

## Comparing Public Space for Women in Mlangi, Yogyakarta and Cumalikizik, Bursa

Desy Ayu Krisna Murti\*

Department of Architecture, Widya Mataram University, Indonesia

Ozlem Akyol

Department of Architecture, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif Universitesi, Istanbul, Türkiye

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### ABSTRACT

Public space is an extremely vital necessity in social life. In architecture, public space belongs to everyone living in an area, city, or settlement. Public spaces like communal spaces have particular profiles. If we talk about the need for gender determination, we can say more about women's space. Yogyakarta and Bursa are similar cities characterized with a majority of Muslim citizens. Both have Muslim Settlements known, respectively, as Pathok Negoro and the area of Cumalikizik.

Pathok Negoro, specifically located in Mlangi, has two patterns to encircling the number of nodes for the public spaces in the form of prayer room/*mushola* and *pondok pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) as the new nuclei at the neighborhood level. These spaces are special for women and an imam who leads in each *Mushola* or prayer room. The existence of two neighborhood levels in Mlangi is based on religious activities, namely of the *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) and Mlangi citizens. Mlangi accommodates several *pondok pesantren* so there is ample space to expand (multi nuclei/polycentric). Around the Cumalikizik area, there is a *camii* or Mosque and it serves as the most central communal space for women. Mlangi and Cumalikizik have a hierarchic and spatial order that provides women comfort and flexibility.

**Keywords:** *Mlangi, Cumalikizik, public space, woman*

### Introduction

Public space is a key element in fulfilling the community's needs and spatial arrangement. The needs of the community make public space the main element in a city plan within the scope of hierarchy that surrounds an existing order in society. The spatial order is arranged based on the social strata that exist in society according to those in power at that particular time. According to the Sustainable Development Goals, as conveyed by Pietro Garau in his article entitled Public Space: The Strategy to Achieving Equitable City, the global Urban Sustainable Development Goal no 11 includes target 11.7 on public space: by 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public space, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (Garau, 2017). The fulfillment of these needs is no exception for women who are always associated with safety and security. The view in our society is that some limitations are still enforced on women in public open spaces. In Islam there is

\* Corresponding author: [kdesyayu@gmail.com](mailto:kdesyayu@gmail.com)

a prohibition that prevents women to go out without being accompanied by a blood relative, otherwise known as *mahram*. However, history has recorded that societies with an Islamic majority prioritize spatial planning for women. In this article, we will discuss cities with a Muslim majority that have fairly good spatial arrangement and give priority to women, namely Mlangi in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and Cumalikizik in Bursa, Turkey.

In a tiered scope with the widest hierarchy to the smallest scope. Yogyakarta is a heritage city with several UNESCO-recognized historical sites, such as the Prambanan Temple and its surroundings and Kraton as the axis of philosophy. Kraton Yogyakarta led by Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X is the core area of the historical site surrounded by a fortification wall called *beteng*. Outside of the *beteng* we can find *Pathok Negoro*, which refers to four sentry strongholds in the Yogyakarta Province area that are also recognized as historical sites. These four areas are points of the sultanate's spatial boundaries. The oldest and first area is Mlangi. Mlangi had quite a good social order when Raden Sandeya or Kyai Nur Iman opened an Islamic boarding school for the surrounding community, he founded the Pathok Negoro mosque by order of Sultan Hamengku Buwono I. Mlangi developed into an area with many lodges for students to study. So the public spaces were created in the form of schools or madrassas and prayer rooms. Religious activities are centered in the main mosque, the Pathok Negoro Mlangi mosque. To date, it has developed into an Islamic society which supports religious activities outside the Kraton, namely the Gede Kauman mosque.

Similarly, on the other side of the world, there is another country with a Muslim majority, namely Turkey, which is also famous for its conservation areas in Istanbul, Bursa, and Edirne. Many heritage buildings have been preserved to this day. In Indonesia there is Yogyakarta with its Mlangi locality, which is a conservation area, while in Bursa, Turkey there is Cumalikizik (Jumalikizik), which is a conservation village that is now a tourist area. In 2014, Cumalikizik village was entered into the UNESCO World Heritage List under the title of 'Bursa and Cumalikizik: The Birth of the Ottoman Empire' (Kizilkuşak, 2019). It is, hence, most interesting how Cumalikizik became a village that has similar social character as Mlangi and an early residential site of the Ottoman Kingdom. Historically speaking, Cumalikizik was established hundreds of years ago and it is one of the seven Kızık villages settled 700 years ago, by Oguz tribes, in an area 10 kilometers east of Bursa (Altunbas, 2016).

Both Mlangi and Cumalikizik are fairly dense villages but they maintain open spaces with quite clear designation. Therefore, the ancient Muslim civilization had thought deeply about social needs for all circles. Women primarily need space to socialize with others and the Asian tradition is to nurture their children by taking a walk in open space.

## Methods

The current research used direct observation methods carried out by the authors on the field and reviewed digital literature in the form of the latest journals containing research related to public space and the research object. Generally speaking, this is a qualitative research utilizing a comparative method to find a conclusion. Comparison in qualitative research is unavoidable. The importance and utility of comparative research infiltrate virtually all types of qualitative research projects. Further discussed in the Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods (Sage Publishing, Given, 2008), comparative research method is a broad term that refers to the evaluation of the similarities, differences, and associations between entities. Entities may be based on many lines such as statements from an interview or individual, symbols, case studies, social groups, geographical or political configurations, and cross-national comparisons. Comparative research is used within most qualitative approaches, such as comparisons by core emic categories in ethnographic studies, within-case comparisons in phenomenology, case study comparisons, comparative politics, and examination of contrasts in narrative and discourse analysis.

The comparison of two objects, which in this case are Mlangi and Cumalikizik, is a way to find similarities in how the arrangement of open space women need can be applied from ancient times to the present.

### Public Space for Women

As we know, women have various stereotypes and roles in various communities throughout the world, especially in Asia. Some of these stereotypes include the role of being a mother who must always nurture the children and stay at home dealing with domestic affairs. It is of no surprise that this results in psychological fear among women, whose movement is severely curtailed. Such an appalling atmosphere prevailing in most Indian cities and towns, aggravated by images circulated in print and electronic media, creates strong feelings of fear among women (Das, 2017). In Asian culture that adheres to various religions but maintains a system believed to be the main construct, namely patriarchy, women occupy a visible role in the second layer. This led to the so-called “cultural Islam,” which to some extent restricted women’s appearance in society (Alizadeh, 2022).

The Islamic culture is most prominently found in Muslim-majority countries. The social and cultural context that is fostered in society is, therefore, united with one common view. How public space is provided for women in a country of Islamic majority society is the main point. In his writings, Dr. Sukanta Das even conveyed how the construction took place in India. Women’s fear of public space is informed by patriarchal codes and structure. In fact, space has always been a site of power, control, and dominance. The patriarchal society bifurcates space to designate the inner, domestic domain (‘ghar’/home) as space for women, while the outer domain (‘bahir’/world) is allotted for male activities (Das, 2017).

One study shows a link between how women access public spaces safely and comfortably with women’s mental health in their general role, particularly in domestic affairs. A mother who is able to stroll around with her child in public spaces would look happier than a mother who has no freedom to access public spaces. The findings of the study suggest that: the presence of public toilets does not affect perceived safety; eliminating graffiti has a weak significant impact on perceived safety; and removing solid walls leads to significant improvements in perceptions of safety, with the effect being stronger for women (Hernandez, 2021). Mental health itself is associated with spiritual essence as conveyed by Imam Ghazali. According to al-Ghazali, *qalb* (heart) is the human essence, which is subtle, spiritual and transcendent, it has the capacity to learn something and know. Rashid Rida said that there are two *qalb*, namely *qalb* understood as a piece of bodily organ functioning as the center of blood circulation, and *qalb* which means the subsystem of the *nafs*, which is the center of feelings (Irham, 2023).

Several factors influence how women can access both open and closed public spaces, including how social structures are formed where the space is located. Subsequently, how technology is developed in an area where women grow up is included as an influencing factor. Examples include how women can access the internet in public spaces and how they can easily use personal devices. According to Wronska in her study on violence against women in Bangladesh, the first aspect refers to analyzing how women’s physical mobility is constrained by certain ways of thinking and, as a result, the behavior of men towards women (Wronska, 2018).

Rapoport asserts that women’s activities in open spaces are influenced by various aspects that affect spatial patterns in an area, namely socio-cultural, technological, economic, and environmental factors. In cases where these aspects are well-developed, the orderliness of residences and public spaces is created as a whole. Public spaces are created in the form of open spaces such as parks, pedestrians, plazas, squares, and playgrounds. While closed public spaces can take various forms such as markets, places of worship, schools, and commercial spaces that are commonly accessed by the community, especially women.

## Public Space for Women in Mlangi

Shirvani, in Nasution (2016), states that facilities are an important part of the design feature of public open space. It is important to plan an open space that ensures the comfort of a place and the activity with a human scale factor. In Mlangi the building that functions as the center of activities is the mosque, and in each boarding school there is a *pendopo* (meeting hall). According to Nasution and Zahra, *pendopo* and prayer rooms are some facilities that are only found in Indonesia. The facilities are constructed in response to local residents who are mostly Muslims.

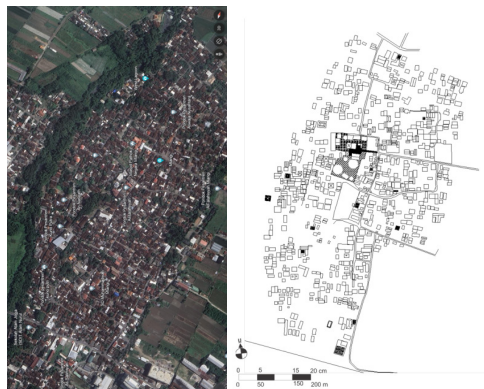
Mlangi as the first Pathok Negoro has the privilege to be the most popular Pathok Negoro in Yogyakarta. The people who live there are the descendants of Kyai Nur Iman. They married in a neighborhood close to each other. The belief in Islamic tradition to keep the legacy of mahlab kind of stream in faith based on Sharia law. That is the reason why the tradition is still maintained today. Relations among relatives are very close (Murti, 2020). As stated in Imawan's article, Mlangi has ties and history with the Yogyakarta sultanate and it is a village or fief land (tax-free) bestowed by Sultan Hamengkubuwana I to his brother named Bendoro Pangeran Hangebei Sandiyo or Kyai Nur Iman after the Giyanti Agreement. Both were the sons of Susuhunan Amangkurat IV, who was also known as Amangkurat Jawa, son of Pangeran Puger or Raden Mas Drajat or Susuhunan Pakubuwana I (r. 1704-1719 AD) (Imawan, 2020).

Many issues discuss women in public spaces and on average put aside security to feel comfortable in carrying out activities in public spaces. Islam puts women in a secure position. The history of Islam shows that women play a significant and crucial role (Sutrisno, 2023).

*Pawestren* is a chamber specially made for female congregational prayers, made using teak wood construction, with a pyramid roof in the form of teak shingles (wooden tiles). This structure is supported by 8 pillars, 4 of which are decorated with carvings of Majapahit design. The floor area that extends to the Qibla measures 15 x 7.30 m. The *pawestren* was constructed during the time of K.R.M.A. Arya Purbaningrat as reflected in the shapes and design of the *Maksurah* or *Kholwat* carvings, which were imprinted in 1866 AD.

Mlangi is the most visited site for religious pilgrimage. History says that Mlangi founded by brother Hamengku Buwono I that had been hidden by his father Amangkurat Jawi in PP Gedangan, Surabaya. Geographically speaking, Mlangi had a strategic role as a village where religious studies were conducted and disseminated and for defense. This is indicated by the presence of several features found on the field, namely:

1. Moderate slope conditions (not too steep).
2. Wide rice field area that sufficiently functioned as a stronghold for resettlement.
3. Rice field area as a means of sustenance as well as livelihood for the local community.
4. The river serving as the source of irrigation.



**Figure 1.**

Aerial view of Mlangi and site image of settlement in Mlangi. Source: Google Earth& Murti, 2020.

In a research on the behavioral patterns of Mlangi people, D.A.K Murti and A. Sarwadi 2020 found that: Pathok Negoro Mosque serves as the center of the settlements while the scattered black dots are the prayer rooms or houses, which they call *mushola*. *Mushola* functions as a place for women to pray, read the Quran, conduct routine gatherings, and prepare the annual commemoration of Kyai Nur Iman's death (*haul*). These activities constantly occur and subsequently become part of their daily activities.

The use of space in Mlangi is very unique for their nodes of activity scattered throughout Mlangi and Sawahan. These nodes grow naturally according to basic human needs relating to social and spiritual nature. The psychology of human need activities to interact with each other and express gratitude for what they enjoy. The Mlangi area, which is indeed a religious neighborhood, provides some space for women to engage in religious activities in *mushola/langgar*. The kinship observed in the Mlangi settlement is one of the elements that underlie the profile and distribution of settlements in Mlangi. Many boarding school students in Mlangi later became permanent residents of Mlangi. Rapoport argues that life begins with human's social needs, in this case the social needs of Mlangi's residents are formed on the basis of a clear and coherent *sanad* or genealogy. Pathok Negoro Mosque functions as the center of all religious activities for men while the *mushola* spread organically for women. There are many activities such as gatherings, charity programs, joint Quran recital with children and *santri* (boarding school students). This pattern is not unlike the multi-nuclei-like veins in our body.

The open space they can use for the gatherings is very flexible for the people around them and this small community uses it for daily activities like praying, weekly activities like gatherings, and monthly activities for women's regular social gatherings (*arisan*). The leader of the community is chosen by the people regularly every year.

In many ways, women are more active in social activities and develop complex strategic plans. This is similar to the results of a study by E. Sutrisno asserting that women have great potentials to build and maintain the kinds of tolerance that Indonesia needs. As for the noble values upheld by Muslim reformist foundations are the values of monotheism, humanity, care and exemplary, nationality and love for the environment, which are critical values for manifesting religious moderation in Indonesia. The role of women in tolerance is apparent in the various roles they play; first, women as mothers and wives always reap the seeds of peace and justice, especially within the family (Sutrisno, 2023).

In Mlangi, public space in the form of closed space has multiple functions as mentioned above, while open public space, which is usually the *mushola* yard, is used for large events and children to play.



**Figure 2.**

Public open space for playground. Source: Murti, 2020.

Overall, how Mlangi area integrate well overcrowding indicated that the houses were built today. And its relation to the use of spaces that are public in this open space and places of worship. The significant differences in contours have led to Mlangi being divided into two territories. This division is quite deeply rooted despite the fact that it is today being administratively separated into Mlangi and Sawahan, yet people still perceive Mlangi to be divided into two areas as shown in Figure 1. This pattern tends to spread and be organic because people living in Mlangi instinctively follow the existing natural conditions and the activity center that function as a sacred site.

Enclose the tombs and mosques as places of worship connecting relation between citizens of Mlangi and Sawahan today. If seen from developments in meso then the tendency of population growth is more spread. Relation to the tombs found in Mlangi to Mlangi spacial pattern in the form of manifestation of the deceased person. Pattern Based Religious activity. Religious activities in Mlangi are entirely centered on the Pathok Negoro Mosque. All activities, both general activities and those specifically afforded to Kyai Nur Iman, have always been held at the Mlangi mosque.

### Public Space for Women in Cumalikizik

Cumalikizik is a village located in Yildirim district, Bursa Province in eastern Turkey. This village marks the establishment of the Ottoman empire that existed in Turkey during the conquest of Bursa. Cumalikizik (Ortakizik) village is firstly mentioned in a document related to Yildirim Bayezid Foundation Charter dating from 1400 (Kizilkuşak, 2019). This village, during its initial establishment, served as the center of Ottoman culture at the time, some of the past traditional cultures can still be found today such as baths and typical cuisines in the area. This village is quite old so it has an architectural charm that can still be enjoyed today. Some of the buildings and activities there are intended for economic and tourism activities. Many say that Cumalikizik is the most authentic village representing the condition of Ottoman Turkey at the time. This is showcased by the arrangement of the houses, the model of the houses, and the materials used to color, which is now quite colorful. This village was very rich and produced the best silk during the Ottoman period. Until 1955, tobacco and chestnuts were produced in the village (Altunbas, 2004).

The social structure that exists in Cumalikizik can be examined from how the polar arrangement of money and public space is used there. There are few spaces for general use and more narrow hallways and houses pattern are more organic. How they are arranged is quite interesting because in one village there is only one mosque, which are called *camii*. In the aerial image, we can see how the arrangement of the space is nearly invisible, only the houses in Cumalikizik are neatly arranged even though they developed organically.



**Figure 3.**

Aerial view of Cumalikizik. Source: Google Earth 2022.

There are several sites listed in the cultural heritage nomination submitted in 2014. In 1990, a mosque, a bath, two plane trees, cemetery and 57 residential buildings were registered by the Decree (1372 / 14.10.1990) of the Bursa Regional Council for the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties. A year later, in 1991, the council (by the Decree no: 1624 / 25.02.1991) designated the borders of Cumalikizik urban and natural sites. By the conservation council decree (3508 / 24.10.1993) in 1993, 65 residential buildings were registered, 1/1000 scale conservation development plan and plan decisions, 1/500 scale conservation development plan were approved, together with building silhouettes and typology studies of architectural elements (Kizilkuşak, 2019).

The area that visitors and local people commonly use is in the form of a green open space where there are trees that are conserved. As well as the mosque which is currently not operational because it is feared that its structure poses a hazard as it is over 700 years old. Some venues such as shops and bathing areas remain functional even though they are very simple. Some other areas are already cultural sites but local people still use roads that still function very well.

Cumalikizik has a hilly area since it is located at the foot of Mount Uludag. The pedestrian footpath there functions as a meeting space for mothers selling at shops or watching over tourist houses.



**Figure 3.**

Activities in Mosque of Cumalikizik and commercial activity. Source: Kizilkuşak, 2019

Despite the diverse range of people visiting the Cumalikizik area, women feel comfortable in the area. As captured in the picture, they move freely until the afternoon. They used to carry out various activities, both communally and individually. Such a pattern of activity has existed since the period of Orhan Gazi, the early establishment of Cumalikizik. Analysis on the characteristics of Cumalikizik Street shows that they are narrow (maximum 2.5 m.), and that they were made for the use of humans and pack animals, not vehicles. The width of Cin Street, which is one of the narrowest streets, is approximately 60 cm (Kizilkuşak, 2019).

### **Similarities Between Mlangi and Cumalikizik**

Mlangi and Cumalikizik have similarities that can be observed from several aspects and backgrounds. Based on the physical and social studies, the two villages boast similarities that can be divided into two things, namely activities and places of activity.

#### ***The Activities: Based on activity time***

The similarity of the two localities, i.e., Mlangi and Cumalikizik, which are exceptionally distant in terms of both location and period of establishment, is how they arrange public spaces for women that focus on public and religious activities. Some of the religious activities carried

out in the sites include prayer activities, gatherings, and simply playing and having conversations. Women gather during times of prayer, which implies that there are daily activities carried out in these public spaces in the prayer room and mosque areas. In Mlangi, these activities take place in *mushola*, which can be found in small areas surrounded by Islamic boarding schools. As for Cumalikizik, daily activities ensue on pedestrian footpaths and in front of the mosque where they do not perform religious activities regularly because it is an ancient building that does not function daily due to structural hazard. Residents perform their worship in places that are not too far around the village of Cumalikizik.

Other activities that take place in public spaces are based on routines that women have always carried out. In Mlangi, women's social gatherings and *hadroh* or weekly recitation are usually carried out as routine activities. While in Cumalikizik, women conduct their weekly activities, particularly during the weekend when Cumalikizik is full of visitors, both students and tourists from various countries, who engage in numerous activities in Egrek Square.

As for annual activities, they are usually held in larger spaces in both Mlangi and Cumalikizik. These events include Kyai Nur Iman *haul* activities in Mlangi and events during the Ramadan involving both women and men, in which all members of the community participate. Meanwhile in Cumalikizik, an annual event called Mulberry Festival is held in which many delicacies from the Ottoman periods are served, especially those made from the Mulberry fruit.

### ***The Places: Open spaces steeped in history***

The public spaces utilized for activities in Mlangi fall under two criteria, i.e., open space and closed space. Weekly and daily activities are commonly held in prayer rooms (*mushola/langgar*) and Islamic boarding schools. A *mushola* usually has a caretaker whose position is entrusted to residents living nearest to the *mushola* or to the management of the Islamic boarding school. Pathok Negoro Mosque is the center of public space and it is a historical site that is protected by Kraton (Yogyakarta Sultanate). Mlangi itself has no large open space.

In Cumalikizik, various activities also take place in open spaces such as Egrek Square. One of the venues is Eûrek Square, which is located at the entrance of the village, while the other is the Hamam Square in front of the historical bath building. To the south of Eûrek Square, the main street splits into two (Kizilkuşak, 2019). Most of women's activities in Cumalikizik can be found in semi-outdoor and outdoor areas.

### **Conclusion**

Mlangi and Cumalikizik have nearly similar characteristics, which are both historical sites with significant historical and cultural values. The buildings arranged are timeless vernacular structures. The historical sites function as public spaces that are freely accessible at certain times of the day. Safe access to public spaces is a common goal of sustainable development goals, including women of all ages having the right to access open spaces freely. Both Mlangi and Cumalikizik have a hierarchical and spatial order that provides comfort and flexibility to women.

Having nearly similar yet different cultural backgrounds, both Mlangi and Cumalikizik have created a social system that provides comfort and ease of access close to their homes or residences with a distance and area that is quite humane on a human scale.

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