

SURAKARTA PALACE SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT: *Surakarta Palace derived from the Mataram Kingdom, known as one of historical kasunanan palaces that still exist today. Even more, Surakarta Palace architecture is a combination between local javanese Indonesian architecture and european architecture. It existence makes a lot of people feel curious about what is behind it. One of the most interesting part of this palace is the organization and the arrangement of the spaces. The space organization of Surakarta Palace has a philosophical meaning from gate to gate, place to place that represent each hierarchy and activity inside. The reason for the study is to identify the kinds of spatial organization in Surakarta Palace Complex.*

The study was conducted by analyzing spatial organization in the Surakarta Palace based on the theory of Francis D.K. Ching in 1943 in his book named Architecture: Form, Space, and Order. In designing architectural project, space organization becomes matter. Different spaces has different functions, purposes, and different role to it's surroundings. It can be briefly visually explained through a well space organization and arrangement in the design.

Keywords: Keraton Surakarta, spatial organization

INTRODUCTION

Located in the middle of Java, Surakarta Kasunanan Palace is a symbol of Javanese architecture and Indonesian architecture both in terms of architectural theory and culture based on beliefs. The complexity of architecture is also found in the palace which is a combination of European architecture and local Javanese-Indonesian architecture itself and it has a touch of various religion beliefs. Surakarta kasunanan palace is a great model of Javanese architecture to be learned of its space, layout, and its relationship between user's behaviours.

OBJECTIVE

This study intended to analyze the spatial organization of Surakarta royal palace and its connection with the javanese traditional architecture that focus on the relationship between belief, space, layout, social structures, and political system.

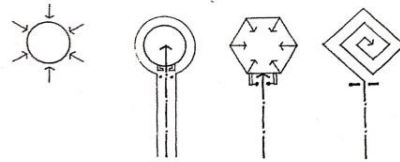
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was conducted in an effort to find out how the spaces in the complex of Surakarta Palace is arranged.

THEORITICAL REVIEW

There are several ways to arrange two or more spaces such centralized organization, linear organization, radial organization, clustered organization, and grid organization.

A centralized organization has a space in the center where the surrounding spaces are concentrated in a central space. The central space usually has the main function or becomes the dominant space among other spaces. These compositions are often symmetrical, orderly, concise and geometrical



Picture 1: Centralized organization

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

Linear organization positions spaces in a straight or curved line which usually defines the flow of circulation or a result of context response. Spaces arranged in a linear organization usually have the same shape and or function and or size.



Picture 2: Linear organization

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

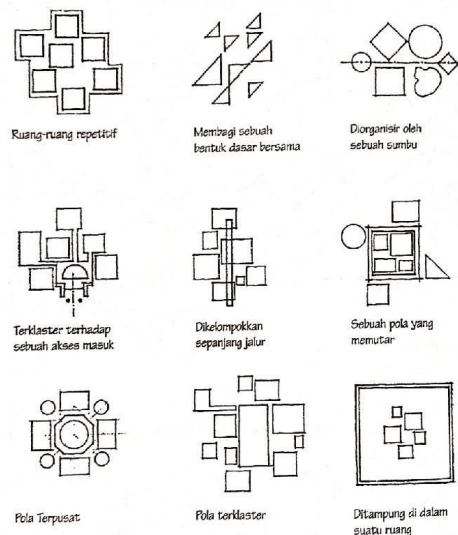
Radial organization is a combination of linear and centralized organization. An organization that has a central space and surrounded by spaces with linear organizations whose linear lines concentrate towards their central space.



Picture 3: Radial organization

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

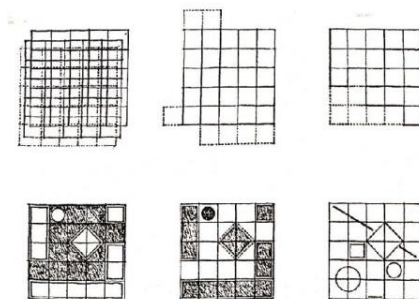
Clustered organizations depend on the proximity of each space. This organization can consist of spaces of the same shape, size and function. in its composition this organization is similar to a centralized organization but not as symmetrical and as orderly as a centralized organization.



Picture 4: Clustered organization

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

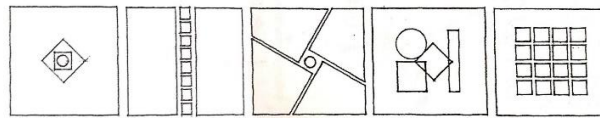
Spaces in the organization of the grid arranged by benchmark points and lines in a grid either the same size or different. Grid which usually consists of two directions of lines which are usually perpendicular to the points where the lines intersect.



Picture 5: Grid organization

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

Space programming, functions, space classification, space character, or even form of the space will be the factors of considering the space organization. The space arrangement, organization, and space programming will explain each space relation, function, contextual response or even the space role to the surrounding. Different space organization has different meaning and purpose in the design.



Picture 6: Spatial Organization; centralized organization, linear organization, radial organization, clustered organization, and grid organization.

Source: Ching, FDK. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

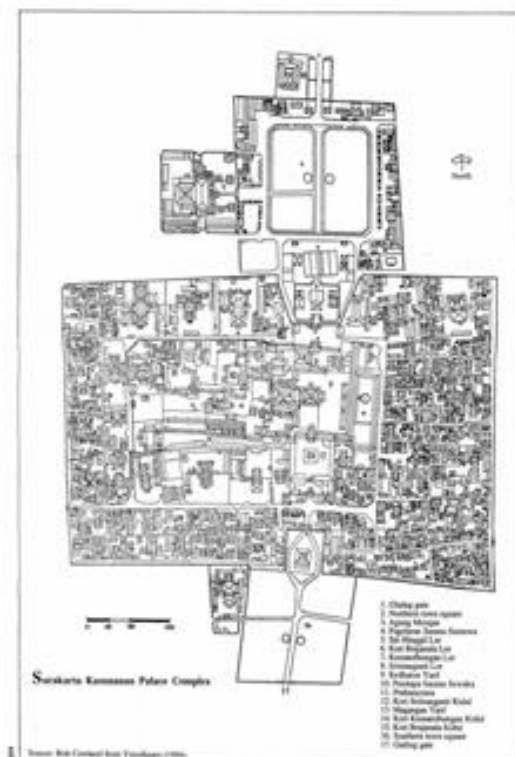
OBSERVATION METHODS

This study conducted an approach with qualitative methods combined with survey methods. Providing an explanation through analysis by interacting directly with objects. Equipped with secondary data that we obtained from the thesis of Dewanto Wahyu titled Space and Myth in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, Indonesia.

DISCUSSION

Spatial Organization of Surakarta Kasunanan Palace

The main complex of Surakarta Kasunanan Palace is the area inside the fortress wall. it is called Baluwarti or Jero Beteng (inside the fortress).



Picture 7: Surakarta Kasunanan Palace Map

Source: Wahyu, Dewanto. Space and Myth in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace

There are four gateways to enter Baluwarti: Gate of Kori Branjanala Lor in the north side of the fortress, The gate of Kori Brajanala Kidul in the south, Gate of Kori Butulan Wetan in the east and Kori Butulan Kulon in the west.

The whole spacial organization of Surakarta Palace itself is a linear: towards north to south. Starts with Gading Gate in the Northeast side of the linear organization. Ching mentioned in his book that linear form is the subordinates arranged in a straight row.

Northern Square (Alun-Alun Lor)

Northern square and southern square have identical form and function, it was built in purpose to provide a place for people to gather. The Gading gate that is located in the northern side of the square. Right in the middle of the square there is a couple of banyan trees next to a pedestrian way crossing straight from the south to the north part of the square which is facing Pagelaran area. Based on public to private space organization, Northern square that has function as a place for people to gather become the first space after the Gading gate.



Picture 8: Alun-Alun Lor

Great Mosque of Surakarta

In the western side of the square there are The Great Mosque of Surakarta. This mosque is used as five time prayers, 'sholat jumat', ceremonies, and other religious purposes held by the kingdom.

The great mosque has 19.180 m² wide area, the main part of the mosque consists of surambi, gedhong (the main space of the mosque) and pawastren (praying space for woman). The mosque itself has clustered space organization with centralized pattern.

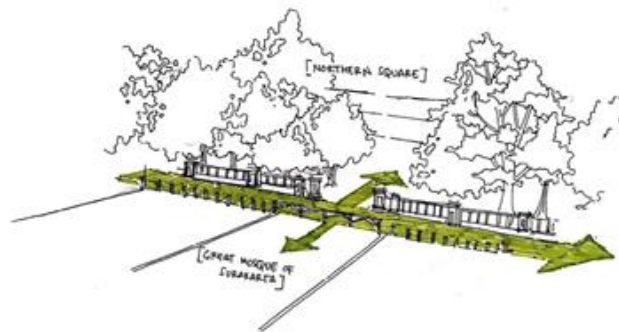


Picture 9: The Gate of Surakarta Great Mosque



Picture 10: Front Façade of Surakarta Great Mosque

In this complex, a bigger space has a smaller space inside it, and another smaller space inside. This organization of spaces is built based on public space to private space of each space's function. Started with the court, surambi, until the main praying area.



Picture 11: Organization Space Between Mosque and Alun-Alun

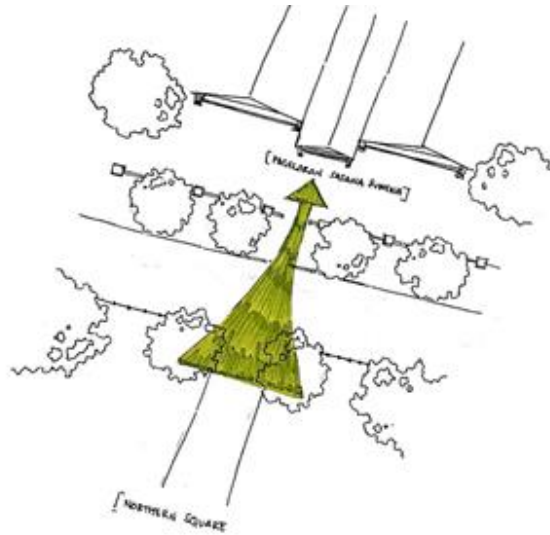
Pagelaran Sasana Sumewa

Located in the south of Waringin Gung and Waringin Binatur. As this place called in javanese, Pagelaran means open space, Sasana means place, and Sumewa means facing up, Pagelaran Sasana Sumewa was used as a place of events where people meet Papatih Dalem and Bupati. This place placed next after the north square which as a place to connect public to Royal Family and Politicians.



Picture 12: Pagelaran Sasana Sumewa

The ceremonial complex of sasana sumewa and siti hinggil is adjacent to the northern square. Both areas are separated by a road. The two small buildings in front of sasana sumewa called bangsal pamandangan along with a row of trees defines the boundary of sasana sumewa from the openness of northern square.



Picture 13: Organization Space Between Pagelaran and Alun-Alun

Sitihinggil Lor

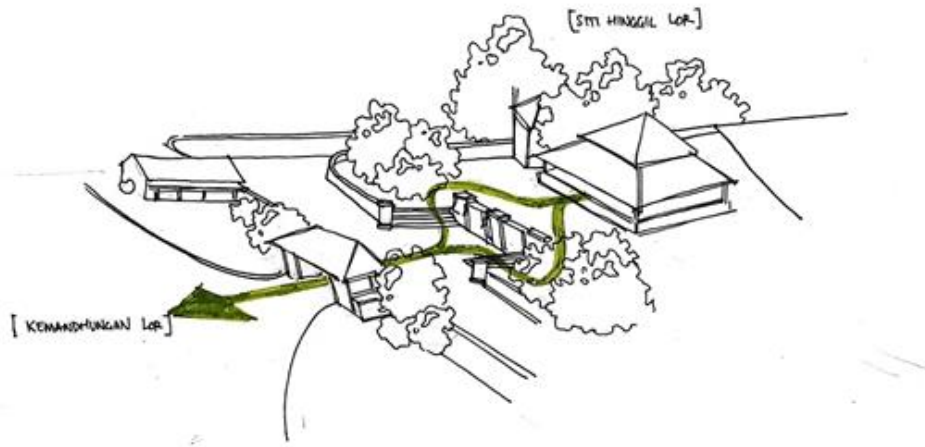
Sitihinggil lor is located right in the southern side of Sasana Sumewa. Both areas are divided by a solid gate called kori wijil in southern side of Siti Hinggil.

An elevated area called Siti Hinggil which means, Siti (earth) Hinggil (high) in Javanese are used to be a place for the politician business, royal religious activity concentrated, such as 3 Garebeg celebration. It placed higher because the activity inside is special than what held on Pagelaran Sasana Sumewa and the road between Kori Renteng and Kori Kemandhungan. It also marked with the Kori Renteng form, a horizontal wall that covered people sight from the road.



Picture 14: Sitihinggil Lor

In the south part of Siti Hinggil, there are no usual gate that mark the south boundary of Siti Hinggil, instead, there are two sets of descending stairs that is facing each other. There are also partition built between the stairs so people who enter the area cannot directly see the inside. In the line of linear space organization sithinggil lor located in the southern side of Sasana Sumewa based on public to private space programming.



Picture 15: Organization Space Between Sithinggil Lor and Kemandhungan Lor

Kemandhungan Lor

In the middle of this complex there is a spacious yard, which is also a public road. There are 4 buildings located at the edges of the yard. On the east and west side of this page are soldiers' barracks, which in the old days for the east side barracks were used by soldiers from the Surakarta Kasunanan and western side barracks used by KNIL soldiers (during the Dutch East Indies). Now these buildings has function as offices. On each side of the Kemandhungan Lor yard there are two gates to go to the area in Baluwarti, which is Kori Gapit Wetan and Kori Gapit Kulon.

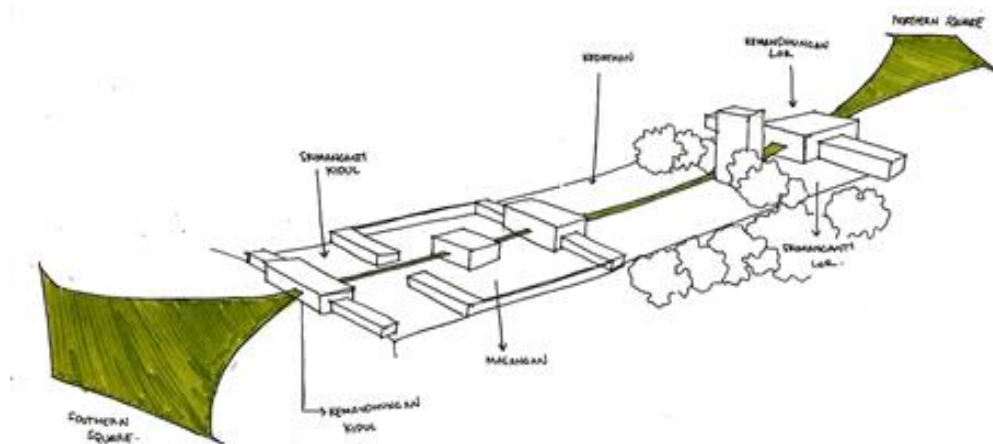


Picture 16: Kemandhungan Lor

This area is also a transition between public area and the main complex that can only be accessed by the royal family.



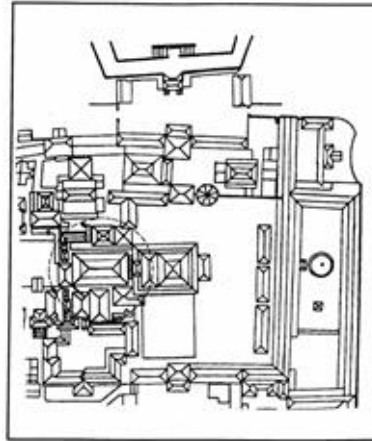
Picture 17: Front Façade of Kemandhungan Lor



Picture 18: Organization Space in Kemandhungan Area

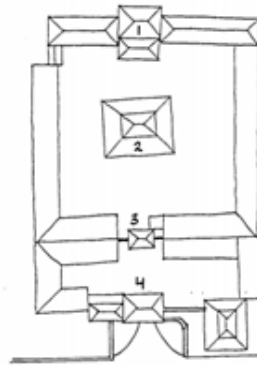
Kedhaton Complex

Kedathon yard is similar to dalem (main house) in traditional javanese housing. It is the center of activity and the most sacred place in palace complex. Prabasuyasa represents the mount Meru and the center of the universe. This area symbolize the spiritual destination. Passage through the palace complex demonstrates proper passage through life toward perfection. There are also Megangan area that is located at the back of Kedathon. Has a high level of privateness. Characteristically more formal because it is located in north-south axis line. And symbolize the 'omah mburi' in traditional javanese houses.



Picture 19: Kedhaton Yard

Source: Wahyu, Dewanto. Space and Myth in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace



Picture 20: Megangan Area

Source: Wahyu, Dewanto. Space and Myth in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace

Kemandhungan Kidul

South of Kori Gadung Mlathi there is Kori Kamandungan Kidul, where the entrance of the palace from the south and decorated with decorative ornaments which has a full of meaning, one of the ornaments is jasmine which means purity. Around this door there will be more open spaces to the public.



Picture 21: Kemandhungan Kidul

Sitihinggil Kidul

Siti Hinggil Kidul is an open pendapa building complex, surrounded by rows of short iron fences. It is different from the magnificent complex of Siti Hinggil Lor, the complex of Siti Hinggil Kidul and other buildings in the south of the palace are simpler and made from simpler materials.



Picture 22: Sitihinggil Kidul

Southern Square (Alun-Alun Kidul)

Located in the very south axis in Surakarta Palace, this square replicates the northern one from its shape and function, for public access. The size is about a half of the northern square. The town square size represents the scale of the activities and a symbol of social order.

Both Northern-Southern Square reflect the connection between the mountain Javanese belief sacred mountain and the sea where some people believe that place is a kingdom of the mythology Queen of The South.



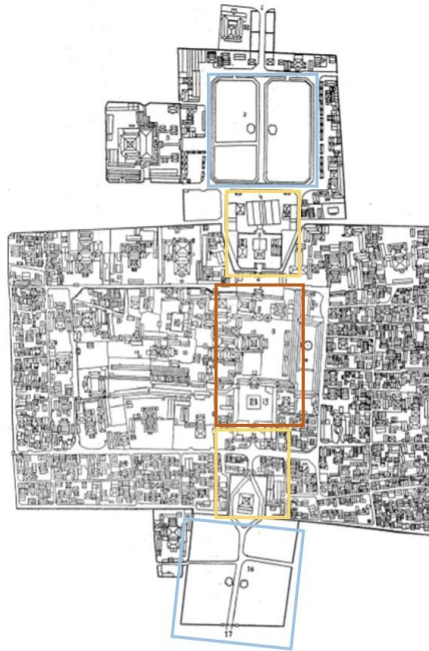
Picture 23: Alun-Alun Kidul

CONCLUSION

A single space may have its own character and identity of function. But a lot of spaces may be put in the same area to make it more than just a space, to be a place. Every space has its own connection to the next space, the function and purpose could be connected or not, the form could be in harmony or not, the character could be similar or not. But all those spaces have to be well organized without ruin each identity of function and character of the spaces. Each type of organization has each functional purpose and visual purpose.

Linear organization of spaces in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace is shown from the north square to the south square site plan. Arranged based on traditional Javanese belief mountain (Merapi)

to the sea (South Sea) which is north to the south. Every gate position shown the imaginary line from north to south.



Source: Bob Coward from Yusofians (1994)

The Kasunanan palace spaces were arranged based on its function and users. The wide northern and southern square were put on the outer part of the palace were made to contain the public when holding ceremonies. And then the semi-public space such as pagelaran and sithinggil were put surrounded by gate so not everyone can access that area. And lastly, the most private part of the palace was put at the inner side, guarded by big gate to ensure its privacy.

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