

The Papat Lima Pancer Qibla: From the Serat Manikmaya to the Traditions of the Javanese Hindu Community

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Keyword:	Abstract
Four Mandalas; <i>Sĕrat Manikmaya</i> ; Javanese Cosmology; Javanese Hindu; Sang Hyang Manikmaya	<i>Kiblat papat lima pancer</i> (the four cardinal directions and the central self) is a fundamental cosmological concept in Javanese culture that maps the four cardinal directions around a single central point (<i>pancer</i>) as an axis of balance between the cosmos and humankind. Previous studies have examined this concept separately through ethnography, architecture, performing arts, or textual analysis, without integrating these perspectives. This study aimed to analyze the conceptualization of the <i>Kiblat Papat Lima Pancer</i> teaching in <i>Sĕrat Manikmaya</i> by Karta Mursadah (National Library collection KBG 1074) and to examine its manifestation in the ritual practices of the Javanese Hindu community. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method with content analysis techniques through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, interpreted using Gadamer's hermeneutic theory and Schutz's phenomenological approach. The findings showed that the concept was presented in <i>Sĕrat Manikmaya</i> (canto 1, verses 15–19) through the narrative of the Dewata Nawa Sanga arrangement across eight cardinal directions and one center, accompanied by a system of cosmic correspondences, including consort deities, Javanese pentadic cycles, natural elements, colors, fauna, and carakan script. This teaching was actualized among the Javanese Hindu community through three dimensions: spatial organization based on the mandala concept, ritual manifestations through offerings (<i>canang sari</i> and the <i>mecaru</i> ceremony), and spiritual microcosmic life through the <i>Sedulur Papat Lima Pancer</i> teaching. This study affirmed the continuity of Javanese cosmological values as a form of cultural syncretism that integrates classical texts with contemporary religious practices.

INTRODUCTION

Javanese culture and spirituality are rich in philosophical cosmological concepts that describe the harmonious relationship between humans, the universe, and the Supreme Being (Alfan et al., 2024; Fauzi & Paizin, 2026; Jafar, 2022; Marpuah, n.d.; Nurziana & Firdaus, 2025). One of the most fundamental Javanese cosmological perspectives is *kiblat papat lima pancer*, a spatial-philosophical framework that maps the four cardinal directions (east, south, west, and north) with one central point (*pancer*) as the axis of balance and a symbol of harmony between the cosmos and humankind.

Sĕrat Manikmaya is an eighteenth–nineteenth-century Javanese literary work that remains relevant today (Day & Wieringa, 2024; Muaddab & Nafisah, 2026; Nursalim, 2025; S. Santosa & Santoso, 2026). This manuscript presents narratives related to Javanese cosmology, including cosmogony, cultural traditions, and philosophical teachings of the Javanese people. One of these teachings is the concept of *kiblat papat lima pancer*.

In Javanese Hindu society, these teachings have undergone a transformation from textual knowledge into living traditions, manifested through rituals, spatial organization, and value

systems that strengthen community identity and spirituality (Khairani & Hendra, 2025; Kiriana et al., 2025; Sadiyani et al., 2025; I. Santosa & Hendryana, 2026; Suroyo et al., 2025). The continuity of these teachings demonstrates the internalization of cultural values that function to maintain social harmony amid interactions with Kejawen philosophy and the cultural influence of the Muslim-majority environment. This process of transforming textual traditions into living practices is a central concern of this study, as it illustrates how classical cosmological concepts remain relevant and functional in contemporary religious life.

The study of kiblāt papat lima pancer from textual and traditional perspectives is relevant because it provides new insights into how cosmological and aesthetic values are inherited, reinterpreted, and practiced within contemporary Javanese Hindu society. This research is expected to enrich academic discourse on cultural syncretism, tradition sustainability, and the role of classical texts in shaping spiritual and social identities.

This study aimed to analyze the conceptualization of kiblāt papat lima pancer teachings in *Sĕrat Manikmaya* and examine how the teachings represented in the *Sĕrat Manikmaya* text are manifested in the practice of kiblāt papat lima pancer rituals within the Javanese Hindu community. The novelty of this research lies in mapping the relationship between Javanese classical literature (*Sĕrat Manikmaya*) and the socio-religious realities of the Javanese Hindu community.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive-interpretative qualitative method using content analysis techniques. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Participatory observation was conducted by observing the implementation of rituals, the arrangement of sacred spaces, and the cultural expressions of Javanese Hindus within Hindu community enclaves. In-depth interviews were conducted with experts, customary leaders, and religious figures to explore the construction of meaning and religious interpretations. Documentary and textual analysis was performed by examining relevant stanzas in the *Sĕrat Manikmaya* manuscript as a textual reference for the conception of kiblāt papat lima pancer. The study employed Gadamerian hermeneutics and Schutzian phenomenology as theoretical frameworks for interpreting textual meanings and lived religious experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A search across several catalogues and digital archives reveals the existence of multiple recensions of *Sĕrat Manikmaya*, composed by different court poets (*pujangga*), including Karta Mursadah, Raden Ranga Panambangan, and Raden Ranggawarsita III. Although the version by Karta Mursadah remains less known among the Javanese public due to limited publication, it fundamentally constitutes the foundational prototype (*naskah awal*) which later versions derived. Consequently, this study utilizes Karta Mursadah's manuscript as the primary reference text containing the concept of kiblāt papat lima pancer."

Conceptualization of the teachings of the Qibla of the Four Five Pancers in *Manikmaya* Fiber

The manuscript of *Sĕrat Manikmaya* by Karta Mursadah published by J.J. Hollander in this study is a collection of the Indonesian National Library KBG 1074. This narrative-type

manuscript is presented in the form of tembang macapat which consists of 9 cantos (*pupuh*): 349 stanzas: 2,872 lines. According to Headley (2004) *Sĕrat Manikmaya*, which is a short version of *Manikmaya* circa 1725, is a copy made on the orders of Paku Buwana VI while in exile in Ambon after 1830.

According to Poerbatjaraka (1954) the Kartamursadah version of *Sĕrat Manikmaya* is thought to refer to Tantu Panggelaran (TP). Meanwhile, Sedyawati, Edi (2001) argues that SM is different from TP even though they both tell the origin of the world. *Sĕrat Manikmaya* mentions that the origin of life comes from the egg from which *Manikmaya* originated. Tantu Panggelaran explained that the origin of life in Java was as a "move" from India ordered by Lord Shiva to Lord Brahma and Vishnu to populate the island of Java with humans and life. Furthermore, Sedyawati (1988/1989) stated that SM explained the teachings of spiritual practice (*laku*) and cosmogony.

The concept of *kiblat papat lima pancer* is presented in the first cantos of verses 15-19 as part of the elaboration of the cosmic arrangement when Sang Hyang Bathara Guru created the God Nawa Sanga and established their spatial orientation called the god nawa sanga. These verses outline the position of the manifestations of the gods arranged according to the structure of the mandala which includes eight cardinal directions and one central point as its axis. This narrative not only details the theological aspects of the god who reigns in every direction, but also elaborates on a complex system of cosmic correspondence. The system associates each cardinal direction with various symbolic attributes, which include sakti (accompanying goddess), Javanese pentadic cycles (*pancawara*), natural elements (*dhatu*), color classification, fauna (birds), to supernatural aspects in the form of sacred carakan scripts (*sastra*) as presented in the following quote. The summary can be seen in Chart 1

Table 1. The summary can be seen

<i>Kang anèng jagad wétan kakasih, Hyang Maha Déwa legi pasarnya, Maha Déwi Bĕtariné, selaka kuĕtanipun, sanuk kuntul punang jaladri, santen hana caraka, aksara kang dawuh, Sang Hyang Sambu wastanira, anĕng jagad kang kidul kiĕta tembagi, baĕtariné Swagnyana.</i>	The one in the eastern world is Hyang Maha Dewa on the day of <i>legi</i> , with her goddess named Maha Dewi. The symbol of his city is silver. His fauna symbol is the egret (<i>burung kuntul</i>), which illuminates the ocean symbolized by a sea of coconut milk (<i>laut santan</i>). His script symbol is the row of <i>ha na ca ra ka</i> , the spoken script. Sang Hyang Sambu resides in the southern realm, with a city made of copper, while his goddess is Swagnyana
<i>manuk ulung pasaranya paing, segara getih punang aksara, da ta sa wa la sastrané, Hyang Kamajaya mungguh, jagad kulon Baĕtari Ratih, murup kuĕtanya emas, segarané madu, manuké manuk kepodang, pasarane epon aksara winarni, nenggih pa da ja ya nya,</i>	The symbol of the bird is an eagle. The day is <i>pahing</i> , the symbol of the sea of blood. His script symbol is the row of <i>da ta sa wa la</i> . Hyang Kamajaya and Dewi Ratih reigns in the western realm. The city is made of shining gold, the ocean of honey, and the birds are the black-naped oriole (<i>kepodhang</i>). The <i>pasarane</i> day is <i>pon</i> , while the script is <i>pa dha ja ya nya</i> .
<i>Baĕtara Wisnu kuĕtanya wesi, nĕng jagad lor wagé pasaranya, Baĕtari Esri dĕwiné, nila segaranipun,</i>	Lord Vishnu in the city of iron, in the northern part of the world, with the goddess Dewi Sri, the indigo is his sea, his bird is the crow, while the symbol of the script is

manuk gagak sastranya adi, nenggih ma ga ba ta nga, gegaduhanipun, Batara Bayu kang ana, jagad tengah dèwiné Batari Sumi, kaliwon pasaranya.	beautifully written, namely <i>ma ga ba tha nga</i>. That's how the middle part belongs to Batara Bayu with Dewi Sumi. with Kliwon as their <i>pasar</i>an day.
Sapuluh sastra gagaduhaning 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (ᮘ, ᮙ, ᮚ, ᮛ, ᮜ, ᮝ, ᮞ, ᮟ, ᮠ, ᮡ, ᮢ, ᮣ, ᮤ, ᮥ). kaliwon pepasarané, kutnipun parunggu, tasik wédang manuké gogik, kang wonten ing lor wétan, prit Anjala tunggu, aksaranipun bya ebyak, kidul wétan Sang Hyang Kuwéra nenggani, sastrané na ra su nya.	His ten scripts are 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10, with Kliwon as his <i>pasar</i>an day in the bronze city, a sea of wedhang (mixed drinks), and the gogik bird (hornbill). Meanwhile, in the northeast, a small Anjala sparrow (burung emprit) waits, with the script <i>byak ebyak</i>. In the southeast resides Sang Hyang Kuwera, watching over his script <i>na ra su nya</i>.
Kidul kulon Batara Mah Yekti, gandéya aksarané ing ucap, ing kang lor kulon déwané, Batara Siwah luhung, kang tinengga sastra nurwiti, sadaya wus pepekan, déwa maha wolu, kasanga Bayu kang kocap, ing carita jagad nusa jawa maksih, gonjing déning érnawa.	The southwest is the domain of Batara Mah Yekti, whose spoken script is <i>gandéya</i>, while the deity in the northwest is the grand Batara Siwah, who oversees the script <i>nurwiti</i> (to begin). All eight deities have now united. Hyang Bayu is the ninth deity. It is told that the land of the island of Java was still unstable, tossed about by the ocean waters.

Table 2. The Position of Dewata Nawasanga and Its Symbols in the SM-K Manuscript

TIMUR LAUT Hyang Anjala Aksara: <i>byak ebyak</i>	TIMUR Hyang Maha Dewa Bathari Maha Dewi Legi Perak Burung kuntul Lautan santan (putih) Aksara: <i>ha na ca ra ka</i> air ketuban '<i>kakang kawah</i>'	TENGGAH Sang Hyang Kuwera Aksara: <i>na ra su nya</i>
UTARA Dewa Wisnu Dewi Sri Wage Besi Burung gagak Lautan nila (biru hitam) Aksara: <i>ma ga ba tha nga</i> tali pusat ' <i>pusar</i> '	TENGAH Bathara Bayu Dewi Sumi Kliwon Perunggu Burug gogik Lautan wedhang (Campur) Aksara: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Manusia ' <i>pancer</i> '	SELATAN Sang Hyang Sambu Bathari Swagnyana Pahing Tembaga Burung elang Lautan darah (merah) Aksara: <i>da ta sa wa la</i> darah ' <i>getih</i> '
BARAT LAUT Batara Siwah (Batara Siwah ini adalah Dewa Siwa yang berwujud sebagai Dewa Rudra, yang biasa disebut dengan Siwa Rudra)	BARAT Sang Hyang Kamajaya Bathari Dewi Ratih Pon Besi Burung kepodhang Lautan madu (kuning) Aksara: <i>pa dha ja ya nya</i> plasenta ' <i>adhi ari-ari</i> '	BARAT DAYA Batara Mah Yekti, Aksara: <i>gandéya</i>

The Actualization of the Kiblat Papat Lima Pancer in the Javanese Hindu community

1. Spatial Organization - Mandala

The concept of order surrounding a center is a manifestation of the concept of mandala in Hinduism and Buddhism. Mandala comes from Sanskrit. In the Sanskrit – English dictionary, mandala means circle 'circle' in the context of yoga, orb 'ball', and round 'round'. According to Wojowasito, *maṇḍala* is the environment; regions; regions; circles; hermitage; *amaṇḍala pertapa*. Based on research in Old Javanese literature, Purnomo (2008) states that the mandala is a sasana ('place') as well as a medium for the forging of human beings in their pursuit of self-identity; their position in relation to their environment, nature, fellow human beings, and most importantly, before the Divine. According to Sumardjo (2000) a mandala is a cosmic space, a space of order, order, and certainty surrounded by an unstructured chaos space. Mandala contains the value of perfection in all its cosmic completeness and fullness including salvation, peace, light, happiness, immutability, eternity, refined power. Thus, the concept of mandala is a symbol of physical and spiritual cosmic balance and order, encompassing the macrocosm (*jagad gede*) and microcosm (*jagad alit*) within horizontal, vertical, and cyclical relationships.

The religious concept of kiblat papat lima pancer is a manifestation of the mandala concept. Literally, kiblat papat lima pancer means four ('papat') directions ('kiblat') with the fifth ('lima') as the center ('pancer'). On a macrocosmic scale (*jagad gede*), this concept refers to the mancapat concept in Java and Catur Loka Pala in Hindu teachings.

According to Lombard (2005), this mancapat concept is a system that divides a territory into one center and four cardinal directions. As a classification structure, mancapat serves as a mental guide materialized in Javanese divination manuscripts (primbon), the spatial layout of royal palaces (keraton), capital cities, and traditional Javanese villages. The mancapat system continuously reflects the supremacy of the center, with the addition that its surrounding periphery is divided into 'four' parts (pat meaning 'four'), each associated with one of the cardinal directions. In its development, mancapat became a paradigm of macrocosmic-microcosmic harmony that also positioned the king as the center of the social constellation, tasked with maintaining world harmony as both the axis of the world (axis mundi) and the 'ruler of the mountain' (Lombard, 2005).

In Hindu teachings, the concept of *kiblat papat lima pancer* aligns with the concept of *Catur Loka Pala* in India, which positions deities as guardians of the cardinal directions, namely: Lord Indra (East), Lord Yama (South), Varuna (West), and Kubera (North). According to Titib (1996), during the Purana era, the concept of *Catur Loka Pala* evolved into the *Aṣṭadīkṣpālaka* deities (guardians or protectors of the eight cardinal directions), and in Bali, it is known as *Dewata Nawa Saṅga* (with Shiva as the ruler of the center). Based on the Rigveda X.36.24, these eight deities are: Kubera (North), Indra (East), Varuna (West), Yama (South), Ishana (Northeast), Agni (Southeast), Surya (Southwest), and Vayu (Northwest).

In Bali, the placement of the deities in the Dewata Nawa Saṅga concept differs from that in India by incorporating temple abodes (stana pura) as a form of local genius. The Balinese version of the Dewata Nawa Saṅga concept positions the deities as follows:

- a. East (Purwa): Lord Ishvara (White), residing at Mount Lempuyang.
- b. Southeast (Aghneya): Lord Maheshvara (Pink/Light Red).
- c. South (Daksina): Lord Brahma (Red), residing at Pura Andakasa.
- d. Southwest (Nairiti): Lord Rudra (Orange).
- e. West (Pascima): Lord Mahadeva (Yellow), residing at Pura Luhur Batukaru.
- f. Northwest (Wayabya): Lord Shankara (Green).
- g. North (Uttara): Lord Vishnu (Black), residing at Pura Batur.
- h. Northeast (Airsanya): Lord Sambhu (Blue).
- i. Center (Madhya): Lord Shiva (Multicolored/Combined), residing at Pura Besakih.



Figure 1. Symbol of the Majapahit Sun
Source: Researcher Documentation

The concept of *Dewata Nawa Sanga* among the Javanese people, particularly in East Java as a region inheriting the heritage of the Majapahit Kingdom, is reflected in the *Surya Majapahit*. The form of *Surya Majapahit* can be seen in Figure 1, which is part of the Trowulan Museum collection. According to Adisukma et al. (2023), the *Surya Majapahit* emblem is the result of a synthesis between two belief systems—Hinduism and the indigenous religion—which served as the emblem of the Majapahit Kingdom during its era. This *Surya Majapahit* emblem is characterized by the presence of eight equal-ranking deities who govern the directions, centered around Lord Shiva as the primary determinant, with the sun's rays altered to eight points corresponding to the cardinal directions.

The manifestation of this concept is deeply rooted in the socio-religious life of Hindu society. In the traditional architecture of Asta Kosala-Kosali, for example, *Dewata Nawa Sanga* not only forms the basis for spatial layout according to function, but also serves as the standard benchmark for determining building locations.

The application of this eight-cardinal-direction pattern is clearly visible in the relics of the Majapahit Kingdom, which seem to be the largest physical manifestation of the *Surya Majapahit* emblem ever discovered. This pattern is distinctly depicted on the remains of an octagonal building whose corners align with the eight cardinal directions (as shown in Figure 2). This structure is located at the Klinterejo Site—also known as the Bhre Kahuripan Site or the Petilasan of Ratu Tribhuwana Tungga Dewi—located in Klinterejo Village, Sooko District, Mojokerto Regency.



Figure 2. Klinterejo Site, Mojokerto

Source: Researcher Documentation

The red lines in Figure 2 are drawn to clarify the octagonal *mandala* area of Queen Tribhuwana Tungga Dewi's deification site (*pendarmaan*), which resembles the *Aṣṭadikpālaka* concept. However, due to limitations in documentation equipment, the researchers have not yet been able to capture the complete *mandala* form in a single screenshot/photograph.



Figure 3. Aṣṭadikpālaka shaped mandala
Source: Personal Documentation

Ritual Manifestations (Ceremonies & Offerings)

According to Dr. R. Bima Slamet Raharja, S.S., M.A., a lecturer in the Javanese Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Gadjah Mada University (interview in Sleman on June 24, 2026), the placement of dewata nawasanga across the nine cardinal directions—accompanied by consort goddesses (*sakti dewi*), days of the Javanese five-day calendar cycle (*pasaran*), metals (*datu*), birds, seas, numerical scripts, and the four human spiritual siblings (*saudara empat*)—demonstrates a distinctive Javanese teaching. This represents an effort to achieve harmony and happiness through balance, a concept that persists to this day in the form of various Javanese offerings (*sesajian*).

"That's what Java is, yes it is. The essence of Javanese identity resides right there, which later incorporates elements like *sad wara*, *pancawara*, and the deities. This is extensively manifested in the use of *sesajian* or *sajen* (offerings) commonly used among Javanese society. For instance, it is expressed in five-colored offerings (*saji panca warna*) or in the *tumpeng* (rice cone) featuring yellow, red, and white colors—representing cosmological constellations: where Vishnu is located, where Lord Yama resides, where Brahma is positioned, and so forth. That is the physical manifestation. To this day, in my view, the Javanese people have not abandoned this tradition because it adheres to an orientation of equilibrium—everything must be balanced to achieve happiness and harmony. Everything must be brought into balance." (Interview with Dr. R. Bima Slamet Raharja, in Sleman, June 24, 2026)

Meanwhile, in religious ceremonies, the concepts of Catur Loka Pala and Dewata Nawa Saṅga are tangibly manifested through the placement of various forms of Balinese *bebantenan* (offerings), which are also utilized by Javanese Hindu communities in several religious rites and reinforced by the *puja astawa* chanted by the ceremony leaders (*maggala upacara*). This parallels the Javanese *sesajian* and *selamatan* traditions, as noted by Dr. Bima Slamet Raharja, S.S., M.A.

The placement of flowers in *banten canang* constitutes one of the implementations of the Hindu version of the *kiblat papat lima pancer* concept. Javanese Hindu women, when performing *nanding* (arranging/placing flowers) into a *canang* or *takir*, position the flowers in such a way that upon offering, the white flower is placed in the east (*purwa*), the seat of God Iswara; the red flower in the south (*daksina*), the seat of God Brahma; the yellow flower in the west (*pascima*), the seat of God Mahadeva; the purple or green flower in the north (*uttara*), the

seat of God Vishnu; and at the center lies bunga rampai of sliced pandan leaves, symbolizing God Shiva. Figure 4 illustrates a canang sari made of banana leaves that conforms to the principles of *kiblat papat lima pancer*, also known as *catur loka pala*.



Figure 4. São Paulo São Paulo

Source: Researcher Documentation

The concept of the qibla of four five pancer is also reflected in the implementation of the *mecaru* ceremony among the Javanese Hindu community living in Gresik Regency, East Java. In larger-scale ceremonies, the *mecaru* ritual is sometimes conducted at road intersections. Such intersections are regarded as a cosmic axis that unites the elements of *jagad gede* (macrocosmos) and *jagad cilik* (microcosmos), with the aim of creating harmony within a broader territorial scope.

According to Suryani (2024), the *mecaru* ritual is one of the ceremonies intended to harmonize the elements of *butha kala* in the framework of cosmic restoration—namely, to reestablish harmony among human beings, nature, and supernatural entities within the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*. As a ritual form of restoring the balance of cosmic elements, *mecaru* involves all components of *panca butha*, which include earth/solid matter (*pertiwi*), water (*apah*), fire/light (*teja*), air/wind (*bayu*), and ether/space (*akasa*).

The series of *bebantenan* used during the *mecaru panca sata* ceremony serves as a medium to harmonize the cosmic elements present in each cosmic space, encompassing the four cardinal directions with the central point functioning as the balancing axis, as illustrated in Figure 5. All ritual instruments and *bebantenan* are placed in accordance with the cardinal directions, where each *bebantenan* must comply with the prescribed rules of color and *urip* corresponding to its respective direction. The requirements of *bebantenan* include:

1. East: employing a white-feathered chicken, white rice, *urip* 5 (all ritual components totaling 5).
2. South: employing a red-feathered chicken, red rice, *urip* 9 (all ritual components totaling 9).
3. West: employing a yellow-feathered chicken, yellow rice, *urip* 7 (all ritual components totaling 7).
4. North: employing a black-feathered chicken, black rice, *urip* 4 (all ritual components totaling 4).
5. Center: employing a multicolored (*pancawarna* or *brumbun*) chicken, *nasi brumbun* (multicolored rice), *urip* 8 (all ritual components totaling 8).



Figure 5. The Arrangement of the Caru Panca Sata Offerings

Source: Personal Documentation

Similarly, the concepts of *urip* and color in the *mecaru* offering among the Javanese Hindu community in Gresik are embodied through the quantity and color of the *jenang* (porridge). These colorful *jenang* are presented in *takir* (banana leaf containers), with their quantity and placement determined according to the *urip* values of the cardinal directions.

The arrangement includes: five *takirs* of white *jenang* in the east, nine *takirs* of red *jenang* in the south, seven *takirs* of yellow *jenang* in the west, and four *takirs* of black *jenang* in the north. Meanwhile, eight *takirs* of four-colored *jenang* (a mixture of white, red, yellow, and black) are placed in the center.

This offering, known as the Javanese *caru*, also uses a five-colored chicken (*brumbun*) as the sacrificial offering, *sambleh*, accompanied by a *cok bakal* and a *segehan* consisting of rice, onions, ginger, and salt. Unlike the Balinese Hindu *caru* offering, which uses a prepared chicken, the chicken in the Javanese *caru* is kept alive and is only slaughtered after the ceremonial leader chants the *pecaruan* mantra. Figure 6 shows the Javanese *caru* offering arrangement after it has been presented. However, this difference does not alter the meaning or purpose of the ritual.



Figure 6. Javanese Caru

(Source: Researcher Documentation)

Spiritual Life (Microcosm Dimension)

The teaching of the *kiblat papat lima pancer* within the microcosm (human beings) is closely related to the concept of *sedulur papat lima pancer*. Throughout the process of birth—from the seed, through the fetus in the mother's womb, until birth—a human is accompanied by four siblings in the form of the amniotic fluid (*kawah/yeh nyom*), blood (*getih*), the placenta (*ari-ari*), the fetal membranes (*lamas*), and the umbilical cord (*puser*), with the human itself at the center.

When the unborn child is born, these four companions will watch over it for forty days (*selapan*) and then return to the natural world, taking their places in the four cardinal directions: the amniotic fluid (*kakang kawah*) in the east, the blood (*getih*) in the south, the placenta (*adhi ari-ari*) in the west, and the umbilical cord (*puser*) in the north.

Within the context of the microcosm—or the human self—the concept of *kiblat papat* refers to spiritual balance. According to the mystical teachings of Kejawen Sastra Jendra Hayuningrat Pangruwating Diyu, as explained by Mr. Dadang Sulistiyo (interviewed in Kendal, Central Java, on June 26, 2025), human beings are formed from four elements—fire, wind, earth, and water—and consist of seven physical components: hair, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, and marrow. The four spiritual companions residing within the body also radiate their own light and exert a spiritual influence on their vessel—the human being and the form of desire. The white-radiant sibling, influenced by the element of water and residing in the breath, brings the *mutmainah* desire—which embodies goodness and thoughts leading to purity. The red-radiant sibling, influenced by the element of fire and residing in the blood, gives rise to the *amarah* desire—causing emotions, anger, arrogance, and so on. The yellow-radiant brother, influenced by the element of air, resides in the bones and marrow, giving rise to the *supiah* desire—worldly desires, beauty, sex, and so on—while the black-radiant brother, influenced by the element of earth, resides in the flesh and skin, giving rise to the *aluamah* desire—dark desires, laziness, greed, and so on. In addition to residing within the human body, these spiritual companions are also constantly present around humans—in the directions of east, south, west, and north, with the self at the center. Therefore, if a person wishes to live in peace, comfort, and happiness, they must always maintain a balance between their material and spiritual lives by exercising self-control to manage the fluctuations of these desires in a balanced manner.

In Java, the order of the *sedulur papat* (four spiritual siblings) is based on the order of their emergence at birth, starting with the first—the amniotic fluid—hence called *kakang kawah*, followed by the placenta or *adhi ari-ari*, blood (*getih*), and the umbilical cord or *puser*. In Bali, however, they are listed in order based on the process of fetal development in the womb: amniotic fluid, blood, placenta, and uterine membranes. *Puser* serves the same function as *lamas*, and the umbilical cord is not mentioned because it is already included in the placenta (Sandika (2022)). In Balinese tradition, the *sedulur papat* or *kanda pat* are cared for from the very beginning of fetal life through birth, continuing through the infant's life, and extending even beyond death. Many lontar manuscripts discuss this concept, including Catur Sanak, Kanda Pat Rare, Kanda Pat Bhuta, Kanda Pat Sari, and Kanda Pat Dewa. Sandika (2022) summarizes the transformation process described as occurring in the *sedulur papat* from their state as *Kanda Pat Rare* until they return to the elements of the bhuta and re-enter the universe, occupying different cardinal directions—hence the term *Kanda Pat Pancabutha*—continuing as they transform into *Pancaratu*, and finally into *Pancadewata*.” The sequential naming of the *sedulur papat*—from *Kanda Pat Rare* to *Pancabhuta*, *Pancaratu*, and finally *Pancadewata*—is as follows:

- (1) Kakang Kawah/Yeh Nyom/amniotic fluid becomes Bhuta Pethak or Bhuta Anggapati, occupying the eastern direction; then becomes Ratu Ngurah Tangkeb Langit, residing at Pura Ulun Suwi; and finally transforms into Bhatara Sadyojata or Bhatara Iswara, represented by the syllable “Sang.”
- (2) Getih/blood becomes Bhuta Bang or Bhuta Mrajapati, occupying the southern direction; it then becomes Ratu Wayan Tebeng, residing at Pura Sada; and finally becomes Bhatara Bamadewa or Bhatara Brahma, represented by the syllable “Bang.”
- (3) The Adhi Ari-ari (placenta) becomes Bhuta Jenar or Bhuta Banaspati, occupying the western direction; it becomes Ratu Made Jelaung, residing at Pura Puseh; and then becomes Bhatara Tat Purusa or Bhatara Mahadewa, represented by the syllable “Tang.”
- (4) The navel/umbilical cord becomes Bhuta Ireng or Bhuta Banaspati the king, occupying the northern direction; it becomes Ratu Nyoman Sakti Pengadangan, residing at Pura Dalem, and later becomes Bathara Aghora or Bhatara Wisnu with the syllable “Ang.”
- (5) The infant or pancer, known as the bhuta mancawarna or the bhuta situated in the center (madya) as the focal point of orientation, becomes Ratu Ketut Pethung, residing at Pura Desa, and later becomes Bathara Guru or Bhatara Isana, represented by the syllable “Ing.”

Aciri (2021: 151–184) traces the textual origins of the concept of “kanda mpat” from several extant Old Javanese texts to support the hypothesis that this concept of biological siblings originated from the Indian *pañcakuśika* or the Indo-Nusantara *pancarsi*. The *pañcakuśika* is part of the Dharma Pātañjala scripture, which recounts the earlier earthly incarnations of Batara (Shiva). One of his incarnations was as Pātañjala, the fifth member of the *pañcarṣi*. The *pañcarṣi/pañcakuśika* consist of Kusika, Gargya, Mitra, Kaurasya, and Pātañjala. Ultimately, it was the *Pañcakuśika* whom Batara tasked with conducting His funeral rites and cremating His body after His death. Kusika buried Batara’s body in all directions; Gargya dug His grave and cast His body into the river; Kaurasya built a tower for the cremation ceremony; Maitri cremated the body; Pātañjala anointed himself with the ashes. Witnessed by the guardian deities of the ten directions, the *Pañcakuśika* completed their tasks, and finally, Pātañjala transformed into Batara.

Sandika (2022) states that the teachings of the *sedulur papat* describe the journey of our soul at birth, guided by its karmic imprint. This allows our soul to once again experience its karmic imprint. The *sedulur papat* assist the soul in obtaining a body and guide it to take up residence in a mother’s womb. They guide our soul to inhabit a womb as an unborn child who shares a strong karmic bond with its future mother. When our soul takes up residence in a mother’s womb, the *sedulur papat* are also present in the same womb to watch over, protect, and sustain the soul so that it may fully inhabit its body—in its physical form, namely the amniotic fluid (*ketuban/kawah/yeh nyom*), blood (*getih*), placenta (*ari-ari*), fetal membranes (*lamas*), or umbilical cord (*puser*). It is also the “*sedulur papat*” who help us break free from the cycle of reincarnation.

Although in Java, the term *Kanda Pat* is used only up to *Kanda Pat Rare* until the birth of the baby, the *sedulur papat* are still regarded as guardians and companions of humanity. The *Kidung Sarira Ayu*, verses 41–42 of the *Sĕrat Kawedar*, describes the duties of the *sedulur papat*. *Kakang Kawah* (amniotic fluid) protects the human being and fulfills their desires; *Adhi Ari-ari* (the placenta) encompasses all actions and provides guidance. Blood gives rise to desires, while the navel (umbilical cord) observes every movement of the human being and fulfills their requests.

Table 3.

<i>Ana kidung akadang premati, among tuwuh ing kawasannya, nganakaken saciptane, kakang kawah punika, kang rumeksa ing ngawak mami, anekakaken sedya, ing kawasanyipun, adhi ari-ari ika, kang mayungi ing laku kawasane, anekakaken pangarah</i>	Free translation: A free translation: There is a song closely associated with self-preservation, tasked with guiding life, bringing about what is desired—that is Kakang Kawah (the older brother amniotic fluid), who protects me, fulfills my wishes, and holds the authority; Adik Ari-Ari (the younger placenta), who has the authority to oversee all actions and provide guidance.
<i>Ponang getih ing rina wengi, ngrewangi Allah kang kuwasa, andadekaken karsane, puser kawasanyipun, nguyu-uyu sabawa mami, nuruti ing panedha, kawasanyireki, jangkep kadang ing sun papat, kalimane pancer wus dadi sawiji, tunggal sawujuding wang.</i>	Free translation: As for the blood, it works day and night, assisting Almighty God in fulfilling desires, while the navel (umbilical cord) watches over my every move and grants my requests—that is its authority. Thus, my four siblings are complete; the fifth, the one that is straight and direct, has already become one, united in the form of Hyang (God).

According to Acri (2021: 155–156), the Kanda Empat are generally considered benevolent toward their younger siblings (*pancer/humans*) only if they are given proper offerings (*sesaji*) and treated with respect. Neglecting them makes them unwilling to help in difficult situations, or even turns them into malevolent beings that bring misfortune upon the *pancer*. The actions taken as a form of remembrance and respect for the *Sedulur Papat* among Javanese communities include the *selamatan* (*wetonan*) ritual on the *weton* of birth—which is considered the last time the *Sedulur Papat* are physically present with the unborn child—or the practice of fasting on the *weton* (birthday). The *Sedulur Papat* are represented in the form of a porridge offering. This porridge offering is always present in every *selamatan* offering, not limited to *wetonan* rituals only.



Figure 7. A Tale of Four Brothers

Source: Researcher Documentation

Figure 7 shows the ritual porridge for the *sedulur papat*. The white porridge is placed in the east, representing *kakang kawah* (amniotic fluid); the red porridge in the south, representing

getih (blood); the yellow porridge in the west, representing *adhi ari-ari* (placenta); and the black porridge in the north, representing *puser* (umbilical cord). The red porridge in the center, layered with white, represents the *pancer*—the center of the human being itself—which is a fusion of the mother’s *kama bang* (red ovum) and the father’s *kama pethak* (white sperm).

Porridge or *jenang* is also used to symbolize the human journey from birth through life, as shown in Figure 8. *Jenang*, made from glutinous rice and white or brown sugar, represents the origin of human life. There are five types of *jenang* with different colors: red porridge symbolizes the mother, white porridge symbolizes the father, and porridge that is half red and half white symbolizes both the mother and the father. Red porridge mixed with white symbolizes the union of mother and father, and finally, red porridge topped with white porridge symbolizes the father’s seed in the mother’s womb, from which a baby is formed. This arrangement of porridge is known as *bubur jenang sengkala*.



Figure 8. of the Smashing Pumpkins

Source: Researcher Documentation

According to Mr. Dadang (interviewed in Kendal, Central Java, on June 26, 2025), this *jenang sengkala* (Figure 8) serves not only as a tribute to the four spiritual siblings but is also intended to ward off misfortune; that is, with the help of the *sedulur papat*, all misfortune can be avoided or eliminated, in addition to the use of mantras, incantations, or magical spells.

There are many mantras or *aji seduluran* in Kejawen teachings specifically intended to summon the four spiritual siblings and request their assistance and protection. To ensure these mantras or *aji* are effective, they are usually accompanied by fasting practices. The fasting practice usually takes the form of a *mutih* fast lasting three, seven, or forty days. One of the *sedulur papat* mantras that can be recited whenever performing routine activities or tasks—such as eating, bathing, sleeping, studying, or working—and when one has a specific wish or is about to undertake an endeavor for a particular purpose is as follows:

*Hong wilaheng prayoganira,
Marmarti kakang kawah adi ari-ari getih puser,
kadangingsun papat kalima pancer,
kadangingsun kang katon lan kang ora katon,
kadaningsun kang kerawatan lan kang ora kerawatan,
sarta kadangingsun kang metu saka ing margaino,
lan kang ora metu saka ing margaino,
miwah kadangingsun kang metu bebarengan sadina kabeh,
nini among kaki among sing momongi jiwo rogoku,*

Ayo podo anu.../ayo rencang rewangi aku.....

Translation

Marmarti (my invisible brothers and sisters),
my older sibling amniotic sac, my younger sibling umbilical cord, my sibling navel,
four siblings and fifth as center in the middle,
my siblings, both visible and invisible,
my siblings, both cared for and neglected,
my siblings born from my mother's birth passage and
those not born from my mother's birth passage,
my siblings bound by the same day of birth,
my male and female spritual guardians who cherish my soul and body—
let us do... support and stand beside me...

CONCLUSION

The concept of kiblāt papat lima pancer has a strong textual foundation in classical Javanese literature, including *Sĕrat Manikmaya*, which describes the creation and organization of the universe through the balance of the four fundamental elements (*papat*) oriented toward a central point of consciousness (*pancer*). In the religious and cultural practices of the Javanese Hindu community, this worldview is harmoniously integrated with the teachings of Panca Maha Bhuta and the manifestations of Dewata Nawa Sanga. The four cardinal directions represent natural energies and guardian deities, while the central point (*pancer*) symbolizes the highest consciousness associated with Atman and Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa. This concept not only regulates the order of the universe (*jagad ageng*) but also provides meaning for the human self (*jagad alit*) through the teachings of *Sedulur Papat Lima Pancer*. Balance in life is achieved when individuals are able to manage their four inner potentials and reconnect with their spiritual center. This cosmological philosophy is manifested through the symbolism of ritual arrangements, such as the placement of four-colored offerings, as well as spatial layouts oriented toward the four cardinal directions with a sacred center.

Further field research on specific Javanese Hindu communities, such as the Tengger and Kejawen communities, should be conducted by academics and cultural researchers to document variations in traditions and local interpretations of *kiblāt papat lima pancer*, which may differ across regions. Local governments and traditional institutions should continue to support the preservation of classical literary works and ritual traditions rooted in local cosmology as valuable cultural heritage. The broader community should interpret *kiblāt papat lima pancer* not merely as a myth or formal ritual practice, but as an ethical framework for maintaining balance among oneself, other human beings, the natural environment, and the Supreme Being.

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