



# Identity, Locality and Image of the Residential House by Eko Prawoto

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**Abstract**—The development of residential architecture now depends on market tastes, with the trend of minimalist houses being identical in style and without a theme, as if they have lost their identity. In this case, there were many discussions that featured Eko Prawoto as an architect with the theme of local architecture, but the subject of this research questioned him. Therefore, this study discusses how the identity and concept of the natural locality of Eko Prawoto's residential works are expressed through architectural tectonics. The architectural biographical approach is used in qualitative inductive research through an emic view. The focus of this research topic is on the process of expressing the image of residential buildings through architectural tectonics. The results obtained are in the form of processing materials, techniques, and flavors in the process of building a house. This discussion is important to straighten the concept of local architecture and the meaning of architectural works through a biographical approach. This research is expected to be the basis for the use of tectonics as a basis for meaningful architectural development.

**Keywords:** identity; locality; image; house

## I. Introduction

Architects have an important role as a medium of expression of values and culture through objects that overshadow the activities of its inhabitants (Sukada et al, 2020). This is paradoxical with the direction of development of residential houses with identical styles to each other. Residential houses should display the image of the occupants (Mangunwijaya, 1998). This concept is held and applied by Eko Prawoto through his residential works. The basics of Romo Mangun's thoughts which are also poured through architectural tectonics have influenced his works a lot (Lina et al, 2018). The architect who had won the Indonesian Cultural Award in 2021 for the Pioneer and Reformer category by the Yogyakarta Special Region Cultural Service, brought the idea of "back to nature". He has produced several residential works which are known to still use local materials to solve environmental problems (Lina et

al, 2018). However, he himself questioned the label 'local architecture' embedded in his works. In the West Java Indonesian Architectural Association (2020) seminar, Eko conveyed that the insensitivity of prospective architects to phenomena in the field caused a lack of understanding of the concept of architecture itself. Locality is a difference that is formed from where he grew up or grew up (Hidayatun et al, 2013), so that local architecture is not a style but an effort to coexist with nature as a mother on this earth.

Locality and modernity are two words that must coexist in an architectural work, as a living work. In the Anabata Talk(s) E-Series (2021) Seminar, Eko Prawoto discussed the topic of modernity, which must retain its identity so that urban values that enter the village do not result in continued urbanization, cultural clashes and cultural amnesia, to the breakdown of the relay of local skills. . This rationale makes architectural tectonics close to him. Previous research by Ng et al (2018) discussed the importance of the role of tectonics as a

unifying element to counter the degeneration of constructed cultural consciousness. Tectonics has a close relationship with the structure, because the shape of the structure is the product of the working mechanism (force) on the building (Zuhri, 2007). Derived from the Greek *techne*, the notion of tectonics developed as a building process that emphasizes the aesthetics or expression of material, structural and construction elements in buildings (Leviato et al, 2017). Material processing in tectonics is related to the development of material technology in the construction sector towards the use of materials sourced from nature and is touted as the concept of sustainable materials (Sulistiawan et al, 2019). Material will affect the character of a place because it is the result of collective identification in the stratification of buildings that have symbolic and aesthetic values (Rociola, 2017). The science of tectonics is a way to create sustainable architectural works.

Architectural works, especially residential houses, are living buildings so the construction process must be in accordance with the times. In this case, tectonics is a construction science that continues to develop along with technological developments, but does not change the initial conditions of tectonics to reveal the truth of a building and its surrounding environment (Hoda Al-Alwan and Yusur B Mahmood, 2020). The development of tectonic studies is always related to the environment (Frampton, 1983), this is supported by Hensel and Cordua (2015) and Harahap (2021) about the emergence of tectonics from discussions on locality. Previous research from Surya et al (2016) supports the development of tectonic aspects in local architecture as a creation of spatial arrangement processing, structural details and building construction, as well as the selection of materials that must be in accordance with their properties and characteristics. The development of architectural tectonic science refers to a further understanding of local architecture with the aim of building works of local unique value with all appropriate materials and technology adjustments. Therefore, tectonics is a construction science that is needed in architecture which must be local.

Architecture must be local, choose the right construction techniques and materials and also keep up with the times. This triggers research questions about identity related to the concept of locality with a house that must reveal the image of its inhabitants. If so, whose identity should be presented between the term 'local', the image of the occupants or the architect himself? This study aims to reveal how tectonic science is used by Eko Prawoto to express the identity of his residential works. In addition, this study aims to examine the biographical method as an approach that can be used in the study of the tectonic expression of an architectural work (in this case, a residence by Eko Prawoto).

## II. Method

This study is a qualitative inductive method that is subjective in nature and an interpretive biographical approach is used to find the tectonic expression of Eko Prawoto's residence through an emic view. The choice of this method is based on the premise that tectonics is related to the inner consciousness of a building (Maulden R., 19986). In tectonics, buildings tell about the process of their establishment, including adaptations carried out as a form of appreciating technology, structures, materials and all that interact in the context of the building. Thus, this study refers to the interpretive paradigm (Sarantakos, 1995) with the aim of exploring meaning (expression) through human behavior (subject of research). This paradigm sees the truth of phenomena depending on the interpretation of others on him (Corbally et al, 2014).

The understanding of the biographical method is particularly inspired by the sociological perspective developed by Plummer (1983) and Denzin (1989). A biography is a writing about the life history of a character (Daud, 2013) which can be used as a research approach to understand the life of a character in more detail. Corbally (2014) supports this statement through a discussion about the correlation between the history or history of the building as an object with the architect's life history that can influence his actions or choices in designing. The search for building expressions is empirically inductive, carried out by observing and researching the phenomena that occur (Widodo, 2017) related to the characters and their thoughts. Thus, the collection of documents including personal letters and dialogues with other subjects related to the character's life, including the nature, influence of ideas and character's character (Denzin, 1989). Thus, the biographical approach allows the researcher to historically describe his actions to be fully understood. This history is obtained from studies based on documents and archives of the character as the basis of knowledge. This knowledge base is then checked with an oral dialogue with the character himself. Merriam (1988) and Marshall and Rossman (1989) state that the process of data collection and data analysis can occur simultaneously in qualitative research. Scatzman and Strauss (1973) say that qualitative data analysis primarily consists of the process of classifying certain things, people and certain events that have certain characteristics. Researchers must position themselves as listeners without presumptions or conclusions in their implementation in the field.

### Data collection

The preparation stage begins with a literature study on architectural tectonics as *background knowledge* in this study to be able to find expressions from residential works. After this preparatory stage is complete, the researcher then moves to the next stage, namely the dialogue stage with the characters and acts as an active listener. The concept of active listening is based on Rogers'

theory (1957), related to *non-verbal supporting*, responding to emotions by *mirroring*, and avoiding paraphrasing. The time spent listening does not have to be long, but rather focuses on the convenience of the research subjects to share information. The science of listening becomes an important basis for being able to delve deeper into the research subject, because for researchers this stage is the most difficult to do. During the data collection process, the researcher should not start from his own idea but be guided by the research subject to then cross-check his thought analysis during the research process. Thus, there are times when the data collection process and the data analysis process occur simultaneously. This process does not stop when field observations related to objects also stop. The process of the researcher's interaction with the subject still continues after the observation of the research object is stopped. The dialogue process can still continue as long as the thoughts of the research subject are still being poured out, even in light conversations.

The self is the most important instrument in this research, so it takes sensitivity to see phenomena as existing knowledge in accordance with the *a posteriori concept* (Setyaningsih, 2019). The tools used to obtain and compile data sources are the human senses ( *observable and measurable sensations* ). This research is subjective because it seeks to reconstruct what is experienced by the interpreter from a biographical perspective. The author interprets (reconstructs) then is checked by the characters during the field observation process. This process takes place simultaneously with the data collection stage. The phenomena obtained during the dialogue process with the subject and field observations on the object are facts which are then written down, including the surrounding elements and points that are considered important based on the author's experience. The author's notes are divided into two, namely descriptive (thoughts of ideas and researchers' attention) and reflective (materials that connect various data, additional ideas, thoughts and display the frame of mind).

As an active listener, the researcher is asked not to paraphrase the thoughts of the subject during the dialogue process. This process will be very difficult to do, especially on the first day and in the process of leading the conversation. The existence of a *silent moment* between the researcher and the subject had occurred because of the curiosity of the subject himself towards the direction of this phenomenological research discussion. Subjects wait for the researcher to ask further questions and ask questions with clear directions for the research process. It is at this time that researchers are proven to have sensitivity, not only in seeing situations or phenomena that occur but also inviting subjects to tell stories about their thoughts. Basic knowledge of the subject and sensitivity to situations are key in biographical research. The dialogue process with the subject ends when the writer feels bored with the repeated data. A short article was made again after saying goodbye to the research subject who had

become a friend to tell about the theme of life.

#### *Data analysis*

The author got a lot of data based on the process of observation and dialogue between designers, homeowners and related people. Each aspect has an important role in the birth of Eko Prawoto's design work by the negotiation process in it. However, the data obtained from the field are not coherent data and are instead scattered like a puzzle. The analysis is done by organizing the data according to certain patterns and categories descriptively. In this research, the analysis phase has actually been carried out in line with the observation process, so that it can be directly validated by the resource person. The data along with some of the validated analyzes were collected, filtered and selected and written sequentially through a transcription and coding process. After collecting observational data containing natural facts and their validated analysis, the empirical data were selected by the researcher with adjustments to research needs. The process of grouping and filtering data is important to adapt to the research discussion.

In this study, the researcher is guided by what the informants have said so that as long as the researcher does not stick to his own ideas. The steps of data analysis were carried out using thematic analysis methods, so that themes would emerge through the data that had been collected by researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The tentative themes that have been found are reviewed by the researcher, linked to the research questions and processed based on their interpretation. The process of determining the theme is the beginning of the data interpretation process carried out by the researcher. Cultural themes were obtained after the tentative themes underwent a triangulation process, one of which was the triangulation process of sources by returning the proposed theme to the research subject (Eko Prawoto) and experts related to the research topic (Yu Sing). The data obtained from this triangulation process can be used as material for the discussion stage.

The process of giving meaning and significance to the analysis is carried out by explaining descriptive patterns and looking for relationships, as well as linkages between existing data descriptions. Cultural themes that have been grouped and juxtaposed with research questions are then compiled and discussed using related theories. This data interpretation process is carried out to explain the relationship and interrelationships between data, patterns and findings using theory. Existing theories and additional theories become tools to discuss the findings obtained. This paper is one of the topics in cultural themes that have been obtained during the research process.

### **III. Results and Discussion**

The study was conducted in two different residences and selected based on differences in

style, *site*, homeowner and occupation, even though both are located in the city of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The first house is located in Kembaran Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta, inhabited by Lantip Kuswaladaya and Jeannie Park as a family with two sons. While the second house is located in the Senganan area, Sleman, Yogyakarta, it is guarded by a woman called Mbak Sum because Maria Hartiningsih as the owner of the house is rarely inhabited it. Researchers come with initial data about the life of Eko Prawoto and architectural tectonic science as *background knowledge*. The tectonic theory used is based on the tectonic concept of Romo Mangun (1998) and Kenneth Frampton (1995) both of which discuss the relationship between materials, building techniques and the surrounding environment (culture and *site*). Researchers found a difference in this study where Eko Prawoto emphasized empathy as the architectural basis in his tectonic concept. Empathy for the environment (cultural, ecological, social, educational, or economic) is the architectural basis for Eko.

Architectural tectonics talks about the art of building. This is related to the negotiation process on all aspects of the environment around the residence as part of the *site*. In dialogue with the research subjects, it was found that their empathy for the environment influences the process of designing a house. The subject has the thought that

the architect works like a midwife who helps the birth process (residential house) itself. Building a house is like realizing the dream of the owner, so the architect is not a top priority. The image of the occupants in a residential house is very important, so that the process of building a residence cannot be separated from negotiations between the architect and the *client*. In this case, Eko Prawoto negotiated the two residential works through architectural tectonic processes. Material selection and processing methods are carried out after the introduction and negotiation process with the *client*. Architectural tectonics in Eko Prawoto's residence has a very broad scope of findings, so the analysis only focuses on matters related to negotiations with *clients* in the development process.

#### House of Jeannie Park and Lantip Kuswaladaya

In the plan it can be seen that the only room that has a name is the kitchen. This is because the ground floor of Lantip Kuswaladaya and Jeannie Park's house has a room that continues to move according to the needs of its residents. The spaces on the ground floor are flexible and open. The ground floor is not made insulated, but becomes a formation with open spaces. This house has two main entrances as can be seen in Figure 1, so that the open and flexible concept is increasingly supported by the ambiguity of the *entrance*.

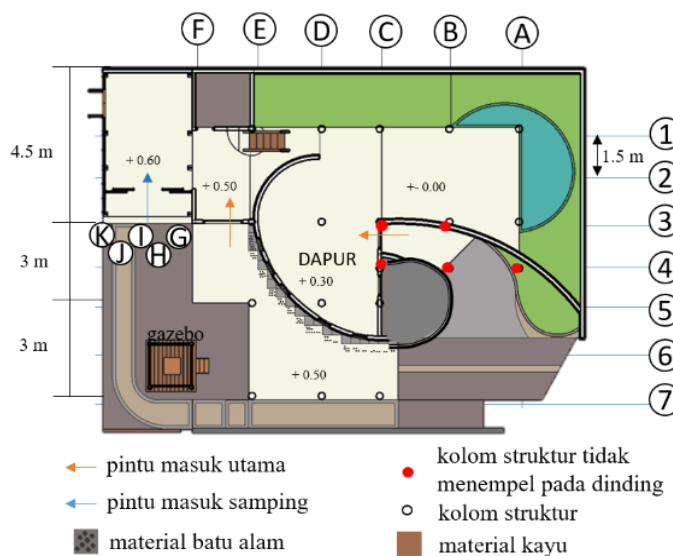


Figure 1. Ground floor plan of Jeannie Park and Lantip Kuswaladaya with accentuation of curved shapes on walls that are not attached to structural columns

There was a negotiation on the design of the house with the placement of the kitchen at the front in accordance with Jeannie Park's wishes. He is a Korean-blooded dancer, from America who really appreciates Indonesian culture but also wants a *homey impression* in his home. For the owner, the kitchen is the heart of a residential house with a warm and friendly impression that wants to be displayed through the direction of circulation from the entrance directly to the kitchen. The kitchen and

outdoor space are only separated by a curved wall as an accent. The curved shape used as an accent has a wall that does not stick to the structural column. This shows that the wall is not part of the structure of a building. The wall is just an *infill* that can be created and shaped as a result of negotiations with the homeowner. The material chosen to fill the curved outer wall also follows the dominance of the surrounding environmental material, namely natural stone. This shows that in the negotiation process,

Eko Prawoto won over nature and the owner of the house in accordance with architectural principles.

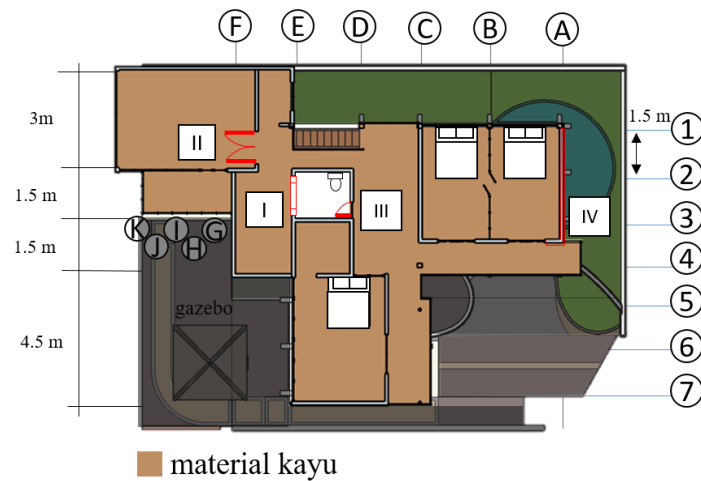


Figure 2. Jeannie Park and Lantip Kuswaladaya's upstairs floor plan with repurposed architectural elements that characterize this residence

The selection of materials and techniques used also follows the needs of the occupants of the house, such as the use of used goods for the architectural elements in it. Eko himself must be able to sort out the right technique to unite residential buildings with the selected used materials. The use of wooden elements that dominate this house is also a form of design adjustment to the character of the occupants in it. Wood that has a warm and flexible impression is used to dominate the upper floor of the house. Architectural elements with descriptions of labels I, II, III and IV are a form of *infill adjustment* of Jeannie Park's house as previously discussed. The architectural elements used in the construction of this house are used elements that are still suitable for use. Each has a different problem solving in terms of structure.

Despite using used architectural elements, the character of the owner of the house is seen as someone who respects the local culture of an area. These old old doors and windows are also a form of solving economic problems. The use of these used architectural elements also gives accentuation to each room, as a form of cultural adaptation to the times. The process of searching for used architectural elements was carried out by the two homeowners themselves, like a *treasure hunt*. Through this fact, Eko Prawoto involves the *client* in building his own house. The process of selecting

materials, searching for used materials, and other things related to content or *infill* are carried out by involving the owner of the dwelling itself, so that the image of the owner of the dwelling will not be lost.

In architectural element I, the type of window installed in the bathroom is the type for the bedroom or living room. This window does not function as an opening, but as an ornament on the outer wall of the bathroom. People will not suspect that the room is a bathroom, while the open impression of this residence actually increases. Architectural element II is a used door with adjustment of placement not attached to the ceiling, so it is clear that the element is not part of the residence but is an additional *infill*. The bathroom also has a unique door with a height of more than two meters exceeding the standard size of a bathroom door, as shown in Figure III. Meanwhile, Figure IV shows the combination of brick walls, structural columns and wood materials. Wood serves to cover this residential building, so that the structural columns in the room are not visible because they are covered by wood material. This solution creates a warm impression from the wood material that is visible from outside Jeannie Park's house, as if this house is a house on stilts with full wood material.

#### Maria Hartiningsih's house



Figure 3: Architectural elements with adaptations to the design of the first dwelling house

Maria Hartiningsih is a journalist who rarely stays in one place for long. Guarded by a woman with a family from time to time, this residence is a place to stop, even if not for a long time. On this basis, the simple concept became the first impression the researcher received when he saw the house. Homeowners do ask for a house that is easy to maintain and care for. The shape of the building is clearly visible from the outside thanks to the low fence, but enough to provide boundaries. This house was built by having two accesses, the back door of the house is close to the highway and the front door which is located in a small alley. The two main access doors are made so that other people can use the large backyard as access for passing by. Unfortunately, one access has been closed and the house has become more private because of the new high fence in the front yard. This high fence separates the area of Maria Hartiningsih's house and the *guest house* next to the house from the outside world. This is because homeowners rarely come, so

the house is made more closed.

This second house has a cool and calm impression, with several large open spaces. The impression of this house is more like a villa than a residential house. The bedroom and bathroom have void spaces that seem to blend with nature, as well as the *bale bengong* in the backyard. The place, called *bale bengong*, is the space that Maria Hartiningsih wants and becomes the accent of the house as a whole. The different angles of inclination made some adjustments to other aspects, such as the shape of the walls which can be seen in figure 4. The house has a considerable difference in height, about 3 meters from the ground in the backyard, so the river is clearly visible even though it is no longer clear now. Despite having a simple and basic shape, the difference in height and angle of inclination makes for various variations. The house looks simple from the outside, but has clear details inside.



Figure 4. Ground floor plan of the second house with adjustment of the walls to the slope angle of the bale bengong structural module, and adjustment of the stairs to the circulation space.

Minor adjustments to the ground floor also led to other adjustments within the building. The stairs are made with a curved shape to adjust the circulation path formed due to the adjustment of the wall angle to the *bale bengong* structure module. This adjustment is in the form of stairs that are curved in shape and made of ceramics with ceramic craft ornaments. This shows the concept of architectural tectonics which is applied as a differentiator between the ground floor and stairs which are intermediaries (not part of the building structure). Meanwhile, adjustments to the ground floor also have an effect on the superstructure as can be seen in Figure 5. The roof tile must be cut to adjust to the degree of slope of the wall that continues upwards. Maria Hartiningsih's house shows more ideas from Eko Prawoto, even so the architect still involves the owner of the house to

participate in the construction of his house. It took Maria Hartiningsih a long time to feel the inner connection between herself and this house.

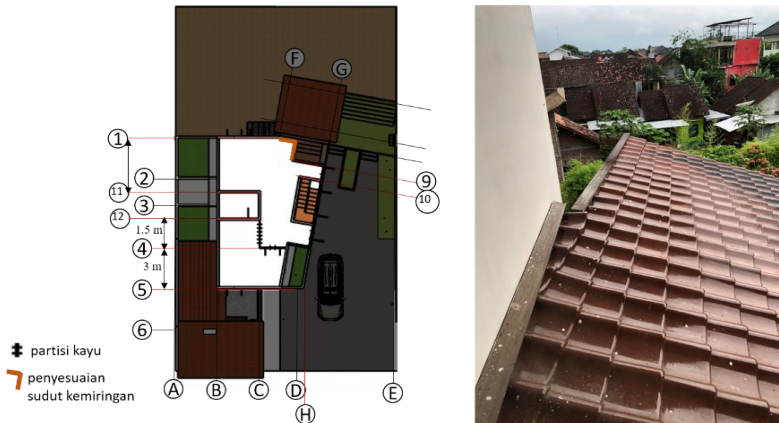


Figure 5. Adjustments to the tile installation technique due to the angle of inclination of the continuous wall to the upper floor wall

### Discussion of Identity, Locality, and Image in Architecture

The results and analysis of the residence by Eko Prawoto show that the identity of an architect is not important. Architects work as intermediaries from an idea that is *intangible* to be realized into a *tangible work*. This idea must be controlled by the architect so as not to lead to the *Architect's syndrome* as discussed by Manguwijaya (1998). In his book, Manguwijaya discusses the image of a building that must be in accordance with the occupants in it. This is related to the identity of the building which in this study emerged through the involvement of the owner of the house in building his residential work. The feeling of owning a house must really emerge so that the identity of a house can be formed. This research supports the previous discussion about the identity of a place that will emerge if it is influenced by the emotional bond between an individual and his social and physical environment (Bernardo & Palma, 2005). This makes the personal relationship between a person and his place of residence the most important factor in determining identity (Ernawati, 2011). The opposite discussion was carried out by Zahroh et al. researchers (2019) about human behavior that can be influenced by the architectural form they live in, so that the architect plays an important role in conveying the message of the building. In the construction of a residential house, it is precisely the building that must be in accordance with the character of the occupants in it. This supports previous research by Nima et al (2015). Architects working with clients as discussed by Palea et al (2012) must have clear communication, coordination and negotiation with the client. The position of the *client* and the architect is equal, but has different responsibilities where the architect is responsible for the identity of the work in accordance with the occupants.

Building a work anywhere must pay attention to site conditions including cultural, economic, social, economic and ecological, so that the label as an architecture that adheres to the concept of locality is deemed inappropriate.

Locality is not a style, but a basic architectural process because every nation has its own culture, so it has different forming factors in each region (Hussein, 2019). Local architecture is indeed a form of an architect's responsibility towards his work, as a form of building identity related to topography, culture, materials and the architect himself (Hidayatun, 2014). Both identity, locality and image in architecture are a unity which is part of the responsibility of an architect as a messenger through an architectural work. Locality is not a hallmark or uniqueness of Eko Prawoto's residential work, but the people in it are what make the work unique. The architect has responsibility for the structure and general principles (including locality), while the client is free to put anything in the house as infill

### IV. Conclusion

Research finds that there is a negotiation between the architect and the client in the process of building a residential house which is then realized through architectural tectonics. Eko Prawoto always involves the client in the construction of his house, because the identity of a house will emerge through a sense of ownership. While locality is not a style, but an architectural process that already exists as the basis and responsibility of an architect. The image of the building is related to the expression that is raised by a building and must be in accordance with its occupants. These intangible aspects can be used as a tangible form of architectural work through architectural tectonic processes. The identity of the architect is not important in the construction of a residential house for Eko Prawoto. The occupants of the house must feel ownership of the architectural building as a work of their residence. Jeannie Park and Lantip Kuswaladaya managed to feel this by taking part in filling in the architectural elements in it. Meanwhile, Maria Hartiningsih took longer to feel that the house was hers. This is also due to his trust in Eko Prawoto during the design process, so it is a challenge to involve the client.

This study also found that tectonics can be a tool to display the image of a residential building,

along with the negotiation process in it. This research supports previous studies on architectural locality, where locality is actually a basic thing in architecture. Locality is not a type of local style or theme, but rather a form of responsibility of an architect for the environment. This study examines the tectonic expressions of Eko Prawoto in more depth through an architectural biographical approach. As a qualitative research, of course this research is subjective and takes a long time to process scattered data. However, this weakness can be used as a starting point for further studies on other architectural works related to architectural tectonics using an architectural biographical.

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