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THE PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY OF ALUN-ALUN KEPANJEN'S PLANS AS A CITY IDENTITY

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Abstract

Kepanjen, as the center of government of Malang Regency, will transform into the capital city of the regency following the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) 2021-2026. An important proposal in this plan is the development of Kepanjen Square. The Alun-alun is a public space and a symbol of the city's identity, combining its historical, social, and cultural values. The design of the square will emphasize Kepanjen's identity while strengthening its social, cultural, and governmental roles in the area. This study will focus on the philosophical and architectural analysis of Alun-alun Kepanjen as a symbol of city identity. The methods used are literature review and historical analysis, by examining the essential function of the square. This approach is expected to identify relevant patterns in the development of Kepanjen City Square. From an architectural perspective, this study will examine how the design of the square can strike a balance between traditional and modern elements. Through a philosophical, architectural, and historical approach, the design of Kepanjen Square is expected to meet the community's public space needs and strengthen the identity of Kepanjen City. This square is expected to be a gathering place for community and cultural preservation, and various social, political, and religious activities, to become a center of harmonious and balanced life for all levels of society.

Keywords: Alun-alun, philosophical study, public space, City identity, Architectural analysis

1. Introduction

The background of the importance of philosophical studies in planning Alun-Alun Kepanjen, not only as a Green Open Space (RTH) but also as a symbol of city identity, stems from the historical and cultural functions of the square in Indonesian society. Since the royal period, the square has served as the center of political, social, and cultural activities. In addition, the square often became a place for religious rituals, community gatherings, and the center of government administration. These functions demonstrate that the square serves a deeper purpose than just a physical space; it reflects the identity and values of the local community. In the modern context, many cities plan squares as green spaces, which are crucial for supporting ecological balance and enhancing the quality of life for the community. However, simply making it a green space without considering the philosophical aspects and identity of the city will ignore the potential of the square to strengthen the distinctive character of a region.

Philosophical studies are necessary to explore local values, history, and cultural wisdom that can be integrated into the physical and aesthetic planning of the square, thereby strengthening the city of Kepanjen's identity. Alun-alun is one type of public area. One of the ideas of public open space that traditional Javanese society is familiar with is alun-alun. The palace and its plaza serve as the focal point of traditional Javanese urban planning, which

emphasizes the harmony between the macrocosm and the microcosm as an expression of the cosmological idea.

In Javanese culture, the ruler's home (Keraton, Regency) is always furnished with an alun-alun plot, which represents the idea of Godhead, or a banyan tree, which represents life, in an empty area. Similarly, the idea of a big kingdom with a big harbor fronting the ocean and a prosperous mountain behind it (Susanti, 2015).

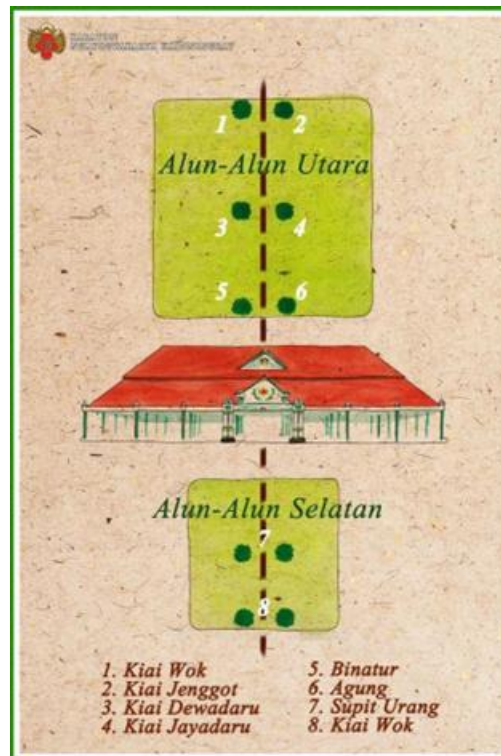


Figure 1: Layout Plan of Alun-Alun Yogyakarta
Source: Keraton Yogyakarta

Planning based on philosophical studies will make Kepanjen Square more than just a green open space; it can become a symbol of togetherness, a reflection of local spirit, and a distinctive cultural and historical representation. This is crucial in fostering an emotional and social connection between the community and the public space, as well as in building urban pride that reflects the character of the Kepanjen community. Alun-alun, the regent's office, mosques, and commercial establishments are the historical components of Java Island's cities. These four components, which are situated in the city center, are referred to as *catur tunggal*, or "four in one." Additionally, a layout prototype exists. The alun-alun is surrounded by the regent's office, mosques, and business establishments. Alun-alun is therefore a vital component of the metropolis. In terms of its modern usage, citizens use alun-alun for special occasions, such as ceremonies and celebrations, as well as for everyday activities, including marketplaces. Alun-alun has become a well-known feature of the city and a representation of it (Kohori et al., 2019).



2. Literature Review

2.1. Alun-alun's Philosophy:

Alun-alun can be understood as a space that holds deep meaning, encompassing various aspects of the community's social, cultural, and spiritual life. Here's an expanded explanation translated into English without changing the term "alun-alun":

1. Symbol of Cosmology and Balance with Nature - Adishakti (2009):

Discusses the alun-alun as a space that reflects cosmology and the balance with nature. Adishakti argues that the alun-alun serves as a central point in the city, representing the relationship between humans and the universe, as well as the harmony between social spaces and the natural environment.

Implementation: In Kepanjen, these principles can be applied through the selection of environmentally friendly materials, the use of extensive green areas, and the integration of natural elements, such as fountains or gardens, that symbolize harmony with nature.

2. Inclusive Space for All Social Strata - Soemardiono & Santosa (2016):

Highlights the alun-alun as an inclusive space accessible to all social strata. This approach highlights the significance of the alun-alun as a gathering place for diverse social groups, regardless of their socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds.

Implementation: The design of the alun-alun in Kepanjen can be structured to provide easy access for all residents, with facilities that are disability-friendly, as well as providing diverse activities that appeal to different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

3. Center of Spirituality and Sacred Activities - Sulistyowati (2015):

Reveals the alun-alun as a center for spiritual and sacred activities in the lives of the community. The alun-alun not only serves as a social meeting place but also as a space for spiritual reflection and religious activities.

Implementation: In Kepanjen, the alun-alun can be designed to accommodate various religious and spiritual activities, including traditional ceremonies, religious observances, and other sacred events. The design could involve areas dedicated to worship, like mosques or churches, that are connected to open spaces for prayer and reflection.

4. Representation of Authority and Governance - Kusuma & Pradoto (2018), Rahmawati (2020):

The alun-alun is a representation of authority and governance, embodying symbols of power and leadership. This concept emphasizes the alun-alun as a symbolic space that reflects the relationship between the government and the people.

Implementation: In Kepanjen, the alun-alun could house government offices, the district office, and other public facilities that represent local authority. The design of the alun-alun could also incorporate monuments or statues honoring local leadership history, as well as symbols reminding residents of the importance of participation and involvement in governance.

5. Symbol of Local Identity and Pride - Widiastuti (2021):

Emphasizes the alun-alun as a symbol of local identity and community pride. This concept refers to how the alun-alun can reflect the cultural values, history, and pride of the local community.



Implementation: The development of the alun-alun in Kepanjen could incorporate design elements inspired by the rich local culture and history, such as traditional arts, regional architecture, and street names referencing local figures. The alun-alun can become a place where local identity is preserved and celebrated, through statues or murals depicting local historical and mythological stories.

By integrating these principles, the development of the alun-alun in Kepanjen will not only create a functional public space but also a symbolic one, reinforcing the community's identity and pride.

2.2. Square's Philosophy:

In a philosophical sense, a square is more than just a place; it is a symbol of human interaction, social engagement, stability, and shared values that support healthy and inclusive urban life. Here's an expanded explanation of each concept from the image:

1. Togetherness and Social Integration - Carr, S., et al. (1992):

This concept highlights the significance of public spaces as venues where people can gather and engage, promoting a sense of community and social cohesion.

Application: In public squares, this is evident in the design that encourages diverse groups of people to gather, such as seating arrangements that accommodate various social interactions, communal spaces for events, and open layouts that facilitate easy movement and interaction.

2. Symbols of Freedom and Public Expression - Whyte, W. H. (1980):

Public spaces should foster freedom of expression and offer a platform for public art, performance, and personal expression.

Application: Incorporating areas for street performances, installations, and public art in the alun-alun can embody this principle, encouraging community members to express their identities and stories, thereby enriching the city's cultural fabric.

3. Democracy and Citizen Participation - Montgomery, J. (1998):

Public squares serve as democratic forums where citizens can participate in governance, express opinions, and engage in dialogue.

Application: The design of the alun-alun can facilitate citizen participation by including features such as open spaces for public meetings, decision-making spaces like community boards, and facilities that host local assemblies and forums.

4. Symbol of Stability and Order - Lynch, K. (1960):

A well-designed public space can serve as a symbol of order and stability, providing a sense of predictability and safety.

Application: In the alun-alun, elements such as clear pathways, defined areas for different activities, and visual landmarks can enhance its functionality and contribute to a sense of order and stability within the community.

5. Open Space and Balanced Living - Gehl, J. (2011):

Public spaces should promote open space, allowing people to live balanced, healthy lives by providing areas for leisure, recreation, and social interaction.



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Application: The alun-alun can incorporate green spaces, parks, playgrounds, and pedestrian-friendly paths, enabling residents to relax, socialize, and engage in physical activities, thus contributing to a balanced urban lifestyle.

6. Identity and Cultural Heritage - Madanipour, A. (1999):
Public spaces should reflect and celebrate the local identity, history, and cultural heritage.
Application: The alun-alun can incorporate elements that reference local traditions, art, and architecture, such as local materials, traditional designs, and symbols representing the history and culture of Kepanjen, reinforcing a sense of place and pride.
7. Equality and Accessibility - Carr, S., et al. (1992):
Public spaces must be designed to be accessible and inclusive, ensuring that all community members can use the space regardless of age, disability, or socioeconomic status.
Application: The alun-alun can be designed with accessible pathways, seating arrangements, and amenities that cater to people with disabilities, as well as considerations for affordable access and opportunities for participation for all community members.
8. Community Life - Gehl, J. (2011):
Public spaces should foster a sense of community life by supporting social interactions, communal activities, and the informal exchange of ideas.
Application: The design of the alun-alun can support a variety of programmed and spontaneous activities, such as markets, fairs, public performances, and community events, encouraging a vibrant community life and a strong sense of social cohesion.
These concepts collectively guide the development of public spaces, such as the alun-alun in Kepanjen, aiming to create environments that are not only functional and aesthetically pleasing but also socially, culturally, and politically meaningful.

3. Method

In a study addressing the importance of philosophical considerations in planning Kepanjen Square, not only as a Green Open Space (GOS) but also as a symbol of the city's identity, several research methods can be employed:

3.1. Qualitative Method

This method is well-suited because the study aims to gain a deep understanding of the philosophical values, history, and cultural identity of the city. Techniques used include:

3.1.1. Literature Review

Analyzing relevant literature on public space concepts, the historical role of squares in Indonesia, and philosophical studies on urban space.

1. Alun-alun's Philosophy:

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5. Symbol of Local Identity and Pride Widiastuti (2021)

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4. Symbol of Stability and Order Lynch, K. (1960)
5. Open Space and Balanced Living Gehl, J. (2011)
6. Identity and Cultural Heritage Madanipour, A. (1999)
7. Equality and Accessibility Carr, S., et al. (1992)
8. Community Life Gehl, J. (2011)

3.1.2 Case Study

The research can be framed as a case study of Kepanjen Square, comparing it with squares in other cities that successfully combine GOS aspects with urban identity. This provides insight into how philosophical approaches are applied elsewhere and their relevance to Kepanjen.

1. Grouping Theory of Alun-alun

The alun-alun (city square) in Indonesia is a culturally and historically significant public space, distinct from other green areas. It often features elements like banyan trees, open fields, monuments, places of worship, and culturally reflective architecture. These spaces, typically near key institutions, play a central role in the social and cultural life of a community. The planned alun-alun in Kepanjen aims to enhance the city's identity and support its role as a prospective independent regency capital. Following traditional layouts, such as Alun-alun Malang, it incorporates sustainable design elements to preserve cultural heritage and foster community interaction. Through this blend, the alun-alun strengthens city identity and continuity across generations. Moerdjoko, 2005. Santoso, 2024.

The creation of Alun-alun is a crucial process, given that its naming and design cannot be done carelessly. This is because the square has historical significance, rules, elements, and culture associated with it. In addition, the characteristics of the square differ from those of parks, urban forests, and other green open spaces, making it a unique public space that plays a crucial role in the community's social life. Sustainable development encompasses a range of physical and non-physical components that shape a city's identity. Over time, each city has specific characteristics that highlight its historical heritage, urban design elements, humanist values, and development strategies. Besides influencing the perspective of local residents, these factors also affect how the city is perceived by others. By combining these elements, cities can create rich and layered identities that reflect their unique history and development (Putri, 2024).

In this context, Alun-alun Kepanjen is designed not only as an inclusive and sustainable public space, but also as an icon of the new city identity that will strengthen Kepanjen's position as a prospective independent regency capital.



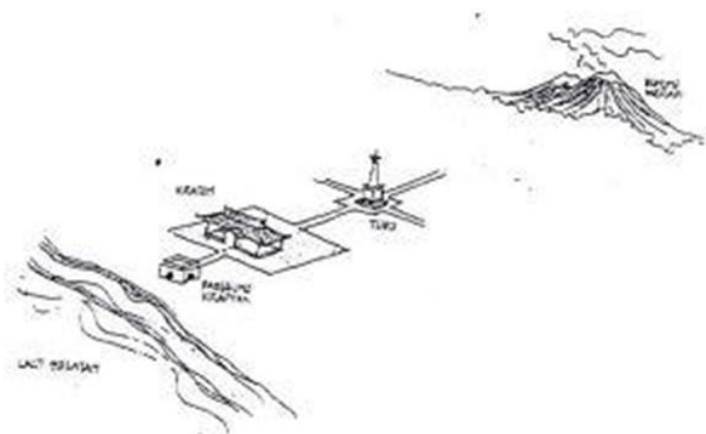
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Alun-alun is usually an open space that depicts the history and culture of a region. Squares in Indonesia are typically surrounded by important buildings, such as mosques, government offices, and historical sites. Here are some symbols that are often found in squares:

1. Banyan Tree (Beringin tree): This is a symbol of fertility, shade, and protection. Many cultures also consider this tree sacred.
2. Open Field: This is a representation of public space and a place where people gather for various activities.
3. Monument or Statue: Indicates important people, historical events, or values upheld by the community.
4. Mosque or Place of Worship: Indicates a strong religious and spiritual element in the local culture.
4. Building Architecture: The cultural values and lifestyle of the community are usually reflected in the design of the buildings around the square.

Alun-alun is the center of social and cultural life in a city. Sustainable development encompasses a range of physical and non-physical components that shape a city's identity. Over time, each city has specific characteristics that highlight its historical heritage, urban design elements, humanist values, and development strategies. Besides influencing the perspective of local residents, these factors also affect how the city is perceived by others. By combining these elements, cities can create rich and layered identities that reflect their unique history and development throughout time (Moerdjoko, 2005).

Alun-alun is an open space created by the intentional creation of space between buildings, according to Thomas Nix (1949:105-114). Therefore, the buildings serve as the starting point and the primary element in the formation of the square in this case. However, if any open space is left and used as a square, it is not a true square. Therefore, a square can be found in every village, sub-district, city, or district center (Suhardi, 2021).



Picture 2: Imaginary Line of Alun-alun Yogyakarta
Source: Khairuddin, 1995:11

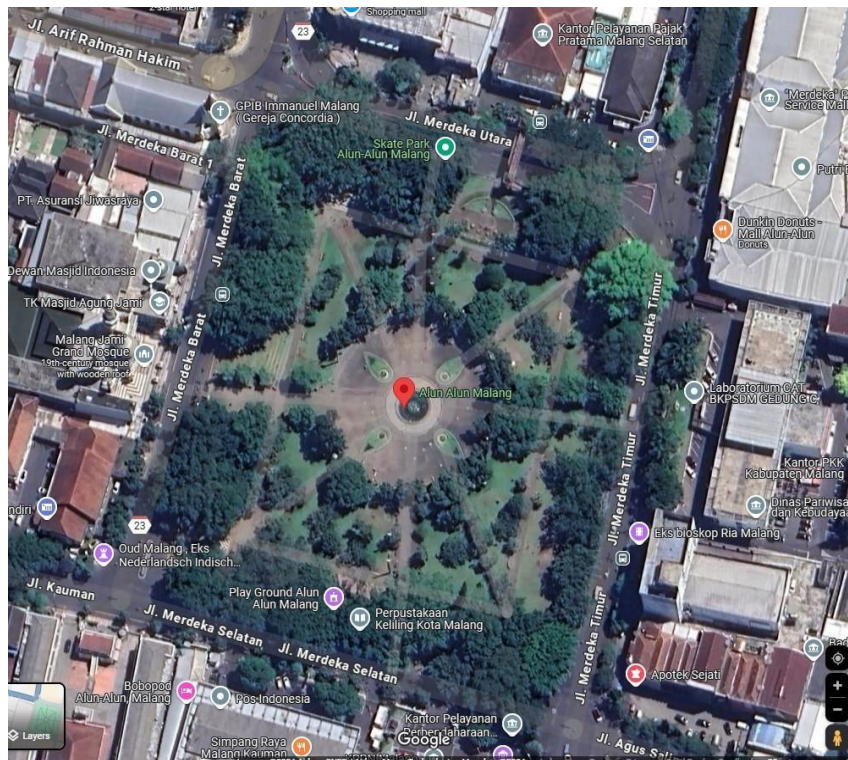
The layout of the Alun-alun Kepanjen planning is situated directly in front of the Malang Regent's Office, which serves as the district government headquarters. However, when viewed in terms of the philosophy of Alun-alun in general, the layout of Alun-alun is not only in front of the regent's office, but also serves as an open space that transitions to linear building centers, such as the palace, places of worship, markets, and office centers.



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Picture 3 Layout Plan of Alun-Alun Malang

Source: Google Maps

2. Grouping Theory of Squares

Theories about the concept of the square and its layout in urban design in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, often refer to the view that the square is the centre of social and cultural activities, surrounded by important buildings such as government offices, places of worship, and markets. Some sources that explain square theory in this context include:

Thomas Nix (1949). In his book, Nix states that a square is an open space surrounded by buildings, which serves as the starting point in the creation of a city center. He states that the square features symbols that make it the center of activity and identity for the city (Nix, 1949, pp. 105-114).

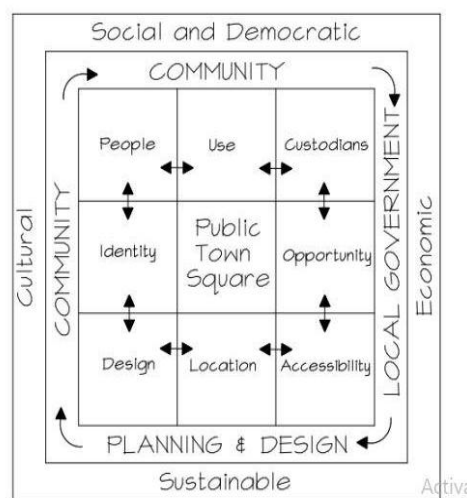


Figure 4: The Resultant Framework untuk pengembangan Public Town Squares

Source: David Kraljick



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David Kraljik's Resultant Framework describes the development of public town squares by combining social, cultural, economic, and sustainability elements. The framework consists of internal factors (People, Use, Custodians, Identity, Opportunity, Design, Location, Accessibility), and external factors (Community, Local Government, Economy, and Sustainable Planning). The goal is to create functional, inclusive, and sustainable public spaces to support social interaction.



Figure 5: Layout Plan Federation Square (Melbourne, Australia)
Source: Google Maps

The Resultant Framework in Action is shown by Federation Square in Melbourne, Australia. 1) Location & Accessibility: It is strategically located in the city centre and easily accessible. 2) Design & Identity: It has an iconic design that reflects Melbourne's cultural identity. 3) Functions & Opportunities: It is a multifunctional public space for arts, cultural, and economic events. 4) Community & Stewardship: Engage local governments and the community in maintaining the city.

In accordance with the principles of David Kraljik's The Resultant Framework, Federasi Square successfully created a functional, inclusive, and sustainable public space.

3.1.3 Historical Analysis

This method examines the history of Kepanjen Square's development and public squares in Indonesia, as well as their social, cultural, and political roles in both past and present contexts. It helps in understanding how the functions and meanings of squares have evolved and how philosophical analysis can strengthen the city's identity.

Origin of Kepanjen City Name (Summary):

- The city of Kepanjen comes from the story of Raden Panji Pulang Jiwo, the Duke of Sumenep, who was known for his bravery against the Mataram Sultanate.

- The Beginning of the Story: Raden Panji won a contest against Putri Probo Retno, the daughter of the Duke of Malang.
- War Against Mataram: Refusing to submit to Mataram, a war broke out between the Malang troops (led by Raden Panji and Putri Probo Retno) and the Mataram troops led by Joko Bodo. Princess Probo Retno died in the duel.
- Raden Panji's death: Overcome with grief, Raden Panji finally died as a result of a well trap designed by Mataram troops.
- Naming of Kepanjen: Raden Panji was buried in a location later known as Kepanjian (now Kepanjen) as a symbol of resistance to Mataram.
- Historical Significance: The story reflects the courage, sacrifice, and resistance of the people of the Duchy of Malang to the rule of the Mataram Sultanate.

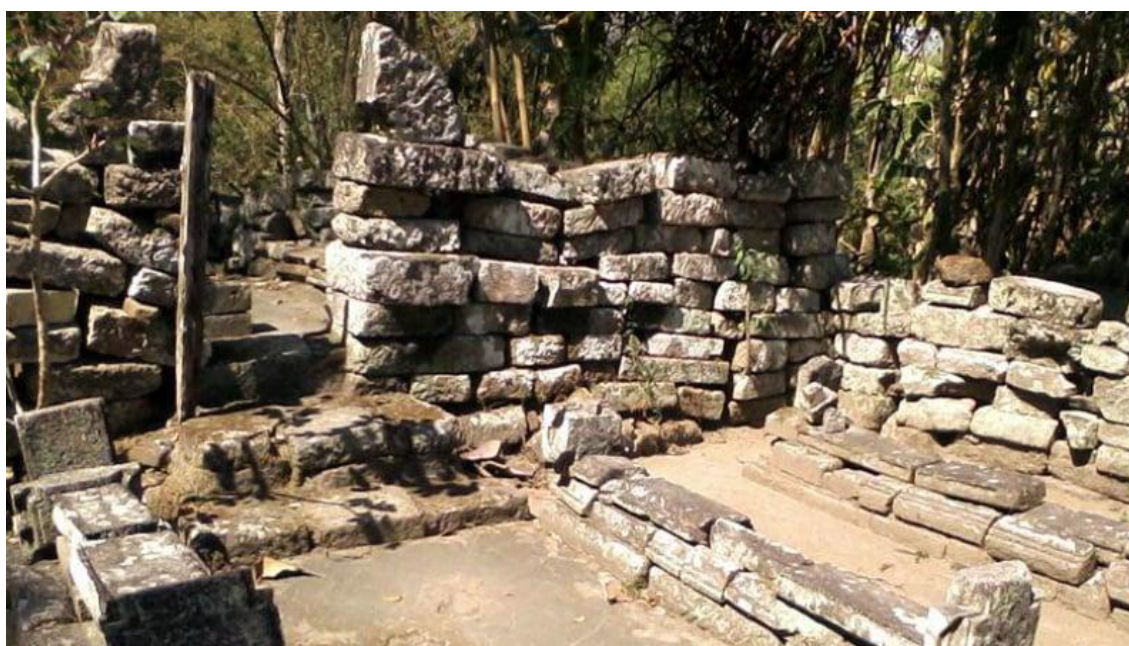


Figure 6: Sengguruh Kingdom inscription in Kepanjen, Malang Regency.

(Photo: Kiaibudaya)

Source: <https://jatim.inews.id/berita/kisah-sengguruh-kerajaan-bercorak-hindu-budha-terakhir-di-malang-selatan>

A brief history of the origin of Kepanjen City, rooted in the story of Raden Panji Pulang Jiwo's struggle and Princess Probo Retno's quest, can serve as the basis for the cultural essence and philosophy in the future development of Kepanjen Square. The story reflects the values of courage, sacrifice, and resistance to injustice, which are strong identities of the Kepanjen community. The construction of the square, considering this history, will not only honour the traces of the ancestors' struggle but also become a symbol of the revival of local culture as a meaningful public space. Thus, Alun-alun Kepnajen can become a centre of culture, social interaction, and community pride that reflects the philosophy of history and the values of past struggles.

3.1.4 Aesthetic and Architectural Analysis

This method involves examining the square's existing physical layout as well as artistic ideas that can represent the city's identity and philosophical principles. It is crucial to understand how public areas can be planned to serve purposes beyond their ecological function. A thorough



analysis will be produced by combining techniques from urban design theory, such as the "placemaking" concept, which highlights the value of creating community-meaningful places (Carmona et al., 2010), and the "sense of place" theory, which emphasizes the importance of place attachment and local identity (Tuan, 1977).

We can learn from Kepanjen's precursor, Malang City's Alun-alun, by comprehending the function of public squares as not only tangible areas but also as symbolic and philosophical places for the locals. For example, satellite imagery shows that the Bank Indonesia office is located on the square's north side, the Regent's Office is situated on its east side, places of worship, such as mosques and Christian churches, are located on its west side, and a post office is positioned on its south side. Together, these components represent the space's complex character and purpose, offering a blueprint for how a new alun-alun in Kepanjen may include and represent the city's varied administrative, religious, and cultural fabric.

By incorporating these components, Kepanjen's new public space will fulfill its ecological purpose while also connecting with the neighborhood's shared history and values, thereby strengthening ties and boosting pride among its citizens.

A philosophical study of Indonesian alun-alun and Western town squares reveals the values, symbolic meanings, and purposes of these two public spaces. Here are the philosophical differences between the two with their sources. From the literature review, the philosophical values can be grouped in terms of their differences, namely:

Table 1: Differences in Philosophical Value Theory Of Alun-alun and Square

Philosophical Aspects	Alun-Alun Indonesia	Town Square (West)	Reference
Spiritual and Religious Meanings	Alun-alun has a close relationship with spirituality and religion, often adjacent to a mosque or temple, reflecting a vertical connection with God and spiritual forces (Kusuma, 2015; Fauziah, 2018).	Town squares in the West are generally more secular, rarely feature religious elements, and tend to focus more on civic and community activities (Anderson, 2011).	Kusuma (2015), Fauziah (2018), Anderson (2011)
A Symbol of Power	In Indonesia, Alun-alun represents the power of the government or kingdom, symbolising the influence and authority of the local government. The banyan tree in the centre of the square, for example, symbolises the protection and stability of the government (Saputro, 2020).	Western town squares represent people's power and often symbolise freedom and autonomy in public life, emphasising democratic values and individual rights (Creighton, 2009; Hall, 2009).	Saputro (2020), Creighton (2009), Hall (2009)
Social Function and Freedom	Alun-alun is often the centre of traditional ceremonies and celebrations, but these activities are usually more formal and organised, involving a government role in the management and	Town squares in the West function as places of free social activity, for example, for public protests, celebrations, and communal interaction; often reflecting individual freedom	Kusuma (2015), McDowell (2012), Anderson (2011)



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	restriction of events (Kusuma, 2015).	(McDowell, 2012; Anderson, 2011).	
Relationship with Cultural Identity	Alun-alun reflects cultural identity and locality, with elements that are considered sacred and illustrate the cultural roots and beliefs of the community, especially in Java (Fauziah, 2018; Kusuma, 2015).	Town squares are more universal and often lack specific local elements, instead focusing on creating communal spaces that accommodate the diverse needs of communities (Hall, 2009; Creighton, 2009).	Fauziah (2018), Kusuma (2015), Hall (2009), Creighton (2009)

Source: Author, 2024

However, from these differences, there are some philosophical similarities that can be explained as follows:

Table 2: Similarity in Philosophical Value Theory Of Alun-alun and Square

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Source: Author, 2024



4. Result and Discussion

Based on the theoretical analysis of the square and town square, it was found that both have similarities and differences that reflect their respective cultural contexts, functions, and local values.

1. Similarities: As Public Space: Both squares and town squares function as centers of community activity, gathering places, and locations for social or ceremonial events (Carr et al., 1992).
2. Symbol of City Identity: They are often important icons that represent the history, culture, or values of the local community (Gehl, 2010).
3. Strategic Location: Generally, squares and town squares are located in the city center, often adjacent to important buildings such as government offices, places of worship, or markets (Nas, 2007).

Table 3: Differences between Alun-alun and square

Criteria	Indonesian Alun-Alun	Western Town Square	Reference Source
Size	Large, located in the city center, surrounded by important buildings such as mosques and government offices	Varies, often in the city center, surrounded by commercial and government buildings	Fauziah, 2018; Hall, 2009
Elements	Mosque minarets, open gardens, banyan trees, public facilities such as sports fields	Fountains, statues, monuments, small gardens, public seating	Saputro, 2020; Creighton, 2009
Shape	Usually symmetrical and open, often square or rectangular	Varies, but often square or round with defined open spaces	Suharjo, 2019; McDowell, 2012
Characteristics/ Philosophy	Center of social and spiritual interaction, symbol of power and local culture, with sacred elements (e.g., banyan tree as a symbol of strength)	Center of communal life and social interaction, a free public space reflecting values of freedom and democracy	Anderson, 2011; Kusuma, 2015

Source: Author



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Here are some of the results of the Kepanjen Corridor competition, where one of the planning points is Kepanjen Square.



Figure 7: Layout Plan of Alun-Alun Kepanjen 1st Winner

Source: LAI Malang

The design approach uses a vine bridge to connect Alun-alun and the regent's office, signifying cooperation in the control of urban expansion.



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Figure 8: Layout Plan of Alun-Alun Kepanjen 2nd Winner
Source: IAI Malang

The planned Kepanjen District Square is situated adjacent to the government district, government buildings, and the District Court. The government center serves as an important gathering place for people in the government and represents the Corridor as a grand, formal, open, and intimate mediating space. As part of the “Adimarga”, there are two main roads that connect to the fortress road or slow lane. The 12-meter main road serves as the primary route for the north-to-south passage of Adimarga from the city of Kepanjen to Gondanglegi, while the 6-meter slow road/Fortress Road provides access to the government district and the planned Square.



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Figure 9: Layout Plan of Alun-Alun Kepanjen 3rd Winner

Source: IAI Malang

Plataran Kuto can be interpreted literally as a place that gives pleasure to the community. From the discussion of the three winners of the alun-alun design competition, it can be concluded that these designs offer various relevant approaches to planning the Kepanjen alun-alun. Studying theories about alun-alun in Indonesia, as well as comparing them with the concept of town squares abroad, provides valuable insights into understanding the cultural values, social functions, and aesthetic aspects that must be considered in public space planning.

As a suggestion, the design of the Kepanjen alun-alun can incorporate principles from Indonesian alun-alun theories, which emphasize the connection between people, nature, and spiritual values, as well as elements of public space from the square concept, which focuses more on social interaction and economic activities. Thus, the Kepanjen alun-alun can not only serve as a symbol of the city's identity but also as a space capable of supporting social and environmental sustainability in line with the principles of *sustainable urban design*.

An additional benefit of this approach is the creation of a more inclusive and environmentally friendly public space, which will enhance the quality of life for the community and support Kepanjen's appeal as a sustainable destination from both economic and social perspectives.



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3. Conclusion

In the planning of Alun-alun Kepanjen, philosophical and cultural aspects require more in-depth attention. The square is not only a public open space, but also has the potential to become a symbol of Kepanjen's identity and, more broadly, that of Malang Regency. In order to achieve this goal, a philosophical approach that delves into the values of local wisdom, tradition, and regional history is crucial. By highlighting local culture, the square can reflect the unique character of Malang Regency, giving it a strong and recognizable identity.

This in-depth approach includes the exploration of distinctive cultural elements, such as art, traditional architecture, customs, and mythology or folklore that are still alive in the local community. Representing local culture in the design elements of the square, through sculptures, reliefs, thematic gardens, or traditionally styled buildings, can enhance its aesthetic value while creating a culturally nuanced space. Thus, Alun-alun Kepanjen serves not only as a gathering place for citizens but also as an educational and reflective space that reminds people of their cultural roots.

In addition, Alun-alun Kepanjen can also serve as a cultural tourism attraction that enriches the visitor experience, both for locals and those from outside the region. The integration of these local cultural elements will make the square a public space that is not only aesthetically pleasing and functional, but also rich in meaning. Ultimately, Kepanjen Square is expected to become a symbol that represents the personality and values of Malang Regency, thereby strengthening the collective identity of its people. In planning Alun-alun Kepanjen, it's crucial to emphasize the philosophical and cultural aspects that reflect the identity of Kepanjen and Malang Regency. By incorporating local art, architecture, customs, and folklore through elements like sculptures, reliefs, and thematic gardens, the square can serve as both a community gathering space and a cultural education site. T. (1949), Moerdjoko (2005), Suhardi (2021), Santoso(2024).

Based on various literature reviews, it can be explained that alun-alun and square each have their own distinct characteristics, which serve as one of the foundations for reviewing the design planning of alun-alun Kepanjen.

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