



**HAL**  
open science

# The altruism of Romo Mangun : the Seed, the Growth, the Fruit

Darwis Khudori

► **To cite this version:**

Darwis Khudori. The altruism of Romo Mangun : the Seed, the Growth, the Fruit. Indonesia and the Malay World, 2001, 29 (85), pp.198-214. 10.1080/13639810120102067 . hal-02540907

**HAL Id: hal-02540907**

**<https://hal.science/hal-02540907>**

Submitted on 17 Apr 2020

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.


L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

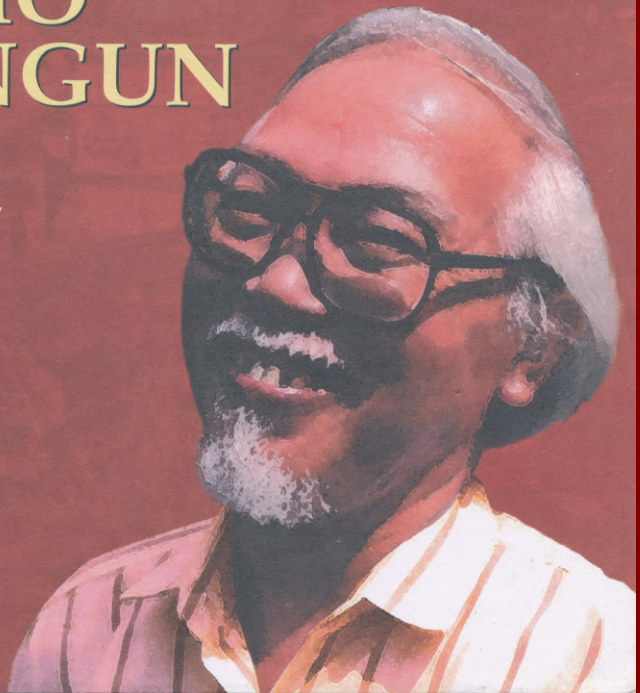
Darwis Khudori

Darwis Khudori

# THE ALTRUISM OF ROMO MANGUN

The Seed,  
The Growth,  
The Fruits

 Yayasan Pondok Rakyat



Darwis Khudori, "*The Altruism of Romo Mangun: the Seed, the Growth, the Fruit*" in the journal *INDONESIA AND THE MALAY WORLD* Vol. 29, No. 85, 2001, published by Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Ltd., Abingdon, Oxford, UK.

Second edition by Yayasan Pondok Rakyat, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2002.

Third edition by Yayasan Pondok Rakyat, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2009.

The cover of this online edition is taken from the second edition.

# THE ALTRUISM OF ROMO MANGUN

## The Seed, the Growth, the Fruit

by Darwis Khudori



THE ALTRUISM OF ROMO MANGUN

The Seed, the Growth, the Fruit

by Darwis Khudori

Firstly published in the journal

INDONESIA AND THE MALAY WORLD

Vol. 29, No. 85, 2001

Editorial Board: School of Oriental and African Studies, University  
of London

Publisher: Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Ltd., Abingdon,  
Oxford

Web site of the journal: <http://www.tandf.co.uk>

Lay-out: Darwis Khudori

Cover: Caricature on Romo Mangun by GM Sidarta in KOMPAS  
daily as it was used in the book *MENDIDIK MANUSIA*

*MERDEKA: Romo YB Mangunwijaya 65 Tahun*, Yogyakarta,  
Dian/Interfidei, 1995

All right reserved.

Copy Right © 2009 by Darwis Khudori

Published in a limited number for 55 BANDUNG 55 Inaugural Event  
in Jakarta-Bandung-Yogyakarta, April 28-May 5, 2009, by:



Jalan Nagan Lor 19 Yogyakarta 55133 Indonesia

Phone/Fax +62-274-372525

[www.ypr.or.id](http://www.ypr.or.id)

[ypr@ypr.or.id](mailto:ypr@ypr.or.id)

# **THE ALTRUISM OF ROMO MANGUN: THE SEED, THE GROWTH, THE FRUIT**

by Darwis Khudori

<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>p. 3</b>
<b>Prologue</b>	<b>p. 4</b>
<b>Paradise lost</b>	<b>p. 6</b>
<b>War and peace</b>	<b>p. 8</b>
<b>Turning point</b>	<b>p. 9</b>
<b>Priest</b>	<b>p. 11</b>
<b>Architect</b>	<b>p. 13</b>
<b>Socio-political activist</b>	<b>p. 16</b>
<b>Writer</b>	<b>p. 20</b>
<b>Educator</b>	<b>p. 24</b>
<b>Epilogue</b>	<b>p. 26</b>
<b>Romo Mangun: list of works and awards</b>	<b>p. 26</b>
<i>Written works</i>	<i>p. 27</i>
<i>Works of architecture, planning and design</i>	<i>p. 32</i>
<i>Awards</i>	<i>p. 34</i>

# THE ALTRUISM<sup>1</sup>

## OF ROMO MANGUN:

### THE SEED, THE GROWTH, THE FRUIT

By Darwis KHUDORI

#### Prologue

"Why do you choose to serve the poor in a direct way, living with them in their village<sup>2</sup> as you do nowadays, and as

---

<sup>1</sup> Many words can be used to describe the good character of Romo Mangun: 'humanism' / 'humanist', 'philanthropy' / 'philanthropist', 'charity' / 'charitable', etc. 'Altruism' / 'altruist' is perhaps the most suitable. This term was created by Auguste Comte as the opposite of 'egotism' or 'egoism'. In philosophical use, it has two meanings. Firstly, in terms of psychology, it means the feeling of love towards the other: either arising instinctively from relations between beings of the same species ; or resulting from thought and individual self-abnegation, self-denial, or self-sacrifice. It comprises, according to the *Tableau du catholicisme positiviste*, affection, veneration, and kindness. Secondly, in terms of ethics, it designates a moral doctrine, the opposite of hedonism, egotism and, to a certain extent, utilitarianism: it is a theory of goodness or well-being which proposes as its point of departure the interest of our fellow-creatures as the goal of moral conduct. See André Lalande (1926/1991), *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*.

<sup>2</sup> The interview between the journalist and Romo Mangun took place in the village of Panggang, a poor, dry area on the chalk-mountain of South Yogyakarta where Romo Mangun lived for some time, withdrawing himself from various activities, helping the poor farmers to obtain water with hand pumps, and writing his essays and stories. See Apul D.

you did before in the spontaneous settlement on the banks of the river Code?" a journalist asked him one day in his bamboo cabin in a dry village on Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta.

"I wonder ...," Romo Mangun left the question in the air, showing that he could not answer it easily. "I have lived in cities most of my life and both my parents were teachers. Maybe it is because of my experiences during the war of independence. At that time we were guerrillas. We hid in the villages. I saw how the poor farmers were tortured by the Dutch soldiers. For us guerrillas, the farmers were our genuine protectors. We hid in their houses and we received food from them. But to this day their fate has remained the same. I feel indebted to them. Besides that, when I participated in the guerrilla I was in my teens, a period when one is very receptive to experiences. This meant that the impression of war was unforgettable and determined my later attitudes."<sup>3</sup>

"Many people have had the same experiences as you, yet they are not inclined to serve the poor as you do," another person continued this conversation at another time.

"I think our personality grows like a tree," Romo Mangun answered. "Sometimes it grows fast, at other times slowly, and often it does not grow at all, or even dies. It depends on the soil, the feeding and the climate."

"And the seed, where did it come from?"

"I think it was from my father."

"Not your mother?"

---

Mahardja, *"Romo Mangun: arsitek, budayawan dan pengabdian rakyat jelata"*, Mutiara, 16-29 July 1986.

<sup>3</sup> *"Romo Mangun: arsitek, budayawan dan pengabdian rakyat jelata"*, Mutiara, 16-29 July 1986.

"It was more from my father. He always stressed to us children that life was not just rice and money and that we had to search for the essence; while my mother was more concerned with creating the atmosphere for the seed to grow."<sup>4</sup>

## **Paradise lost**

Romo Mangun was born on 6 May 1929 in an ordinary Javanese family in Ambarawa, a town between Magelang and Semarang in the mountainous area of North Central Java. Although his grand-parents were, like most Javanese at that time, nominal Muslims,<sup>5</sup> his parents were pious Catholics. It was probably the influence of Dutch missionary schools that led them to Catholicism.

His name at birth was Bilyarta, from the word 'billiard', because at that time his father was very fond of billiards,<sup>6</sup> the game that the Dutch administrators used to play in their houses.

His father, Yulianus Sumadi Mangunwijaya ('Yulianus' shows his Catholicism, while 'Sumadi Mangunwijaya' reveals his Javanese origins) was a teacher and inspector of Dutch colonial primary schools. His mother, Serafin Kamdaniyah (Serafin was her Catholic name, while Kamdaniyah may be a Javanisation of the Arabic name Hamdaniyah, showing the influence of Islam in her family), who gave birth to him when she was 19, was a teacher in a nursery school (kindergarten). Bilyarta, whose Christian name was Yusuf, was the first child born to this young couple. Later, they had 12 children, 5 boys

---

<sup>4</sup> Unrecorded remarks, during work, trips and other informal meetings between Romo Mangun, the author and others.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.



and 7 girls, all of whom are well educated and well-to-do, showing that Sumadi and Kamdaniyah were educated people.

The time when Bilyarta was born was, as Kamdaniyah said, *zaman susah*,<sup>7</sup> the 'difficult period', the depression of 1929. What it meant for Bilyarta later, physically and mentally, is not clear. It seems not to have affected his growth, perhaps because his parents always tried to give him good nourishment and education, however difficult the conditions were.

From his early years, Bilyarta showed intelligence. "When he was two years old, his questions were already difficult to answer," his mother said. "For example he asked me why the coconut tree has no branches?"<sup>8</sup>

Bilyarta received his primary education at the Hollands Indische School (H.I.S.), the Dutch colonial primary school for the the children of notables<sup>9</sup> in Ambarawa, Muntilan and Magelang, in Central Java. It was, according to him, the most beautiful period of his life. The school, which he regarded as 'paradise', gave the pupils not only intellectual exercises, but also humanistic learning and skills such as speech-making, writing and telling stories, singing, and acting.<sup>10</sup>

"Our teachers in the school were really kind and clever," he explained. "The most interesting lesson was *voorlezen*: the teacher read a story, after which the pupils were asked to retell the story in their own ways. Other interesting subjects were history and geography. Besides that, every Saturday the teacher allocated time for a free discussion, in which pupils were

---

<sup>7</sup> Unrecorded remarks...., op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

encouraged to ask any question they liked. We also learned to appreciate language and to study morals through poems."<sup>11</sup>

This 'paradise' was made complete by the atmosphere of the Dutch colonial town of Magelang where Bilyarta spent his childhood. He was very impressed by the Dutch colonial houses and their surroundings. Though an indigenous child, he sometimes went to the Dutch neighbourhood, where he would stand outside the fence of a villa and, full of wonder, observe the white children, nice-looking boys and girls, playing cheerfully in their garden. He was impressed by the style of the house, especially by its big glass windows covered behind by white curtains. From that time onward he knew his ideal for the future: to be architect.

This 'paradise', however, was snatched from him by the Japanese occupation in 1942. As a boy of 13, Bilyarta was shocked by the brutal changes in the situation: people died of hunger or torture every day and the schools were closed down.<sup>12</sup>

## War and peace

When he left primary school in Magelang, Bilyarta moved to Semarang, then to Yogyakarta, to study — as he had dreamt — at a technical school. But before he had finished his studies, at the end of 1945, the war of independence started, and the schools were closed again.<sup>13</sup>

From then on Bilyarta was at the mercy of the changing situation, which alternated between war and peace. Like many

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Tota, *"Mangunwijaya: anggota TRIP yang menjadi romo"*, Intisari, December 1985.

<sup>13</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.

teenagers at the time, he fought in the guerrilla during wartime and went to school during ceasefires. The students' army, the *Tentara Pelajar Republik Indonesia*, was accommodated in the Vredeburg fortress of Yogyakarta.<sup>14</sup> It was his first experience of military barracks. Later, he took part in the battles of Magelang, Ambarawa and Semarang. He was in Battalion X, Division III, his commander being Major Soeharto, later president of the Republic of Indonesia.<sup>15</sup>

During the peaceful period of 1946 Bilyarta continued his third year of technical school in the mornings and started his first year of high school in the evenings in Yogyakarta.<sup>16</sup> But in his second year of high school, in 1947, the war came back and the schools were closed again. He went back to the students' army, this time in Brigade XI in Magelang.<sup>17</sup> During the ceasefire of 1947 he continued high school in Magelang. Just before his last examination, however, the fighting of 1949 took place. After the war, he at last completed high school in Malang, East Java.<sup>18</sup>

## Turning point

Now that he had completed high school, he planned to go to Bandung, West Java, to fulfil his ideal since childhood: to study architecture at the Institute of Technology, Bandung. But a shocking event radically changed his mind.

---

<sup>14</sup> The Vredeburg fortress was built by the Dutch in front of the Royal Palace of Yogyakarta to accommodate their army. During the Japanese occupation this fortress was taken over by the Japanese and later by the Republic of Indonesia. Now it is used as a museum.

<sup>15</sup> Maharadja, op. cit. and Tota, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Tota, op. cit.

It was in 1950, when a great celebration was organised in Malang to mark the victory of the Republic of Indonesia over the Dutch in the U.N. Soldiers who had just come back from the guerrilla were praised and entertained extravagantly as national heroes.

But the joyful atmosphere was changed immediately into silence when the former commander-in-chief of the Students' Army, Major Isman, gave his speech:

"Dear brothers, please don't praise us as heroes. We are not heroes. I should say: we were criminals. We have killed people, we robbed and burned their houses. We are still young, but our hands have been smeared with blood. It is true to a certain extent that we did all those things in the name of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia. But we have done all kinds of murderous things. If you want to help us, please don't treat us like this! Instead, give us the chance to be normal people, ordinary citizens in the midst of society, in order to build our independent country!"<sup>19</sup>

Present at this celebration as an ex-member of the student army, the young Bilyarta was shocked and deeply impressed by this speech. Back at home after the party, he could not sleep the whole night. He contemplated Major Isman's speech. He realised that it was the people — the little people — and not the army, who had sacrificed most for the independence of Indonesia. During the guerrilla, the people were tortured, even killed, by the colonial soldiers, while the republican soldiers hid or escaped. Not only by the colonial army were the people victimised, but also by the republican soldiers, who took from them whatever they wanted. Major Isman's speech inspired Bilyarta to dedicate himself to the little people. But in what way?

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

## Priest

He chose the priesthood. Perhaps it was his background as the son of a pious Catholic family that led him to this way of life. He was aware that he would lose his chance to be 'a dignified man with a big house, good car and beautiful wife', as ordinary teenagers imagined their ideal at that time. But the seed planted in him by his father had grown strongly as a result of the war. He believed that the holiest work for him to do was to dedicate his life to suffering people, and that the best way for him to follow was to be a priest, so that he would not be tempted to think of money and power, but instead would be able to concentrate his energies on the realization of love.

The social atmosphere in which he lived at the time seems also to have encouraged him to realize his ideal. The still remaining revolutionary spirit encouraged people to live in solidarity with others. Sexual temptation, which otherwise discourages a young Catholic from becoming a priest or a sister, seems to have been absent, or very weak. In the small town of Magelang where Bilyarta lived, social control was very strong. A boy and a girl riding on the same bicycle would cause gossip all over the town. Marriage and sex were the business of adults. For teenagers, the most important thing at their age was studying. Only stupid boys or uneducated ones, according to the cultured group to which Bilyarta belonged, thought about marriage in their teens.<sup>20</sup>

Bilyarta, although a high school graduate, voluntarily followed the lower grade of study at the Seminary of Mertoyudan, a six-year special school for Catholic clergy

---

<sup>20</sup> "'Saya tak mau jadi godfather'. Y.B. Mangunwijaya bicara tentang desa, wanita, gereja, dan Pak Harto", *Matra*, April 1988 and Unrecorded ... op. cit.

combining the junior and senior levels of secondary education, which was situated in a village near Magelang. But since he had finished high school, he could go directly into the fifth grade on the special condition that within two years he must study Religion and Latin, which were normally studied by ordinary students for six years.<sup>21</sup> Anyway, in this seminary he was one of the most outstanding students,<sup>22</sup> which is understandable since he was both naturally brilliant and older than the others (he was 21-22 years old, while his classmates were 17-18 years of age), and had also been enriched by experiences in various social situations, from the Dutch colonial period and the Japanese occupation to independent Indonesia, with its alternating war and peace. These experiences made him different from other students. He felt as if his friends were children.

Bilyarta said one day,<sup>23</sup> "I could not have the same ideals as other teenagers, who dreamt of being rich and enjoying luxury. All those dreams had vanished from my mind. But I don't regret it. The experiences of war could not be bought nor be wiped out. They determined my way of life later."

He was also known as a humorist and talented person. He sometimes drew caricatures during class. In his hands, a priest could look like a nun or Mickey Mouse. His brilliance was famous. For example, it was said that he often slept during class but could always answer the teacher's questions satisfactorily.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Tota, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Maharaja, *op. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> Unrecorded conversation between the author and Father Frans Hardjawiata OCSO, Romo Mangun's class-mate at the seminary, later priest in the Trappist monastery of Rawaseneng, Temanggung, Central Jawa.

This seminary seems also to have been a sort of antechamber leading to his future intellectual work. Among his friends at the seminary were Swantoro and Jakob Utama,<sup>25</sup> later founders and managers of *Kompas*, the biggest and most influential newspaper in Indonesia, in which Bilyarta, known as Y.B. Mangunwijaya, wrote most of his essays and romans.

After the seminary, Bilyarta studied at the Institute of Philosophy and Theology 'Sancti Pauli' in Yogyakarta, a Catholic institution of higher learning for the preparation of priests. At the end of his studies, thanks to his outstanding reputation, he was approached by various congregations with a view to recruitment. One of them was the Jesuit, well known for its intellectual orientation and its strong influence in national and international politics. But Bilyarta preferred to keep his own promise to serve the people in the villages. He was sure that if he joined the Jesuits, he would have to work in 'intellectual' activities, such as being director of a Catholic school or in charge of a Catholic organisation. He chose the Praja, a small Javanese-based congregation which stresses the direct service of people in villages, as the base for his missionary activities.<sup>26</sup> On 8 September 1959 in Yogyakarta he was ordained a priest by the bishop, Monseigneur Soegijapranoto SJ, with the official name Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya.<sup>27</sup>

## Architect

Just one day after his ordination, the bishop called him. He was surprised: the bishop asked him to study architecture.

---

<sup>25</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> "'*Saya Tak Mau...*" op. cit. and Unrecorded remarks ... op. cit.

<sup>27</sup> Maharaja, op. cit.

The Indonesian church, the bishop explained, needed its own architect to build churches of indigenous character, not on the Western pattern followed until then.

Obedying the bishop's instructions, in 1959 he entered Bandung Institute of Technology. But no more than one year later the same bishop withdrew him and sent him to West Germany. Later, he realized that by studying in Bandung for a year he had had the chance to make friends with students who later became influential architects in Indonesia.

In 1960 he began his studies in the Department of Architecture of the *Reinisch Westfälisch Technische Hochschule*, Aachen. He chose Aachen, rather than Berlin which was more famous at that time, because of its proximity to the Netherlands, Belgium, and France.

Although he studied architecture within the discipline of engineering, he developed at the same time his interest in history and culture. For a long time he had been astonished by Europe as a phenomenon in world history. "What and who actually is Europe?" That was his question. One of the most important books providing an answer was, according to him, Arnold Toynbee's *The World and the West*. Together with his study of architecture, various books on philosophy and history built up his understanding of Europe.

In 1965, the last year of his studies in Aachen, a new awareness was formed. It was Schelhasse, a young professor of Regional Planning who helped him to realize that architecture and urban planning were not simply a matter of technique, but more of politics. The first essay that Bilyarta wrote after his return to Indonesia reflected this awareness. Published in the newspaper *Indonesia Raya* in 1969, this article explained how cities were planned in such a way as to channel wealth from rural to urban areas, and from developing countries to



developed ones, taking Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, as an example.<sup>28</sup>

In keeping with his earlier ideals, as soon as he came back to Indonesia in 1966, he was designated as priest to the villagers around his church in Salam, a small town between Yogyakarta and Magelang. At the same time, Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, the biggest state university in Indonesia, invited him to be a lecturer in the Department of Architecture, which was short of lecturers. He worked enthusiastically to develop this school. He was responsible for the major subjects in the school of architecture, such as Design, and History and Philosophy of Architecture. He founded a research centre with the tasks of searching for, documenting, studying and publishing the architectural heritage of Indonesia, especially that of Java, where Gadjah Mada University is situated. He also founded a design centre with the tasks of serving society through architectural design and of providing students and teachers with a place to practise.

The politics of Indonesian development in the 1970s, which stressed physical development thanks to the oil boom, on the one hand, and the shortage of development consultants, on the other, had pushed these two centres into becoming professional agencies. The Research Centre became an urban planning consultancy, and the Design Centre an architectural design consultancy. These new businesses in turn meant that the teachers were more involved in professional projects than in educational activities. Romo Mangun was disappointed. But he could do nothing, since he was only a 'voluntary' teacher, an outsider in the educational institution. He reduced his involvement in the university in order to spend more time on religious service, social activities and writing. In 1981 he

---

<sup>28</sup> Unrecorded remarks...., op. cit.

taught only a minor subject, which has still not been developed in Indonesia, *The Criticism of Architecture*. In 1982 he left Gadjah Mada University completely.

Owing to Romo Mangun's various activities between his graduation in 1966 and 1992, his architectural works amount to no more than thirty, mostly churches and houses. But his creations continue to impress those who visit them. His architecture shows his strong attachment to local culture. First of all, it appears to be a continuation of, instead of an opposition to, nature. Interior and exterior space penetrate each other sweetly, building and garden play together intimately. Secondly, most of the houses he constructed are elevated on a series of columns, showing his reference to the traditional architecture of the humid tropical archipelago of Indonesia. Finally, the union of human creation with nature is reinforced by the use of natural and local building materials, such as stone, wood, and bamboo. These characteristics can be seen clearly in the Code riverbank settlement of Yogyakarta.

### **Socio-political activist**

It seems that his resignation from Gadjah Mada University in 1982 was the time when Romo Mangun began to discover his own way of transmitting ideas. In the 1980s he not only left the conventional form of intellectual struggle — academic activities — but also left the conventional form of priesthood. He left the priest's house to live instead among the urban poor in a spontaneous settlement on the bank of the river Code in Yogyakarta.

His work in the Code riverbank spontaneous settlement shows his remarkable qualities as architect, priest, social thinker and activist. It is a very clear example of architecture as a representation of social vision. It was, in the first place,

against the established common social vision. In Yogyakarta, the centre of Javanese culture, society regards this group of people as '*sampah masyarakat*' (the refuse of society), a dirty and disgusting community which should be avoided. Society called this settlement a '*daerah hitam*' (black area) where criminal activities — prostitution, gambling, fighting, etc. — took place. Since the 1960s this settlement had been demolished several times, but the settlers had always come back. For Romo Mangun, this was just a symptom of a bigger problem: 'structural poverty'. Increasing urbanization and the growth of spontaneous settlements were merely the effects of the 'wrong paradigm' of development, a paradigm which assumed that the rural areas were the hinterland, the producer, and the servant of the city, which was the consumer and the lord. And the city had never repaid the hinterland properly. The inhabitants of the spontaneous settlements, according to Romo Mangun, were simply the victims of this system. They were the villagers who, mostly because of rural poverty, could no longer survive on agriculture. They came to the city and they found neither work nor shelter. They created their own jobs, mostly in refuse recycling, and their own shelter, which most architect and urban planners unjustly called 'squatting' or 'illegal settlements'.<sup>29</sup> According to Romo Mangun, it was imperative for intellectuals to correct this wrong paradigm and to be in favour of the poor and the oppressed. Everyone could work in this spirit according to his or her own profession. Romo Mangun took just one of the possible steps, a radical one indeed, which could be taken by *intellectuels engagés*.

Romo Mangun lived on the Code riverbank from 1981 until 1986. His stay in this settlement made a great contribution, not only to improving the living conditions of this

---

<sup>29</sup> Y.B. Mangunwijaya, "*Desa jangan dijadikan daerah belakang*", *Prisma*, No. 3, April 1978.

poorest group of society, but also to introducing a different, more just, social vision on the part of the rest of society. The living conditions of the settlers were improved, not only in physical terms, but also in social and economic respects. The improvement in physical conditions can be seen, for example, in the provision of a community centre, footpaths, and electricity and water supplies. The social improvement is manifested in the increasing cohesion of the community through regular community meetings at which people discuss their problems. The economic improvement was achieved through the setting up of a credit union and a community co-operative.

For the rest of society, Romo Mangun's stay on the Code riverbank improved the image of 'squatters' in the eyes of the dominant group in society. From the beginning of his stay, the newspapers and magazines often wrote about it, all of them, interestingly enough, in a positive tone. They wrote with sympathy, suggesting that these poor members of society should be accepted and helped to improve their living conditions, rather than being rejected and kicked out of the city. Publicity increased dramatically, reaching the international press, when in 1983 Romo Mangun and the Code riverside settlers, on one side, were confronted by the government of Indonesia on the other. Romo Mangun declared a hunger strike against the government's plan to clear the Code riverbank of its settlements. Spontaneously, many intellectuals, artists and students declared their solidarity with Romo Mangun and the inhabitants of the Code riverbank. The government cancelled its plans. Nine years later, in 1992, Kampung Code was selected as the winner of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture

in the Muslim World. The Code riverside settlement continues to exist to this day.<sup>30</sup>

Another outstanding example of his work as a socio-political activist was his involvement in the Kedung Ombo affair. This was a project for a high dam, financed by the World Bank, in the vicinity of Boyolali, Central Java. It was foreseen that many villages would disappear under water. Thousands of houses and much agricultural land would be flooded. People's property (agricultural land and houses) was confiscated by force (by the army) and without reasonable compensation. The people resisted, but the government went ahead without changing its policy. Water started to flood agricultural land. Villages began to be surrounded by water. The people continued to struggle. Romo Mangun came to support them, not only by speaking and writing, but also by collecting foodstuffs and other basic necessities, delivering them to the villages that were threatened with disappearance, and staying with the local people. The army terrorized him and the government accused him of supporting rebels. He answered intelligently: it was his task as a priest to save people from death whatever their religious conviction might be; it was just like the division of roles in war: the soldiers shoot, the Red Cross saves the victims.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Many articles about the Code River-bank Community Development have been written in various newspapers and magazines in Indonesia and abroad. Among the academic works, see Darwis Khudori, *Toward a community of liberation, a report from the battlefield of social conflict in Yogyakarta, Indonesia*. Rotterdam: Institute for Housing Studies, 1987 and Darwis Khudori, *Housing action as a means for popular development. Empirical reflection from and future possibility in Yogyakarta, Indonesia*. Rotterdam: Institute for Housing Studies, 1989.

<sup>31</sup> Reports were written in various papers and magazines at that time. See, for example, the main reports in *Editor* and *Tempo* on March 25, 1989.

## Writer

Romo Mangun's unique method of struggle can also be seen in his entry into fiction-writing at the end of the 1970s. The reason, according to him, was that essays are read only by intellectuals. By writing stories, he reached a larger public, including the common people, to whom in fact he most wanted to impart his messages.<sup>32</sup>

But his stories, like his essays, his speeches and his actions, seem to be a medium that he used consciously to convey his elaborated ideas rather than to express unconsciously his unelaborated intuitions. A sentence from an essay here is sometimes spoken by a character in a story there. He treated a novel exactly like an essay. It represented, according to him, a certain genre of literature, the 'novel-essay' or 'essay-novel'. He himself classified his most important novel, *Burung-burung Manyar* (The weaver-birds) in this genre.<sup>33</sup>

The outstanding quality of his writings is firstly found in his advanced philosophical thought, based on his 'metaphysical' view which, quoting Mohammad Iqbal, he defines as: "a logically consistent view of the world with God as a part of that view."<sup>34</sup>

Romo Mangun viewed the world as part of an evolution. To a certain extent he agreed with Teilhard de Chardin, for example in his vision of the emergence of human beings, as he

---

<sup>32</sup> This reason was stated several times on various occasions, among others in his lecture at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands, in 1989.

<sup>33</sup> He proclaimed this 'genre' for example in a public lecture at the Karta Pustaka, Yogyakarta in the 1980s.

<sup>34</sup> Y.B. Mangunwijaya, *Sastra dan religiositas*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1988, p. 40.

quotes: "In the beginning, there was a long period of darkness which can be regarded as death but which in fact has an *invisible soul*. Then, at the period of millions of tiny atoms, came a kind of red dawn announcing the beginning of life. The formation of cells followed like a clear dawn. They grew to be more lively and richer in structure. The nervous system was formed. At the end of the spectrum of life, the thinking brain was shining like a bright sun."<sup>35</sup>

But he did not agree with de Chardin in regarding the human being as the end of evolution. His opposition was based on the theory of evolution itself. Firstly, he saw that in the evolutionary process, during the 'biological' period, it often happened that certain creatures disappeared. Dinosaurs, mammoths, and mastodons are examples. So it was with the hominoids, which had all the characteristics of human beings, as evidenced by the fossils of *Australopithecus Robustus* and *Boisei*. The experts do not know exactly why these creatures disappeared after living on earth for about a million years.<sup>36</sup> The hypothesis is that they destroyed each other. Secondly, the human being today has arrived at a capacity equal with God, determining what is good or evil, who is to be killed and who supported. If he likes, he can even explode this earth and close down civilization.<sup>37</sup> Thirdly, evolution has its own periods. For 10 milliard years, helium was the highest creature. Then there was a time when amino acid was at the summit. The same thing happened with the dinosaur, the mammoth, and the mastodon. But each in turn was always replaced by a higher creature.<sup>38</sup> So, unlike de Chardin, Romo Mangun regarded human beings

---

<sup>35</sup> Y.B. Mangunwijaya, *Putri duyung yang mendamba*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1987, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 and 24.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

as one of the stages in the evolutionary process, and considered it not impossible that human beings would one day disappear if they could not control their tendency to kill each other.<sup>39</sup> "It is clear," he wrote, "that all this is not only the business of the experts, but also that ALL OF US have to speak, to which direction the human being and the world will be driven."<sup>40</sup>

Secondly, Romo Mangun's writings show his high capacity for revealing the symbolic meanings of the remarkable phenomena of life (nature, social developments, political events, history), and vice versa: he uses familiar symbols to explain his ideas. Unlike the academic intellectuals, who write with the support of statistical data, quotations from influential persons or huge numbers of footnotes, Romo Mangun, the non-academic intellectual, wrote mostly with the support of symbols.

The third characteristic of his writings lies in his style. Unlike the professional intellectuals, who write in dry, cold, 'brain-touching' language, Romo Mangun, who preferred to be called an amateur, wrote in wet, warm, 'heart-touching' style. Unlike the scientist-intellectuals, who write in a systematic way, Romo Mangun the artist-intellectual wrote in an improvisatory way.

Finally, unlike the theoretician-intellectuals, who write for a theoretical world by supporting, countering or proposing a theory, Romo Mangun the practitioner-intellectual wrote for a real world by giving a new interpretation of existing phenomena in order to improve praxis.

One of those characteristics sometimes shows up remarkably in an essay here. Other characteristics emerge at

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 21.



other times in a story there. And they show up together in his novels. *Burung-burung Manyar* demonstrates all these characteristics clearly. It appears to be a realistic novel, with realistic descriptions of personages, historical events and geographical settings, but from beginning to end it is fraught with symbols. For example, Atik, one of the main characters in the novel, symbolizes the ideal woman of whom Romo Mangun often wrote in his essays: intelligent, brave, creative, coquettish, friendly, warm, more advanced than her husband in taking initiatives and in public life, but also feminine in appearance and behaviour, skilled in household work and in raising children. The outstanding personality of Atik is demonstrated in her defence of her doctoral thesis in Biology, not only in the contents of her thesis, but also in her way of defending it; her appearance and her style of speaking, which finally bring her a *maxima cum laude*. "In the behaviour of the female weaver-bird," she says during her defence of *'The Inner Self and Image Language in the Structure of Communication of Ploceus Manyar'*, "which is also visible in other animals, it seems that to love the partner is not the primary goal. The attitude shown from the very beginning by both the female and the male is that the more important thing for them is the egg and the process of bringing it up to be a new generation of weaver-bird. It can be said, that in all the nature of fauna, from the very beginning, animals have planned and formed the best possible environment for the growth of the egg or the new generation. In our laboratory we once had some young *celepuk* (*Otus scops malayanus*). For many days the father and mother of these little *celepuk* came down from the forest frequently and faithfully to the cage where we kept these small birds, bringing them presents of rats or insects...."<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Y.B. Mangunwijaya, *Burung-burung manyar*. Jakarta: Jambatan, 1981, p. 223-224.

## **Educator**

After he began to stay in the Code riverside settlement, Romo Mangun became convinced that the primary target group of social action should be the children. An oppressed, unhappy, suffering childhood, he often wrote and said, would lead children to a life of crime. The children of the poor have only a very limited period to enjoy. As soon as they finish primary school and try to move up to secondary school, they will be confronted by socio-economic cleavages. On the one hand, many of them cannot afford, for economic reasons, to move up, and therefore at the age of 12-13 they have to work in order to survive. They become shoe shiners, cigarette vendors, refuse scavengers, *becak* drivers, etc. and enter automatically into the lawless life. They immediately come into contact with prostitutes, pickpockets, bodyguards, gamblers, drinkers.

On the other hand, those who can move up to secondary school are normally frustrated, sooner or later. They realize that they belong to the lowest stratum of society, that they wear the worst clothes, that they have no money with which to enjoy themselves, and that they live in a disgusting settlement. Most of them have dropped out before finishing their studies and are finally abandoned, like their comrades, to a lawless life.

In 1988 Romo Mangun founded an institute called D.E.D. or *Dinamika Edukasi Dasar* (the Dynamic of Elementary Education), which deals with research and development in children's education. Elementary education was for him a key to the future. If children's elementary education is good, their future will be saved, even if their subsequent education is bad. Conversely, if their elementary education is bad, their later levels of education will hardly be of any help. According to him, under the New Order, there was no real education. There

was only training and drilling. In his words: "Teachers mostly play the role of circus instructor, training and drilling a bear to be capable of riding a bike."

In the middle of the 1990s, a concept of elementary education was developed at the institute. In collaboration with the Kanisius Foundation of Education and *Kompas* (both belong to Catholic missions), the D.E.D. applied this concept in one of the Kanisius primary schools, that in Mangunan, a village outside Yogyakarta, in which most of the pupils come from very poor families. In terms of subjects, the curriculum of the school still in general follows the national one (from the Ministry of Education), since the children have to pass the national examination at the end of their studies. Some changes have, however, been introduced. The subject 'Religion' (knowledge of formal religious teachings), for example, is replaced by 'Interfaith communication'. A subject related to the politics of the New Order has been wiped out. A new subject, unique in Indonesia, is inserted: 'Formulating questions' (which reminds us of what Romo Mangun often said: "The most important of our intellectual tasks is to formulate a question concerning the phenomenon that occurs"). The main innovation is in terms of teaching methods. The teachers' aptitude is improved and refreshed regularly through collective reflections involving voluntary experts from outside: musicians, actors/actresses, writers, etc. Instead of studying a subject in an abstract way, the pupils are involved in experimentation, for example in physics and communication. The results are promising: in the national examination, the average mark at this school has several times been better than the average mark for the region.

## Epilogue

After university students (Gadjah Mada), slum-dwellers (Kampung Code), oppressed farmers (Kedung Ombo), it is the children of the poor who seem to have been the last object of Romo Mangun's dedication. Was it by chance? The symbolic universe to which Romo Mangun belonged seems to have prepared for this. Remember what he often said about the children of the poor:

"The best thing we can do with their very limited opportunity and our limited resources is to enable them to enjoy happiness while they are children. A happy childhood will be the principal memory of their later life, the guide which will call them to come back again and again."<sup>42</sup> Does this not reflect the 'lost paradise', which refers, not only to the experience of Adam and Eve in the biblical (and Koranic) myth (shared by both Christians and Moslems), but also to the real experience of his own childhood? It does not seem to have been by chance, therefore, that Romo Mangun dedicated most of his time to children until the end of his earthly life. Was this not his way of returning to his 'lost paradise', which he finally did reach on 10 February 1999?

## Romo Mangun: list of works and awards

### *Written works*

Non-fiction

Fiction

Articles

Forewords and epilogues

Works on Y.B. Mangunwijaya

Tribute to Y.B. Mangunwijaya

---

<sup>42</sup> Unrecorded remarks...., op. cit.

***Works of architecture, planning and design***

Constructed

Designed

***Awards***

National

International

This list is not exhaustive. Articles on Romo Mangun in journals and magazines are excluded. Various lists of written works can be found in books by Romo Mangun or dedicated to him. The list of works of architecture, planning and design was compiled thanks to the field research of Erwinthon P. Napitupulu.

***Written works***Non-fiction

1975. *Ragawidya. Renungan Fenomenologis Religius Kehidupan Sehari-hari*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1978. *Puntung-puntung Roro Mendut. Kumpulan Esai di Harian Kompas 1973-1977*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1978. *Bunga Rampai Soempah Pemoeda*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
1980. *Pengantar Fisika Bangunan*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1982. *Mencari Bentuk Ekonomi Indonesia*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1982. *Sastra dan Religiositas*. Jakarta: Sinar Harapan; Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1982. *Panca Pramana. Praktis Penggembalaan Jemaat*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1983. *Teknologi dan Dampak Kebudayaanannya* (Vol. I). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1983. *Citra Arsitektural*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1985. *Teknologi dan Dampak Kebudayaanannya* (Vol. II). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1986. *Menumbuhkan Sikap Religius Anak-anak*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1987. *Di Bawah Bayang-bayang Adikuasa*. Jakarta: Grafiti Pers.

1987. *Putri Duyung Yang Mendamba. Renungan Filsafat Hidup Manusia Modern*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1987. *Esei-esei Orang Republik*. Jakarta: Midas Surya Grafindo.
1988. *Wastucitra. Pengantar ke Estetika Arsitektural*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1994. *Tumbal. Kumpulan Esei*. Yogyakarta: Bentang.
1995. *Gerundelan Orang Republik*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
1998. *Menuju Indonesia Serba Baru. Hikmah Sekitar 21 Mei 1998*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1998. *Menuju Republik Indonesia Serikat*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1999. *Gereja Diaspora*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Surat Bagimu Negeri*. Jakarta: KOMPAS.
1999. *Pasca-Indonesia Pasca-Einstein*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Manusia Pascamodern, Semesta dan Tuhan (revisi Putri Duyung yang Mendamba)*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Memuliakan Allah, Mengangkat Manusia*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Saya Ingin Membayar Utang Kepada Rakyat*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

### Fiction

1981. *Romo Rahadi*. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya.
1981. *Burung-burung Manyar*. Jakarta: Djambatan.
1983. *Ikan-ikan Hiu, Ido, Homa*. Jakarta: Sinar Harapan; Jakarta: Djambatan.
- 1983-1986. *Roro Mendut, Genduk Duku, Lusi Lindri (trilogi)*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1985. *Balada Becak*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
1992. *Burung-burung Rantau*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1993. *Balada Dara-dara Mendut*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1994. *Durga Umayi*. Jakarta: Pustaka Grafiti.
1999. *Tak Ada Jalan Lain*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1999. *Pohon-pohon Sesawi*. Jakarta: Gramedia.

### Articles

1978. Dilema Sutan Syahrir, Antara Politikus dan Pemikir. *Manusia dalam Kemelut Sejarah*. Jakarta: LP3ES.

1981. Dialog: Indonesia Kini dan Esok II. *Indonesia Kini dan Esok*. Jakarta: LEPPENAS.
1983. Cendekiawan dan Pijar-pijar Kebenaran. *Cendekiawan dan Politik*. Jakarta: LP3ES.
1984. Konsepsi Kristen dalam Menjawab Masalah Gelandangan. *Gelandangan: Pandangan Ilmuwan Sosial*. Jakarta: LP3ES.
1985. Perdamaian Bukan Masalah Orang Kecil. *Agama dan Kekerasan*. Jakarta: Kelompok Studi Proklamasi.
1985. Gereja antara Yesus dari Nasareth dan Caesar. *Agama dan Tantangan Zaman*. Jakarta: LP3ES.
1986. Sastra yang Berorientasi pada Orang Kecil. *Majalah Horison* no. XXXI/9, September.
1990. Mengenang Seorang Gerejawan Besar, Mgr. A. Soegijapranata. *Harta dan Surga*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1992. Daya Cipta Ilmu dan Teknologi dalam Pertumbuhan di Indonesia. Jakarta: Kongres Kebudayaan 1991.
1993. Kosmologi Baru. Agama dan Demokratisasi Bangsa. *Agama, Demokrasi dan Keadilan*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
1993. Kemiskinan dan Perempuan. *Dinamika Gerakan Perempuan di Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana LSSPA.
1994. Pergeseran Titik Berat dari Keagamaan ke Religiositas. *Spiritualitas Baru. Agama dan Aspirasi Rakyat*. Yogyakarta: Serie Dian II.
1994. The Indonesia Raya Dream and Its Impact on the Concept of Democracy. *Democracy in Indonesia 1950s and 1990s*. Clayton: Monash University.
1997. Gereja dan Pendidikan dalam Situasi Kini yang Serba Kompleks. *Gereja Indonesia Pasca-Vatikan II. Refleksi dan Tantangan*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1998. Mencari Visi Dasar Pendidikan. *Majalah Basis* no. 01-02, Januari-Februari.
1998. Panggilan Masyarakat Politik Kristiani. *Deklarasi Forum Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia*. Jakarta: Sekretaris Nasional FMKI.
1998. Beberapa Gagasan tentang SD bagi 20 Juta Anak dari Keluarga Kurang Mampu. *Pendidikan Sains yang Humanistis*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

1999. Peran Buku demi Kearifan dalam Iptek. Seminar Meningkatkan Peranan Buku dalam Upaya Membentuk Masyarakat Baru Indonesia. Jakarta: Hotel Le Meridien, 10 Februari.

Forewords, epilogues

1983. *Indonesia, Bagian Sangat Penting dari Desa Saya*. (Emha Ainun Nadjib). Sala: Jatayu.
1988. *Sosok Sang Pejuang*. (Chinua Achebe). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1990. *Homo Ludens, Fungsi dan Hakikat Permainan dalam Budaya*. (Johan Huizinga). Jakarta: LP3ES.
1991. *Indonesia, Bagian dari Desa Saya*. (Emha Ainun Nadjib). Yogyakarta: Sypress.
1992. *Panji Koming 1 1979-1984*. (Kartun Dwi Koen). Jakarta: Kompas-Gramedia.
1992. *Keprihatinan Sosial Gereja*. (Eduard R. Dopo). Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1992. *Tumbangnya Seorang Diktator*. (Gabriel Garcia Marquez). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1994. *Sydney Hook: Sosok Filsuf Humanis Demokrat dalam Tradisi Pragmatisme*. (Sydney Hook). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
1994. *Nafas Budaya Yogya*. (Linus Suryadi AG). Yogyakarta: Bentang.
1996. *Spiritualitas Pembebasan*. (Baskara T. Wardaya). Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1997. *Menjadi Gereja Misioner dalam Konteks Indonesia*. (Widi Artanto). Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1997. *Demi Keadilan dan Perdamaian*. (Dom Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, SDB, Peter Tukan, Domingos de Sousa). Jakarta: Komisi Keadilan dan Perdamaian Dili dan Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian KWI.
1998. *Melangkah dari Reruntuhan. Tragedi Situbondo*. (I Haryanto). Jakarta: Grasindo.
1998. *Menertawakan Romo Koko*. (Kartun Windyatmoko B, MSF). Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1998. *Membuka Topeng Seminari(s)*. (Catatan Perjalanan di Seminari Garum 1985-1997). Wagu.



1998. *Kapan Badai akan Berlalu*. Bandung.

Works on Y.B. Mangunwijaya

1990. Th. Sri Rahayu Prihatmi. *Dari Mochtar Lubis hingga Mangunwijaya*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
1995. Wiyatmi. *Novel Burung-burung Manyar karya Y.B. Mangunwijaya: Tinjauan Strukturalisme Genetik*. Yogyakarta: Seri Pustaka Kuntara UGM.
1995. Adi Setijowati. *Burung-burung Manyar karya Y.B. Mangunwijaya: Tinjauan Struktural Semantik*. Yogyakarta: Seri Pustaka Kuntara UGM.
1996. Michael Bodden. *Women as Nation in Mangunwijaya's Durga Umayi*. *Journal Indonesia*, 62.
1996. Maman Suryaman. *Mangunwijaya dan Sosok Wanita Pasca-Nasional*. *Journal Prisma*; Jakarta: LP3ES.
1997. Karel Steenbrink. *Mangunwijaya als romanschrijver van de koloniale tijd*. *Journal Wereld en Zending*.
1997. Barbara Hatley. "Nation, Tradition and Constructions of Feminine in Modern Indonesia Literature" in Jim Schiller and Barbara Martin-Schiller (ed.): *Imagining Indonesia: Cultural Politics and Political Culture*. Athens, Ohio University, Center for International Studies.
1997. I. Haryanto. *Rohaniwan dan Politik dalam Refleksi Romo Mangun*. Yogyakarta: Majalah Basis no. 1-2, Januari-Februari.
1998. Karel Steenbrink. "Y.B. Mangunwijaya's Blueprint for Diaspora Church in Indonesia." *Exchange, Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research* Vol. 27, No. 1. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV.
1999. Nurinwa Ki S. Hendrowinoto. *Tentara dalam Sastra (Studi Konstruksi Sosial, Tiga Tentara Pejuang Pengarang Novel 1945-1950)*. Unpublished.

Tributes to Y.B. Mangunwijaya

1995. *Mendidik Manusia Merdeka. Persembahan 65 Tahun Romo Y.B. Mangunwijaya*. Yogyakarta: Dian/Interfidei.

1999. *Tinjauan Kritis atas Gereja Diaspora Romo Mangun. Kumpulan Tanggapan, komentar, dan kritik atas buku Gereja Diaspora karya Romo Mangun.* Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Pergulatan Intelektual dalam Era Kegelisahan. Sumbangan pemikiran dari berbagai tokoh sebagai kado ulang tahun Romo Mangun yang ke 70.* Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Romo Mangun di Mata Para Sahabat. Sharing pengalaman dan pandangan atas Sosok Romo Mangun.* Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Menjadi Generasi Pasca-Indonesia. Sastra Y.B. Mangunwijaya. Tulisan-tulisan sastra, komentar, dan analisis atas karya sastra Y.B. Mangunwijaya.* Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
1999. *Y.B. Mangunwijaya Pejuang Kemanusiaan. Kesaksian para sahabat masa studi dan perjuangan Romo Mangun.* Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

***Works of architecture, planning and design  
Based on the field research of Erwinthon P. Napitupulu***

Constructed Works

- 1967-1969. Gereja St. Maria Fatima. Sragen, Central Java.
- 1968-1971. Gereja St. Maria Assumpta. Klaten, Central Java.
- 1969-1970. Gereja St. Yusuf Jurukarya. Gondangwinangun, Klaten, Central Java.
1970. Gereja St. Petrus. Borobudur, Magelang, Central Java.
1970. Gereja Mandongan. Srumbung, Muntilan, Central Java.
- 1970-1971. Gereja St. Yusuf. Desa Bogo, Kalibawang, Central Java.
1971. Wisma dan Gereja St. Theresia. Salam, Central Java.
1971. Gereja St. Theresia. Jombor, Solo, Central Java.
- 1970-1971. Gereja St. Lukas. Desa Tambran, Bantul, Selatan, Yogyakarta.
- 1970s. Wisma Unio dan Gereja St. Albertus. Jetis, Yogyakarta.
- 1970s. Wisma Unio. Jetis, Yogyakarta.
- 1970s. Wisma Sang Penebus. Nandan, Yogyakarta.
- 1972-1991. Peziarahan Sendangsono. Kulonprogo, Yogyakarta.
- 1977-1978. Seminari Anging Mammiri. Kaliurang, Yogyakarta.

- 1980s. Rumah Tinggal Ibu Hendro. Yogyakarta.
- 1980s. Tempat Kos Putri. Yogyakarta.
1983. Gereja Salib Suci. Cilincing, Jakarta.
- 1983-1987. Permukiman Tepi Kali Code. Gondolayu, Yogyakarta.
- 1984-1991. Pertapaan Suster Bunda Pemersatu. Gedono, Salatiga, Central Java.
- 1985-1988. Kampus Universitas Surabaya. Rungkut, Surabaya, East Java.
- 1986-1987. Rumah Arief Budiman. Salatiga, Central Java.
- 1986-1999. Wisma Kuwera. Mrican, Yogyakarta.
- 1986-1988. Bentara Budaya. Palmerah, Jakarta.
1988. Gereja Maria Diangkat ke Surga. Malang, East Java.
- 1993-1994. Gereja Bunda Maria Sapta Duka. Desa Mendut, Mungkid, Magelang, Central Java.
- 1989-1994. Rumah, Perahu, & Perpustakaan Terapung. Kedungombo, Boyolali, Central Java.
1993. SD Kanisius dan Asrama Anak Putri. Desa Mangunan, Kalasan, Yogyakarta.
1996. Gereja St. Alfonsus. Nandan, Yogyakarta.
1996. Seminarium Fermentum St. Yohanes Pembaptis. Citepus, Bandung, West Java.

#### Designed Works

- 1970s. Koridor Malioboro. Yogyakarta. Urban design.
- 1970s. Gereja San Inigo. Dirjodipuran, Solo. Demolished.
- 1970s. Relief Dinding Altar, Meja Altar, dan Mimbar Gereja Muntilan. Muntilan, Central Java. Elements of church.
- 1970s. Rumah Tahanan Politik di Pulau Buru. Island of Buru. Not yet documented.
- 1970s. Gedung Jurusan Arsitektur Universitas Gajah Mada. Yogyakarta. Team-work, demolished.
- 1970s. Altar Gereja Van Lith. Muntilan. Accessory.
- 1970s. Altar Kapel di Panti Semedi. Sangkalputung, Klaten. Accessory.
- 1970s. Relief Dinding Gelanggang Mahasiswa Universitas Gajah Mada. Bulaksumur, Yogyakarta. Ornaments.
- 1970s. Biara / Susteran. Batu, Malang. Renovation.

- 1970s. Masterplan Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta. Urban planning.
1971. Gereja Deyangan. Desa Deyangan, Mungkid. Demolished.
1975. Perpustakaan Pusat UGM. Bulaksumur, Yogyakarta. Team work.
- 1980s. Katedral Dili. Dili. Unbuilt.
- 1980s. Biara Redemptoris. Waikabubak, Sumba Barat. Not yet documented.
1983. Markas Komando Wilayah Pertahanan II. Yogyakarta. Unbuilt.
- 1987-1989. Penataan Lingkungan Pantai Grigak. Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta. Environmental design.
1992. Rumah Hari Senja Kardinal Justinus Darmoyuwono. Dusun Puren, Yogyakarta. Not yet built.
1993. Bangunan Penampungan Korban Gempa. Maumere, Flores. Not yet documented.
1993. Katedral Ambon. Ambon. Unbuilt.
1998. Panti Mlati (orphanage). Sleman, Yogyakarta. Unbuilt.

### ***Awards***

#### **National**

1975. Sayembara Cerpen Kincir Emas Radio Nederland Program Bahasa Indonesia. Literature.
1982. Hadiah Sastra Dewan Kesenian Jakarta untuk Esei (atas buku *Sastra dan Religiositas*). Literature.
1983. Piagam Penghargaan Menteri Negara Pengawasan Pembangunan dan Lingkungan Hidup untuk Tata Ruang. Environment.
1985. Piagam Penghargaan Sekretaris Nasional untuk Perencanaan dan Perumahan. Human Settlement.
1986. Anugerah Kemanusiaan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum. Human Rights.
1991. IAI Award (atas Penataan Lingkungan Kompleks Ziarah Sendangsono, Kulonprogo, Yogyakarta). Architecture.
1993. IAI Award (atas Pertapaan Bunda Pemersatu Gedono Jawa Tengah). Architecture.
1996. Penghargaan Seni untuk Budaya dan Sastra Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. Art dan Culture.

1996. Medali Emas Pusat Lembaga Kebudayaan Jawi Surakarta untuk Sastra. Literature.
1998. Medali Emas Kalyanakretya Utama dari Menteri Riset dan Teknologi dalam rangka Hari Kebangkitan Teknologi Indonesia. Technology, Journalism and Literature.

#### International

1983. The South East Asia Write Award of the Queen Sirikit (for his roman *Burung-burung Manyar*). Literature.
1992. The Aga Khan Award for Architecture (for his work in Kampung Code). Architecture.
1995. The Ruth and Ralph Erskine Fellowship Award, Stockholm, Sweden (for his work in Kampung Code). Humanities.
1996. The Professor Teeuw Foundation Award, Leiden-Jakarta. Literature.



**Jalan Nagan Lor 19 Yogyakarta 55133 Indonesia**

**Phone/Fax +62-274-372525**

[www.ypr.or.id](http://www.ypr.or.id)

[ypr@ypr.or.id](mailto:ypr@ypr.or.id)

Yayasan Pondok Rakyat (YPR, literally People's Shelter Foundation) is a non-profit organisation activated by a group of people from various backgrounds who join in one common interest that is to participate in building a more just social order. Based on its expertise and social commitment, the group focuses its activities on participatory action research on community-based urban development.

**Mr. Darwis Khudori — Indonesia/France**

Dr. Darwis Khudori is writer (poems, short stories, novels, essays), engineer-architect (Gadjah Mada University) and historian specialised in the Contemporary Arab and Muslim World (doctorate, University of Paris-Sorbonne). Senior lecturer in Oriental Studies at the University of Le Havre, France, he is also researcher at GRIC (Group of Research on Identity and Culture) at the same university. He is active in Yayasan Pondok Rakyat (People's Shelter Foundation), Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and International Network on Development and Civilisations LEBRET-IRFED, Paris, France. Contact: [darwis.khudori@univ-lehavre.fr](mailto:darwis.khudori@univ-lehavre.fr) or [emdeka@free.fr](mailto:emdeka@free.fr)

## Darwis Khudori

"Why do you choose to serve the poor in a direct way, living with them in their village as you do nowadays, and as you did before in the spontaneous settlement on the banks of the river Code?" a journalist asked him one day in his bamboo cabin in a dry village on Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta.

"I wonder ...," Romo Mangun left the question in the air, showing that he could not answer it easily. "I have lived in cities most of my life and both my parents were teachers. Maybe it is because of my experiences during the war of independence. At that time we were guerrillas. We hid in the villages. I saw how the poor farmers were tortured by the Dutch soldiers. For us guerrillas, the farmers were our genuine protectors. We hid in their houses and we received food from them. But to this day their fate has remained the same. I feel indebted to them. Besides that, when I participated in the guerrilla I was in my teens, a period when one is very receptive to experiences. This meant that the impression of war was unforgettable and determined my later attitudes."

"Many people have had the same experiences as you, yet they are not inclined to serve the poor as you do," another person continued this conversation at another time.

"I think our personality grows like a tree," Romo Mangun answered. "Sometimes it grows fast, at other times slowly, and often it does not grow at all, or even dies. It depends on the soil, the feeding and the climate."

Firstly published in the journal  
INDONESIA AND THE MALAY WORLD  
Vol. 29, No. 85, 2001

Editorial Board: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London  
Publisher: Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Ltd., Abingdon, Oxford

Republished as it was  
with the permission of the first publisher by  
Yayasan Pondok Rakyat, Yogyakarta



Darwis Khudori, *"The Altruism of Romo Mangun: the Seed, the Growth, the Fruit"* in the journal *INDONESIA AND THE MALAY WORLD* Vol. 29, No. 85, 2001, published by Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Ltd., Abingdon, Oxford, UK.  
Second edition by Yayasan Pondok Rakyat, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2002.  
Third edition by Yayasan Pondok Rakyat, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2009.  
The cover of this online edition is taken from the second edition.