

Spatial Formation of Pesantren Pabelan : A Preliminary Study to Understanding Territory Delineation

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Abstract

Pesantren, a setting where *muslim* community –who embraced Islam religion- live together and learn about Islamic teachings intensively to become a good *muslim*, is considered as a unique of culture which characterized by special of life pattern, mores, and the presence of **internal-authority hierarchy**. Study on physical phenomena of *pesantren* is needed to understand *pesantren* as whole phenomena in both cultural and physical phenomena. This study was conducted to clarify spatial formation of *pesantren* Pabelan within Pabelan Village context as a broader setting where *pesantren* Pabelan was established. Data was gathered through multi-method data collection approaches consisting of observation, photographs, personal case history, and informal interview. This study verified that (1) spatial structure was arranged into concentric circle formation around Pabelan Mosque as a center of religious activity in this village to maintain power structure, (2) *Pesantren* Pabelan is a unit of culture that was either separated or integrated with surrounding community, (3) *Pesantren* spatially segregated based on functional relationship, dominantly use of space, and domain separation between male and female.

Key words: *Pesantren*, *muslim* community, spatial formation, territory delineation, traditional rural village, Indonesia

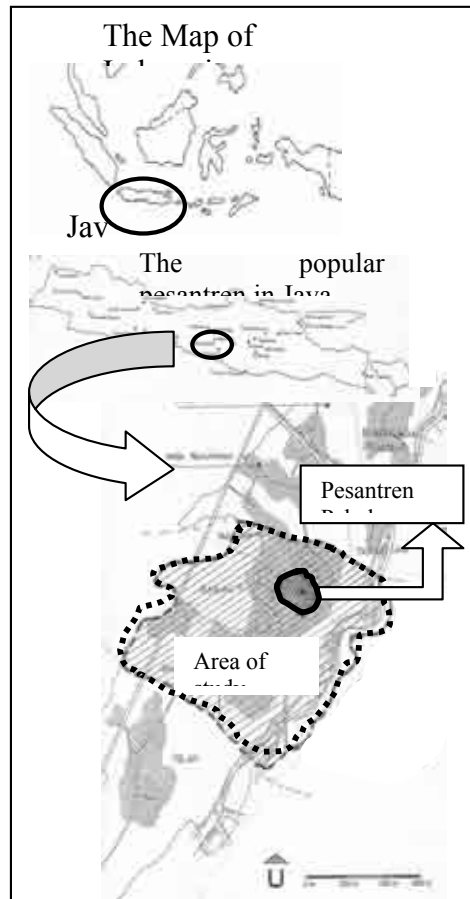
1. Introduction

Pesantren –a setting where *muslim* community live together and learn about Islam intensively to become a good *muslim*- has been recognized as a part of Indonesian cultures since the emerging the religion of Islam in Indonesia, especially in Java Island. They have played a significance role since they become the only local institutions which maintained and expanded Islamic principles in the beginning of Islam development (Mukhtarom, 1988). Present day, *pesantren* are continuously growing into various types and characters and can be found almost everywhere in Java Island either in rural or urban areas.

Considered as socio-cultural habitat, *pesantren* showed subculture characteristic that was signified by the presence of specific life pattern according to Islamic principle as way of life (Effendy, 1985; Wahid, 1988; Asy'ari, 1995). To maintain their culture *pesantren* developed social relationship among them through endogamy system, transmission of knowledge, and inherited their authority to lead *pesantren* community based on kinship relationship. The kinship system among *kyai* –who belongs to the *pesantren* or has a good ability on Islamic teachings- constituted *pesantren* as a closed community sociologically (Dhofier, 1982). Also mores and traditions of *pesantren* would be influenced by personality of *kyai* (Dhofier, 1982), including in socio-political life (Sjoekron, 1988).

As far, existing studies of *pesantren* confined on socio-cultural life, directly and indirectly would offer understanding on the culture of *pesantren*. Only a few of study have been found on physical environment of *pesantren*. However, study on spatial environment of *pesantren* and the relation to surrounding environment has never been

done. This study is a preliminary study to clarify spatial formation of Pesantren Pabelan and to describe the spatial linkage of pesantren to surrounding environment in order to understanding the territory of pesantren.



1.1. Objectives of Study

It is important to explain spatial phenomena of pesantren that directly and indirectly reflected the culture of pesantren. Different culture tends to segregate spatially from the others as an attempt either to emphasize their identity or to maintain their lifestyle, tradition, religion, and their customs (Rapoport, 1969). Every culture tends to select and create their physical environment in accordance to cultural requirement. Besides, a need for identification purpose, every culture needed boundaries that offered an opportunity for their existence, through social, cultural, and physical boundaries (Rapoport, 1977).

The unique characteristic of *Pesantren Pabelan*, one which has a good social relationship and concerned to continuously improve social life of surrounding community has led this *pesantren* to be brought as a case in this study. It is important to clarify how *Pesantren Pabelan* that was developed in rural area arrange its spatial environment to enrich the vocabulary of spatial articulation as a local unique ways. The aim of this study is to describe spatial formation of *pesantren* and clarify its spatial linkage to surrounding environment as an effort to understanding the territory delineation of *pesantren*.

1.2. Methodology

Area of study was carried out to make possible the description of physical phenomena in relation to socio-cultural context within specific area. *Pesantren* Pabelan was carried out as main area without separated its existence within Pabelan Village context, especially Dusun Pabelan I, Dusun Pabelan II, Dusun Pabelan III, and Dusun Pabelan IV.

The term of territory contains the meaning of space which was defined and controlled by individual or community through possession, defense, exclusively utilized space, sign, identity, and spatially oriented boundary (Gifford, 1987). How individuals and community define their territory depend on how close the relationship among them. To provide comprehensive understanding on territory delineation of *pesantren*, data was developed into sociological data consisting of society and social structure; beside morphological data consisting of activity and spatial usage.

Data was gathered through multi-method data collection approaches consisting of observation, photographs, questionnaire survey, personal case history, and informal interview. Two distinct set of notes for data analysis were prepared. First, the conventional set that easily permits data recording and storage. Second, set of data that allow the researcher to carry out a qualitative interpretative approach to analyze data as well as develop a local theoretical understanding of them. This second set of data contributed to developing a gradually changing idea of social world studies (Guba, 1985)

2. Societies and Social Structure

It is important to clarify socio-cultural relationship between *pesantren* and surrounding community in order to understand social relationship that has been developed both among *pesantren* community and among village community itself, and the relationship between those two communities. The dominantly influenced role of *kyai* in this socio-cultural relationship would be described to examine how contribution of *kyai* in the relationship. The members of community village recognized two types of social relationship that directed them in their daily life. Firstly, they considered horizontal-social relationship both among individual informally and that formally organized in social groups. Secondly, they also recognized vertical-social relationship that was realized through the obedience to the influential village person both toward *kyai* and *pesantren* as non-formal institution as well as toward village leader as formal administrative leader. *Kyai* and *pesantren* as institution were accepted as religious leader by the villagers, which compounded majority of Javanese ethnic (93,1%) and embraced Islam religion majority (99,3%). Vertical-social relationship that was developed among the villager, *kyai*, and village leader constituted patron-client relationship (Soemardjan, 1991).

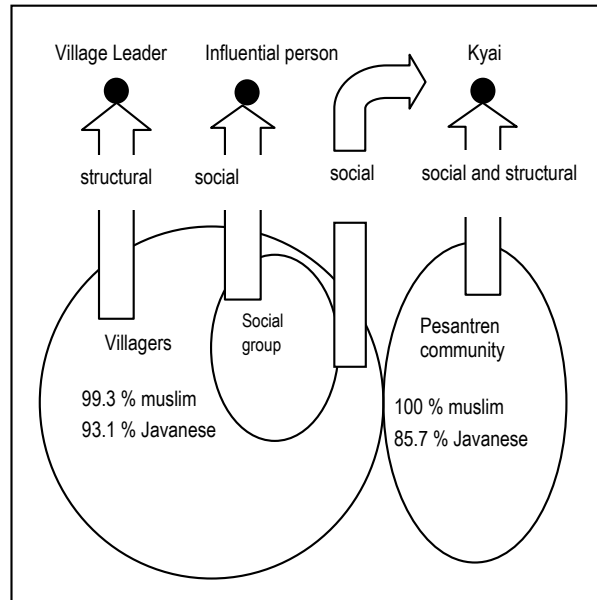


Fig 2 Vertical-Social Relation in Community

Santri –one who studied Islam intensively- had strong commitment to *kyai* in their daily life both structurally as well as socially. It is genuine that *santri* have full loyalty to *kyai* to support learning process of Islamic principle as a whole way of life. Horizontal-social relationship among *santri* was expressed in the presence of equality and social interaction that offer the opportunity for mutually advice among them to be a better *muslim* in their daily life. Also in this horizontal-social relationship the stratified relationship was practiced in term the presence of seniority system according to capability degree of knowledge on Islamic teachings.

The important role of *kyai* as personal figure in the capacity to lead the villager was significantly appeared when the founding father of *pesantren* was taken hold the *pesantren*. Both the influence and the status of *kyai* were almost parallel with the village leader whom holds administrative authority. Although *kyai* had has no exact position structurally in government administration, *kyai* influenced the village development including on community development, physical development for community (public street and alley, drainage system development, public facility), choose village leader, and involve in land regulation, beside on the religious activity realms. After the founding father of *pesantren* passed away, authority as a leader of *pesantren* was inherited to one of his son whom did not take any role in government administration anymore like his father except in religious activity.

3. Activities and Setting of Pesantren

Pesantren comprised *kyai* whom known for his knowledge of Islam teachings and his extended family beside *santri* whom learn Islamic principles and ways of life to be a good *muslim*. *Kyai* teaches Islamic principles through the use of both traditional as well as contemporary religious texts, including reading a holy *Qur`an*.

The space-used for *pesantren* communities activity and surrounding community are identified by observation during the survey then categorized in the following order : *pondok* and *kyai*'s house, mosque, open space, neighbors. Fixed elements including *pondok*, *kyai* house, mosque and open space jointed to non fixed elements shaped spatial arrangement into hierarchical order as the result of space usage and activity.

3.1 Pondok and kyai house

House for santri, called *pondok*, as well as *kyai* house for *kyai* and his family, served as facility for their daily activities such as sleeping, eating, bathing, studying, and refreshing. *Pondok* is developed into several buildings compounded of several rooms, each room is connected to verandah for interior extension purpose. Each room of *pondok* is formed as open lay out arrangement where group of 10-15 *santri* lived and used this space together.

Clustered buildings for daily activities used by male *santri* separated from those that used by female *santri*. Domain separation was implemented to emphasize their culture to segregate physically between male and female in almost activities. Only in religious activity at the mosque and a few part of studying activity they used the space together at the same time.



User Space	Pesantren Members			Villagers	
	A. Kyai	B. Male C. Santri	Fem. Santri	D	A
Pabelan mosque (A)					
Public funeral (B)					
Kyai's house (C)					
Male <i>pondok</i> / fac.(D/F)					
Fem. <i>pondok</i> / fac. (E/G)					
Public facility (H)					
Public open space (1)					
Private open space (2a)					
Private open space (2b)					
Alley (3)					

D-daily activity A-accidentally activity

Fig 3 Space Utilization of Pesantren

3.2. Pabelan Mosque

The Pabelan mosque is one of those important facilities in Pesantren Pabelan. Beside acted as symbolic values for *muslim* community, Pabelan mosque served as a gathering place for all community of pesantren both female and male *santri*, *kyai* and his family, and surrounding community at religious activity especially. Furthermore, for male either *santri* or surrounding community, the mosque served as a place for social gathering among them.

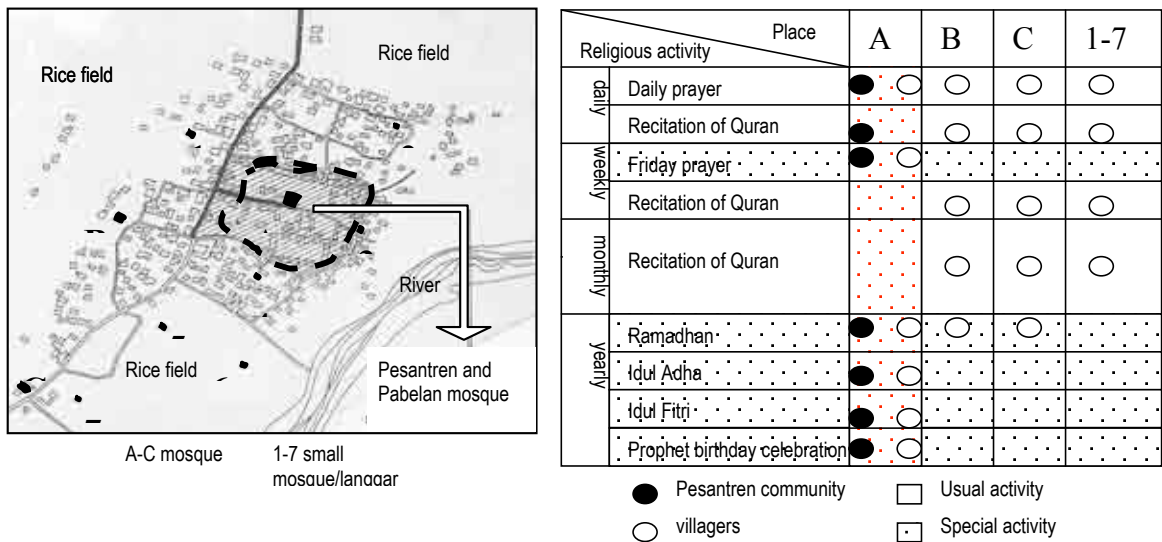


Fig 4 Mosque in Pabelan Village and Activity

Although the mosque was property of surrounding community in fact, they had have to confirm to the *pesantren* when they would like to used this space with large numbers of people participated, but had not when small number of group participated. The mosque has not offered as place for instrumental activity only for surrounding community but also offered a memory since the influential person in the village had built it. It was performed as a center of religious activity both instrumentally and symbolically.

The site of mosque placed at the center of the *pesantren* environment, exactly at the joint of two pathways stretched west-east side and north-south side, clarified an important role of this facility in the environment. At the west side of the mosque laid public funeral, where the mosque builder was lie buried, as the formation of the Javanese influenced mosque.

3.3. Open Space

Groups of building inside the *pesantren* have been built in an organic order and formed in clustered arrangement; it created dynamic open space among the building. Open space constitutes two level of hierarchy according to usage characteristic by either *pesantren* or villager community. The courtyard among clustered buildings of female *santri* constitutes a private domain, highlighted by its predominantly used. Male, either members of *pesantren* community or surrounding community never used this space in spite of passing usage through without permitted. The courtyard among clustered buildings of male *santri* constitutes a private domain essentially, but it is not prohibited for surrounding community if they would pass it through, even though they hardly ever do it. The courtyard around the mosque and two streets cross each other exactly in front of the mosque constitute public domain, where children of surrounding community play, where male *santri* learn about boy scouting skill. There is no activity done by female *santri* at these public domains except just passed through to go to the mosque.

3.4. Neighbors

Except *pondok*, *kyai* house, and other facilities used by *santri* for daily activity considered as neighbor domain that outside of *pesantren* domain. The house of surrounding community and the mosque that lay outside of Pesantren

Pabelan included of this neighbor domain. Almost there is no activity has been done by *santri* in the neighbor areas although in their free time, excluding *santri* whom come from this village.

4. Spatial Formation

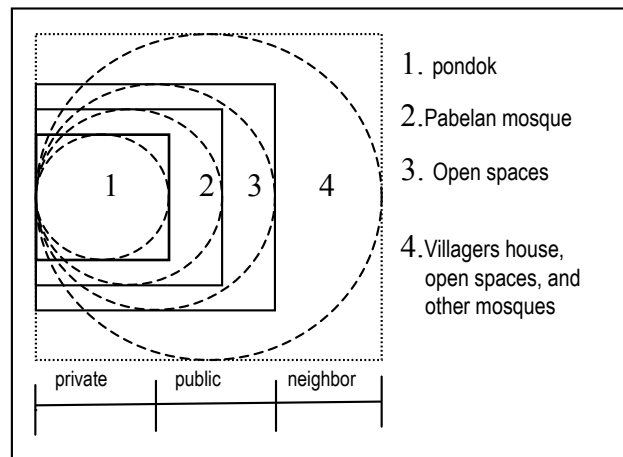


Fig 5 Hierarchy of Space

Spatial formation of *pesantren* was influenced by *muslim* and Javanese attitudes in shaping their built environment: great mosque was located in most accessible place and segregation tendency was applied to limit male-female interaction. The concentric circle arrangement was performed to emphasize the important existence of the mosque in the environment, emphasize the important existence of *kyai* among the *pesantren* community, and emphasize the important existence of *pesantren* among the villagers. This formation was adopted from Javanese tradition; it symbolizes the establishment of the power structure of *pesantren* and *kyai* in Pabelan village.

5. Conclusion

Based on sociological data consisting of society and social structure and morphological data consisting of activity and spatial usage, this study concludes that :

1. *Pesantren* showed a subunit of culture whose life pattern differs with surrounding community. It segregates spatially from surrounding environment by shaping clustered buildings based on functional relationship and domain separation between male and female *santri* around a local mosque. This is essential to maintain continuity of life pattern and system of activity. Building in the clusters, including open spaces between them except the mosque, courtyard, and street connecting mosque to outer space, defined as *pesantren* domain highlighted its exclusively used.
2. According to space-used domain of *Pesantren* Pabelan consisting of :
 - (a) public domains are facilities which could be used by surrounding community together with male and female *santri*, consisting mosque area including courtyard in front of it and street connecting *pesantren* and outer space.

- (b) private domains are facilities which could be used by male or female *santri* only separated, including *pondok*, study room, dining room and courtyard between those clustered buildings.
3. Spatial formation of *pesantren* was arranged into concentric circle formation around the Pabelan mosque as a center of religious activity in this village to establish the power structure of *pesantren*. This concentric circle formation emphasized the important existence of mosque among the environment, emphasized the important existence of *kyai* among the *pesantren* community, and emphasized the existence of *pesantren* among the villagers.

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