

# A Study On The Visual Character Of Mantran Wetan In Magelang, Indonesia

Margareta Maria Sudarwani

Vice-Rector for Academic, Pandanaran University, Indonesia  
Email: maria.sudarwani@yahoo.co.id

**ABSTRACT:** Mantran Wetan is a traditional area which is situated in the village of Girirejo, in the regency of Magelang, Indonesia. The unique of this traditional area is the natural landscape, the specific of traditional buildings which have ornament details that belongs to local architectural style. The purpose of a study on the visual character of Mantran Wetan in Magelang are to find the elements that form and influence a character of Mantran Wetan in Magelang and to find visual relation between some visual characters of Mantran Wetan. A study on the visual character of area, firstly must examine the elements of architecture physical character that discussed here as: building character, area character, and the integration of the both building character and area character. And secondly, must examine about non-physical character that form the physical character. This research use rasionalistic approach with qualitative paradigm. The qualitative rasionalistic research approach is appropriate with the research problems to reveal and to understand the visual character of Mantran Wetan which haven't known yet. According to the research conclusion, it is known that the visual character of Mantran Wetan in Magelang is based on the physical character as the main elements and the non-physical character as the supporting elements. Basic of all the visucharacter of Mantran Wetan is the environment pattern, the built environment formation, the socioculture activity, and the economic activity. Yet the Mantran Wetan's traditional buildings, space pattern, beautiful natural landscape, rich farmlands, and *Jaran Kepang Papat* dance give Mantran Wetan sense of tradition, history and regional identification that remains resistance to the encroaching values of modern industrial society.

**Keywords :** Visual Character, Mantran Wetan

## 1 INTRODUCTION

MANTRAN WETAN is situated in the village of Girirejo, in the regency of Magelang, Central Java. This area lies in the slope of Andong Mountain and is easily accessible by public transportation from Magelang about 25 km away to Salatiga city. At first sight this traditional region enclosed by ranges of farmlands and the Andong Mountain as a background. Mantran Wetan is famous for its fertility. Crops grow easily in its soil. The people of this region are friendly and industrious. They make a living as farmers by cultivating rice, vegetables and tobacco. Being abundant with vegetables characterizes much of the traditional area. This area is leading vegetables crops commodity production in Central Java besides producing tobacco. Mantran Wetan has an area of 2.21 hectares to accommodate the housings, yards, public facilities, and farmlands especially for vegetables. The people of Mantran Wetan preserve the traditional dance "Jaran Kepang Papat" that has become the pride of this traditional area. In traditional ceremonies the *Jaran Kepang Papat* dance usually carry the articles of the royal ceremony. The unique of this traditional area is the natural landscape, the specific of traditional buildings which have ornament details that belongs to local architectural style. The beautiful natural landscape of Mantran Wetan need to be maintained to avoid decreasing of living environment quality because of ignoring ecological function of open space and green open space. Some of the architectural style of the buildings at this region is still original. The fixed character which remains resistant is original character which becomes regional identification. The visual character performance of an area can emerged the pride of its people because it has strong character in the observers' view. In fact the area that has mentioned above is hard to be created. Moreover, although there are some buildings that have original visual character in Mantran Wetan, nowadays some of them are changed its visual character without show interest in architectural value. So it can emerge a high diversity and tend to aim at bad arrangement. Mantran Wetan has a special character, both of physical character and non-physical character. In a physical manner, architecture character of buildings is remains resistant and is not changed too much, but nowadays some of them are changed

its visual character without show interest in architectural value. In a non-physical manner, their socioculture and their traditional dance activity in this area remains resistant and need to be preserved. The integration of physical character and non-physical character that exist in this traditional area formed a character which remains resistant and is not changed too much. The resistant character which remains is original character which becomes regional identification. From such a thing, the existence of Mantran Wetan need to be maintained, therefore it is necessary to find its character type so can be determined the way to maintain it.

### 1.1 Basic Problems

The traditional area of Mantran Wetan has visual character which remains resistance and the existence need to be preserved, therefore it is necessary to find its visual character type so can be used in consideration of the components that need to be maintained and the components that must be developed. Based on the background above, so there are some problems such as: Firstly, what are the components which form and influence the visual character of Mantran Wetan? Secondly, is there any visual relation between some characters of Mantran Wetan?

### 1.2 The Purpose of Study

A study on the visual character of Mantran Wetan in Magelang is done for two purposes: to find the elements that form and influence a character Mantran Wetan and to find visual relation between some characters.

### 1.3 The Use of Study

Firstly, giving input for the government as consideration of the components that need to be maintained and the components that must be developed in Mantran Wetan. Secondly, to improve architectural insight especially in the character visual aspect in architecture image aspect and can be used as basic to the same research.

## 2 OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Overview

Visual quality covers aspect of esthetic quality, like composition, pattern, and order, imageability, that is a quality related with image to a visual system and distinguishing element on view (Vining and Stevens in *Smardon, 1994*). Visual bearing is visual relationship between building elements and/or buildings in the environment, resulting comprehensive visual continuity effect. Urban area visual condition is concerning several things below (*Cullen 1961*).

1. Physical phenomenon, that is the things related with environment ordering and arrangement, and visual correlation, related with the relation between elements which can also be interpreted as the buildings relationship.
2. Psychological phenomenon, related to urban physical appearance that able to generate certain character of emotion, related with meaning attended by an environment or object to observer.

In a city area, there are two kinds of architecture characters: physical characters, that concern to the performance of physical forms, and non physical characters are socioculture characteristic of community (*Trancik, 1986*). Therefore, to study the character of area must examine the components of architecture physical character consists of: Building character includes buildings fasade, building scale, and building style (*Shirvani, 1985*). Area character include: landmark, path, nodes, and edges Lynch, 1960); and the integration and the both buildings characters and areas characters that include: view and vista (*Cullen, 1961*). And then to study the visual character of area also must examine about non-physical character that form the background of physical formation Rapoport, 1977).

### 2.2 Methodology

This research use rasionalistic approach with qualitative paradigm. The qualitative rasionalistic research approach is appropriate with the research problems to reveal and to understand the visual character of Mantran Wetan which haven't known yet.

## 3 PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF MANTRAN WETAN

The physical character of Mantran Wetan is reflected trough the strong relation between buildings character and area character.

### 3.1 The Building Character

To study the physical character of area must examine the elements of architecture consists of: Building character includes buildings fasade, building scale, and building style. Although there are some buildings that have original visual character in Mantran Wetan, nowadays some of them are changed its visual character especially housing that is located within main road. They changed the visual character without show interest in architectural value. So it can emerge a high diversity and tend to aim at bad arrangement. The residence of Mantran Wetan consists of housing, shops, and mosque.

#### 1. The Traditional Architecture

Despite of the threat of modern values of industrial society, the people of Mantran Wetan are able to keep their regional identification because of their traditional buildings in Javanese Architecture Style. It is shown by the natural materials of their

housing that made of wood and bamboo.

**TABLE 1**

The Materials Housing in Mantran Wetan

No	Material of Housing	Amount	Prosentage
1	Brick	64	44,75 %
2	Wood	39	27,3 %
3	Bamboo	39	27,3 %
4	Concrete Brick	1	0,7 %

Their traditional buildings in Javanese Architecture Style based on the Javanese customs and traditions to entrust their life with all their natural environment conditions. So they use local potential and local resources to build their housings and create a harmony between human and environment.

### 2. The Housing Roof Style

The average housing of Mantran Wetan are in Kampung and Limasan roof style, the style of the housing roof that use the aslant roof so that the rainfalls can be flown easily, with some modification on it. For example: Kampung Srotongan is a roof with the unique style of ridge which have functions as sun shading and air ventilation, Limasan Maligi Gajah is a roof with ornament at the ridge. The roof ridge ornament is made of wood design which is formed in artistic composition.



**Fig.1.** The Artistic Ridge Roof of Mantran Wetan.

The buffer/support of the roof, which is made of wood, is in piles or stacks of wooden carving/relief.

### 3. The Element of Housing

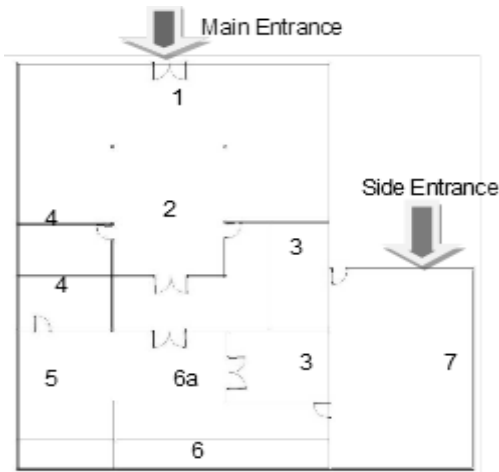
The Mantran Wetan traditional building in Javanese Architecture Style is shown by the natural materials of their housing which is made from wood and bamboo characterizes much of the traditional building. The door and the window are made of nangka and sengon wood with less glass.

### 4. The Housing Construction

The traditional housings structure of Mantran Wetan use the frame structure from wood or bamboo. The function of the housing wall is non bearing wall, just as partition made of wood or plaited bamboo, with the umpak pondation (the pondation made of a single stone) and wood columnn.

### 5. The Housing Interior

The housing of Mantran Wetan has the principal hierarchies in interior pattern. Each room has a different value, the room which is laid in front of the house as public area and back of house as private or service area.



1. **Pendopo**, is located in front of the house, it is usually used for formal activity such as selamatan, kenduri, etc. This is public area room, as guess house, but there is no furniture in it.
2. **Pringgitan**, this room is a corridor (connection hall) that connect between pendopo and dalem.
3. **Dalem**, as family room. It is semi public room, because the guess can enter this room with permission from the owner.
4. **Senthong**, as bedroom, located at right and left of the house, this is private area room.
5. **Pawon**, as kitchen room, and there is tungku as a traditional stove in Mantran village.
6. **Omah Mburi**, as service area
  - 6a. **Lumbung**, as food warehouse, is located at mezanine, like a plafond, it is used to keep crops product such as corn, soybean, etc.
7. **Kandang Ternak**, as beef cattle or stall.

Fig.1. Sketch of Housing Interior of Mantran Wetan

**6. The Element of Ornament Style**

The ornament style of Mantran Wetan is shown in the ridge of roof and the exterior element, for example the buffer of roof, etc. The element of ornament style is usually used in the building which needs philosophy such as art residence. The following are examples of Mantran Wetan ornament style: banyu tetes, baraspati, lung-lungan, gunung/kekayon, bacapan, etc.

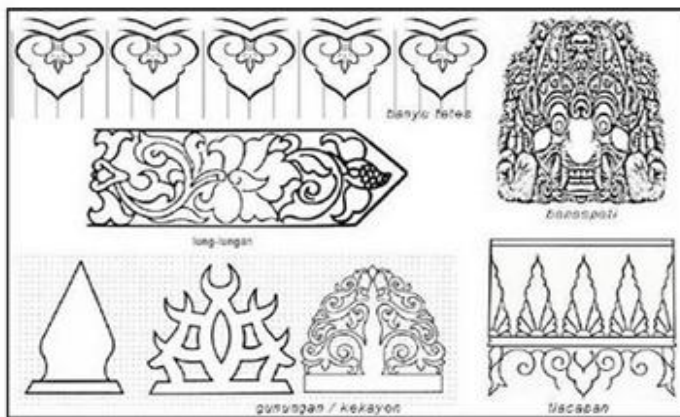


Fig.1. The Ornament Style of Mantran Wetan

**3.2 The Area Character**

**1. The Space Structure**

The space structure of Mantran Wetan residence is formed by the network of road and the network of utility. The space structure of Mantran Wetan is linear, with the network of main road as the main structure and the local road network which is divided the resident in grid form.

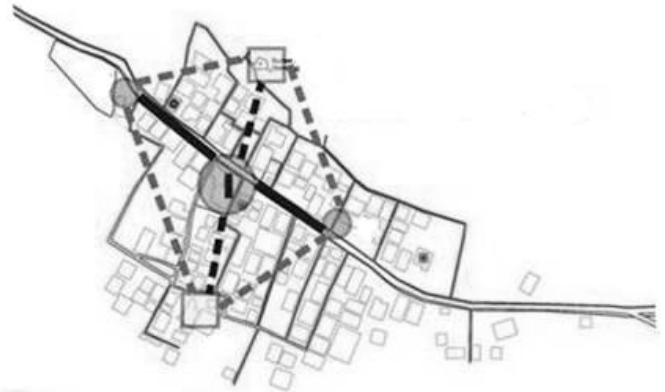


Fig.1. Space Structure of Mantran Wetan

**2. The Residence Pattern**

The residence pattern is influenced by the water source, because at the first time the residence pattern grows close to that water source. In the next development the residence pattern of Mantran Wetan shows clustered pattern which the pattern arrangement form the center space of residence. The residence pattern of Mantran Wetan is becomed by the buiding mass related one another formed urban blocks. Between one to another urban block is separated by grid road pattern forming sub urban blocks.



Fig.1. Residence Pattern of Mantran Wetan

**3. The Open Space**

The open space of Mantran Wetan comprises not only open area but also farmlands especially for vegetables and natural landscape. The people of Mantran Wetan make a living as farmers by cultivating rice, vegetables and tobacco. This area

is leading vegetables crops commodity production in Central Java besides producing tobacco. The green open space is potential point for Mantran Wetan because of its beautiful scenery and its clean air. Mantran Wetan also provided with natural green farmlands which attracts visitors to this area. The open area as a public facility is used for economic activity, social interaction, and culture activity. This culture activity has relation with the customs and tradition activity such as Sedekah Bumi, Bersih Desa, Suronan, etc.that organized routinely.

ditional buildings which have ornament details that belongs to local architectural style, space pattern, and natural landscape.

#### 4 NON PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF MANTRAN WETAN

The housing is not merely a physical structure of the environment, but also a cultural environment that is created and arranged with the basic of culture. It is used as a place to stay and to live in together in order to fulfill the needs to perform lives. The community's activity that related to the community's socio-culture aspect consists of two aspects, both of horizontal relation among the people (social interaction) and the vertical relation between human and God. The space pattern of Mantran Wetan shows residence area within open space in the center of it. The function of this open space is to do some socioculture activity and economic activity as non physical character of Mantran Wetan. The following are the function of the open space in the center of this region: to accommodate social interaction, to do some traditional ceremonies, to perform their traditional dance (Jaran Kepang Papat dance), to dry farming product, and to hold pigeon exhibiton. This socioculture activity of Mantran Wetan has relation with the customs and tradition activity such as Sedekah Bumi, Bersih Desa, Suronan, etc. These traditional ceremonies usually take place on the open space in the center of this region. In this socioculture activity besides having social interaction people of Mantran Wetan usually perform Jaran Kepang Papat dance. Traditional dance, which is usually performed by men, are feudal in spirit. Jaran Kepang Papat dance had existed in 1819. The people of Mantran Wetan preserve the traditional dance "Jaran Kepang Papat" that has become the pride of this traditional area. In traditional ceremonies the Jaran Kepang Papat dance usually carries the articles of the royal ceremony.

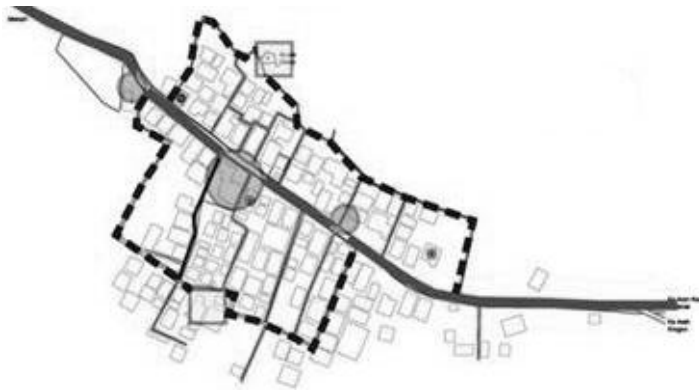


Fig.1. Open Space of Mantran Wetan



Fig.1. Open space which is used for culture activities

#### 3.3 The Integration of Building and Area Character

The built environment formation consists of three elements: space, the building surrounding it, and the formation which have composition pattern meaning or composition model. The functional relation and the implementation of space pattern of Mantran Wetan formed because of interaction between space, buiding massing, and its environment, between building massing itself, between building massing and road network, and between building massing and the environment surrounding it. There is no fence on each kavling area caused there is no need to enclose property. The physical character of Mantran Wetan is reflected trough the strong relation between buildings character and area character. The unique of this traditional area is the integration between building character and area character, the unification between the the specific of tra-



Fig.1. Jaran Kepang Papat dance carry the articles of the royal ceremony in Sedekah Bumi

In the economic activity, the people of this region make a living as farmers by cultivating rice, vegetables and tobacco. Being abundant with vegetables characterizes much of the traditional area. This area is leading vegetables crops commodity production in Central Java besides producing tobacco.



*Fig.1. A traditional dance (Jaran Kepang Papat) has become the pride of Mantran Wetan people*

## 5 CONCLUSION

According to the research conclusion, it is known that the visual character of Mantran Wetan in Magelang is based on the physical character as the main elements and the non-physical character as the supporting elements.

### 6.1 Physical Character

Firstly, most of the building in Mantran Wetan consists of traditional buildings which are formed of some aspect such as roof style, interior, ornament style, etc. Secondly, the space structure of Mantran Wetan residence is formed by the network of road and the network of utility. The space structure of Mantran Wetan is linear, with the network of main road as the main structure and the network of local road which is divided the resident in grid form. Thirdly, A residence pattern of Mantran Wetan is formed by the building mass related one another formed urban blocks. Between one to another urban block is separated by grid road pattern forming sub urban blocks. Fourthly, the open space in Mantran Wetan consists of open area or yard as general public facilities are used for economic activity, social interaction, and culture activity. The open space is formed by the facade of buildings and open space within building area. In the integration of building character and area character in Mantran Wetan, the visual character of Mantran Wetan is reflected through the strong relation between buildings character and area character. The unique of this traditional area is the unification between the the specific of traditional, the space pattern and its natural landscape.

### 6.2 Non Physical Character

Firstly, people of Mantran Wetan usually perform their traditional dance Jaran Kepang Papat besides having social interaction in their socioculture activity. Secondly, in the economic activity, the people of this region make a living as farmers by cultivating rice, vegetables and tobacco. Being abundant with vegetables characterizes much of the traditional area. Basic of all the visual character of Mantran Wetan is the environment pattern, the built environment formation, the socioculture activity, and the economic activity. Yet the Mantran Wetan's traditional buildings, space pattern, natural landscape, rich farmlands, and Jaran Kepang Papat dance give Mantran Wetan sense of tradition, history and regional identification that remains resistance to the encroaching values of modern industrial society.

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