

Java's culture of local pilgrimage

Its place in the study of Indonesian Islam



Women at the tomb of Sharifah Ambami, Arosbaya, Madura

George Quinn

<https://anu-au.academia.edu/GeorgeQuinn>

Sources of statistics on pilgrimage

- **guest books** at pilgrimage sites
- local government **statistics on tourism**
- reports by the **governing bodies of sites**
- **media** reports

- Plus “impressions” ...
 - ↳ the number and prosperity of **vendors**, the size of a site’s **parking area**, the presence of a local **government ticket office**, the number of **beggars** and “**guides**”, the claims made by **key-keepers**, reports by **pilgrims** and **tour operators**, and the observer’s **personal impressions**.

Visitor numbers at pilgrimage sites are usually recorded in guest books...

Tanggal	Waktu (Jam)	NAMA	Alamat	Tujuan	Tanda tangan
16-10-2010	16.10.	Rombongan kabupaten nganjuk + 60 orang.	Des. Loceret. nganjuk.	Ziarah.	[Signature]
17/10 2010	16.14.	Rombongan Jember	Kesambi Jember	Ziarah	[Signature]
20-10-10	09.30.	Rombongan TORIQOH BEKAR PUTIH NGANJUK	panpes MISBAHUL ISLAM BEKAR PUTIH	-	[Signature]
21-10-10	16.03	ROMBONGAN DARI ISTIFAR 9 KADIRI TABAHAN BALI	KAMPONG JAWA KEDIRI BALI	ZIARAH	[Signature]
23-10-10	9.00	KAMI PPPM TANJUNGPANOM MALANG JATIM	malang JATIM	Ziarah	[Signature]
23-10-10	12.00	Rombongan dari sumber paku usayit Malang - jalan 180kg	JENBRANA.	Ziarah	[Signature]
24-10-10	08.00	Rombongan mahasiswa STITMA JENBRANA (Forum ForumFas mahasiswa Islam), FKMI H. Saah. sbm	Jepara	-	[Signature]
26-10-10	07.31	KH. A. Hadiansyah	Kel. Karah Kec. Jombang Surabaya; Jatim	Ziarah	[Signature]
26-10-10		H. M. H. J. R.	PA gon P. S. Kuc.	Ziarah	[Signature]
26-10-2010	10.25	MUSLIMAT NURUL HIDAYAH	RAUDU	Ziarah	[Signature]
27-10-2010	10.30	Rombongan ziarah dari JEDING Sarungduren Blitar H. Zamrudin.	Blitar	Ziarah	[Signature]

...but site records are not rigorous or reliable

Visitor numbers at pilgrimage sites are sometimes posted in the site office

**DATA ZAIRIN DI MAKAM AULIYA' TAMBAK 2012
DS. NGADI KEC. MOJO KAB. KEDIRI JA-TIM**

NO	BL.	ROMBONGAN		PERORANGAN	MUKIM
1	JAN	140 BUS	54 COL	0 SEPEDA	8 ORANG
2	PEB	114 - - -	72 - - -	6 - - -	10 - - -
3	MAR	122 - - -	61 - - -	8 - - -	8 - - -
4	APR	80 - - -	51 - - -	0 - - -	0 - - -
5	MEI	160 - - -	67 - - -	2 - - -	3 - - -
6	JUN	270 - - -	84 - - -	1 - - -	3 - - -
7	JUL				
8	AGT	140 - - -	24 - - -		4 - - -
9	SEP	91 - - -	63 - - -	4 - - -	8 - - -
10	OKT	67 - - -	40 - - -	2 - - -	8 - - -
11	NOP	64 - - -	30 - - -	4 - - -	4 - - -
12	DES.				7 - - -

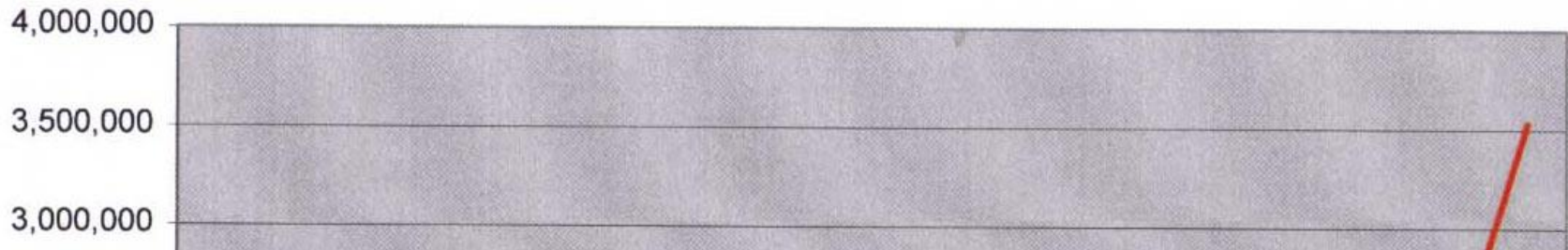
Annual visits to the tombs of saints

as recorded by the East Java Archeological Service, 1988 and 2005

Pilgrimage sites in East Java	Number of visits in 1988	Number of visits in 2005
Tomb of Sunan Bonang (Tuban)	117,270	618,047 (a 5x increase)
Tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim (Gresik)	128,905	1,556,651 (a 12x increase)
Tomb of Sunan Drajat (Paciran, Lamongan)	26,381	696,858 (a 26x increase)
Tomb of Ibrahim Asmorokondi (4 km east of Tuban)	11,886	467,896 (a 40x increase)

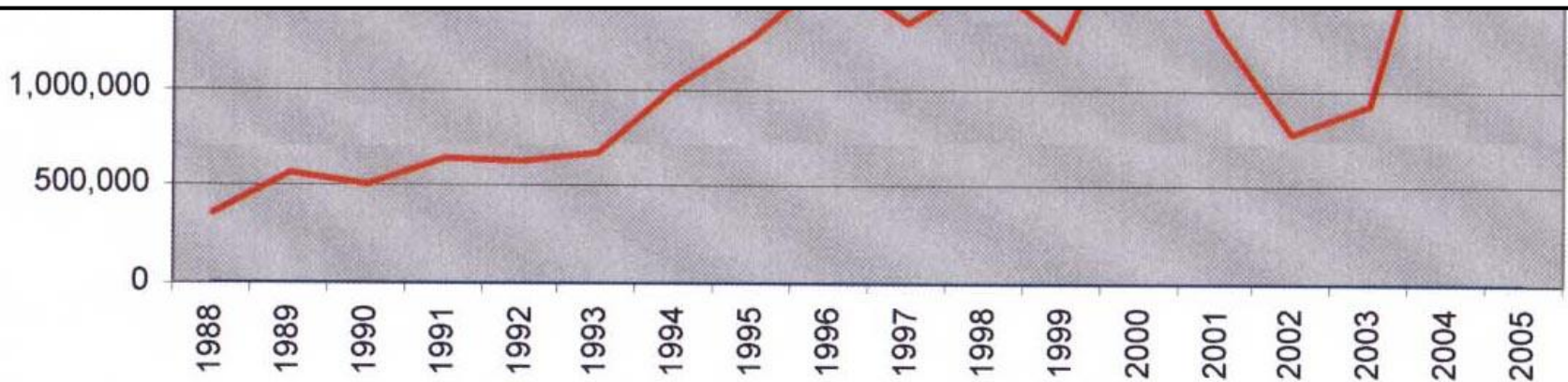
Visitor numbers at major sites

East Java, 1988 to 2005



Number of visits to the tombs of the Nine Saints (*Wali Sāngā*) in 2014: **12.2 million**

Estimate by Department of Tourism



(Armstrong 2006: 64)

A total rise of 873% over seventeen years

The top seven pilgrimage sites in Java (The “million-annual-visits” club)

- Banten Lama (100 kms west of Jakarta): the tomb of **Sultan Hasanuddin**, and the nearby tomb of **Maulana Yusuf**
- The tomb of **Sunan Gunung Jati** (Cirebon)
- Demak (25 kms east of Semarang): the tomb of **Radèn Patah** behind the Demak Grand Mosque, and the nearby tomb of **Sunan Kalijågâ**
- The tomb of **Sunan Bonang** (Tuban)
- The tomb of **Sunan Ampèl** (Surabaya)
- The tomb of **Maulana Malik Ibrahim** (Gresik)
- The tomb of **Abdurrahman Wahid** (Jombang)

Common “non-standard” devotions at the tombs of saints

- Petitioning for **personal favours** (*ngalap berkah*)
- The drinking of **zamzam water** from an on-site holy well
- The **charging** of water, food, cosmetics and personal possessions with the holy power of the saint

Bottles of water getting “charged” beside the grave of Kyai Kholil, Bangkalan, Madura



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- The **charging** of water, food, cosmetics and personal possessions with the holy power of the saint
- *Nadhar* **contracts**
- The **burning of incense**, sprinkling **perfume**, scattering of **flowers** on graves (*nyěkar*) and making offerings

Flower offerings on sale

at the tomb of Ki Ageng Balak, Bekonang, near Solo



Raw opium sold as an offering

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- Annual **rebutan** rituals (usually held in conjunction with **haul** commemorations)
- On-site **slamětan** meals
- The **mixing of sexes** during devotions
- Annual **washing and parading of sacred objects**
- Annual ritual **replacing of the cloth canopy** (*buka luwur*)

Why is local pilgrimage increasingly popular when devotional orthodoxy is growing in authority?

- **Disposable income** is rising and **infrastructure is improving**
 - ↳ better roads, accommodation, eateries and transport services
 - ↳ people are simply more mobile (especially women)
- The ***tarekat* flow-on effect**
 - ↳ There has been a significant increase of interest in *tarekat* and popular sufism (i.e. sufism defined broadly to include the practices of certain *majlis dhikir* groups and practices at tombs)
 - ↳ formal devotions “desiccated” and emotionally unsatisfying
- The development of a **“pop” theology of pilgrimage**
 - ↳ Ritual “proxemics” – tombs bring you closer to divine power
 - ↳ All things come from God, so it is proper to ask God for things
 - ↳ God’s power is so great it cannot be approached or accessed directly. It demands an intermediary (a saint)

Why is local pilgrimage increasingly popular when devotional orthodoxy has growing authority?

- The boom in local pilgrimage may have **political and class** dimensions.
 - ↳ The mayhem of 1965-1966 was directed mainly at leftists most of whom were practitioners of non-standard, “*abangan*” Islam. Many were victims of “*santri*” violence.
 - ↳ After the trauma of the 1960s and 1970s, in the 1980s heterodox Muslims renewed their non-standard practices in the low-profile safe-haven of pilgrimage sites.
 - ↳ The ancient authority of these holy places and their venerated saints offers heterodox Muslims a protective environment where they can continue to practice at least *some* of their *abangan* religious culture. Hence the boom in local pilgrimage and the low-profile survival of *abanganism*.

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Mosque and Holy Tomb

as contrasting identity markers and sources of authority

Mosque

open, public, a “*pandhåpå*” (day?)

oriented outward (*kiblat*, *Ka’bah*)

place of rigid ritual at particular times (*salat*, *Jumatan*)

worshippers arrayed in neat *shaf* lines;
women wear *rukuh/mukena*

the mosque is masculine, men dominate,
women and men are kept separate

Holy Tomb

intimate, private, a “*pasaréyan*” (night?)

oriented inward (local saint & traditions)

place of varied rituals at various times
(*sholawat* songs, *dongå*, *tahlilan*, *nyěkar*)

worshippers arrayed in circles or
packed in no particular order; more
relaxed dress code

women are prominent, women and men
usually mix indiscriminately; at some sites
there are female *juru kunci*

At the tomb of Sunan Gunung Jati (Cirebon) women and men sit mingled, women at the front



Mosque and Holy Tomb

as contrasting symbols of identity and sources of authority

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emphasis on oral traditions (origin stories, verificatory stories, popular history); the power of miracles

But... there is now growing interest in local pilgrimage among strictly observant Muslims



Visitors from the Ma'had Al-Madinah, Semarang

...after prayers at the shrine of Sĕmar, Mount Tidar, Magelang



Visitors from the Ma'had Al-Madinah, Semarang

...after prayers at the shrine of Sėmar, Mount Tidar, Magelang



Growing interest in local pilgrimage among strictly observant Muslims... why?

- The **hajj flow-on effect**
 - ↳ local pilgrimage may be part of the total hajj package
 - ↳ curiosity about the pilgrimage experience
 - ↳ frustration at not being able to perform the hajj
- There is wider awareness of an orthodox **theological case for the legitimacy of pilgrimage** to the graves of saints
 - ↳ The theologically respectable principle of *tawassul* in the Qur'ān
 - ☞ “O you who believe, honour Allah. Seek ways and means to come close to Him. Do all you can in His cause, and if you do, you will prosper.” Qur'ān Al-Maidah 35
 - ↳ The Prophet's permission as recorded in hadith
 - ☞ “Visit graves, for that makes you mindful of death.” *Sahih Muslim*, IV 2130
 - ↳ In the Shafi'i school of law, pilgrimage is “recommended” (*mandub / mustahabb / sunnah*)
 - ☞ Although there may be conditions, especially for women

An “orthodox” rationale for local pilgrimage (from a Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Gresik, 2013)

SIMPULAN

- Ulama Ahlussunnah sepakat bahwa hukum ziarah kubur bagi kaum laki-laki itu hukumnya sunat asalkan tidak mengarah pada perbuatan musyrik. Sedangkan hukum ziarah kubur bagi kaum perempuan yang telah mendapat izin dari suaminya atau walinya,
- Wali Songo terdiri dari sembilan wali; Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Bonang, Sunan Giri, Sunan Kudus, Sunan Drajat, Sunan Muria, Sunan Gunung Jati, dan Sunan Kali Jaga.

People are starting to realise how important it is to take part in religious tourism and how positive its effects are.

Growing interest in local pilgrimage among strictly observant Muslims... why?

- The **juggernaut of Indonesia's economic development**
 - ↳ Local pilgrimage is now **big business**, attracting investment and management expertise from orthodox / santri Muslims .
 - ↳ hotels, eateries, souvenir shops, bus hire, tour services, *Islami* clothing
 - ↳ The lure of profit and government patronage seem to be softening hostility to the practice of local pilgrimage
 - ↳ called **wisata religi**, *wisata spiritual*, *wisata ziarah*, even *wisata sharia*
 - ↳ The **involvement of the government** in the development of local pilgrimage by...
 - ↳ encouraging the “professionalisation” of the pilgrimage business
 - ↳ making funds available for the development of pilgrimage sites
 - ↳ earning revenue from local pilgrimage sites

The “santrification” of local pilgrimage

Some pilgrimage sites have always been more “santri” than others, but today a gradual extension and intensification of “santrification” seems to be taking place.

- For observant Muslims holy **places** are becoming more comfortably orthodox in appearance.
- “Non-standard” **devotions** are in decline and more orthodox devotions are appearing.
- The **stories** attached to pilgrimage sites (origin stories and verificatory stories) increasingly emphasise connections with the narrative traditions and symbolism of the Middle East.

Mekah-Mekah DI NUSANTARA

MASJID DEMAK, JAWA TENGAH

Pada periode 1930-an setiap 10 hari antara tanggal 1 sampai 10 Zulhijah, orang-orang akan berdatangan ke Demak untuk melakukan ziarah.

Dipercaya Berziarah tujuh kali ke Masjid Demak akan sama nilainya dengan naik haji ke Mekah.

Gelar setelah menjalani ritual Haji Blankon.



MAKAM RAJA-RAJA MATARAM DI IMOGIRI, YOGYAKARTA

Dipercaya Ziarah ke makam raja-raja Jawa sebanyak 40 kali akan dinilai sama dengan naik haji satu kali.



MAKAM SYEKH BURHANUDDIN DI ULAKAN, SUMATRA BARAT

Julukan Meka Ketek (Mekah Kecil).

Dipercaya Tujuh kali ziarah ke makam Syekh Burhanuddin di Ulahan, sama dengan satu kali haji ke Mekah.



GUNUNG BAWAKARAENG, MAKASSAR

Dipercaya Berziarah Gunung Bawakaraeng diyakini setara dengan ibadah haji.

Gelar setelah menjalani ritual Haji Bawakaraeng.



tirto.id

Sumber: Naik Haji di Masa Silam (2013) Infografik: Mojo

The santrification of place



The Ka'bah-like tomb of Habib Husein Alaydrus (died 1756) at Luar Batang, Jakarta.

The santrification of place

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Jelang Ujian Akhir, Ratusan Santri Padati Makam Keramat Luar Batang

Restara 12.42.00 Artikel, Berita



@asshiddiqiyah

<http://www.asshiddiqiyah.com/2017/04/jelang-ujian-akhir-ratusan-santri.html>

AMC-Ratusan santri dari pondok pondok pesantren asshiddiqiyah padati Makam Keramat Luar Batang. Sabtu (1/4).

The santrification of place



The renovated “long grave” of Sheikh Jumadil Kubro, Semarang

The sanctification of place



Two of the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah (*asma al-husna*) forming the fence around Jumadil Kubro's grave. Left: Al-Jabaar (The Omnipotent One), and right: Al-Aziz (The Mighty One).

The santrification of place



A (not very successful) attempt to separate men and women at the tomb of Sunan Ampel.

The santrification of ibadah



WARNING!!!

Many people have *gone astray* because they hope to get blessings from the tomb, like the following:

- ✓ (magic) knowledge
- ✓ personal magnetism
- ✓ help from God
- ✓ wealth
- ✓ favours from someone
- ✓ rank

So make the tomb a place to:

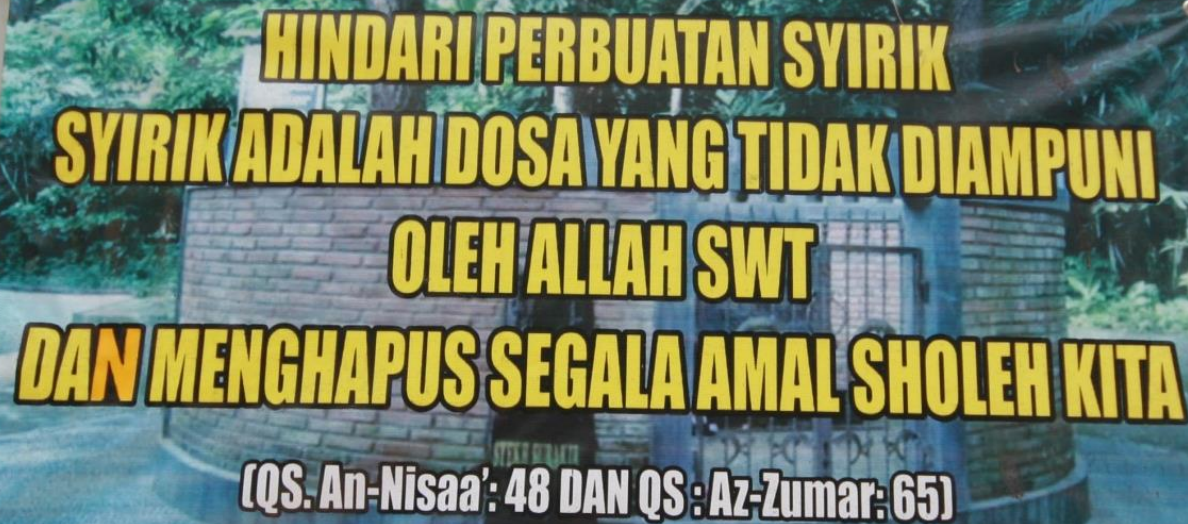
think about death and pray for the person buried

God willing, you will have a smooth run in this world and the next. Amen.

Visitors must report (to the key-keeper)

At the tomb of Jaka Tingkir, Butuh, near Solo

The santrification of ibadah



**HINDARI PERBUATAN SYIRIK
SYIRIK ADALAH DOSA YANG TIDAK DIAMPUNI
OLEH ALLAH SWT
DAN MENGHAPUS SEGALA AMAL SHOLEH KITA**
(QS. An-Nisaa': 48 DAN QS : Az-Zumar: 65)

Stay away from idolatrous practices. Idolatry is a sin that will not be forgiven by Allah. It expunges all our pious good deeds. [Qur'an An-Nisaa' 48 and Az-Zumar 65]
(at the shrine of Sèh Subakir on Mount Tidar, Magelang)

The santrification of ibadah



Mudrosah Al-Qur'an: Qur'an study-groups and reading practice by 1000 men and women who have read (memorised?) the Qur'an in its entirety.

Khotmil Qur'an: The relay-reading of the Qur'an from beginning to end.

Tahlil Akbar and Manaqib: The reading out of Sheikh Jumadil Kubro's life story accompanied by mass chanting of "There is no god but Allah."

Pengajian Umum: Mass prayers, readings from the Qur'an, homilies by guest speakers, *zikr* and *tahlil* chanting.

At the tomb of Sheikh Jumadil Kubro, Troloyo, near Mojokerto

The santrification of story



A statue of Éyang Jugo in the village of Jugo, East Java

The santrification of story



The “santri” incarnation of Éyang Jugo, Kyai Zakaria II, shakes hands with his Javanese disciple and adopted son Iman Sujono on a relief panel at Gunung Kawi

Mosque and Holy Tomb

as problematic symbols of identity and sources of authority

Mosque

open, public, a “*pandhåpå*” (day?)

oriented outward (*kiblat*, *Ka’bah*)

place of rigid ritual at particular times (*salat*)

worshippers arrayed in neat *shaf* lines; women wear *rukuh/mukena*

the mosque is masculine, men dominate, women and men are kept separate

emphasis on the authority of scripture and law; didactic (sometimes inflammatory) sermons stressing obedience and duty

Tends to be exclusive and purist

Holy Tomb

intimate, private, a “*pasaréyan*” (night?)

oriented inward (local saint)

place of varied rituals at various times (*sholawat* songs, *dongå*, *tahlilan*, *nyëkar*)

worshippers arrayed in circles or packed in no particular order, more relaxed dress code

women are prominent, women and men usually mix indiscriminately; at some sites there are female *juru kunci*

emphasis on oral traditions (origin stories, verificatory stories, popular history); the power of miracles

Tends to be inclusive, diverse

The inclusive power of place

The case of Mbah Priok



Pilgrims at the newly renovated tomb of Mbah Priok, Jakarta, 2015

In 2010, an attempt by the Jakarta government to demolish Mbah Priok's holy tomb was violently resisted, including by the ***Front Pembela Islam***.

In 2017, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (**Ahok**) made three visits to Mbah Priok's tomb, declaring it an official cultural sanctuary (*cagar budaya*)

The inclusive power of place

Ahok at the tomb of Mbah Priok



January 12, 2017

The inclusive power of story

Chinese Mbah Jugo and Javanese Iman Sujono at Gng Kawi



Head key-keeper Nanang Yuwono Hadi Projo tells me why Muslim Javanese and Confucian-Buddhist Chinese get along well in the holy village of Wonosari, Gunung Kawi.

“Here Javanese and Chinese honour their ancestors Mbah Jugo and Iman Sujono. They belong to a common family. *Keluarga sendiri ‘kan tidak boleh di-nomor-dua-kan.’*”

The inclusive power of place & story

Pilgrimage sites that offer a special welcome to Chinese

- **Gunung Kawi** (the burial place of Éyang Jugo and Iman Sujono)
- **Makam Sunan Gunung Jati** (with the burial place of the saint's Chinese wife Ong Tien)
- **Gedong Batu / Klěnthěng Sam Po Kong** (the temple dedicated to the Muslim Admiral Zheng He and the burial place of his Chinese helmsman Kyai Juru Mudi, also a Muslim)
- **Gunung Srandil** (a “supermarket” of small shrines with one dedicated to the Chinese Dampo Awang)
- **Pasujudan Sunan Bonang** (with the burial place of a Chinese princess entrusted for protection to the saint, near the ancient Chinese centre of Lasem)
- **Makam Sunan Kuning** (the tomb of *Raden Mas* Garendi also known as Sun An Ing or Sun Kun Ing)
- **Makam Habib** Husein Abubakar Alaydrus at **Luar Batang** Jakarta (with the tomb of the saint's Chinese disciple *Haji* Abdul Kadir)
- **Makam Kyai Telingsing** (tomb of a Chinese ulama and artist in Kudus)

The practice of local pilgrimage... an absence in major studies of Javanese Islam

Comprehensive studies of Javanese Islam that make little or no mention of local pilgrimage as a devotional practice (although saints – especially the Wali Sāngā – do get mentioned as well as “sufi” practices, *tarekat* orders, *dzikr* groups etc.)

- Clifford Geertz *The Religion of Java* (1960)
- Koentjaraningrat *Javanese Culture* (1985)
- Mark Woodward *Islam in Java* (1989)
- Andrew Beatty *Varieties of Javanese Religion* (1999)
- Abdul Munir Mul Khan *Islam Murni dalam Masyarakat Petani* (2000)
- Stephen Headley *Durga's Mosque* (2004)
- M. Bambang Pranowo *Memahami Islam Jawa* (2009)

Why is the practice of local pilgrimage not at the centre of studies on Islam in Java?

1. Difficulty accessing pilgrimage sites
 - remote locations and “difficult” ritual timetables
2. Dismissive attitudes towards saint veneration and local pilgrimage
 - anti-pilgrimage *hukum* and *fatāwa*, *ziarah* is “kampungan”
3. Declining knowledge of local cultures
 - languages: Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese
 - local texts and local history
4. The absence of saint veneration and local pilgrimage in “agenda-setting” studies,
 - especially Geertz’s *The Religion of Java*
5. The stifling impact of current obsessions in the study of Islam
 - focus on security, human rights and democracy, leading to...
 - neo-orientalist essentialism: focus on Islam as a source of terrorism, abuse of women and incompatible with democracy

The study of Islam in Indonesia

Four lessons from Java's culture of local pilgrimage

1. The importance of not generalising from one case study, or a small number of case studies
 - Local/single case studies are important, but in a country as complex as Indonesia extrapolating from them without evidence is risky
 - A broad-ranging “encyclopedic” approach can be valuable
2. The importance of thoroughly mastering local languages, local history and local practices
 - necessity for scepticism of the national language & institutions as sources
 - renewal of academic studies in local languages
3. The importance of local history and literary studies in researching religion
 - familiarity with manuscript and printed texts, and folk literature
4. Being aware of the politics of research agendas
 - setting aside neo-orientalist presuppositions that come from agendas very distant from the world of saint veneration and local pilgrimage.
 - ...such as security, human rights, democracy

Sigĕg / Sekian



Saint veneration and local pilgrimage: Studies on particular sites (a selection)

- D.A. Rinkes *De Heiligen van Java* (1910-13) translated as *The Nine Saints of Java* (1996)
- Marcel Bonneff “Islam di Jawa, dilihat dari Kudus” *Citra Masyarakat Indonesia* (1983)
- James Fox “Ziarah visits to the tombs of the Walis, the founders of Islam on Java” *Islam in the Indonesian Social Context* (1991)
- Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot *Le culte des saints dans le monde musulman* (1995)
- Huub de Jong “Pilgrimage and Local Islam on Java” *Studia Islamika* (1998)
- Nelly van Doorn-Harder & Kees de Jong “The pilgrimage to Tembayat: tradition and revival in Indonesian Islam” *The Muslim World* (2001)
- George Quinn “Where history meets pilgrimage” *Journal of Indonesian Islam* (2009)
- Burhanudin Sanusi “Jum’atan in the graveyard” *Journal of Indonesian Islam* (2010)

Some studies that set out to put local pilgrimage in a wider religious/historical/social context

- Muhaimin AG *Islam dalam Bingkai Budaya Lokal: Potret dari Cirebon* (2001)
- Henri Chambert-Loir and Anthony Reid
“Introduction” in *The Potent Dead* (2002)
- George Quinn “Throwing money at the holy door”
in *Expressing Islam* (2007)
- KH Muhammad Sholikhin *Ritual dan Tradisi Islam Jawa* (2010)
- Agus Sunyoto *Atlas Wali Songo* (2012)