildings that are splendidly made such as the palaces of kings/sultans such as Maimun and Niat Lima Laras Palaces. The mosque building is the evidence that the Malays are adherents of Islam in which case they are considered non-Malays if they are not Muslims (Pelly, 2019, p. 8; Simanjuntak, 2011, p. 13). The meeting hall is a place where the community can gather and discuss things such as the building of the Indonesian Malay Culture Council. The description of this type of building is relevant to the explanation of its function.

Based on the structure, Malay architecture can be identified as three parts: the top, middle and bottom (Fitri Handayani et al., 2019). The roof of Malay architecture generally takes the form of a pyramidal roof for residential buildings and a domed roof for mosque buildings. For palace buildings, the pyramid roof model is more diverse and detailed. There are also those that combine the shape of a pyramidal roof with a dome like the Maimun Palace building. In addition, on the middle part, many pillars and niches are placed and those are not only intended for open air circulation and lighting but also a sociological proof of the openness and hospitality of the Malay people. On bottom part, Malay buildings are generally in the form of open stage houses or at least higher than the ground. The goal, apart from functionality, is to make a great impression on the appearance of the building and the image of its occupants (Zulkifli, personal communication, April, 2022).

This diversity of Malay architectural forms has the potential to be developed into souvenir products, preserving Malay identity while supporting tourism in NS. The shape of Maimun Palace, for example, looks unique. Apart from having a distinct Malay characters, it is also inclusively combined with European and Persian architectural characters. The European character is characterized by the shape of the walls and the use of the many columns. While the

Persian character is characterized by the application of the dome shape which is generally applied to mosque architecture. The unique form of the Maimun Palace is explored through its external appearance, the roof, walls and floor as a miniature souvenir. The structure and composition of the roof of the Maimun Palace looks dynamic in the form of graded patterns and variations on the accompanying shapes. The wall appears dominant with the repetition of window shapes and niches with poles. Since both floors are used, the ground floor appears massive, which reduces the impression of a building/house on stilts. Viewed from the front, the Maimun Palace shows a symmetrical composition with a tendency to widen to the right and left. This form has the potential to be developed as a miniature display on tables and shelves or showcases.

The next iconic Malay architecture is the Grand Mosque of Medan, which is not far from the Maimun Palace as it is still a complex of the Sultanate of Deli. The original designer was a Dutch architect who also designed the Maimun Palace named Theodoore van Erp (Akhyar, 2020). The shape of the mosque building has a symmetrical octagonal pattern with projections often called wings on the South, East, North and West sides. Above each is a domed roof surrounding the main dome of the mosque building. The wing shape acting as a porch is one of the unique features of this mosque besides the alley around the sides fitted with open arched windows. This mosque is very majestic seen from the direction of the intersection of Sisingamangaraja Street and Jalan Masjid Raya and has a strategic position. Today, Grand Mosque of Medan and Maimun Palace are tourist attractions for the general public, especially historical tours of the Sultanate of Deli. Hence, these two architectural forms have the potential to be explored as miniature souvenirs.

Next is the Niat Lima Laras Palace architecture which is a testament to the greatness of the Malay coastal kingdom. This building is now showing its age and looks poorly maintained. It is, therefore, necessary to make conservation efforts to preserve it as it is a valuable cultural asset. The contribution of this research is limited to the preservation of its form through the production of miniatures as tourist souvenirs. The architecture of Niat Lima Laras Palace has a unique shape. A dynamic impression can be seen from the composition of panels and shapes on the walls and roof, emphasizing the existence of the pavilion which does not give a flat impression. In addition to the dynamic pattern of shapes, it is also supported by the application of a distinctive Malay decoration. This palace looks great, especially from the front perspective. As a reference for the development of miniature souvenirs, the main potential lies in the pyramidal roof pattern, which consists of several levels and aims at the four cardinal points. The next potential lies in the facade, which, unlike other forms of palaces, for example in Europe, is rich in curves and projections, cavities and columns.

Also famous is the Malay architecture of the type of house of worship, the Azizi Mosque. This mosque stands majestically on the edge of the Trans-Sumatra Highway in Tanjungpura (LR). This mosque is a mosque of the Malay Sultanate of Langkat (LR), which is still well preserved today. The uniqueness of the architecture of this mosque lies in the shape of the roof and surrounding walls. The shape of the roof is very varied with a dynamic composition, although it tends to be in symmetrical balance. The roof of the mosque is in the shape of an octagonal dome, the largest of which is placed in the center as the roof of the main building of the mosque. Three medium-sized domes are located at the front, left and right of the main



dome. Several small domes of different shapes and heights around the main dome add to the uniqueness of the mosque's roof. Another uniqueness is on the walls or sides around it. The walls or sides of the mosque building are rich in niches and poles that create open spaces for community activities.













The Malay architecture that has been modernized includes the Indonesian Malay TCMBS. This building was constructed of concrete, especially on the floor, columns and stairs. Even though it has been modernized, the Malay building character is still strong, particularly the impression of the stage construction and placement of the stairs that is sideways, not frontal. The impression of the stage building is enhanced because the lower part of the building is open plan and shows many pillars. At the very top is the roof of the pyramid-shaped building. The existence of stairs, columns and the application of a pyramidal roof model shows the strong character of Malay architecture in its structure. In addition, it is supported by the appearance of a typical Malay ornament that is transparent. The architectural character of the building is a powerful potential to be explored in miniatures as souvenirs.

Iconic Malay architecture can be understood as an architectural form that developed in Malay society including those influenced by the architectural culture of other regions or other countries. Various types of Malay architecture were examined in this study. It can be said that the original form is as developed in the society. Communal residential houses that have passed from generation to generation over time are the reference for the development to be palaces or other buildings such as assembly halls or custom halls (Zulkifli, personal communication, April, 2022). In this regard, one of the examples of iconic Malay architecture is the form of communal houses. Although there are differences or variations in shape and style in its development, its distinctive character is still recognizable (see Table 1). Traditional Malay houses are definitely in the form of houses on stages and pyramid roofs and are full of layered decorations. The materials used are natural according to local wisdom such as wood for construction, walls and floors, then palm leaves for the roof. Changes that are occurring concern the use of materials like wood material is being replaced by concrete and palm leaf roofing is being replaced by zinc or tile roofing along with the modernization of Malay society. This change does not change the character of the original form very much. Therefore, when developing miniatures, one of the possible references is the architectural form of the residence or house of the Malay community.






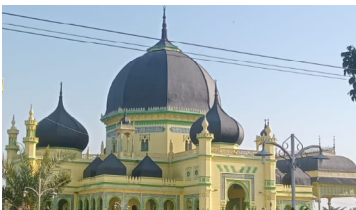






Based on Wallas' theory of creativity used in this study, the exploration of miniature creation includes stages of incubation, illumination, execution, and validation (Damajanti, 2006, pp. 23–24). The process begins by observing the character of the dominant architectural form as a marker that is easy to recall. The dominant character is based not only on type and shape but also on a symmetrical or asymmetrical compositional pattern in which monumental buildings are generally symmetrical in pattern, both mosque and palace buildings so the formal impression is more pronounced. The asymmetrical pattern is a community building which makes it look more informal and dynamic. The character of the architectural form is also shaped by the patterns running to the side or to the rear. Malay architecture develops these two patterns, particularly palace buildings, while mosques generally have a rectangular pattern in the sense that the difference in length is not contrasted. Then there is a horizontal or vertical tendency where Malay architecture tends to be more horizontal although built like a palatial building on several levels.



**Table 1.** The top, middle, and bottom division of Malay architecture's character (source: created by authors)

Types/functions		Structures		
Residential buildings	■ Houses of common people			
		- top	 Pyramidal roof	
		- mid	 Open space	
		- bottom	 Staged	
	■ Palaces of kings/sultans	Maimun Palace (Medan, North Sumatra (NS), Indonesia)	- top	 Pyramidal and domed
			- mid	 Many columns/niches
		- bottom	 Impression of a stage	
		Niat Lima Laras Palace (NS)	- top	 Pyramidal room
		- mid	 Open-space	
	- bottom	 Stage-shaped		

End of Table 1

Types/functions		Structures	
Places of worship	■ Grand Mosque of Medan (Medan) 	- top	 Domed roof
		- mid	 Many niches/columns
		- bottom	 Impression of a stage
	■ Azizi Mosque (NS) 	- top	 Domed roof
		- mid	 Many niches/columns
		- bottom	 Impression of a stage
Assembly hall/custom hall	■ Traditional Council (Mabmi) Building in Stabat (Langkat Regency, NS) 	- top	 Pyramidal roof
		- mid	 Many niches/columns
		- bottom	 Stage-shaped

In particular, the features of Malay architecture are identified by the shape of the roof, center and floor or base and the details of the walls, stairs and the decorations. The exploration of Malay architectural forms as miniatures is intended to consider these general and particular characters. This investigation emphasizes the dynamic and varied character of the

roof shape and the building perimeter covering the center and floor (base) of the building. In addition, exploration can be performed by converting the tendency of sharp straight lines into soft curved lines. Likewise with the field's tendency to be gently curved. Relevant curved lines and fields are explored to create miniatures as souvenirs for children.

## 5.2. Technical and aesthetic exploration of miniatures

The main media or materials explored in this creative experiment of miniature creation were wood, cardboard and clay flour. These materials are readily available in the social environment and represents the character of hard, soft and flexible. Supporting materials are provided in the form of stickers to highlight details of building structures and Malay decorations as well as relevant supporting knick-knacks. The tools used are adapted to the material to be examined. For wood, light carpentry tools are used, mainly cutting tools. While the cardboard material is enough to use a cutter as a cutting tool. To put them together, these two materials use glue, which is a strong, quick-drying glue (superglue).

Wood and cardboard materials are available in the market, in contrast to clay flour, which should be studied in this research. Clay flour is made from a mixture of wheat flour, starch and polyvinyl acetate white glue and colored liquid depending on the combination. Clay flour is malleable. It must be used while still damp/soft and needs approximately 10 hours to dry. The process of making miniatures with clay flour medium requires patience as it is sculpted in stages and each stage needs time to dry. The process becomes effective when it is manufactured/produced in bulk so that each product is manufactured in sequence so there is no idle time.

The coloring process takes place parallel to the batter production. Based on socio-cultural colors, the Malay colors are yellow and green. When the miniature is finished, there is no post-processing process. It just needs time for it to dry and cannot be modified afterwards. Miniature products with clay flour have the character of being rather solid because of the ingredients. The weakness of clay flour media is that it is not easy to make thin or small miniature structures. The solution is to make it thicker or larger than normal proportions, making this a typical character of miniatures using clay flour media. For example, to keep the miniatures safe, the packaging is made of clear acrylic material.

The technique for making miniatures with wood media is almost the same as with cardboard media. Both use materials in the form of slabs, which are then cut according to the pattern and then assembled. The only difference lies in the hardness and softness of the material, which of course has consequences for easy processing. In line with the development of digital technology, miniature designs using wood or cardboard media are produced through computer applications. Application programs like *CorelDRAW* are effective in designing repetitive patterns and working on the details of shapes and decorations. This miniature is lighter than the miniature clay flour media and requires no packaging.

Based on the Wallas' theory, the aesthetic potential of miniature products is understood in the stages of execution, confirmation, validation, and development (Damajanti, 2006, pp. 23–24). Internally, this aesthetic potential is understood through observational data throughout the creation process through to the realization of a miniature product, reinforced with data from daily notes. Each phase of the exploration process is discussed as a vehicle of

appreciation and at the same time as a control mechanism for the product to be developed. On the other hand, the aesthetic potential of miniature products is understood externally based on the appreciative responses of the observers collected through questionnaires. The aesthetic and artistic potential of miniature products is seen through the application of visual elements and compositional principles to represent Malay identity as well as tourism principles.

The observers generally responded positively to every aspect asked in the appreciation questionnaire. Based on the aspect of unity, the miniature product shows the unity of concept and the visuality of the dominant character of Malay architecture which is expressed in the balance of the composition, which is generally symmetrical from the main perspective. Miniature products also show the impression of rhythm from the various elements being composed as well as aspects of emphasis used to reinforce Malay identity. Being a miniature product, this product applies the principles of proportion and perspective although some may need to conform to the miniature character. Based on the principles of tourism art, this product is made in simple, practical, yet varied in size. In general, this product has a distinctive feature that represents a strong Malay identity (Figure 2).

In addition to the aesthetic potential, the economic potential of miniature products was also rated positively by the observers. Economic potential is understood in two aspects, namely economic potential related to the production process and economic potential in marketing. Based on the research, the process of making miniature products can be done efficiently as they enable mass production. In addition, from a sociological point of view, there are many qualified local human resources available. This production efficiency can be understood in terms of the processing time, the labor required and the costs involved and all of which are calculated as part of the production costs. This production efficiency supports the effectiveness of the development of miniature products where sustainability is developed in the form of creative industries.

The economic potential in terms of product marketing is considered since the beginning of research into miniature development where this miniature product is developed with the principle of tourism art. Sociologically, the largest market for souvenir products is mobile consumers such as tourists visiting Medan city or NS in general. Medan is the largest Malay city in NS and also in the Sumatra region. Geographically, the Malay territory of NS is close to neighboring countries, especially Malaysia. Intellectual tourists usually want exclusive souvenir products that represent the culture of the area they are visiting, in this case NS with its Malay identity.



**Figure 2.** Miniatures of architectures as souvenirs with Malay identity: a – wooden media; b – clay flour media; c – cardboard media (source: created by authors)

### 5.3. Malay identity in the exploration of miniatures as souvenirs

The contribution of miniatures based on iconic Malay architectural forms to the development of souvenir products and the preservation of Malay identity is understood through the results of discussions and the completion of questionnaires by the observers. In this case, the researchers distributed photos of miniature products from the research results to observers for consideration. Before completing the questionnaire, the observers is given a preliminary explanation of the scope of the contribution and the indicators so that the observers has a full understanding when completing the questionnaire. The general indicator of a tourism souvenir product represents the region or local culture, namely North Sumatran Malay, mass-produced in the creative industries and intended for general consumers and realized in simple, practical and varied forms.

This miniature product is an image of NS as it was developed from iconic Malay architectural forms. It is synonymous with Malay along the East coast of NS, including the city of Medan as the center of the Deli Malay kingdom/sultanate. The iconic Malay architectural form in question has become a landmark or is becoming a marker for someone remembering NS. Of course, as it is based on the iconic Malay architectural form, this miniature product differs from those in other places, which means that this product is unique and exclusive. In addition, since it is mass-produced for general consumers, the selling price is of course relatively cheap. Next, the principles of simple, practical and diverse are very relevant for products oriented as tourism goods which in turn contributes to the preservation of NS' Malay identity.

## 6. Conclusions

The potential of North Sumatran's Malay architectural forms explored in the creation of miniatures as souvenirs is strong and it helps the revitalization of the Malay identity in NS. The potential is technically and aesthetically supported in representing the Malay identity. As a strong cultural identity, the architectural forms can be mapped based on the types and the structures. Based on the type (function), they can be divided into residential buildings (palaces, houses), places of worship (mosques, prayer halls), places of assembly (customs halls). The structure can be used to identify the top, middle and bottom of the building. The upper part of Malay architecture generally takes the form of a pyramidal roof for dwellings and domes for places of worship, but a combination of the two forms also exists. The middle part consists of many pillars/niches representing the openness of Malay society and the lower part is a stage model. The potentials of Malay architecture offer diversity in the variation of the types and the structures and they are the cultural identity of Malay that needs to be revitalized.

The technical and aesthetic examination of the miniature emphasizes the dynamic and varied character of roof shapes and architectural facades. Wood, cardboard and clay flour with the appropriate tools are used as alternative media. The design process takes place on a digital basis. Technically, using cardboard is more practical, but aesthetically, wood has more potential. The aesthetic quality of miniatures is understood based on the application of visual elements and compositional principles to represent Malay identity as well as the principles of tourism. Miniature aesthetics as souvenir products stand in the context of preserving Malay identity in the creative industries. The technical and aesthetic potential of creating miniatures



can be realized as it is supported by tourism resources, human resources and creative industries in NS. In addition, this miniature product which was developed based on the iconic Malay shape is of course a unique tourism product in NS. The existence of this miniature as a tourist souvenir represents one of the benefits of the local culture and reinforces the identity and ethnicity of the North Sumatran Malays.

## References

- Akhyar, A. (2020). Masjid Raya Al Mashun Medan. *Tribun-Medan.Wiki.com*. <https://tribunmedanwiki.tribunnews.com/2020/01/16/masjid-raya-al-mashun-medan?page=all#>
- Azmi, A. (2012). *Rumah panggung Melayu Deli: Tinjauan Rumah panggung di Kota Medan*. Unimed Press.
- Budiman, K. (2011). *Semiotika visual: konsep, isu, dan problem ikonisitas*. Jalasutra.
- Causey, A. (2006). *Danau Toba: Pertemuan Wisatawan Dengan Batak Toba Di Pasar Suvenir*. Bina Media Perintis.
- Damajanti, I. (2006). *Psikologi seni: sebuah pengantar*. Kiblat Buku Utama.
- Damanik, E. L. (2014). Mencermati Kepariwisataan Sumatera Utara. *Analisedaily*. <https://analisedaily.com/berita/arsip/2014/8/30/59479/mencermati-kepariwisataan-sumatera-utara/>
- Dharsono, D. (2018). *Indonesia Masa Depan Adalah Indonesia Masa Lalu Yang Kreatif* [unpublished source].
- Fitri Handayani, M., Nawawiy Loebis, M., Ginting, N., & Tamiami, H. (2019). Karakter Spasial Hunian Vernakular Melayu Deli. *Talenta Conference Series: Energy and Engineering*, 2(1), 107–114. <https://doi.org/10.32734/ee.v2i1.395>
- Imawati, I., Rusmawat, R. D., & Nurjati, N. (2021). Media Miniatur Rumah Adat Dengan Panel Surya untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Imiah Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 5(2), 272–278. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jipp.v5i2.34356>
- Pelly, U. (2015). *Etnisitas Dalam Politik Multikultural* (Vol. 1). Casa Mesra.
- Pelly, U. (2019). *Tak Hilang Melayu Di Bumi: Antara Keragaman Dan Keseragaman*. Casa Mesra.
- Muhar Omtatok: Dari Melayu Untuk Me. (2021). *Keris Bahari & Hukuman Salang*. <http://puakmelayu.blogspot.com/>
- Rahajeng, A. (2018). Strategi Pemasaran Produk Suvenir Pendukung Desa Wisata Tinalah Dan Program Bela Beli Kulon Progo. *Jurnal Pengabdian Dan Pengembangan Masyarakat*, 1(1), 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jp2m.41025>
- Ramadan, Sh. (2018). Masjid Azizi Langkat Berusia Ratusan Tahun. *SumutPos.co: Tepercaya, Media Semua Komunitas*. <https://sumutpos.jawapos.com/shaum-ramadan/2374307576/masjid-azizi-langkat-berusia-ratusan-tahun>
- SeMedan.com. (2017). *Tag: Istana Lima Laras*. <https://www.semedan.com/tag/istana-lima-laras>
- Simanjuntak, B. A. (Ed.). (2011). *Melayu Pesisir Dan Batak Pegunungan (Orientasi Nilai Budaya)*. Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Sklair, L. (2006). Iconic architecture and capitalist globalization. *City: Analysis of Urban Change, Theory, Action*, 10(1), 21–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810600594613>
- Sklair, L. (2010). Iconic architecture and the culture-ideology of consumerism. *Theory Culture and Society*, 27(5), 135–159. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276410374634>
- Sutiono, E., Degeng, I. N. S., & Praherdiono, H. (2021). Pengembangan Media 3D Untuk Mengkonstruksi Keterampilan Memanipulasi Siswa Vokasi. *Jurnal Kajian Teknologi Pendidikan*, 4(3), 233–241. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um038v4i32021p233>
- Tri Atmojo, W. (2007). *Dampak pariwisata terhadap perkembangan seni kerajinan kayu di Gianyar Bali 1930–2002: Kelangsungan dan perubahannya* [PhD/Doctoral Thesis, Gadjah Mada University]. Special Regency of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. <https://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/36410>
- Yulianto, Y. 2015. Kreasi Seni sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Budaya di Padepokan Bagong Kussudiardja Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Media Wisata*, 13(1), 252–266. <https://doi.org/10.36276/mws.v13i1.219>

- Zulkifli, Z., Ibrahim, A., Pasaribu, M., & Khair Amal, B. (2021). The revitalization of iconic shapes through the creation of relief dimensional paintings as tourism software products (case study in Medan City, Indonesia). *Randwick International of Social Sciences Journal*, 2(4), 450–460. <https://doi.org/10.47175/rissj.v2i4.291>
- Zulkifli, Z., Mesra, M., & Misgiya, M. (2010). *Pengembangan Desain Produk Cenderamata Pariwisata Sumatera Utara Berbasis Karakteristik Pariwisata Alam, Pantai, Dan Budaya*. <https://digilib.unimed.ac.id/id/eprint/19949/2/Fulltext.pdf>
- Zulkifli, Z., Sembiring, D., & Pasaribu, M. (2020). Tradisi dalam Modernisasi Seni Lukis Sumatera Utara: Eksplorasi Kreatif Berbasis Etnisitas Batak Toba. *MUDRA: Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 35(3), 352–359. <https://doi.org/10.31091/mudra.v35i3.878>