

# Mangunwijaya's Concept of Religiosity in His Architectural Work of Gereja Maria Assumpta (GMA), Klaten-Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya (often referred to as Romo Mangun; YBM) stands out as one of Indonesia's architectural luminaries, and his architectural vision is deeply rooted in his religious background as a Catholic priest. This article delves into the intrinsic religious values embedded within one of Romo Mangun's architectural masterpieces, the Church of Maria Assumpta or Gereja Maria Assumpta (GMA) in Klaten. This structure emanates a profound and sanctified ambiance by merging traditional Javanese architectural elements with a contemporary sensibility. By adopting a qualitative approach, explicitly employing a constructivist paradigm of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology theoretical schools, this research raises a question on how Mangunwijaya engraved his understanding and discernment of religiosity in his architectural work of GMA. By using Mangunwijaya's GMA as a material object and his concept of religiosity as a formal object, it is found that he engraved his understanding and discernment of religiosity through his architectural work of GMA. To be religious is (1) to be a part of our own culture, which is shown by the space order; (2) to be focused on the Most High, shown by the orientation, ornaments, and liturgical light and colors; and (3) living in harmony, well-engraved in the proportion.

Keywords: *Religious Architecture; Maria Assumpta Church; Religiosity; Y.B. Mangunwijaya.*

## 1. Introduction

In our surroundings, numerous steadfast structures, including our present-day residences, grace the landscape. A building embodies the physical manifestation of construction intricately intertwined with its specific location or environment. Article 1 of Law No. 28 of 2002 provides a comprehensive definition of buildings, describing them as either a part or the entirety of a structure rising above the earth's surface or water, designed to serve as a venue for diverse human activities. This definition primarily emphasizes the functional aspect of a building. Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, an architect from ancient Rome, articulated the essential principles of sound architectural design, which have been persisting to this day: the principles

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of strength (*firmitas*), utility or function (*utilitas*), and beauty (*venustas*) (Newman & Vassigh, 2016).

Houses of worship, regardless of their religious affiliation, are commonly assumed to facilitate profound spiritual experiences for congregants, although this assumption is only sometimes accurate. These places of worship are often referred to as “sanctuaries” because they are consecrated for religious activities that revolve around the relationship between humans and the “transcendent” or “divine” (referred to as God in Abrahamic traditions) (Lang, 2014). Churches in bygone eras, such as the Middle Ages, were meticulously designed to evoke a sense of majesty and sanctity. However, within the context of the Catholic Church, Michael S. Rose notes a shift in architectural trends of church buildings, where minimalist, simplistic, and practical structures have supplanted the grand Gothic cathedrals of yesteryears. Rose conjectures that this transformation corresponds with a diminishing, or even an outright loss, of the congregation’s sensitivity to the Transcendent. Duncan Stroik further asserts that contemporary church architecture tends to forsake the rich symbolic traditions that once fostered a close connection between the congregation and the Transcendent (Stroik, 2023). However, sensitivity to the Transcendent is an integral facet of religiosity.

Sensitivity to the Transcendent, as experienced by the Indonesian Catholic community, is one of the architectural concerns of Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya (1929-1999), a priest and an architect. Also widely recognized as a writer and a social activist, he boasts a multi-faceted perspective rooted in his diverse educational background and extensive experience. Beyond his role as an architect, YBM is renowned as a clergyman, culturalist, and writer. His insights into religiosity often intertwine with his literary contributions (Mulyatno, 2020; Wartiningsih & Parmin, 2021) and thoughts on education (Christiani, 2014; Dewantara, 2015). Nevertheless, YBM’s reflections on religiosity also leave an indelible mark on his architectural creations. In architecture, YBM’s religiosity is evident in his designs, which transcend mere utility, aspiring to be “more than just useful” (Mangunwijaya, 1994, p. 12).

In all construction work, we can build as long as it stands and is usable. Even this applies to animals. The wings of a butterfly, the antlers of a king deer, the feathers of a bird of paradise, the scales of a fish, and even the demeanor and behavior of a dolphin or a dog are not just biology; mere physical survival and self-preservation. Some elements are “more than just useful” (Mangunwijaya, 2009).

The statement above underscores that architectural work goes beyond mere functionality and accentuates the dimension of quality and aesthetics. While Vitruvius proposed three principles (strength, utility, beauty), YBM consolidated these into two: “wastu” or “guna” and “citra” (Istanto, 1999). YBM employs the analogy of humans, comprising both body and soul. Within the body, strength, and utility are inseparable. Similarly, architectural creations come to life when the soul, or beauty, infuses vitality into strength and utility. YBM comprehensively elaborated on this concept in his book *Wastu Citra* (Mangunwijaya, 2009). Consequently, the architectural design process should embody technical proficiency and humanize non-technical aspects concurrently. YBM once remarked that architecture serves as a culture’s expression and vehicle for its thought and emotion, representing the most direct manifestation of a society’s philosophical approach to life (Mangunwijaya, 2009).

YBM applied the principles of usability and aesthetics when designing GMA as a place of worship. Using a term from Murray E. Rae, a theologian, and architect, architectural work resembles a text that requires “reading” and “interpretation” to unveil the meaning behind the design (Rae, 2017). Similarly, the GMA building has been extensively studied, primarily from an architectural science perspective (Audilia & Kurniawan, 2023; Kusbiantoro, 2009; Olivia et al., 2019; Tanumihardja, 2017; Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018). This research aims to describe and explain a robust religious dimension in Mangunwijaya’s Gereja Maria Assumpta (GMA) architectural work. Thus, through qualitative research using an interpretive paradigm following the phenomenology theoretical school of thought (Leavy, 2023), this paper addresses the question of how YBM’s religious virtues are engraved in his architectural work of GMA.

## 2. Literature Review

Generally, religious architecture plays a vital role in cultural heritage because its components of cultural heritage material remain visible for a long time, witnessing the historic and inter-territorial events and simulators of subsequent events (Gil-Mastalerczyk, 2016). Furthermore, it is open to different activities that are not just limited to sacral objects but also significantly

affect the activation of tourist and business districts and regions (Gil-Mastalerczyk, 2016). The three religious traditions, i.e., Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, transform the design of their places of worship. However, these new designs are not easily readable to believers and visitors (Wildt et al., 2019).

Religion is one of the leading modelers of civilization and lifestyles. The need to perform daily religious activities such as prayers explains why religious architecture is usually preeminent in settlement arrangements. According to YBM, humans are dynamic pilgrims who evolve holistically (Mulyatno, 2020; Mangunwijaya, 2020b). This development is comprehensive, encompassing both inner and physical dimensions. Religiosity manifests in human attitudes and behavior and works primarily in the arts (Cf. Mangunwijaya, 2009). Humans evolve holistically, meaning they grow through interconnected relationships with others, The Holy, and nature (Mangunwijaya, 2009, 2020b; Mulyatno, 2020). Humanity is an essential element of religiosity: “Be a good man, a humane human, because humanity is the way to the Lord” (Mangunwijaya, 1999, p. 21). To be religious, according to YBM, is to be part of nature and to be part of the poor and the leftovers (Mangunwijaya, 1999b, pp. 191-193), being part of the local community (Mangunwijaya, 1994, pp. 215-232), and has the good impacts on society or our country, i.e. promoting nationality (Mangunwijaya, 1996, pp. 125-129). In his *Ragawidya* (1975), he stated that to be religious is to be part of our daily bodily activities, including our works of art. Human handwork has more value than that fabricated by machines. From a religious perspective, human handwork is part of devotion to The Holy One, as a symbol of gratitude to The One who already created the human body (Mangunwijaya, 1975). Thus, the uniqueness of human handy-artwork is part of the authenticity of our being.

As religious beings (*homo religiosus*), humans are engaged formally through religion to express their religiosity. It is manifested in many forms, including architecture. In particular religions, religious architectures were monumental displays for the benefit of ruling authorities and constituted the people’s reason for being (Gutierrez, 2018). It is acknowledged that cultural and religious identity is constructed in works of art (Koptseva et al., 2018; Mangunwijaya, 2009; Wildt et al., 2019). Religious art is representative of religious concepts where the artworks of religious architecture can be studied as cultural texts through cultural-semiotic analysis (Koptseva et al., 2018).

Among the architects, YBM is known for his work, *Wastu Citra* (Mangunwijaya, 2009). Since its first publication in 1987, this book is still relevant to architecture development in Indonesia. In his book, YBM explores how architecture should be developed for the benefit of society through local genius and local cultural wealth. For him, architecture does not only aim to build magnificent buildings with high technology (Mangunwijaya, 2009). Architecture should design and build buildings by relying on local wisdom in local cultural traditions (Istanto, 1999, p. 40). For YBM, in designing and constructing a building, architects must simultaneously consider aspects of function and utility (*wastu*) and image (*citra*), which is “a symbol that speaks of all that is humane, beautiful, and majestic of him who built it” (Istanto, 1999, p. 44; Mangunwijaya, 2009). In other words, a building should be able to present the human spirit and beauty; it should not only accommodate the aspects of utility or function. YBM’s ideas of use and image are hotly discussed among architects (Istanto, 1999; Priyo Pratikno, 2020; Susanti et al., 2021). In addition to using an image, YBM’s architectural practice has also been observed by Sunaryo (Sunaryo, 2007), Hanifati (Hanifati & Harjoko, 2020), and Gunawan (Gunawan, 2009).

Departing from the understanding of utility and image, several authors observed and examined how Mangunwijaya realized these ideas in his designed buildings (Asiku & Wardani, 2014; Olivia et al., 2019; Setyoningrum, n.d.; Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, 2018). Of all Mangunwijaya’s works, it seems St. Maria Assumpta Church in Klaten is most often the subject of studies with specific focuses, such as aspects of its interior design (Asiku & Wardani, 2014; Olivia et al., 2019) or the embodiment of the “sacred space” of worship buildings (Gunawan, 2009; Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018). In these studies, the architectural perspective dominates. Meanwhile, a more integrative theological-architectural perspective has yet to be widely explored. Kusbiantoro’s (Kusbiantoro, 2009) and Setyoningrum’s (Setyoningrum, n.d.) efforts can be seen as the first step in researching the theological meaning of Mangunwijaya’s architectural works, especially in St. Maria Assumpta Church, Klaten. Kusbiantoro observed how Mangunwijaya tried translating theological views into a local (Javanese-Indonesian) context. Almost in line with Kusbiantoro, Setyoningrum observes the design of church buildings as a medium of inculturation. Since both papers are

written from the perspective of architectural science, YBM's theological ideas have yet to be elaborated in depth.

### **3. Method**

This research used a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology theoretical schools through descriptive analysis (Leavy, 2023). The data were collected through unobtrusive methods by analyzing documents and doing visual analysis (Leavy, 2023) after visiting the site of Gereja Maria Assumpta. Unobtrusive methods are those for systematically investigating texts to understand the meanings that circulate in texts and rely on noninteractive, nonliving data that exist independently of the research (Leavy, 2023). YBM's architectural works were placed in this research as a text (cf. Gutierrez, 2018). To analyze, the researchers used the primary literature of YBM and his discernments on religiosity (Mangunwijaya 1994, 2009, 2020). Secondary data for this content analysis will be sourced from written materials such as books and journal articles that scrutinize the St. Maria Assumpta Church in Klaten.

### **4. Results**

#### **4.1. Mangunwijaya and the Concept of Religiosity**

This first discussion concerns the meaning of religiosity itself. Religiosity contains the Latin word "*religio*", a derivative of the verb *relegere*, which means to bind. The roots of the word define religiosity as a comprehensive unity of elements, which refers to a person so that he can be called a "religious person" (being religious) and not just claiming to be an adherent of a religion (having religion). Religiosity itself includes experience, knowledge, and behavior, as well as social attitudes.

So, more compactly, it can be said that religiosity refers to a person's state, understanding, and attitude when believing in a belief or religion. The religious experience is then realized in the appreciation of values, norms, rules, or obligations, thus encouraging him to act and behave in line with religious guidance in his daily life. This also concerns what the individual lives in mind, conscience, and personal stance (Mangunwijaya, 2020, p. 35).

Following the discussion on religiosity, the subsequent discourse centers around the figure of YBM and the concept of religiosity itself. Comprehending this section, it is essential to first acquaint ourselves briefly with the persona of YBM, a central figure in this discussion. YBM, whose birthplace is Ambarawa, Central Java, in 1929, embarked on a remarkable life journey. After the war of independence, he embraced the vocation of priesthood, ultimately receiving ordination as a Catholic priest in 1959 within the diocese of the Archdiocese of Semarang. He pursued architectural studies in Aachen, Germany. Post his academic pursuits, he engaged in various spheres, wearing multiple hats: a prolific writer across different media, an author of both fiction and non-fiction works, a cultural enthusiast, an education observer and practitioner, a clergyman, and a lecturer at the Department of Architecture, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta. As an architect, YBM distanced himself from the notion of 'grand architecture' in 1988, firmly believing that architecture should prioritize the welfare of the socially marginalized.

After providing an overview of his life history, the ensuing discussion delves into understanding YBM through the lens of religiosity as reflected in his architectural designs, particularly those of church buildings synonymous with places of worship inspired by some famous architects such as Le Corbusier through his Notre Dame du Haut (Mangunwijaya, 2009). Commencing this exploration, the writer raises a fundamental concern akin to the sentiment expressed by Mgr. Ignatius Suharyo questioned the paradoxical scenario in Indonesia, where many exquisite places of worship exist. Yet, corruption seems to proliferate, and violence appears to rise, with unresolved crises (Suharyo, 2009). Upon closer examination, a division, even a chasm, emerges between the core of religious life (*ordo essendi*) that offers intimacy in human relationships with God, others, and oneself and the comprehension and practice of spiritual life (*ordo cognoscendi et agendi*). This division seems to cause the noble ideals of salvation, well-being, justice, and human solidarity to wane, almost vanishing, overshadowed by fanaticism, violence, and injustices.

YBM coined "religiosity" to refer to the *ordo essendi* of religious life. Religiosity encompasses dimensions of faith, love, and hope. According to YBM, religiosity differs from religion, which is more inclined toward institutionalizing reverence for God, emphasizing formal and juridical aspects, such as regulations, laws, and interpreting holy texts (Mangunwijaya, 1999; Jatmiko, 2005, p. 5). In contrast, religiosity delves deeper, tapping into

the profound inner realm that emanates from personal conscience. It is an individual disposition that remains enigmatic to others as it unveils the inner stirrings and longings of the soul. In the words of Blaise Pascal, this relates to “*du coer*,” a taste-encompassing totality that includes reason and human sentiment, transcending the visible, formal, and official aspects of religion. Religiosity leans toward community life, fostering more intimate connections (Jatmiko, 2005, pp. 2, 6). Through its devotion to the divine (Mangunwijaya, 1975), reverence for humanity (Mangunwijaya, 1999), the spirit of locality (Mangunwijaya, 1994), and love for nature (cf. Mangunwijaya, 2009), YBM elevates the realm of Indonesian architecture to a state of totality. Hence, YBM does not just “talk” about religiosity; he “works” through it.

#### 4.2. Religiosity in Mangunwijaya’s Architectural Works

The word “architecture” comes from the word *architectoon* (Gr.), which means the chief/master (*arche*) of building (*tektion*) maker. According to YBM, this definition still needs to be improved compared to the real meaning. So, he prefers to use the term “*Wastu*” (*Vasthuidya*; Old Javanese), which refers to an understanding of the essence, matter, case, norm, reality, or benchmark of morality.

**Table 1.** Comparison Table of Definition of Architecture

Architectoon	Wastu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Guna</i> (function): perspective of function</li> <li>• Aesthetic form that is autonomous, materialistic, and informative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Citra</i> (image): the perspective of transcendental meaning</li> <li>• Harmony with the cosmos, spiritual and transformative</li> </ul>

Source: Sunaryo (2007, p. 41)

As per YBM’s perspective, genuine architecture encompasses the fusion of functionality and aesthetics. In essence, an architect’s skill lies in imbuing materials with profound meaning in the construction process. Moreover, architectural design should transcend the boundaries of human existence’s physical and intellectual dimensions. It should also serve as a mirror, effectively conveying and mirroring the identity of its users. Within the concept of “*wastu citra*,” we can discern pivotal themes that underpin YBM’s architectural approach and outcomes: the celebration of vernacularism, a deliberate preference for uplifting the marginalized, and the pursuit of a timeless beauty that resonates with truth.

Josef Prijotomo argues that architecture is not a collection of building materials erected on a mere plot of land; architecture carries many complex cultural, social, and technological issues (Prijotomo, 1988). In line with this view, YBM even gives “soul” to buildings. Although inanimate, buildings are not “soulless” (Istanto, 1999, p. 41). For example, the house we build is a house for human beings. Therefore, a natural house is always animated by the dynamics of human life, its characters and tendencies, and passions and ideals. In other words, there is a semiotic relation behind the physical form created by humans (Gruson, 2019). A house is always an “image” of the person who built it. Thus, constructing a house or other building involves two spheres of concern: “*guna*” (utility) and “*citra*” (image) (Mangunwijaya, 2009).

YBM explains “*guna*” and “*citra*” in detail in the book *Wastu Citra* (2009). He summarizes architectural principles into “*guna*” and “*citra*.” This differs from the general view of architecture, especially from a Western perspective. “*Guna*” is defined by YBM as the benefit, utilization, or “service” we can get from it. “*Guna*” does not only mean to be useful or to provide material gifts but more so to have “power” that causes our lives to be better. On the other hand, YBM describes the *citra* element as an image, an impression of appreciation that captures meaning for a person. He explains that the image is close to use but has a more spiritual dimension related to the dignity of the people who occupy and use the building. YBM further writes that image refers to the level of culture, while *guna* refers to skills or abilities (Istanto, 1999, p. 42). An image is a “symbol that speaks” of all that is humane, great, good, and beautiful about the one who made it.

To date, YBM’s recorded architectural works number around 84, either built, unbuilt, or demolished. YBM has won two prestigious awards: the Aga Khan Award for Architecture for the settlement on the banks of Kali Code, Yogyakarta, and an award from the Indonesian Architects Association (IAI) for the Sendangsono pilgrimage site. Indeed, most of his works are church buildings. Through its buildings, YBM presents an architecture that is in contact with and integrated with its natural environment. YBM architecture offers a natural atmosphere to

the surrounding area so residents can become more familiar with nature. This is the value of religiosity, and the author finds that unity with nature becomes its soul in the form of YBM buildings. The choice of building materials also shows harmony with nature. YBM used elements provided by nature; this does not imply respect for nature itself. Everything is done to give a distinctive taste of the natural surroundings.

YBM's architectural work falls into the category of vernacular architecture. Several forms of buildings made by YBM are unique to YBM. The uniqueness lies in the choice of building materials, the combination of the structure and the contours of the land, the intelligence in the physical calculation between the support and the mass of weight, and the visual beauty produced. The shapes of buildings that are often encountered must have unique, strange, yet beautiful shapes. One thing for sure is that YBM has consistently maintained its concepts, principles, and architectural character. Lilianny S. Arifin from the Laboratory of Architectural History & Theory of Petra Christian University said that YBM's architectural designs grew out of a familiarity with the local nature, with a natural delivery yet containing many messages. YBM's desire to present the architecture of the archipelago can be seen in its appreciation of the architecture of traditional houses and temples in Indonesia (Arifin, n.d.). Arifin deduced this from his observation of the order of the pillars of YBM's building design, which reflects the order of traditional houses and the arched order reminiscent of the shape of temple doors, as well as the combination of materials and construction that presents a harmony of architecture typical of the archipelago. It can be said that this consistency has always been present since YBM's first work, the Church of Santa Maria Assumpta, Klaten, Central Java, which was completed in 1968.

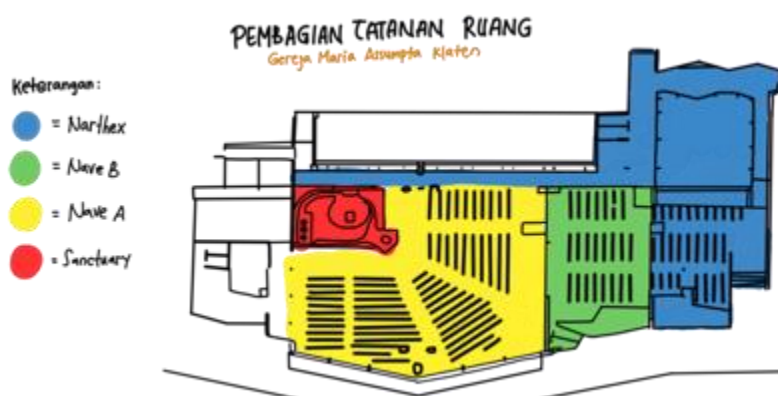
The unique and beautiful forms in YBM's work bring us to architecture as a unity between utility and beauty. In each design, YBM pays close attention to the harmony between the surrounding nature and the existing buildings. The concept of a church building, according to YBM, is a Church (meaning a community of Christian congregations) that is present amid a pluralistic society, willing to be open and dialogue and accept all people regardless of background status, class, tribe, race, ethnicity, culture, and others. Of course, this results from YBM's reflection on the actual situation in Indonesia.

According to YBM, the building style should be reflected in what it expresses in everyday life. He starts everything from real life and exists in the community. With his architectural style, YBM wants to criticize the trend of building houses and public facilities that are far from local cultural values. C. B. Mulyatno concludes that YBM's interest in appreciating and preserving nature and culture and defending the interests of the poor became the basis of his architectural vision and works (Mulyatno, 2013, p. 189).

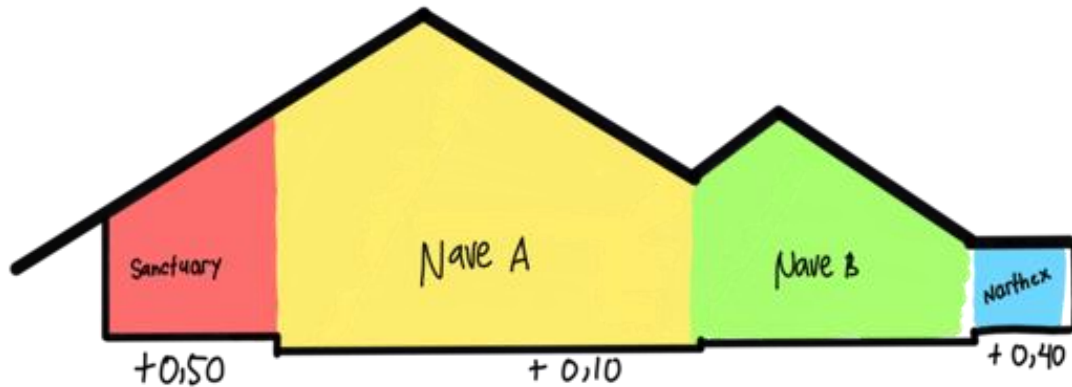
#### 4.2.1. Religiosity in Space Order

The spatial arrangement that YBM created consists of three major parts: the *nave*, *narthex*, and *sanctuary* (see Fig. 1 and 2). The nave section of GMA is further divided into two parts, distinguished by the floor's height and the difference in the use of roofing materials. In GMA, the quality of space is differentiated by various methods, one of which is by making a difference in floor height (see Fig. 2), where the highest floor elevation is located in the sanctuary, the most sacred area in the layout of Catholic church buildings (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 168).

Figure 1. Spatial division

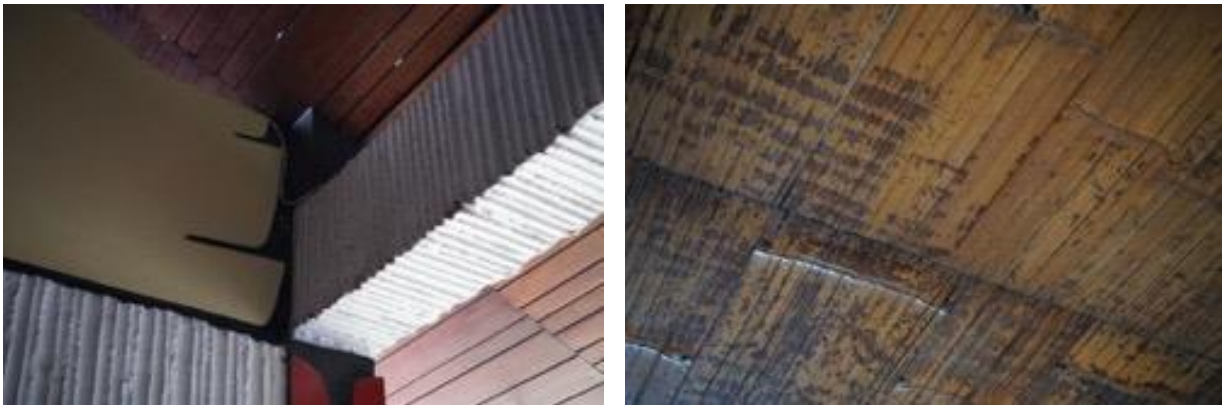


Source: Authors

**Figure 2.** Room Elevation

Source: Authors

Another distinction is made by choosing different ceiling materials for the narthex, nave, and sanctuary areas. In the narthex, bamboo and flat ceilings are used, while wood materials are chosen in the area for the priest and the congregation. The top shape follows the slope of the roof, which is a gable.

**Figure 3.** Wooden and Bamboo

Source: Authors

The differentiation of the quality of space can also be seen in the decoration of lights and pillars or building structures used in each area. In the non-sacred part of the building (narthex), YBM used elements that could be more striking or more varied. This is to show the room's not-too-important nature. Meanwhile, the most sacred area (sanctuary) uses more significant and exceptional elements. This shows the character of the most essential or sacred space (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 169).

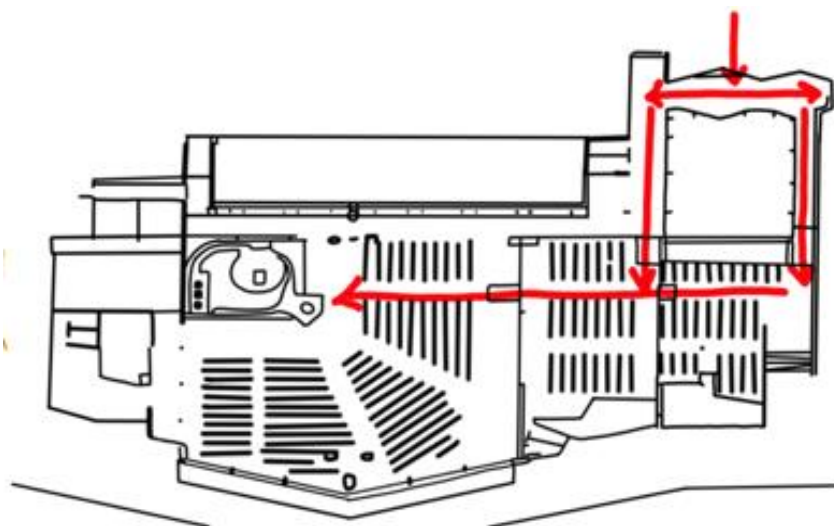
**Figures 4 and 5.** The different design of the lights in each room shows the various qualities of the space.

Source: Authors

Furthermore, there is something unique in the sanctuary area: the tabernacle, which should have unity with the sanctuary, is instead placed at the back. In Catholic church buildings, the tabernacle symbolizes the presence of the Divine. However, in the GMA design, YBM set the tabernacle in a separate place that is completely silent and serene. This is YBM's way of showing that the Tabernacle is more sacred by the part of the temple in Jerusalem called the Tabernacle or "the Holy of Holies," so it is placed in a room with a more secluded atmosphere (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 169). Separating the tabernacle space takes the concept of *luwangan* (Sukendar, 1993, p. 34). The idea of *luwangan* can be seen as a form of Javanese cultural inculturation into the Catholic Church tradition. *Luwangan* itself, in the context of traditional Javanese houses, refers to a particular space or area in the house that functions as a connection between various house buildings.

The axis of the GMA appears broken and tends to branch out. In general, the axis of a church building should be straight and firmly connect the narthex, nave, and sanctuary spaces, as found in a typical Catholic church building. So, YBM's axis design seems to complicate and reduce the essence of the "sacred path" in this building. However, the space division created by YBM in GMA is not without purpose. YBM's idea is the concept of a Javanese house. In a Javanese house, three major parts are precisely the same as described in GMA: *pendapa*, *pringgitan* and *senthong*. However, YBM did not just build an inculturation church building with patches to make the building seem "njawanī" (Javanese-looking). YBM's choice is not in the form but in the philosophy of the Javanese house. Of course, the value of religiosity to be raised here is the realization that the church building and its congregation community are within the scope of Javanese society. Therefore, the face of the Church to be shown is also a Church with Javanese culture (Cf. Mangunwijaya, 1994).

**Figure 6.** GMA Longitudinal Axis



Source: Authors

#### 4.2.2. Religiosity in Orientation

The exterior orientation of the GMA building points upwards, with a triangular roof formation that cones upwards, as shown in Fig. 7. This shape also embodies the expression to always point to God (The Most High). YBM designed the roof shape of GMA with inspiration from tent construction. This reminds the congregation of the tent where the tablets of the covenant between God and the Israelites were kept (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 179). With the exact depiction of the tent of Israel in the Old Testament, the function of the GMA is also similar to that of Israel's tent, which is to protect something that is sanctified, in this case, protecting "the Holy of Holies" stored in this church. This form is also a separate religiosity value that YBM wants to express.

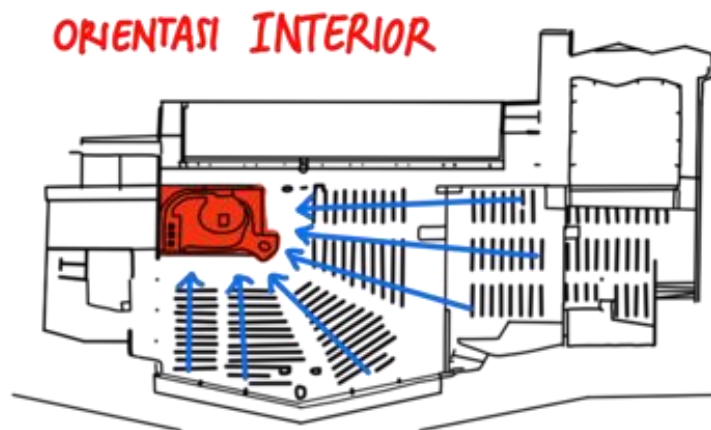
Meanwhile, the orientation of the interior space in the building leads to the priest's home, which is at the diagonal corner of the space. With this design, the people in the church can focus well on the sanctuary. The meaning of religiosity is obvious: The sanctuary is the center because the sacrifice of Christ, which is the center of the congregations' faith, occurs at the altar through the priest's intercession.



Figure 7. Roof orientation (Source: personal doc.)



Figure 8. Interior Orientation (Source: personal doc.)

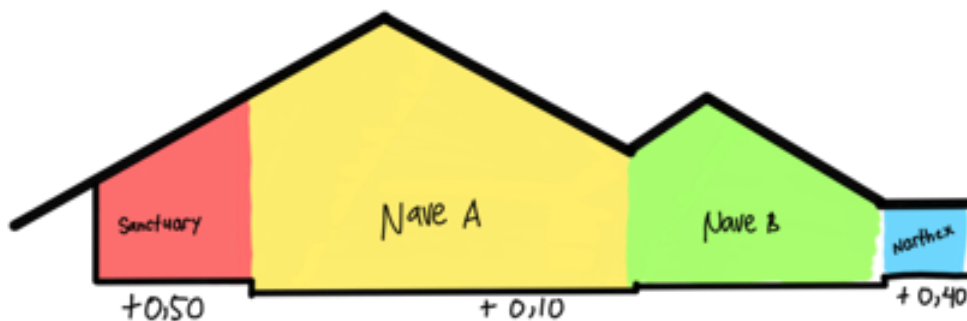


Source: Authors

#### 4.2.3. Religiosity in Proportion

The spaces in the GMA have unequal spatial proportions. Overall, however, the spaces in GMA have more robust horizontal proportions (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 175). This horizontal impression aims to highlight the motherly character of the Church, known as the “Alma Mater” concept. This concept differs from European churches, which generally have an inner space with vertical solid proportions. The ceilings of European churches are generally high to give the impression of transcendence (God is omnipotent and far from humans). So, by presenting horizontal proportions in GMA, YBM wants to express that the relationship between God and humans is close, like a mother holding her child. Because the relationship between humans and God is near, the congregation should also strive for friendship between its people (Cf. Mangunwijaya, 1994).

Figure 9. Proportion (Source: personal doc.)



Source: Authors

#### 4.2.4. Religiosity in Ornaments

In the design of GMA, YBM played with the art of ornamentation in considerable detail (see Fig. 10). These ornaments are found on many elements of the building, including (1) a picture of five loaves and two fish on the wall of the priest’s house; the meaning is a reminder of the

miracle of the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish performed by Jesus (Mark 6:30-43, 8:1-10). (2) The palm leaves on the columns symbolize victory. (3) The emblem of the Church (diocese) and the *Garuda Pancasila* bird emblem on the columns of the main structure symbolize the motto “*Pro Ecclesia et Patria*” (for the sake of the Church and the Motherland), or many also interpret it as the expression “100% Catholic 100% Indonesian” (Cf. Mangunwijaya, 1996). (4) Tongues of fire and doves, found in many building elements, symbolize the Holy Spirit. (5) Lamp ornaments with different shapes as a representation of doves symbolize the presence of the Holy Spirit. (6) The pieces of scrap wood used as the primary material in composing the altar symbolize the hearth in sacrifice because Christ himself sacrificed, and now the sacrifice takes place on the altar.

**Figure 10.** Ornaments [left-right, top: wall tiles, tabernacle, pillars; bottom: ceiling ornaments, altar]



Source: Authors

#### 4.2.5. Religiosity in Liturgical Light and Color

One of the most exciting parts of the chest is the lighting. There are two possible sources of light entering the building, namely natural lighting and artificial lighting. The GMA building is dominated by natural lighting that enters the church space through gaps, holes, or [folding] doors that cover the eastern wall plane. Meanwhile, the western part of the building is made open. The effect of the incoming light, either from the east (in the morning) or from the west (in the afternoon), creates silhouettes that create a sacred impression. This effect is often called heavenly light because it creates silhouettes that produce a different impression of space (Tanumihardja & Gunawan, 2018, p. 178). YBM also gives a sacred impression with natural lighting that utilizes the top of the tabernacle through skylights. This is also an expression of its religiosity that the tabernacle is the most sacred part because it stores the holy of holies and is the main highlight in the room.

**Figure 11.** Natural and artificial lighting



Source: Authors

The colors used in GMA also have meaning. The dominant colors of the GMA chosen by YBM include (1) yellow, a symbol of glory, eternity, and victory; (2) white, a symbol of purity, unquenchable light, eternal glory, and new life; and finally (3) red, as contrast and symbolization of the Spirit of God who inspires and affirms humanity, and can also symbolize the blood of Christ who has atoned for the sins of humanity. These color symbols can help the congregation's appreciation of faith.

## 5. Implications

YBM's architectural endeavor at GMA Klaten holds profound implications for contextual theology. In this paradigm, theology transcends traditional boundaries, extending beyond the confines of scriptural interpretation, pulpit sermons, or liturgical rituals. YBM redefines theology by embodying it within architectural creations, where theological values find expression through spatial arrangements, proportions, embellishments, lighting, and color palettes. As both a priest and an architect, YBM establishes the local wisdom, life context, and experiences of the Javanese people as the *locus theologicus*. He masterfully presents the theological principles of the Second Vatican Council, marked by openness and engagement with the contemporary world (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 1 and 53), by crafting a church building replete with symbolic richness.

Within the diverse and pluralistic Indonesian society, Christian communities navigate coexistence challenges. This milieu necessitates Christian communities to embody a flexible presence, enhancing people's lives (Inriani, 2021). In this dynamic context, church buildings serve as places of worship as potent symbols of existence, capable of conveying inclusivity or exclusivity based on their architectural style and design.

## 6. Conclusion

All that being described and explained, YBM engraved his understanding and discernment of religiosity through his architectural work of GMA. To be religious is (1) to be a part of our own culture, which is shown by the space order; (2) to be focused to the highest, shown by the orientation, ornaments, and liturgical light and colors; and (3) living in harmony, well-engraved in the proportion.

In essence, YBM's architectural vision for shaping worship spaces' form and interior draws inspiration from the rich tapestry of Javanese design aesthetics. This innovative approach stems from the fusion of YBM's dual roles as a priest and an architect, rooted in the profound values of "*wastu citra*." For YBM, beauty serves as the genuine expression of truth. Every creation crafted by YBM carries profound meaning, a truth evident in the meticulous analysis of the Church of Maria Assumpta in Klaten. YBM adeptly channeled his religiosity concepts through his architectural masterpieces, and this article meticulously dissects the intricate religiosity concepts interwoven into his architectural designs. These religious values resonate powerfully through every form, ornament, and philosophical concept.

A place of worship should aspire to be more than just visually appealing. Each place of worship should be thoughtfully aligned with the local cultural context, embodying the essence of "a Church that willingly engages with and remains open to the world around it" and encourages harmony. As a result, we anticipate further research delving into a descriptive analysis of the theological impact of YBM's architectural imagery on the congregation's lives as an authentic and vital Church within society.

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## 8. Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest.

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