

## The Ndalem Wuryaningrat Hall of Pillars in Aesthetic Studies

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### Abstract

*The Ndalem Wuryaningrat is a Javanese noble heritage building with Javanese cultural significance designed exclusively for noble descendants. This research aims to show four main pillars in Javanese building known as soko guru. Not only does the soko guru pole serve as a foundation, but it also represents Javanese cultural values. This research method is ethnographic, which examines meaning through direct observation and interviews with sources. The results of this study are the meaning behind the hierarchy of soko guru in The Ndalem Wuryaningrat. Each element's meaning is strongly tied to Javanese cultural notions and reflects its owner. Even though it changed shape throughout the preservation of the Ndalem Wuryaningrat building, the shape of the soko guru pillar at Ndalem Wuryaningrat remains intact and has Javanese cultural significance. This study discovered that the soko guru pole symbolizes Javanese culture and the owner's position through the pole system, shape, and pattern. The conclusion of this research is soko guru pole represents Javanese culture and is associated with the Javanese people's belief in Islam through the soko guru pole features meaningful columns, motifs, and embellishments.*

**Keywords:** *Soko Guru, Javanese Culture, Representation, Islam Belief, Ndalem Wuryaningrat.*

### Introduction

Culture is an inherent component of human existence. Culture emerges from human cognition and manifests itself in a variety of facets of life. One of these is a home. Certain architectural styles have a strong cultural significance. Residential dwellings are inextricably linked to cultural values due to the building designs and spatial layouts that humans develop. The relationship between culture and architecture includes creating designs, arrangements, and architectural arrangements of significant cultural significance (Mangunwijaya, 2013). As a result, architecture and culture are mutually reinforcing.

*Ndalem Wuryaningrat* is one way of representing the interaction between culture and architecture. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* is a prince's *ndalem* that was erected as a residence for nobles or nobles to live in, and the owners are known as princes. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* serves the same purpose as the prince's *ndalem*, which is to house the princes or those who uphold the king's rule. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* served as the home of Prince Wuryaningrat. The function of *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* demonstrates the relationship between the *Ndalem* and the royal family lineage. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* is situated in Surakarta, at alan Brigadir Jenderal Slamet Riyadi No. 261, Purwosari, Laweyan, Sriwedari, Surakarta, 57127, Central Java. The values embodied in *Ndalem Wuryaningrat's* architectural designs are also influenced by their location and sociopolitical context.

*Ndalem Wuryaningrat's* buildings and architecture reflect the features of Javanese society. According to Budiwiyanto (2009), the house represents the characteristics of the Javanese people in terms of construction, design, architecture, structure, and interior design. The function of *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* as a dwelling exemplifies Javanese culture. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* displays Javanese cultural values such as beliefs, morals, ideals, practices, and social strata. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* symbolizes the behavior and knowledge patterns of the Javanese society. This behavior pattern eventually becomes a habit which is passed down from generation to generation. This cultural heritage is reflected in the meaning that arises from the design and construction of the *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* edifice. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* has a traditional Javanese home shape based on the prince's *ndalem* architectural pattern. *Ndalem* princes typically have the shape of a *joglo*, with a pyramid roof and rows of rooms. *Ndalem* Prince has maintained a methodically organized building

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shape and a spatial plan. At the front, there is a rectangular-shaped room with a soko guru pillar as the primary support pillar and several supporting pillars known as pavilions.

The soko guru pole represents the meaning of Javanese culture. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat features a soko guru pillar, which serves as the fundamental support for a Javanese architectural edifice. The soko guru pole is a sign of Javanese belief and represents its owner, particularly among the nobility. It is made up of four huge pillars that rise upwards from beneath the house's roof. The portrayal of the residence's owner is exhibited through the placement of decorations with specific motifs that indicate the owner's magnificence while also presenting high aesthetic value. The aesthetic value demonstrates how the soko guru element conveys the interaction between its occupants, the social context, and God Almighty.

The decorations on the pillars of Soko Guru *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat depict the interaction between society and God. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat regards the soko guru pillar as a necessary component of a Javanese home. Soko guru is preserved because it has meaning and historical significance, and the Javanese people believe in it. The shape of the soko guru pole represents the homeowner's purity and prosperity. Javanese people also express their social position through the use of magnificent carvings on their house walls. The shape of the carving represents balance in people's lives, particularly in Java.

Maintaining the design of the sokoo guru pole demonstrates that the Javanese house is inextricably linked to the social and cultural life that takes place around it. For Javanese, a house is more than just a place to dwell. According to Tjahjono (1989), the prince's *ndalem* is more than just a location to reside and conduct activities; it also embodies Javanese society's ideology, attitudes, and thoughts. The designs, themes, and decorations on the soko guru poles express the Javanese people's ideas and attitude on life, and are supposed to reflect how they live.

In the context of Javanese architecture, the shape, and motif of the *soko guru* pole are affected by the residents of the home, demonstrating the intimate link between the house's owner and his family. The motifs were chosen not only to reflect religious principles but also to describe the identity and personal ties of the families who live in the building. According to history, the owner of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat was of aristocratic origin. According to history, the house is named after *Prince* Wuryaningrat, who was given the title Kanjeng Pangeran Harya Wuryaningrat—Son of Patih KRA. Sosrodiningrat IV was a nobleman from the Surakarta palace, a combatant, and a hero who contributed to Indonesia's freedom. According to his family tree, Prince Wuryaningrat is the grandson of Sinuwun Pakubuwono IX and the son-in-law of Surakarta's King I.S.K.S Pakubuwono X (Kusumo, 2012). Looking into Prince Wuryaningrat's life history reveals that Javanese society values history, particularly in the context of residence.

*Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's history reveals that there was a special type of adornment reserved for noble descendants. The positioning of decorative shapes demonstrates that the location of the soko guru poles on the building has a symbolic importance in Javanese culture. The shape of the building and the internal spatial layout at *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat were specifically designed based on the owner's strata, in accordance with Widayat's (2017) concept that the Surakarta Palace building has its unique style that distinguishes it from palaces in other places. Widayat (2017) further demonstrates that the decoration of Surakarta can be seen in the *soko guru* poles in Javanese buildings, which are the distinguishing features of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat.

With the passage of time, the *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat building has undergone many physical and non-physical adjustments as part of efforts to preserve historically significant structures. Several rooms have been significantly altered, although others remain unchanged. According to Budiwiyanto (2009), several princes' *ndalems* can still be found in varying situations at the Surakarta Palace. However, the ornamental characteristics of the *soko guru* pole were preserved until this study was published (2023-2024). Efforts to preserve the beautiful qualities of the *soko guru* pole demonstrate that *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's *soko guru* pole depicts the personal, social, and religious bond that Javanese people have with their God. The theme and shape of the *soko guru* pole have remained unchanged despite the building's multiple alterations.

This study examines the aesthetic positioning of poles in the pavilion space from the outside, middle, and inside. The analytical debate is based on the building's history, which began in 1890. The discussion will focus on the philosophical implications of the *soko guru* pole, as well as its relationship to Javanese society's beliefs. The meaning will be carried out by analyzing the aesthetic value of the location of the *soko guru* pole on *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. The meaning of aesthetic values in this residential design demonstrates the appreciation and feelings inherent inside each spatial arrangement. The aesthetic value of building architecture and space layout in a dwelling symbolizes the expression of Javanese society in the form of symbols, particularly in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. Sachari (2002) states that aesthetics demonstrates the presence of Javanese cultural characteristics that are indicative of Javanese culture in a home space layout. Thus, the aesthetic values of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat reflect Javanese culture.

Based on the background description, the purpose of this study was to examine the aesthetic relationship between *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat, the positioning of *soko guru* poles, and Javanese culture. The *soko guru* pillar, one of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's structural parts, is not only a feature of the residential building; it also has significance. Data identification in this study reveals a link between the owner of the *ndalem* and the decorative shapes on the *soko guru* pole.

## A Review of Literature

Aesthetic research, both in general and specifically relevant to *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat, has already been conducted, particularly in Javanese architecture and portraying Javanese culture. Several studies that I discovered emphasized the worth and significance of Javanese architecture. This topic may be found in Purnomo et al.'s (2022) study, "Adaptive Implementation in *Dalem* Wuryaningrat," which examines the Danar Hadi Batik Museum's distinctive architectural and interior forms. The purpose of this research is to establish the extent to which conservation and transformation strategies have been applied to heritage buildings, as well as the significance of heritage preservation. Adityaningrum, Pitana, and Setyaningsih (2021) demonstrate that there is a form of Javanese religious belief in a building; the Javanese architectural features in the building emphasize truth values, moral values, and religious values. Adityaningrum et al. (2021) explained in their research on the Great Mosque of Surakarta that the architecture of the mosque embodies the Javanese people's culture and religion, as evidenced by the architectural components in the mosque's interior. The Great Mosque of Surakarta has Javanese architecture, particularly joglo homes. Thus, there is a link between buildings and Javanese beliefs. In addition, Fauzi et al. (2020) discussed mosques. According to Fauzi et al. (2020), components of the old Plosokuning Mosque embody the Javanese people's ideals. Fauzi et al. (2020) demonstrate that there are aesthetic symbolism in mosque architectural features that represent the concept of Javanese beliefs. Indraprasti and Santosa (2020) found that the architecture of the Sumenep Palace buildings, particularly the Pendopo, reflects Javanese cultural values. The visual component of the Sumenep Palace, as manifested through its building features, demonstrates cultural worth. Three studies on the aesthetic worth of Javanese historical structures found that architectural features contain symbols that symbolize Javanese society's cultural ideals. This reasoning is clearly different from the research I completed. Discussions about the aesthetics of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's *soko guru* have not yet occurred. This study contributes new perspectives on the aesthetic value of *soko guru* poles, which symbolize Javanese culture.

According to studies conducted by Pitana and Titis Srimuda (2023), Javanese architecture has evolved into more than merely a depiction of human intellect and the world. Javanese people's understanding of building structures is based on the cosmological notion of *papat keblat lima pancer*, which serves as the foundation for Javanese architecture's objective of unity with the universe. Tajug, joglo, limasan, and kampung are the four different forms of Javanese buildings, each of which is divided into three pieces and orientated in two directions. For Javanese people, architecture is more than just a physical structure; it is also a symbol of the concepts and meanings that pervade their culture and societies. According to Sunarmi (2023), the interaction between concepts and language in buildings gives philosophical or significant value to buildings in Java and their surrounding communities. Aside from that, Abdillah, Santosa, Sunarya, and Hendriyana (2024) claimed that structures, as a type of visual aspect, can be identified through artifacts such as music,

dance, and architecture. Not only is the concept of tolerance important, but regional differences influence how cultural values are approached and integrated into daily life.

Hastuti, Syarief, Santosa, and Widodo (2023) found that historical values and spatial power are mirrored in the meaning of a location for Javanese people in the Dalem Keputren Pracimosono. According to his findings, geographic location is intimately tied to an individual's feelings, ambitions, and societal standing. This study also draws on the work of Supriyatna, Lianto, and Trisno (2023), who defined the architectural concept of the Yogyakarta Palace as reflecting the mystical and philosophical qualities of Javanese mythology that are intimately tied to the king's authority and might. My research discovered a link between culture and architecture, particularly in terms of Javanese society's traditional ideas and hierarchy, as depicted in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's soko guru.

## Research Methodology

This research examines the hierarchical meaning of the soko guru pole at Ndalem Wuryaningratan. Ndalem Wuryaningrat is located at Slamet Riyadi Street No. 261, Surakarta, Central Java. The design study in this research refers to Javanese cultural architecture.

The population of this study is Javanese community groups represented by the interviewees. This research interviewed sources from academics and cultural experts as well as interior designers related to this research.

This study used ethnographic methods to collect data, focusing on the aesthetic aspects found in the *soko guru* pole. According to Santosa's (2007) theories, ethnography is a way for analyzing cultural systems in a community. Ethnography is utilized to comprehend and notice the significance of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's pillars of pillars by investigating the symbols in the shapes, patterns, and pillars of pillars. The study of symbols refers to Geertz's (2013) concept that symbols are systems utilized by people to manifest things in diverse ways, such as objects, language, images, and structures.

The analysis of symbols on soko guru poles is used to express thoughts in Javanese culture. The ethnographic technique is a framework for gathering information through observation, surveys, and interviews. Data was collected through firsthand observation of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat to identify *soko guru* pillars that are still in place. Data analysis provides accurate descriptions in the form of interaction with diverse points of view, including architectural, design, historical, and cultural perspectives.

## Discussion

Residential houses are an integral aspect of Javanese life, representing social and cultural values. For Javanese people, a house represents their identity and social position. Residential houses for common people and aristocrats or princes differed in physical form and room size. The edifice designed for the prince is known as the prince's *ndalem*. According to Saptoni (Researcher interview, 2023), the prince's *ndalem* was a home erected for the king's son, daughter, and son-in-law, all of whom held key government positions. Saptoni (Researcher interview 2023) revealed that after marriage, all Sinuwun boys and girls are awarded *ndalem*, however not all *ndalem* can be classified as princely *ndalem*. In comparison to other Javanese houses, *Ndalem* Prince stands out in terms of land area, physical building, building size, and structural completeness. The design of the prince's *ndalem* building indicates that it is strongly tied to the life status of Javanese people based on their descent or race. For the Javanese people, the term *Ndalem* prince holds unique significance. The prince's *ndalem* is more than just a building; it represents cultural values, the owner's identity, and the spirituality of the Javanese people. The evolution of Javan dwellings demonstrates the relationship between *ndalem* and culture.

Houses in Java began with primitive constructions and shapes built primarily of wood and bamboo. The choice of building materials is determined by the community's material and technological restrictions. Java houses have evolved into intricate shapes as a result of scientific and technological advancements. This development creates new knowledge and rules for building houses, one of which is related to determining



sacred spatial planning and making alterations to buildings by establishing spatial positions based on cardinal directions. According to Soekmono (2002; Budiwiyanto, 2011), the spatial structure of the house defined a specific location as a sacred site beginning with the Mesolithic culture. This culture began to emerge with the erection of pole dwellings (*kjokenmoddinger*). The house's shape began to grow, with stilts to prevent wild animals and a curving roof like a horse's saddle (Kusnadi, 1976/1977, in Budiwiyanto, 2011). According to Budiwiyanto (2011), traditional Javanese dwellings in prehistoric times were rather simple in design and structure. At the time, the mansion served solely as a residential and social hub for Javanese people.

Traditional Javanese dwellings evolved in shape and architecture as the Hindu-Buddhist empire began. This growth was influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, as evidenced by the incorporation of temples and relief themes into building structures. During Mataram's heyday, traditional Java dwellings witnessed growth. The mansion began to take on a sophisticated design as it grew in size. The house's function expanded to include more space for religious rituals. Houses in Java were then influenced by Islam and colonialism. The fall of the Majapahit empire and the emergence of the Islamic kingdom of Demak influenced architectural and technological growth (Atmadi, 1984, cited in Budiwiyanto, 2011). Changes in Javanese architecture displaced the magical center known as the *rong-rongan* between the *soko gurus* and replaced it with the *mihrab* as the spiritual focus of Javanese society. The decoration now includes more Islamic symbols, as well as a prayer area for Muslims to worship in. Furthermore, the establishment of Sultan Agung's government had no substantial impact on the shape of the home; the symbol's structure changed only little (Atmadi, 1984, referenced by Budiwiyanto, 2011). During this time, the sizes of *soko guru*, *soko swamp*, *soko emper*, and *panitik* were determined by the owner's thumb size. Following that, colonization introduced European architecture combined with native Javanese designs.

Gaudenz Domenig (in Budiwiyanto, 2011) attempts to change and develop ancient houses in various stages. The shape of the house evolved with time, beginning as a conical hut with ridge horns, a basic frame with scissor-crossed ribs like horses, and other ribs on the branches of the combined horns, then evolving into a *kuda kudan* and *soko guru* as a basic frame with two ribs that crossed scissors that mangingal (Budiwiyanto, 2011). This development demonstrates that Javanese society at the time began to pay attention to the relationship between cultural values and aesthetic values, so that every individual saw a building in a dualistic way, specifically by providing a horn-shaped ridge roof as an ancient aesthetic value that was closely related to religious principles (Budiwiyanto, 2011). Figure I shows the development of the house shape.

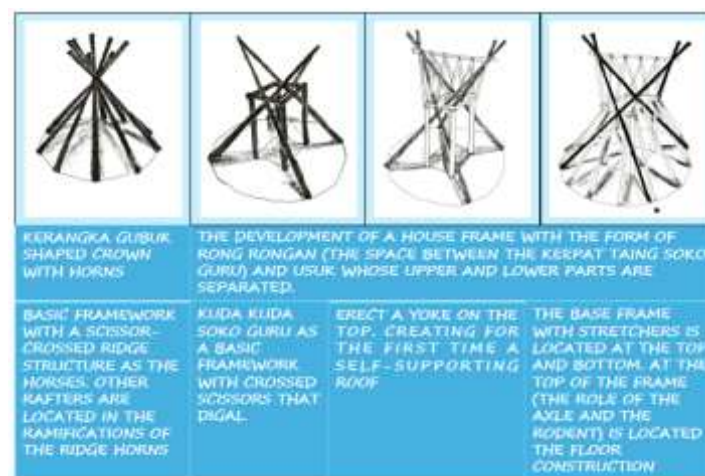


Figure I: Development of traditional house construction

Source: Frick, 2001, dikutip oleh Budiwiyanto, 2011

During the agricultural era, life became more mobile, necessitating the use of a loading and unloading mechanism for each individual. This system is part of the horse and pillar of the guru, and it is magically intact (Frick, 1997; Budiwiyanto, 2011). This method of building a house eventually evolved under the influence of Hindu-Buddhism, which introduced Indian cultural concepts. Indian cultural concepts influence the construction system by drawing analogies between the macrocosm and the microcosm, the universe and the human world (Heine-Geidelrn 1982, cited in Budiwiyanto, 2011). The concept of Javanese religion demonstrates that humans are influenced by energy, which leads to the cardinal points of wealth. Belief in the cardinal points continued until the coming of Islam, which used four primary pillars as supports known as pillars. According to Mulyana (2005, as described by Budiwiyanto, 2011), one of the pillars in the east is known as Saka Tatal. According to Mulyana (2005, as described by Budiwiyanto, 2011), Saka Tatal is a pole made of wood that is properly stacked and covered with metal plates. Saka Tatal is associated with the existence of nine wali sanga, saints or intellectuals who promoted the Islamic faith. The usage of pillar pillars in building construction in Java has continued to this day, particularly during the Islamic Mataram period. When traditional Javanese houses entered the contemporary period, they underwent further alterations owing to technological advancements and shifts in social attitudes. Building materials are changing, particularly the use of concrete and steel, which are more modern. House designs become more practical as they reflect the community's functions and demands. However, the presence of modern influences at the time did not deprive Ndalem Wuryaningrat of its pillars of teaching, which continue to this day.

According to history, Ndalem Wuryaningrat was established in 1890. This building was founded by KRA Sosrodiningrat IV. Prince Wuryaningrat began occupying this mansion during PB's rule. According to the history of Ndalem Wuryaningrat, this House previously served as the headquarters and centre of national operations during the struggle for independence. In 1997, the Solo City Government classified this House as a Solo City Cultural Heritage. H. Santosa Doellah, the owner of Batik Dinar Hadi, acquired Ndalem Wuryaningratan in 1999. Currently, this House serves as a batik shop on the left front, a conference hall for the main Ndalem Wuryaningrat building, and a batik museum on the side of the pavilion, which is now a Soga Cafe. Figure II show a map of Surakarta, Indonesia.



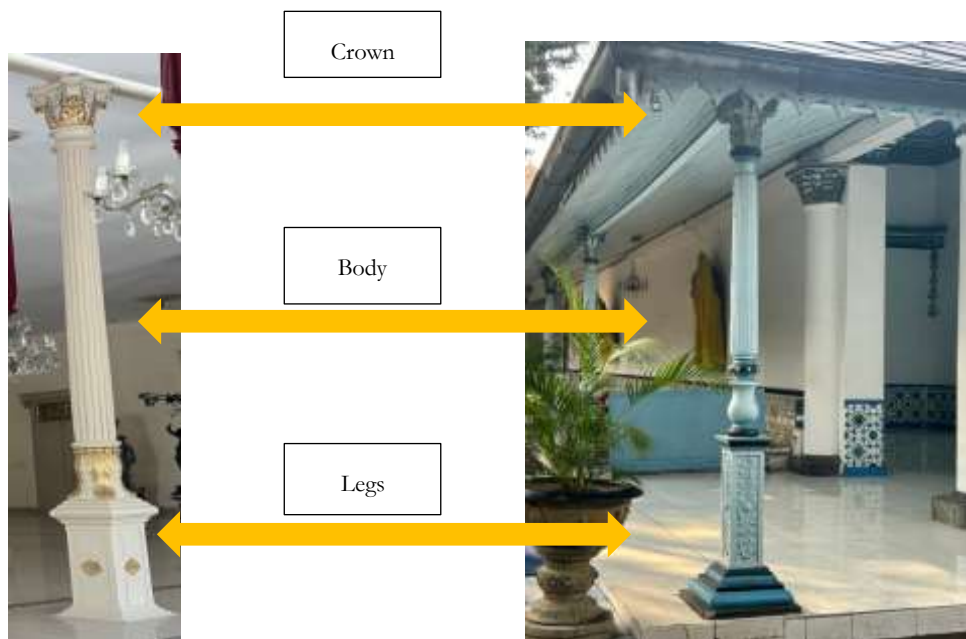
**Figure II:** The location of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat

Source: Maps & Self documentation

*Ndalem* Wuryaningrat was designed in a Javanese-inspired architectural style. Inside, different aesthetic embellishments demonstrate Javanese society's identity and ideas. Javanese architecture is more than simply a physical representation; it expresses human cognition and its relationship to the universe via the cosmological idea of *papat keblat lima pancer*. *Tajug*, *joglo*, *limasan*, and *kampung* are examples of Javanese buildings with structures and orientations that are strongly tied to this concept, demonstrating that Javanese architecture is more than just a physical structure; it is also a symbol of cultural ideas and meanings in its

society. The relationship between concepts and language in buildings gives philosophical meaning to buildings in Java and their surrounding communities, and buildings as visual aspects can be identified using cultural artifacts such as art, music, dance, and architecture. Aside from the crucial concept of tolerance, regional differences influence how cultural values are approached and integrated into everyday life. The spatial planning system demonstrates Javanese culture's values, particularly its beliefs. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's spatial layout includes motifs associated with Javanese society's inner spirituality. The aesthetic value of the object's design reflects the Javanese people's feelings and sensibility when viewing the palace, as well as their social relations and family relationships.

Each form of the prince's *ndalem*, as well as the forms of the buildings in the palace, demonstrates the distinctions in the hierarchy. The prince's *Ndalem* also represents one of the king's duties: to guard, protect, and respect. Aside from that, the prince's *ndalem* demonstrates the prince's loyalty to those around him. This structure represents the prince's rights and responsibility in making decisions for the betterment of his people. The interpretation derived from the prince's *ndalem* demonstrates that buildings have both social and physical aspects. The social qualities of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat demonstrate that it is more than just a dwelling; it is also a sign of social position and Javanese beliefs, as evidenced by the shape and placement of the *soko guru* pole in the pavilion, which convey Javanese cultural values. *Ndalem* Prince is a place where princes live and grow their lives. One of the contrasts visible in this hierarchy is the shape of the architectural elements and equipment contrasted to those found in the palace. However, some similarities can be seen as markers, such as the shape of the *soko guru* pillar, which is similar to the shape of the pillar in the palace hall (palace). The shape of the *soko guru* pole represents the owner's position, which openly explains the presence of a familial link with the king, either directly or indirectly, as in the case of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat.



**Figure III:** The similarity of the shape of the pillars in the hall of the Surakarta Hadiningrat palace with the shape of the pillars at *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat

Source: Researcher documentation 2023

*Ndalem* Wuryaningrat has a similar spatial structure to Javanese houses, including a pavilion, pringgitan, and dalem ageng. Each area has a meaning and function specific to Javanese society's requirements. Aside from that, the shape and function of each room will differ between ordinary people's homes and the prince's palace. The pavilion's shape also reflects the form and meaning of the prince's *ndalem*. The roof of the

prince's pavilion is joko joglo, with a modest peak that extends downward. The design of this pavilion's peak conveys a metaphysical notion about God. The position of the pavilion roof reflects the Javanese people's belief in societal equality before God. This pavilion also demonstrates that Javanese society is open and welcoming to anyone.

The prince's *ndalem* has a specific significance and philosophy tied to the cultural values of Javanese culture, as demonstrated by the *soko guru* pole, and spatial layout. According to Revianto's interview (2023), the tiered roof of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat is supported by *soko guru* pillars. However, the ceiling shape is slightly different from that of other pavilions, fitted to the era at the time. The *soko guru* pillar comprises four massive pillars typical of Javanese dwellings. *Soko guru* pillars, also known as columns, are systematically constructed and used primarily to support the framework of the pavilion building. The *soko guru* structure is designed and decorated to reflect Javanese society's principles, ideas, and aesthetics. *Soko guru* poles are adorned with carvings of many decorative shapes, including fauna and flora motifs, representing the balance of life in Javanese society.



Figure IV: *Soko Guru pole of Ndalem Wuryaningrat*

Source: Archive by R.Ay Evi Sriyuniarti YP (1890)



Figure V: *Soko Guru pole of Ndalem Wuryaningrat*

Source: Researcher Documentation(2023)

In the context of Javanese architecture, especially in traditional buildings such as pavilions, the use of poles is essential, especially the sokoo gguru pole (main or central pole); in this case, the use of poles has a deep connection with the principles of the Islamic religion, which considers prayer as a religious pillar—connecting the existence of pillars, especially *soko guru* in a pavilion, with the basic concept of Islam, which states that prayer is a pillar of religion.

The emblem of the pillar supporting the *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat structure represents the spiritual beliefs of the Javanese people, who are deeply committed to their religion, primarily Islamic religious beliefs. The entrance of Islam during the Islamic Mataram regime had a considerable impact on the construction of structures, particularly the usage of *soko guru* poles as building supports. People perform prayer as a required act of worship, which is one of Islam's pillars. The prayer ritual is reviewed and taught using numerous scriptures from the Quran and Hadith, two religious instructions for Muslims. Several verses in the Quran underline the importance of prayer in Islam and define it as a vital requirement for Muslims to fulfill. For example, in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 177, Allah SWT says, "Indeed prayer is an obligation determined at certain times for those who believe." This verse underlines the importance of prayer as a requirement for Muslims.

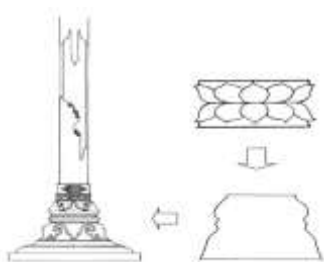
Prayer is a fundamental religious practice for Muslims. When Muslims do not pray, they indirectly harm or weaken their religion. Thus, Islam's force lies in its five daily prayers. This Muslim idea was implemented in the *soko guru* pillar, which supported the edifice at *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. Prayer is considered a pillar of religion in Javanese society under the *soko guru* worldview. *Soko guru* poles exhibit aesthetic ideals, demonstrating the presence of both aesthetic and spiritual elements in Javanese society. The Pole *Soko Guru* doctrine demonstrates Javanese society's spirituality through the requirement to pray. Prayer is an essential religious act that asks for assistance. Aside from being a God-given requirement, Javanese people think that



praying five times can help them build their defences. According to this religious concept, Javanese residential buildings use *soko guru* poles as supports to bolster their foundation. If poles are not provided, the structure has no defence. Without poles, a home cannot stand. This meaning emphasizes the significance of a pillar in a building. The *soko guru* pole at *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* exemplifies the concept of strength. In Javanese architecture, *soko guru*, the central pillar of a pavilion, can be viewed as a symbol of prayer, a pillar of Islam. *Soko guru* serves as a centre pillar, supporting the roof structure and providing stability to the building. In the Islamic theological, *soko guru* is a symbol that unites heaven (Allah SWT) and earth (humanity) through Muslim prayer. Thus, the relationship between pillars, particularly *soko guru*, in a pavilion building and Islamic religion, namely the concept of prayer as a religious pillar, provides a thorough knowledge of how Islamic religious principles are mirrored in traditional Javanese architecture. This demonstrates the depth of the interaction between religion, culture, and architecture in Javanese society, where Islamic religious ideals are lived and passed down.

The *soko guru* pillar is an important part of *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* as a building. Apart from being a building structure in the pavilion, it also represents the values of Javanese culture and is related to Islamic beliefs, namely the five daily prayers as a pillar of religion and other prayer such as sunnah prayers. In Javanese society, the meaning is almost similar and close to Islam. The meaning of the *soko guru* pole is shown by placing the four main poles to represent obligatory prayers (where the fifth is the middle point as the center) and additional poles to represent sunnah prayers. Therefore, the pillar is the most important part and must be built strongly to support the roof of a building. Another philosophical meaning is honesty. The community believes that individuals who perform prayers will be obedient so that they will not commit crimes such as stealing and lying due to their control over their worship. The meaning of this philosophy is manifested in the four pillars of *soko guru*.

The *soko guru* pole is also related to the Javanese belief in the relationship between human life and nature, believing in cosmology. Cosmology is a force outside the self, both the natural environment and God, strengthening every Javanese person. The *soko guru* pole shows that Javanese society is a society that prioritizes cosmology as a very important thing in its life. Natural balance is the main principle of Javanese philosophy, especially cosmic harmony, known as *rasa ngudi* or *ngumpulake urip*. The four pillars of *soko guru* play an important role in maintaining a balance between society and nature. This balance is achieved by teaching the community the importance of preserving the environment. This philosophical meaning is displayed through various decorative *soko guru* poles which take motifs from flora. Through floral motifs, Javanese people convey the importance of human harmony with other living creatures. Therefore, Javanese people need to respect nature.



**Figure VI: The Padma decoration on the umpak in Bangsal Witana is a stylization of red lotus**  
Source: The decoration of the Surakarta palace (Widayat, dkk. 2017: 42)



**Figure VII: Decorations on the umpak Ndalem Wuryaningrat**  
Researcher Documentation(2023)

The decoration on the *soko guru* pole is *Padma* on the base. *Padma* decorations come in brownish-black, gold and red colours. *Padma* decorations give beauty to the pillars. Apart from providing beauty, *Padma*

decorations have the meaning of purity and strength. The meaning of this motif can be seen in the decorative motifs on the *soko guru* poles. The formation of the *soko guru* pole in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat shows the cultural values of Javanese society, which upholds the value of purity. The *padma* motif is also proof that Javanese people always hold tightly to the belief of being the basis for supporting something heavy, including the *soko guru* pole as support for *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. The *padma* decoration also shows that the *soko guru* pole represents the Javanese people's inner relationship with God.

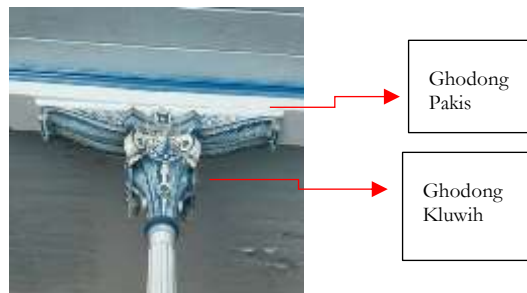
The *soko guru* pole also has a Kalamakara motif, which is used to show the beauty of the *soko guru* pole. The *soko guru* pole also has a gedhong kluwih motif that adapts the European neo-classical style. This motif shows the influence of classical European culture, which entered into the development of Javanese architecture and interiors. Even though it adapts European Neo Classical culture, the gedhong kluwih motif has a meaning that represents Javanese culture. The gedhong kluwih motif represents the usefulness of the *soko guru* pole, meaning that the building can benefit the surrounding environment. The *soko guru* pole also has a gedhong fern motif with a blue and white composition. The gedhong fern motif is also influenced by the Neo-Classical pole style. The gedhong fern motif on the *soko guru* pole represents the value of Javanese society, which always upholds goodness. This motif symbolises hope for the Javanese people always to receive the light of goodness.



**Figure VIII: The Godhong Kluwih decoration has the meaning of being extravagant.**

Source : The decoration of the Surakarta palace .

(Widayat, dkk. 2017: 40)



**Figure IX: Godhong Kluwih and fern decorations at the Surakarta palace**

Source : Researcher Documentation, 2024



**Figure X: Godhong Kluwih and fern decorations at Ndalem Wuryaningrat**

Source: Researcher Documentation, 2023

The designs and decorations on the *soko guru* pole indicate that it represents a spiritual and ethical leader in Javanese culture. *Soko guru* poles are adorned with religious and spiritual symbols and are guided by profound philosophical values. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat protects Javanese society's arts, culture, and spiritual values through the practice of *soko guru*. The *soko guru* pillar system demonstrates its position as a building's centre of strength through various distinguishing ornaments and colours. The *soko guru* pillar system in Javanese architecture closely connects to religious traditions, particularly the establishment of the five daily prayers. In Islam, prayer is regarded as a cornerstone of religion and one of Muslims' most important tasks. In this sense, the *soko guru* pillar, one of the primary pillars in Javanese architecture, can represent or extend the "religious pillar" notion. The *soko guru* pole conveys a connotation that is directly tied to Javanese society's beliefs, particularly Islam. The *soko guru* pillar reflects the number of rak'ahs in the four-rak'ah prayer. The portrayal of the number of rak'ahs of prayer demonstrates a close tie between Javanese culture and Islamic studies. Structurally, the *soko guru* is a pillar in the centre of a Javanese building that supports the roof and ensures overall structural integrity. In a religious setting, the *soko guru* pole might represent the spiritual power that connects heaven and earth or symbolise Muslims' loyalty and steadfastness in worship. The presence of *soko guru* pillars in Javanese structures also has a profound philosophical significance. The *soko guru* pole provides physical support and represents structural and spiritual stability, strength, and perseverance. As a result, the significance of *soko guru* pillars in buildings is recognized not only in terms of the physical construction of the building but also in terms of the meaning and symbolism inherent therein, particularly in the context of the five daily prayers, which are one of the primary pillars of the Islamic religion. The meaning of the *soko guru* pole indicates the Javanese people's belief in the importance of religion and divinity. The *soko guru* pole depicts balance, strength, harmony, and Javanese society's traditions related to efforts to keep faith in Islam.

The *soko guru* pole on *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat symbolizes purity and prosperity for its owner, Prince Wuryaningrat. The carved designs and colours depict previous glories and the owner as a member of the nobility. The *soko guru* pole system represents the proprietor of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. According to Javanese culture, manufacturing *soko guru* poles involves a system of harmony and respect. The *soko guru* pillar demonstrates the presence of a hierarchy in the architecture. *Soko guru* is more than just a pillar that supports a building; it represents its significance through numerous decorations and colours. However, it also contains Javanese cultural values and ideas. The role of the pillars is critical for this 1890 structure. The pavilion's visual shape has changed throughout time. The pavilion was initially open, but it is now closed by a glass door to decrease air pollution and maintain the cleanliness of the interior area; yet, despite changes in ownership and shape of the home, the *soko guru* pillars remain.

The *soko guru* pole is also kept up because it depicts Javanese society's horizontal and vertical relationships. The representation of public relations in *Soko Guru* demonstrates *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's cultural values, including how Javanese people perceive God, kings, princes, nobles, society, and the natural world. As a result, *Soko Guru* depicts how Javanese society values harmony in everyday life, as exemplified by *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. In *Soko Guru*, a Javanese cultural philosophy promotes living a balanced and harmonious life.

The *soko guru* pole system demonstrates Javanese society's status hierarchy. The societal status hierarchy describes the power of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's *soko guru* pillars. Based on researcher observation and interview with Saptoni (2023), the pole system in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat is represented by the following rules, and also refers to Ismunandar (1990).

### *Main Pole*

The *soko guru* pillar is positioned in the centre of the building. This pole is larger than the other poles. This pillar, located in the center of the building, is the primary support for the roof. Its primary duty is to sustain the building's construction, ensuring that the *soko guru* pole is at the center of the entire structural system. The main pillar, or *soko guru*, represents strength and stability. This symbol elevates the *soko guru* pole to the highest rank in the hierarchy.

### Companion Pole

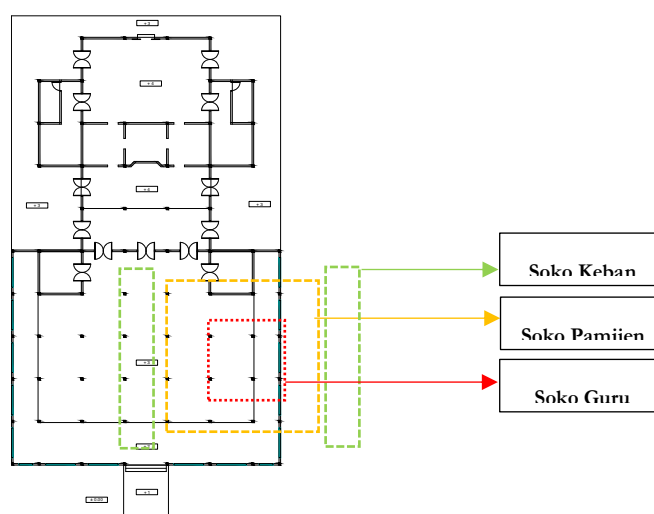
The companion pillar is next to the *soko guru*, or *soko pamijen*. Accompanying poles are positioned on the left or right, typically at the building's corners, and serve as extra supports for the building's sides. *Soko pamijen* poles, despite being smaller than *soko guru* poles, are nonetheless crucial in preserving the stability of the building structure by uniformly distributing the load. The companion pillar, *Soko pamijen*, ranks second in the *soko guru* hierarchy. With its position as a companion, this pole represents a helper.

### Support Pole

The *soko guru*, or *soko keban*, is behind the support pillar. This pillar supports the roof and provides stability to the *ndalem*. This pillar is positioned on the side of the structure and supports the building's wall. *Keban* pillars help to evenly distribute the load from the roof and walls to the ground, strengthening the building's overall stability. *Soko keban* ranks below *soko guru* and *soko pamijen* in the building hierarchy.

In Javanese architecture, the *soko guru* poles, *pamijen* poles, and *soko keban* poles are structurally interconnected and support one another to ensure the building's overall stability. Thus, the three pillars collaborate to ensure the stability and strength of the Javanese building. This Javanese architecture is represented in *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*. The *soko guru* pole, the primary pole in the center of *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*, is highlighted by the *pamijen* poles in the corners and the *soko keban* poles on the sides, resulting in a powerful and robust structural system (researcher observation, 2023-2024).

These three pillars demonstrate the presence of a hierarchical structure at *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*. This hierarchy demonstrates that *soko guru* is the primary pillar, receiving more attention. Meanwhile, *Soko pamijen* and *Soko keban* are in lower positions. However, the three pillars remain vital throughout the pavilion, particularly in the structural construction. The building's hierarchical system reflects Javanese society's attitudes toward social and cultural hierarchy. In Javanese society, the hierarchy does not distinguish between those who are lower and higher; rather, it enforces their rights and obligations to foster a peaceful social existence. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* reflects qualities and symbols through each of its pillars.



**Figure X:** Lay Out; the Placement of the Poles on *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*



The pavilion is made of pillars that follow a characteristic layout in traditional Javanese architecture. This layout symbolizes the virtues of Javanese life. Based on interview with Saptoni (researcher observation, 2023), the pole sequence will be detailed in more detail below. The pole sequence also refers to Nuryanto (2019).

#### *Soko Guru*

Soko guru is the most crucial pillar. Soko Guru is located in the center of Ndalem. Soko guru often has a greater size. Soko guru serves as the footing for the building's roof. Soko Guru represents strength and stability. Aside from that, the Soko guru is a symbol of human-spiritual interaction.

#### *Soko Pamijen*

Soko Pamijen is situated on the slopes of Soko Guru. Soko pamijen can be put to the left or right. Soko Pamijen's height is comparable to Soko Guru's. Pamijen pillars represent knowledge and wisdom. Aside from that, Soko pamijen means assistant or comrade of Soko guru.

#### *Soko Keban*

Soko keban is the pole in front of and behind the Soko guru. The soko keban is shorter than the other poles. Soko keban denotes protection. The soko keban supports the roof and stabilizes the structure.

#### *Soko Kulon*

Soko Kulon is located west of Pendopo. The site of Soko Kulon signifies the west direction or Kulon. The Soko Kulon pillar supports the roof and provides equilibrium to the building structure.

#### *Soko Wetan*

Soko Wetan is situated on the eastern bank of the Pendopo. The position of the soko wetan represents the east or wetan direction. The soko wetan pillar supports the roof and provides equilibrium to constructions like the soko kulon.

#### *North and South Soko*

The pavilion's size and design determine the existence of the north and south soko pillars. As a result, these two pillars are optional in any building. The two pillars help to support the roof.

The construction hierarchy reflects cultural values throughout the *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* edifice, particularly in the placement and formation of the *Soko guru* pillars. The meaning of the *Soko guru* pole can be understood via the lens of aesthetic values, specifically the admiration and feelings of the Javanese people, as represented in the decorating, decorations, carvings, colors, and hierarchy of the *Soko guru* pole in *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*. Based on the analysis presented, *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* can be classified as a cultural form. When we examine the meaning and hierarchical system of the *Soko guru*, *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* demonstrates the ideals and principles of Javanese life regarding social structure, attitudes, and daily behavior. *Ndalem Wuryaningrat* demonstrates the system that regulates Javanese society's activities, particularly the practice of beliefs, arts, customs, laws, and morals.

The discussion of *soko guru* is studied to demonstrate the culture of Javanese society. According to Nuryanto (2019), the prince's ndalem has a magnificent typology and decorating, is custom-made, and reflects Javanese culture. The image of Javanese culture is portrayed in *Ndalem Wuryaningrat*, which is the primary focus of this study. The *soko guru's* aesthetic aspect reflects Javanese culture. According to Sutrisno (2005), aesthetics is a feature that demonstrates the application of values, including not just beauty but also the

deep value of an object, such as inner joy and spiritual values gained through the process of learning symbols. The symbols in *soko guru* are represented by the motifs. According to Widayat (2017), there is a padma theme with lotus flower carvings; kalamakara with adapted carvings of an elephant trunk, lion head, and leaves; gedhong kluwih, which is influenced by European neoclassical style; and gedhong fern, which has fern leaf carvings. Each motif has a meaning that reflects the thoughts and identities of the Javanese people. According to Nuryanto (2019), the teacher's pillars symbolize Javanese society's values and standards. According to Nuryanto (2019), the *soko guru* pillars are the four primary pillars that support the house's basic structure as well as the roof. According to Kaplan and Manners' (1999) beliefs, the major pillar in a Javanese residence is culture; according to Linton, culture is a system that regulates attitudes, conduct, and knowledge based on community members' everyday lives and is passed down from generation to generation.

This research shows that the *Soko guru* in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat represents spiritual ideas, cultural values, and the status of life of Javanese people according to their descent or race. Fig. XI shows the analysis presentation in chart form.

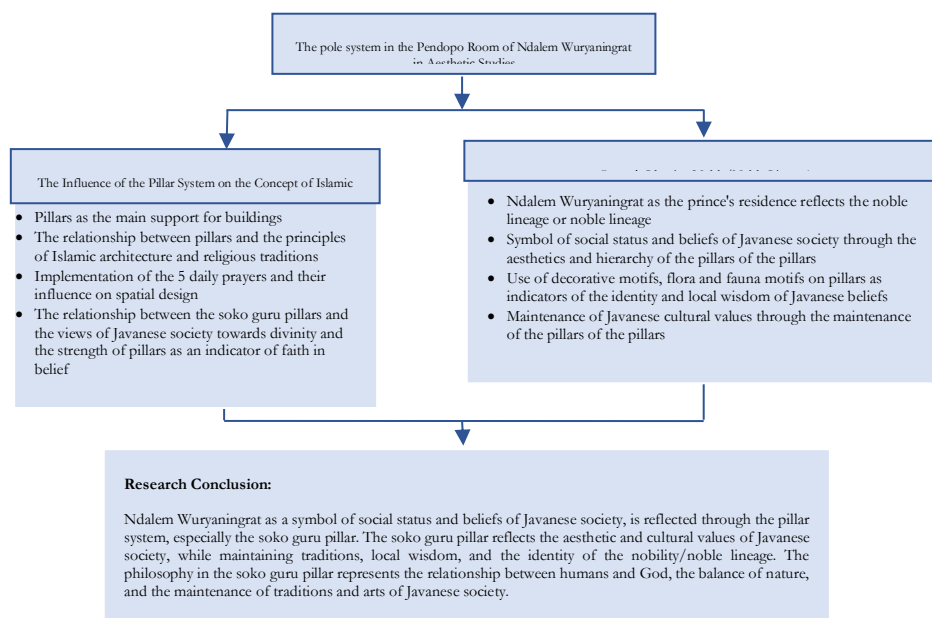


Figure XI: Research Chart

Source: Researcher Chart

## Conclusion

*Ndalem* Wuryaningrat is a residence reserved particularly for princes based on their descent or race. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat represents the Javanese people's social standing and beliefs. The aesthetic components, design, and hierarchy of *soko guru* poles reflect Javanese society's social position and beliefs. The *soko guru* pole depicts the Javanese people's view of divinity, particularly when linked to Islamic teachings, where the five daily prayers demonstrate the strength of religion in maintaining faith, so it can be interpreted that if prayers are maintained, so will the strength of faith, as well as buildings. The major support pole must be substantial and durable so that it does not fail to carry the load of the roof construction; total strength is required with the four main poles. *Soko guru* serves a purpose and stands out from other structures. The meaning of soko guru reflects *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat's aesthetic and cultural values. The principles of

Javanese society are reflected in the decorating, position, and motifs of *soko guru* poles, demonstrating the philosophical meaning of Javanese society, which values balance, and tranquillity. The *soko guru* pole system in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat is realized by incorporating cultural and aesthetic elements into planning and spatial design.

The *soko guru* pole is a sort of Javanese society that preserves local traditions and wisdom. *Soko guru* poles with Javanese cultural values must be researched so that Javanese people can continue to practice current customs. One approach is to apply Javanese cultural ideals such as simplicity, ethics, and moral values to Javanese culture. *Soko guru* teaches, using philosophical meaning, the foundation and spirit of life in Javanese society. In *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat, the *soko guru* pole refers to the principles and ideas of Javanese society. The variety of decorative animals and flora and the colours of the *soko guru* poles, which *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat continues to maintain, reflect the principles and ideas of Javanese society.

The *soko guru* pole represents the cultural diversity of *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat has aesthetic merit because of its cultural richness. The *soko guru* pillars, which express the spiritual view of life and the Javanese culture's social position, demonstrate a dwelling's aesthetics. Decorations with flora and animal motifs signify peace and balance in Javanese society's life. *Soko guru* pole plays an important part in *Ndalem* Wuryaningrat. This ideology is consistent with the principles of Javanese society. The *soko guru* pole depicts the Javanese way of keeping human relationships with God, maintaining natural equilibrium, conserving Javanese traditions and customs, and preserving art and historical structures. *Soko guru* poles play a crucial role in reflecting Javanese culture and identity.

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