

Contemporary Brutalism: A Study of the Concept of Materiality

Case Study: Comparison Between Brutalism Style of Tadao Ando and Andra Matin

Vika Haristianti¹, Djoko Murdowo²

¹Department of Interior Design, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia

²Department of Interior Design, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia

haristiantivika@telkomuniversity.ac.id, djoko@telkomuniversity.ac.id

Abstract An Architectural and interior design works are made by combining various aspects including materials. Over time, the concept of materiality continues to develop so that this topic becomes relevant for discussion. This paper is a discourse on the development of Contemporary Architecture. The case study of this paper is a comparison of the Brutalism styles of Tadao Ando (Japanese Architect) and Andra Matin (Indonesian Architect). Data is collected by literature studies, namely by collecting various relevant writings related to the topic and then analyzing it using a qualitative method using analyzing of text-data by way of sorting and comparing each result of the writing. The aim of this paper is to find the background characters and concepts of contemporary brutalism from both architects. The results of the study show that both have several aspects in common in the creation of the works but can still have a different brand identity.

Keywords Materiality, Brutalism, Contemporary Architecture

1. Introduction

Architectural work is created by combining various aspects including material. Literally, material is an adjective which means something physical, rather than intellectual or spiritual. While materiality is a concept that explains the use, application, various materials or substances in a building medium. Over time, the science of Architecture experienced many developments as well as the concept of materiality. In its development, this concept also has an interesting uniqueness to learn. Therefore, this discussion becomes relevant because architecture and materiality are interrelated and shape each other's character, especially in the contemporary era.

This paper is a discourse about the development of Contemporary Architecture. Broadly speaking, this paper is divided into three parts, namely the introduction, results and discussion, and conclusions. The case study of this paper itself is a comparison of the concepts of Contemporary Brutalism from Tadao Ando (Japan) and Andra Matin (Indonesia). Data was collected by means of literature study, namely searching for data through secondary sources in the form of scientific journals, reference books, magazines and interview excerpts both from the mass media and the inter-

net. Then, the collected data is analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques (Kumar, 2005), namely text data analysis. Literature review from various sources was analyzed by way of comparison and choice according to the needs of this study. This paper aims to find similarities and differences from the background of the birth of the concept of Contemporary Brutalism of the two architects through a review of some of their work.

2. Results and Discussion

2.1. Materiality As a Concept

In its development, contemporary architectural discourse does not have certain guidelines both in terms of artistic, social and engineering to judge it. However, Kenneth Frampton (1996) in his description offers a summary of architectural tendencies which he calls Architecture in the Globalization Era (1975-2007) where he organized these architectural tendencies into six thematic discussions, namely topology, morphology, sustainability, materiality, habitat and civic form, wherein the materiality section, he compares the function of a material which, if it used to function as a means to realize the structure of the structure, now its role is changing into a means to create certain impressions. An architectural building always has meaning and

meaning can be translated directly through building materials. By definition, Simmel (2001) defines materiality as an "increase in material culture". Material is not only a structural and technological property but also a cultural property.

Materiality also depends on perception and its relationship with life (experience). Zumthor, 2006 explained that materiality is a phenomenon where if an architect is able to place the material correctly and expose the essence of the material to the maximum, he will be able to make the material tell a story more than a culture. This ability is very important because basically, a material does not have a poetic nature, but must be placed carefully to produce a meaningful situation. There is no right way to process material into the right composition. Success is judged when a person can feel something special, something different and he has never felt anywhere else.

Another opinion about materiality and contemporary architecture was delivered by Pallasmaa, 2005, he quoted the words of a therapist from America, Gotthard Booth, 'nothing gives man fuller satisfaction than participation in processes that supersede the span of personal life' from the quote, Pallasmaa argues that the phenomenon that occurs at this time is a decrease in mental effects on the environment due to reduced sensation from one's experience of feeling a material. According to him, the use of natural materials can tell more and more meaningful than material produced in industrial or mass. Today, architecture that emphasizes intellectual concepts contributes to the loss of physical feelings, to the sensuality of an essence. Contemporary Architecture disguised as something avant-garde, only in the context of art without responding to human existential questions. If it is constantly left mixed with political, cultural, economic, cognitive and architectural perceptions it can become an endangered art field.

2.2. Contemporary Brutalism

Initially, the term brutalism was introduced by an architect from Sweden named Hans Asplund in 1949 to describe the design of Villa Goth in Uppsala. However, in 1966, Reyner Banham, an Architectural Critic, introduced the term brutalism in his publication *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* He explained brutalism as a movement for giving a more monumental and heroic impression on the development of modern architecture. Finally, this publication makes the term brutalism famous throughout the world.

Meanwhile, as a work, brutalism architecture was popularized by Le Corbusier through his work *Unite d'Habitation* (1952) and the *Secretariat Building* (Palace of Assembly) in Chandigarh, India (1953). In the mid-20th century, the architecture of brutalism achieved its glory along with World War II because at that time cheap construction methods were needed. The impact of the war left a lot of polemics. Crisis occurred everywhere until finally the English nation first sparked an Education strategy by building 2500 schools using a pre-fabrication system. Until the

mid-1950s, the truth of material remained important teaching of the architecture of brutalism, which manifested itself as an obsessive concern for the expressive articulation of mechanical and structural elements.

In terms of shape, brutalism-style buildings are usually formed with repetitive modular elements to form masses that represent certain functional zones. Concrete is used to symbolize honesty and simplicity. Cast concrete surface shows the basic properties of construction and exposes the texture of the wooden boards used. Building materials of brutalism include bricks, glass, steel, and chisels. However, it does not mean that all buildings with exposed concrete exterior can be considered as having a brutal style.

Brutalism as an architectural philosophy is often also associated with socialist ideologies that tend to be supported by designers, such as Alison and Peter Smithson. This style had a strong place in socialist (communist) European architecture in mid-1965-1989. Countries such as Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia are countries which are closely related to brutalism. Although the brutal movement was considered dead in the mid-1980s, today many buildings with concrete facades have been built, although most are made in a more subtle style. This renewal was also carried out one of them in the renovation of several buildings in the style of brutality, such as in Sheffield's Park Hill, England. The buildings of brutalism itself today have been registered as cultural heritage buildings. This is considered as an appreciation of the brutal-ism journey in the world of Architecture.

Today, brutalism is still chosen as an architectural style even though an architect has no problems with the budget. This happens because the style of brutalism is considered as a style that has honesty, natural and anti-bourgeois. Concrete and brutality eventually developed in Japan. Tadao Ando, an architect who has a vision in making work by processing concrete into a free-standing frame into a parapet wall is one that carries this concept. His work is a reflection and important process of creating a building for living things. Uchipanashi (designation for exposed concrete style in Japan) is considered as a work that symbolizes modernity, authenticity, and honesty in the developments in contemporary architectural studies. Just like the concept of brutality that occurred in the era of the 50s, Ando also wanted to show the natural impression of a building. Ando has a large role in the development of concrete and contemporary brutalism in Japan. Through his works. One proof of its influence is the 1995 The Pritzker Architecture Prize which he received for his success in creating extraordinary works and science for the future of architecture.

In his work, we can see how he processes concrete elements and combines them with natural lighting effects. The Chapel of the light has a cold, narrow and dim atmosphere with the dominance of exposed concrete, then in the darkness the light of the cross appears from a hollow wall, as a statement that the sym-bol gives light to its adherents, so

that a sense of solemnity can be created when we enter the building. Just as Peter Zumthor said in his book where material can tell more than a culture, Tadao Ando has succeeded in doing that in his work. The concrete building he founded was able to tell stories, and form a perception for the people who entered into it.

In Indonesia, Architect Andra Matin, also developed a style of brutality in his works. The wooden sills and wooden windows of Madura second-hand stalls can become one of the most luxurious restaurants in Jakarta. The game of cross-ventilation is one of the important elements in Andra Matin's design. In addition, the composition of ironwood material, with a concrete frame is one of its other characteristics, as seen in the private house and Komunitas Salihara building he designed. Some of his works are difficult to digest only from two-dimensional images. He often uses minimalist lines with geometric structures that fell the same. And the division of the room level that gives the impression of being connected between one level with another level. Many consider that Andra Matin can succeed in creating self-identity and pride in the architecture he designed. According to him, aesthetics are honesty and balance. By displaying the material as it was originally, without finishing he considered it as honesty. As well as balance, he regards as yin and yang, which are complementary things, such as it looks not finished outside but actually, when entering the building it is finished perfectly.

He has a vision to always be dynamic and add newness. Andra Matin always wants to make everything in detail from the largest to the smallest to create things that are different from the others. Such was the vision he had. His success in designing can be seen from the awards he has received, one of which is the coronation as one of the 101 most active architects in the world in 2007. In Indonesia alone, he is known as one of the architects in the contemporary era. From the honesty and balance that he wanted to display through the material, the use of the concept of brutality was born in many of his works.

2.3. Contemporary Brutalism of Tadao Ando

Tadao Ando, born in Osaka in 1941, is a self-taught architect. At first, he was a boxer. He was raised by his grandmother in a mixed-use home in the city of Osaka. As a child, he worked part-time in a wooden workshop in front of his grandmother's house. This has led to an interest in the world of architecture. At the age of 18, he first designed the interior of the night club. In 1965 at the age of 24, he decided to travel the world to equip himself with knowledge through direct experience than by studying at school.



Figure 1. Tadao Ando

(<http://civilianglobal.com/design/tadao-ando-architect-pritzker-prize/>)

In 1976 he received an award from The Japanese Architectural Association for the field of architecture. Tadao Ando is an extraordinary architect who has the ability to combine artistic and intellectual aspects and rationality in creating a building. This, in the end, delivered him as an architect with extraordinary capabilities. He always has a very strong vision when making work. Every building he creates is always adapted to the type of life or form of activities such as what will take place in the building. At an age where most architects are just starting to make a mature work, he has succeeded in creating an unusual masterpiece.

His trademark is creating works is always trying to process the elements of the wall which are actually the basic elements of architecture. From the wall that he managed to process, unique and different spaces were born, although basically Tadao Ando cultivated the space from ordinary pillars, walls, and domes. After that this approach was manifested in a series of reinforced concrete houses, each focused on one thing or another about the atrium, specifically Matsumoto and Ishihara houses from the late seventies built on the outskirts of Osaka. Where the thing that is focused on this building is the terrace, opening in front of the forest, Ando also processes concrete into a free-standing frame into a parapet wall and is combined with stained glass or steel-framed glass blocks.



Figure 2 Implementation of glass block and steel by Tadao Ando

(<https://ofhouses.tumblr.com/post/154276545244/377-tadao-ando-glass-block-house-ishihara>)

In his work, Tadao Ando always has a mission to revive the unity between home and nature using simple geometric elements that ultimately form a sensation for people who are in the room through the lighting effect. His work is a reflection and important process of creating a building for living things. In 1995, Tadao Ando was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize for his success in creating extraordinary work and science for the future of architecture.



Figure 3. Rokko Housing (<https://www.pritzkerprize.com/laureates/1995>)

Tadao Ando admitted that he admired several architects, Le Corbusier. He always held the principle that as an architect, we must always give the best in every project. In addition, architects must also be able to make the lives of others better and give inspiration to them. Some of Tadao Ando's works include Church On The Water in Hokkaido, Japan, Rokko Housing I, II and III in Kobe, Japan, Naosima Contemporary Art Museum, Japan and Fabrica (Benetton Communications Research Center), Treviso, Italy.

The scope and scale of the Tadao Ando architecture began to develop in the mid-eighties with two major works namely Rokko Housing which was built on a hill site overlooking Kobe Harbor and a commercial complex, known as the Festival in downtown Naha, Okinawa in 1984. Rokko adapting Le Corbusier's work: Roq Rob which was built in 1949, while the Festival is considered a cube of seven introspective stories protected by perforated screen walls from the chaotic metropolis surrounding it in all directions. Tadao Ando intends to create a lighting effect from the piles of pillars in the seven corners. In his work, Tadao Ando has never considered western and eastern architectural styles as the opposite. He argues that both have differences due to different cultures in the area. However, we must be able to respect both as differences in mindset and lifestyle. At present, he hopes to continue to create something that can contribute to the lives of many people.

2.4 Contemporary Brutalism Andra Matin

Andra Matin, who is familiarly called Aang, was an Architect born in Bandung in 1962. He was a graduate majoring in Architecture at the Parahyangan University in Bandung. In 1998, he started his own firm, named Andramatin Architect. At present, he has designed hundreds of buildings throughout Indonesia including residential, museums, mosques, restaurants, city parks and others. Some of his famous works include Agus Suwage Villa, Salihara Community Building, Potato Head Beach Club and Katamama Hotel. Many consider some of his works difficult to digest if only viewed from a two-dimensional image. However, the hedonistic impression in it will be felt and recorded in ourselves when we see it.

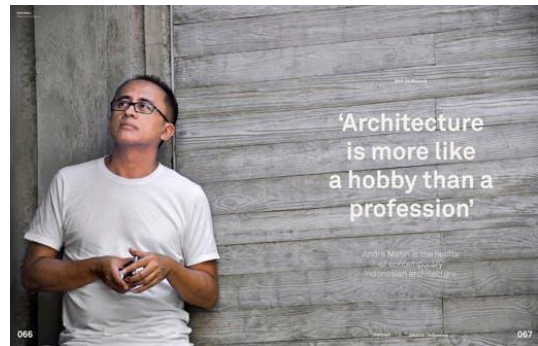


Figure 4. Andra Matin

(<https://archinect.com/news/article/78832523/an-interview-with-indonesian-architect-andra-matin>)

When asked about his design philosophy, he will answer "I have no idea." One of his works is the Tanah Teduh complex where he collaborates with eight other architects to build 20 houses on a 20,000 m² land in Jakarta. Every architect has an idol, and so does Andra Matin. He idolizes Japan and always takes the time to visit there every year. According to him, every short trip to Japan is a short 'course' that gets deeper and deeper. Where good things can be set as examples that could be applied in Indonesia.

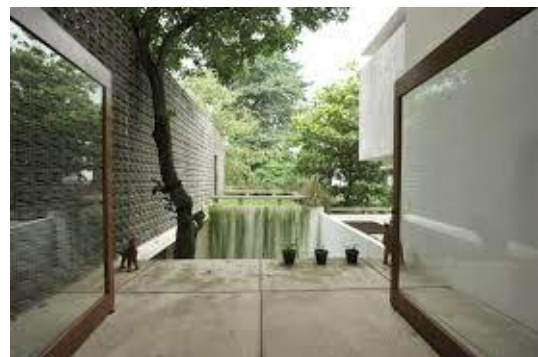


Figure 5 Tanah Teduh Residential Project by Andra Matin (andramatin.com)

According to him, inspiration can come from anywhere. Mostly from nature, but also from other architectural works, literature, or even just from watching movies and reading poetry. From his perspective, he explained that everyone has different personalities and traits. Comfort will bring someone out identity. In each of his designs, he never issued a statement which was his style of work. He prefers other people who give an assessment of his work.

In making work, Andra Matin wants to apply the concept of vernacular architecture into the design of his building as an interview quote that he did with dailywhynot, namely "... Indonesia's vernacular architecture is very stunning. Indonesia's vernacular architecture is very attractive to me. The challenge for me now is to think of how to make it into the new architecture of Indonesia. Looking back, if we find a suitable vernacular we can definitely take that for inspiration. Doesn't matter if it is an older architecture or the modern one, the changes are caused by culture, however, there is something that will not change in Indonesia and that is the climate and it becomes a habit to adapt to the climate to have a good surrounding home. "



Figure 6. Interior Design at Kata Mama Bali (katamama.com)

In another interview with fimela.com, he also said that he liked pure geometric shapes. According to him, "... If you have a permanent character, people will come because they know the character of our design. Our market may be limited, but with such a focus we can be deeper with our characteristics. It will be special and feel the soul of our design. That's where the character will be strong and there will still be people who are looking for a strong character like that "

3. Conclusions

The conclusions from the results of the analysis of this paper are explained in the following table:

Table 1. The conclusion of paper

No		Tadao Ando	Andra Matin
1.	The work is inspired by the culture of origin	yes	yes
2.	The work is inspired by figures who are admired	yes	yes
3.	Branding that they want to display has similarities between one another	no	no
4.	The results of processing the material showed the same impression of each other	no	no

Tadao Ando always stressed that he was Japanese, and his design was an implementation of traditional Japanese design, in his design, Ando tried to make harmony between buildings and nature. Similar to Tadao Ando, Andra Matin also wants to apply the concept of vernacular architecture into the design of the building. In addition, the authors found the fact that Tadao Ando idolized Le Corbusier which incidentally was one of the originators of brutalism architecture, and Andra Matin idolized Japan and Tadao Ando who were also icons of modern brutalism. The correlation that the authors conclude from the facts above is that apart from origin and culture, the design of an architect can unwittingly be influenced by their idols.

In this contemporary era, branding must always be there, each architect wants to bring out their character and identity not as a narcissistic reason, but to look outstanding as well as both. In essence, I concluded that Tadao Ando and Andra Matin produced Contemporary Architecture designs with a critical regionalism approach and their designs were influenced by culture, life's journey and perhaps (unconsciously) also influenced by what and who they idolized. Both of them also want to create a balance between nature and buildings.

Each creates an identity image, the difference is that people judge that Tadao Ando's works are very spiritual. While in Indonesia, Andra Matin's work is considered to be very hedonist. That is, even if processing the same material, the impression created can still be different, it all depends on the image that the architect wants to create. Brutalism is a style, but the interpretation of the user can still be different in every building, what is unique here is that in the past, concrete was used to create the impression of honesty and anti-bourgeoisie, nowadays concrete can be anything the architect wants. The resulting impression becomes richer than before.

So it can be concluded that although Tadao Ando and Andra Matin have similarities in carrying out design approaches by applying the concept of contemporary brutalism, the branding and image of the work produced will remain different according to the characteristics that each architect wants to create. The similarity of the two is the work created was inspired by a cultural background.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kumar, R. *Research Methodology: A Step by Step Guide for Begginer*. London: Sage Publication. 2005.
- [2] Frampton, Kenneth. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* Forth Edition. London: Thames and Hudson. 1996.
- [3] Simmel, G. *Consumption Critical Concepts In the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge. 2001. 89 p.
- [4] Miller, Daniel. *Materiality*. USA : Duke University Press. 2005.
- [5] Zumthor, P. *Thinking Architecture*. Germany: Birkhauser Verlag AG. 2006.
- [6] Pallasmaa, J. *The Eyes of The Skin*. Great Britain: TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall. 2005.
- [7] Furuyama, M. *Ando*. Germany : Taschen. 2006.
- [8] Matin, A. Armand, Avianti, et.all. *Haikk!*. Jakarta : Borneo publications. 2008.
- [9] Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Eyes of The Skin*. Great Britain: TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall. 2005.
- [10] State, James. *Architecture Today : Experimental In Japan*.
- [11] Dailywhynot. "Getting Personal with Indonesian Architect". 2012. <http://dailywhatnot.com/feature/andra-matin/> . Accessed 4th August 2019 at 14.00.
- [12] Fimela.com "Andra Matin Interview". 2012. <http://www.fimela.com/read/2012/08/30/andra-matin-arsitek-dengan-karakter-jywa-pada-setiap-desain/page/0/1>. Accessed 20th June of 2019 at 14.00
- [13] Ibrahim, Athina. "Unconventional Space with Andra Matin" 11 November 2013. <http://www.whiteboardjournal.com/interview/12236/unconventional-spaces-with-andra-matin/>. Accessed 4th August 2019 at 14.00.
- [14] Movingcity.org. "Andra Matin interview". Juli 2013. <http://movingcities.org/interviews/andra-matin-mark-magazine-2013/>. Accessed 4th August 2019 at 14.00.