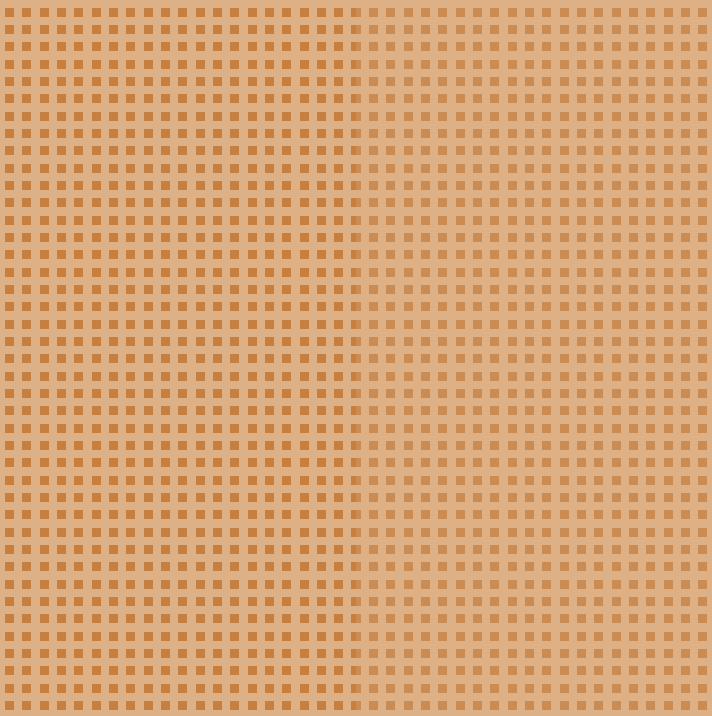
Abidin Kusno [Guest Editor]

ISSUE 5

Charles Prosper Wolff Schoemaker & Vincent Van Romondt
Modernism and national characteristics



Inaugural Speeches and Other Studies
in the Built Environment

Charles Prosper Wolff Schoemaker
& Vincent Van Romondt

TU Delft Open 2020

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

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C.P. Wolff Schoemaker and Vincent Van Romondt
Modernism and national characteristics

Guest Editor: Abidin Kusno
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The works of Dutch architects and educators whose careers were spent mostly in colonies far away from the Netherlands, received little attention in their home country. But in Indonesia, the former largest colony of the Dutch empire, they have always been part of the country's architectural history. They continue to be recognized and referred to, even after a generation has passed. This small booklet contains the speeches of two of the most influential Dutch professors who mentored the majority of the first generation of Indonesian architects: C.P. Wolff Schoemaker (1882-1949) and Vincent van Romondt (1903-1974). Clearly Schoemaker and Van Romondt held different views about the challenges of architecture in the world as well as in Indonesia. They sought to bring the notion of modernism and tradition into the context of their time. They talked about modernity, architecture and the complex processes shaping citizens. Put together, these two lectures offer an insight into the intellectual world of Dutch architect-educators as they sought to register architectural identity, modernize society, and contribute to the nation-building of Indonesia at two different moments: Schoemaker (1930) during the time of colonial occupation, and Van Romondt (1954) in the era of early Independence. Introduced by Abidin Kusno this volume deepens our understanding of what it takes to globalize Dutch architectural history, that is by recognizing its connection with the colonial past.

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Preface to the series

Inaugural Speeches and Other Studies in the Built Environment

Inaugural speeches have long been unique moments in the careers of academics in many countries: As an important moment in the career they offer a moment 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 operating within the academic community. Prepared with great care for a university and general audience, 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 offers inaugural lectures – translated into English and contextualized with scholarly introductions – and other seminal studies to unlock information for comparative research and set the stage for new investigations. The expanded series continues with a study on Charles Prosper Wolff Schoemaker & Vincent Van Romondt by Abidin Kusno.

Herman van Bergeijk and Carola Hein

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Abidin Kusno

Introduction

Dutch architects whose careers were spent mostly in colonies far away from the Netherlands generally had little influence on the architectural development of their home country. Little is known about them. These architects were often discovered rather late, long after they had died. Architect and professor Wolff C.P. Schoemaker (1882-1949) is just such an example. A book devoted to his work was only published in 2010, a half century after his death.[1] For Dutch professors whose work was limited to teaching and research in distant colonies, things were not any better. Leaving no architectural monuments behind, they were easily forgotten. Their lecture notes and publications could be easily ignored by a generation with little interest in their country's colonial history. Dutch professor Vincent van Romondt (1903-1974) is considered lucky, for his notes and papers at least are kept as a "rare" collection in a specialized library in old Leiden.[2] It remains to be seen how they might be integrated into an increasingly "globalized" Dutch architectural history.

Outside the Netherlands, in the former colony of the Dutch empire previously known as the Dutch East Indies (today's Indonesia), these professors have a different afterlife. They have always been seen as part of the country's architectural history. They continue to be recognized and referred to and they remain influential, even

1 see: Jan van Dullemen: Tropical Modernity: Life and Work of C.P. Wolff Schoemaker, SUN architecture, 2010.

2 See KITLV – inventaris 44 for the Van Romondt's collection.

after a generation has passed. Schoemaker, who designed many landmark buildings in Bandung, is a hero of the city's mayor, who seeks to rebrand Bandung as a center of modernist architectural heritage. Van Romondt, who mentored the majority of the first generation of Indonesian professors of architecture, has been referred to by subsequent generations as the "father of Indonesian traditional architecture."

This volume contains the inaugural lecture of Professor Vincent van Romondt, titled "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," on the occasion of receiving his professorship in 1954 at Fakultet Teknik Universitet Indonesia (known as Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool, when it opened in 1920), then the only technical college in colonial Indonesia. Schoemaker's speech, held during a gathering in celebration of the tenth anniversary (Dies Natalis) of the university, delivered in 1930, was titled: "Aesthetics of Architecture and the Art of the Moderns."[3] In his speech, Schoemaker discusses modernism, showing how the world of architecture has developed, making hardly any reference to Indonesia, whereas Van Romondt discusses the possibility of Indonesia creating a new culture of its own. Schoemaker represents architectural history in terms of the linear, chronological development of style, which makes his historiography remarkably Eurocentric and his conception of the Indies rather Orientalist.

3 "Inaugural lecture" applies only to Van Romondt (1954); During the time of Schoemaker (from since the opening of Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool in 1920 until Japanese occupation) the most prestigious lecture was "Anniversary Lecture" delivered each year by a professor. Either "inaugural lecture" is less significant or non-existent, but it clear that an "Anniversary Lecture" is considered the most prestigious speech of a professor. For a list of "Anniversary Lectures," see: "Technische Hoogeschool Bandoeng," <https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technische_Hoogeschool_te_Bandoeng>

Van Romondt, on the contrary indicates that time (especially in Indonesian history) is cyclical and that the arrow of time could return through a cultural crisis. Another difference between the two figures concerns the domains of their works. While the architectural work of Schoemaker, such as Villa Isola (1932 – figure 3), could be described as the physical manifestation of his speech, the same could not be said about Van Romondt, who did not produce architectural design work, except for, in 1948, proposing the construction of Kebayoran Baru, a satellite town which he expected to be the "future Javanese town." Van Romondt was, however, known for his archeological work and the reconstruction of monuments of Hindu-Buddhist Java. While their professional worlds did not meet, their lectures represented two important strands of architectural strategy in the history of twentieth-century architectural thinking in (colonial) Indonesia.

The lectures were both held in the school's auditorium hall and were attended (as indicated in their speeches) by faculty members and students of the time. The 1930s and the 1950s, however, were two radically different worlds. The socio-political environment changed with the shift from the colonial to postcolonial era. In the 1930s, there were fewer native Indonesian students than in the 1950s. In 1926, for the first time in the history of the Technische Hoogeschool, four Indonesian students graduated, of whom one was Ir. Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia and a student of Schoemaker.[4] At the time that Sukarno was a student, there were subjects called *bouwkunst, bouwkunde, assaineering, werktuigbouwkunde, electrotechniek, stadsaanleg*, and it is likely that Schoemaker taught *bouwkunst* and *stadsaanleg*. By the time Schoemaker delivered his Anniversary Lecture in 1930, there were

4 Goenarso, *Riwayat Perguruan Tinggi Teknik di Indonesia, 1920-1942*. Bandung: ITB, 1995: 37.

16 Indonesian students graduated, and throughout his 19 years of academic appointment, the total number of Indonesian students (excluding ethnic Chinese) graduated from Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool was 58.

Vincent van Romondt, on the other hand, graduated 110 students during his almost a decade of tenure in the 1950s. In the era of decolonization, Van Romondt was hired as a professor of architectural history, while the school's curriculum was tailored to the Technische Hoogeschool of Delft. Hardly anything was recorded about Schoemaker as a teacher, except that his former student Sukarno worked at his office as an apprentice and became a good friend. Van Romondt had many student admirers—one even drew his profile (figure 5). Those who later found themselves teaching Indonesian architectural history at the university found him inspiring and irreplaceable.[5] It is not clear if these two professors met (either professionally or socially) or whether they liked each other. Schoemaker taught (as adjunct professor from 1922 to 1924, and as permanent professor from 1924 to 1940, but never quite full time, as he was a practicing architect at the same time) during the last quarter of Dutch colonialism from 1922 to 1940, and Van Romondt taught during the early years of decolonization, from 1953 to 1962.

What brought them together was that they both lived in the same historical era, in the first half of the twentieth century, at a time of rapid socio-political change in the Dutch East Indies. They also lived and worked in the colony for a long period of time. Wolff Schoemaker was born and buried there, whereas Van Romondt began working in the colonial archeological office in the 1920s

5 Ir. Wastu Pragantha, "Dua Tokoh Pembentuk Arsitektur Indonesia," Paper presented in symposium on "Arsitektur Tradisional" organized by IAI, 4-5 December 1981.

and remained in Indonesia as the only Dutch professor despite deteriorating relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands in 1955. Before we discuss them individually through their seminal lectures, it may be useful to provide a socio-historical context of colonial Indonesia, of which they are a part.[6]

Socio-Historical Context

Both Schoemaker and Van Romondt lived under colonial occupation, the societies of which were by definition internally divided. They lived in a segmented world that divided the colonizer from the colonized.[7] The era in which they lived (the first half of the twentieth century), however, was distinctive as the colonial state had initiated an "ethical policy" to improve the welfare of Indonesians while "civilizing" them by expanding technical services. In September 1902, the reform-minded Minister of the Colonies, Alexander Idenburg (who would serve as Governor General of Dutch East Indies from 1906-1916) declared that "the aim of colonial rule was not to expand possessions but to encourage the advancement of indigenous people."[8] Concern for the well-

6 Van Romondt's inaugural lecture was often cited by other professors, such as Gunawan Tjahjono in his own Inaugural lecture (see: Abidin Kusno (Guest Editor), *Gunawan Tjahjono & Josef Prijotomo: Postcolonial Traditionality*. Issue 2 of Inaugrual Speeches in the Built Environment: Global and Contextualised, YU Deft Open, 2017); see also references made by Romondt's students, such as: Ir. Wastu Pragantha, "Dua Tokoh Pembentuk Arsitektur Indonesia," Paper presented in symposium on "Arsitektur Tradisional" organized by IAI, 4-5 December 1981; Josef Prijotomo (in response to Johan Silas, Van Romondt's student), "Van Romondt dan Peran Arsitek Indonesia," *Surabaya Post*, 15 Juli, 1982.

7 For a brief history of Dutch late colonialism in Indonesia, see: Jacques van Doorn, *A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University, Comparative Asian Studies Programme, 1983.

8 As cited in Eduard J.M. Schmutzer, *Dutch Colonial Policy and the Search for Identity in Indonesia, 1920-1931*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977: 16.

being of the indigenous population required not only technical support but also an understanding of indigenous cultures as part of consideration for their welfare and development. It is in this context that the colonial state encouraged the training of technical personnel while encouraging the study of Javanese cultures and the excavation of ancient monuments. The curriculum of technical training was supplied by Delft, while Leiden's Orientalist Studies supplied cultural knowledge.[9]

However, it is important to note that the re-orientation of the colonial state through ethical policy came in tandem with the rise in anticolonial sentiment against Dutch colonialism. Historian Takashi Shiraishi called this era "the age in motion," when political consciousness was translated into anti-colonial rallies, protests and strikes against the injustices that marked life in major cities in Java.[10] Meanwhile, the early twentieth century was also the era of decentralization, with the central government establishing municipal (local) governments to manage urban development, which for the first time included consideration of indigenous settlements known as *kampung* neighborhoods. Both Schoemaker and Van Romondt, as members of the colonial social order, lived through this changing political environment of the colony. They were involved, in different capacities and at different stages, in training the indigenous population to become "engineers" to take part in the "civilizing mission" of the colony (Fig. 1). They assumed ideas about the modern world, about architecture and Javanese cultures, all of which were inseparable from the state's pursuit of legitimacy.

9 See John Pemberton, *On the Subject of Java*," Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994; Cornelius Fasseur, "Leiden and Empire: University and Colonial Office, 1825-1925," in W. Otterspeer (ed), *Leiden Oriental Connections 1850-1940*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989.

10 Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion, Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990.

FIG. 1 Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool, 1920 (architect: Henri Maclaine Pont)

The Colonial World of Architecture

The new century brought with it questions of representation. Prior to the twentieth century, architecture in colonial Indonesia was dominated by a neoclassical style introduced under the regime of Herman Willem Daendels (1808-1811), the colonel-general of Louis Bonaparte from France, when he was made Governor General of the Dutch East Indies in the early nineteenth century. Known as Empire Style, this imitation of neoclassical style was favored by military engineers and bureaucrats of the mid-nineteenth century.[11] The new twentieth century, however, demanded new architecture.[12] This was due in large part to the arrival in the colony of a cohort of Dutch-trained architects (such as F.J.L. Ghijsels, Henri Maclaine Pont and Wolff Schoemaker, among others) who brought with them new ideas. As could be

11 For a discussion of Empire Style as a representation of power in colonial Indonesia, see, Handinoto, "Indische Empire Style," *Dimensi* 20 (December 1994): 1–14; Also Handinoto, "Daendels dan Perkembangan Arsitektur di Hindia Belanda Abad 19" [Daendels and the development of architecture in the nineteenth-century Netherland Indies], *Dimensi* 36, no. 1 (2008): 43–53.

12 For a discussion of the crisis of architectural representation in relation to the Ethical Policy, see: Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. NY: Routledge, 2000.

seen from their architectural works, they turned the colony into a site of individual architectural experimentation.[13] Individualistic and sharing no coherent vision, they agreed nevertheless that the nineteenth-century Empire style was not to their taste and was too old fashioned to represent the new age. They sought a new architecture that would represent the progressive age, marked by an intersection of "local" culture and "universalistic" technology.

Early twentieth-century Java thus witnessed dynamic architectural experiments regarding how to best represent a new era marked by the expanded roles of city government and the "ethical" state. This new mood was represented by a debate aimed at defining the contemporary architecture of the Indies, one that would respond to climatic issues with local materials, while expressing the spirit of the time, against the classicist colonial architecture of the nineteenth century—the symbolic remnant of the old colonial order. The new architecture of the Indies would represent the new society made up of, in the words of Jacques van Doorne, "a synthesis of interests and ideas to be borne by an increasing number of archipelago's residents, a synthesis, therefore, neither 'Indonesian' nor 'Dutch,' but a combination of what all the participants had to offer."[14] Translating this political aspiration into architecture required considering the local civilization as a basis for experimenting with modern architecture in the colony. It sought to apply technology in and through the assumption of specific cultures. Yet, a major bone of contention between

13 For a comprehensive account of Dutch colonial architecture in Indonesia, see: Cor Passchier, "Colonial Architecture in Indonesia: References and Development," in *The Past in the Present: Architecture in Indonesia*, edited by Peter J.M. Nas. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2007; Yulianto Sumalyo, *Arsitektur Kolonial Belanda di Indonesia* [Dutch Colonial Architecture in Indonesia], Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1993; Helen Jessup, "Netherlands Architecture in Indonesia, 1900-1942," PhD dissertation. Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1989.

14 Jacques van Doorn, *A Divided Society*: 11.

members of this new generation of architects was the question of what role indigenous, traditional architecture should play. On this issue, they were divided.

Architect Henri Maclaine Pont, for instance, believed in the potential of indigenous traditional architecture to become contemporary architecture of the Indies. He put this aspiration into practice by designing the Bandoeng Technischee Hoogeschool, where Schoemaker and Van Romondt taught. (Fig. 1).[15] Pont drew his inspiration from indigenous traditional architecture of Indonesia to create a new kind of architecture. He composed architectural elements from various places across Sumatra and Java, blending them so that the new architecture was both local and trans-local. Pont was born in Batavia in 1884, and later went to Delft to get his engineering degree, returning to the Dutch East Indies to open an architectural firm. He was fascinated by the civilization of pre-Islamic Java, most notably the thirteenth-century Majapahit kingdom, and he spent a great deal of time reconstructing on paper its capital city, Trowulan, in East Java. He lived and worked in various places in Java, but sadly never had a chance to teach.

Pont represented only this individual approach. Schoemaker had a different approach. They had a dispute. Schoemaker did not believe that there was any future for indigenous traditional architecture. Instead, as the "anniversary speech" indicated, he shared an affinity with the modernist aesthetic, which claimed universality and formal autonomy.

15 See: Helen Jessup, "The Architecture of Henri Maclaine Pont: Colonial Style and Native Tradition in Indonesia," *Lotus International*, 26, 1980: 108-13; B.F. van Leerdam, *Architect Henri Maclaine Point*. Den Haag: CIP-Gegevens Koninklijke Bibliotheek.

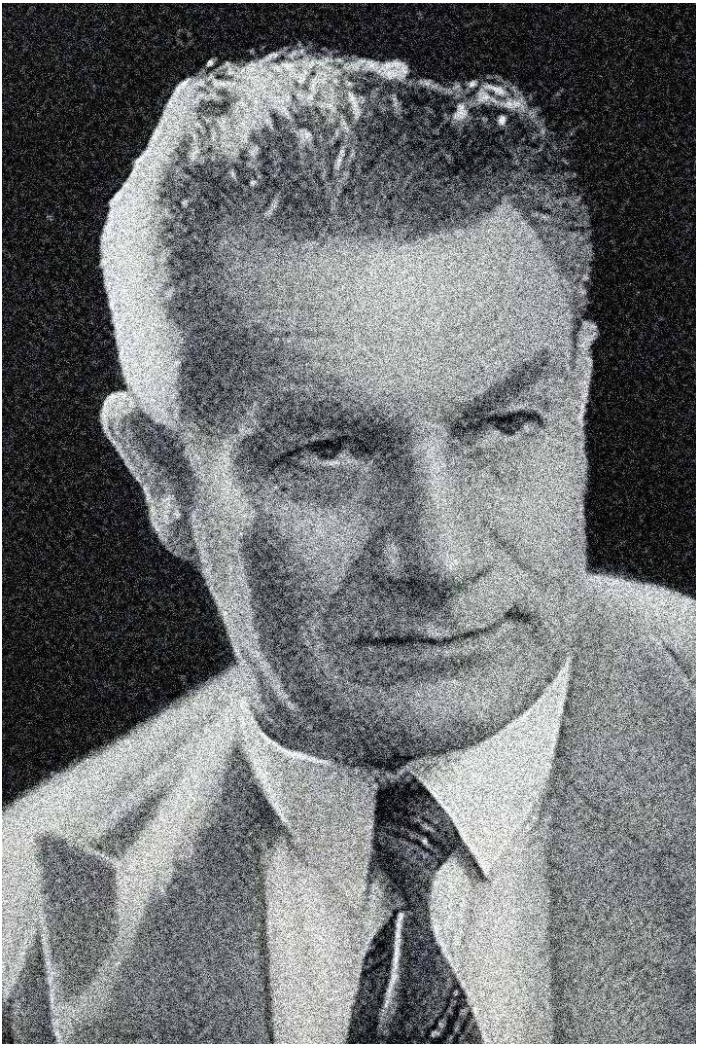

FIG. 2 C.P. Wolff Schoemaker

His architecture could be said to free itself from the moorings of local history.[16] The specificity of the local seemed to have been overshadowed by a set of functionally oriented space and formalistic ornaments (akin to art deco) that bore little reference to indigenous architectural tradition. This modernist position (while paying attention to tropical climate through some ornamental detailing) conceptualized architecture as capable of transcending culture and tradition in the assumption of modernity for the colony. He claimed a progressive architectural strategy for the colony, ruled now less by the exploitative state and its bureaucrats, but by the new "ethical" colonial state, engineered by technology and science, powered by the force of the market and supported by the emerging middle class (European and elite Indonesian – including ethnic Chinese families). Be that as it may, both Pont and Schoemaker sought to represent architectural resolution for the ethical policy, for the restless "age in motion," and for want of a better word, for the local modern world of the twentieth century.

It is in this context of new time and architectural experimentations in the restless early-mid twentieth century that the lectures of Schoemaker and Van Romondt ought to be understood. Let us now turn to their individual context and speeches.

Wolff Schoemaker's Modernism

C.P. Wolff Schoemaker was born in Banyubiru, Central Java, in 1882, but went to the Netherlands for his education at the Royal Military Academy in Breda, Holland. He returned to the colony

16 For a comprehensive account of Schoemaker, see: Jan van Dullemen: *Tropical Modernity: Life and Work of C.P. Wolff Schoemaker*, SUN architecture, 2010.

as military engineer, moving between Java and Sumatra to build railway and telegraph networks. He then served the municipality (Gemeente) Batavia from 1912-1913 before working as an architect at Moojen and Company. From 1914-1917, he returned to Gemeente Batavia and directed its Public Work Department, where he was in charge of designing a range of facilities including markets and in charge of town planning for Batavia.[17] Schoemaker moved in and out the public sector, and after a field trip to the U.S. in 1918, settled in Bandung. He opened an architectural bureau with his brother Richard Schoemaker. His brother was also an architect, having graduated from both Breda and Delft, and had become a professor of *Bouwkunde* appointed in 1921 (after serving as adjunct professor in 1920) at Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool.

Wolff Schoemaker first taught at the Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool as a replacement for his brother, who had taken a leave of absence, but he stayed on after news arrived that his brother Richard had been hired as a full-time professor (*gewoon hoogleraar*) at TH Delft.[18] On 1 January 1922, he was appointed Adjunct Professor of Construction History, Decorative Art, Building Budgetary Management, and Town Planning (Geschiedenis der Bouw- en Versierkunst, Bestekken, Begrootingen en Stadsaanleg). On 1 September 1924, Wolff Schoemaker was appointed Professor of Architecture (replacing his brother while keeping his areas of expertise) in Bandung, a position that he maintained until 31 December 1940. Throughout these years, he ran his architectural firm, C.P. Schoemaker en Associatie Architecten

17 Schoemaker's career reflected perfectly the shift in the governance of colonial Indonesia from the hands of bureaucrats to the power of technocrats. For a discussion on this shift of power see: Jacques van Doorn, *The Engineers and the Colonial System: Technocratic Tendencies in the Dutch East Indies*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University, Comparative Asian Studies Programme 6, 1982

18 Goenarso, *Riwayat Perguruan Tinggi Teknik di Indonesia, Periode 1920-1942*. Bandung: ITB, 1995: 27.

en Ingenieurs. Dutch architectural historian Coor Paschieur described Schoemaker as a man of "a strong personality and a gifted architect, painter and sculptor."[19] Throughout his career, Schoemaker designed many public and private buildings (but not housing). Architectural historian Handinoto estimates that Schoemaker designed over 50 buildings in the Indies, many of which have become landmarks of major cities in Java, such as (in Bandung alone) Concordia Club House (1921), Jaarbeurs Building (1927), Preanger Hotel (1930), Cipaganti Mosque (1933), St. Petrus Church (1922), and Villa Isola (1933).[20]

FIG. 3 Villa Isola, 1933 (Architect: C.P. Wolff Schoemaker)

19 Cor Passchier, "Colonial Architecture in Indonesia: References and Development," op.cit, 109.

20 Handinoto, "Studi Perbandingan Karya 3 Orang Arsitek Belanda Kelahiran Jawa di Indonesia." [A comparative study of three Java-born Dutch Architects in Indonesia] see: http://fportfolio.petra.ac.id/user_files/81-005/ARSITEK%20BELANDA.pdf

Schoemaker developed his own style of architecture, although the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Amsterdam School is evident. For sure, his architecture shows no clear association with indigenous tradition of architecture, except for the Cipaganti mosque which follows the form of the traditional Hindu-Javanese mosque, with three-tier roofs. The circumstances that led him to design a mosque are not clear, but Schoemaker converted to Islam in 1912 and became a member of an Islamic association in Bandung. His Muslim fellows gave him the name "Kemal," but on his deathbed he reverted to Catholicism.[21] He married five times; his third wife was an Indonesian of ethnic Chinese origin. For Schoemaker, like most Indonesian elites (including Sukarno) at the time, modernity represented by (Western) science and technology was more attractive than any indigenous culture. He warned "against the tendency to refer to indigenous examples and telling us we can learn from it."[22] He felt sure that "the Indies do not have an architectural tradition … old forms are often no longer suitable to satisfy the practical and spiritual needs, anyway, so far as one can say about indigenous building methods. Architecture in the sense that it has for us does not exist in Java."[23] Schoemaker also thought that the Javanese, whom he considered incompetent for such a task, did not build the ancient Hindu-inspired monuments in Java. [24]

21 see: Jan van Dullemen: *Tropical Modernity: Life and Work of C.P. Wolff Schoemaker*, SUN architecture, 2010.

22 Schoemaker as cited in Passchier, "Colonial Architecture in Indonesia": 109.

23 Schoemaker as cited in Jessup, "Netherlands Architecture in Indonesia": 132.

24 For Schoemaker's reflection on Hindu monuments in Java, see: C.P. Schoemaker, *Aesthetiek en oorsprong der Hindoe-kunst op Java*. Semarang: Van Dorp, 1924. Schoemaker seems to follow the long tradition of Orientalist thinking which conceived Southeast cultures as derivative of Indian civilization. For a critical discussion of this tradition, see: Oliver Wolters, *History, Culture and region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982.

Such an intellectual position is reflected in his 1930s Anniversary Speech entitled "*de aesthetiek der architectuur en de kunst der modernen*" (aesthetics of architecture and the art of the modern). The speech was delivered in the auditorium hall of Bandoeng Technische Hoogschool designed by Maclaine Pont, his ideological foe in architecture, six years after his appointment as professor. He never liked the auditorium, because of its association with indigenous traditional architectural style. The speech, however, was not about architecture in the Dutch Indies, nor was it about the challenges facing architects in the colony. Instead, it was largely about the development of architecture in the West. In some ways, this disregard for the place where his works were located serves as an indirect statement about his role in bringing Indonesia forward into a new era. Schoemaker's formulation of architectural ideas was largely derived from the architectural development of the West, which justified his own architectural practice.

I referred to the principal factors that determine the building style, bringing reason and technology in particular into prominence. The technical-utilitarian aspect is definitely of primary importance as the foundation of the formal system. It is the operational basis of the creative imagination.[25]

Yet the "rationality" of architecture is complemented by "an atmosphere in which the emotional charge of the human mind manifests itself. This prevailing tone is determined by the sentiment, the morality, the psyche – sometimes stable, tranquil and harmonious, at other times turbulent, chaotic, eruptive."[26] Between the rational and the emotional (or the affective), he

25 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture and the Art of the Moderns." 10th Anniversary Lecture, Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool, 28 June 1930 (translated into English by Gerard van den Hooff).

26 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.

saw "all kinds of influences, such as the geographical site of the country, its climate, religion, state of sciences, its social, political and economic situation, the national character and traditions."[27]

However, even with this sensitivity toward the technological, psychological and environmental, Schoemaker did not see traditional Indonesian architectural culture as offering any inspiration for his modern rationalism and aesthetic sensibility. His "aesthetics of architecture and the art of the modern" were about how certain periods produced specific knowledge of form and formal character in architecture, and how such formation characterizes "the mentality of a society in its historical evolution."[28] Schoemaker saw that the new spirit of time was enabled by a variety of factors such as technological development and new building materials, producing "the craving to make a complete break, first and foremost and as soon as possible, with all that was."[29] And finally, "technically all but perfected by the inventions of science and aesthetically inspired by a spirit of pragmatism and daring, architecture sought a distinctive symbol as a point of departure."[30] He explored the architectural evolution from the construction cultures of the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans to the Gothic method and Italian humanism of the Renaissance, all of which had led to "a radical change of which our modern architecture is the result."[31]

After a long survey of architectural development in the Western hemisphere, regarding stylistic development over time and how this was generated by technological progress, Schoemaker

27 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.
28 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.
29 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.
30 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.
31 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.

reflected in the end on the architectural development of the Dutch East Indies. He is, however, rather dismissive.

In this brief overview I have ignored the architecture in the Dutch Indies. Still, the modern will to art has also effected a change in the Indian architectural style and some novel principles as to form have been adopted. We are, however, not witnessing a pronounced direction that is characteristic of this country with its typical climate, typical nature and typical social composition as yet. [Addressing students – consisting of European/Dutch, ethnic Chinese and indigenous Indonesians largely from Java and Sumatra].[32] *Your future architectural activities will probably be rather limited. Most of you are even unlikely to get tuned in to the beautiful domain of architecture in a direct manner.*[33]

Schoemaker was looking for a "development of the historical and modern architectural styles" that reflected "the mentality of a society in its historical evolution." His understanding of architectural development followed the paradigm of European art historiography, where stylistic development was conceived in terms of "historical evolution." Such a conception had prevented him from seeing Indonesian traditional architecture as "evolving." It was common at that time in European architectural historiography (such as in the tradition of Sir Banister Fletcher – figure 4) to conceive history in the binary terms of the "historical" and the "non-historical."[34]

32 Of the total number of students from 1920 to 1937, 367 students were classified as "European," 205 as "Indonesian" and 78 as "Tionghoa" (ethnic Chinese). Out of these numbers, the graduation rate calculated in 1940 was 32,8% for "European"; 35,4% for "Indonesian" and 35,8% for "Tionghoa." *Goenarso, Riwayat Perguruan Tinggi Teknik di Indonesia, Periode 1920-1942*. Bandung: ITB, 1995: 40-41.

33 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.

34 For a discussion of Sir Banister Fletcher, see: Abidin Kusno, "Imagining Regionalism, Re-fashioning Orientalism: Some Current Architectural Discourses in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast* Asian Architecture, 4, 2000: 45-61.

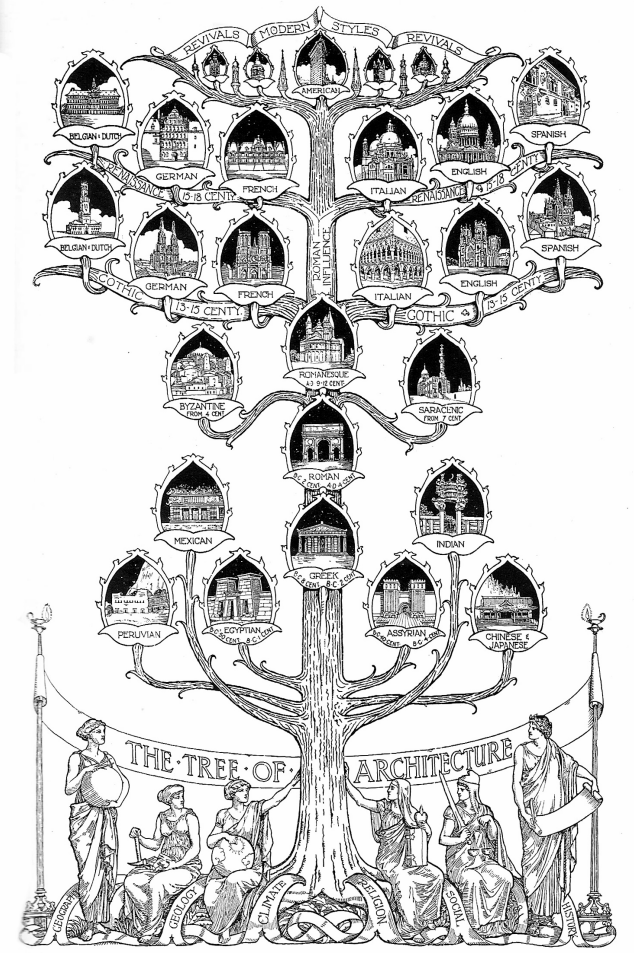

FIG. 4 Banister Fletcher's Tree of Architecture

Such temporal division was transported spatially into a binary opposition of the West and the non-West. It seems Schoemaker was influenced by this dominant Eurocentric current of thought,

which as we have learned from Edward Said's *Orientalism*, led to seeing the "East" as backward or frozen in history – a vision that would lead to colonialism being seen as involving a "civilizing mission" to develop the colony by way of scientific modernization.

In this sense, Schoemaker considered Indonesian architecture as belonging to a different domain outside the stylistic rationality that guided the evolution of (Western) architecture. For him, by the 1930, the colony had not yet developed a proper intellectual tradition or technical capacity in architecture to develop a style that could be seen as evolving.

Schoemaker nevertheless advised his students:
Do remember, however, that architecture in this country is the visual expression of a culture of which you are also purveyors, and it is for this reason that you should feel obligated to familiarize yourselves with the culture, seeing that you as engineers will be in a position to influence it... you will be in a position to help develop a high stylistic quality... something we are always in want of... with respect to your own work, exercise a high degree of self-criticism. Do not seek the sublime in eccentric posturizing, but first and foremost in functionalism of approach, rationalism of construction and reserve of form... In your work you will continuously have to ask yourself whether a better solution may be possible from a static, constructional and formal perspective... preserve your common sense at all time...[35]

This statement, while directed to students, seems to be serving as an architectural mission statement for himself—he had, by then, been using the colony as his laboratory of modernity.

35 Schoemaker, "The Aesthetics of Architecture," ibid.

FIG. 5 Vincent van Romondt (Left) in Yogyakarta with John Kok and Dicky (a dog), circa 1931

FIG. 6 Vincent Van Romondt (artist: Wastu Pragantha) and his inaugural lecture

Vincent van Romondt's "Towards an Indonesian Architecture"

In 1955, Vincent van Romondt (a graduate of Delft Technische Hoogeschool in 1930) was the only Dutch professor to remain in Indonesia after all other Dutch docents left the country as the Dutch-Indonesian relationship worsened. Van Romondt started teaching at Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool in 1953 upon the request of President Sukarno, around the time when his office at the Colonial Archeological Service was transferred to the hands of Indonesians. He left for the Netherlands in 1963, and never returned to Indonesia.

During the Dutch colonial era, Van Romondt worked for many years in the archeological office in Central Java. Van Romondt gave his inaugural lecture, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," in 1954,[36] when modernist architecture was popular, and President Ir. Sukarno (Schoemaker's apprentice) was on the verge of promoting it through the building of Jakarta in the early 1960s. While it is not clear if the president's desire for a modernist architectural form to represent the nation was influenced by Schoemaker, we see in several of Sukarno's speeches the production of new space through the materiality of modernist architectural expression, but no reference to indigenous traditional architecture.[37] The first generation of Indonesian architects (some of whom were educated in Germany and Holland) all responded positively to the call of President Sukarno. Bianpoen Liem, a graduate of the University of Technology at Hannover, returned to Indonesia with

36 Van Romondt's original speech was in Dutch, but his lecture was soon translated into Indonesian and published by Djakarta's Noordhoof – Kolff N.V. Van Romondt's is the only Dutch professor's inaugural lecture that was translated into Indonesian. The English version is translated from the Indonesian.

37 For a discussion of Sukarno's affinity with modernist architecture and urban design, see: Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*, New York: Routledge, 2000: chapter 2.

a firm understanding that: "Indonesian architecture, regardless of what form it might take, must be created by Indonesian people without continuing its traditional architecture."[38]

Van Romondt's speech, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture" was delivered around this time of heightened passion over modernism as the paradigm for thinking about decolonization and city-nation building. As if to respond to the modernist hegemony in postcolonial Indonesia, Van Romondt's primary message was about the importance of growing and developing architecture from one's own culture, *with or without* making reference to traditional form. Before the speech, Van Romondt had already had a debate with Mohammad Soesilo, an Indonesian town planner trained by Thomas Karsten and Jacques Thijsse, concerning the design of the satellite town of Kebayoran Baru, 5 km south of Jakarta. Van Romondt, who first conceived the idea of creating such a new town, wanted the design of the town to be based on a new interpretation of Javanese or Indonesian spatial concepts so that it would be a "future Javanese town," but Soesilo thought it should be "modern" and follow the European "garden city."[39]

Vincent van Romondt's students remember him for his sustained interest in Indonesian culture and civilization, and, perhaps because of his former association with archeological work, postcolonial architects have referred him to misleadingly as "the father of Indonesian traditional architecture." Yet, as shown in his inaugural lecture, Van Romondt never quite so straightforwardly

38 Bianpoen as cited in Suryono Herlambang, "ATAP, Delft: 1953–1957 Kisah-kisah kecil tentang Kelompok Diskusi, Perjalanan Arsitektur dan Persemaian Arsitek Modern Indonesia" [ATAP, Delft: 1953–1957: Concerning a discussion group and the cultivation of modern Indonesian architecture], in *Tegang Bentang*, edited by Pusat Dokumentasi Arsitektur Indonesia, Jakarta: Gramedia, 2007: 96.

39 See: WF. Wertheim (ed). *The Indonesian Town: Selected Studies on Indonesia*. W.Van Hoeve, 1958: xvi

promoted "traditional architecture" as a representation of "Indonesian architecture." "Indonesian architecture" for him connotes a far more complex concept, as it must be understood within the framework of Indonesian nationalism. In any case, it is understandable that Van Romondt is often associated with "tradition" by his former students, as since 1931, for about two decades prior to teaching at Technische Hoogeschool of Bandoeng, he served as technical inspector of the Colonial Archeological Service in Yogyakarta in charge of the reconstruction of the ninth-century Temple of Siva at Candi Prambanan in Central Java.[40] Van Romondt remained in his post in the 1950s after a transfer of sovereignty with the Dinas Purbakala (Indonesian Archeological Service).[41] After over 20 years of working in the archeological office, he became professor in 1954. Van Romondt taught courses on the history of architecture and theory of forms. His archive at Leiden contains notes from classroom seminars on modernist architects in Europe and the United States, but he must have also given a heavy dose of Indonesian traditional architecture – perhaps pulling together his archeological findings. Archeology, in any case, is one of the fields that addresses the pre-colonial history of Indonesia. Van Romondt was aware that the ancient monuments were heavily influenced by South Asia's Hindu civilization, and yet they were located in Java, a place with a deep

40 For a discussion of Van Romondt's involvement in Indonesian archeology, see: Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, "Conserving the Past, Mobilizing the Indonesian Future: Archeological Sites, Regime Change and Heritage Politics in Indonesia in the 1950s." *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 167, 4, 2011: 405-436.

41 See: Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, "Decolonizing Borobudur: Moral Engagements and the Fear of Loss," in *Sites, Bodies and Stories: Imagining Indonesian History*. Edited by Susan Legene, Bambang Purwanto and Henk Schulte Nordholt. Singapore: NUS Press, 2015: 34.

history of turning foreign cultures into its own.[42] Van Romondt was not sure how these ancient monuments could inspire the quest for contemporary Indonesian architecture. He nevertheless emphasized the importance of architecture in defining culture, and how indigenous building traditions could be seen as materials for thinking about the possibility of constructing a contemporary Indonesian architecture.

The crux of Van Romondt's inaugural lecture is the relationship between architecture and culture: how the two cannot be separated, and yet, most importantly, how their relationship was facing a crisis as Indonesian culture had become fossilized and dependent on foreign influences as a result of Western colonialism. Unlike Schoemaker, who seems to blame Indonesian culture for not being able to evolve from within, for Van Romondt this process of fossilization is propelled by the encounter with a radically different culture: the western culture. Old civilization was not able to resist the relatively young force, which came with different values. The seemingly solid social order was aborted as it underwent adaptation and amalgamation.

This crisis of culture, as already experienced by the West over half a century ago, is already quite deep and is proving, here, to be more frightening. Indonesian society has been accustomed to following the West, due to their rule during the colonial era. Since Western authority is no longer present (with the end of formal colonialism), the current ruling elites cannot ignore Indonesian culture in the way that previous Western powers did.... In reality,

42 For a discussion of how Indonesian nationalists resolved the issue of Hindu Buddhist monuments as the heritage of the postcolonial nation, see: Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, "Conserving the Past, Mobilizing the Indonesian Future: Archeological Sites, Regime Change and Heritage Politics in Indonesia in the 1950s," op cit.

Indonesian culture has long ceased and people have become satisfied with following the game of foreign culture[s], which have come to Indonesia and given an impression of progress.[43]

He also continued to remind Indonesian students of their responsibility to define Indonesian culture and essentially to transform colonial modernity into a new form of modernity, which would represent "the spiritual will of a nation." Material for such reworking is, as he put it in his Inaugural Lecture, "here! In Nusantara."

Thus the struggle over culture is not only concerned with the pursuit of new forms, but also with the organization of a new culture. We hear that revolution is still not complete and that there are still many heavy and difficult duties ahead of us, in order to fill the space left void by independence (kemerdekaan).[44]

Van Romondt's lecture, unlike Schoemaker's, is filled with Indonesian cultural history from high to low, cutting across different eras to register the idea of continuity and transformation. For instance: "Java during the Islamic era had accepted many Hindu influences. So many in fact, that we cannot dismiss the theory that Islam did not invent a new form, and only took over the old.... [The co-existence of contrasting styles of house indicates that] past Hindu norms are still largely operational, even as they take on Islamic variety."[45] The encounter with the West (and its "processes of change that can't be stopped") was not only transformative but also pathological, as the formation of

43 Vincent van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," Inaugural Lecture, 26 May 1954. Fakultet Teknik Universitet Indonesia in Bandung (previously known as Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool). Djakarta: Noordhoof – Kolff N.V. 1954

44 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.

45 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.

urban culture (the main signifier of Western cultural production) unsettled the agrarian society. "Urbanization is taking place in cities where its occupants still live [in] the agrarian world.... The building (in the city) is foreign in its space and form.... Except for Chinese shops, many of these buildings disregard climate and appear foreign."[46]

In Van Romondt's lecture, we see an attempt to construct Indonesian architectural history – a historiography that does not follow examples from the West. It could be conceived as the first postcolonial architectural critique in which issues of Western colonialism were addressed in connection with an urban-rural cultural crisis, where the story of the West was only a small part of a larger and longer story of inter-Asia interactions, adaptations and conflicts before European hegemony.

The lecture emphasizes the need for Indonesian architects to construct an architecture that would represent a new nation. For Van Romondt, the possibility of an "Indonesian architecture" is closely related to the possibility of constructing a national culture in a nation known for its cultural diversity. He knew perfectly well that much of the vernacular architecture had taken root in rural areas, leaving the urban as largely the domain of the West. For Van Romondt, this offered little for Indonesia in reinventing its own culture. "Indonesians would have to ask themselves, if the life of the kota (city), as a result of industrialization, will lead to different kinds of building form, namely an Indonesian one?"[47] The urban cultures depicted by Van Romondt were seen as belonging to "foreign" cultures, and he raised the question of their relevance for the building of an Indonesian national culture.

46 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.
47 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.

There seems to be an affinity between Van Romondt's thinking and Henri Maclain Pont's approach to the architecture of the Dutch East Indies. Both Van Romondt and Pont were interested in archeology, and were both highly conscious of the (constructed) difference between the "West" and the "East." Yet, if Pont was interested in the symbolic cooperation between the "East" and the "West" as a basis to guide colonial Indonesia into the modern world, Van Romondt showed how absurd such cooperation had been. Pont and Romondt were in accordance, nevertheless, in their great interest in past Indonesian civilizations. Van Romondt's archeological focus was the Candi Prambanan in Central Java; Maclain Pont was fascinated by the archeological remains of Majapahit kingdom in Trowulan, East Java. They were both interested in the remains of these past civilizations, although Van Romondt was less interested in seeing them as a resource for rebuilding the future. "I don't think that one can regain the glorious past and imagine that Borobudur and Prambanan hold a key to give new form. These structures – though may sound strange to you – are dead. They are beautiful mummies, which mean a lot to the nation and its art, but they are not from our time and they don't mean much for the future era."[48]

Pont, in any case, was tasked with creating forms to address the challenge of a late colonial power seeking new representation. Van Romondt never considered himself an architect in practice. He was an architectural educator with substantial field experience in archeological restoration. He did not build culture in the sense of giving form to an architectural idea, but he laid the *cultural* understanding and thus built cultural infrastructure for thinking about architecture. He knew that he was "someone who

48 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.

is appointed to teach architectural history."[49] He was at his best when talking about Indonesian cultural history when he raised questions beyond architecture, bringing in the roles of culture as a way to think about the potential and the limit of architecture:

In a time when a principled life prevails, we see progress. However if the structure of culture is crumbling, and culture takes only appearance without substance, then we live in an era of 'minus-culture'—which at its lowest point solely reproduces old norms. In this kind of era, people who feel threatened by this decline tend to cling to the past. Research on history and culture results in the pursuit for a single source, and often one that is greatly exaggerated.

Indonesian architects who, because of their low self-esteem and a need to exaggerate their sense of self, try to adopt foreign forms with an Indonesian quality through the use of traditional elements, are not only mistaken, but are also enemies of the development of true architecture![50]

Van Romondt's final point was to encourage Indonesian architects to find their own path by following honestly the "spiritual will of the nation," characterized by its forward-looking aspiration.

Please consider that the greatness of Indonesia is located in its future, not its past, and it must be located here, in this Nusantara, nowhere else. The struggle for genuine forms in literature, music, painting, and sculpture has produced art forms with dramatic fineness, stemming from an arousing homeliness. One does not have

49 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.
50 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.

to feel ashamed by his or her honest pursuit. Rather, trying to give substance to a hollow, empty shell should be the embarrassment.

Students of architecture (seni bangunan) understand well my affirmation that you have huge responsibility as Indonesians. We, foreign lecturers, can only bring you to the gate that we will not be entering. You have the responsibility to give a true architecture to the nation. For this, you must investigate with full consciousness the potential of Indonesian culture.[51]

Vincent van Romondt nevertheless stayed on in Indonesia until 1962. He became the most well-known Dutch professor, and was responsible for making culture an essential topic in architectural education. Indonesian architectural historian Iwan Sudradjat reported: "Under Van Romondt's direction, the training programmes, which initially laid heavy stress on technical and engineering aspects, were gradually enriched. Aesthetic, cultural and historical considerations were gradually incorporated into the studio exercises, while lectures on Indonesia architectural heritage and excursions to different regions were introduced, to broaden students' minds and to intensify their appreciation of the architectural heritage in Indonesia. His teaching method still exerts strong influence on the architectural education system in Indonesia today."[52]

51 Van Romondt, "Towards an Indonesian Architecture," ibid.
52 Iwan Sudradjat, "A Study of Indonesian Architectural History":187.

C. Wolff Schoemaker

The Aesthetics of Architecture and the Art of the Moderns

Translated by Gerard van den Hooff

Adress delivered by: Prof. C. Wolff Schoemaker, In the auditorium of the college of technology in Bandung on 28 June 1930 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the college.

Dear Director of Education and Advisory Service,
Dear Governors of this College,
Dear Professors and Lecturers,
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen Assistants and Students, as well as all others gracing this occasion with their worthy and attentive presence,
Esteemed and learned listeners,

When I was designated to deliver an address, as pursuant to the custom of this college, on a subject from the discipline practiced by myself, architecture, Goethe's words came back to me: "Die Kunst ist deshalb da daβ man Sie sehe, nicht davon spreche."

Discussing art without the illustrative pictures of relevant works of art unavoidably entails contemplations that have little real value and tend to tax the patience of the audience, the majority of whom are not likely to be experts.

Consequently, it is not without great hesitation that I avail myself of the opportunity to deliver this lecture, and I fear that I will not be entirely able to obviate the objection expressed above.

In order to allow the subject its proper scope, I felt that a very compendious dissertation on "the aesthetics of architecture and the art of the moderns" should be appropriate, where, however, I have to appeal to your powers of imagination.

To the intelligent beholder, architecture as a technical medium of art takes on a deep significance when he takes a look at the works not only from an artistic or technical perspective, but with the knowledge of how to recognize in them the characterization of the mentality of a society in its historical evolution.

It is of relevance to the historian and the art lover, but likewise to the engineer as a civilized person, to become acquainted with the value of the aesthetical principles. In consequence, apart from the technical aspects of the building profession and the auxiliary sciences, the future engineer is expected to study the development of the historical and modern architectural styles, while devoting close attention to the particular constructional design and the peculiarities of its forms.

Usually, definitions of architecture suffer from one-sidedness. One of the first attempts at a satisfactory definition was made by Vitruvius, the architect of Augustus, at the beginning of our era, and the author of a celebrated work on architecture.

Arguably, architecture may be regarded as the art of building functionally, solidly and beautifully. The question remains, however, what the word "beautifully" is understood to mean. The preconditions "efficiently" and "solidly" are perfectly clear. But confusion may well arise in a situation where efficiency and

solidity, incorporated in one and the same building, constitute a certain beauty in themselves, as may be the case in engineering works, whereas any grandeur of design which we may find impressive is just as much an aesthetic factor that should not be underestimated.

To avoid falling into rhetoric, it is well to remember that broadly speaking a building – always provided, of course, that it has functionalism and solidity – should be considered to be part of what we call the *métier*, not architecture, if the construction neither bespeaks the urge for beauty, nor suggests a higher idea underlying the design, or a powerful sense of awareness, even though ornamentations may have been applied to delight the eye.

In fact, we can only speak of architecture if the building suggests a strong will to art or a spiritual idea, epitomized in an artistic form such that the objective of the design is related to it, or is incorporated in it, in a sense.

Whatever the case may be, it will always be difficult to draw the line between utilitarian workmanship and architecture, and in border-line cases it is a matter of appreciation more than anything else.

A residential dwelling of the Niassers, for example, notwithstanding its simplicity, may be counted as architecture, whereas many a building in our environment should only be called a work of architecture in a manner of speaking.

Essentially, architecture is the art of constructing: that is, choosing and processing materials with a view to meeting practical needs. The primary aim of architecture is the creation of closed and covered spaces and hence it initially commenced as a necessity rather than an art.

Man's natural urge or instinct to satisfy the mind or to impress by creating something striking among its own kind, induced him to apply remarkable forms and ornaments that may partly have originated from superstition and been intended as charms or fetishes.

Ultimately this ambition breathed new life into the sense of beauty, and thus the higher form of building emerged that we call architecture. In view of its essentially utilitarian character, architecture remains closely interrelated with the demands of functionalism and technology. In consequence design in this context relies largely on that fact, as we shall see.

Exceptions to this rule are the memorial monuments, to which no criteria of usefulness apply and which can be regarded as a special kind of architecture that is left out of consideration here.

Being a product of human contrivance and the human spirit, there exists a close connection between man and his architecture. Changes in the circumstances in which man finds himself are invariably accompanied by transformations in his architecture. As a result, architecture provides a clear reflection of the traits of the society in the midst of which its works were created, and it characterizes the various kinds of civilization through its different styles. The power of dictators, the degeneration of a state, the authority of a religion, they are all expressed just as eloquently by contemporary monuments as by the pen of the historian.

The incessant transformation of architectural manifestations can be regarded as a perpetual process that is an evolution in a technical sense only. From an aesthetic point of view, there is no such thing as development in terms of progress or improvement; one might refer to it as a variability of views. This transformation may be observed in the art of all civilized peoples and is more

conspicuous and frequent as the spirit is livelier, the vigor greater and the creative urge more active.

Thus a historical evolution is discernible, which is divided into art periods or "styles."

Transformation, or rather metamorphosis, leaves certain values unimpaired, basic patterns and principles of tectonics to which man remains devoted through conservatism and the lack of orientation to change in the artistic instinct within his ethnic group. This accounts for the inherent affinity of the artistic expressions in chronologically consecutive periods.

An architectural style is characterized by its characteristic construction method, formal tendencies and the way in which the structure of the buildings is jointed and presented through molding and ornamentation. In this way, in the architectural products of a cultural community common features are created, which pass over to other forms of visual art and find expression in the spiritual disposition, the intellectual ambitions and the inner life of such a cultural community.

Through its style, architecture thus characterizes the culture and the will to art of a people in a particular epoch; it is in fact the lapidary manifestation thereof.

The artistic value of a work is autonomous with relation to its style and is determined by the individuality of its creator, whereas the appreciation of a certain style is related to aesthetic preference, in an objective sense.

We may fall under the spell of a style due to the optical beauty and composition of its forms, or the intensity with which a splendid idea that we divine and makes a profound impression has been

expressed, even though neither the kind of beauty, nor the idea put forward is consonant with our subjective intuition.

As our sensitivity to the objective beauty of forms or our susceptibility to their symbolism prevails, together with our taste and frame of mind, we will be moved and fascinated more profoundly by one style than by the other.

When a cultural community is divided into different ethnically and spiritually related groups, each of them will interpret the common architectural style in their own way, more often than not displaying notable morphological distinctions, even though there exists no essential difference in terms of the formal system or the psychological means of expression. Essentially, this is what makes the style typical on a permanent basis, being similar across the entire interrelated artistic field.

Conversely, borrowing of form may cause a morphological relationship between the architectures of barely related cultural communities, although this does not necessarily imply a stylistic relationship.

Each style has a dominant theme, an atmosphere, in which the emotional charge of the human mind manifests itself. This prevailing tone is determined by sentiment, the morality, the psyche – sometimes stable, tranquil and harmonious, at other times turbulent, chaotic, eruptive.

In Greek designs of classical antiquity it is the intellect, reason, that is the preponderant factor enforcing fixed rules and modules. Here the delicate sentiment prevails, fine-tuning the forms, and giving them a stately, self-conscious complexion.

The building organism in the Greek temple is a simple one of space-covering load and strut abutments, of clear and rhythmic jointing and with harmonious, all but formalistic proportions. Each component seems to have a specific function to illustrate the composition.

Here self-control, a sense of order and love of organic beauty set the tone.

How different things were in the Gothic age: more spontaneous and intrinsically emotive. No more laws or fixed rules, no set proportions, but a heroic creative urge that would not be bridled.

Between buttressed supporting columns the nave of the cathedral rises above all, a magisterial epitomization of the over-strung imagination.

Sturdy spires, alive, watchful masses of stone, rise up, making the eye lift up, their proud contours silhouetted against the sky. As if inspired by a dynamic impulse the stone bundles ascend, rhythmically arrested in their growth time and again and emanating into trembling ornamentation. They are narrowing upwards and, wreathed by sharp bands, they end in pointed steeples piercing into the sky. "L'âme de l'art Gothique," says Rodin, the great French sculptor, "est dans cette déclinaison voluptueuse des ombres et des lumières, qui donne le rythme à l'édifice tout entier et le contraint de vivre."The interior of the lofty temple space is filled with a mysterious air. A broad nave, lower side aisles, doubled sometimes, intersecting transepts, smaller extensions grown into one mighty ensemble of spatial shapes and canopied by a bold structure of vaulting, where the muscular bundles of pillars divide. The light comes in through large windows, filtered by glass panes in multi-colored topaz, azure, emerald and bloody purple, veiling the elevated caverns in a transcendental shroud.

Religious or not, on entering these tall, sacred halls, we are overcome by a deep emotion. Are we overawed by the revelation of an exalted mystery? Or are we seized by a heaviness of heart caused by the atmosphere of spiritual agitation that cries to Heaven like a plea for salvation? It is the spirit of Gothic.

What also comes to mind is another form of architecture where heavy blocks of stone were piled on blocks of stone by an unresisting crowd, slaving away under burdens and lashes in the Nile valley.

Charged with tensions, the ancient Egyptian ruins tell us of an uncompromising, ruthless rule, of a mighty will demanding immortality for itself.

Materialistic craving, supersensory reasoning and cool calculation, the entire interested spirit of the supreme ruler is epitomized in the awe-inspiring masses of stone.

It is as if – with brute force - a supernatural power has fossilized all of life's functions into magic formulas.

This style has a titanic touch and is essentially the expression of Power – a power that even means to oppose destruction after death.

So, in the various styles we recognize a psychological fundamental, which does not rely on a tradition of form but is fully determined by the mind-set of the creating environment.

Baroque, for example, is more closely related to Gothic and the art of the Indians than to Graeco-Roman design, from which its motifs are fundamentally derived.

This also accounts for the fact that modern architecture, despite its entirely different forms and constructions, is reminiscent of the spirit of the medieval cathedrals and the massive constructions of the Egyptians alike.

How now can it happen that on the basis of form and composition of raw material a certain architectural style comes into being, bound as it is by objective and technology? The spirit that drives the artistic urge cannot arbitrarily dictate design, as is the case in the free arts.

The individual design that characterizes a specific style in the formal sense, depends on three variable factors at least, viz., intellect, technology and mind.

These variable factors, of which sometimes one and then the other prevails, are in their turn dependent on all kinds of influences, such as the geographical state of the country, its climate, religion, state of sciences, its social, political and economic situation, the national character and traditions.

It hardly needs saying that these influences require no further elucidation, as their respective significances are obvious.

An interesting phenomenon that definitely deserves your attention is the artistic awareness, which attempts to find the sublime form and thus seeks to support the subliminal self, which is the actual creator.

As soon as man became aware of the concept “Beautiful,” he tried to fathom and explain it.

True, the development of art is not demonstrably related to the artistic hypotheses that were introduced by reasoning in all periods of its history, although the architects certainly took these hypotheses into consideration, but the conceptions afford a remarkable outlook on the role of reason in solving aesthetical issues.

As early as antiquity, thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle sought to explain the sublime. But in later times this problem likewise occupied the minds of the philosophers, not only in the West, but also in the Orient, and they felt that they had succeeded in tracking the fundamental principles of aesthetics. Not only did they seek to articulate the psychology of the aesthetic impression, but also the philosophy of the aesthetic object.

My limited span of time forbids a more thorough discussion of the various hypotheses. The aesthetic impression, or the emotion aroused by beauty, on beholding an architectural work is such an intricate complex of inner sensations and associative factors that we cannot but render account of it in faltering and inadequate words.

It is useful for the architect to turn his mind to this subject, as it sharpens the artistic intellect and teaches him to ask “why.”

Some reflective activity will enable anyone to recognize certain perceptions as factors that have a function in evoking profound emotion on beholding man’s creations.

In this context, the concept “sublime” should not be interpreted in its narrow sense of “beautiful” or pleasurable to the senses, but as an elevating psychological sensation.

Hence the manifest evidence of the ability to master subject matter, brave forces of nature or exercise power will fill the beholder with awe, and move him aesthetically. As other aesthetic factors concur, the sensation will be stronger.

What comes to mind is the pyramids of Egypt, the stately obelisks, the stupas of the Buddhists, or indeed the colossal dolmens erected in pre-historic times. Or imagine an iron bridge of great span, a grain elevator, a gigantic hoisting crane, a modern ocean-going steamer or a huge mountain locomotive. In all these magnificent engineering works, however, the striking functionalism and solidity of the construction is all too much emphasized as the criterion of beauty. More than anything else, it is an emotion of respect and awe of the powers of the human mind that tames the forces of nature and submits them to its will.

Another aesthetic factor of ideal value is bound up with the manifestation of a sacrifice made to ennoble the form, lending the idea a higher sacredness. The sacrifice referred to here is noted in the application of costly and laboriously tooled materials such as polished marble, granite etcetera, and likewise in a rich sculptural finish, let alone the objectively sublime aspect carried with it.

We just as greatly admire what satisfies our intellect through intuitive comprehension – but only when what we observe has an inspiring effect on the mind on account of its composition or interesting form.

A hackneyed form, or ensemble of forms, however easy to understand, signifies nothing and will hence fail to captivate us – and even less so when we discern in it the deliberate attempt of a pathetic mind.

A familiar phenomenon in our psychologically rather than aesthetically oriented time is that a work of visual art that can be grasped all too easily through sensory perception, kindles little interest, despite its dexterous finish and, indeed, its objective "beauty." Representations of nature or natural forms will be found less enthralling the more they approximate reality, i.e., what is sensorily familiar, and consequently hardly prompt us to reflect on them. On beholding such a work, our imagination is left

disconnected and in this way we miss out on the psychological incentive our time is yearning for.

The form aberrant from nature, on the other hand, appeals greatly to our imagination, which it is not impeded by the shallow charm of sensory perception, but receives a stimulating suggestion.

Similarly, we are more likely to grow bored with certain decorations or forms in architecture when the design is all too obvious or familiar through its ubiquity. We wish for something whose composition cannot be recognized at a single glance, but simultaneously conveys the idea of a certain systematic nature. When, by contrast, we feel it is haphazard or confusingly arbitrary, we merely experience aversion.

And herein lies the distinction between the modern work of talented masters and the experiments of mediocre followers, who believe that nowadays all that matters when it comes to bringing about a "forceful" work is distortion and quasi-naive mutilation of forms.

But even the art critics, who are usually just laymen in the domain of art, all things considered, have fallen for this and propagate this fallacy, while failing to distinguish between method and art.

The lack of understanding with regard to a peculiar form could, however, bring about an aesthetic sensation, when the individual design – even though it is decidedly ugly from an objective perspective – suggests the notion of an obscure meaning or a profound thought. In this context, awkwardness creates the appearance of an artist's form-neglecting state of mind as a result of enhanced spiritual insight. Witness the admiration for the sometimes grotesque monstrosities of modern art.

The aesthetic sensations that I just quoted as examples arise from the suggestive force of what is being observed, in other words from the spiritual relationship between object and subject.

Of a more sensory nature is objective beauty, which we experience when a play of forms and colors is in alignment with our instinctive sense of "harmony" and "rhythm"' and our sense of "scale," which is closely bound up with it.

The concept of "rhythm," like that of "harmony," is abstract and has no clearly specified meaning. Rhythm is a regulating principle, as it were, the impulse of life, which bends or arranges lines and forms in steadily moving proportion; it is the cadence of the material.

"Scale" is usually understood to mean the mutual relations in terms of size between the principal masses and the components of a building. Scale may refer to a fixed proportional factor, as in the classical or pseudo-classical structures or to a variable one, as in Gothic and in modern art.

Classical architecture is "expansive" due to that invariable proportional factor or canon, which means that a large building has the overall identical appearance as a smaller one, being – in a manner of speaking – a magnification of the same. It is for this

reason that in this system the eye lacks an estimable measure by way of object of reference.

In Gothic buildings the details do not increase or decrease in proportion to the main measurements, but retain an intuitively credible dimension, which causes the main measurements to be more convincing.

When we feel that an aperture, extension, cornice or ornament has an incorrect proportion compared to the face of a wall or the mass of the building as a whole, we say that such a part is "out of scale." In this way, an entire segment of a tower, for example, may be too big or to small in proportion and "fall out of the scale."

This small digression on the significance of the aesthetic sensation may hopefully serve to provide a notion of the vagueness of aesthetics. From this philosophical principle certain maxims cannot be inferred, and neither can an understanding of certain concepts such as "harmony" or "rhythm," which indeed cannot be described, enhance the sense of beauty. The ability to sense them is a matter of innate aptitude and aesthetic experience.

True, the concept of beauty is not invariable, but a true work of art never ceases to compel admiration, regardless of passing fashions.

The aesthetic problem inherent to architecture was simply reduced to a mathematical one by the master builders of the late Middle Ages.

Consequently, in those times of spiritual overheating, when architecture seemed to have its origins in a flush of ecstasy – as present-day art historians surmise – people did not refer to a "style," but rather soberly to a "mode" or "manner."

The medieval artists, who as apprentices were guild-trained by masters, were neither aware of a religious delirium, nor of the existence of spiritual values in art.

Theoretically, architecture was interpreted as a part of geometry, as “scientia geometrica,” where the proportions were determined by trigonometrical systems, after thoughtful deliberations.

In doing so the Gothic architects, stonemasons of great skill, evidently reasoned from certain rules and numerical proportions, entirely in accordance with their scientific interpretation which is manifest in their well-considered constructional system and competent stereotomy.

In contemporary documents architects are referred to as ”magistri geometrici.”So, in their view the experience of the sublime was aroused by a harmony of proportions and rhythm in architecture, measured subconsciously and tentatively, in the same way that the ear perceives the proportional numbers of the acoustic vibrations and tests them for purity.

The formal scheme was determined by the functionalism of the design and the solidity of the construction, with which the verticalism and spiky top-pieces were closely related with a view to stabilizing the structure.*

In Gothic, the design has entirely grown out of the construction, thus affording the building a virtual power.

* The collapse and dangerous subsidences in the latter years of the Gothic cathedrals and their towers were usually due to desintegration of the mortar and erosion of the stone.

The elevation of the church's vaulted space and the slenderness of the construction were the pride of the medieval constructor, competing in boldness and skill with his fellow craftsmen. Achieving virtuosity in carving naturalistic ornaments was nothing but an emulative pursuit.

The guild were so envious among themselves, that nothing was written down about building techniques in their days. They maintained the greatest secrecy about special artistic rules or constructional methods.

Turning this over in our minds, we may well wonder whether the spiritual charge and the sentiment in Gothic architecture, springing from divine inspiration, was sensed by society of those days in just as lyrical a fashion as it is by us now, many centuries later.

Surely, those people must have been totally unaware of their spiritual frame of mind and were not wont to lose themselves in psychological self-reflection.

What is certain, however, is that the beauty of Gothic had no hold over the Italian architects of the subsequent Renaissance. In fact, these artists of the Italian Renaissance, called the medieval art of Germanic peoples "Gothic," synonymous with "barbarian."

Should that designation impugn the possibility of universal and objective aesthetic rules? I think not. People in the Renaissance were seized by an enthusiastic artistic ambition in a particular school of thought, and were therefore incapable of objective judgment, nor could they claim ample experience, and rejected everything not in keeping with their feeling for art.

In the Middle Ages, many experts were skeptically disposed toward the existence of a particular aesthetic numerical taxonomy. However, in my view there are indications that would justify some credence in it.

However, leaving this aside, there is no denying that to a certain extent our subliminal self is susceptible to elementary patterns in numerical and dimensional proportions, while the same is true of curves. Does this not account for our sense of discomfort on seeing an imperfect straight line or an incorrect mathematical figure? Is an ellipse not more delightful to the eye than a compound curve, which approximates to the ellipse? And do we not intuitively recognize the beauty of distributions according to simple mathematical equations?

I am convinced that mathematics plays a major role in our aesthetic subconscious, something the medieval builders of cathedrals were thoroughly aware of.

Typical in this context is the manner in which the great French architect Jean Mignot defended his design for the cathedral of Milan, circa 1400, when he referred to *"il retto ordine del triangolo, che non puo essere abbandonato sensa errore."*When the Italian architects, annoyed at his mathematical considerations, raised the objection that reason was part of the domain of science and had nothing to do with art, Mignot indignantly retorted: "ars sine scientia nihil est"!

The rationality of the masters of the time of mysticism and religious fanaticism, whose work displayed great impetuosity, coupled with a belief in aesthetic significance of numerical proportions, struck me as sufficiently noteworthy to dwell upon at greater length. More particularly so as it turns out – considering

the results of that rationality – how little weight artistic rules carry with the form when it is experienced deep-down.

It is only in periods without a driving spiritual ideal that the intellectual function can prevail in art and that architecture, when taking its departure from a knowledge of forms, will have a somewhat formal character.

Just now I referred to the principal factors that determine the building style, bringing reason and technology in particular into prominence. The technical utilitarian aspect is definitely of primary importance as the foundation of the formal system. It is the operational basis of the creative imagination.

Leaving a few exceptions aside, a building is a closed off, floored and covered space or a linked-up number of spaces, not uncommonly several storeys high. Screened from wind and weather, man lives in those spaces, performing certain activities that determine the intended purpose.

The construction of the walls may be either massive, albeit with the needful openings, or consist of a system of supporting fulcra with lintel beams and provided with unloaded filled-in sections.

The former, more primitive, method of stacked building has had considerably less influence on the formal development of architecture than the latter method of brick nogging or structural steelwork, which should be visualized in the original wooden version. Its basic principle is far more ingeniously contrived and has a more productive effect on the tectonic imagination. Architectural design being predominantly based on stone as the most hard-wearing material, which in addition allows great freedom of tooling on account of its non-fibrous structure, my

primary consideration in the following argument concerns stone-built constructions.

To prevent misunderstandings, however, I must not neglect to point out that the functional forms of the original ways of building in wood, loam and other materials often had their effect on the architectural forms in stone. There is, likewise, arresting beauty in the

wood-based architecture of certain peoples, who – predominantly due to the natural conditions of their countries – have retained a great predilection for wood, while succeeding in expanding the formal possibilities of this material to monumental proportions.

The overriding constructional problem, the solution to which was sought in the historical development of stone architecture, was how to cover open spaces.

The most primitive system is the flat covering by means of continuous stone joists, as used in ancient Egypt, derived from the covering with lengths of round timber and a layer of loam as is still common there and elsewhere.

The statically best thought-out, and structurally boldest, system is the vaulted construction, at the same time the most impressive from a visual point of view.

Being of the utmost importance when it comes to determining the volume of the space and the shape of the supporting organs, the vaulted construction has dominated the architectural manifestation throughout its development, not least as a driving factor creating an awareness of large-scale constructional possibilities.

The use of stone in the form of a beam resting on fulcra necessitated serious restrictions, and enabled the construction of wider spaces only if they were interrupted by many supporting points. It is a well-known fact that the constructional usability of stone is primarily based on its substantial resistance against pressure, whereas the material can absorb hardly any tensive strain as takes place in the case of a horizontal beam. The construction, whose strength in such a case is determined by the relatively small tensile resistance of the material, is therefore basically incorrect and acts prohibitively.

The Egyptians, Greeks and other peoples of antiquity following this irrational style of building – insofar as they had at their disposal large quarries and slave labor – they could not but create an oppressive type of space.

When in the Roman Empire the social, political and economic circumstances made the need felt of more substantial spaces, uninterrupted by fulcra, the architects translated this task into action by applying the vaulted construction, the principles of which had been taught to them by their Etruscan predecessors.

The vault, which in all likelihood can be originally traced to a form in loess or loam, enables large spaces to be spanned by a stone construction, where the stability is determined by the stone's resistance to pressure and the material can produce its highest capacity. In consequence, such a construction is perfectly rational from a material-technical point of view.

The Romans developed the vault into an aesthetically carried-out constructional system, where the architectural design was based on patterns derived from the Greek building method of beams on columns.

As little as the Greeks were favorably disposed toward the introduction of the vault in monumental art, even though they were familiar with the basic principle, so little the Romans were prepared to abandon the semi-circular form in the vault as a leading idea.

That they would have been able to improve on the constructional method had they had the will to do so is, I believe, by no means uncertain, considering their extraordinary skills and statical rationality. After all, the span of the Roman Pantheon's dome has not been exceeded by any other stone vault.

Presumably, their notion of form contravened any basically different manifestation, which suggests that the sense of art imposes restrictions on the intellect, in other words that constructional expertise is not the deciding factor if neither the need nor the imagination compels to further development.

This conservatism brought the evolution of the vaulted construction to a standstill, thereby permanently freezing it to an architectural type.

It was only the rigidly constructivist-minded architects of the late Middle Ages who perfected the technique of the vaulted construction in their craving for height, reduced the pressure from the sides by means of the statically more favorable shape of their pointed arch and concentrated the loads in organs of strong resistance, thereby enabling themselves to increase the tallness of the space to excessiveness and leave openings to create immense incidence of light.

This original idea renders Gothic art its special character, made all the more forceful by its terse design.

The Latin peoples of the South, ethnically and spiritually related to the mixed Roman people from the days of the Empire, and like them by nature ill-disposed toward complicated forms, turned away from the Gothic method which they had never really empathized with anyway, when in the early fifteenth century they were greatly impressed by classical literature, focusing their artistic interest on the remnants of Roman architecture.

After the extreme consequences of the vaulted construction had been explored among the Northern peoples, approximately one century later, and this art form degenerated convulsively into virtuosity of form, these peoples too, who had meanwhile become acquainted with humanism, came under the influence of the joyful Italian Renaissance; architecture adopted a retrospective attitude, for want of innovative form-oriented ideas caused by a depletion of constructional possibilities.

By reason of this argument one tends to believe that it was predominantly due to the standstill in technology that architecture was doomed to persevere in this attitude until the end of the last century. This conclusion may strike one as somewhat one-sided, the art-historical facts, however, as well as the circumstances resulting in the emergence of an individual present-day building style, are definitely food for thought. Conversely, the entirely valid point can be raised that in the case of geographically and ethnologically separated peoples who utilize the very same constructional system, a completely different form of architecture may nevertheless come to the fore, and if one calls to mind how radically design can be influenced by the mental make-up, technology alone can hardly be held responsible for the impotence in the last few centuries. The spirit of the times was equally to blame. It becomes clearly visible in the architectures of the different periods of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance, despite their tendency to hold on tenaciously to the same

formal principles. But does that stable orientation toward the architecture of ancient times not likewise typify the orientation of the mentality?

Lastly, let us restate briefly how events in the nineteenth century initiated a radical change of which our modern architecture is the result.

A discussion of all the factors that resulted in the innovation of style is outside my scope. In addition, they are well enough known.

Hence it is merely to avoid excessive incompleteness that I venture to bring to mind some factors.

After the great revolution of the social order, the introduction of the mechanically driven machine, the rise of the working class due to industrialization, the huge population growth, the emergence of overpopulated urban areas, the non-religious disposition, all this altered the material and moral situation in Europe. Knowledge was broadened in every conceivable discipline, the exact sciences produced one surprise after the other, the focus on businesses gave rise to the world of high finance, the accumulation of people caused new problems.

The tasks that the engineer and architect were presented with were significantly more diverse and large-scale than those in former times. The introduction of building materials of a special nature as well as novel construction methods enabled the architect to meet the new demands. Rolled iron, for example, was one of the new building materials put on the market in the former half of the nineteenth century.

Later again the possibility of a statical combination of bar iron and Portland cement concrete was discovered. This combination

is used in the form of so-called reinforced concrete, with which the one-sided resistance capacity of stony material is overcome.

Yet the ensuing far-reaching expansion of building techniques did not immediately lead to changes in architecture. A devotion to tradition, formalism in professional training, a universal confusion with regard to taste in those chaotic times, together with other causes, kept the slackened artistic awareness in a state of captivity. While seeking expressions for the derailed mind in all conceivable directions, architecture degenerated into imitations of form. In this way romanticism, renaissancism, eclecticism and individualism came into being, from which only few architects, endowed with original artistic talent, managed to escape.

It was not until the advent of the end of the century that it was registered in the conscience of prominent architects in Northern countries, that the traditional forms, whose application had become a mere grind, were no longer appropriate to express their aesthetic consciousness and that time was pressing to champion a radical revival of architecture.

Situating themselves in the slippery field of theorizing aesthetics, without being aware of the nature of their inner urge, they initially sought the solution in contrived sophistication, actuated by the craving to make a complete break, first and foremost and as soon as possible, with all that was.

All this gave rise to constructivism, which is understood to refer to an artistic view which starts from the assumption that true beauty in architecture actually relies on the bare manifestation of the construction, rid of all non-essential embellishment. Apparently its followers were under the impression that experiencing the sublime is largely based on the assuagement of the intellect, which has definitely an element of truth.

In the meantime this view did not come to full fruition thanks to the artistry of these pioneering architects, who gave the first, forceful impetus to the present-day architectural revival. Their view, extremist though it was, became the incentive to the quiescent artistic awareness and inspired the imagination to find new possibilities in terms of form, to which the meanwhile universal application of iron and reinforced concrete contributed.

The process is currently well under way and may be regarded as the most important in the history of art.

In this period of formation, with its excesses and inept imitations, in which only the leading tendencies stand out, it is difficult to articulate the aesthetics of the new style. In addition, the necessary historical distance to arrive at an objective judgment is lacking. _

If, therefore, my dissertation on the modern movement in architecture sounds like a fixed opinion, it is in the full awareness that all I do is volunteer a subjective impression.

When we ask ourselves what powerful factors are prevalent in our sense of time and environment, what spatial needs there are, from what ideas the architectural commissions take their departure, whence the enthusiasm and inspiration spring that pervade architecture with vitality, then our minds turn to the centrally organized superpowers of our society, created by science, technology and decisiveness. I am referring to large-scale industries, the wholesale business and large-scale infrastructure with their formidable engineering works, their laboratories, their strongholds and their high-powered machines. The only ambitions seem to be efficiency, organization, order, system, consultation.

This concentration on a gigantic scale of human activities in all domains requires vast and clustered spaces, storey upon storey, if

necessary to staggering heights, demands halls of immense span and complex facilities to prevent wasting of time.

Consequently architectural commissions are nowadays far more comprehensive and extensive, as a result of which greater demands are made on the art of presenting architecture in a clear and amenable form.

Modern building techniques have brought the solution to the most fantastic constructional problems within the bounds of the possible.

So, now that in consequence the architect's lack of constructive freedom has decreased considerably, he is being tempted to find solutions in forms that tend to create some surprise due to their constructional adventurousness. This means that his intellectual efforts are predominantly moving in that direction.

Vice versa, the imagination – which is creative in the near-unlimited domain of form – has an inspiring impact on technology, inducing it to devise new ways to materialize the design. It is a mutual influencing of wish and ability, without which no evolution would be possible.

The present feeling for art, with a tectonic inclination, is stabilized little by little by constant new observations in the work of others and by individual experiments. The unusable forms, out of character, are abandoned, being replaced by more typical forms, and in the end a partiality in terms of ways of expression is taking shape, which is not only found with artists, but also merges into the world of laymen as a result of repeated suggestive impressions. This familiar development of good taste is a sine qua non for the emergence of style as a formal expression of the familiar artistic consciousness.

The search for a characteristic way of expressing the constructive organism and the spiritual orientation of the time led to modern rationalism, a synthesizing movement, which pushes the constructional and tectonic details, not being of vital importance to the effect, into the background.

Where this rationalist movement was already discernible in the early days of this century, albeit almost exclusively in the Northern countries, the turbulent events during and after the Great War, which caused the intellectual abilities and the decisiveness to be stretched to the limit, accelerated the pace and brought about an expansion of the movement.

The modern rationalists, related to the constructivists when it comes to concept, are preferably thinking in terms of reinforced concrete, glass and iron, and in machine-produced parts, sober, flawless of form and line.

The extremists among them are particularly fascinated by glass, by the possibility to render an irrational complexion to a constructional-rational solution and to astonish with the pretense. I am referring to the glass-iron-concrete maniacs from abroad.

The fact of the matter is that the perfection of the production technique of glass has enabled an unprecedented expansion of its use in the form of building blocks and sheets.

True, as early as the Gothic period large areas of glass, composed of smaller pieces, were placed in the cathedrals, and in the age of the baroque the glass areas increased considerably in size, but it was not until the application in our time of reinforced concrete and iron used to build according to the structural steelwork principle, that the face of a wall could be interrupted by large and rectangular openings, and even be replaced by glass in its entirety.

The fact is that on installing an internal framework and a system of projecting beams and floor plates the load-bearing function of the wall is counterbalanced and it only serves to enclose a space. For utilitarian and semi-utilitarian buildings requiring the incidence of plenty of light, stone is disappearing, being non-transparent, and glass is taking its place, mounted in a delicate iron framework.

Where in former times the negligible effect of thermal insulation was the paramount objection to the ample application of glass, this is obviated by the now relatively common system of central heating.

In some cases it is not always practicable to install glass surfaces that can be opened, but the system of artificial ventilation deals with this problem.

However, there are more aspects that support the technology of building in its arduous tasks.

The necessary increase in height of buildings in the large cities, even amounting to dozens of storeys, is enabled by the electrical elevator.

The marvelous applications in the field of electrical engineering placed the telephone, as well as a cleverly devised signaling system, in the service of architecture and, what is more, numerous useful automatons, so that in a complex of spaces, however extensive it may be, the problem of communication and service has become of secondary importance.

Technically all but perfected by the inventions of science and aesthetically inspired by a spirit of pragmatism and daring, architecture sought a distinctive symbol as a point of departure.

It was the prismatic cell with hard planes that arose as the space-enclosing basic form, and became the guiding motif for the composition, the keynote of the imagination.

The grouping of spaces of varying volume into a compound ensemble of a higher order, either axially or in a non-symmetrical arrangement takes place – even though only seemingly so – according to a regulating principle, viz., that of functionalism, the parrot-cry of our times. The architectural manifestations are reserved, and likewise the ornament, applied rather sparingly, is rendered the stern character of the stereometric spatial conglomerate. The pragmatic and deliberate mind of the individual leading an assertive life was not likely to identify with the saccharine forms, graphically sensual or delicately playful, in which our ancestry took delight.

If the sculptor is offered the opportunity, by way of exception, to create a figurative work of art – for even among the moderns there are those who are decoratively-minded – his artifact will be stern-looking, approaching the prismatic form of the stone block and consequently thoroughly tectonic in appearance.

The works of the decorative school, which I am here referring to, are rendered a fascinating magnificence thanks to the great stylistic skills of our artists, but they are treated as an architectural grimace by the geometrically-minded architects favoring the intellectually inspired experience of art.

While recognizing the merits of any authentic movement, irrespective of its ideal, whether it concerns the down-to-earth pragmatic, stripped of any ornamental element, or attempts at expressions of the decorative instinct, may the future save us from monumental buildings and residential dwellings in the form of a cleverly contrived ensemble of boxes in stone and glass with cut-

out wholes and neat iron bars, which will little by little relegate architecture to the scope of the hygienic-scientific laboratory. While the movement is gropingly seeking a universal style, there are distressing indications that it is going in that very direction.

To our reassurance I may add, however, that Dutch architecture is not yet entirely overcome by this inordinate puritanism.

Let us have a look at how the general trend in present-day architecture is already producing artistic creations of varying appearance, on which their function, evidently, has great influence.

Where in former times the cathedral was the center of spiritual interest, the town hall the proclaimer of municipal power and the royal palace the pride of the aristocracy, nowadays the theater and party hall are the central venues, the merchant's office, the bank building and the factory are the symbols of organizational power and unremitting industry, and monumental institutions for popular education and public housing bear testimony to the democratic spirit of the age.

The architecture, thoroughly aware of modern artistic instincts, witnesses to this in every possible way, full of vitality and determination in the better works, their design subject to the relevant direction.

One direction groups the spatial units as isolated entities, yet leaning against and engaging one another, overlapping and projecting, partly settled at a low level, partly rising up or towering above the rest, sometimes – an ensemble reminding one of a stony organism solidified in uneven growth.

Another type of architecture is more closed in appearance, with vertical openings in regular series or large glassy areas. The walls

are straight or slanting, with units hugging or moving along one another where they meet, cresting or projecting, or showing a wide curve as if in an undulation of material that is folding to create greater resistance. Upwards, parts of the body are billowing outward or balconies are projecting in a swerve.

In the rigidly constructivist type the spaces seem to be enclosed by vertically placed slabs with cut-out openings and in their turn covered with plates, either placed cold, or level with one another, or with terrace-like recessions. Where canopies or fascias are used, these are positioned above one another in a metric arrangement and regular repetition.

The type where the vertical line prevails and the structure is indicated by a compact series of rises.

In this brief overview I have ignored the architecture in the Dutch Indies. Still, the modern will to art has also effected a change in the Indian architectural style and some novel principles as to form have been adopted. We are, however, not witnessing a pronounced direction that is characteristic of this country with its typical climate, typical nature and typical social composition as yet.

To conclude, some words to you, the students,

Your future architectural activities will probably be rather limited. Most of you are even unlikely to get tuned in to the beautiful domain of architecture in a direct manner.

Do remember, however, that architecture in this country is the visual expression of a culture of which you are also purveyors, and it is for this reason that you should feel obligated to familiarize yourselves with the culture, seeing that you as engineers will be in a position to influence it.

Great value will be attached in the future to your aesthetic perception as a professional engineer in the assumption that you are capable of expert judgment. Perchance you will be invited to judge projects and completed works, or exercise authority in a particular capacity.

But as a civil engineer your sense of beauty will likewise play an active role when designing technical utilitarian works. Even if there should be no particular reason to render an architectural touch to pure engineering work, it still requires an aesthetic sense to give your work the appropriate expression when it comes to functionalism and the sternly constructional aspect, and to refrain from finery. Your creations can, in all simplicity, equally have the allure of monumental art.

Therefore, you will be in a position to help develop a high stylistic quality, not in the least by aiming for unadorned naturalness, something we are always in want of.

By virtue of your specific training, your criticism of a primarily intellectual nature may well tend to be destructive rather than constructive. In such cases, use circumspection and more than anything else seek to find quality in the work of others.

With respect to your own work, exercise a high degree of self-criticism. Do not seek the sublime in eccentric posturizing, but first and foremost in functionalism of approach, rationalism of construction and reserve of form.

In your work you will continuously have to ask yourself whether a better solution may be possible from a static, constructional and formal perspective, complacency being a serious peril.

Preserve your common sense at all times lest you err.

I have said.

Vincent R. Van Romondt

Towards an Indonesian Architecture

Translated by Abidin Kusno

Inaugural Speech for the appointment as Professor in Architecture at Fakultet Teknik Universitet Indonesia in Bandung on May 26, 1954. Published in Indonesian by Djakarta: Noordhoof – Kolff N.V. 1954. Only paragraphs in italics were delivered in Indonesian. The rest were delivered in Dutch.

Honorable Vice President of Universitet Indonesia, professors, lectors, lecturers and assistant lecturers of the university. students and guests whose presence has brightened this event. I thank you for being here, which shows your interest in the development of Universitet Indonesia generally and the development of Indonesian architecture specifically. If this speech were delivered in Indonesian, it would have been a translated one. I am unable to present it to you in Indonesian. So please allow me, honorable guests, to use my own language, in which case I will feel freer to express myself.

If Indonesia established a school of architecture or engineering, it would be carrying out an important task for the field of cultural production. Many people are still not aware and still thinking that it is a wasteful luxury (instead of a need) to set up such a field of knowledge. To support the wisdom of those who think that architecture education is necessary, I am presenting to you here some thoughts about the place of architecture in society and how architecture can play a role in developing Indonesia.

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There are many contesting views on how the first buildings were constructed in the world. There is a well-known assumption that to "shelter" or to protect against bad weather was the primary motive for building a canopy, followed then by walls, where one could hide in between or underneath to counter the discomfort caused by wind, rain, cold and wet weather. Another view, with a primary concern for the spirituality of human culture and coming from the theoretical tradition of romanticism, interprets architecture as "auseinandersetzung mit dem Raum." In this view, it is not physical danger (such as weather) that is harmful, but the encounter with spirituality felt in the vastness of a spatial environment which prompts the little human being to find protection. As usual, the truth lies somewhere in between these two positions. Meanwhile, people are astonished to see most primitive nations remain calm in facing formidable powers that threaten them. These nations think the forces are coming from different sources known as spirits, deities, ghosts and so on. Even though they are threatened by these forces, they continue to be friend with thems through an intelligent and practical relation.

If the origin of architecture is explained through these conflicting opinions, then we would not be surprised to encounter yet another explanation, one that is again different from the existing accounts. As said, it may well be that the origin of people settling in a building is due to their attempt to survive material and spiritual threats. This opinion however only applies to those who seek security and tranquility by hiding in a building. But this opinion does not work for those who could only survive and get tranquility through dynamism and moving around. It may be more accurate therefore to say that the reason for one to construct a building is to synchronize one's perspective on life with one's surrounding environment. Instead of fixing a definition for architecture, it would be better to link architecture to humans' attitude to life, which continues to change!

The change can be traced in the variety of forms architecture has taken over time as styles changed according to changes in human history. Before we dive into this issue, let's be clear about what we are looking at: what is meant by the attitude of life, why such an attitude, and what are the factors that determine the attitude.

In a nutshell, humans' attitude can be traced back to the environment where he or she was born. Here, however, this assumption can be problematized, for the environment can be changed by humans who are embedded in it. Similarly, the environment can be used to preserve or destroy humans' attitude. In the end, attitudes too can change. If an existing attitude is consistently neglected, a different attitude could emerge out of consciousness as a crystallization of character.

In my opinion, one's attitude is formed in response to three authorities:

1 To God, the deities, the almighty or whatever it is called.
2 To fellow humans.
3 To one's own desire (*hasrat*) to live, which constitutes the basic form of life.

How these three orders are to be ranked is up to us and it would be different from person to person. The first and the last orders, the unknown physical force and the unknown mental force, are often together. A human's response to these forces could take the attitude of elevating him or herself above the forces, equalizing him or herself with the forces or subjecting him or herself to the forces. These different possibilities, while governed by the influence of custom and social environment, give shape to many different expressions and built forms.

Some illustrative examples will clarify this. The taut lines of Greek architecture more or less fit with the dynamic natural environment in Hellas. The ancient Greeks saw themselves as equal to their gods. They saw themselves as physically and mentally resembling their deities, albeit in an exaggerated form. The Greeks consciously located themselves above nature. As humans of culture they felt they were on the top. This was expressed by Socrates when he said he had learned nothing from nature. As such he sought to find companionship with fellow humans. This perspective that culture is above nature is inherited by the West and was expressed by elites and the educated during the Renaissance.

Most Western people however continued to worship the power above them and the power of nature, as could be seen in the cathedrals of the Middle Ages. The buildings from the Middle Ages, much like the temples in India, were a way of relating to nature. People did not consider themselves equal to God. They saw themselves below God (conceived singularly as the *Tuhan*), with human lust (*nafsu*) as the antithesis, whereas humans' relationships with each other is depicted as the war between gods (*dewa-dewa*). Such struggles seem to have been represented in a series of dynamic powerful built forms. Another example is the Egyptian pyramids and temples. Egyptians chose the human as the reference point in relation to the three forces. The human was symbolized by Phiraon, the king and the high priest. His body was maintained forever.

If a city is represented by its places of worship, we can be sure that we are facing a civilization that is centered on godliness. There have been many periods, including ours, with different centers. And people built different temples and different objects for worship: temples for the arts, temples for the glorification of power, temples for money or for technical superiority, and so on. We can see them in architecture, in the way spaces are organized, in the styles, in the order of structure and in the details of the building.

To give more examples: Autocracy, the government with the tendency of placing the individual below power, and thus going against individual freedom. The era of despotism expressed itself in the form of a geometrical plan, with symmetrical floor plan of the palace (as the exemplary center) and a façade tied to a system. The art of building in a country under dictatorship reflects the harsh and ruthlessness of the regime, with monumental order beyond the human scale. Under colonialism, the city is under the menace of the fort. Consider how colonial power changed the thousand-year-old Sargon II palace, which was located between urban centers. Consider also the case of Harappa and Mohendjodaro where we see from the new town plan a series of unorganized street lines cutting across the old centers. Democracy also takes architectonic form, in the form of freedom to arrange space, which probably should not be the case if we have a better understanding of the meaning of democracy.

When we talk about monumental order, we are talking about scale. This is also determined by a perspective on life. In Ubermensch, the scale is beyond figures represented in temples and churches. In ancient times, the scale of the building matches the power of the gods. If we could not find in an era a building that impresses us, we can assume that the people there are living under a civilization that is filled with spiritual tranquility, relatively static and without tension. We can know all these things through the history of architecture. In buildings, people show themselves more than in writing or painting. In the latter, people could still pretend that they were tender and holy; they would not have realized that in architecture they would release their true selves in built form. More than music, architecture is closely connected to everyday life especially for those who know the language. Architecture is a reliable mirror with which to see the work of culture.

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The history of Indonesian architecture shows aspects that reveal to us a lot about the character of the Indonesian nation. For this we need to differentiate between areas influenced by Hindu religion, and those that were not. Islam too not only influenced religious parts of a building, but the building as a whole. Much like subsequent Western influence, some built forms have taken root even though their origin is foreign. Over time, these forms are no longer seen as foreign and removing them as non-Indonesian would be a great loss to culture.

Even though we cannot find the art of building from the pre-Hindu period, we can assume that it would not be very different from what we find in the region untouched by Hinduism, Islam or Christianity. The society in this region is traditional and isolated by a social environment influenced by supernatural power. Every civilization based on supernatural power shows a character that is rather fixed. Religious people would never question power they considered absolute. To change such a civilization and the form it has taken is to change the mindset that governs the society. There is a dominant assumption that in parts of Indonesia that is relatively untouched by the world religions; there has been no change in the mindset of the people living there. There, we see a classification of built forms introduced by sociologists, such as home clan, homes, family houses in addition to public houses where deities are worshiped and guests are accommodated. A *desa* (village) is formed by the need to collectively defend against enemies. *Toko* (shops) are unknown as they are not needed. Every household is self sufficient. However, goldsmiths are worshiped for their expertise and respected as priests. We are unsure if their position in that society is obtained through their mastery over fire – a skill attributed also to women in the household – or whether it is because he is the only person with special expertise in the society.

A house is made for family, the mother and children. In there, foods are made, clothes are woven, husband and wife live. A husband is considered someone living in the public domain, and therefore located outside the core of the family. In a matrilineal clan-based society, there is even no space for a husband in the house. On the other hand, as a member of the village, the husband is provided with a space at the front of the building, with some distance from the house. Unfortunately, we know very little about houses from the Hindu era. We can assume that people from that era had departed from the habit of building houses on stilts even though there are images of houses on stilts in *Tjandi* Prambanan. In the narrative depicted in Prambanan, the houses on stilts are located abroad, in Langka, which means they are considered alien (for the Hindu-influenced region). To know something about the culture of this period, we would need to turn to heritage monuments. This includes all the religious buildings associated primarily with Buddha and Shiva. We are inclined to think of the society then as theocratic. This is the case, but they are different from the country where the religions came from, that is, India, where deities are only manifestations of natural forces. The Shiva temples (*tjandi*) in Java stored relics. They were built to worship the dead. Unless the transformation had already occurred during the journey from India to Java, which is a possible scenario, we can assume that an intermixture took place between the existing indigenous devotions to ancestors and the foreign religion. The worldview of Java made a person more important than the forces of nature. We see the manifestation of this view in the southern part of Central Java where the king elevated himself above everything else and he was seen as a deity-like figure.

The composition of the monumental *tjandi* with a geometrical square represents such a belief system. The building indicates the supreme power of the king. In the beginning, perhaps, the realm was governed by a strong council, but overtime it had

become centralized on an individual. Such centralization could be seen in the development of the roof shape which overtime had furled and served as a unifying feature of the building. The Shiva *tjandi* in Prambanan is the latest manifestation of this development whereas the three equally sized roofs of *tjandi* Sari near Kalasan belong to an earlier age. There were, however, forces that resisted this development, prompted perhaps by a different interpretation, which sought to eliminate the deity-like character of the individual (so eager to embody the monumental) by giving him a scale closer to that of a human. Changes occurred in the monuments associated with Buddhism as shown in Sewu and Kalasan, which have smaller doors.

Perhaps you think this is a bit fantastical, but my working experience has given me a rather different lesson. In many cases, architecture gives the first reason for a hypothesis, which would then need to be validated by experts in archeology. I therefore dare to put forward something worth noting. The clusters (of *tjandi*) in the northern part of Central Java are not only smaller, but also freer in composition. They are not geometrical in composition and appear more equal in size compared to the giant clusters of the southern counterparts. This indicates that the society in the northern part was more democratic! There seem to be two reasons behind this. Perhaps people in the north are too far from the center (of power) and therefore freer in their movement, or – and this is most likely the case – there is no relation with the south, and there were two kingdoms. Some epigraphic evidence has indicated this. We therefore have the liberty to interpret the age of the ancient north part of Central Java, which has always been difficult to do. But since research on this is rather accidental, we must be careful in hypothesizing. For sure however, the younger kingdoms in East Java have received a looser categorization and their ornaments are more Javanese (*kedjawaan*).

It has been noted that one could find in East Java pre-Hindu Javanese forms and the trace of their development toward a democratic order which we see clearly today in Bali. If we studied the floor plans of Bali's *pura*, *puri*, *grija* and the houses of the commoners, we would be impressed by how freely the components within the compound were organized. But we then would acknowledge the souls who organized them, as they must be persons of culture. Such souls you will not find in those creators of Balinese replicas for tourists and foreigners who are spellbound by the beauty they are unable to grasp. It turns out that in Bali there is no separation in the floor plan between the spheres of men and women. There is even no conception of guests. If a guest room is provided, we are seeing the presence of someone with an official rank and that the building is influenced by Java.

The Java of Islamic era had accepted many Hindu influences. There are so many that we cannot dismiss the theory which says that Islam did not invent a new form and it only took over the old form. The architectural focus of the Islamic era had eventually shifted to palaces even though mosques remained an important part of Islamic culture. It is also striking that palaces (*kraton*), while spacious and expanding as in Solo and Jogja, were never quite colossal and never seemed to lose human scale. Although we cannot say that this has to do with a democratic worldview, it still is an embodiment of a soul that did not want to differentiate people in terms of high and low even though the society remained patriarchal. We just have to recall terms that are popular today such as *Bapak*, *Saudara* and *Bung*. Nevertheless the Sultan's position is higher compared to the primus inter pares of Bali. And this found expression again in the plan of the town. In the village of Bali, there is a square field intended for fellow villagers and only one fourth of the area is for building houses and the king's *puri*. Inside the puri is a clearly demarcated space for commoners to meet the king.

In Java, on the contrary, it is not the open field that is the focus of the community, but it is the kraton. People assembled at the south, east and west wings of the kraton. As if escorted by the commoners, the king would step to the north, guarding Njai Lorokidul, the goddess of Samudra Selatan (the Southern Ocean). In front of his kraton spanned a vast field, called *alun-alun*, where the king could meet his people. Beside the field was a mosque, the house of Allah. The mosque's position was lower, and its orientation often deviated from Kiblat. There was no attempt to coordinate a hierarchy with the world power. Since Islam did not recognize high priests, the king held not only the world power, but also served as *kalifattullah*, the representative of Allah and the head of Islamic followers. Here, the house was the domain of women, with the porch or the front part of the house for the husband and guests. In a bigger house the inner part of the house was concealed by a wall at the yard making it inaccessible to outsiders. We see this phenomenon all over the world. Such a division is a feature of an agrarian house in a rural environment.

The agrarian social order is closely tied to nature and the feeling of being controlled by supernatural forces. Worship is central to agrarian society, and people are controlled by customs and therefore their life is tied to religious ceremonies (the most well-known being the many *selamatan* – communal feasts to enhance social unity, make offerings, and stage special activities of little importance to the science of building, but crucial for the construction of traditional buildings). Within the borders of the magical realm, there is a vast space of freedom to create, which has led to many contrasting styles of houses, such as those of the Modjopahit and Djawa today. We can draw a similarity in this diversity as the past Hindu norms are still largely operational even as they are of the Islamic variety. However if the desire to create is suppressed, culture will vanish, leaving only formalism seen as representing the tradition. In this situation, a diversion from the

traditional form is seen as a loss. The form seems to replace the substance which has been lost!

Concomitant to the fixing of a traditional building style is the drying up of any desire to create. Architecture could continue to live even under a tradition frozen in time. In Indonesia, this process of fossilization is propelled by the encounter with a radically different culture, the Western culture. The old civilization was not able to mobilize its energy to face the relatively young force which came with a different system of value. The seemingly solid social order was aborted as it underwent adaptation and mixing. Historically, the story of adaptation and mixing and even conflict is nothing new, but the conflict with the West seems to have been exaggerated, which in turn perpetuated the conflict itself. In a nutshell, the process created a division between the city and the countryside, with the agrarian society migrating to the city. This process of rural to urban migration was largely generated from outside and it was taking place all over the world at that particular time. It stemmed from a crisis which could take place abruptly through a revolution or gradually through an evolution that could take a long or a short period of time, known to us as *masa pantjaroba* (a period of transition). This period is often marked by much suffering. The need for change is caused by discontent which often arises when the force to create has been replaced by habitual routine. We learn this from the history of architecture. The development of building styles is not arbitrary. Instead, it is a result of consummation and the easing of the principle of life to the point of reducing substance to form. And when the form overstays its time, it represents nothing other than an empty shell, which people take as a traditional building. In the end, people feel an emptiness of culture in the old form, which has lost its meaning.

People who understand culture see the calamity and begin to find a way to integrate thinking and doing, to close the gap between form and substance. The efforts to overcome the crisis take two different paths. There are those who seek to rediscover the golden age of the past era, and try to retrieve the past substance to match the traditional form. For them, discarding ancient values is an act of treason against one's own culture. On the other hand, there are those who consider the past era obsolete and they seek to build a new civilization, a new principle of life. In the West, this kind of crisis exploded approximately at the beginning of this century. After unsuccessful efforts were made to revive the past, people tried hard to acquire new forms with all kinds of experiments in cultural production in what many have called "ism." In architecture, we saw the revivals of ancient styles, and after a rejection, we saw the invention of forms determined by construction and function. In these experiments, romanticism and functionalism occupied two opposite poles. The proponents of romanticism held on to past glory, searching for inspiration there while engaging in theoretical debates to justify their efforts. The proponents of functionalism, by way of theories, sought a way to give birth to the present era by leaving behind all that had been inherited. They marched on with the slogan: "New time, new form."

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If we think forward to the future of Indonesian architecture, and take culture as the basis for thinking, then we face an issue that is, for several reasons, quite complicated. Not because the picture of a new Indonesian culture has not yet been formalized (or unified) – and in fact this can be seen as an opportunity, rather than a constraint – but people have not shared the same awareness as of how the culture will be formed and where should one look for it. Even though it is difficult to talk about this issue without entering the arena of politics, and generating a feeling of

discomfort, I will formulate it as honestly and fairly as possible because this is so important for the development of this nation. The crisis of culture, as already experienced by the West over a half century ago, is already quite deep here and it is taking a form that is more frightening than in the West. Indonesian society has been accustomed to following the West, which was in power during colonial times. Since Western authority is no longer there (with the end of formal colonialism), the ruling elites who are taking power cannot ignore Indonesian culture in the way the previous Western power could. People may not be able to accept Indonesian culture, and that is why conflicts over values have emerged. In reality, Indonesian culture has long stopped and people have been satisfied with following the game of foreign cultures which have come to them and left an impression that Indonesia is progressing. Only a small fraction of Indonesians are caught up in this game, and the majority are just figurants. Thus the struggle over culture is not only about looking for a new form, but also about the organization of a new culture. Therefore, we have heard that revolution is not yet finished and there are still many tasks, heavy and difficult duties ahead of us, to fill the space left open by independence (kemerdekaan). The field has been worked and the task now is to plant, if we want to get results.

The art of building in Indonesia encounters this difficulty. Can we say that there are two kinds of built form? One is the indigenous building, which we find in kampung where mosques and other old structures are built. This type of building is based on wooden materials covered by rafters without other supporting structure. Sometimes the upper part is detached. The rooftop is not always supported by one or more columns and beams. Through this method, astonishing spaces are created to the amazement of architects. Buildings that are not part of this type such as offices, big stores, hotels and big houses, are of foreign origin as they have no place in the old Indonesian culture. Their building materials

are bricks, concrete, tent roofs, and so on. Their walls are bearing weight, which limits spacing. This wall-bearing structure is in contradiction with the flexible floor plan of Indonesian building, where walls are light and can be moved around between columns.

This does not mean that one has to build big buildings with the old Indonesian method of timber structure, flexible walls and so on. Those who think that way would be embarrassing, for that means they do not understand what I am trying to convey here. Those who think that way will not be getting a building for public use anyway, for such kind of building does not exist in Indonesia, even though the art of Indonesian building reflects some general principles. Also, do not think that one can regain the glorious past and imagine that Borobudur and Prambanan hold a key to new form. These structures – though it may sound strange to you – are dead. They are beautiful mummies, which mean a lot to the nation and its art, but they are not from our time and they do not mean much for the future era.

There is no model therefore to follow. For the beginning of a civilization, there is no example to follow. Every civilization has to create its own form. Europe and America are facing as many challenges as Indonesia in giving form to contemporary life. Thousands of thinkers are studying this and thousands of artists with high pleasures and deep pains are searching for forms for the contemporary era. We are undergoing a cultural change the end shape of which is still unclear.

Indonesia is looking for its own place in the world and it is up to its architects, following their specialization, to give the nation a form, a genuine form in which beauty lies in the acknowledgment of the poverty of culture in our time. If Indonesian architects, because of their low esteem and tendency to show more than who they are, tried to adopt a foreign mode and give it an Indonesian

flavor with elements from the past glorious era, then he or she is not only erroneous, but also the enemy of the development of a sound architecture!

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Unfortunately, most people in Indonesia think of architecture as a form without thinking of its substance. They only recognize the exterior as a pleasurable frontal piece to look at and behind it are spaces of a building organized according to activities. Most of them are not aware that every room consists of an idea, and that its comparable size, the location of activities taking place in it, and its brightness could result in different atmospheres. They have lost their feeling for sublimity as an expression of genuine self. People have lost their savor for beauty! How big is the difference between this era and that of the Middle Ages, when commoners considered art a central part of life, and the creator of Brussels' city hall hanged himself over the entrance to the building because the door was not located correctly along the axis of the tower above it! For young Indonesian architects it may be hard for them to put meaning into their works. However, I do not want to grieve about the future because I believe that courage and fortitude will be rewarded and valued if in their creation they found a genuine character of Indonesia which seems to have been lost for a long time.

For that we must have the courage to return to the principle of building a basic structure and take responsibility for what has been expressed in that form. Indonesians have to look for what is currently glorifying the heart of Indonesia, and what has developed over the years when Indonesians were not at the forefront of the development of their nation.

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Let's analyze a bit by focusing on changes in the ecology of buildings. The first is the change in social structure, a process that cannott be stopped as the change continues. What I mean by this is the impact on the agrarian society of urbanism, with its different form of life. I have explained that such change occurred under foreign influence. This can be seen clearly in the change of the built environment to what has never seen before. The building is foreign in its space and form. However, such building has taken root and it cannot simply be removed. Except for Chinese shop houses, many of these buildings disregard climate and appear foreign. Air conditioning simply cannot replace the lack of climatic adaptation. Those who go in and out of the building immediately feel the discomfort, for the regular exposure to differences in temperature is not good for their nerves.

The change caused by urbanism however is partial. Urbanization is taking place in a city where its occupants are still living in the agrarian world, as represented by their detached houses with large yards. The growth of such a building type however is contradicted by the settlement (*pondokan*) of the lower-class population. There is a difference between the high and the low which in a democratic setting should not be the case. This issue is beyond the capacity of builders to solve, but they have to search for a new form, one that is closer to the aspiration of their nation. They have to ask themselves if change in urban society will lead to change in the built form. If the tendency to live adjacently (as seen in some cities) in the form of rowhouses and highrises –flats – has a future here.

The partial development of urban society in a city that is highly populated is an indication that urban culture that developed originally in the city is not there to deepen and cultivate spiritual culture. Not many theaters, concert halls, museums and exhibition halls could be found and if there is such a place, it is

hardly used. This raises the question of whether Indonesians need them at all and how they could be adapted to suit Indonesian life. If they were removed, then the city would be very different from what it should be. Then the city would become a dumping site for villagers, and not a center of cultural production endowed by the leaders of the country. Western forms are embodied in the city, which, as I indicated, are not centers for the production of deep spiritual life. It is likely that Indonesia will create its own form. The form may only apply to a small number of followers before it is accepted and appreciated by the majority. I have not touched on mosques, which are largely located at alun-alun, hidden from the urbanscape. The reason why I do not know.

The second issue concerns housing which has undergone a change. As indicated above, in agrarian society, the center of a family (if a family is formed) is located at the back of the house. Women reign there and they govern the house from that section. There is also a dining space where children play and where family guests or female friends, accompanied by their husbands, are entertained. The front of the house is where the husband receives his guests, They will not be permitted to cross the boundary that marks what I would call the male and the female domains of the house.

Such division can be seen clearly in Indonesian houses. For a conservative family, the housewife rarely crosses the line except for greeting and serving the (husband's) guests. Often today, however, the line is no longer clear, and there is a shift of the center of the house to the front space. This change follows the shift in gender relation as women are advancing. This is an example of how the change in social structure is followed by the change in the floor plan of a house.

The new perspective on health and body care has made the old houses of Indonesia obsolete. Often this new requirement has to be imposed by the health department in charge of the eradication of pestilence (Dinas Pemberantasan Penjakit Pes). This not only changes the house form, but also constitutes – though by way of enforcement – a new culture.

Today's building materials too are different from those that were used to satisfy the needs of past Indonesian architecture. It is not necessary to recreate the old form by using new building materials. There is also no need to avoid using the new materials because they were not used for the buildings in the past, or because they are not representing the indigenous identity of Indonesia. As is known in India, as in Indonesia, the roof structure is sustained by central supporters. When a new way of creating a roof was introduced, people commented that "the roof is not resting" ("*sungkup itu tidak tidur*"), as they were uncomfortable with the new structural arrangement and its concomitant distribution of forces. This only illustrates that a new or modern form could be rejected or reluctantly received. We should not however make a quick judgment, especially in the context of Indonesian culture, which has not yet fully grown. There is still a lot to discover and to experiment with.

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From the description above, I hope I have given a picture of the very close relation between architecture and culture as it spiritually evolved not individually, but collectively. And how all the beliefs that play a role in human life echo in the art of building.

That is why an architect is not only a technician, or an artist. He or she has to be someone who knows culture well. There have been questions about whether the training ought to be within

engineering and not so dominated by the art school. There is also a softer suggestion that the discipline should be located in social studies. The wonder stems from the vagueness concerning the relation of architecture to other disciplines. It could also because other disciplines have largely ignored building knowledge (*ilmu bangunan*). However town planning (*ilmu bangunan kota*), with its interest in social issues, has incorporated building knowledge into its inquiry.

We have to acknowledge that architecture forms many relations, perhaps too many, with issues of culture and that has made the architect a universalist. He or she might be consulted for his or her knowledge of technology, of the artistic, and of social life. The latest two aspects (the artistic and the social) are the most uncertain, especially in a time of cultural transition, when culture is looking for a form and way of creating it. This is different from a situation and time when culture is already formed, with a sense of its trajectory, and relatively integrated with the lifestyle. Tradition is the result as physical forms and activities intermingled. Under this circumstance, the challenge lies only in perfecting things that have been formed. The technical side on the other hand could leap forward without sentiment, by continuing to solve problems posed. In these three fields of knowledge (the technical, the artistic and the social), the technical occupies a relatively stable ground and it serves to satisfy the artistic and the social. The firmness of the technical has given architects a means to carry out his or her duty. That is perhaps why architecture is located in Fakultet Teknik.

How about the question concerning the future of architecture? My answer on this is short: I do not quite know. Only Indonesians can answer this question, as they have to answer the question regarding what form their culture will take. The search for the answer, especially that which concerns culture (of which architecture is

the expression), would have to come from Indonesians themselves. In the search, people have to understand two things: the time and the space within which they are embedded. Copying ideas of what to build is as not meritorious as copying ideas of what not to build, especially those ideas that are not coming from Indonesians themselves. To build architecture that matters is to build honestly from below, from the search for a form for a "new life" (bentuk-bentuk azas hidup baru). There are many items that are truly Indonesian, but for today, they are nothing other than empty mannerisms (lagak kosong). One has to have the courage to get rid of those that are obsolete. Please consider that the greatness of Indonesia is located in its future, not in its past era, and it must be located here, in this Nusantara, not anywhere else. The struggle for a genuine form in literature, music, painting, and sculpture has produced art forms with dramatic fineness as they stem from an arousing homeliness. One does not have to feel ashamed by his or her honest pursuit. Instead, one should be embarrassed if one is trying to give a hollow shape a substance that is however empty.

Culture, and art, cannot be obtained just like that, or 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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Honorable guests:

My analysis is no more than posing questions. Perhaps some of you would ask how someone who is appointed to teach architectural history could claim that history is the basis for the art of building today. I should reveal a secret that it is knowledge of history that has made me realize that there is neither reduplication nor linear progression in history. Instead, there is only a journey that revolves

around the rise and fall of culture with architecture following closely behind. In a time when principled life prevails, we see progress. However, if the structure of culture is crumbling, and culture takes only appearances without substance, then people would live under the era of minus-culture, which at its lowest point would produce a strong movement of retrieving old norms.

In this kind of era, people who feel threatened by the decline, tend to cling to the past. Research on history and culture would end up searching only for one basic source, often one that is greatly exaggerated.

In my opinion, our world is undergoing this kind of minus-culture. We have to accept this fact. Many traditions have lost their meaning and two terrible world wars have seemingly not been enough to generate a new workable norm. However, I am confident that in the quiet moment beneath the roar of time, a new feeling of life is growing, which will draw everyone's attention to the future and its yet to be seen direction of new culture. *Pun* Indonesia.

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From this time and space, I am compelled to thank the president of the Republic of Indonesia for the trust he has bestowed on me based on the view that I ought to take part in the education of Indonesian architects. How much appreciation I have given to the field of education only the new leader would know. I accept this duty with affection which I will carry out so that it will bear fruit. The approval of this appointment by the minister of culture and education and the president of the university has filled my heart with a full sense of responsibility. I hope they will not be disappointed.

The chair and colleagues have accepted me as a member of this faculty. It has always been my desire to work with you in equality to take care of the courses that have been given to us. I feel confident with my collaboration with lecturers and assistant lecturers from the Building Department. I am grateful that they have made me feel that I am part of the community. I have recalled the time when I was a university student and the knowledge I obtained from my respectful teachers. It scares me now to think about how I could transmit the knowledge they passionately handed down to me. I should particularly mention Granpe Moliere, who has given me, through his lectures and friendship, profound knowledge of the principles of building. Subsequent highly motivated conversations with students have pushed me to deepen my understanding of issues (2). Dicke's friends certainly would confirm this.

At the Department of Archeology (Dinas Purbakala), where I have been working for over 20 years, I have moved beyond the scope of my appointment. Meanwhile, I have deepened my understanding of Indonesian culture. Besides the honorable Mr. Bosch and the late Dr. Stutterheim, I thank Ir. Moens who passed away recently. He was my father's friend. These honorable people shared with me their vast knowledge of Indonesia. If understanding is loving, then Ir. Moens was the first to give me a love of Indonesia. We are committed to loving Indonesia even as it is under the threat of disaster.

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For Indonesian students, as a professor I have the right to say a few words to you. In the future, you will generally belong to a small group who will provide a strong foundation for your nation. This requires you to do more than simply apply the knowledge you have acquired. Instead you have to do it with wisdom and with consciousness of culture. Knowledge can be a tool to do harm and good. Not long ago, a professor in Amsterdam divided

humanity into three categories. Two of them have no culture and are dangerous for the well-being of society. They are those who pursue nothing more than their own self interest. They are savage, barbaric and killers of culture; even if they might have fine intentions, they contribute to chaos and destroy culture violently. The second group does not do anything for society, and because of them, their culture shows no blood and it dies without spiri. Only those whose actions are based on a consideration of the future can develop culture to build a better future. It is my wish that you, Indonesian students, would remember this for the rest of your life.

Students of Fakultet Teknik, among the educated, you have a special place. Your task is to maintain and improve infrastructure on which to build culture. This task is both noble and scary. I hope you will make decisions based on aspiration. But do not forget that behind infrastructure stand human beings and for some behind them is God. This consciousness will guide you – because it stems from the desire to develop technical capacity - so as to be aware of the change of the character of technology from its purpose to serve as a force of dominance. Technology can bring happiness, but it can also become cancer.

Students of architecture (seni bangunan) understand well my wish that you have huge responsibility as Indonesians. We, foreign lecturers, can only bring you to the gate which we will not be entering. You have the responsibility to give to the nation a true architecture. For this, you have to investigate with full consciousness the potential of Indonesian culture. But don't take this literally, and think that you should dig up all the knowledge available—just as a mother does not need a full extent of knowledge to become a real mother. If the desire to serve, to give, is with you, then only a lack of talent in art or understanding could lead to failure. If, at this point, you need advice, then all the docents will be ready to help you as much as they can. Sometimes

we can share with you the challenges we have in our own country. I once again thank you for your trust. I am going away on leave soon. If I can come back, I hope I can learn from you all. And my knowledge is yours.

I would like to convey special words to lecturers and students from Fine Art (Balai Pendidikan Uniersitet Seni Rupa): building experts need you. You have the liberty to create form from your feeling. If technical issues dominate us, then we need your help to bring us back to our duty to overcome technology.

Let me thank you all, honorable guests, for your patience by way of reading you a poem which I have kept for some time in my heart. My friend, Mr. M.R.Djajo translated it into Indonesian.

In the time of change
They stood up to honor responsibility
To learn to control the forces of the world
Toward a future that remains a mystery

Toward the most powerful construction
Toward the valley of regret and repentance
Toward an afternoon brightened by sun
Toward a night filled with desperation

In the time of change
They stood up, with noble choice
Taking responsibility for human suffering
But their own sufferings remain untold.

The end and thank you!

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In this booklet, the architectural theorist and Professor at York University Abidin Kusno discusses two lectures given by two influential professors in the former Dutch colony of Indonesia. The first one, 'The aesthetics of architecture and the art of the moderns', was given by C. Wolff Schoemaker in 1930. The second, entitled 'Towards an Indonesian Architecture', was delivered by Vincent Van Romondt in 1954. Schoemaker and Van Romondt held different views on the challenges of architecture in the world as well as in Indonesia. They nevertheless both sought to bring the notion of modernism and tradition into the context of their time. The lectures are published here for the first time in English.

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