Public space of *Surakarta* palace square as a Sacred and profane Architectural Meaning

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ABSTRACT

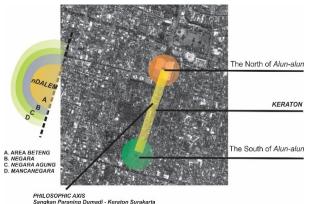
One of the parts of Javanese palace which is integrated and inseparable is the square. Surakarta Palace complex owns two squares, namely Alun-alun Lor and Alun-alun Kidul. The existence of the square as part of the spatial structure in Surakarta palace complex becomes the philosophical axis of Sangkanparaningdumadi, which has a transcendental meaning related to human life. This philosophy denotes that human beings must always take into account where they were originated from and where they will end. In Javanese spiritual understanding, the north (lor) and south (kidul) represent the powers of the afterlife. The north represents heaven and the south represents hell. They also represent an imaginary straight line to the south coast as well as a spatial structure pattern influenced by the cosmological concept of Javanese Hindu society. In the past, the space in Alun-Alun Kidul was closed, had high privatization, and served as a place for rituals of silence and contemplation of the king. The method utilized in this study is a phenomenological descriptive approach, referring to grounded theory that does not apply the term population but emphasizes more on social situations consisting of four elements, namely place, activity, person (actor), and time. The results of the study indicated the existence of public space's sacred-profane meaning in space transformation of Surakarta Palace Square. The sacred-profane space includes: sub-concept, nature of space, and concept category. Space is utilized for activities according to its spatiality and time. And, the physical order pattern remains in a fixed form with slight changes in the meaning of space function and behavior.

Key words : Alun-alunlor, Alun-alunkidul, Surakarta palace, Sacred and profane space, Cosmological concept of square

Introduction

Solo or *Surakarta* owns nuances of religion, architecture, and past cultural activities. Together with its cultural and legal life, *Surakarta* palace is still in existence in the present time. The existence of this palace is strengthened by the belief in the existence of parallel and reciprocal relationships between the macrocosm and microcosm, with the king as the center of the microcosm. Some of the cultural lifes that gave birth to traditional ceremonies in *Surakarta* palace among others: *Grebeg, Kirab, Jamasanpusaka, Labuannyadran, Mahesalawung, Tingalanjumenengandalem, Tingalandalem* and *Pasowananngabekten* (Lego, 2005). *Keraton Surakarta* has a unique Javanese tradition and the people should be proud of. During the reign of *Sunan Pakubuwono II*, urban planning was preceded by the first displacement of *Surakarta* palace from *Kartasura*. One part of the Javanese Palace that is integrated

and inseparable is the square. The series of two squares is located in Surakarta Palace complex, namely Alun-alun Lor and Alun-alun Kidul. Regarding its existence, the square is part of the spatial structure of Surakarta palace complex and becomes a philosophical axis of Sangkanparaningdumadi. Thus, transcendentally, this implies that human beings should always take into account where they were originated from and where they will end.



li - Keraton Surakarta

Fig. 1. Philosophical Axis concept and the archetypal hierarchy of space in Surakarta Palace. Source: Google Earth, edited by writer (2020)

In Javanese spirituality, the north (lor) and south (kidul) symbolize powers of the hereafter where the north symbolizes heaven and the south symbolizes hell. When Hindus entered the island of Java, the king was considered a living deity, a human being in whom was a Hindu deity. The god-king is the divine protector of society. He owns total control of power; politically, socially, and religiously, and to him all aspirations of society are addressed (Wardani, 2010; Tohar, 2019). As stated by Eliade (Eliade, 1959) that in the state there are two different spatial parts, namely: the core (the sacred) and the outer (profane) parts. So that Eliade firmly divides, in a spatial order, the sacred area and the area that is considered unclean (profane).

In the 18th century, Surakarta consisted of Negara, Negara Agung, and Mancanegara. In terms of power, they are different because each of them is occupied by a distinctive social group. Negara is the residence of the nobles and Negara Agung is the gathering place for peasants. Palace is only for the royal family, so it is clear that there is a practice of power in this area, with the royal family as the center. Nobles with lower status reside in the outer circle and ordinary people with the lowest level of status reside in the suburbs (Purwani, 2016).

Materials Methods

The Study Area

Surakarta as a royal city in Java has a belief related to the creation of the cosmological world, namely the belief in harmony between the small universe (microcosm) and the big universe (macrocosm). This can be observed in the Javanese king's governmental system which is adhered to by the king as the sole ruler (ruler of the small universe). According to Purwani (Purwani, 2016), the most accepted Javanese cosmological layout consists of two aspects, hierarchical circles and axes. Thus, matters related to this layout are considered to be cosmological, because they are considered to represent the cosmos in Indic Cosmology. This view has also been discussed extensively by several researchers (including Santoso, 2008 and Tjahjono, 1989), all of whom focus on the Javanese palace.

In understanding the search for Javanese essential values, there are several theories which assume that Java is a harmonious cosmological realm. Purwani (Purwani, 2016) stated that the previous theory in Java mostly assumed that Hindu and Buddhist culture were very influential and the most significant. This is reflected in the Javanese spatial layout based on Buddhist and Indic Cosmology.

The city of Surakarta, which was built during the



Fig. 2. Four-Circle concept the archetypal hierarchy of space in *Surakarta* Palace. Source: Bahrend (1982)

time of King Paku Buwana II, is an ancient city. And the history of this city cannot be separated from the beginning of the Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace as the successor of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom. So that the city of Surakarta is known as one of the political centers of the development of Javanese tradition (Rahman, 2015). The city of Surakarta, which was built during the time of King Paku Buwana II, is an ancient city. The history of this city cannot be separated from the beginning of the Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace as the successor of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom. Thus, the city of Surakarta is renowned as one of the political centers of the development of Javanese tradition (Rahman, 2015). The city plans and traditional Javanese urban planning patterns that are recognized and characterized are: the palace, the square, traditionally erected buildings and roads that intersect in squares, all of which can be located in the city center (Fig. 3).

Another influence is in the division of the kingdom, which is described as a concentric circle of power distribution. The first power is in the innermost circle - A (Figure 1). The more outward (B-C-D), the less power it owns.

The Study Method

The method utilized in this study is a phenomenological descriptive approach (grounded theory). It does not apply the term population but emphasizes more on social situations consisting of four elements, namely place, activity, person (actor), and time.

Through the understanding existing in Javanese spirituality, the north (*lor*) and south (*kidul*) directions symbolize the powers of the afterlife. The north represents heaven and the south represents hell. The state is understood as a place owning two

distinct spatial parts (Figures 1 and 2): the core, among, and support as a part of open space. In spatial terms, the division of regions are divided into areas that are holy (sacred) and areas that are considered general/unclean/profane (Fig. 4 and 5).

Discussion

The study dicovered a transformation of the spatial order of public space (according to the division of regions) which is meaningful and sacred-profane based on the time of day and night.

The study at the *Surakarta* Palace Square resulted in the finding of a transformation of public spatial layouts (according to regional expansion) which is sacred-profane. The existence of the space based on the time of day and night is temporary, in accordance with cultural and religious events.

Where these results illustrate that

The *Keraton* Mosque area, which is on the north side of the North Square, has an important role as a place for religious and cultural activities of the palace heritage. The nature of the space that occurs is Sakral - Profane (SP), according to the time the area of the mosque room is held events, one of which is during the *Garebeg*, *Sekaten* events or during *Eid al-Fitri* and *Eid al-Adha*. The space in the mosque area becomes crowded and has nuances between culture and religion, so that the sacred and profane atmosphere is mutually reinforcing.

The twin banyan rooms belonging to the palace, namely *Dewadaru* and *Jayadaru*, have an important role as a sacred place. Become a place to ask for blessings and safety for people who believe in it.

The *Pagelaran* building space is located in North Square and has a role as a palace for the gamelan instruments played at the opening of *Garebeg* and

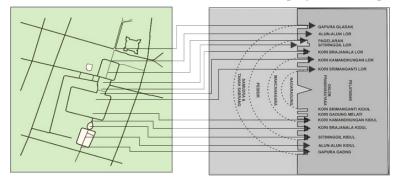


Fig. 3. Maps of *Alun-AlunLor*, Palace Complex, and *Alun-Alun Kidul* – and *Surakarta* Palace Cosmology Source: Google Earth, edited by writer (2017)



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Fig. 4. Maps of *Alun-AlunLor area and table*, and Complex *Surakarta* Palace table of observation unit, open space and Character room Source: Google Earth, analyzed and edited by writer (2020)

	No	observation unit	Open Space	Character Room
	1	Northwest hearse building	CORE	Profan – Sakral (PS)
	2	Southwest hearse building	CORE	Sakral – Profane (SP)
	3	SitihinggilKidul Building	CORE	Profane (P)
	4	Twin banyan in the middle of the square	CORE	Sakral – Profane (SP)
	5	Central Square West Side of Lor Square	CORE	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	6	Central square in the square	CORE	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	7	The Caucasian kebo cage derived from KiaiSlamet	CORE	Sakral (S)
	8	Roadside conditions around the square	CORE	Profane –Sakral (PS)
	9	Pedestrian room	CORE	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	10	North side plaza room	CORE	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	11	Kori BrajanalaKidul	AMONG	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	12	Kori Gurawan	AMONG	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	13	Kori Gading inside	AMONG	Profane (P)
	14	Kori Gading outside	AMONG	Profane (P)
	15	Street space in Baluwerti Village (inside the Citadel)	AMONG	Profane (P)
	16	NDalem courtyard space in Baluwerti Village	AMONG	Profane-Sakral (PS)
	17	Front yard space Kamandungan	SUPPORT	Sakral-Profane (SP)
	18	The courtyard of the Palace Museum	SUPPORT	Profane –Sakral (PS)
	19	SupitUrang street room	SUPPORT	Profane –Sakral (PS)
	20	Kori Pamurakan street space	SUPPORT	Profane –Sakral (PS)
	21	The Great Mosque of the Keraton and its courtyard	SUPPORT	Profane –Sakral (PS)

Fig. 5. Maps of *Alun-AlunKidu areal*, and Complex *Surakarta* Palace table of observation unit, open space and Character room. *Source:* Google Earth, analyzed and edited by writer (2020)

Name Room	Phenomenon	Facts	Consequence	Nature of Space
Performance Building Room	Place for the palace cultural dances, exhibitions, <i>Grebeg</i> and <i>Sekaten</i>	Dance-cultural venue, exhibition hall or sales space during <i>Garebeg</i> and <i>Sekatenan</i> (yard)	Bale Pagelaran	Profane - Sacred (PS)
Dewadaru and Jayadaru Banyan Room	The place between the two banyan trees is considered a sacred space	Place for <i>tirakat</i> , offerings	<i>Papansuci /</i> Holy board	Sacred - Profane(SP)
or Square Room	Temporary place for residents at the <i>Sekaten</i> and <i>Garebeg</i> events	Temporary shelter market for fire victims from <i>Klewer</i> market (2012)	rental board	Profane (P)
Great Palace Aosque Room	The place for religious and cultural events of the <i>Surakarta</i> Palace	The mosque of the past which is still used by the community for prayer and the interests of the palace's cultural customs	Prayer room	Sacred - Profane(SP)
Central Square Nest Side of <i>Lor</i> Square	Parking for vehicles during the <i>Garebeg</i> and <i>Sekaten</i> events	A large field which in the past was a place for various ritual activities related to the palace culture	parking board	Profane-Sakral (PS)
South Side Street Room	The location of the road on the south side of the Lor square which changed during the activities of <i>Sekaten</i> and <i>Garebeg</i>		inside the board	Profane-Sakral (PS)
or Sitihinggil Room	The place where the king saw the activities of the palace's cultural customs	<i>Sitihinggil Lor</i> in the plaza lor which is the king's room with the elevated land	swing board	Sakral (S)
upit Urang or Street Room	Place for motor vehicle roads	The street space in <i>Supit Urang</i> <i>Lor, alun-alunlor,</i> which is used for public motorized vehicles leading to the palace (<i>beteng</i>)	inside the board	Profane –Sakral (PS)
ori Pamurakan treet Room	Place the path between <i>Lor</i> 's square doorway and the outside of the fort	The space in the <i>Kori Pamurakan</i> area, <i>alun-alunlor</i> , which at the time of satusuro was used by part of the pedistrians for street vendors selling space	board out and in	Profane-Sakral (PS)
ori Brajanala or Room	Place the path between the exit into the settlement in the palace fortress	Spatial connectivity between the residential area of <i>Baluwerti</i> (inside the fort) and the open public area, namely the <i>alun-alunlor</i>	board out and in	Profane-Sakral (PS)
ori Gladhag and ori Pamurakan rooms	Place a path between the entrance and exit of Lor's square and the outside of the fort	<i>Kori Gladhag</i> and <i>Kori</i> <i>Pamurakan</i> are access spaces for the exit and entry of the community from the outside of the palace towards the main square.	board out and in	Profane-Sakral (PS)
Cori Gledheg or Room	Right on the road between the exit and entrance of the main square with the <i>Klewer</i> market	Space connectivity between the <i>Klewer</i> Market area and the open public area, namely the Lor square	board out and in	Profane-Sakral (PS)
ori Gledheg Netan Room	The place of the road between <i>Baluwerti</i> and <i>Bathangan</i> village	Spatial connectivity between the residential area of <i>Bathangan</i> village and the open public area, namely the <i>Lor</i> square	board out and in	Profane (P)

Table 1. Phenomenon	- Facts - Nature of Space -	(Alun-alunLorKeraton Surakarta)), Edited and analyzed by writer (2020)

Table 1. Commune				
Name Room	Phenomenon	Facts	Consequence	Nature of Space
The Gledheg Baluwerti Room	The place between the roads of the residents of the <i>Baluwerti</i> village	The interaction space near the village as an area of interaction for the villagers in the settlement of the <i>Baluwerti</i> village	inside the board	Profane (P)
<i>Baluwerti</i> Village Office Space	Place between residents of <i>Baluwerti</i> village if there are administrative needs of the community	The <i>Baluwerti</i> urban village office underwent a temporary change in space to become an interaction area for villagers	working board	Profane (P)
Street and courtyard space <i>n Dalem</i>	A gathering place for residents in settlements	Changes to <i>n Dalem</i> street and courtyard space	<i>NDalemplataran</i> inner board	Profane – Sakral (PS)
The front yard of <i>Kamandungan</i>	Place for the palace cultural rituals (annual)	Changes to <i>Kamandungan</i> courtyard space	Glass board (kamandhungan)	Sakral –Profane (SP)
The courtyard of the Palace Museum	A place to study the cultural history of the <i>Surakarta</i> palace	Changes to the Palace Museum room	Plataran museum	Profane – Sakral (PS)

Sekaten. The nature of space that occurs is Profane -Sacred (PS). As a place for palace cultural dances that are open to the public, as well as a place for cultural exhibitions at *Sekaten* events for the community.

The middle field room, changed its character to Profane (P) during cultural events because it was used as a temporary place for the *Klewer* market after the fire in 2012. So that it became a space for people to meet and be crowded, into a space of high economic value and buying and selling transactions.

The *Lor* Square room, which is on the west side, becomes a parking area for four-wheeled vehicles when there are activities such as *Sekaten* and *Garebeg*. The nature of space becomes Profane (P).

The south side of the road space becomes the center of street vendors and becomes a gathering space for traders and buyers. The nature of the space becomes Profane (P), as a place for community recreation in looking for objects of the palace culture (keris, traditional clothes, cultural accessories).

The *Sitihinggil Lor* room, as a place to sit (sitting the king) when viewing the palace cultural dances, is also a place for the king to contemplate. The nature of space is Sacred - Profane (SP).

Jalan Supit Urang Lor is an area that is usually passed during Garebeg, jamasan of heirlooms, and palace cultural rituals. One of them is the space for the kebobule, a descendant of Kiai Slamet, in the garebeg pam summit. So that the nature of the space becomes sacred (S) during the cultural ritual event, but on weekdays it becomes a public traffic lane so that it is Profane (P).

Jalan Kori Pamurakan space is a sacred road during Garebeg cultural events, jamasan and palace cultural rituals. Kori Pamurakan is the main entrance to the road to the Palace. When a normal day is a community traffic lane, it is profane (P). When Garebeg and Sekaten become crowded as places to sell street vendors that enliven cultural events.

The *Kori Brajanala Lor* area is the entrance gate as an access and exit for the *Baluwarti* village (the village inside the fort). The nature of the space becomes sacred when cultural ritual activities are used as access to *Garebeg, Jamasan, Sekaten* and palace culture ceremonies. When a normal day becomes the door of access to the community, both the residents of *Baliwerti* village and the community, so it becomes profane.

The Kori Gladhag and *Kori Pamurakan* rooms, as access in and out of the palace area so that they are Profane - Sacred (PS) rooms. When the event is related to cultural ritual activities, it changes into a sacred space.

The *Kori Gladak Lor* room, the same as the *Kori Gladhag* and *Kori Pamurakan* rooms, is the main exit to the palace area and is Profane - Sacred (PS). Changes in room settings depend on whether there are palace cultural events.

The *Kori Gledheg Wetan* room, as an in-and-out access and as a sign/*tetenger* between *Kampung Baluwerti* and *Kampung Bathangan*. Space becomes profane (P).

The Gledheg Baluwerti Room, as an access road in

the settlement of *Kampung Baluwerti*. The space that occurs is as profane space (P).

Baluwerti Village Office Space, as a space for interaction between residents of *Baluwerti* Village. The space that occurs is profane (P).

NDalem Street and courtyard space, as an open space when there are cultural events of the *Baluwerti* villagers. The space that occurs is profane (P).

The front yard of *Kamandungan*, as an open space that is closed during cultural rituals in *Baluwerti* Village, so that the space is sacred (SP. However, on weekdays it is profane (P) because many people visit for recreation and take pictures in the open space yard the background of the *Kamandungan* building and *Kori BrajanalaLorand Kori Baluwerti*.

The courtyard of the *Keraton* Museum, as an entrance area for Museum exhibitions and as the use of public space in appreciating learning the history of palace culture. So that the nature of space is profane (P).

The *Sitihinggil Kidul* Building Room, as a place for the king to sit while enjoying dances and cultural events and while enjoying the silence sitting in the South Square. The nature of the Sacred-Profane Space, this is because in the area of this building there is a walled place of *Kiai Slamet'skebobule* which is often visited by residents who want to see it.

The Twins Bayan Room is a sacred space for those who wish to pray and do penance according to the beliefs of the Javanese in the past. The nature of the space becomes sacred (S). And usually people who seek blessings pray from night to morning.

Alun-alun Kidul, becomes a space that is sacredprofane space. It becomes a sacred space (S) when there are *Eid al-Fitri* and *Eid al-Adha* prayers. It became a profane space (P) when it became the venue for the Sekaten event, which became crowded in the middle of the field.

The *Mahesa* Cage Room, is a sacred space - Profan (SP). When the *kebobule*, the descendant of *Kiai Slamet*, is led to the direction of *Kamandungan* for the *Garebeg* cultural ritual procession the space that is traversed will be sacred (S). And then when the visitors are busy having recreation to see the cages and feed the Caucasians, the nature of the space becomes profane (P).

The East Street Side Room is a Profane Room

Southwest side of the pedestrian pedestrian room, Profane Room Expression

The room on the north side of the South Square, the Expression of the Profane Room

Kori Brajanala Kidul room, access in and out of *Baluwerti* village, Expression Profane Room

Gurawan Kori Room, access in and out of *Gurawan* village, Profane Room Expression

Kori Gading Room, Access in and out of villages and *Gading* market, Profane Room Expression

Kori Gading Room, Access in and out and as a sign / *tetenger* Profane Room Expression

Kampung Baluwerti Room, Village road access, Profane Room Expression

Road Space in *Kampung Baluwerti*, Access to roads within the village, Expression of Profane Space

NDalem Courtyard Room, as a space for cultural events in the village, the Profane Room Expression

The front yard of *Kamandungan*, as a space for cultural events in the village, the Expression of Sacred-Profane Space

The Palace Museum's courtyard room, the entrance room to the Museum exhibition, by utilizing public space and as an appreciation room for learning the history of the palace's culture, Expression of the Profane Room

Jalan Supit Urang, as a road space supiturang the palace fortress area becomes an area of cultural interaction and community members, Expression of Profane Space

Jalan Kori Pamurakan space, as a space for cultural interaction and community members, the Expression of Profane Space

Results

The study discovered that the meaning of public space in the transformation of *Surakarta* Palace Square owns a sacred and profane nature. The sacred-profane space includes: Sub Concept, Nature of Space, and Concept Category. Space is utilized for activities according to its spatiality and time. And, the physical order pattern remains in a fixed form with slight changes in the meaning of space function and behavior.

Conclusion

Based on the research, there is a change in the meaning of space in *Alun-alun Lor* and *Alun-alun Kidul* area of the *Surakarta Palace*. In the early days of the kingdom, the square was a place of sacred activity, then the meaning shifted to a place of profane community activity. Thus it can be concluded that there

Table 2. Continued ...

Name Room	Phenomenon	Facts	Consequence	Nature of Space
The hearse room on the northwest side of the South Square	Around the building during the day the air is cool and feels empty, at night many people come and buy food and drinks in angkringan	The hearse building belonging to the palace which was used in the past when the king (the royal family died)	Hearse board on the left side	Sakral-Profane (SP)
The hearse room on he southwest side of he South Squar	Around the building, the air is cool during the day and feels empty, at night there are many people who come and buy food and drinks in angkringan	The hearse building belonging to the palace which was used in the past when the king (the royal family died)	Hearse board on the right side	Sakral-Profane (SP)
Sitihinggil Kidul Building Room	The seat of the king when there is a traditional palace event, on weekdays it is quiet, the pet kebobule, the descendant of Kiai Slamet, is a place to soak in a puddle	The Sitihinggil building belonging to the palace is an elevated building and is the seat of the king.	The stage where the king sat	Sakral-Profane (SP)
Twin Banyan Room	The place is cool- haunted; want to spend the night until dawn	The twin banyan trees belonged to the palace in the past, that only the king could pass between the two banyan trees	holy board	Sakral-Profane (SP)
Alun-alun Kidul room	A quiet place; used to do the night seekers running until dawn	The field in the middle of the South Square has the privilege of changing the profane space to the sacred space between day and night, and vice versa	Board between banyan twins	Sakral (S)
Central Field, West Bide of Kidul Square	A place to pray for religious activities (holidays)	The center of the square during religious events is used for the Eid al-Fitri prayer and Eid al-Adha; the palace's cultural space	Holy board; culture board	Profane-Sakral (SP)
RoomMahesa's cage	The Caucasian kebo cage, derived from Kiai Slamet as a maintenance and care cage	Kandang Mahesa (kebo), a derivative of Kiai Slamet, has space for a maintenance cage on the southeast side of the square close to Gapurendra.	Ing Endi Kandhang Kebo Board	Sakral-Profane (SP)
East Street Side Room	The place to sell on the side of the road to the east of the square	East side of the road, a paving block for access around the South Square which is partly used for the selling space	inside the board	Profane (P)
Southwest side of he pedestrian pedestrian space	Roadside selling places for street vendors	Pedestrian space on the southwest side of the South Square which is used for street vendors selling space	inside the board	Profane (P)
The room on the north side of the South Square	Street vendors by street vendors	The room on the north side of the south plaza is used for street vendors selling space	Inside the board	Profane (P)
Brajanala Kidul Kori Room	The place of entry and exit between the settlements in the palace fortress.	Kori BrajanalaKidul is an	Board out and in	Profane (P)

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Table 2. Continued

Name Room	Phenomenon	Facts	Consequence	Nature of Space
Kori Gurawan Room	The exit and exit place between the Kidul square and the Gurawan village	Kori Gurawan is an access space for the exit and entry of the community from the Gurawan village towards the Kidul square	Board out and in	Profane (P)
Kori Gading Room	The road is used to enter and exit the community from the ivory market and to the South Square	Kori Gading is the main entrance and exit for the community from the Gading market (main road) to the Kidul square	Board out and in	Profane (P)
Baluwerti Village Room	A street for residents of Baluwerti village and a gathering place for residents of Baluwerti village	Kampung Baluwerti (inside the fort) which has a gathering space as an interaction between residents of the Baluwerti village community is quite wide (in front of Kori BradjanalaKidul)	Village / village board	Profane (P)
Street space in Baluwerti Village	The street for the residents of Baluwerti village	Kampung Baluwerti (inside the fort) which has a road space and a space for interaction between members of the Baluwerti village community	Street board	Profane (P)

has been a change in meaning based on: spatial space, the meaning of sacred and profane spaces related to the zoning of space (Table 1 and 2).

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