

## The Existence of Hindu-Islam Tenet Syncretism Traditional and Cultural Values in Spatial Layout of Baluwarti Settlement, Surakarta

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**ABSTRACT:** *Baluwarti Settlement is located in Surakarta Palace area, built by Paku Buwana III (1749-1788). The spatial layout element of Baluwarti settlement consists of building and environment (physical aspect), and social-cultural life tradition of its community (non-physical aspect). Most of its people still hold tightly on court custom, habit, rite, and culture. In addition to be religion or traditional belief adherents, some of Baluwarti people still hold on dynamism belief, the belief in heirloom objects like kris, lance, and dwelling building. The belief is implemented through traditional rites like: wilujengan (an event of praying for safety), caos dhahar (setting out food as offering for the spirits), sesaji (offering), and etc. It is this peculiarity that makes Baluwarti settlement environment existing in the court is different from other settlements (outside the court). This research aimed to explore the survival of values composing Baluwarti Settlement's spatial layout. The exploration of values started with prior concept of this settlement built in 1749 AD up to current condition (2017). Thus, this paradigm of research referred to qualitative research with historical reading and the analysis used grounded theory. The result of research explained the survival of Hindu-Islam tenet syncretism values in Baluwarti settlement's spatial layout. Although Surakarta Palace is the trah (purebred) of Islam Mataram Kingdom, Hindu tenet still affected the court's tradition and culture as basic concept of whole spatial layout of court area.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Values, Syncretism, Hindu-Islam, Spatial Layout, Baluwarti Settlement*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The background of Baluwarti settlement establishment derived from formal bond between the people and the court. This formal bond is the status of court's servants (*abdi dalem*) with degree or *kekancingan* given by the King. This dwelling existence was originally controlled (arranged) by the Court government. Dwelling was grouped by status, role, and grade of each dweller. However, the current condition of Baluwarti settlement develops in less controlled manner, so that outsiders having no bond with the Court dwell this settlement by buying the land without the court/king's permission. Originally, this settlement's construction aimed to enable its people to contribute to maintaining security, giving service to the king, and preserving the court tradition and culture.

This article aims to interpret the spatial layout concept of Baluwarti settlement in the beginning of settlement construction and to reveal traditional and cultural values as the elements composing typical spatial layout of settlement based on historical study. Then, it identifies the spatial layout elements of Baluwarti settlement still maintained by community currently, based on field observation and result of historical study. Spatial layout concept of Baluwarti settlement produced can complement the preexisting Javanese traditional settlement theory. It also gives the readers and the public knowledge to recognize the existence of typical spatial layout of Baluwarti settlement from the original concept to its current surviving condition.

### II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The existence of Surakarta palace (court), believed as the Javanese cultural center, is still expected by Surakarta people and surrounding, although physically there are some changed buildings in the court area, including Baluwarti settlement. In relation to tradition and culture, each name of buildings and rite, building shape and ritual object, building location, and a rite's procession in the court have their own philosophical meaning. However, unfortunately those meanings are less popular and get inadequate attention. To anticipate uncontrolled change, noble values underlying the spatial layout concept of Baluwarti settlement should be

explored. The problem statement of research is what values becoming the concept of Baluwarti settlement constructed during Paku Buwana III's reign (1749-1788).

### III. METHOD

The research method employed was inductive qualitative one with historical reading. Historical reading was used to find out the concept of Baluwarti settlement's spatial layout in its beginning construction, through books or *babad* telling about its condition at that time, document/archive/magazine/article, and picture in that period and by seeing the still existing artifact. It was also used to see the spatial layout elements of Baluwarti settlement still surviving until today. Furthermore, inductive qualitative approach with in-depth interview was used to reveal factors making the people still holding tightly on traditional and cultural values. Then data analysis was conducted using grounded theory method.

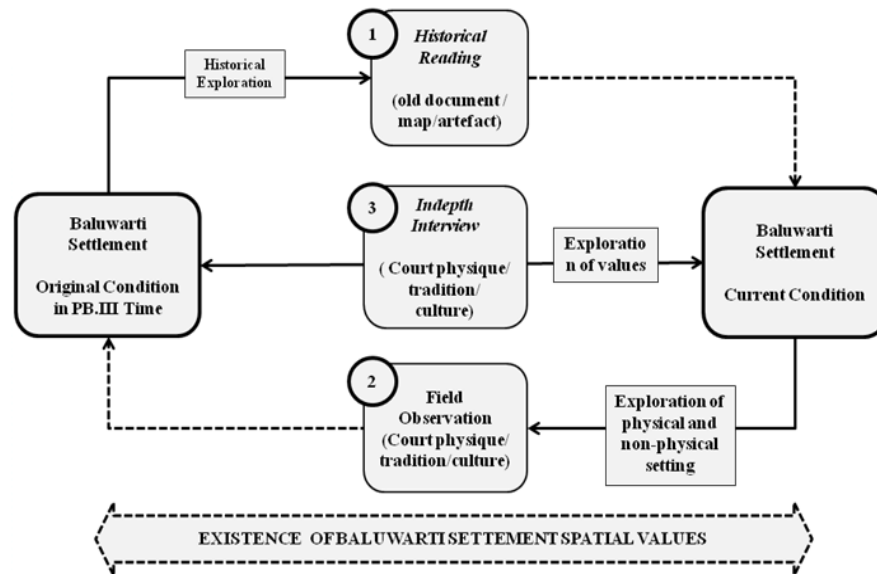


Figure 1. Research Method

### IV. LITERATURE STUDY

The arrangement of buildings in Kasunanan Surakarta Palace has very deep symbolic, well-organized, ordered and harmonious meaning about the guidance of human life journey (Suyanto, 1985: 82). It is in line with KGPH Dipokusumo (2016) explaining that all places from *Alun-Alun Utara* (North Square) to *Kedhaton* generally contain philosophical meaning representing human life journey to see God (*sangkan paraning dumadi*). Then, the arrangement of buildings from *Kedhaton* direction toward *Alun-Alun Selatan* (South Square) contains a philosophy representing that human beings will go back to the everlasting realm (*alam sunyori*). In philosophical meaning of building arrangement from *Alun-Alun Utara* to *Kedhaton*, there is a philosophical meaning of "adult" human life journey meaning forgiving and apologizing quickly when making mistake (*pangapura*); this philosophical meaning lies on *Sitihinggil Utara*, in this stage representing human life journey struggle implemented difficultly to achieve life perfection.

Furthermore, KGPH Dipokusumo (2016) explained that the orientation of Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace construction used concept of *sedulur papat kalima pancer*, as manifested into the arrangement of its building that are always oriented to four pairing directions: North – South (*lor-kidul*), West-East (*kulon-wetan*) constituting dualism, an authentic single unity pair (*loroning atunggal*). North-South direction is the manifestation of *sangkan paraning dumadi* to *manunggaling kawula gusti*. North direction is the spiritual power related to material need, while South direction is the manifestation of the unity of king and people/kawula, while West-East direction is the manifestation of something's origin (*mapag sang surya wisesa*). *Pancer*/center of Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace building arrangement is embodied in *ndalem Ageng Prabasuyasa (kedhaton)*, in which this place is the King and his family's residence.



Figure 2. Sedulur Papat Kalima Pancer / Four Directions  
(Source: Constructed from Sasana Pustaka of Surakarta Palace)

Physical arrangement form of settlement or dwelling environment can also be seen as a system unity consisting of *spatial system*, *physical system* and *stylistic system*. *Spatial system* is related to the spatial organization involving spatial relation, organization, spatial relation pattern, and etc. *Physical system* involves construction system and material uses, while *stylistic system* is a unity embodying shape, including façade, door shape, window shape and ornament size either inside or outside the building (Habracken1978, in Is, 1994:25). A community's spatial layout is inseparable from religious or belief system of the corresponding community. It is very authentic in nature in life, so that this religious or belief aspect is difficult to change, but affects and underlies other life behavior (Permana, 1995: 14).

## V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As we know, Baluwarti settlement was the capital (*kuthagara*) of Surakarta Hadiningrat palace in the past. Thus, the spatial layout of Baluwarti settlement area is affected by court concepts including: cosmology, territorial division, and dwelling concepts. Traditional ceremony/rite is always undertaken to preserve ancestor/preceding kings' culture. *Grebeg/sekaten* rite replete with Islam tenet but using ritual properties like Hindu religion tenet is always held merrily and massively, in addition to because of the symbolic values of rite, but also to show off the existence of Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat palace to other kingdoms existing in archipelago (Susanto, 2017).

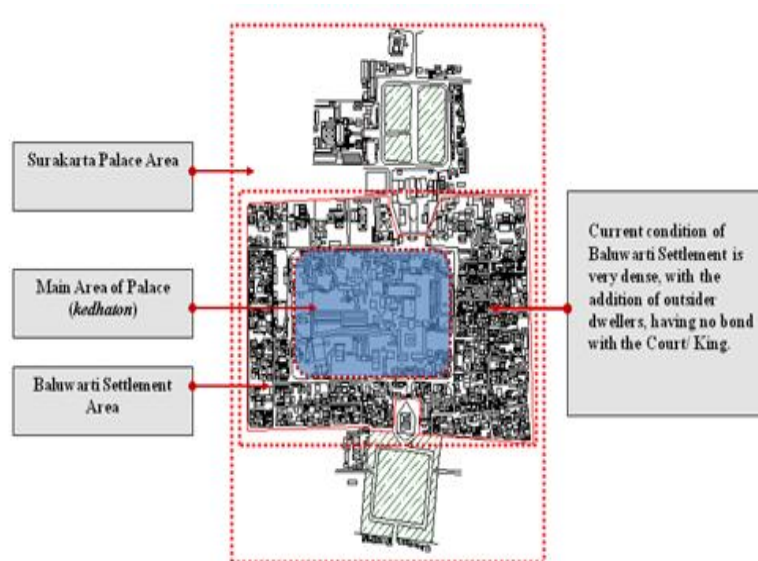


Figure 3. Physical Condition of Baluwarti Settlement during PB. XIII's reign (current condition)

(Source: Analisis 2017)

Considering the historical data originating from *Babad Sala*, *Babad Nitik Kartasura*, dan *Pustaka Radya Laksana*, Surakarta Hadiningrat palace has been established by King Paku Buwana II in 1742-1745. The court's area has been created as characterized with the presence of circumference fence (made of bamboo) and ditches surrounding the court as outer border. Soon after that, exactly in 1749 King Paku Buwana II passed away and succeeded by Paku Buwana III. During Paku Buwana III's reign, Baluwarti settlement began to be constructed for *abdi dalem* (servants)/soldiers, *sentana dalem*, and *putra dalem*.

KGPH Dipokusuma (2016) said that the construction of settlement for soldier *abdi dalem* became one of priorities to safeguard the King's security. Meanwhile, at that time there was still traumatic condition due to rebellion occurring in Kartasura, and the rebellion was still conducted by RM Said and his followers. *Tamtama* (lower-ranking non-commissioned officer) and *Carang* soldiers were in charge of safeguarding the King, while *Wireng* soldiers were in charge of securing the organization of ceremony/tradition held by the court. Thus in the beginning of area construction in Baluwarti settlement, the settlement for soldiers was prioritized. Figure 3 shows Baluwarti settlement area physically as the part of Surakarta Palace.

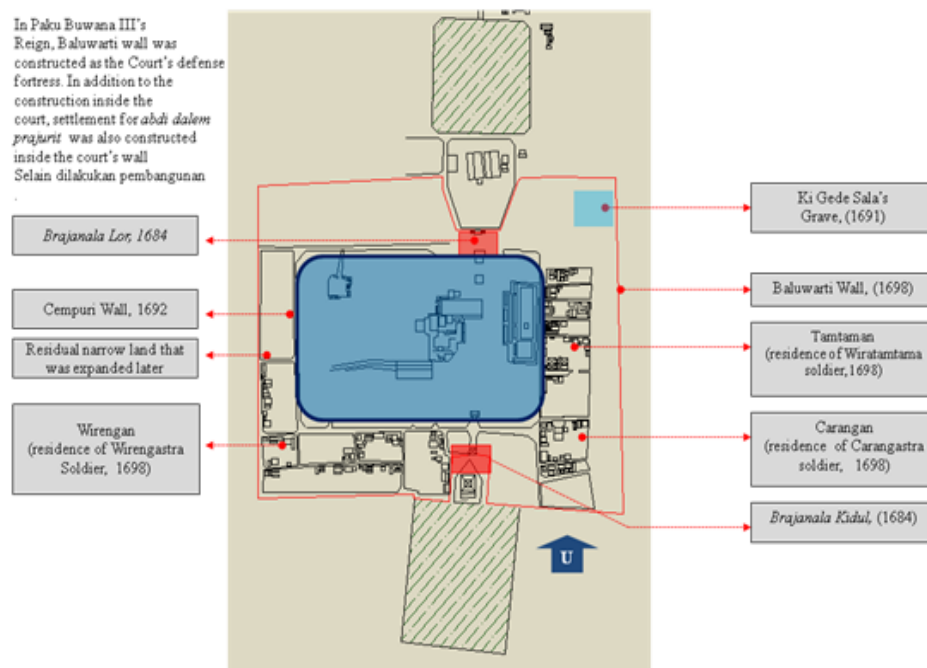


Figure 4. Physical Condition of Baluwarti Settlement during PB III's reign (1749-1788 AD)  
(Source: *Pustaka Radya Laksana*, and Hardiyanti, 2004)

## 2.1. Sedulur Papat Kalima Pancer Concept as the foundation of cosmological orientation of Area and Building Arrangement

The existence of Surakarta Palace is inseparable from Islam Mataram Dynasty. However, cosmological concept of Kasunanan Surakarta palace is still affected by Hindu concept, while in mezzo-concept scale the court (palace) uses Javanese concept replete with Islam sharia tenet values. Cosmological concept as an approach is related to the orientation of area and buildings located in Baluwarti settlement. North orientation is Krendhawahana forest, the symbol of fire power. East orientation is Mount Lawu, and West one is Mount Merapi, as the symbol of earth and wind powers. Meanwhile South orientation is South Sea, as the symbol of water power manifestation. Area orientation (Baluwarti settlement) is a manifestation of respect to and praying for safety and wellbeing to the symbols of natural power.

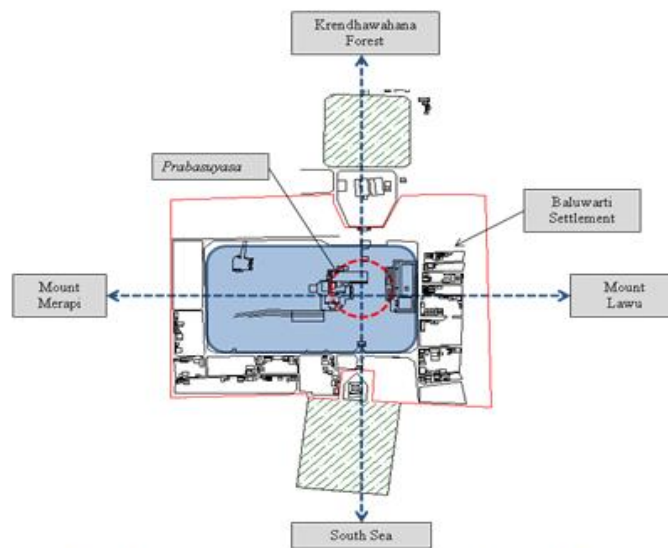


Figure 5. Cosmology Concept of Court and Baluwarti Settlement  
(Source: analysis, 2017)

Sedulur papat kalima *pancer* concept is embodied into the arrangement of buildings that is always oriented to the four (*papat*) pairing directions: North-South (*lor-kidul*), West-East (*kulon-wetan*) constituting dualism or an authentic single unity pair (*loroning atunggal*). Most of dwellings in Baluwarti settlement face to the south (oriented to South Sea). But in area scale, the orientation of Baluwarti settlement faces to one direction, *kedhaton* (the residence of king), as the center of area's power.

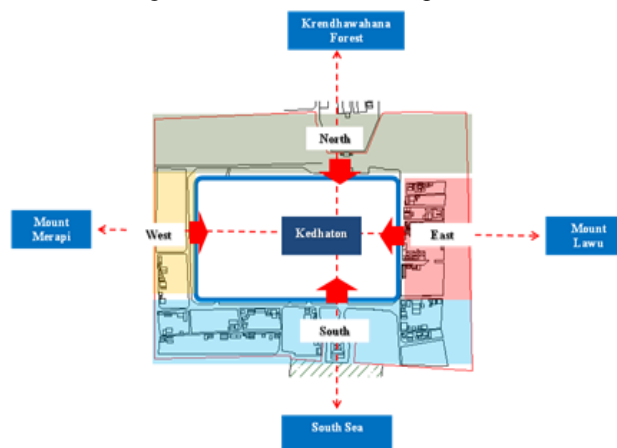


Figure 6. The manifestation of *Sedulur Papat Kalima Pancer* Concept in spatial layout of Baluwarti Settlement, Surakarta  
(Source: analysis, 2017)

## 2.2. Hierarchy Concept as the foundation of Spatial Division and Building Arrangement

In Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat palace area, building with highest hierarchic value is manifested into *ndalem Prabasuyasa* (*kedhaton*) building constituting the dwelling of King and his family with *joglo* roof shape.



Figure 7. Hierarchy of Building Arrangement in Surakarta Palace area  
(Source: literature of Surakarta Palace, 2004: 105)



Such hierarchy concept is manifested into its building orientation facing to the South representing the respect to South Sea's Master, *Kanjeng Ratu Kidul* and disproportional dimension of building with function and activity within it. Viewed from position aspect, *Kedhaton* lies on the center of area.

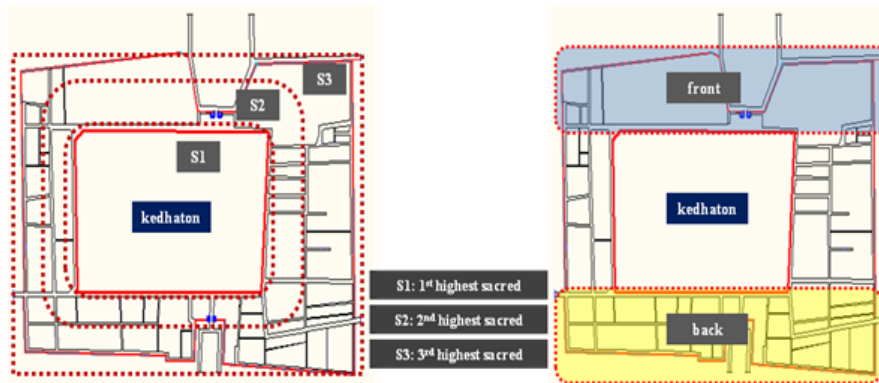


Figure 8. The manifestation of hierarchy as the foundation of spatial division  
(Source: analysis, 2017)

The spatial zone close to *kedhaton* has higher sacred value, as the king is believed as having high power aura. The farther it is, the weaker is or the more profane is the power. Then, the size of building is then adjusted according to hierarchy. *Dalem pangeran* has higher hierarchy, followed with officials' house, and with *abdi dalem*'s houses.

### 2.3. Dualism Concept as the foundation of Accessibility Layout and Physical Element of Settlement Spatial Layout

Dualism concept is a conception of authentic single unity of physical-spiritual/spiritual-physical, bright-dark/dark-bright, joy-grief/grief-joy, rich-poor/poor-rich, *lingga-yoni/yoni-lingga*, men-women/women-men. It is the essence of human beings and life. The composition order of Baluwarti settlement is affected by dualism concept in which composition is made in couple, so that the area is divided into East-West and North-South, and the presence of *kori brajanala* in North-South. And the axis of Baluwarti settlement area is North-South, characterized with the presence of *kori Brajanala Utara* (North) and *kori Brajanala Selatan* (South). When a linear line is drawn, it will stretch out from the north to the south representing an individual's life from birth to death.

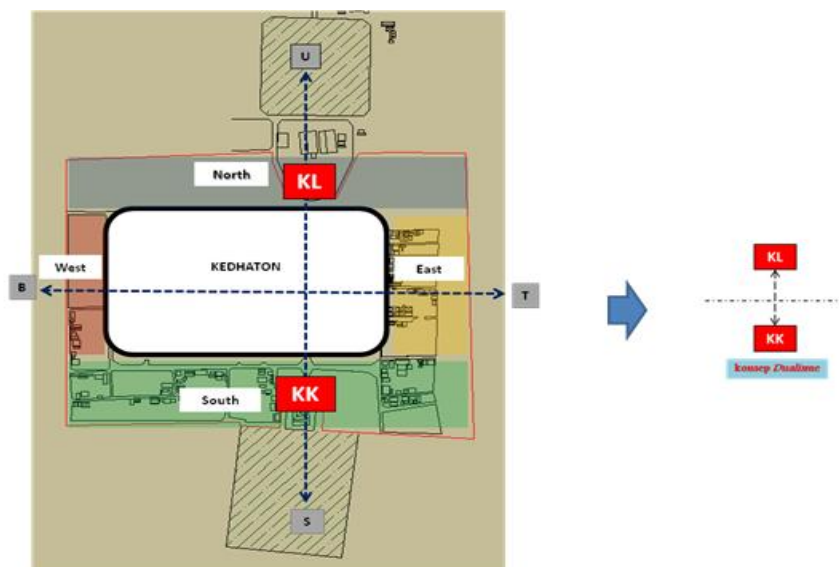


Figure 9. Dualism concept in Spatial Layout of Settlement  
(Source: analysis, 2017)

The meaning of dualism concept is balance and unity. It can also mean contradictory but creating a unity (*loroning atunggal*). This concept had existed before Surakarta palace, even before Mataram Kingdom's time. So that it can be believed that dualism concept belongs to the tenet from Hindu ancestors.

#### **2.4. Traditional and Cultural Values composing Non-Physical Element of Baluwarti Settlement's Spatial Layout.**

In principle, according to KGPH Poeger (2016), Surakarta Palace's culture is the Islamic one but the properties used for holding the court rite or tradition are indeed inseparable from Hindu culture still existent until today, the belief in the presence of parallelism and reciprocity between macrocosm and microcosm, in which the king serves as the center of microcosm that has resulted in state customary (traditional) rites in Surakarta palace such as *Grebeg*, *Kirab* and *Jamasan Pusaka*, *Labuan*, *Malem Selikuran*, *Mahesalawung*, *Tingalan Jumenengan Dalem*, *Tingalan Dalem* and *Pasowanan Ngabekten*. Customary rite created by Surakarta palace's poets contains some meaning in every detail of rite. The main objective of rite is to put every member of society onto certain social position, as king, *sentana*, *abdi dalem*, and *kawula*, (Kuntowijoyo, 1987: 40-41).

Court tradition and culture becoming the elements of Baluwarti settlement's spatial layout pattern constructed by Paku Buwana III include, among others:

##### **a. Grebeg/sekatén,**

Tradition and culture that have been implemented since Demak Kingdom time, is held routinely by the king and family reigning in Kasunanan Surakarta palace. This tradition is maintained and implemented continuously in the attempt of preserving ancestor tradition containing much meaning. In its implementation, *grebeg/sekatén* is accompanied with the court's special soldier, *Wireng* soldier, and involves the King and family, Islam scholars, *abdi dalem*, and *kawula*/people. The property used in this rite is *gunungan* (puppet shaped like a mountain) made of food and crops. *Gunungan* made of diverse food represents a woman's life, while the one made of crops represents a man's life. The form of *gunungan* is the symbol of mountain coming from Hindu religion tradition. In its procession, *gunungan* is carried to Masjid (mosque) as a means of praying in Islamic manner. It can be seen that there is syncretism of Hindu and Islam tenets in the *grebeg* rite that is still held merrily and attractively until today. Although not all of this procession occur in Baluwarti settlement, *kawula/abdi dalem*/soldiers are responsible for the organization of this *grebeg/sekatén* procession. It also contributes to creating the ideology of people/*kawula* living in Baluwarti.

##### **b. Kirab and Jamasan Pusaka.**

*Kirab* and *Jamasan Pusaka* to Baluwarti people mean to implement ancestor tradition and culture, and have the following meanings: *firstly*, to make the heirloom undertaking *kirab* (carnival) to emit invisible magic power, *daya purbawa*, for safety, blessing, peace, and wellbeing to Surakarta Hadiningrat palace. *Secondly*, *kirab pusaka* rite, according to some informants, contains Javanese philosophical value, *manunggaling kawula ing Gusti*. Through implementing this *kirab* rite, an individual is expected to get physical and spiritual power that can lead him/her to find his/her self identity. *Thirdly*, the *kirab* is human being's attempt to make the power contained in the heirloom to bring safety.

The procession of *Kirab pusaka* is organized by carrying on the heirlooms surrounding the court wall in *pradhaksina* manner (walking around *nengenaken kraton*) or clockwise way. It is the procession characterizing the beginning of Javanese new year held in early morning on 1 Muharram (1 *Suro*), constituting Islam New Year. *Jamasan* with any rite indicates Hindu tenet, while the moment of implementation on 1 Muharram as Islam New Year suggests the presence of syncretism in this tradition.

##### **c. Labuan**

At certain moment, the court holds *Labuan* routinely to South Sea, exactly in Parang Kusumo beach. *Sesaji* (offering) *dilabuh* (is dropped) to South Sea believed as the residence of *Kangjeng Ratu Kidul*. This tradition is held by the royal family and followed by Baluwarti people. This tradition means praying for safety, because South Sea is considered as having magic power to the Court from the South corner. The procession begins from the court and the people join it to go to Parang Kusumo in South Sea together.

##### **d. Malem Selikuran**

*Malem selikuran* is a traditional and cultural ceremony held on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of fasting month. This tradition starts with special sermon (*khotbah*) in the court and procession will be very merry in the evening. It begins from the court and goes to Sriwedari. *Kirab* is initiated by the parade of three court soldier groups escorting the court's officials and *abdi dalem* (servants) carrying on the king's alms (*sedekah*). Two court heirloom carts are also used to carry on the kingdom officials mandated by the king to hold *malem selikuran* rite. Having arrived at the destination, the food constituting *tumpeng nasi liwet* and *ingkung ayam* (intact chicken meat) and *jajanan pasar* (market snack) is put onto the center of Pendopo Sriwedari. The court *imams* (leaders of communal prayer) then lead the pray for safety. After the praying, the king's *sedekah* food then is distributed to *abdi dalem* and people present in the event.

**e. Tingalan Jumenengan Dalem**

*Tingalan Jumenengan Dalem* is a ceremony to celebrate the king's inauguration. In *Tingalan Jumenengan Dalem*, *pisowanan ageng* or large meeting is held attended by all *abdi dalems* and *sentana dalem*. A day before the rite, the court management usually confers nobility degree to the one considered as meritorious to the Court.

In *Jumenengan* tradition, *sinuhun* or the King will attend *pisowanan ageng* to watch *Bedhaya Ketawang* sacred dance. This dance is performed only once a year, in *tingalan jumenengan* rite. *Bedhaya Ketawang* dance is performed by 8 *abdi dalems* becoming dancer, all of which are still virgin, and should fast for 40 days before. It is said that the dance was created by the greatest king of Mataram, Sultan Agung, and there is one invisible dance that also performs this dance.

**f. Pasowanan Ngabekten**

*Pasowanan Ngabekten* rite is held to give sign of service and to ask for blessing from the King. This rite is held in *pendapa* Sasana Sewaka on Eid ul-fitr Holy Day on 1 Syawal, attended by sons and daughters, court officials and relatives. Meanwhile *halal bihalal* (special rite held during which people visit their elders and show respect to them) with the public is held in *Sasana Mulya*. *Pasowanan Ngabekten* indicates the King's characteristics that are also close to *kawula*/ordinary people.

**VI. CONCLUSION**

Baluwarti settlement has been established during Paku Buwana III's reign, started with constructing dwelling intended to *abdi dalem* and soldier. The dwelling is grouped by professions. Dwelling orientation faces to *kedhaton* area, constituting the King's residence. Because Baluwarti settlement is a part of Surakarta Palace's area, the concept of Baluwarti settlement is highly affected by the king/court. The concept of court is built based on values coming from ancestors and Mataram Kings, so that the unification of Hindu and Islam tenet values also affects the concept of area and building arrangement in the court environment.

Value concept of physical elements of Baluwarti settlement's spatial layout constructed during Paku Buwana III's reign unifying Hindu and Islam tenet values includes, among others:

- a. *Sedulur Papat Kalima Pancer* concept as the foundation of cosmological orientation of area and building arrangement
- b. Hierarchy concept as the foundation of spatial division and building arrangement
- c. Dualism concept as the foundation of accessibility layout and physical element of settlement.

Value concept of non-physical elements of Baluwarti settlement's spatial layout unifying Hindu and Islam tenet value is contained in traditional rites such as *Grebeg/Sekaten*, *Kirab* and *Jamasan Pusaka*, *Labuan*, *Malem Selikuran*, *Tingalan Jumenengan Dalem*, and *Pasowanan Ngabekten*. In each of tradition rites, there is syncretism between Hindu and Islam tenets, as indicated with the properties used in the rite, procession, and implementation time.

The Existence of Hindu-Islam Tenet Syncretism Traditional and Cultural Values in Spatial Layout of Baluwarti Settlement, Surakarta, able to maintain the harmony of both physical and non physical environment.

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