

## Looking for the Relevance of Architecture Education for the People Lecture by Dipl. Ing. Y.B. Mangunwijaya, 6 December 1975

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*The lecture was part of “Diskusi Pagi” Pendidikan Arsitektur Kini dan Masa Datang (“Morning Discussion” of Architecture Education in the Present and the Future), held at Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) in Bandung on 6 December 1975 to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of architecture education at ITB. The Morning Discussion took place at Galeri Soemardja, ITB, and included participants from Institut Teknologi Surabaya (ITS), Universitas Jayabaya, Universitas Pancasila, Universitas Petra, Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM), Universitas Indonesia (UI), Universitas Kristen Indonesia (UKI), Universitas Jakarta (UNJ), Universitas Hasanuddin (UNHAS), Universitas Parahyangan (UNPAR), Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 (UNTAG), Universitas Udayana (UNUD), and Universitas Trisakti (USAKTI). Most of the speakers emphasized the importance of tailoring architecture education to the location situation and not relying only on foreign ideas. The text also appeared in the book *Arsitek Bicara Tentang Arsitektur Indonesia (Architects talk about Indonesian architecture)*<sup>1</sup> under the title “Kegayutan Pendidikan Arsitek bagi Rakyat Indonesia (The relevance of architecture education for Indonesian people)”.*

*This text was translated by Angeline Basuki for the project *Dipl.-Ing Arsitek: German-trained Indonesian Architects from the 1960s* and edited by Eduard Kögel and Moritz Henning with Alisa Kotmair.*

*The sources in the footnotes, which are partly incomplete in the original, have been supplemented by the editors. From note 17 onwards, the footnotes are missing from the original. We have tried to reconstruct them as far as possible.*

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1. Assalamualaikum warohmatullohi wa'barakatu!

I thank all the initiators of this Morning Discussion and send my regards to my colleagues at the Architecture Department of UGM, and *proficiat* [Dutch/Latin for “congratulations”] for the silver jubilee, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Architecture Department at ITB. Long ago, ITB planted the seeds in me to become an architect. Therefore, my speech will hopefully be considered an expression of my gratitude and a returning favour for all the kindness and ideals I received from the Architecture Department and my former teachers, whom I respect to this day. Once again, this Morning Discussion initiative shows the immense responsibility and dedication our colleagues at ITB have towards the development of architecture in Indonesia and our architect candidates' education in the present and future. Honestly, I might not be qualified to represent the vision of the Engineering Department of the Architecture Faculty UGM as an institution.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Budihardjo, Eko (ed.), *Arsitek Bicara Tentang Arsitektur Indonesia*, Bandung: Alumni, 1987

<sup>2</sup> UGM (Universitas Gajah Mada) was the university where he taught.

You can read the attachments containing the workshop output on curriculum training at the Architecture Department, Faculty of Engineering, UGM, held in May 1973, for comprehensive information on what we have been/are thinking about at UGM regarding this discussion.<sup>3</sup> There you can also see my suggestions, among others, which we titled: “Determining Variables of Architecture Education”.

2. I do not think it is necessary to reiterate everything at this special event this morning. Basically, my view on the matter has not changed much, although, in the two years since the workshop was held, several developments have influenced my point of view and priorities from that time.

As I see it, our direction is highly determined by our challenges, which come from our society’s anthropological and sociocultural context. And by the decisive aspects from IPOLEKSOSBUDHANKAM (ideology, politics, economy, society and culture, defence and security) that we can also sense in the architecture climate and current attitudes toward education in our homeland.<sup>4</sup>

3. Therefore, my fellows, let me personally (not as a UGM representative, despite the consent of my colleagues at UGM) propose several considerations that are vital, in my opinion, for the direction of architecture education in Indonesia in particular and Indonesian architecture in general (if Indonesia as a predicate is still required). These considerations are not new at all, but given several global trends, they will be unavoidable for our nation in this shrinking world.<sup>5</sup>

Chapter Two of the Introduction to the Morning Discussion by the Steering Committee provides a good basis for reflection: “The construction world has grown so much that the architect’s relevance is no longer limited to planning and design only. The architect is also

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<sup>3</sup> Workshop “Pembinaan Kurikulum Bagian Teknik Arsitektur”, Fakultas Teknik, Universitas Gajah Mada, held in 1973 in Kaliurang.

<sup>4</sup> In the dynamic era with information overload, although not as blended as developed countries, but through mass media and open-door politics importing all kinds of foreign influences (from the noble to porn), is it still relevant to be considered (in the academic world everywhere and spread by UNESCO and other education centres) today? As said by C.H. Waddington, (professor of animal genetics, University of Edinburgh), “... the problem first of all is to see them not as metaphysically ordained – with the Absurd as the root cause of exploitation – but rather as conditions deeply rooted in a particular if pervasive dynamic. The problem secondly is to understand the dynamic in which both alienation and exploitation exist as interaction and related features.” [C.H. Waddington, “Three Relevant Quotations”, *Ekistics*, vol. 26, no. 155, 1968, p. 324].

<sup>5</sup> Barbara Ward (Lady Jackson) (Professor of International Economic Development Columbia University USA), “The biggest factor of global consciousness is that the gap is widening between the rich and poor nations, and this is especially so in their cities. The festering sores of the world are concentrated in its so-called “human settlements”. The limits of human patience are likely to be reached in 1984 not 2050.”, [Barbara Ward, “Toward Removing Global Inequalities: Recommendations from Delos Ten”, *Ekistics*, October 1972, vol. 34, no. 203, p. 270.]

Hollis B. Chenery (Economic Advisor to the President of World Bank), “... in 1960 there were 750 million people living in cities over 20,000 people. Of these some 400 million were in the relatively developed countries and 350 million in the less developed. Over the next 50 years, population growth in the developed countries will be relatively slow while the urban population of countries that are now less developed will probably reach 2.5 billion. This will require the construction of facilities for over 2 billion additional city-dwellers. Therefore, in these poor countries, with heavy population pressures, the economic constraints are most acute and new types of urban solutions are most needed ...” [Hollis B. Chenery, “Toward Removing Global Inequalities: Recommendations from Delos Ten”, *Ekistics*, October 1972, vol. 34, no. 203, p. 272.]

involved in special fields whose focus is outside of planning and design.” To clarify again, “planning and design”, as mentioned above, are the things that are directly related to architecture, additionally in the physical sense.

The term “physical” clearly is not satisfactory since we never consider architecture merely as something physical. But I hope you get my point.<sup>6</sup>

The Steering Committee had proposed the precise starting point: “Twenty-five years is a long time – if not too late – to start reviewing the works and looking into the future.” (Event Introduction, Chapter One)<sup>7</sup>

4. It is true that the architecture world, whether at home or abroad, is facing a serious crisis. But which discipline that is not facing a crisis would determine the existence of its *raison d'être*, moreover, its civilization?<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, basic philosophy and physics, which can be said to have touched the deepest core and greatest galaxy of human existence, are struggling desperately with their *raison d'être*. Moreover, there are discipline branches that matter, which do not ask humankind the most fundamental and existential questions as our architecture does. Nevertheless, the architecture graduates' callings and the education of its candidates are worth discussing seriously.<sup>9</sup>

We are expected to have a big heart since a critical diagnosis of the situation might sound bitter. But along with all the responsibilities accompanying the calling of knowledge and its deeds, the things that matter need to be said openly.

5. Dear friends, we need not doubt the materials or performances of Indonesian architects and its candidates. Nor do we need to worry about the creativity, imagination, and management skills of our current and future partners. We should also be grateful for the

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<sup>6</sup> Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. “Die Architektur hängt von ihrer Zeit ab. Sie ist die Kristallisation ihrer inneren Struktur, die allmähliche Entfaltung ihrer Form ... Architektur ist der echte Kampfplatz des Geistes.” From a speech at Illinois Institute of Technology (ITT), 1950. [First published: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, “Architecture and Technology”, *Arts and Architecture* 60, no. 10, 1950, p. 30. Re-published in German: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, “Technik und Architektur”, in Ulrich Conrads (ed.), *Programme und Manifeste zur Architektur im 20. Jahrhundert*, Gütersloh/Berlin: Birkhäuser, 1975 (first edition), p. 146].

<sup>7</sup> Introduction of “Morning Discussion” of Architecture Education in the Present and the Future. Architecture Department, ITB, Bandung, 15 November 1975.

<sup>8</sup> Hasan Ozbekhan (Executive Planning and International Development, Worldwide Information Systems, Inc.), “Events around us have become so numerous, diffuse, and dangerous, that we are in grave peril unless we can develop a central construct within which we can understand not only events and their relationships, but the meaning we as human beings have within this dynamic environment. We must, in effect, conceive of and decide upon “purpose” ... we will be utterly unable to cope with the environment we have created if we lack such “purpose” ... that all relationships occurring within a technological framework are metaphysical ... beyond physics ... (quoting Kopkin) the conceptual meaning of event is, in fact, of much greater importance to us today than the specific event itself.” [Hasan Ozbekhan, “Planning Theory”, *Ekistics*, October 1969, Vol. 28, No. 167, pp. 296–299.]

<sup>9</sup> Werner Heisenberg (Nuclear Physics Pioneer, Nobel in Physics 1932), “... die Wandlungen in den Grundlagen der modernen Naturwissenschaft ... als Symptom angesehen werden können für Verschiebungen in den Fundamenten unseres Daseins ... in Veränderungen unserer Lebensweise und unserer Denkgewohnheiten, sei es in äußeren Katastrophen, Kriegen oder Revolutionen.” [Werner Heisenberg, “Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik”, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1955].

dedication – proven in face-to-face expert meetings – shown by our colleagues with different experiences who are willing to gather and exchange ideas. It is natural that we must contribute to this dedication and climate of responsibility, things that are unpleasant but necessary for healthy progress.

First, it can be said openly that the results and current climate of architecture in our country are still a response to the past culture, which is not very relevant to people's situations and conditions today. I am not going to blame professors or practicing senior and junior architects. No. They have made their contributions and been loyal to architecture ethics and their calling during their time.

But now, from our standpoint in 1975, we are seeing millions of Indonesian people as they are, and not as we imagine them to be. And we must admit that the direction of Indonesian architecture and architecture education needs a different orientation. Architecture graduates must have different compasses in terms of their architectural orientation. It is not just because we want to be up-to-date for the sake of being up-to-date, nor do we want to be something else because we suffer from a disease of authenticity. Not that. A new compass is needed not because of a certain trend or other external reasons. It comes from the fundamental calling of the architect, which is natural and demanded by the situation and condition as humans among the closest humans – who make up our growing nation and include millions of poor and suffering people. This calling came organically and intrinsically from our historical and existential position, *hoc hic et nunc*, this here and now.

It does not mean that the past is useless or bad. Neither. Simply, this historical phase is different and architecture graduates today are hearing the people's longing through other ears and a different level of maturity.<sup>10</sup>

6. First, it can be said that the direction of architecture that was inherited by the 1950s and '60s era is still dominated by the architecture we know from symbolic figures like Gropius, Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Nervi, v.d. Broek and Bakema, Scharoun, Eiermann, Kenzo Tange, etc. Theirs is an architecture with the super-, trans-, and infrastructure of developed countries with advanced industry and capitalist liberal patterns, free enterprise, and a degree of order and hierarchy in the decision-making process that is completely different (than here). Furthermore, it often contradicts our country's actual situation and condition.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Reinhardt Guldager (Prof. Dr.-Ing. Entwicklungsplanung T. Univ. Braunschweig), "... Dekompensation ländlicher Strukturen – Integration industrieller Strukturen – Transfer von Know-how – Transfer von Technologien – so nenne es die Klugen, die weißen und die schwarzen, die, die die Ursprünglichkeit traditioneller Lebensformen durch eine andere, eine bessere Welt aus Beton, Stein und Stahl ersetzen wollen. So wachsen die Städte (in developing countries). Wachsen sie auch aus dem Zwiespalt der Möglichkeiten etablierten Gesellschaftsformen der Arrivierten in Verbund mit dem noch schwankenden Gerüst des Transfers derjenigen, die in das Land kommen, um Know-how und Technologien zu vermitteln? ... Nicht Intelligenz allein sondern persönliche Erfahrung sowie Identifizierung und Anpassungsfähigkeit sind Merkmale, die der Lösung besonders schwieriger Aufgaben vorangehen. ... Erst dann versteht man Planung als dynamische Aktion, als Vorgriff in eine verstandene oder zumindest in ihren Dimensionen erkannte Zukunft. [Reinhardt Guldager, "Zur Lage. Stadtplanung in Entwicklungsländern", *Bauwelt* 48 (Stadtbauwelt 40), 31 December 1973, p. 295]

<sup>11</sup> Reinhardt Guldager, "Wirtschaftswachstum allein ist kein Maßstab für humanen Fortschritt, auch nicht in der Stadt- und Regionalentwicklung. Zahlreiche Städte in den Ländern der Dritten Welt zählen heute schon zu den

One of the lacks we accepted is that our education is dominated by something that is *disziplin-bezogen*, and not yet *problembezogen* (oriented to discipline or method, not yet oriented to the real problem).<sup>12</sup>

7. Every architecture is not a value-neutral thing. An *Architektur-an-sich* never existed, just like *Technologie-an-sich* never existed. This is something we need to truly understand because it determines the *raison d'être*, the essence of our work and ideal in architecture (practice) and self-architecturing. It is important to recognize the Indonesia of the present for the sake of the future. Architecture, as we know it, is a crystallization of a view of life; it is a field of evaluation pattern, an infra-, trans- and superstructure framework for a certain decision-making process.

Architectural attitudes and work are carried away by certain ideologies. Every revealing strategy of action by a certain group of architects or individuals has been shaped by presumptions or paradigms that are usually taken for granted. But these actually determine the deepest characteristics of the architectural work.

The architecture of the pharaohs' pyramids in Ancient Egypt, the Indian *chaitya*, *stupa*, or *puram*, the Javanese *candi* or Balinese *meru*, Tenno Palace in Kyoto, Chartres Cathedral, Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation in Marseille, Mies van der Rohe's Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Oscar Niemeyer's capital city of Brazil, Kenzo Tange's exhibition hall in Osaka or Safdie's Habitat in Montreal and the House of Representatives "dormitory" in Senayan, Jakarta – they are not isolated from the ideologies and sociocultural views of the *bouwheer* (clients) who become their *maecenas* (patrons).<sup>13</sup>

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teuersten Hauptstädten in absoluten Preisen. ... Gestehen wir uns lieber ein, dass wir im Bereich der Entwicklungsplanung, und damit auch Stadt- und Regionalentwicklungsplanung, [für die Länder der Dritten Welt] – und hier besonders für die ärmsten – erst am Anfang des Wissens um die Komplexität der ineinandergreifenden Probleme stehen ... Wenn ich in der "Wir-Form" spreche, so meine ich damit die Architekten und Planer aus Entwicklungsländern und diejenigen von uns, deren Engagement in der Dritten Welt und für die Dritte Welt sich nicht vorrangig in kurzen Exkursionen niederschlägt, sondern in der echten Auseinandersetzung mit den Problemen der Menschen, [die in den Städten und Regionen] ihre Ursprünglichkeit wiederfinden wollen und ihr Anrecht auf humanes Leben beanspruchen werden." (Ibid. *Bauwelt* 31 December 1973, p. 296), [see note 8].

<sup>12</sup> One of the attempts by the young academic and student generation to face the infertility between theory and practice and to solve the no-longer-relevant architecture education at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century came from Technische Universität Berlin. This resulted in a recommendation study regarding the fate of "Planning" today. "Planning in Kapitalismus" situation (today's Western European youth suffering condition) and an attempt at "Kritik des herrschenden Planungsbegriffs" such as: "What most determines the relation between a society and planning are these questions: What is being planned? Who is planning? For the sake of whom? ... Rationale Planung kann nur dann gesellschaftsverändernd eingesetzt werden, wenn der Begriff von Rationalität nicht reduziert auf Zweckrationalität verwendet wird, sondern verstanden wird als ein politisches Konzept zur Emanzipation der Beherrschten gegen die Herrschenden. ... Erkennen ist nur eine Komponente des Handelns. Damit fällt die Grenze zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik ... Eine Verbindung des Wissens über Gegenstände und über Mittel unternimmt die Praxeologie ... Dieser Ansatz gewährleistet eine Aufhebung der "positivistischen Trennung von Theorie und Praxis" (Planerflugschrift der Arbeitsgruppe der Planer an der Technische Universität Berlin 1970). See also [Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie und Praxis. Sozialphilosophische Studien*. Luchterhand, Neuwied am Rhein 1963.]

<sup>13</sup> These serious conditions can be seen in European and American urban planning. Hans G. Helms (Critic and essayist for many newspaper magazines in Germany and other countries. European urban planning expert), "Die historisch entwickelte europäische Stadt ist ein Produkt der gesellschaftlichen Arbeitsteilung, der Klassenherrschaft, (...) Das einzelne Individuum, sofern es Mitglied einer der beiden beherrschten arbeitenden Klassen ist, hat, ohne es zu wollen, die passive Rolle der Ware übernehmen müssen: es ist der wichtigste Transportgegenstand, menschliches Stückgut ..." [Hans G. Helms, "Die Stadt – Medium der Ausbeutung.

8. Moreover, the architecture in Indonesia today is not free from ideology and dominant structures, such as the system between the architect and the one paying the architect. A very close and resonant interaction exists between the architect and the *bouwheer*. People tend to assume that many architects must fight the *bouwheer* to realize their idea. But that is a pseudo-contradiction. In reality, the *bouwheer* is convinced by the architect that the architect's proposal to the *bouwheer* is a universal ideology and view that corresponds to the *bouwheer's* interests. And vice versa (perhaps it happens more often), that the architect's expression reflects the *bouwheer's* thoughts and vested interests.<sup>14</sup>

So far, we are taught that the architect is some kind of new-vision warrior, a problem-solving pioneer of what the *bouwheer* does not know. It is partly true. In the latter instance, architects are merely servants or slaves.<sup>15</sup>

9. Being a servant or slave is not per se dishonourable. The only matter is: who are we ultimately serving? Not personally or individually but rather structurally. The former can depend on each architect's conscience and ethical responsibility. But the latter – in terms of structural involvement – we have personal and collective responsibilities, which are heavy and often demand not a few sacrifices. And precisely within the structures that determine the fate of many people, architecture graduates have responsibilities that are not easy. We should first ask, who is our primary *bouwheer*? It is a crucial question that determines our position. As a graduate, intellectual, master, etc. – they are no different than biochemical graduates developing biological weapons that could efficiently make a continent disappear on command and for the sake of merit.

Our primary *bouwheer* are the less fortunate people who do nothing but beg because of their poor situation. Defending people in power is not an art. But being a samurai warrior loyal to the primary master – the millions of poor people who cannot voice their rights that were promised in our 1945 Constitution and Pancasila – yes, it strongly requires art and civil courage – from both the architect and the university, who are paid by and for the people.<sup>16</sup>

10. It is therefore good for us to elaborate on the ideological content that has infiltrated architecture and still dominates our homeland. It can be said that the things we have learned

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Historische Perspektiven des Städtebaus”, pp. 5–35, in Hans G. Helms, Jörn Janssen (eds.), *Kapitalistischer Städtebau*, Neuwied, Berlin: Luchterhand, 1970.]

<sup>14</sup> Analysis of architecture theories in West Germany: Jörn Janssen (Architect and *Planungsmethoden* teacher at Technische Universität and Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Berlin), saw many western architecture theories as a “Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts” that requires strong criticism. The writings of Jörn Janssen and Hans G. Helms are highly influenced by Marxism. But looking at European recent literature, the essence of truth must be objectively acknowledged.

<sup>15</sup> Edmund N. Bacon (Executive Director, Philadelphia Planning Commission 49–70), “... The classical notion of what planning is (articulation of goals, analysis of facts, selection and presentation of alternatives) is only small part of continuous cyclical process ... Planners tend to think they know the right answers but that politicians won't listen to them, but if we believe in the democratic system we must learn to formulate ideas that engage the collective mind of the community – the prevailing community sentiment.” [Edmund N. Bacon, “Education”, *Ekistics*, vol. 33, no. 197, April 1972, p. 283.]

<sup>16</sup> See also Stephen Verney: “In areas of population explosion, it is the quantity of shelter which must have priority over quality of shelters.” [Stephen Verney, “Human Needs in Housing”, *Ekistics*, April 1972, vol. 33, no. 197, p. 291].

have almost always been dominated by Western European and USA architectural views. And even if we learn so-called Brazilian or Japanese architecture, they are not isolated from the perspectives and ideologies of the vested interests in power, which can be filtered globally into these keywords: bourgeois and capitalist. Brasilia is often glorified as a masterpiece of town planning and architecture, but in reality, it was controlled by *L'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme* motive that is reflected in and imposed on the slums of the labourers who built Brasilia within a neo-capitalist and neo-feudalist system. That is comparable to the construction of Rome or the Egyptian pyramids with hundreds of thousands of slaves victimized for centuries. This kind of thing happens everywhere, if our eyes could see and look at the research of socioeconomic experts, even the Nobel prize winners.<sup>17</sup>

Architecture, especially in poor nations and developing countries, tends to be a symbol of how wide and high the gap is between the rich and the poor. But not only in developing countries; the remnants of feudalism and colonialism are still firmly rooted everywhere, even in western Europe and the USA. People today realize that the fight against humanity and true civilization is uncontrollable. Architects and architecture have played an important role since Emperors and nobles started using architects. Baroque and rococo architecture are simultaneously symbols and consolidators that clearly depicted feudalism and oligarch wealth. Manifested in all urban and rural architecture in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is the bourgeois mentality as well as the capitalism and imperialism that chained the majority of the world population.

Even today's architecture continues this "majestic" historical tradition in our country, where we are politically independent, but where not much has happened in economic and cultural terms since the proclamation of independence.<sup>18</sup>

11. Therefore, this Morning Discussion initiative is an admirable one, to reflect on our calling as architecture graduates. I intentionally said "graduates" because there we find the characteristics of thinkers: not to be gullible but instead helping those who do not understand the profession's position and calling in a real situation. For the sake of better humanity and world order. Especially for the sake of the majority of the people.

Perhaps what I said to the colleagues is a bit "political" or even "communist"; some might even interpret it as a "new left" persuasion that could upset national stability. For such objections, I can only refer to President Suharto's speech on 16 August 1975 at the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia: "Simply it can be said that Pancasila society is a socialist religious society ... do not allow capitalism, feudalism, dictatorship, colonialism and imperialism; therefore, together we must vanish it ... The university world ... (is invited) ... to think and work on an explanation of Pancasila that is simple and easy to understand so that it is easy to absorb and practice by people of Indonesia ... in daily life ... moreover by the future generations ..." (Underlined by me).

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<sup>17</sup> Starting with note 17, the numbers for the footnotes are shown, but the footnotes themselves are missing from the original. We have tried to reconstruct them as far as possible. – Eds.

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 17.

Therefore, the EXPLANATION asked of the university world (read architecture graduates) clearly shows the socialist-religious spirit. I hope this is taken seriously as a main concern for architecture graduates and fellow students. The explanation of the term “religious” can be discussed next time, since it is not a simple matter. But at least we can explain the term “socialism” within strategic instructions for the present and the future.<sup>19</sup> And if we work on formulating it in common faith, “politics” is not something narrow like what is commonly understood but something very relevant in its original Greek meaning: *polis* = city, *politikos* = something that the citizens deserve, related to living together, cultured people, politeness, being civilized.<sup>20</sup>

12. Once again, my dear friends, this is not an accusation or some Literature Court (as has been done here in Bandung). However, in the field of Indonesian architecture, accusations of who is to blame are useless and sterile. What counts are the hurdles created by our situation, and our sociocultural awareness and sensitivity towards what is happening as a structural process – not just making individual accusations. We might find a direction or explanation in one try. How can we teach the socialist spirit of architecture? At least we know that the compass we are using is foreign-made, and that it remains an irrelevant orientation for us Indonesians with our particular situation and challenges.

As I share these notes, we are still drifting in the ideological stream of western architecture. This does not mean Western architects’ achievements and thoughts are meaningless. Western architecture history is the history of the evolution and revolution of humankind; on that, we can all agree. The term East-West is too narrow and not equivalent to the true values we want to formulate with a very limited language.

But clearly, the international (architecture) world is shrugging, ignoring, or even mocking. If we show off our “achievements” in creating big hotels, big offices, and other such “architecture achievements”, for this problematic new world order it is no longer a bright example, given the world’s current cultural crisis. During the era of Mies van der Rohe or Le Corbusier (both are deceased), those “achievements” became symbols of rebuilding the post-World War II ruins. But now? Especially when applied to the situation and condition of poor people, that is still be left to the architects, because after all, someone has to do it. But it is very different if we talk about architecture GRADUATES plus the term INDONESIA. As graduates, perhaps the Dutch architects were more progressive and more *de-facto* Pancasila than we are. For those who speak Dutch, remember the Dutch architects’ achievements and perspectives written up as research results in the journals *Djawa* and *Bijdragen* by the Tropisch (formerly *Kolonial*) Instituut Amsterdam, and *de Ingenieur*. Among others, it was Prof. Ir. Maclaine-Pont who designed these main buildings at ITB. And if, for example, we read the “Squatter Manifesto” by the architects of the Zambia Institute of Architects in Lusaka,<sup>21</sup> then we should be concerned and try to catch up, as we are left behind. Left behind, not in the sense of skin cosmetics resulting from a society’s consumption of remnants of an outdated way-of-life, but in the sense of finding our identity and expression based on our own situation.

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<sup>19</sup> See note 17.

<sup>20</sup> See note 17.

<sup>21</sup> [Paul Andrew, Malcolm Cristie, Richard Martin, and T. Martin, “Squatter Manifesto”, *Ekistics*, August 1972, vol. 34, no. 201, pp. 108–113].



“The key for a successful re-building of our environment – which is the architect’s great task – will be our determination to let the human element be the dominant factor.”<sup>22</sup> This was written by the father of modern architecture, Gropius, for the AIA Conference in Chicago in 1952, where he warned of the critical situation that architects worldwide were experiencing, especially the centuries-old problem that humankind (including present-day Indonesia) has been wrestling with.

“Overwhelmed by the miraculous potentialities of the machine human greed has obviously interfered with the biological cycle of human companionship which keeps a community healthy. At the lower level of society the human being has been degraded by being used as an industrial tool. This is the real cause for the fight between capital and labour and for the deterioration of community relations. We now face the difficult task to rebalance the life of the community and to humanize the impact of the machine.”<sup>23</sup>

What Gropius said (who admitted that he was “already old” when he wrote that) was a kind of legacy advice for the new architect generation that can only smell but is not yet able to solve that world problem; it is a tremendous but noble challenge for us. Especially we, who are in the midst of weak and poor people, who live the meaning of “*Herabwürdigung des untersten Niveau der Gesellschaft zu materiellen Werkzeugen der Industrie.*”<sup>24</sup>

13. Twenty-five years is not a long time, depending on how we interpret it. We all hope that the beginning and the results that were achieved by Indonesian architects – to be exact, architecture graduates – are more perfected, or more precisely, to understand and reflect more their duty and calling. Through dialogue, through search and rescue, even through trial and error. There are many paths that can be taken as long as the orientation is right. In short, we urgently need to review the paradigms or presumptions that are usually taken for granted, which might plunge us into a cliff without us knowing. One concrete example is when such presumptions, invisible to the common people, strongly influenced the *Rencana Undang-undang Tata-Kota* (Urban Planning Law).

Classic but naïve, Le Corbusier’s urban planning concept clearly missed macro effects that disrupt more than planning in the city. Another example is my restless question whenever reading the Minister of Research Sumitro Djojohadikusumo’s [1917–2001] explanation:

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<sup>22</sup> The quotation from Gropius cannot be confirmed directly. The cited text from the 1952 AIA conference in Chicago was published in English as “The Architect Within Our Industrial Society”, in Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955), p. 76–90; 77. In German this text appeared under the title “Die Stellung des Architekten innerhalb unserer industriellen Gesellschaft”, in Walter Gropius, *Architektur. Wege zu einer optischen Kultur* (Frankfurt a. M., Hamburg: Fischer, 1956). Considering the content, the quoted sentence comes closest to Mangunwijaya’s words. It is very likely that Mangunwijaya translated the German original himself.

<sup>23</sup> Again, it is very likely that Mangunwijaya translated the German original himself. See Walter Gropius, “Die Stellung des Architekten innerhalb unserer industriellen Gesellschaft”, in Walter Gropius, *Architektur. Wege zu einer optischen Kultur* (Frankfurt a. M., Hamburg: Fischer, 1956). Cited here is the English version, from Walter Gropius, “The Architect Within Our Industrial Society”, in Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955), p. 76–90; 77.

<sup>24</sup> German original: “In den unteren Volksschichten ist der Mensch zum industriellen Werkzeug degradiert worden.” Walter Gropius, “Die Stellung des Architekten innerhalb unserer industriellen Gesellschaft”, in Walter Gropius, *Architektur. Wege zu einer optischen Kultur* (Frankfurt a. M., Hamburg: Fischer, 1956). For the English original (“At the lower level of society the human being has been degraded by being used as an industrial tool.”) see Walter Gropius, “The Architect Within Our Industrial Society”, in Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955), p. 76–90; 77.

“In housing, for example, there are too many of us who assume that wood is the right material for affordable housing. Not only because wood is becoming increasingly scarce ... The technological challenge in the housing problem is finding and developing materials that use a minimal amount of wood and cement, whereas these similar new materials must be strong enough yet affordable for the people ....”<sup>25</sup>

I entirely agree with the second part of that quote, and here the petrochemical industry and its complex synthetic materials invention play an important role. Are we ready to process synthetic materials for socialist architecture – which benefits not only the lucky 1–2% but the majority of almost 120 million Indonesian people? The synthetic materials would no longer be imported goods, but domestic materials – on the condition that oil matters are managed wisely.

But it will be for the medium term. For the short term (short for 100 million could be very long), is it right what Minister Sumitro said? The minister’s conclusion mostly came from his assistants’ reports and analysis (perhaps some of them were architects). But is it right? That wood is not the right material? Not only for affordable housing but also for gigantic buildings like a Convention Hall, the Gedung MPRS (Parliament building), even skyscrapers? What kinds of presumptions and paradigms are hidden behind that conclusion? It was said that “... wood, as other than a precious material (too expensive for houses), is becoming a very limited material ....”<sup>26</sup>

Why is it precious? In what sense? Why is it rare? Who made this rare, and what mechanism put good-quality wood beyond people’s purchasing power, people who own that wood forest?

Let me conclude by quoting something that was said more than 60 years ago but still seems to be still relevant to us; it comes from the Futurist warrior Antonio Sant’Elia: “The problem of Modern architecture is not a problem of rearranging its lines ... it has nothing to do with defining formalistic differences between the new buildings and old ones ... it must be as new as our state of mind is new, and contingencies of our moment in history.”<sup>27</sup>

Thank you.

Bandung, 6 December 1975

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<sup>25</sup> See note 17.

<sup>26</sup> See note 17.

<sup>27</sup> Antonio Sant’Elia, “L’architettura futurista”, *Lacerba* 2, no. 15, 1 August 1914. (Original in Italian). The original quote has been published in English as: “... The problem of *Futurist* architecture is not a problem of rearranging its lines. ... an architecture that finds its *raison d’être* solely in the special conditions of modern living ... it has nothing to do with defining formalistic differences between new buildings and old ones; ... It must be as new as our state of mind is new.” See: <https://www.tboake.com/2022/manifesto-of-futurist-architecture-1914.pdf>