

**Gunawan Tjahjono & Josef Prijotomo**  
**Postcolonial Traditionality**

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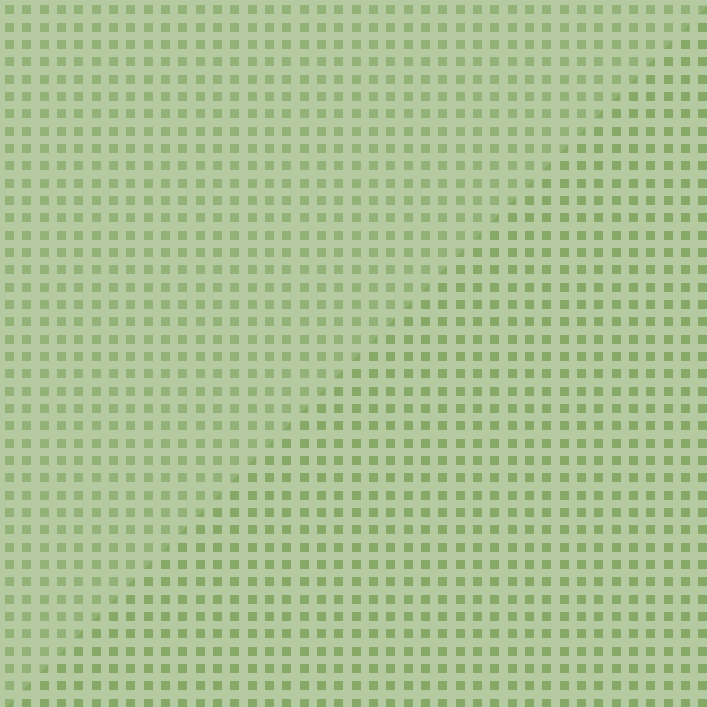
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Abidin Kusno [Guest Editor]

ISSUE 2

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Gunawan Tjahjono &  
Josef Prijotomo  
Postcolonial  
Traditionality



Inaugural Speeches in the Built Environment:  
Global and Contextualised





Gunawan Tjahjono & Josef Prijotomo

TU Delft Open 2017

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Postcolonial  
Traditionality

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Inaugural Speeches in the Built Environment:  
Global and Contextualised

**Inaugural Speeches in the Built Environment:  
Global and Contextualised**

Series Editors: Carola Hein and Herman van Bergeijk  
[Chair History of Architecture and Urban Planning, TU Delft]

ISSUE 2

**Gunawan Tjahjono & Josef Prijotomo**

Postcolonial Traditionality

Guest Editor: Abidin Kusno

Design: Sirene Ontwerpers

*This small booklet contains the inaugural speeches of Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo on their appointments as professors at the University of Indonesia and Surabaya Institute of Technology, 10 November. The texts provide novel insights into their respective approaches to Indonesian architecture, and appear here for the first time in English. An analytical reflection on their work by the architectural historian Abidin Kusno introduces them. The notes in the speeches are made by the editor.*

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# Inaugural Speeches in the Built Environment: Global and Contextualized

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Inaugural speeches have long been unique moments in the careers of academics in many countries: they offer time to pause, to reflect, and to envision new approaches. Planners and architects in particular have used such speeches to tie together insights into design work and education and to offer a programmatic view on their own role in the academic community. Prepared with great care for university and general audiences, inaugural lectures also offer later researchers insight into the thoughts of these scholars at a specific moment in time. Material gathered for and notes written on the occasion of these lectures can help such researchers understand the work habits and thought processes of their authors, perhaps even their relationships with colleagues and students. This series presents inaugural lectures – translated into English and contextualized with scholarly introductions – to unlock information for comparative research and set the stage for new investigations. For example, scholars can use these works to explore educational activities in the built environment or to study the dissemination of planning and design ideas. The series continues with the words of two highly influential professors from Indonesia.

*Carola Hein and Herman van Bergeijk*





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**FIG. 1** A photo taken by Tjahjono (accompanied by Prijotomo) in Sumba Island, eastern Indonesia, of a traditional Marupa house being constructed in the manner of mutual help by the community. The photo shows the ritual performed after the elementary structure was set up for the roof. The owner of the house sits on the top of the structure.

# Postcolonial Traditionality: Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo

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*I would like to take this opportunity to revisit the challenge posed by Van Romondt. I think the challenge has not yet been taken up seriously by our nation. The current architectural construction of national identity has not fairly benefitted our mosaic of ethnic diversity. Since Independence, issues of identity in architecture have arisen numerous times in different forums, with little result. This indicates that our contemporary society is looking for self-liberation from the constraint of a rigid social norm. In this endless exploration I think it would be better if we could first understand the position of architecture in Indonesia, in order to determine where it wants to go and by what means are we going to get there. On this issue, Van Romondt's speech has laid out a foundation on which we can search for an Indonesian architecture.'*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gunawan Tjahjono, "Arsitektur Di Indonesia: Kancan Penjelajahan Tanpa Batas" (paper presented at the Inaugural Speech for Professorship in Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Depok, University of Indonesia, 28 December 2002).

In 2002, Gunawan Tjahjono opened his inaugural speech at University of Indonesia with a reference to Vincent Van Romondt, the last remaining Dutch tutor of architecture in Indonesia, who had pioneered an approach that challenged Indonesians to think about the relationship between architecture and ‘nation-building’. Since independence, the topic of ‘towards an Indonesian architecture,’ has received various interpretations, with numerous references to Van Romondt. Josef Prijotomo, one of the most respected Indonesian architectural theorists, for instance, wrote an article in a newspaper in 1982 entitled: ‘Van Romondt dan peran arsitekt Indonesia [Van Romondt and the role of Indonesian architects]’. Prijotomo reminded Indonesian architects of Van Romondt’s inaugural speech and his emphasis on the importance of architecture in the nation-building of postcolonial Indonesian society. He also revisited Van Romondt’s question of whether social and cultural values of Indonesia could be the foundation for the construction of architects’ identities in this time of transition.<sup>2</sup>

Indonesia is a postcolonial country, and its architects engage with the spirit of decolonization by coming to terms with (instead of ignoring) their colonial past.<sup>3</sup> This reflection on inaugural lectures delivered by Indonesian professors in the postcolonial era reveals a simultaneous identification with and problematization of a Dutch/European legacy of architecture.

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- 2 Josef Prijotomo, “Van Romondt Dan Peran Arsitek Indonesia (Tanggapan Buat Johan Silas),” *Surabaya Post*, 15 July 1982. The article was a response to his colleague, a former student of Van Romondt, Professor Johan Silas who discussed (in the same newspaper) the emerging role of “super clients” in determining architectural culture. Prijotomo reminded readers that Van Romondt pointed out that the socio-aesthetic aspect of architecture is most uncertain especially in any time of transition, but that the social role of architecture remains crucial in the formation of architects’ identity. See also forthcoming booklet.
  - 3 On the colonial and postcolonial construction of Indonesian architecture, See Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

This booklet seeks to explore the theme of architecture and postcolonialism by focusing on the inaugural lectures of Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo as symptomatic responses to a postcolonial condition, in an effort to construct or re-work an ‘Indonesian architecture’ – a theme that was central to Van Romondt’s inaugural lecture.<sup>4</sup> It addresses this theme by considering the political context against which their lectures emerged. We start with a brief and discursive discussion of institutional shifts in architecture at the time of transition, from a more technical sphere to ‘architecture’ and how such a shift has shaped architectural thinking beyond the technical, to capture the social. The discussions provide context for understanding the theme of post colonialism in the inaugural lectures of Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo. This introduction hopes to stimulate further exploration from different angles, including those of architectural education and professional association.<sup>5</sup>

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- 4 Gunawan Tjahjono, “Arsitektur Di Indonesia: Kancan Penjelajahan Tanpa Batas” (paper presented at the Inaugural Speech for Professorship in Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Depok, University of Indonesia, 28 December 2002). Josef Prijotomo, “Inaugural Lecture: Arsitektur Nusantara: Arsitektur Perteduhan Dan Arsitektur ‘Liyen’ Pembacaan Arsitektural Atas Arsitektur Masyarakat Tanpa Tulisan” (paper presented at the Inaugural Speech for Professorship in Design Theory and Method, Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Surabaya, Institute of Technology 10 November, 19 April 2008).
- 5 A history of Indonesian architectural education and professional association still needs to be written. There is some documentation on annual architectural awards at the office of Indonesian Institute of Architects (IAI) in Jakarta and there are some annual reports on activities in some Indonesian architectural schools, but they have not been put together under a historical narrative. The first, and only, attempt to write a history of Indonesian architectural education was 30 years ago. See Suparti A. Salim, “35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia,” *Kongres 35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur di Indonesia* (1985), pp.9-24

## Colonial and Postcolonial Interface

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Architectural discourses in postcolonial Indonesia could be said to have started in 1950, although the Institute Technology of Bandung – ITB (the former Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool) had been established much earlier, in 1920. Sovereignty was only officially transferred from the Dutch to Indonesia in 1949. On 25 October, 1950, a course in ‘building construction [bouwkunde afdeeling]’ was opened at the Faculty of Engineering Science in ITB.<sup>6</sup> The term ‘architecture’ however, was not used until 1957 when a unit entitled the ‘Department of Architecture and Fine Arts’ was established. In 1950, there were only 20 students in the department, taught by a small group of staff.<sup>7</sup> Of this group of about six Dutch tutors, the most influential were Prof. Ir. Jacques P. Thijsse, Prof. Ir. F. Dicke, and Prof. Ir. V.R. van Romondt. Indonesian professors who were once taught by these tutors remembered them favourably.<sup>8</sup>

These Dutch tutors played a key role in designing the curriculum, which owed much to the architecture school in Delft. Van Romondt was perhaps the most popular. An Indonesian architect recalled him stating: ‘the true architect is an artist with knowledge of engineering. Thus an insinyur with artistic inclination will be able to create form based on the three pillars of the architectural profession: soul (*djiwa*), material (*materi*), and reality (*kenyataan*).’<sup>9</sup> For Romondt:

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6 By 1959, the Faculty of Engineering Science was integrated into the Faculty of Exact Science (Fakultas Ilmu Past dan Alam).

7 Salim, “35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia”, p.9

8 For instance, Parmono Atmadji, after citing Prof. Ir. F. Dicke, declared that “architecture shouldn’t represent any personal ambition. Instead its main purpose is to serve people, humanity and society and if it had a belief system, it would be a dedication to God.” Parmono Atmadji, “Inaugural Speech: Arsitektur Dan Pengembangannya Di Indonesia “ in *Kumpulan Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar Dosen & Alumni*, ed. Ratna E.S. B. Setiawan, Maulidina D.K.D (Department of Architecture and Planning, Gadjah Mada University: Yogyakarta: 1981), p.19

9 Van Romondt, as cited in Salim, “35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia”, p.12

*'While architects can be consulted for their knowledge of the technical, the artistic, and the social life, the latter two aspects (the artistic and the social) are the most uncertain, especially in the time of political transition... The technological side, on the other hand could leap forward without sentiment by continuing to solve issues posed by technical challenges. In these three fields of knowledge (the technical, the artistic and the social), the technical occupies a relatively stable ground as it serves to satisfy the artistic and the social. The firmness of the technical has given the architect a means to carry out his or her duty. That is perhaps why architecture is located in Fakultas Teknik [...]'<sup>10</sup>*

This philosophy evidently attracted students, as enrollment increased from year to year to the point where there was clearly a shortage of teaching staff. By 1952/1953 there were 225 students, which grew to 430 by 1955/1956. It was reported that the three to six Dutch docents intermittently covered every aspect of the school. As anti-Dutch sentiment in Indonesia increased towards the end of the 1950s due to the conflict over West Guinea, all of the Dutch docents returned to Holland with the exception of Vincent Van Romondt, who stayed until 1962.<sup>11</sup>

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- <sup>10</sup> Vincent van Romondt, "Menuju Ke Suatu Arsitektur Indonesia" (paper presented at the Inaugural Speech, Fakultas Teknik Universitas Indonesia, Bandung, 26 May 1954).
- <sup>11</sup> Van Romondt, as cited in Salim, "35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia." p.15. Suparti Salim recorded that prior to Van Romondt's departure in 1962, he reminded Indonesian students that: "... architecture is universal in its capacity to fulfill the aspirations of people. Architects should carry out this universal task. Architectural education ought to be universal too capable of reaching all the scientific fields."



The departure of the Dutch docents left a vacuum for a year. In 1958 the government was able to bring in three members of teaching staff from Austria and two from the U.S under the Post WW II American assistance program, carried out by the Kentucky Contract Team.<sup>12</sup> The team worked together with Van Romondt until the program ended in 1962 (which coincided with Van Romondt's departure). It is not entirely clear how such a dramatic change in the faculty transformed architectural education in Indonesia, but Indonesian professor Johan Silas recalls that:

*'In 1957, I went to ITB to study for six years, and the curriculum was the old Dutch one geared towards bouwkundig ingenieur. The boundary between bouwkunde (civil engineering) and architecture [was not yet clear]. During my time I still had to learn how to construct a road and a bridge. Yes! And I had to know how to calculate the price, the timber price, iron price. Then it was moved to pure architecture and they eliminated all these unnecessary [engineering] subjects. We still had two Dutch professors at the time. When they left we had professors from Australia and some American. That is also the reason why we needed to speak English. I finished in 1963.'*<sup>13</sup>

From 1963 onwards the school of architecture was fully in the hands of Indonesians. The government had decided to open more architecture schools, such as in Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (1962), Diponegoro University in Semarang (1962), Hasanudin

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<sup>12</sup> For an account of this transition period, see: Kenneth Watts, "Urban Planning and Development 1948-1989, a Personal Memoir," *Habitat International* 16, no. 2 (1992); See also Ellen Shoshkes, *Jaqueline Tyrwhitt: A Transnational Life in Urban Planning and Design* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> As cited in Freek Colombijn, "I am a Singer": A Conversation with Johan Silas, Architect and Urban Planner in Surabaya, Indonesia," *Indonesia*, 102 (October 2016), p. 11

University in Makassar (1963), University of Indonesia in Jakarta (1965), the Institute of Technology of 10 November Surabaya (1965) and Udayana University in Bali (1965).<sup>14</sup> Largely, graduates from the ITB Bandung staffed these schools, all still very much influenced by the Dutch curriculum. Johan Silas, who was involved in setting up the architecture school for Surabaya's Institute of Technology, pointed out: 'we just copied ITB's curriculum, including the books used. No big deal.'<sup>15</sup> There is not yet enough information available to historicize the transformation of Indonesian architectural institutions from the Delft/Dutch model to those influenced by the U.S. or British and German models, but by the beginning of the 1970s more Indonesian students were sent to the U.S. for their graduate studies. Despite the change from engineering-oriented content to architectural design (as indicated by Johan Silas), today Indonesian architectural schools (which total 142) are largely housed in Faculties of Engineering (Fakultas Teknik).<sup>16</sup>

The location of architecture in Fakultas Teknik raises the question of architectural identity. Van Romondt acknowledged the firmness of the technical, but was not quite sure if the technical could adequately represent the spiritual will of the new nation. For Van Romondt, this should be drawn from Indonesian art and culture. Van Romondt's assertion continues to haunt architects of postcolonial Indonesia: 'Culture and art cannot be obtained just simply by establishing an institution. Culture and art must be born from a spiritual will of a nation (- for the time being represented by its leaders -) as the embodiment of the spiritual life of the public'.

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- 14 Salim, "35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia" p.20. The government's initiative to open more architectural school was in some ways to catch up with private universities which had already opened their architectural schools as early as 1960.
- 15 Colombijn, "I am a Singer," p. 14
- 16 Salim, "35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur Di Indonesia"

The following two inaugural lectures by Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo could be said to articulate a way of locating architecture in the culture and art of Indonesia, thus opening up a space to think about (postcolonial) ‘Indonesian architecture’. In doing so, they have also challenged the institutional location of architecture in the Fakultas Teknik. Before discussing the significance of these two lectures, it may be useful to consider some of the earlier postcolonial inaugural lectures as they too have contributed to the thinking of postcolonial Indonesian architecture in relation to nation building.

### Connection: Tribute to Earlier Postcolonial Inaugural Speeches

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During the 1980s there were various attempts at a national level, through congresses, to highlight the connection between an architecture and culture that is specific to Indonesia: ‘Traditional Architecture’ (Jakarta, December 1981); ‘Towards Indonesian Architecture’ (Yogyakarta, December 1984); ‘The Role of Cultural Identity in Indonesia’ (Jakarta, September 1984); ‘Indonesian Traditional Architecture’ (January 1986). In these congresses, a series of questions were asked: Does tradition belong to the past? Can it be rediscovered in the postcolonial era as a basis for constructing an Indonesian architecture? How should ‘Indonesian architecture’ be periodized? Should it include the colonial era’s invention of ‘Indonesian’ tradition? How relevant is ‘tradition’ or ‘modernity’ for thinking about ‘Indonesian architecture’? Does tradition suggest an architectural strategy for the future? The 1982 national architectural congress closed its meeting by declaring that ‘in the efforts to support the building of the nation and the state and the development of culture, there is a need to develop an Indonesian architecture, conceptually and substantively, as a totality of architecture.’<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> “Conclusion of the National Congress II of the Indonesian Association of Architects (Iai)”, (paper presented at the Rekaman Kongres Nasional II IAI Ikatan Arsitek Indonesia, Yogyakarta, 1984).

A series of inaugural lectures were also organized around the theme of 'towards an Indonesian architecture'. For instance, in 1981 Parmono Atmadi emphasized that 'architecture is a product of culture and thus an expression of the development of national cultures. The history of a nation can be traced in the history of architectural development of that nation'.<sup>18</sup> Such a mission demands architecture to move beyond technocratic tendency, to enter the field of social sciences and humanities. Atmadi thus further indicated that 'Indonesian architecture can only develop its character according to the aspiration of nation-building if architects work together across different disciplines with experts from different fields'.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, in 1984 Sidharta proclaimed in his inaugural lecture: 'architecture in Indonesia needed to be understood within social contexts. Such research could then be used as a consideration for designing architecture with an Indonesian identity'.<sup>20</sup> And in 1991, the most accomplished student of Atmadji and Sidharta, Eko Budihardjo, in his own inaugural lecture explained that 'what we mean by socio-cultural gaps is the discrepancy between societal norms and the professional norms of architects as a result of difference in culture, education and socio-economic status. As a result, architects produce architecture, housing, and urban design that are insensitive to socio-cultural values and disregard the realities of everyday life, and they contribute to the elimination of the essential symbolic dimensions of life'.<sup>21</sup> Budihardjo declared that 'to handle the problem of architecture and the built environment, we need a thousand dedicated and well intentioned architects with a strong sense and love for people. We don't need a genius or a master builder who comes with doctrines...

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18 Atmadji, "Inaugural Speech: Arsitektur Dan Pengembangannya Di Indonesia".

19 Ibid.

20 Sidharta, "Pendidikan Arsitektur Dan Masa Depan Arsitektur Indonesia" (paper presented at the Inaugural Speech, Semarang, Universitas Diponegoro, 1984).

21 Eko Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Sosio Kultural Arsitek: Implikasi terhadap Pengembangan Ilmu dan Profesi Arsitektur," Inaugural Speech, 1991. In *Kumpulan Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar Dosen & Alumni*, edited by B. Setiawan, Ratna E.S., Maulidina D.K.D. Yogyakarta: Department of Architecture and Planning, Gadjah Mada University, 2012.

We need barefooted architects who are sensitive towards the socio-cultural values and capable of producing works that touch the soul and enrich people's spiritual life'.<sup>22</sup>

We can see from these earlier postcolonial inaugural lectures a strong sense that architecture had not yet quite been adapted to the context of Indonesia. The profession was considered too elite and the architecture too strongly oriented towards the international norms that reflect Euro-American hegemony. Meanwhile, a large number of postgraduates obtained degrees from Europe, America, Australia, Japan and other British-influenced Southeast Asian countries, further sustaining such hegemony. In fact, Parmono Atmadji obtained his Master's from Columbia University in 1960; Sidharta received postgraduate training from University of Washington, Seattle in 1965; Eko Budihardjo got his Masters from University of Wales, Cardiff in 1978. Yet, while their degrees were from the West, they were still able to cultivate a relationship with the art and culture of Indonesia. We see in their own inaugural speeches how tributes were paid to their Dutch tutors at ITB and architecture practitioners, such as Henri Maclaine Pont and Thomas Karsten; They cited the statements of Vitruvius, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Paul Rudolph; They made reference to the works of Bruno Zevi, Juan Pablo Bonta, Wayne Attoe, Geoffrey Broadbent, Christian Norberg Schultz and Kenneth Frampton; and they talked about Bauhaus, Form Follows Function and Postmodernism. And yet they also paid respect to the works of their Indonesian teachers, especially the work of Y.B. Mangunwijaya, and their former Dutch Masters such as Vincent van Romondt. Their inaugural lectures thus always focus on the challenges facing Indonesia and the need to think about architecture as an expression of Indonesian

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22 Eko Budihardjo, "Kepekaan Sosio Kultural Arsitek" *ibid.*

national cultures, while recognizing the diversity of ethnic and regional expressions. What is consistent in these earlier inaugural lectures is the concern over ‘Indonesian identity’ in architecture, a theme that is also central to the lectures of Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo, further discussed in the following section. Prior to this, however, we must tease out a relevant socio-political context within which Tjahjono and Prijotomo (and others of their generation) are located.

### Context: Cultural Tradition as a Battle Ground

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The interest in the notion of ‘Indonesian architecture’, while inspired by Van Romondt’s inaugural lecture, also needs to be understood within the context of a particular postcolonial time. By the mid-1980s, Indonesian architects had formulated ‘Indonesian architecture’ in order to deal critically with the rising influence of the cultural politics of the nation-state, which was promoting Javanese nationalism.<sup>23</sup> The state saw Javanese culture as carrying a strong foundation for guiding a young generation of Indonesians in the course of their development. The president as the ‘father’ of development would guide the ‘children’ of the nation with Javanese culture.<sup>24</sup> Some officials even sought to translate Javanese cultural values into the built form. For instance, they identified the typical Javanese ‘Joglo’ roof as representing Javanese values. The governor of Central Java once declared that ‘we have Joglo architecture which is more beautiful, why use foreign architecture? ...

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<sup>23</sup> For a discussion on this subject, see: John Pemberton, *On the Subject of ‘Java’* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Benedict Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

<sup>24</sup> See: Romain Bertrand, “Asal Bapak Senang’ (as Long as It Pleases the Master): The Pastoral Government Idea and Privatisation of the State in Indonesia,” in *Privatising the State*, ed. Beatrice Hibou (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), pp.211-240.

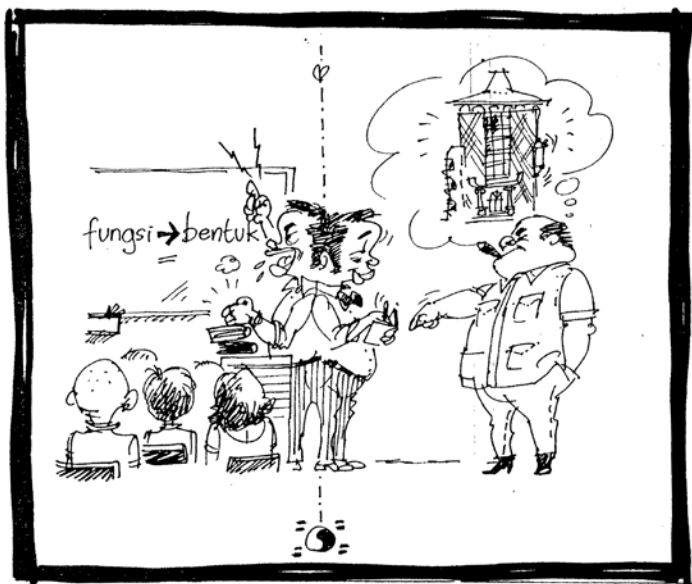


FIG. 2 Between 'Form follows function' and the traditional 'Joglo' roof.  
(Artist: unknown, 1985)

Is it appropriate for this foreign architecture (referring to a neoclassical façade of a public building) to be juxtaposed with the existing statue of our national hero?<sup>25</sup> The governor went as far as to instruct all future government buildings in his region to be built with a 'joglo' roof.

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<sup>25</sup> "Joglo = Jogja – Solo," *Tempo* June 1, 1985, p.58; see also "Membongkar Pillar Yunani," *Tempo* September 1, 1984, p.18.

Most Indonesian architects deplored such decisions. They saw this as the outcome of a conservative ethno politics of the state which sought to re-invent Javanese tradition as the dominant culture of the nation. They called for an intervention in architecture to express identity that would not glorify only one culture. Instead, Indonesian architecture should be broad enough to convey the diversity of the nation. They saw the challenge towards an Indonesian architecture as a challenge that called for a double movement: one was to be critical of Western architectural hegemony, as represented by the modernist doctrine of 'form follows function', the other to be critical of the Javanese-centric formulation of national culture promoted by the nation state.

The following two inaugural lectures can be located within this Indonesian socio-political milieu. Both Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo delivered their speeches in the 2000s after the collapse of Suharto regime (1966-1998). They represent a new post-authoritarian era, but their positions could be understood as having developed from within the context of Suharto's cultural politics *against* which they present their thoughts. Both are deeply interested in Javanese culture (the signifier of Suharto's state), and it is thus most interesting to see how they go against the grain, how they counter the forces of provincialization and ethnicization of national culture; how they simultaneously deal with forces of globalization and the geopolitical hegemonic knowledge of the West. Essentially, while they acknowledge the power of customary practices, they see 'culture' as an invention, not as a given 'inheritance'. This opens up a way of thinking about Indonesian architecture beyond the framework of preserving a dominant cultural form or adopting a modernist doctrine. How did they re-work both the nativism and modernism through an intellectual formulation of 'Indonesian architecture'?



## Gunawan Tjahjono and the Cosmopolitan Layer of Javanese Architecture

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Gunawan Tjahjono started his architectural training in 1965 at University of Indonesia, Jakarta and obtained the Insinyur degree in 1975.<sup>26</sup> Prior to his graduate studies in the US in the 1980s, he designed various buildings and won a series of design awards (ranging from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> place) for an Islamic Centre in Surabaya, low cost housing and the upgrading of an irregular settlement and bazaar in Jakarta. Gunawan remained active in architectural design during his graduate studies at UCLA for a Master of Architecture (1981-1983) and at UC Berkeley for his PhD (1985-1989). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, he designed a series of university master plans, of which the most famous is the master plan and the Rectorate tower of the University of Indonesia. Tjahjono's academic publications reflect the research strength and interests of UC Berkeley on vernacular environments (the history of which goes back to the phenomenological and anthropological approaches to the design of the built environment during the 1960s). Tjahjono's works on the vernacular settlement, which culminated in his PhD dissertation on Javanese architectural tradition, brought together various strands of scholarship associated with Amos Rapoport, Christopher Alexander, Paul Oliver, and his contemporary Nezar Alsayyad and Dell Upton. Tjahjono is thus part of a worldwide architectural movement that sought to respond to the industrialization of the 'third world' by way of re-conceptualizing 'tradition' in architecture.

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<sup>26</sup> Gunawan Tjahjono, known as "Pak Gun" is by heart an educator, a bookworm and a conceptual thinker who has a unique way of inspiring students and colleagues. He has dedicated his life to the university without ignoring the world of architecture and urban design. He has been the chair of the city's architectural committee for almost two decades. For a lively account of Gunawan Tjahjono's life and work, see: Safitri Ahmad, *Gunawan Tjahjono: Arsitek Pendidik* (Jakarta: Anugrah Sentosa, 2013).

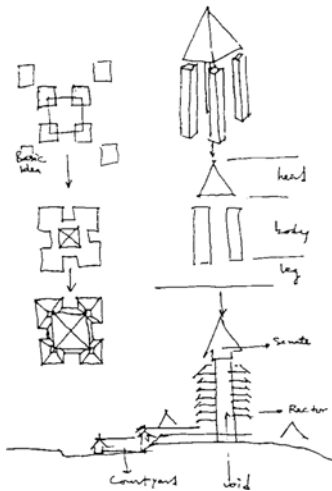


FIG. 3 Gunawan Tjahjono's sketches of the Rectorate Tower of the University of Indonesia

Alongside completing his dissertation, Tjahjono joined the design team for the new University of Indonesia which was to be located on the outskirts of Jakarta.<sup>27</sup> Tjahjono took up the task of designing the campus's most important administrative building - the Rectorate Tower - and reviewed the master plan of the new campus.<sup>28</sup> He was also responsible for designing various facilities, in particular the symbolic components of the campus: the gate and the university's epigraph.

<sup>27</sup> For a history of this relocation, see: Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan, "Memory and Nationalism: The Case of Universitas Indonesia," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 12, no. 4 (2011), pp.532-551

<sup>28</sup> The design of University of Indonesia has been covered quite extensively, see, among others, architectural report from , *Mimar* 12, no. 42 (March 1992); Wiwiek Usmi, "Bentuk Tradisional, Wajah Sebuah Kampus Baru [Traditional in Form, the Face of a New Campus]," *Asri* 53 (1987), pp. 21-6; Zein Wiryoprawiro, "Citra Arsitektur Indonesia Untuk Kampus Baru Ui, [an Indonesia Architecture for the New Campus of Ui]," *Konstruksi* 12 (1988).



FIG. 4 The rectorate tower of the University of Indonesia designed by Gunawan Tjahjono

The task of designing structures with such high symbolic value carried the burden of how to represent the nation. Tjahjono used Javanese ideas about space to consider a range of spatial and formal typologies of Indonesian regional houses, to produce a form that could be considered both Javanese and Indonesian. There was a considerable effort to compose 'Indonesia' instead of fetishizing only certain Javanese elements to represent Indonesia. Javanese spatial concepts were elevated to a meta-level to constitute the idea of trans-local 'national' culture of Indonesia. In doing so, he registered the importance of 'Java', but subsumed it under 'Indonesia'. This was captured in the Rectorate tower where the highest floor is reserved for the Senat, and not for the Rector. The top level speaks of 'becoming Indonesia'. Java was deconstructed at the point that it was reconstructed as Indonesia. Tjahjono thus registered the idea that 'Indonesian architecture' lies in the spirit of 'becoming' rather than 'representing' a particular culture.

The emphasis on composition, synthesis and mobilization of relationships between different cultural ideas and mutually constituting forms has managed to convey a message that Indonesian architecture is simultaneously local and supralocal, that it could be many things but certainly not simply a representation of a dominant culture. Could we also say that the University of Indonesia, while showing a primary concern over Javanese signifiers, develops a criticality that Java is not given? Does it instead exist, much like other traditions, only through a composition?

In his inaugural speech, Tjahjono therefore emphasizes the palimpsest of Indonesian tradition:

*'Indonesia today is the sediment of many layers of influence... Our people, in their aspiration to live together, continue to absorb the new without discarding the old... Architecturally, the Hindu-Buddhist layers comingled with that of Islam and the West, represented historically by the Dutch, the British and the Portuguese, which added another layer of cross-cultural production that have produced at different moments in Indonesian history a variety of ideas and forms for the built environment.... And through colonial territorial discourse, a new nation is produced. The era of decolonization has enabled a formation of a national consciousness beyond the framework of local sub-regional identities.'*<sup>29</sup>

Such layering prevents a domination of one culture over the others, and 'Indonesian architecture' offers an intellectual framework to consider the overlapping relationship between cultures. Furthermore, this cross-cultural practice suggests intertwined temporalities where tradition is no longer in opposition to modernity.

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<sup>29</sup> Tjahjono, "Arsitektur Di Indonesia: Kancan Penjelajahan Tanpa Batas."

'Unlike modern creation, tradition is often a creation without authorship. Yet both formations were 'modern' at the time when they were founded, until they were transmitted to the next generation, often then as 'tradition'. Criticality is an important component in architectural design, so that we don't fall into the trap of romanticizing tradition or anti-tradition.... Tradition (not unlike the modern) is living and present. It therefore should not be fixed by a rigid framework of time. Tradition then won't freeze. Instead it could be understood in terms of adaptation and progression, capable of dealing with contemporary challenges. Criticality serves as our filtering mechanism to shape and transform tradition to address current challenges.'<sup>30</sup>

Tjahjono's formulation is supported by his argument that the global forces today offer an opportunity for the local to participate. The process of homogenization is being complemented by heterogenization, despite the fact that both are operating within a system of capitalist development. The emergence of the local in the face of the global has posed a challenge for Indonesian architects who have been accustomed to following only Western architectural histories and theories. The resurgence of the local within the global forces has posed a challenge to Indonesian architects who knew very little or nothing about Indonesia's own architectural traditions, as represented by ethnic and regional architectures. Tjahjono thus calls for an appreciation of regional architecture, which must be understood (and integrated into architecture school) and explored for a creation of a cross-cultural contemporary 'Indonesian architecture'.

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30 Ibid.

Tjahjono indicates: ‘we have a lot of homework to do’ considering the hegemony of Western architectural schools. ‘We need to explore across different disciplines and frontiers as the name ‘Indonesia’ bears such endless and limitless opportunity for exploration.’<sup>31</sup>

Tjahjono’s inaugural lecture could be said to stem from the debates that have been ongoing since the 1980s over cultural strategies of architecture in coping with capitalist modernization and the state’s ethno-nationalism. His speech offers a profound statement on ‘Indonesian architecture’ which acknowledges the hegemony of the West and marginalization of local/regional architecture, but moves beyond the binary opposition between the West and the East, beyond modernity and tradition, by defining ‘Indonesian architecture’ as an aspiration for a hybrid, cross-cultural production. This vision, which Tjahjono called a *wacana* [discourse], could be seen as his postcolonial response to Van Romondt’s invitation to think about ‘Indonesian architecture’.

In Tjahjono’s speech we see that the basis for moving towards an Indonesian architecture is achieved by overcoming the binary opposition between the East and the West, but that he does this by suspending the structure of inequality in knowledge formation. This has led us to ask questions such as: How should the uneven structure of knowledge be challenged? How could local architectural knowledge be understood on its own terms so that it could stand on the same platform with those of the West? These are the questions most directly picked up by Josef Prijotomo in this inaugural lecture.

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31 Ibid.

## Josef Prijotomo, the Politics of Otherness and the Inner Layer of Javanese Architecture

In 2008, six years after Tjahjono's lecture, Josef Prijotomo gave his inaugural lecture entitled: 'Arsitektur Nusantara: Architecture of Shade and 'Liyān' Architecture: An Architectural Reading of the Architecture of society-without-writing'. Unlike Tjahjono's lecture which offers a general response to Van Romondt's call for an Indonesian architecture, Prijotomo's is a specific exposition of Javanese architectural tradition to the point that it could stand on its own while serving as a counterpart (if not opposition) to western architectural assumptions.

Prijotomo's invocation of 'society-without-writing' recalls the philosopher Claude Levi Strauss' structuralist anthropology, which he appropriates to discuss the role of speech as having a structural function, similar to that of language. In doing so, Prijotomo plays with the relationship between *langue* and *parole*, but he extends the act of speech to different domains of performative representations, which include bodily gestures and artifacts. The performative domains (of the visual, the aural and other sensory), while discursive, are not in any way subordinated to textual representation. Instead, they play a crucial role in the social relation of society-without-writing. Such insight is obtainable by reading outside of the discipline of architecture. Architecture therefore would need to incorporate other disciplines in order to comprehend the architecture of society-without-writing.

*'Let me offer my utmost appreciation to the disciplines of anthropology, philology, folklore, and cultural studies. They have ably put together materials related to the society-without-writing. For the discipline of architecture, these materials ought to be the 'reading materials'. They are the 'texts' that need to be read into the language of architecture. They are the layers of doors that enable*

architecture to reach out to the world of the society-without-writing. Therefore, the exploration of the architectural thoughts of the society-without-writing is an exploration of interdisciplinarity.<sup>32</sup>

By invoking society-without-writing as a characteristic of 'Nusantara architecture' (the architecture characteristics of different ethnicities of Indonesia, as constructed by the discipline of architecture), Prijotomo not only calls for interdisciplinarity, but also effectively emphasizes the profound *disjuncture* between the non-textual tradition of Nusantara architecture and the written tradition of Western architecture. Thus, 'the knowledge formation of Nusantara architecture would need to be based on a way of reading the society-without-writing. It should not be based on the written tradition of the West'.<sup>33</sup> Unlike other Indonesian architectural theorists and historians, who seek to understand the challenges of Indonesian architecture by coming to terms with Western architecture, Prijotomo confronts the West by actually challenging it. 'Oppositional' becomes a strategy for building a different architectural knowledge, as well as a way to construct a domain for Javanese agency vis à vis the West.

Josef Prijotomo is not only a theoretician, but also one of the most consistently perceptive and creative architectural critics in the design studio even though, as he once claimed, he has never produced any design work.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Prijotomo, "Inagural Lecture: Arsitektur Nusantara: Arsitektur Perteduhan Dan Arsitektur 'Liyen.' Pembacaan Arsitektural Atas Arsitektur Masyarakat Tanpa Tulisan."

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Prijotomo, known as "Pak Josef," is not only a very committed educator, but also a great teacher and a most creative and inspirational figure. Students were often dumbstruck with an unspeakable mix of terror and joy when receiving comments about their design from Pak Josef.



Prijotomo is also perhaps one of the most prolific architectural historians and theorists of Indonesia today. By the time he obtained his PhD in 2006, he had already published over five important monographs on architectural issues in Indonesia, including his influential *Idea and Form in Javanese Architecture*, based on his Master's thesis while studying at Iowa State University.<sup>35</sup>

He wrote numerous articles in Surabaya's newspapers, some of which have entered the classroom as core readings for discussions on the relationship between architecture and culture.<sup>36</sup> Central to his teaching are the potentials and challenges of the diverse ethnic Nusantara architecture in thinking about 'Indonesian architecture'. His writings from the early 1980s demonstrate how architecture in Indonesia has always evolved within diverse social and cultural contexts, and therefore explain why a narrative of stylistic development (as developed in the Western historiography) would make no sense. At the same time, he shows how architecture could make an intervention to the context within which it is embedded by addressing issues that are profoundly social, if not political. He also talks about *kampung* and the city as two important components of Indonesian urbanism that every architect, in his or her preoccupation with building alone, ought to seriously address.

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- 35 Josep Prijotomo, *Idea and Form of Javanese Architecture* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1994); Other books prior to his PhD include: *Pasang Surut Arsitektur Di Indonesia* (Surabaya: CV Arjun, 1988 – revised edition 2008); *Petungan: Sistim Ukuran Dalam Arsitektur Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1995); *Arsitektur Nusantara – Menuju Keniscayaan* (Surabaya: Wastu LaNas Grafika, 2004); *Dari Lamin Dan Bilik Pengakuan Dosa* (Surabaya: Wastu LaNas Grafika, 2004); *Kembara Kawruh Arsitektur Jawa* (Surabaya: Wastu LaNas Grafika, 2004); *(Re-)Konstruksi Arsitektur Jawa – Griya Jawa Dalam Tradisi* (Surabaya: Wastu LaNas Grafika, 2007).
- 36 As students, we read many of Prijotomo's interesting articles from 1979 to 1987 which were compiled in *Arsitektur Indonesia: Masalah & Potensi (I)*; and *Dinamika Arsitektur Indonesia* (ITS: 1987); *Pasang Surut Arsitektur di Indonesia* (Arjun, 1988)



FIG. 5 Western 'Greek' Architecture vs Nusantara Architecture

Meanwhile, he encourages students to take the concept of 'Indonesia' seriously, and emphasizes that 'Indonesian regional architecture, when accounted for its diverse non-physical symbols and meanings, could be said as richer than the sources of western architecture itself'.<sup>37</sup>

With the ability to read old Javanese manuscripts, Prijotomo has access to primary materials. Through Javanese texts, he sees the 'inner core' or the 'elementary form' of Javanese architecture as one that is based on the preservation of the 'self' as the basis for agency. From the 'core' he develops the other side of Javanese dualism that is the 'outer layer'. Unlike the core, this outer layer serves as a 'diplomatic' domain where Java relates itself to the rest of the world, including the West.

The outer layer represents the appearance of Javanese cosmopolitanism. Hidden behind this is the core of Javanese culture, which is at once preserved and strengthened by the outer layer's interaction with the world. This concept finds its manifestation in architectural form.

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<sup>37</sup> Josef Prijotomo, "Modernisme Dan Arsitektur Indonesia," *Surabaya Post* 13 November 1986, p.107

In careful readings of Javanese manuscripts, such as *Kawruh Kalang Sasrawirjatma*, Prijotomo redefines the essence of Javanese architecture in terms of its non-physicality, thus displacing the fetishization of the physical dimension as the core of architecture, as has been theorized in the West. A new concept emerges, such as that of *berteduh* as the meaning of a *griya* (building).

‘Entering a building (*griya*) is seen and understood as an act of *berteduh* (going into the shade) under a ‘big shady tree’. This statement, recorded in *Kawruh Kalang Sasrawirjatma* (1928) manuscript, defines what architecture is. Here, architecture is formulated as taking shade under a tree, not as a shelter (for protection)...<sup>38</sup> For Prijotomo, *berteduh* (to shade) is not hiding or securing associated with isolation from the surrounding environment. *Berteduh* for him is not to protect. Instead, *berteduh* is to form a relationship with the immediate environment. Therefore, architecture (as understood in Javanese script) cannot be associated with a type of shelter that offers physical protection against the surroundings. Regrettably, Prijotomo further points out, the formulation of “architecture as a shelter” is still commonly used in architectural schools in Indonesia, which is an indication of the influence of Western architectural thinking. Heavily influenced by Western hegemony, students of architecture in Indonesia still tend to misleadingly see architecture as a protective shelter, not as *perteduhan*.

The size of Javanese architecture thus is derived from the shade. From the intangible concept of *berteduh*, Prijotomo moves on to construct the physicality of architecture. For instance, the size of Javanese architecture is derived from the shade. In other words, from the ‘coverage’ of the shade the dimensions of other architectural

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38 “Inagural Lecture: Arsitektur Nusantara: Arsitektur Perteduhan Dan Arsitektur ‘Liyen.’ Pembacaan Arsitektural Atas Arsitektur Masyarakat Tanpa Tulisan.”

elements are determined, not the other way around. The wall, a most important and elaborated element of Western architecture after distinguishing itself from ‘the primitive hut’, is not mentioned at all in Javanese *Kawruh Griya* (as walls are only adopted later on in Javanese building culture).<sup>39</sup> Other differences are recorded in Prijotomo’s inaugural speech: ‘the majority of Nusantara architecture uses timber as its prime building material. This is quite different from Western architecture, which is dominated by the architecture of brick and stone. The use of timber and other organic materials (such as bamboo, thatch, reeds, and *ijuk*) demands a periodic recycling’.<sup>40</sup> Difference constitutes a ‘self’. Thus Prijotomo concludes:

*‘It is clear that Nusantara architecture is significantly different from Western architecture. If Nusantara architecture is the architecture of society-without-writing, Western architecture is the architecture of written tradition; Nusantara architecture is architecture of shade (perteduhan) whereas Western architecture is architecture of protection; The construction of Nusantara architecture goes through the process of moving from roof to floor; whereas Western architecture moves from floor to roof. These are just some of the differences identified here. The thought and the knowledge about Nusantara architecture that is being built up here strongly indicates that Nusantara architecture is an “architecture” but it is not the one framed by the perspective of Western architectural knowledge.’<sup>41</sup>*

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<sup>39</sup> For a discussion on the “origin” of Western teleological architectural historiography based on the idea of a “primitive” hut – as an archetype that at once represents the “other” that cannot be lost in Western architectural psychic even as it only exists in mind, see: Joseph Rykwert, *On Adam’s House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971). We could think about this imagined hut in terms of colonial imagination of the overseas colonies.

<sup>40</sup> Prijotomo, “Inagural Lecture: *Arsitektur Nusantara: Arsitektur Perteduhan Dan Arsitektur ‘Liyan’*.” *Pembacaan Arsitektural Atas Arsitektur Masyarakat Tanpa Tulisan.*”

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

The construction of difference produces a position for Nusantara architecture to stand against Western architecture. For Prijotomo, Nusantara architecture is architecture of the 'other' which he calls 'liyan [the other]' architecture. This construction of the 'other', as indicated earlier, is related to the preservation of an inner-self and the question of agency against the domination of Western knowledge.

'It is obvious that this strategy (of liyan) is developed after I locate the tradition without-writing as equal to written tradition. Our willingness to be aware that we have been duped by written tradition, that only in written tradition do we find truth and knowledge, is a consciousness crucial for a critical understanding of architecture's past and future. With this consciousness, we know that the past doesn't mean backwardness, stupidity and primitiveness.'<sup>42</sup>

Instead, according to Prijotomo, 'the architectural aspect of Nusantara challenges us to nurture and develop Nusantara architecture within the environment of BHINNEKA TUNGGAL IKA. Gone is the narrow regional and ethnic mindset which could potentially give rise once again to *divide et impera*. Batak could present in Java, and from there could give rise to hybrid Java-Batak, a hybridity that would enrich both Java and Batak'.<sup>43</sup>

## Conclusion

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What have two of the most important Indonesian architectural thinkers taught us about architecture and nation building under a postcolonial condition? Prijotomo's construction of Indonesian architectural tradition is set against the hegemony of

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Western architectural historiography. He shows that a struggle 'towards an Indonesian architecture' needs to be sustained by a counter knowledge against the global hegemony of Western architecture. But what is most significant about Prijotomo's approach is his attempt to be critical to the nativistic political culture of the Indonesian state. Prijotomo teases out the specificity of Javanese architectural tradition as one that could not be easily co-opted by both Western architectural thinking and the nation-state agenda.

Tjahjono's cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, is based on the acceptance of different architectural traditions, including those of the West. He sees no contradiction in accepting Western architectural tradition, as far as it could be reworked to expand the perspective of culture so that it would not be provincialized to represent only a single culture of one ethnic group. Architectural modernism is seen as capable of localization, whereas Javanese culture could be expanded to go beyond its ethnocentrism in order to imagine a broader Indonesian architecture.

From these two inaugural lectures we can see that Prijotomo and Tjahjono approach Javanese culture differently, but that they both were against a fixation on Javanese culture. Through a journey from the 'inside out', Prijotomo brings us back to what Tjahjono has noted in his inaugural speech, that it is the cosmopolitanism of Java which is central in combating the Java-centricity of the state, or any fossilizing claim of superiority of one culture over another. In different ways, Prijotomo and Tjahjono seek to go against the grain, by opening up further the meaning of 'Indonesian architecture' and re-conceptualizing it in a way that it would once again respond to Van Romondt's call for an 'Indonesian architecture'.



FIG. 6 Gunawan Tjahjono

# Architecture in Indonesia: An Arena of Exploration without Borders

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*Translation by Abidin Kusno, prepared for Inaugural Speeches in the Built Environment: Global and Contextualised - TU Delft - series editor: Carola Hein*

Honorable guests,

Please allow me to begin this presentation by remembering an event that occurred 48 years ago. On Wednesday, May 26, 1964, the late Professor Insinyur Van Romondt delivered his inaugural lecture, entitled ‘Menuju ke Suatu Arsitektur Indonesia [Towards an Indonesian Architecture]’ for his appointment as Professor of Architecture at the Fakultas Teknik Universitas Indonesia in Bandung. Van Romondt presented some questions to challenge Indonesians to look for their own way of creating Indonesian Architecture. He emphasized that Indonesians must take care of the future of their own architecture, as they must also with their cultures. Van Romondt’s message was: ‘To create a living architecture, one has to honestly build from below, and one must search for a new foundation of life’.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Romondt, “Menuju Ke Suatu Arsitektur Indonesia.”



I would like to take this opportunity to revisit the challenge posed by Van Romondt. I think the challenge has not yet been taken up seriously by our nation. The current architectural construction of national identity has not fairly benefitted our mosaic of ethnic diversity. Since Independence, issues of identity in architecture have arisen numerous times in different forums, with little result.<sup>45</sup> This indicates that our contemporary society is looking for self-liberation from the constraint of a rigid social norm. In this endless exploration I think it would be better if we could first understand the position of architecture in Indonesia, in order to determine where it wants to go and by what means are we going to get there. On this issue, Van Romondt's speech has laid out a foundation on which we can search for an Indonesian architecture.

In the following section, drawing from my knowledge of and experience in architectural study, building and regional design, I reflect on Professor Van Romondt's speech. I will begin by teasing out the essence of architecture, and move on to identify the different challenging environments of Indonesia, before finishing with a discussion.

## The World of Architecture

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Architecture has become a common term, often used loosely by those who are not in the profession. They seem to know how to understand architecture from their perspective. Of course in this free world, everyone has the right to use the term as he or she wishes, based on his or her interests and capacity to formulate.

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<sup>45</sup> Since 1984, many forums have been staged by the IAI (Indonesian Institute of Architects) and architectural schools in different universities.

Architecture is considered an interesting profession, to the point that the notion of the intellectual architect is seen as they who uncover manipulative or criminal activities. It would be rather strange, however, if architecture was understood without reference to the architect who supplies the intellectual force behind the architecture. Architecture is a knowledge-based discipline, on which I will proceed to elaborate.

We have learned from a sacred text of a great religion that this universe is related to the Creator. According to the text, before the universe took its current shape, it was in a state of chaos. God then transformed the universe from chaos to order. As such, the universe is presented to us as a design with the Almighty as Architect.

In this world, we know that people build their homes and develop their social lives based on their needs, desires and wishes, which continue to change. Some of the changes are constrained by their environment as well as by their own actions. However, humans are not the only beings in this world who build. Bees, termites, orangutans and birds are amazing builders. A termite can build a structure 1000 times the height of its own body. Animals build according to a determined code and in line with their need to live, adapting to the challenges of their environment. Humans build according to the cultural codes within which they are embedded. This explains the almost unlimited diversity of buildings constructed by humans.

### Forces behind Architecture

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Architecture is a product of human desire (*hasrat*), which is formed by consciousness of one's relation to his or her environment. There are at least five desires in human beings that I have noted, which I will share with you here: the desire to defend life; to live with

fellow others; to live peacefully with supernatural forces (*alam adikodrati*); desire for self expression; and for continuity - by way of leaving a legacy which can be handed down to the next generation.

The desire to defend life demands adaptation to the environment within which he or she is located. There are two ways of doing this: to change the environment, or to follow the environment. Either way involves thought and knowledge. To change an environment requires the knowledge of how to transform an existing condition, whereas to follow an environment requires careful understanding and a willingness to compromise on comfort. The first choice (transforming the environment) determines the domain of dwelling, its protective space, which leads to the production of architecture. The second choice (accommodating the environment) may limit demands and save resources.

The desire to live with fellow others encourages people to form relationships and build tolerance, and to collaborate to form rules of conduct. On this basis, people form partnerships and groups. Living together generates cultivation of a place, and determines the quality of safety and level of control over the state of living together. Boundaries are drawn, rights and responsibilities are agreed on, and a way of building is developed and standardized, based on this sense of togetherness in an environment. Over time, different understandings create differences in the origin of place, differences in appearance, in behavior, in interest, in habit, and so on. The difference between this and that, where there is no sense of relationship, ends in conflict. It is where there is a desire to live with fellow others that we find the clustering of buildings within a territory.

The desire to live peacefully with supernatural forces (*alam adikodrati*) is a manifestation of human behavior in facing something beyond human control, beyond comprehension - so

powerful that this force is believed to have determined human fate with no alternative. As a result, they must provide space for this *alam*, personally or collectively. They may try to satisfy the *alam* through all kinds of practices as represented in his or her belief system, such as rituals and offerings. They may look for a form that would convey this relationship with the *alam*. The manifestation of such a desire can be seen in buildings for worship, and found in spaces ranging from family altars to amulets.

The desire for self-expression, from a small self as a person to a big self as part of a community, takes the form of self-accomplishment through the fulfillment of aspirations. If the desire to live makes a person work, then the desire for self-expression makes a person create. Through creation, we attain emotional satisfaction, as in doing so we leave behind work that is meaningful for following generations. This desire prompts us to cultivate, improve and make perfect the creation. The manifestation of the desire for self-expression is the quest for distinctiveness to mark our existence.

The desire for continuity by way of ‘replicating’ oneself motivates reproduction, or the handing down of things collected in life to subsequent generations. This desire also generates a sense of belonging to and longing for a heritage. This desire to look back is the other side of the coin that looks forward to a new condition. The desire to look back encourages us to preserve and bestow all that we have to those who are willing to keep and preserve them, and this sometimes take the form of an object to commemorate. Tradition and custom, which tend to bind, are one of the manifestations of this desire for continuity.

A desire stems from stimulations, which can come from within as well as from outside, or from both. There are several levels of desire, which depend on one’s cultural social backgrounds. Desires can be turned into motivation: an essential step for self-

expression. The larger the desire, the greater the effort needed. Not all desires appear simultaneously, but it is not impossible that some desires come at the same time.

All of these desires take place in space and time, which, in turn, curb the desire. People are constantly confronted by environments that tend to control their desires. They then give meaning to the space by reframing it and thus turning it into a place (*membingkai tempat*) within which they are located. Since every individual and his or her group faces different challenges, and their desires also vary, the reframing of place is also multiple, as is the investment of meaning into that place. Place therefore is meaningful only after it is built and used. This meaning, however, is not permanent. Rather, it changes according to each new user, each of whom invests different meaning. Architecture therefore represents an attempt by humans to invest meaning into the space in which activities are performed.

### The Object of Architecture

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As a matter of fact, architecture is invisible. What is visible is the work that produces an object called architecture.<sup>46</sup> The object can thus be studied, as it takes the form of a building. A building registers its presence by marking a space, which at once is given meaning by the users. Is architecture always associated with monumental buildings of particular scale? The idea that architecture only refers to an important building or to an important person is no longer valid. Architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner's statement that a bicycle shed is a building, whereas Lincoln Cathedral is

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<sup>46</sup> Richard Saul Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been: The Words of Louis Kahn* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986).

architecture, has long been problematized.<sup>47</sup> If architecture represents knowledge and the skill of constructing space with meaning, then what has been built ought to be studied.<sup>48</sup> Such understanding indicates to us that without “small” buildings that represent everyday life, the special monumental building means very little. The history of architecture has moved from its focus on the styles of monumental buildings to the analysis of the spatial ordering of everyday life. The meaning of a space is no longer in the hands of authority; those who use the space as part of their daily lives instead control it.

Monumental buildings are not always honest to the conditions of the society in which they belong. Monumental architecture can obscure the real situation. History has taught us that monumental architecture is often constructed at a time when society is experiencing an economic downturn.<sup>49</sup> However, buildings that use a thatched roof can be a more genuine expression of real living conditions.

In opening up the boundary of architectural analysis, we can focus on issues concerning the knowledge and skills that have produced architecture. From there we can tease out the meaning invested in the architecture. We can then consider why the presence of the architecture is worth studying. Only one or two perspectives therefore should not frame architecture. It must be more. However, architecture cannot be understood without posing a limit either. Something without limit prevents us from

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<sup>47</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1985).

<sup>48</sup> Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>49</sup> Indonesia has experienced this tendency several times, such as the Mercuri Suar monumental building projects in the Sukarno era and the skyscrapers of the Suharto era, which were constructed at times of economic crisis.

seeing what needs to be seen. As in architecture, without a frame we cannot analyze a building, as we tend to generalise.

Buildings come into being after completion. They should satisfy building requirements. However, an expert in structure and construction could fulfil such requirements, it does not need an architect to do so. A building is built in order to give comfort to the people who are active inside the building, as well as those in the surroundings. It therefore must satisfy the requirement for protection and comfort. However, building scientists or space programmers could satisfy such requirements. It does not need an architect to do so. A building is built to give pleasure. For this it must satisfy some aesthetic criteria. An artist, however, can fulfill such requirements; there is thus no need for architect in this respect. If we dissect a building into these different criteria, we cannot assign a role to the architect. However, if we present architecture as a whole, then the architect has an important role to play.

Architecture combines all these requirements into a coherent unit, so that each part of the whole cannot stand alone. The architect is the translator of all the requirements for the production of architecture. However, architectural quality does not always mean that an architect was responsible.<sup>50</sup> A building, perhaps in a particular region, could be built following societal norms, and such buildings often have architectural quality. In contrast, a building designed by an architect can often appear poor.

For a long time, the academic standing of architecture has been heavily influenced by knowledge developed in the Western world.

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<sup>50</sup> Bernard Rudolfski, *Architecture without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (New York: Doubleday, 1964).

Most are influenced by Vitruvius, the first century architect. Vitruvius, if you recall, proposed three qualities of architecture as a discipline: strength, functionality and beauty.<sup>51</sup> Today we are no longer framed by these criteria. There is a desire now to move beyond Vitruvius' definition, such as by emphasizing meaning in architecture. Meaning can only be grasped through the creation of space, place, time, and event. Vitruvius' triangle may be able to frame space and limit time, but time and event are components that are crucial for the production of architectural values. The work of architecture ought to nurture environment so that it can provoke an investment of meaning by those who experience it.

Western architecture stems from the tradition of Egypt, Greece and Rome. At one point it was under the influence of the church, before the intervention of the Renaissance 'enlightenment'. Western architecture then entered the phase of what we know as functionalism and pluralism.<sup>52</sup> Unlike in the field of science, changes in architectural thinking have been slow. Today, architectural thinking is influenced by multiple values and there is a strong desire to set it free from the trap of mainstream modernism. It took a while for western architecture to enter the modern era. The long journey was accompanied by an interaction between development of technology and social change. Indonesia did not experience such change evenly, and thus the journey of Indonesian architecture has taken a different path.

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<sup>51</sup> Vitruvius, *Vitruvius: The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. M.H. Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, 1960).

<sup>52</sup> Many architectural history books have dealt with these issues, see, among others, Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Meaning in Western Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1984).



## Architecture in Indonesia: The Arena of Exploration without boundary

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Honorable guests,

Indonesia is one of the most diverse countries in the world in terms of its ethnicities and cultures. The richness of cultures can be seen in the richness of natural landscape and the built environment, which shows strong regional diversity. The mountain, the sea, the valley, the beach, the river and the savanna are all panoramic and sources of inspiration for architectural creation. The natural landscape is so rich that it often serves as the arena for the expression of social drama, of which the built environment is a part. We have inherited a built form that we understand as traditional. But we must not forget that the notion of tradition connotes temporal dimension. It begins as a creation, not necessarily seen as tradition at the time. Over time, in a long, creative process of understanding the natural and social environment, a built form is created and eventually registered as part of the society's tradition. The diversity of form in the built environment of Indonesia, however, has not received adequate attention because the rush for development has left behind such recognition.

Our nation has encountered a huge challenge in its history of architecture and spatial design. There is a will, on the one hand, to model our nation on the Western world, with a pre-text that our tradition offers no such example of development. As a result, the development wheel has flattened our built environment to the point that the new urban form in our cities is similar to those found in cities all over the world. On the other hand, there is a strong will to defend traditional buildings which have given pride to those who inherited them. Are we then in the business of making a choice?

Largely, our nation is still living under agrarian tradition, although this is changing rapidly due to the rise of urban society - which will become the majority in twenty-five years. Meanwhile, the improvement of transport (as part of rural development) has increased the volume of rural to urban migration. The rise of a network society will change the map of spatial relationships between the city and the countryside. Meanwhile this nation, much like other nations undergoing rapid development and transformation, will see a strengthening of ethnic and identity-based grouping with concomitant strengthening of spatial and social boundaries.<sup>53</sup>

Identity is associated with the will for self and group expression. In architecture, the desire for self and group expression is capable of producing a different form. For an ethnic group who identify themselves with a regional character, the will for self expression produces space and form along with how they understand and use things, recognizable only to them. If space is produced through an interaction of different groups, with no exclusive claim over particular regional expression, then the meaning invested in such a space will be more ambiguous and pluralistic. Such a new creation is free of association with a particular identity, which often suggests favouring one group over another.

What we see in Indonesian traditional architecture is the sedimentation of different compounds of layers of influence. Every layer of influence has left a trace, but because of the lack of written evidence, we are still unable to analyze each one of them.

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<sup>53</sup> See: Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Volume 2* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997). See also Setha M. Low, "Spatializing Culture: The Social Production and Social Construction of Public Space in Costa Rica," in *Theorizing the City: The New Urban Anthropology Reader*, ed. Setha M. Low (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999), pp.111-137

Having moved from what we now know as Austronesia, our ancestors wandered until they settled, and developed a culture that is (because of this migration) related to different parts of Nusantara. Their migration across different regions had given them a cross-cultural (*silang budaya*) experience. Most had encountered Hindu culture and ideas of Buddhism. They represented their encounters in their built forms and integrated their learning into a system of governance, which in turn found expression in the built environment. In the realm of formal and spatial design, all forms of human desire converged, requiring creativity to select and compose in order to build. In the depths of the Island, sustained by the relatively stable social and natural environment, a particular form and space was consolidated and eventually served to bind together members of society. It gave them passion and direction to lead their lives. In the coastal regions, cross-cultural practices took more diverse forms. The ports were the arenas where values and interests clashed and were negotiated, but were also the sites of conflict resolution. The intensity of trade in the coastal areas found expression in the built forms. Here, the melting of boundaries and the intersection of differences was seemingly unavoidable.

Interaction with Islam produced a new kind of building and a different social life. Islam never dictated a particular form, and its earlier development in Nusantara witnessed the trace of Hindu and Austronesian cultures. As such, Islam took a compromised form. Here we see how our nation kept alive cultural practices of continuity, without destroying what we had. And on this basis we accept the new. Here we see that the desire to live with others is expressed in the pluralistic and hybrid built environment.

The interaction with Western cultures, which came with the arrival of the Dutch, Portuguese and British, added another layer of influence to the architectural design of Indonesia.

New buildings, new town planning and new systems of governance challenged society to accommodate the new or to reject it, through the creation of boundaries. The values of this new building culture were not always suitable for the local conditions, causing problems for those who fully embraced them. These cross-cultural practices have produced a variety of built forms, which have marked the living spaces of Indonesia today. Cross-cultural practices often provoked resistance, but they serve to mutually enrich both cultures.

Western culture introduces and bestows on us the inheritance of new urban design, capable of replacing a spatial concept based on autocratic and cosmological ideas of space. The construction of the colonial city during the colonial era encouraged craftsmen to migrate from rural to urban areas. New urban space had changed people's needs and self-perception, as they emulated the fashions of the ruling elites.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, in the village, traditional building faced difficulty, as it became expensive to build using traditional methods. Western culture introduced new technology, which contributed to the decline of Indonesia's building tradition.

Decolonization has transformed ethnic groups into new national subjects. However, there is a tendency in the postcolonial state, in some ruling elite circles, to look back at the 'golden age' of the Majapahit Empire. Our nation inherited products of cross cultural practices unevenly. The more open a region, the more diverse the buildings in the living environment of society. The more isolated the region, the more substance its building seems to carry as it follows closely the growth of the desire for self expression. The uneven exposure to practices of cross culture could be said to be caused by the unevenness of access to information in different

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54 This is discussed by Dutch architect Henri Maclaine Pont, "Javaansche Architectuur," *Djawa* 3 (1923), pp. 112-127; and "Javaansche Architectuur," *Djawa* 4 (1924), pp.28-58

regions. Such unevenness has lowered self-esteem in some and created an over-confidence in others. The result is strong expression of identity in built forms.

Indonesia's Independence has liberated territorial and cultural confinement in that regional differences have amalgamated into the concept of the nation representing a broader sovereignty. Nationalism set up a basis on which to imagine beyond a sub-regional boundary, to think outside the box, to look outwards instead of looking inwards.

The 'society-with-strong-tradition' produces form that works only to strengthen tradition. This, however, minimizes compatibility with urban society today. We find such 'society-with-strong-tradition' largely in agricultural regions. Life that depends on natural resources demands the preservation of knowledge about what works in certain situations. The availability of technology and building materials in the 'society-with-strong-tradition' is quite limited, whereas in places where construction is active, there are abundant building materials and technology. In places abundant with technology, we should be able to create more diversity, which would lead to the formation of certain qualities. However, thanks to new frameworks presented with slogans such as efficiency, fabrication, and marketing, what has been produced turns out to be dry and lacking creativity. This is ironic.

It is important to note however that even though the 'society-with-strong-tradition' tends to reproduce its forms with limited choice and in a limited space; it does not depend on any 'organization-without-form' (such as transnational corporations) or external powers that control their decision. On the contrary, modern urban society has many options, but what they can choose from is limited to a system that operates globally. In this global system, options are ironically limited if we don't creatively respond to

the system. In big cities we see different types of building such as shopping centers, shophouses and apartments, which replicate built forms in ways that remind us of cultural reproduction in the 'society-with-strong-tradition'. Such development, in my opinion, is backward.

The contribution of each ethnic group to cultural forms needs to be accepted as an endowment. However, to form a future that we want to see, we must accept the endowment critically, not without doubts. Is the inherited cultural form acceptable today? And should it continue? We have learned that all traditions have a beginning. A tradition is often created without us knowing the creator.<sup>55</sup> This is not dissimilar to what we know as modern creation. The difference, nevertheless, between modern product and tradition is that we know who the modern producer is. What brings them together is that whether in the form of object or idea, at the moment that a product is created it appears meaningful. It is considered new for that time and for those who made it, but over time it becomes a tradition, at which point the product is bestowed as inheritance to the following generation.

In this sense, the modern and the traditional are not opposed. Philosopher Karl Popper suggested that the Western world must preserve its critical tradition so that it can be responsive to what is being faced.<sup>56</sup> In facing issues of building where spatial design is the main focus, we should develop a critical attitude so that we don't float off into a romantic dream or become anti-tradition.

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<sup>55</sup> See E. J. Hobsbawm, and T. O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. E. J. Hobsbawm, and T. O. Ranger (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1984). See also Bruno Queysanne, "Commentary: Tradition and Modernity in the Face of Time," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, 1, no. 1 (1989), pp.3-6

<sup>56</sup> Karl Popper, "Towards a Rational Theory of Tradition," in *Conjecture and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*, ed. Karl Popper (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp.120-135.

Architect or architect-scholar should be alert to avoid the trap of replicating image in design. Emulating an image from a magazine, for instance, which displays 'contemporary' design in order to appear modern is just as uncritical as those who reproduce what is inherited from tradition.

If we approach tradition with curiosity and a sense of exploration, we may be able to find its history. Through such a historical approach, tradition can be developed. I see tradition as something that is alive and therefore which should not be fixed. If we were to frame it, it would freeze and wither. It would be unable to face change and the challenges that have become increasingly formidable today. If the attitude of breaking the frame (unfixing tradition) could be developed today, then the wealth of inheritance would increase. With critical attitudes, we will be able to filter values that are relevant from those that need to be left behind or dislodged, so that new ones can be constructed.

We realize that the future of architecture of this nation must not be held back by its past. We realize that remembering is part of life, bringing us closer to a past that may be sweet or bitter. Recalling the past can lead to no action (status quo). However, recalling could also motivate us to search, to gather more recollections. The future needs to be built with honesty, from below and by starting with existing reality. It can also be built from something new, something that we are not quite familiar with. Endless searching seems to be the effort required to progress to a new architecture.

The role of the local has become more important in this challenging global era. In the world of building construction, we have learned that Manado and Bali have exported their buildings. Meanwhile, both foreign and domestic tourists have diminished boundaries between regions and nation-states, as have the built forms, which have become increasingly similar everywhere.

In the abundance of choices, we are given a chance to explore. The blurring of the boundary in the architectural arena needs to be stirred (or shaken), but how? Here we need to consider the world of architectural education and practice.

The world of architectural practice in Indonesia is still filled with problems. It still relies on the relationship between the client and the architect, and it is therefore difficult to reach broader members of society who need architects' assistance. Ordinary people however, are disinclined to approach architects. As a result, architects have been associated with serving only a minority - a reality that cannot be denied. Meanwhile architecture is associated with the world of design, especially the knowledge and skill in designing the physical environment. The world of architectural practice needs to be more sensitive and further reaching. It needs to understand the changing world of which architecture is a part. Thus, knowledge of practice needs to be sustained by broader knowledge of a wider variety of disciplines. The world of practice needs to work in partnership with the world of education, and not just simply complain that the education system has gone adrift.

The world of architectural education in Indonesia is very diverse. It ranges from offering a Bachelor of Architecture, (*sarjana arsitektur*) to issuing diplomas. *Sarjana arsitektur* is no longer someone who is skilled in practice. The academic world produces people who are capable of thinking but who are not quite ready to solve challenges in design. For a long time, there has been an impression that architecture focuses only on design. The influence of such a view, however, is diminishing globally. Architectural education in world-class architectural schools today offers a great variety of choices for students to cultivate themselves. The sharpening of knowledge of materials is no longer at the Bachelor level, but at the Master's degree level. What is unfortunate is the neglect of knowledge about tradition of regional architecture.



The exploration in design therefore is dominated by an orientation towards the West. It seems that there is a tendency in the process of globalization for the local to be enhanced rather than displaced. This may direct attention to the tradition of regional architecture and give it a more central place as an object of analysis. With this new attention, exploration across the boundaries of regional territory would tease out the principle of architecture in Indonesia and also bring to light the historical layers that cover the tradition of regional architecture. Western knowledge could serve as a comparison, which in the design studio could compete with local architectural knowledge, in an effort to create a new architecture.

For all these, we need to rethink architecture, to rethink issues for exploration, to think about crossing the boundary, about demolition and reconstruction, and to rethink pedagogy. We still have a lot of homework to do. It seems to me that we need a network that would link us to different fields for an endless exploration in the arena that we called Indonesia. Whether architecture would be better, and what form it would take, are questions to which I am unable to respond.

### Acknowledgements

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Honorable guests,

I am grateful to God for with His permission I have the chance today to stand in front of you all. I accept this appointment (as professor), entrusted to me, as my dedication to University of Indonesia. I am indebted to my late parents who would have been proud to attend this event. My mother never had a chance to go to school and that is why she wanted her children to obtain as high an education as they could. My father only completed secondary school, and with this lack of education he always supported his

children's education to the highest degree. Their kindness I won't be able to return. I am also indebted to my beloved wife who, selflessly, accompanies me with patience and has always shared her feelings with me throughout my career. The support and understanding of my children have brought peace to my household and convinced me that what I have been doing is worthy. I want to offer my appreciation to all of the teachers who have been part of my education. Let me mention a few names for the opportunities they have given me, which have opened up a space that have led to my achievement. Dipl.-Ing. Han Awal introduced architecture to me and trusted me with teaching materials when I was still in my third year of university. This chance brought my attention to teaching materials and ways of researching. He was also the first to propose that I offer a Selected Topic (Kapita Selecta) course entitled Post-Modern Architecture, not long after I completed my degree. Professor Suwondo was the first to invite me to serve as his assistant for a fourth year design course, just after I received my degree. Much of his valuable advice has guided me throughout my teaching career. Ir. Gurnawan Ranadireksa, who served as my Mentor in my final year of architecture until I graduated. The chance to work with him empowered me to complete a larger task. Dr. Bianpoen opened up a chance for me to pursue research and involved me in an international conference on habitat. Ir. Gustaf Abas M. Arch inspired me to follow in his footsteps. Ir. Hartono Purbo, M. Arch provided a letter of recommendation for my study in the United States.

At UI, the roles of Professor Parsudi Suparlan and Dr. Budi Hartono were crucial to me in choosing to follow a research track, rather than a professional design job. They demonstrated to me that scholars should never compromise on their beliefs. The late Professor Nugroho Notosusanto for giving me the challenge to design this campus so as to allow me to eventually take up the Javanese concept of architecture as the topic of my dissertation.

For the design of the campus, I want to thank Mr. Diyan Sigit who always challenged the design so as to achieve the best result. Thanks to Dr. Harianto Sunidja for making it possible for me to return to Berkeley to continue my graduate study following the completion of the design of the campus of UI in Depok.

In the intellectual circle of the United States, I am indebted to Professor Richard Meier, Professor Clare Cooper Marcus, Professor Robert Reed, and Professor James Anderson from UC Berkeley who served as my mentors for my PhD dissertation, full of understanding and patience. I also thank the late Professor Horst Rittel who always challenged every opinion so as to sharpen my argument. Prof. William Mitchell, the late professor Charles Moore and Prof. Berge Aran from UCLA who, full of understanding, supervised my thesis. They showed me that a mutual respect between teacher and student could overcome distance. Such a belief I uphold until today.

In the professional world, Ir. Sidharta Nurochman once explained to me about the elite schools in the US and encouraged me to study further in order to teach better in Indonesia. Mr. Morris Simon showed me examples of how a letter of recommendation can be written in such a way to demonstrate one's capacity.

In the department of architecture, Ir. Tato Slamet and Ir. Siti Utamini facilitated my research while I was completing my study. Bung Budi Sukada has always been my sparring partner who gives me input for my writing. Bung Triatno Yudoharyoko who is always critical to my statements. To the late Mr. Mustadjab who was like a parent when I was doing fieldwork at Kota Gede. He shared with me wholeheartedly his knowledge about Javanese culture. Without his guidance, I would not have been able to complete my dissertation. To Prof. Edi Sedyawati and the late Prof. Kuntjaraningrat, who invited me to engage in issues around

culture, which has broadened my intellectual association. The late Dr. Ardi Pardiman Parimin, who was always critical to my opinion. Finally, my thanks to all the administrative staff of FTUI, especially Mr. Firman, who diligently helped the organization of this event. My apologies if there are names that I have forgotten to mention.

Honorable guests, let me close my presentation with an address to my students. Students should not expect answers from teachers. Teachers only prepare a program that may lead you to find an answer. Don't be disappointed if the answer turns out to be more new questions, which need to be further analyzed. Exploration without limit gives you a chance to move across borders, an act of which demands critical thinking, and this is the essence of knowledge formation. Don't get tired of asking and don't get disappointed when the answer is 'I don't know'. Only through will and hard work to find your own character, can architecture be genuinely explored and pushed beyond its limit. Through this attitude we can produce a new era for architecture.

Thank you for your attention, honorable guests.



FIG. 7 Josef Prijotomo

# Nusantara Architecture:<sup>57</sup> The Architecture of Shade and ‘Liyan’ Architecture. An Architectural Reading of the Architecture of the ‘Society Without-writing’<sup>58</sup>

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*Inaugural speech delivered on the occasion of appointment to Professorship at Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Surabaya, 19 April 2008.  
Translation by Abidin Kusno*

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- 57 The Indonesian title is ‘Arsitektur Nusantara: Arsitektur Perteduhan dan Arsitektur ‘Liyan.’ Pembacaan Arsitektural atas Arsitektur Masyarakat Tanpatulisan’. Nusantara refers to the Indonesian archipelago. The term originates from the Old Javanese Sanskrit word of *nusa* (island) and *antara* (in between) which, when combined, conveys the idea of a ‘whole’ archipelago. Gajah Mada, the military leader of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Majapahit Empire was the first to glorify the term through his oath to ‘unify’ Nusantara. This concept, however, was revised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Douwes Dekker to imagine the Indonesian regions from Sabang to Merauke. The term has become the synonym for Indonesia. It is seen as indigenous as it does not contain any ‘foreign’ association, such as ‘Indies’ or ‘India’. Prijotomo may have used the term with this understanding, but as his inaugural speech informs us, the notion of Nusantara contains a cosmopolitan nationalist vision of unity in diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika - p. 24), and is particularly strategic in his aim to overcome the Euro-American-centric knowledge formation of architecture.
- 58 The notion of ‘tanpatulisan’ is derived from Claude Levi Strauss’ society without writing (p. 4). Prijotomo, however, puts together two words ‘tanpa’ (without) and ‘tulisan’ (writing). The English translation here acknowledges this amalgamation by hyphenating “without” and “writing” to represent a single idea of ‘tanpatulisan’. So ‘tanpatulisan’ is translated as ‘without-word’ to acknowledge Prijotomo’s specific local appropriation of Strauss’s idea in a way that is similar to his discussion on ‘Iamtalking’ for ‘I am talking’. (see p. 8)

Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thanks to the presence of Almighty God I am honored and proud to receive the trust bestowed upon me to deliver my inauguration speech as professor at this honorable event.

### **Epilogue: Expressing Message and Recording Thought**

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Reading is not just spelling words and sentences, nor is it simply the stringing together of meanings of words. To read is to grasp the message of the writer. Once the reader grasps the message, he or she would say that the message is understood. This principle applies to all acts of reading, regardless of whether the writings are in Latin, Arabic, Chinese or Javanese script. If we pay closer attention to the rules of reading, we see that Latin script is read from left to right. Javanese script too is read from left to right. Arabic script, however, is read from right to left. Chinese script goes from up to down, right to left. These different rules of reading (in different languages) do not, however, change the meanings of the sentences.

It is essential to understand the use of certain scripts and the method of reading in order to grasp the meaning of a text. For us who use Latin script, we won't have difficulty in understanding a sentence such as 'architecture is a container of activities'. But would the sentence come across as such in Javanese script? If we can read Javanese script, we would know the answer, but what if we don't know Javanese script? If we don't know Javanese script, for sure we won't be able to read the sentence as such. We thus can say that we are literate in Latin script but illiterate in Javanese script. Understanding a script is related to understanding a language. We can be illiterate in Javanese script but literate in Javanese language. This is similar to someone who is fluent in

Javanese language and capable of writing in Javanese script but illiterate in Latin script. On the other hand, even if we have mastered Latin script, but are not well versed in English, then not all English text will make sense. The mastery of a language and its script is key to reading and understanding a text. The capacity to grasp the meaning of a text is an expression of a mastery over a script and a language.

Reading is also an attempt to grasp the message, the thought and the feeling of the author. This is because a piece of writing is a manifestation of a message from the author. It is also a record of the thought and feeling of the author. Problems appear if we meet a person or community who does not recognize writing, who does not use text. How do they convey their message? How do they record their thoughts? Such a person or community belongs to the illiterate, but this does not mean that they don't have the capacity to express their message and record their thinking. Although for centuries in the past the Toraja community has not been able to recognize writing, messages concerning the norms of life still can be found in their tradition. The stunning ancestral house of Toraja would not exist without a careful and sophisticated recording of their thoughts. Here we can't rely on written texts to grasp the message and thoughts of Torajan people. A similar problem is facing a great many other communities in Nusantara that do not recognize written text, such as those who built Candi Prambanan from the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries – a stone structure as tall as a five storey building; or the house in Sumba with three-storey timber construction; or a Javanese building without a roof truss. Here we must leave behind the view that writing is the only expression of message and record of thought. We have to search and find the kind of 'texts' that are being used to express messages and record feelings.



## Society-without-writing

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Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a society with no writing, one that structural anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss called 'community without writing', there is still a particular way of recording or giving expression to messages, thoughts and knowledge. Borrowing from this understanding, I want to show how speech, activities and artifacts operate like 'writing' as they find expression in the society-without-writing.

### A. Speech

Based on the high capacity to memorize, a society-without-writing excavates, acquires, communicates, transfers, and records knowledge after knowledge. Speech and other expressive forms are the first step to communicate. The emergence of mnemonic practices or the 'rule of thumb' may have originated from society-without-writing. They help to remember. Through mnemonic practices a range of otherwise hidden or forgotten knowledge can be retrieved. Then there are stories (such as folklore, fables and so on), tales (*hikayat*) and chronicles (*babad*), songs and sacred hymns. They are all forms of speech that serve as the 'written' form of knowledge.

### B. Acting and activity

Acting, activating and doing (which remind us of 'learning by doing') are also forms of 'writing'. The tradition of apprenticeship (*magang*) for instance, is a way of transmitting and recording knowledge from the expert to the disciple. The activity of assembling the rooftop for communal feast (*selamatan*) is not only a festival or religious ritual. The process of assembly demands those involved to move continuously up and down the rooftop. If assembly is not

perfectly executed, the building will collapse as the builders ascend. Here the process of assembly of the rooftop for *selamatan* is a way of challenging the skill of assembly. Dancing is another form of 'writing': the registering of thought and conveying of messages through movement of the body, according to a rhythm.

### C. Artifacts

Speech and action depend on the individual who makes the utterance. And this individual act can be limited, for the repertoire of knowledge is huge, so the scope of knowledge transferred by an individual cannot represent the total knowledge that transcends a generation. Objects and things in our surroundings thus offer a way to register and transfer knowledge in a way that could not be executed adequately by an individual. We thus often see a community, such as followers of animism, who believe that a stone can embody a soul. The soul gives animism a particular expression, but if the soul is understood as a force, an energy, an inertia embedded in an object, then the expression that 'the stone has a soul' cannot be associated with animism any more. Another example is the association of the forest with the dwellings of genies and giants. A forest is ghostlike, and should therefore be left alone and not destroyed. In depicting the jungle as a haunted place, the forest is preserved. Here the association of the jungle with the ghostlike turns out to be important for the preservation of the forest. Is it possible to imagine what might have happened to the forest of the 'society-without-writing' if the forest had not been represented as a haunted place? All of Java's forests would have been destroyed two or three hundred years ago.

Now consider the era in which we live, an era that produces books for reading and for the registration of knowledge. In the past, the book took the form of speech, action, and artifact. What we need to be cautious of here is how the book is read. Speech, actions and

artifacts are not merely a product of culture and tradition of the society-without-writing. They are not what they are. Instead, they are a representation of thought, and they therefore have to be 'read' instead of accepted, as simple fact or truth. We also must be cautious of the fact that that each of these expressions was embedded in the spatial and temporal context of the society-without-writing. Another brief example: We are often impressed by Nusantara architecture for its lack of nails in construction. Unfortunately, we tend to stop at such admiration, satisfied with a feeling of pride for this practice; and therefore never consider the ideas that are hidden within the nail-less building. What can we say about the expertise of the craftsmen (*tukang*) and his tools, modest compared to the tools we use today for building construction. We have stopped appreciating the tradition of mutual help (*gotong royong*), and admired instead a Javanese house and a Balinese Meru built solely by a construction management company. Speech, action and artifacts are not three separate forms of 'writings' to be decoded. Instead, they are mutually constituted networks of 'writings' that complement each other. The integrity of the messages and thoughts stems from the network formed between different speeches, actions and artifacts. Each reading produces a meaning, which becomes a message and idea of the society-without-writing.

To end this section, let me thank and offer my utmost appreciation to the disciplines of anthropology, philology, folklore, and cultural studies, to name but a few of the disciplines that have ably put together materials related to the society-without-writing. For the discipline of architecture, these materials ought to be the 'reading materials'. They are the 'texts' that need to be translated into the language of architecture. They are the layers of doors that enable architecture to reach the messages and thoughts of the society-without-writing. Therefore, exploration of the architectural ideas of the society-without-writing is an exploration of interdisciplinarity.

Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

From what I have discussed above concerning the society-without-writing, what is its significance for our understanding of Nusantara architecture? First, Nusantara architecture develops out of the environment and the tradition of the society-without-writing. In this context, we can say that the (non-textual tradition of) Nusantara architecture operates outside the Western (*arsitektur manca/barat*) intellectual environment, which is based on a written tradition.<sup>59</sup> Second, the knowledge formation of Nusantara architecture would need to be based on a way of reading the society-without-writing. It should not be based on the written tradition of the West. We can use the analogy of language (*bahasa*) and writing (*tulisan*) to see the difference. To explore Nusantara architecture is to read Javanese in Javanese script. Let me illustrate with an example: To write 'I am talking' is to write in Latin script, but in Javanese script, it would be something like 'Iamtalking'. Can we tell if 'Iamtalking' is a word or a sentence? We know nevertheless the difference, for 'Iamtalking' is a non-written action expressed in a language form. Third, the way of reading architecture in Western tradition is useful in so far as it is limited to the inquiry over 'how western architecture constructs its knowledge'. So, how the written tradition builds its knowledge could serve as an inquiry to explore how the society-without-writing builds its knowledge. Western architectural tradition then will not be taken as an intellectual product as represented in the question, such as, what is it? Instead it should be seen in terms of its processes of knowledge construction with an emphasis on the

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<sup>59</sup> *Arsitektur manca/barat* refers to Western or Westernized architecture as well as architecture abroad. The term sounds monolithic, but is used by Prijotomo to construct a different position for Nusantara architecture, which he later on describes as the position of 'the other' (see the section on Liyan architecture). Mindful of the diversity of '*arsitektur manca/barat*', I simply translate '*arsitektur manca/barat*' as 'Western architecture'.

question of why and how it is what it is. Here, it is important not to take the model of Western architectural knowledge as a basis to form knowledge of Nusantara architecture.

Several attempts were in fact made before the end of the twentieth century to differently construct the architecture knowledge of society-without-writing. Li Yu (1994), using a computer language program, has successfully shown the principle of Chinese traditional architectural design. The result is a production of knowledge about Chinese traditional architectural design in a computer language. Through a computer language program, Li Yu has demonstrated a way to produce Chinese architectural knowledge without relying on the tradition of Western architectural knowledge.

A decade after Li Yu's attempt not to follow the written tradition of Western architecture, Reena Patra (2007) wrote a dissertation about an ancient Indian manuscript. Unfortunately, Patra did not follow Li Yu's step to leave behind Western tradition. Instead, Patra uses the written tradition of the West, which she has taken as a model to read the *Vaastu Shastra* manuscript. In other words, Patra uses Western architectural method of reading to read Indian architecture, and by doing so, she assumes that ancient India is a society of written tradition, and not a society-without-writing. Reena Patra's method is similar to that of the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture, which documented traditional architecture in Indonesia in the 1980s. Although limited in circulation, the Department published over twenty volumes, each representing the traditional architecture of a different province in Indonesia. This state project relied heavily on the discipline of anthropology (as this discipline evolved in Indonesia at the time), but (despite its methodological problem) many schools of architecture in Indonesia are still using this series of books as a key text for teaching courses on Indonesian traditional architecture.

In 1980, YB Mangunwijaya published a different book. Called *Wastu Citra*, the book sought to liberate Eastern architecture from the framework of Western architecture, despite the fact that Mangunwijaya did not locate Eastern architecture (such as of India, Japan and Nusantara) in the context of the society-without-writing. Mangunwijaya firmly rejected the notion of architecture, using the term *Wastu* instead. Unfortunately, Mangunwijaya passed away before he had a chance to develop *Wastu* into a philosophical foundation for a non-Western knowledge formation.

These examples show different attempts to build architectural knowledge for non-Western architecture. They find various ways to read. Li Yu and Mangunwijaya locate Chinese and Eastern architecture outside the circle of Western architecture, whereas Reena Patra locates Indian architecture within the circle of Western architecture.

### On the Notion of Nusantara Architecture

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I have indicated earlier notions such as ‘Nusantara architecture’ and ‘traditional architecture’, as if they are two kinds of architecture. But this is not the case. Both terms ‘Nusantara architecture’ and ‘traditional architecture’ refer to the same object: the architectural characteristics of different ethnicities in Indonesia. The difference between these two terms refers to the two different ways of constructing knowledge for the same object. The knowledge of traditional architecture is built from the discipline of anthropology, whereas Nusantara architecture refers to a knowledge produced by the discipline of architecture. There are occasions when attempts were made to rework the terms. Gunawan Tjahjono, for instance, introduces ‘architecture of tradition’ to show that his exploration of traditional architectural knowledge doesn’t fit with the discipline of

anthropology. Meanwhile, Galih Widjil Pangarsa (2006), through his book entitled *Merah Putih Arsitektur Nusantara* [The Red and White (referring to the Indonesian national flag) of Nusantara Architecture], also uses the term Nusantara architecture, but his usage is different from mine. Pangarsa nevertheless intentionally uses the term to convey that the knowledge he is building is not that from traditional architecture.

### **The Architecture of Shade (*Arsitektur Perteduhan*)**

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Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

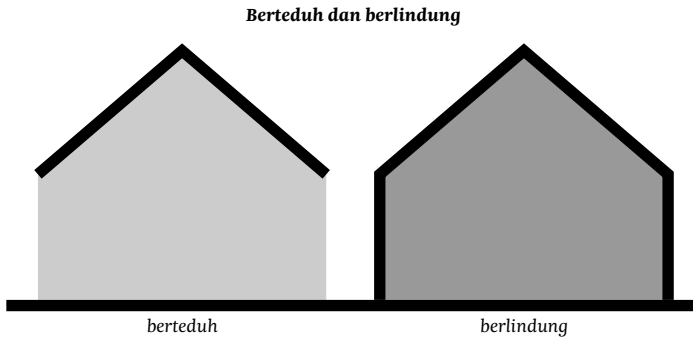
The Nusantara architecture that I have been most extensively and intensively exploring is Javanese architecture. Although we can still see many buildings designed in Javanese architecture today, what I am going to share with you in this honorary opportunity is the representation of Javanese architecture in Javanese manuscripts. I have explored over ten manuscripts, all written between 1882 and 1933. As indicated in the manuscripts, the texts were based on oral communication of the craftsmen (*tukang*) and the Javanese *undhagi* (architect-priest). So, these manuscripts are in fact speeches recorded in written form. As such, when I read the manuscript, I served as a listener – listening carefully the utterances of the *tukang* and the *undhagi*. I did this in order to locate Javanese architecture and the Javanese society within the society-without-writing. How Javanese architectural knowledge is constructed within the context of society-without-writing is what I present below:

## A.

'Dados tiyang sumusup ing griya punika dipun upamekaken ngaup ing sangandhaping kajeng ageng [...]'

Entering a building (*griya*) is seen and understood as an act of *berteduh*, or going into the shade under a 'big shady tree'. This statement, recorded in the *Kawruh Kalang Sasrawirjatma* (1928) manuscript, defines what architecture is. Here, architecture is formulated as entering the shade under a tree, and not as a shelter (for protection). Let me explain: If a person goes under a shady tree, he or she will be shielded from direct exposure to the sun, and from getting soaked by the rain. Although protected from direct exposure to the sun and the rain, they are still exposed to the heat of the sun and the dampness of the rain. But they still experience the heat of the sun and the heavy rain. Going into the shade is to still be part of the surrounding environment. Being shaded (*berteduh*) thus is more than being in a shelter (*bernaung*). Being in a shelter gives physical independence (from the surrounding environment), whereas the shade gives a sense (*rasa*) of inner comfort and peace. The notion of *berteduh* is used here, as in the quotation above, because it is associated with the notion of *kajeng*. In Javanese *kajeng* means both wood and strong determination. If we take *kajeng*'s first meaning as a piece of wood, it would mean 'going under the shade of a shady tree' and if we bring in *kajeng*'s second meaning as an expression of 'determination', the whole *kajeng* would mean 'going under the shade of a shady tree with a strong honorable determination'. In this mutually constitutive double sense, the precise architectural formulation would be 'entering a building is like going into the shade with a strong honorable determination'. With this formulation, gone is the idea of approaching Javanese architecture only in terms of its physical dimension (*matra*). Instead we are bringing in the nonphysical (*tanragawiah*) dimension.





**FIG. 8** Being shaded (left) and being protected (right)

*Berteduh* (to shade) is not about hiding or securing in terms of isolation, or disappearing from the surrounding environment. Because *berteduh* is not to protect, so architecture (as understood in Javanese manuscript) cannot be associated with the shelter that offers physical protection against the surrounding. Architecture in Javanese manuscripts is the space in the shade (*perteduhan*) and its relation with the immediate environment. Regrettably, the formulation of ‘architecture as a shelter’ is still commonly used in architectural schools in Indonesia, which is an indication of the influence of Western architectural thinking which is based on the perception of architecture as a protective shelter, and not of *perteduhan*.

## **B.**

*Perteduhan* locates an object above the head and body. This object is the leafy, shady tree. The wide-hat is also an example of the object that gives shade, and in building, the roof is the element that provides shade. The roof therefore is the most important element in a building for it is the roof that plays the role of providing shade, not the wall, not the floor. In a tropical setting

such as Indonesia, the roof is the element that is most capable of dealing with the sun, the wind and the rain. Besides Javanese architecture, in the architecture of mBojo-Bima, Waerebo-Flores or Atoni-Kupang, building forms are dominated by the roof - so dominant that the roof also serves as the building's walls. The term 'roof architecture' is quite appropriate here.

The dimension of the roof determines the extent of the area beneath it, along with the activities and the uses of space (note: activities under the roof are better captured by the notion of 'use' than the term 'function' which suggests a deterministic organization of space by the floor plan). Depending on the number of rafters (*usuk*) on the roof, Javanese architecture organizes spaces beneath for activities such as for storing valuables and for dwelling (*dalem, griya ageng*); for gathering (*pendhapa*), for storing rice paddy (*lumbung*); or for animal farming (*kandhang*) and for religious worship (*sanggar pamujan*). The number of rafters determines the breadth of the roof, and the size of the shaded area. The roof therefore takes the lead in shaping the uses and the activities of the building. The extent of the roof size allows the owner to give shape to the building (*Menggah ewahing dhapur wau boten angemungaken saking murih gampil utawi cekap kemawon, saweneh among saking lancip (kakirangan) saweneh saking sasenengan* – pg 6). The form of the roof could take the shape of *tajug, juglo, limansap* or *kapung* (see feature 2). In the conventional courses of traditional Javanese architecture, also taken by ordinary people, the form of the roof communicates the use of the space such as: *pendhapa*, finding expression in the shape of *juglolo*, *kandhang* is represented by *kapung* and so on. However, such understanding is misleading, as shown in the quotation from *Kawruh Kalang Sasrawirjatma*. What determines the use of the building is actually the breadth of the roof, and not its physical form.

**Tampang depan skematik dari dhapur**

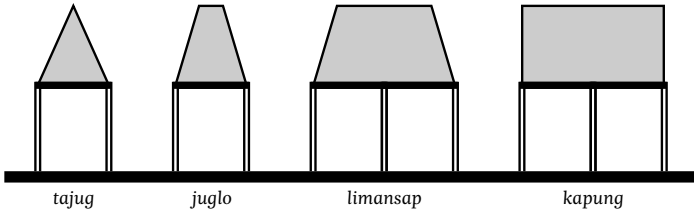


FIG. 9 The schematic front of a kitchen (dhapur)

As indicated earlier, the area of the floor is a product of the size of the shade area. Such logic is quite different from the conventional principle of design influenced by Western architecture, which is based on the presence of the floor plan for the organization of use and activity. In Western architecture, the size of the floor is one of the primary determinants for the presence of the roof. In Western architecture the basis of a building stems from floor plan and finishes with roof; Nusantara architecture, on the contrary, starts only after the roof is determined.

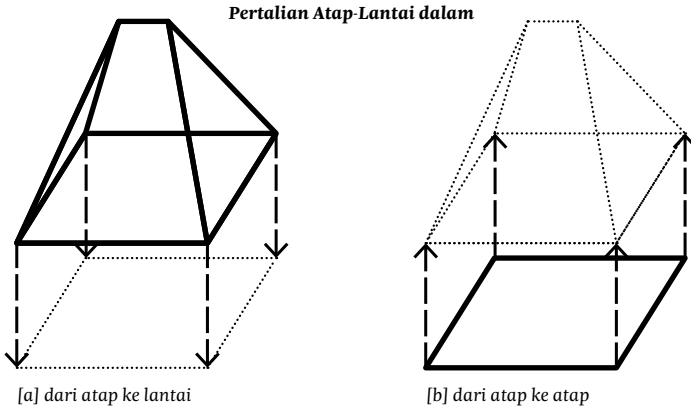


FIG. 10 [a] from roof to ground floor; [b] from ground floor to roof

### C.

As indicated above, the architecture of shade (*perteduhan*) enables architecture to integrate with the surrounding environment. This means that walls are not as important in a building. As a frontal piece, walls serve only to protect, as object through which we cannot see. Walls thus tend to compromise the capacity of a building intended to provide shade. It is not surprising therefore that the *Kawruh Griya* manuscript mentions nothing about walls.

It should be acknowledged, nevertheless, that Javanese architecture did eventually recognize and adopt walls. Considering Javanese architecture alongside other Nusantara architecture, we can see that the walls are used only in buildings which aim to protect or to hide. When a building is a place for protection and hiding, then it is no longer a dwelling but only a place for storage. Protecting our body while sleeping is a form of storage, and therefore it is not quite appropriate to identify such a room as 'bedroom' (as Western architecture would call it). This suggests that daily activities other than sleeping are not conducted in spaces with walls, but in overhang verandas or the space under a building on stilts. If privacy is needed for activities under overhangs or in the space beneath a building on stilts, then a screen, a curtain or a blind can be erected.

### D.

The use of rafters for the main structure comes with the question of what kind of timber is most suitable for the rafters, the roof frames (*balungan*) and the building as a whole. *Kawruh Griya* explains what kind of timber to use from the beginning of the manuscript; whereas *Kawruh Kalang* only gives such instruction at the end. Why such a difference in the representation of the same material? The reason is that the audience of *Kawruh Griya's* manuscript is the building owners, whereas *Kawruh Kalang* is a manuscript for craftsmen (*tukang*). This difference shows how

knowledge is divided according to the social division of labor. For the building owners, timber as a building material is less important than the *angsar*, the character and quality of each type of the timber. In the following I will show the representation of timber and its *angsar* by way of a table published in *Kawruh Kalang Sasrawirjatma* manuscript.

Angka	Kajeng ingkang sae	Dunung sarta katranganipun	Angsar tuwin kasijatipun
1	Gembrang	Kadjeng ingkang kasamber gelap	Langkung kuwawi panulak
2	Pandawa	Wit satunggal pakah gangsal	Langkung rosa ingkang ngenggeni
3	Simbar	Ojot medal wit utawi ngepang	Ajem sarta asrep kang ngenggeni
4	Tunjung	Kasusuhan pakai agene, utawi ngandhap kangge manggen kewan	Kadrajadan, tuwin santosa sedyanipun
5	Monggang	Inkang wonten punthukan ngardi	Mindhak-mindhak darajadipun sugih rijeki
6	Uger-uger	Wit satunggal pakah kalih	Gujub sarajatipun
7	Trajumas	Wit satunggal pakah tiga	Kathah rijeknipun
8	Amulo	Uwit ingkang kinubeng toja	Asreb sawabipun santosa panggalihipun
9	Gedheg	Inkang wonten gembolipun	Kuwawi simpen donja agung
10	Gedhug	Inkang wonten gandhikipun	Wiludjeng, sugih rodja-kaja
11	Gendhong	Trubus tumumpang ing pang	Sugih kaja, saking ngandhap
12	Gendam	Inkang dipun susuhi paksi alit, sarta dipun griyani bangsa gumremet	Kerep kadhatengan rejeki, tuwin sugih bala santana

FIG. 11 Good timbers for building

Our written tradition would say that the table consists of 12 kinds of teak wood, and advises on construction materials. The information in columns 3 and 4, however, are not easy to follow – not because of the Javanese language, but because of the relationship between these two columns and the others. For instance, we can follow column 2, which lists 12 kinds of teak wood each with its own name. (Table 1)

Column 3 is not too difficult to understand, as it describes only the physical characteristics of each teak type. Problems arise with column 4, which describes both the *angsar* and the physical strength of the teak wood. How can it be that *Gembrang* teak can possess both *angsar* and the strength of the wood as described in the phrase: '*langkung kuwawi, panulak*' (stronger to withstand, counter disaster)? For a *tukang* or *undhagi*, the table would be understood in the following way: If a tree is chosen as a building material, then it would be used, following the wish of the building owner, for its ability to cope with certain challenges or for its ability to counter disaster. Based on this understanding, a *tukang* or *undhagi* would first listen carefully to the building owner to understand his requests. On the basis of these requests, the *tukang* or the *undhagi* would determine which building material is most suitable. Through this process of understanding, we know that the table is more than a collection of material information, but is about:

- 1 *The various intentions and requests of the owner*
- 2 *The capacity of different building materials to fulfill the intention and the request of the owner*
- 3 *The physical attributes of teak wood as a building material*

Following conventions in architecture, column 2 (the different types of teak wood) represents column 4 (which consists of intentions and requests of the owner). This means that column 4

doesn't provide information about the strength of the teakwood per se, even though it conveys the qualities of 'angsar serta khasiat', (the savor of the teak wood), for it merely conveys the intention or the request of the owner (this is consistent with contemporary practice of 'form follows client'). The choice of building material represents the intention or the request of the building owner. What is also important here is the responsibility of the *tukang* or the *undhagi* to uphold the intention and the request of the owner. The task of the *tukang* or the *undhagi* is to realize the building as wished by the owner. Finally considering *angsar* and the qualities listed in column 4, we see that they represent not so much the quality of the building material, but the strong determination of the owner and the *tukang* or *undhagi*, and it thus confirms the formulation of 'going into the shade with a strong honorable determination' ('berteduh dalam tekad mulia').

So we ask why the characterization of trees, as listed in column 3, indicates only the physical appearance of the trees and not the strength of the wood in kg/cm<sup>2</sup>. The answer to this is, firstly, that in the era when the manuscript was written, there was no instrument for measuring strength in kg/cm<sup>2</sup>. Second, the expressions from column 3 are those of *tukang* and *undhagi*, whereas the metric measurements of kg/cm<sup>2</sup> are those of builders trained in technical schools.

#### D.

The majority of Nusantara architecture uses timber as its prime building material. This is quite different from Western architecture, which is dominated by the architecture of brick and stone. The use of timber and other organic materials (such as bamboo, thatches, reeds, and *ijuk*) demands periodic recycling. The construction technique of 'bundling', or the system of 'pen and holes', works well for this purpose. Nusantara architecture has

affinity with the timber-based Japanese architecture and Chinese architecture. The use of nails in the construction industry cannot match the accuracy provided by the bundle technique and the system of pen and hole construction (note: nails probably came in tandem with the emergence of Western architecture and were probably introduced in the Dutch colonial era).

#### E.

With the roof as the central component of a building, and the coordinator of the use and activity in the space beneath, it is fair to say that the appearance of the roof deserves particular attention – as an elegant roof shape informs the status of the building owner and the identity of the (ethnic) community. Here, forbidding the use of certain decorative patterns, as indicated in *Kawruh Kalang*, can be understood as an architectural message in the representation of the owner's status, perhaps a member of the nobility or the king. This also explains why generally Nusantara architecture displays very little contrast between buildings for nobility and those for peasants. For those of higher status, the size of the building might be bigger with more 'expensive' materials, and richer in decoration. A *kraton* (palace) is nothing more than a building larger in size, and of more selective building materials, and more adorned in decoration. *Alun-alun* in Javanese *kraton* is merely a front or back yard of a house. Such correspondence reminds us of the structure of society that recognizes chieftain or elders. Unlike in old European societies, here the king is seen as a chieftain.



## 'Liyān' Architecture

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Through an exploration of Javanese architecture, and enriched by an examination of Nusantara architecture in different regions in Indonesia, it is clear that Nusantara architecture is significantly different from Western architecture. If Nusantara architecture is the architecture of a society-without-writing, Western architecture is the architecture of written tradition; Nusantara architecture is an architecture of shade (*perteduhan*) whereas Western architecture is an architecture of protection; The construction of Nusantara architecture goes through the process of moving from roof to floor, whereas Western architecture moves from floor to roof. These are just some of the differences identified here. The ideas and knowledge about Nusantara architecture that are demonstrated here strongly indicate that Nusantara architecture is an 'architecture', but that it is not the one framed by the perspective of Western architectural knowledge. Nusantara architecture stands outside the circle or the environment of Western architecture. It is architecture of the 'other' which can be called 'liyan' (*the other*) architecture. My exploration here could be said as extending or acting on the thoughts of Mangunwijaya.

In this 'liyan' position, Nusantara architecture has the same opportunity to respond to change and development in the world of architecture. For instance, if Western architecture is able to present contemporariness through high-rise buildings, then Nusantara architecture has the same opportunity to present itself as such.

## Embracing the Future

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Honorable ladies and Gentlemen,

Mangunwijaya has pioneered a new insight for the architectural world, not only for us in Indonesia, but also for architecture in all parts of the world. Mangunwijaya also emphasized that 'Western' architecture which has been so popular (*merakyat*) does not represent the only truth and the only knowledge available. Through 'Wastu citra' Mangunwijaya believed that Wastu (a term he used to replace architecture) is a truth and knowledge of architecture from the position of 'liyan' (*the other*) in relation Western architecture.

The notion of 'Nusantara architecture' is in fact equivalent to 'Wastu'. I am not only confirming Mangunwijaya's perspective, but also developing a strategy and a way to construct a truth and knowledge for Nusantara architecture, the architecture of 'liyan' in relation to Western architecture. It is obvious that this strategy (of 'liyan') has developed after having established the tradition without-writing as equal to a written tradition. Our willingness to be aware that we have been duped by written tradition, that only in written tradition we find truth and knowledge, is a consciousness crucial for a critical understanding of architecture's past and future. With this consciousness, we know that the past doesn't mean backwardness, stupidity and primitivism. The use of axes and chisels had produced impressive works such as Toraja architecture and Minang architecture. In all honesty, are we able to produce architecture that is equal to that of Toraja and Minang with the same tools and building materials? Here, the past refers not only to the fact of the past but also to its context, as what we refer to today as the past was once a present. Or to put the same issue differently, would the traditional architecture of Toraja and Minang look the same

nowadays if they were built using the tools and the materials of the present day? It is a challenge today to produce works that are equal to those of the past.

Undoubtedly we cannot, and must not, return to the past. The future must always be the orientation of our life, our thought and our actions. In the same way that we cannot forget our parents, we must also stick firmly to truth and knowledge. Indonesian architecture should make Nusantara architecture its 'parents', and Western architecture its 'colleagues', inviting the two to stay compatible and equal. This is an attitude that would allow us to avoid Euro-American centrism in the truth and knowledge formation of architecture.

If we take architecture as our focus, the architectural aspect of Nusantara challenges us to nurture and develop Nusantara architecture within the environment of BHIKNEKA TUNGGAL IKA. Gone is the narrow regional and ethnic mindset which could potentially give rise once again to *divide et impera*. Batak could grow in Java, and from there could give rise to hybrid Java-Batak, a hybridity that would enrich both Java and Batak. It is time to study Nusantara architecture and teach it in the domain of architectural knowledge, no more borrowing from anthropology, ethnography or cultural studies.

Furthermore, if architecture is still believed to strive for the creation of identity, we must acknowledge the following three issues: First, to acknowledge that the first fifty years of our architectural pedagogy in architectural school was to present an image of transnational architectural identity. Now it is time to move the pedagogy and education of architecture to teach issues around identity and representation of Nusantara, of *wong cilik* (ordinary - small - people) who are proud of *gonjong* and *Joglo* (types of traditional roof). In striving to make Indonesia rooted in

the environment of Nusantara, we recognize the names of current leading architects such as Yori Antar, Sony Sutanto, Ridwan Kamil, Popo Danes, Eko Prawoto, Putu Mahendra, and Edwin Nafarin; while names such as Abidin Kusno, Galih Widjil Pangarsa, Mohammad Nanda Widyarta, Setiadi Sopandi, Juliastono or David Hutama and Undi Gunawan have produced works that have great potential to stay current with (but which are no less important than) knowledge from abroad. It is acknowledged that constraints in communication and information have caused those Indonesians relatively unknown to Indonesia, while Indonesian architects and students so easily pronounce names from foreign lands. This constraint has also kept me from mentioning names that are blossoming and growing outside Java. Yes, that is the irony of the development of architecture in Indonesia.

Second, with the Nusantara and Indonesian attitude that I have discussed in this talk, we won't be seeing *wayang* tradition as merely a story or tale, or merely as a philosophy and ethic of life. *Wayang* could be seen as a science fiction of another era. As such we could appreciate the old time for its capacity to predict and construct a very scientific future. Long distance wireless connection has been depicted in *wayang* play, but was only realized at the end of the twentieth century through the *handphone*. The army battalion of Alengka possessed laser as a weapon for war. The medical world was faced with a very complex issue when it was confronted the newborn baby Gatutkaca, who was wrapped in a layer as he came out of goddess Arimbi's womb. The world of education also admires Bambang Ekalaya, an autodidact who achieves skills equal to the much-worshipped Arjuna. And so on and so on.

The past has also left us with a great many agendas for the present and the future: issues that were already considered a probability.

The third point refers to the component of the teacher in Javanese building, who serves as a model and a leader. The past can also be a good teacher: the figure who made us a trained AND educated person, not only teaching us. My late father was a schoolteacher at Sekolah Pendidikan Guru (The School for the Education of Teachers). He told me that when a student achieves more than him, he is delighted. Here we are reminded of a teacher influenced by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the philosopher of Indonesian education: *Ing ngarsa sung tuladha, ing madya mangun karsa, tut wuri handayani*. Is idealism still sprouting in the heart of our teachers, lecturers, and professors in Indonesia?

### **To Close: Appreciation and Indebtedness**

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Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

That is all I can deliver at this pleasant opportunity. Now let me show my appreciation and thanks to those who have made it possible for me to accept the honor and responsibility of a professorship. Let me first of all thank all who have been involved in processing my promotion to professorship: from typist to Rector and the Minister of National Education. Although I won't be able to mention everyone's name, it does not mean that I have forgotten those who have worked so hard to successfully complete this inauguration process.

To my colleagues in all architectural schools in Indonesia, I thank you for the discussion and exchanges that have made me more aware of the journey of architecture and architectural education in Indonesia. I especially thank and honor the late Djelantik, Josef Maria Soendjojo, Stephanus Setiadi, Slamet Budihartono, Mas Santosa, Angger Orie, Ardi Pardiman Parimin and Sidharta who played a major role in forming my teaching personality and

mission. Mr. Harjono Sigit, Han Awal, Soewondo Bismo Soetedjo, Gunawan Tjahjono, Johannes Widodo, Yuswadi saliya, Sutrisno Murtiyoso, Herbasuki Wibowo and Johan Silas have challenged me in order that I may become a principled teacher, and be consistent in believing in architecture as a form of knowledge and as a *dharma*. You have convinced me that for the teacher, much like my late father used to say: 'the happiest moment is when he sees his student achieving more than what he can achieve'.

Such teacher-student relationship does not end when the student completes his or her study, and does not stop outside the classroom.

To students whom I have taught, to those whom I was not able to accommodate in my classes, those from Banda Aceh to Jayapura and from Manado to Kupang, I thank you all. You are the ones who have challenged and reminded me, at every moment, to become an instructor who could brighten your perspective, and to build character and nationalism in your heart. Forgive me if I became a 'killer' in your eyes.

From parking staff to the head of administration, and from cleaners to clerks, you have supported me in the path of positive thinking (*temen-tinemu*) which I took in the Department of architecture at ITS. I am proud of you for showing me the way. I thank you all. Please do not be disappointed if I don't mention you by name.

Honorable Ladies and gentlemen,

This valuable time has compelled me to thank all my teachers in SDK Santo Josef, SMAK Santo Albertus, Thew Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember and the Iowa State University, as well as all of my friends and colleagues who, in my opinion, were my teachers for the life I have pursued. Apologies if I couldn't mention each one of you name by name, but believe me that you are in my life as teachers who have taught and educated me. Thank you for the teaching and the education you have given me.

All the children, in-laws, grand children and great grandchildren of the big families of Gerardus Soewandi, Roestamadji, Himowidjajan, Raden Mas Kadarsan and Tjokroprawiro who have given me guidance and invaluable appreciation of my work and dedication in teaching and education. Thank you with my salute to you all.

I have always regretted that I loved my books and computers often more than nurturing the love I have planted in my relationship with my loving wife Maria Sri Andrijati and my dear daughter Josephine Roosandriantini S. Psi. I was moved and touched to hear of the tears my wife shed on receiving the text message that informed her that the letter of professorship had been issued; and my daughter proudly pronounced my name along with the title professor. My wife and my daughter, I hope you take what I have achieved here as a sign of my love for you.

My father Gerardus Soewandi, unbeknownst to me, informed my wife that he would be very happy if I were to achieve the highest in the *dharma* in which I found myself. My father was unable to witness this, as he returned to Bapa in heaven in 1997. It is my mother Maria Roosmijah who accompanied me to this highest point in my life. I will never forget how you were trying to smile

happily while, with difficulty, listening to my whisper: 'mother, I have been trusted with a professorship'. My mother's departure to meet my late father in peace thirteen days ago, to me is a sign of happiness of a mother who had taken care of her children in order for them to achieve the highest in the *dharma* they pursued. My beloved father and mother, I hope today's event conveys the wish you have implanted in my heart: 'be diligent in one task, and achieve the highest from what you are doing'. Please accept this event as your child's dedication to glorify his beloved father and mother.

Thank you.





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**FIG. 1** Photo of the construction of a traditional Marupa house. Source: Gunawan Tjahjono

**FIG. 2** Artist unknown (source: Ir. Suparti A. Salim, “35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur di Indonesia,” in Kongres 35 Tahun Pendidikan Sarjana Arsitektur di Indonesia, Jakarta: IAI, 1985)

**FIG. 3** Sketch of University of Indonesia’s Rectorate Tower by Gunawan Tjahjono (Courtesy: G. Tjahjono)

**FIG. 4** Photo of University of Indonesia’s Rectorate Tower. Source: Abidin Kusno

**FIG. 5** Poster for Prijotomo’s lecture, 2013. Designed by architectural students of Universitas Brawijaya Malang (Source: <http://archipress-ub.blogspot.ca/2013/04/kuliah-tamu-bersama-josef-prijotomo.html>)

**FIG. 6** Photo of Gunawan Tjahjono. Courtesy of the LafargeHolcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction

**FIG. 7** Photo of Josef Prijotomo. Source: uc.ac.id

**FIGS 8, 9, 10, 11** Professor Dr. Ir. Josef Prijotomo March, Nusantara Architecture: The Architecture of Shade and ‘Liyan’ Architecture. An Architectural Reading of the Architecture of Society Without-writing. Inaugural speech delivered on the occasion of appointment to Professorship at Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember. Surabaya, 19 April 2008.



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# On the Editors

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**Carola Hein** is Professor and Head, Chair History of Architecture and Urban Planning at TU Delft. She has published widely on topics in contemporary and historical architectural and urban planning – notably in Europe and Japan. Among other major grants, she received a Guggenheim Fellowship to pursue research on The Global Architecture of Oil and an Alexander von Humboldt fellowship to investigate large-scale urban transformation in Hamburg in international context between 1842 and 2008. Her current research interests include transmission of architectural and urban ideas along international networks, focusing specifically on port cities and the global architecture of oil. She serves as Editor for the Americas for the journal *Planning Perspectives* and as Asia book review editor for the *Journal of Urban History*. Her books include: *The Capital of Europe. Architecture and Urban Planning for the European Union* (2004), *Planning History Handbook* (2017/forthcoming), *Port Cities: Dynamic Landscapes and Global Networks* (2011), *Brussels: Perspectives on a European Capital* (2007), *European Brussels. Whose capital? Whose city?* (2006), *Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945* (2003), and *Cities, Autonomy and Decentralisation in Japan*. (2006), *Hauptstadt Berlin 1957-58* (1991). She has also published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, books, and magazines.

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This small booklet contains the inaugural speeches of Gunawan Tjahjono and Josef Prijotomo on their appointments as professors at the University of Indonesia and Surabaya Institute of Technology, 10 November. The texts provide novel insights into their respective approaches to Indonesian architecture, and appear here for the first time in English. An analytical reflection on their work by the architectural historian Abidin Kusno introduces them.

