Ziarah in Java

Indonesia’s ‘Conservative Turn’ and the Increasing Popularity of Religious Pilgrimage in Java

Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri

This thesis is presented for the Honours degree of Bachelor of Arts in Asian Studies

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains, as its main content, work that has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution, including Murdoch.

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Map of East Java Indonesia showing
Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri

Map hand drawn by Kelvin Tran, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Figure 1
Abstract

The popularity of pilgrimages to sacred grave sites (ziarah) on the island of Java in Indonesia has shown a marked increase in pilgrimage numbers since the country’s transition to a democracy in 1998 (reformasi). Shortly after ‘reformasi’ Indonesia experienced what scholars have termed the ‘conservative turn’, where liberalism had been threatened and conservative Islamic organisations took centre stage. Although Indonesia has a tradition of pluralism and one which is enshrined in the nation’s constitution, with the official Indonesian national motto being ‘Unity in Diversity’ (out of one many), Islamists have sought to dictate their fundamentalist view of Islamic law to the vast majority of Indonesians who are Muslims. Alongside this there has been a noticeable increase in the number of orthodox Muslims following more observant pious Islamic practices which one scholar has referred to as the ‘purification’ of society.

This thesis seeks to explain how the increasing popularity of ziarah on the island of Java can occur in the face of an increasing Islamisation of Indonesian Muslims. Islamists consider ziarah to be heterodox, primitive, deviant and even idolatrous. In contrast to this the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia which has a membership of over 40 million people has emphatically supported the practice of ziarah particularly in relation to the Wali Songo (Nine Saints of Java) who first brought Islam to Java in the 14th Century.

This study examines two pilgrimage sites in East Java, the Mount Kawi gravesite (Pesarean Gunung Kawi) and the Sunan Giri gravesite (Makam Sunan Giri). These two sites are examined, compared and contrasted in order to offer possible explanations as to why pilgrimage numbers have been on the rise in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia. I will argue that the increasing popularity of ziarah on the island of Java is driven by the traditionalist NU organisation with its 40 million members. Alongside this, there has also been a deliberate government run campaign in the popularising and marketing of
ziarah to Indonesians through Wisata Religi, particularly in relation to the Wali Songo. I have also identified seven other factors or combination of factors that has led to an increase in the popularity of ziarah. The ‘conservative turn’ in Indonesia I argue has not affected the increased popularity of ziarah in Java because for many traditionalist Muslims it is condoned and encouraged as an Islamic practice. For many Muslims they can still be devout and orthodox whilst still participating in the ziarah ritual.
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Ziarah in Java

Ziarah is one of the Islamic rites that is deeply rooted in Indonesian society. Historically, the concept of ziarah is influenced by the Sunni tradition, where the founders who are regarded now as saints are able to help solve the problems faced by a person. This belief in the founders applies not only to when the saints are alive, but also to when the saints are dead. This is manifested through pilgrimages to the tombs where the saints are buried.¹

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Java is one of over 13,000 islands of a 5000-kilometre long archipelago which makes up the Republic of Indonesia. The population of Indonesia is estimated to be over 260 million with Muslims making up about 87% of the total population, the largest Muslim majority population in the world. Java is home to more than half of Indonesia’s population at around 57%, which puts the number of people living in Java at over 148 million.² Much of Indonesian history took place on Java where it was the centre of the powerful Hindu-Buddhist empires, the Islamic sultanates, and the core of the colonial Dutch East Indies. It was also the centre of the Indonesian struggle for independence during and after the Second World War. Java dominates Indonesia politically, economically and culturally. Scattered throughout Java are thousands of sacred sites of varying sizes and importance. Each year millions of Indonesians make pilgrimages to these sacred sites in Java to perform ‘ziarah’ (Fox 1991, 19).

¹ This is my translation from the original Bahasa Indonesia text from Salam (2010), cited in Mustaghfiroh and Mustaqim (2014, 114). I have kept the word ziarah (pilgrimage to a sacred site) untranslated as it is in the title of my thesis (berziarah is the verb).
² According to the Badan Pusat Statistik the official website of the 2010 census the Indonesian Population was recorded as 237,641,000. Muslims accounted for 87% of the total population. In Java alone the population was recorded as being 57.49% of the total population. Indonesia only has a census every 10 years. Estimates from various institutions in Indonesia put the figure at more than 260 million in 2017 (Indonesia Investments 2018, 4). I have based my calculations on the number of people living in Java on the 2017 figure of 260 million.
Indonesians use the term *ziarah* which is an Arabic derived term used both in Indonesian and Javanese to refer to making a devotional visit to a sacred place. Many of these sites are *pesarean* (gravesite or cemetery) or *kuburan* (grave or tomb) where deceased important people have been buried. These sacred gravesites contain the deceased bodies of a wide variety of people such as *wali* (saint), royalty and nobility, past Presidents, *toko* (prominent person) from the local village level such as village founders to the heads of subdistricts, regencies and provinces of Indonesia. Some gravesites not only have the *wali* or *toko* buried at the site but family members as well; such as wives, children and extended family. Pilgrimages to the graves of saints in Java are an important and popular expression of Islamic devotion with many Indonesian Muslims. Pilgrims believe that these gravesites are sacred and that through their visitation the spirits of the saints can help facilitate God’s blessings and be a pathway in which they may approach God in a respectful devotional way, through worship, prayer and meditation. Other reasons for visitations to these sacred sites can include seeking help with a personal problem, asking for business prosperity or even finding a suitable marriage partner for their children.

Indonesia is regarded as a fledgling democracy following the fall of President Suharto’s ‘New Order’ in 1998. President Suharto’s authoritarian government ruled over Indonesia with an iron fist for over 30 years. Following Suharto’s resignation, a new period of ‘reformasi’ (reformation) commenced which included new local elections, a decentralising of many of the governments powers, a freeing up of the media and an allowing of more freedom of speech. Hard-line Islamic groups used the new found freedoms to become a much more vocal and visible force with many arguing for a stricter interpretation of the *Qur’an* (Holy Book of Islam). These conservative fundamentalist Islamic organisations have in many respects sought to dictate their puritanical view of Islamic law to the Indonesian Muslim majority. Alongside this there has been a

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3 When referring to the graveyard or gravesite, Javanese people use the word *pesarean* (also written as *pasarean*), kuburan and or makam. *Pesarean* is the respectful Javanese term for graveyard and is a noun formed from the verb *sare* ‘to sleep’. Makam means grave, resting place, burial plot or tomb. The word *kubur* means to bury and *kuburan* is the noun which is the place for burying. Traditionally tombs are thought of as the ‘resting places of powerful personages’. (Fox 1991, 20 and Jamhari 2001, 97).

4 See Appendix A for a detailed discussion on Blessings and Intercession of the Saints.
noticeable increase in the number of orthodox Muslims following more observant pious Islamic practices, which Hefner (2000) has referred to as the “purification” of society (cited in Abuza, 2007, 35). The popularity of *ziarah* however, on the island of Java over the last 30 years is confirmed by a noticeable increase in pilgrimage numbers and stands in marked contrast to what scholars have termed the ‘conservative turn’.5

### 1.2 Research Question

The objective of my thesis is on understanding and providing an explanation of two well documented phenomena that are occurring simultaneously in Indonesia. My research explores the seemingly counterintuitive question: *Why have pilgrimage numbers been on the rise in Java in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia?* Islamists consider ziarah to be heterodox, primitive, deviant and even idolatrous (Woodward 2017, 241). In contrast to this the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia which has an estimated membership of over 40 million with about 42% of Muslims identifying themselves to some extent with the organisation6 has emphatically supported the practice of *ziarah*, particularly in relation to the *Wali Songo* (Nine Saints of Java).7 This study also examines two popular pilgrimage sites in East Java, Pesarean Gunung Kawi (Mount Kawi Gravesite) and Makam Sunan Giri (the Tomb of Sunan Giri). These are compared and contrasted in order to offer possible explanations as to why pilgrimage numbers have been on the rise in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia.

One of my objectives was to ascertain for Muslim pilgrims whether their practice of *ziarah* was in any way in conflict with their Islamic principles or values. What

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5 ‘Conservative Turn’ is used in reference to an increase in the popularity of ‘Conservative Islam’ in Indonesia. The term ‘Conservative Turn’ is attributed to Martin van Bruinessen a renowned Scholar of Indonesia who has written widely on Indonesia see his article “What happened to the smiling face of Islam”? (2011) and his book Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam Explaining the “Conservative Turn” (2015).

6 See (Fox 2004, 9; Bruinessen 2013, 1; Rothman 2014, 150; Rabasa 2016, 97).

7 *Wali Songo* (Wali Sanga) - nine saints, refers to the revered nine saints of Java that were said to have first brought and spread Islam throughout the island of Java sometime during the 14th Century. Wali meaning saint or holy man. Songo or sanga is the number nine in Javanese. Also written as one word Walisongo or Walisanga.
emerged and became of interest to me were themes of a different nature, nevertheless still relevant to the research question. Although both sites are located in East Java Indonesia they differ in many respects. Two obvious differences are in their location and the motivation of pilgrims that visit. Pesarean Gunung Kawi (the Gravesite at Mount Kawi) is located in the village of Wonosari about 800 metres above sea level at the foot of the panoramic Gunung Kawi near the city of Malang. Makam Sunan Giri (the Tomb of Sunan Giri) is located in an industrialised area in the district of Gresik in Surabaya, Indonesia’s second largest city (refer to Map of East Java i). Pesarean Gunung Kawi is famed as a mystical site known for its power to bestow wealth on devotees and Makam Sunan Giri revered as a traditional pilgrimage site for one of the Wali Songo.

1.3 Literature Review

My literature review has explored some of the reasons for the increasing popularity of ziarah in Java and reviewed studies on some of the more frequented pilgrimage sites such as the tombs of the famed Wali Songo, Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri. It has also provided valuable insights into some of the supporting and opposing forces in the practice of ziarah as well as offering an important explanation of what constitutes ziarah and how it is performed.

As previously stated ziarah is defined as making a devotional visit to a sacred place. In Java this is commonly practiced at gravesites where a revered person or persons are entombed. Ziarah requires specific procedures to be followed when paying homage to the wali or tokoh and is almost always preformed at his or her gravesite. Chambert-Loir (2002, 132) explains that the supernatural powers are concentrated in the being of the wali or tokoh and it is now lying in his grave and the pilgrim needs to be in the presence of the wali or tokoh in order to receive the blessings or benefits. Javanese tombs, writes Fox (2002, 160) are resting places (pasarean) for a range of people from saints to humble village founders. What is common however, to all is that they embody a reference and authority from the

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8 Henri Chambert Loir (2002) states that female saints represent only a small minority of the saints in Java.
past which offers a source of power. The motivations of pilgrims vary, some request general blessings, whilst others may make more specific requests. However, it is apparent that traditional Javanese beliefs are able to rest side by side with Islamic practices. Some sites require the reciting of select verses from the Qur’an, others where specific prayers are made and again others where the Islamic ritual is barely recognisable.

Millie (2009, 14) in his study of West Java Sufi brotherhoods and saintly worship describes the processes as a dichotomy between Islam and adat (traditional or customary law) where it is difficult at times to agree on what is ‘pure Islam’ and what is adat as there are varying opinions on what is what. So much so that Millie concludes that “the borders between Islam and adat, it seems are in the eye of the beholder”. Islamic rituals have in fact been combined with Javanese-syncretistic rituals at many sites. Although ziarah practice is widely accepted in Java these practices have come under scrutiny by the more orthodox Islamic schools and are considered heterodox. Opponents of the practice come from various Muslims groups and organisations. One such large organisation that has voiced opposition in Indonesia towards ziarah is the Muhammadiyah (Doorn Harder and Jong 2001, 326, 329). Chambert-Loir (2002, 139) explains that although ‘the cult of saints’ is universal in Islam it is however, the subject of fierce debate between the partisans of a strict interpretation of the scriptures and the exponents of a local, ‘traditional’ way of being a Muslim. For many however, the tradition of visiting the tombs of Islamic saints or holy people is considered to be a pious activity and is often considered a small ‘Hajj’.

One of the most revered ziarah visitations in Java is to the tombs of the Wali Songo who according to Javanese documents written sometime before the 18th Century called the Babad Tanah Jawi10 were responsible for the first Javanese conversions to Islam (Ricklefs 2001, 12). The Wali Songo tombs are the most popular ziarah sites in Indonesia and are located in Central and East Java as well as one in Cirebon, West Java. The popularity of visitations to the tombs of the

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9 Hajj is the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.
10 Babad Tanah Jawi - the Chronicle of Java (Christomy 2008, 195)
Wali Songo can be seen by the estimated 12.2 million visitors in 2014 (Quinn, 2017).

Quinn (2008, 64) states that there are in fact well over 100 significant sites scattered throughout the island of Java and Madura of the East Java Province and adds that not only are saints revered, but lesser saints, Muslim clerics, Muslim monarchs, local officials, graves of powerful women and the founding fathers of Islamic communities. The practice of *ziarah* on Java is not reserved exclusively for saints but also it would appear for a range of *tokoh*. Fox (1991, 19) argues that *ziarah* has been ‘javanized’ and pious practice has been combined with various traditional beliefs and ideas to the extent that in some cases it goes beyond Islamic orthodoxy however visits to a variety of tombs are all included under the rubric of *ziarah*.

The increasing popularity for *ziarah* in Java is explained concisely in Quinn’s 2004 research/report (2004). An expert on Javanese sites, Quinn argues that the primary increase in popularity in recent years has been due to better infrastructure to the sites such as better roads and easier access even by bus which has meant that the volume of pilgrims visiting the sites has increased. There has been a greater amount of disposable income for most Indonesians, therefore making pilgrimages more affordable and alongside that a more self-confident display of Islamic identity and piety. Since Indonesia’s movement to democracy there has been a decentralisation of powers so that there has been more pressure on local administrations to maximise local sources of revenue and pilgrimage sites have been targeted as a valuable source alongside their commercialisation. Quinn (2008, 67) argues that the increase in the number of devout Muslims undertaking the pilgrimage to the Holy Land has had a flow-on effect into local pilgrimage. For many that were unable to undertake the *hajj* either because there were no vacancies or they were unable to afford it could now make a local pilgrimage as a substitute for the real thing which is regarded as a kind of lesser pilgrimage (*umrah*). Quinn provided some quantitative data on pilgrimages in Java showing that the number of pilgrims visiting sites in East Java had an 873% increase from the years 1988 to 2005 (Quinn, 2017).
One such site of significance for ziarah practices is the site of Gunung Kawi at Wonosari village in the Malang Regency of East Java where two highly revered men are entombed. The most important location at Gunung Kawi is the mausoleum itself where Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono lay side by side in two separate tombs. Pilgrimage rituals such as the ‘selamatan’ (ritual communal meal), flower offerings and the burning of incense are then performed by pilgrims at times determined by the juru kunci (custodian or key holder). The Gunung Kawi site has become a popular ziarah site not only for Javanese of the Islamic faith but also for Indonesian and overseas Chinese from Buddhist, Confucian and Christian faiths. The cross-religious and interfaith dimension of the Gunung Kawi pilgrimage site is one of the reasons I believe the site has attracted an ever increasing number of pilgrims.

The literature on Gunung Kawi in the English language is sparse, I have only uncovered one article of any note written by Huub de Jonge titled Pilgrimages and Local Islam on Java (1998). This article makes a comparison in origin, development, character and significance of two important pilgrimage sites, Sunan Ampel in the Arab quarter of Surabaya (the capital of the province of East Java) and the Gunung Kawi site. The Gunung Kawi section of Jonge’s article covers some six pages and is in my opinion filled with inaccuracies. One example of this is Jonge’s comment that Mbah Jugo and Mbah Iman Sudjono may never have existed at all and their lives and holiness are only based on legend. Having read

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11 I have used the most frequently used spelling that I found in the literature for the names of the two Saints entombed at Gunung Kawi, Eyang Djoego or Mbah Djoego and Eyang R.M. Iman Soedjono. However, Eyang Djoego is also known as Kyai Zakaria II and his name is often spelt Eyang Djugo or even Eyang Jugo. Eyang R M. Iman Soedjono is often written in full as Eyang Raden Mas Iman Soedjono, sometimes Soedjono is spelt Sudjono as well as Sujono. Iman is also sometimes spelt as Imam and Eyang (a Javanese term of address for a grandparent) is often replaced with Mbah (leader or champion). Raden is a title of nobility and Mas a Javanese title below Raden. It is complicated; however, I have stayed with the most common spelling and terms of address for the two saints throughout this thesis unless I am quoting from a source or a reference where it is spelt differently.

12 See Appendix B for a detailed description of selamatan (slametan).

13 See Appendix C for a detailed description of the role of the juru kunci in ziarah.

14 Jonge (1998, 18) suggests that the majority of pilgrims that visit Gunung Kawi are either Javanese Muslims from nearby surrounding areas of Blitar and Kediri (where Islam is less orthodox) or Chinese Buddhists. Indonesian government statistics from 1991 -1993 on the ethnicity of visitors making a pilgrimage to Gunung Kawi indicate in 1991 there were 51.5% of Indonesian Citizens who visited as opposed to 48.5% who were Indonesian citizens but of Chinese descent. The 1992 and 1993 figures showed slightly higher percentage of Indonesian Citizens (ethnic Indonesians) visiting (Tashadi, Murniatmo and Sumantarsih, 1994/95, 88)
numerous articles and books in Bahasa Indonesia on the revered men, I disagree with Jonge’s supposition. One such book is the *Budaya Spiritual Dalam Situs Keramat di Gunung Kawi Jawa Timur* (The Spiritual Culture at the Gunung Kawi Sacred Shrine in East Java) which was an initiative of the Indonesian Government (1994/95) written by four distinguished Indonesian Professors and acknowledged by the Indonesian Director General of Culture. The book is one of the most comprehensive and in my opinion well researched books on Gunung Kawi providing an accurate and informative history of the site, legitimatising the origins and existence of Mbah Jugo and Mbah Iman Sudjono. Six chapters cover, all aspects of Pesarean Gunung Kawi, including quite a few maps, tables of pilgrimage numbers as well as numerous photographs. This thorough and well researched book which is well presented, structured and referenced is a valuable resource giving an accurate picture of the Gunung Kawi pilgrimage site in its myriad aspects.

Numerous other books, articles and documents which I have reviewed written in Bahasa Indonesia also provide a detailed genealogy of the *juru kunci* of Gunung Kawi who date back to the first Gunung Kawi *juru kunci* Eyang RM. Soedjono who died in 1876.

Information specifically about Makam Sunan Giri written in English, like Gunung Kawi, is quite limited, although the *Wali Songo* themselves have had substantial documentation in English. One book written in Bahasa Indonesia and is of considerable importance is the *Atlas Wali Songo* (The Chart of the Nine Saints) by Agus Sunyoto (2018). It begins from a broad historical and geographical perspective of the *Wali Songo* with specific and identifiable information. It provides an understanding of the various ways Islam came to the Indonesian archipelago and the various distribution channels used by the *Wali Songo* in accordance with the local culture. There is one specific chapter on Sunan Giri where the author offers a detailed account of his life and the importance of his work as a *penyebar* (spreader of knowledge about Islam) of Islam throughout not only Java but Madura, Lombok, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara and the Maluku islands. Sunyoto states that one area of success for Sunan Giri in his *dakwah* (Islamic missionary endeavour) was in the area of education. Not only did Sunan Giri develop the Islamic boarding school system but he also developed
an open education system and created several songs and games for children. One
game is believed to possess a deeper meaning and philosophical message; to teach
human beings not to indulge in lust and greed in seeking wealth and happiness
and to use one’s conscience and humility so that the wealth or happiness contains
blessings for oneself and for others. Sunan Giri’s role in the spreading of Islam
was primarily through education, politics and culture (2018, 221-227).\textsuperscript{15}

1.4 Methodology
My research methodology primarily has been using empirical data based on the
scholarly literature. This has involved an in depth analysis of the available
literature in Bahasa Indonesia and English and the information and arguments
presented relative to the research question. The second Methodology that was
employed was an ethnographic pilot study using primarily participant observation
undertaken during a four-week period in June and July of 2018 at Pesarean
Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri in East Java Indonesia. My ability to speak
Bahasa Indonesia at an intermediate level and having assistance from guides
enabled me to conduct informal conversations with custodians, staff, pilgrims,
visitors and members of the local community. I was also able to observe pilgrims
perform \textit{ziarah} as well as personally participate in some of the ritual activities.\textsuperscript{16}

1.5 Research Argument
The argument that I present in answer to the research question: \textit{Why have
pilgrimage numbers been on the rise in Java in the face of a more conservative
interpretation of Islam in Indonesia?} is based primarily on my study of the
scholarly literature. I argue that because the \textit{Nahdlatul Ulama} represents over 40
million Indonesian Muslims and wholly supports traditional practices such as
\textit{ziarah} as long as it conforms to their Islamic traditions, they are the driving force
of the increasing popularity of \textit{ziarah} in Java. I also argue that there has been a

\textsuperscript{15} This is my own summary and translation form Bahasa Indonesia to English of part of the
chapter on Sunan Giri in \textit{Atlas Wali Songo} by Agus Sunyoto, 2018.
\textsuperscript{16} I have chosen to use the words pilgrims or visitors interchangeably in my thesis and not tourist.
Visitors can be regarded as pilgrims or tourists as the case may be. Pilgrims however, in my
opinion could be identified as people performing \textit{ziarah} with intent whether it is for personal
benefit or as a more religious endeavour.
deliberate government run campaign in the popularising and the marketing of ziarah in the concept of Wisata Religi (Religious Tourism) to Indonesians, particularly in relation to the Wali Songo. I also argue that there are seven other factors or combination of factors that has led to an increase in the popularity of ziarah: 1. There has been improved infrastructure in Java such as better access roads to pilgrimage sites and improved accommodation. 2. A large number of visitors now arrive by the bus load in organised tours. 3. Many Indonesians have more disposable income to enable them to travel and tour the pilgrimage sites. 4. For some Muslims that are unable to undertake the Hajj it is regarded as a ‘little Hajj’. 5. The widespread use of the internet and social media has generated more information to be shared amongst pilgrims that are interested in undertaking ziarah. 6. The increased religiosity of Indonesian society is a factor when it conforms with the traditionalist perspective. 7. Following reformasi there was a decentralisation of the Indonesian government which gave local communities more responsibility in raising money and one important form of revenue raising was the maintaining and promoting of the practice of ziarah at the sacred sites in those communities.

The other point I would add is that the conservative fundamentalist groups or radical groups do not appear to directly oppose the practice of ziarah as they have done with many other issues for example cases of ‘blasphemy’ despite ziarah being at odds with their literal interpretation of the Qur’an and Hadith (Islamic sacred texts). Perhaps the ‘conservative turn’ relative to the Islamists may not be as powerful as it might seem especially in relation to the prevention of the popular traditional practice of ziarah.

1.6 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the ‘conservative turn’, the four traditions of Java, contested interpretations of ziarah between the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah organisation, the evolution of government supported Wisata Religi (Religious Tourism) and the increasing popularity of ziarah in Java.
Chapter 3 provides more detailed and specific information on Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri based on meetings and conversations with custodians, staff, members of the local community and pilgrims. The two pilgrimage sites are then compared and contrasted and a conclusion to the fieldwork presented. Finally, recommendations for further research is outlined and a conclusion to the thesis presented.
Chapter 2

2.1 Conservative Turn

The ‘conservative turn’ in mainstream Islam in Indonesia could well have had its beginnings during the Suharto ‘New Order’ period (1965-1998). The authoritarian Suharto Regime during this period completely controlled the political party system and as an outcome stipulated that Muslim organisations, groups and political parties could only belong to one Muslim political party, the Partai Persatuan Pembanguna (PPP) [the United Development Party]. The objective of this consolidation as Bruinessen (1996, 25) writes was to weaken political Islam by exploiting internal conflicts and rivalries between the competing Islamic groups and to this end Suharto was quite successful. However, during Suharto’s latter years in power there was momentum for change coming from the Islamic community. Suharto responded by launching a program of controlled Islamisation, establishing an Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI), launching a state Islamic bank and a newspaper called Republika which was the government’s mouthpiece for the Islamisation campaign.

Following the resignation of President Suharto in 1998 a new period of Democratic rule in Indonesia ensued. This came to be known as the reformasi period. Reformasi in fact opened up a ‘pandora’s box’ of competing Islamic interests and an assortment of political parties many of which could be described as being conservative. Islam in Indonesia is not monolithic but a highly complex and diverse structure and that to understand Islam in Indonesia and analyse ‘conservative Islam’ or the said ‘conservative turn’ one needs to consider its various components. I would first suggest that there needs to be a clear distinction made between ‘conservative Islam’ and ‘radical Islam’. Conservative Islam is by definition a more rigid and stringent interpretation of Islam and radical Islam or radical Islamic fundamentalism although conservative, in some cases supports ‘violent extremism’ as a justifiable tool to achieve its aims. Radical Islamic fundamentalism writes Eliraz (2007, 16) is however a relatively marginal phenomenon and that Indonesia has managed to keep this form of radicalism on the fringes of society.
In 1999 the first truly democratic elections were held in Indonesia since 1955, the results indicated that the great majority of Indonesians supported parties of a pluralistic and nationalistic nature. Even the more moderate Muslim parties in that election received only 20 percent of the vote and the neo-fundamentalist Islamists less than 4% (Hefner 2002, 763). The political trend for the majority of Indonesians even today continues to support parties that are pluralistic and nationalistic in nature. Notwithstanding this there is enough evidence to suggest that the influence of radical Islam has increased since the end of the Suharto New Order period and that there is an increasing trend for Muslims throughout Indonesia to follow Islamic practices of a more conservative nature. One of the arguments that Karen Armstrong (2000) puts forward for the rise in conservative Islam is that its adherents perceive a crisis whereby they are under threat and will erode or even eradicate their faith and morality (cited in Sahrasad and Chaidar 2015, 309).

Another explanation as to why conservative Islam is on the rise is put forward by Abuza (2007, 35) where he argues the appeal of conservative Islam in Indonesia arises because of the perceived need of the society to be purified because of endemic corruption, economic stagnation and diminished expectations in the transition to democracy. “Islam is the answer” has become a popular catch phrase. Islam is seen as strong, moral, less corrupt and that political power should not be used as an end in itself. The increasing move towards a conservative Islam in Indonesia does not mean however that the majority of Indonesians are likely to embrace the goals of radical Islamist groups. Bubalo and Fealy (2005, 2) contend that there is little evidence in Indonesia that increasing pietism has led to a surge in popularity of Islamist parties.

**Islamists**

In discussing Islamists Abuza (2007, 9) offers three broad categories and qualifies this by stating that the situation in Indonesia is highly complex and fluid with groups and organizations changing in size and orientation over time. The first category is political Islam, political parties and national institutions, other than the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, which are committed to Indonesia’s
existing political system and social order that support a greater role for Islam in political and social life. The second group is militant Islam, radical groups, supported mainly by disaffected youth that engage in low-intensity conflict and who also support a greater role for Islam in Indonesian political and social life. The third group is Islamist terrorism (violent extremists) highly radical militant organizations that use terrorist tactics in an attempt to bring about a radical political and social realignment. These groups can decline in size and membership but can increase in lethality. Some of the Islamist groups that came to the forefront following the fall of Suharto were the Laskar Jihad (LJ) [Jihad Paramilitary Force] and the Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) who achieved notoriety by taking to the streets to demand the comprehensive implementation of syariah (Islamic law) and raided cafes, discotheques, casinos, brothels and other reputed dens of iniquity. Some of these groups stated their determination to fight jihad (struggle) and mobilised members and other aspirants to venture to the frontlines of conflict in Asia and the Middle East (Hasan, 2008, 37). Although these radical organizations are different in name, their major concern and objectives are almost the same. Their short-term objective is, on the one hand, to push and demand the government for formalization of syariah or Islamic law in Indonesia, or at least to recognize Islamic syariah as part of the Indonesian Constitution and in the long term to establish Indonesia as an Islamic state. The influence of Islamists cannot be underestimated in Indonesia and that although their numbers are small in comparison to other organisations such as the NU and Muhammadiyah their influence is large. Lindsey and Pausacker provide an expressive image by quoting an Australian academic as stating that “In Indonesia we have a very small tail wagging a very big dog. Just a small number of radical Muslim groups are setting the agenda for the majority” (2016, 117).

One clear example of this was in 2012 when a planned concert for Lady Gaga was cancelled because of protests by the Front Pembela Islam (FPI) and likeminded groups which resulted in the Jakarta police refusing to issue a permit for the planned concert. The national police, who had the final say on the matter, gave permission dependant on a positive recommendation from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI). This was refused and
in the end, Lady Gaga’s management cancelled the concert (Burhanudin and van Dijik 2013, 10).

The 2005 Majelis Ulama Indonesia Fatwa

The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) [Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars] an advisory body that guides the Islamic community and government, in 2005 issued a *fatwa* (religious legal opinions) declaring that secularism, pluralism and liberalism were incompatible with Islam. The suggestive acronym ‘Sepilis’ (sekularisme, pluralisme and liberalisme) was quickly conceived, designed to sound like syphilis which was regarded by Islamists as a Western disease that would destroy Indonesia. For scholars of Indonesia the 2005 *fatwa* is regarded as a watershed year where the ideals of secularism, pluralism and liberalism were declared as being against Islam and the state deferred to conservative rather than pluralistic versions of Islam. For many Islamists groups such as the *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI) and the *Hizbut Tahir Indonesia* (HTI) this *fatwa* was a vindication for their agenda of wanting to turn Indonesia into an Islamic state (Kersten 2015, 1-2). Bruinessen (2011, 3) writes that there was a conservative turn in 2005 when the modernist and liberal views which had found broad support within the Muhammadiyah and the NU were rejected and leaders who were regarded as liberals replaced. These actions were thought to have been influenced by the disproportionate influence of a relatively few radical Islamists who had joined the MUI as well as the Muhammadiyah and the NU.

Salafist Groups

The Salafi movement in Indonesia can be described as a group conforming to a clearly conservative Islamic doctrine and although small in comparison with mainstream Muslim organisations such as the Muhammadiyah and the NU nevertheless have met with considerable success in communicating their ideas to a wider audience and attracting people to their cause (Bubalo and Fealy, 2005, 33). The Salafist movement started to emerge in Indonesia in the late 1980s and was part of an emerging global Islamic movement that was closely linked to the
development of the religio-political ambition of the Saudi government. These
groups practice a literal interpretation and understanding of Islam and have
connections at either the theological or organisational level or both with groups in
the Middle East and elsewhere in the Muslim world. The Salafist believe that
Islam is an all-encompassing religion that covers all aspects of life; they refute
secularism that separates religion from politics and reject democracy on the basis
of religious doctrines (Wahid 2014, 53, 57 & 62). Most Indonesian Salafist
groups focus on religiosity and peaceful missionary and educational activity
although some have had a hand in violent extremism such as the Jihadist Salafi
group (Jemaah Islamiyah) that was responsible for the Bali bombing in 2002
(Wahid, 2014, 45). The Salafi-Wahhabi groups also condemn Muslims who
participate in ziarah because they regard it as bid’ah (Woodward 2017, 241).17

Islamism on the Rise

Greg Fealy a renowned Australian Scholar on Indonesia quoted two
Muhammadiyah activists as saying:

When you look around you, you see Islam everywhere. People greet each
other all the time with ‘Peace be upon you’ (assalamu alaikaum). Almost
anywhere you go, you’ll hear the call to prayer (azan) and see mosques
crowded at prayer time. Go into McDonalds and they have halal certificates
on the wall and women serving in headscarves. Bookstores are full of
books on how to be a good Muslim. On TV, Islam is referred to all the
time. This has now become normal; people expect it to be that way. It
wasn’t like this when we were kids. Islam is now the centre of everyday
life. (Fealy 2006, 15)

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17 Indonesian Salafis are part of a global movement that connect countries such as Saudi Arabia,
Kuwait and Yemen which clearly demonstrates the importance of transnational networks in
shaping one form of Indonesian Islam. Many Indonesian university students study in those
countries with the hosting countries support, financial and otherwise. Books have been translated
from Arabic to Indonesian and there has been a free flow of communication between the groups
through the internet. The Salafis are expanding and have even been known to take over the
running of Mosques in some parts of Indonesia. Hasan (2010, 703) concludes that the rise in
popularity of the Salafi movement has broadened because of globalisation. Travel has been
easier, communication faster and learning enhanced enabling the rapid free flow sharing of ideas
and Islamic precepts. Indonesia has become more and more integrated into the Muslim world and
is susceptible to the influence of Pan-Islamic awakening and global Salafism.
There is consensus amongst many scholars of Indonesia that there has been an increase in Islamic religiosity. Muslims are turning to Islamic values to regulate their lives and become better Muslims through the notion of ethical self-improvement. Many Muslims do not necessarily feel inclined to be involved in Islamic political movements; however, Islamism is on the rise because Muslims are trying to discipline themselves by turning to Islam and popular Islamic preachers (Sakai and Fauzia, 2013, 56). Islamism is however not just about Islamic politics but includes the process whereby various domains of social life are invested with signs and symbols associated with Islamic cultural traditions. For example, the wearing of the hijab (veil), consumption of religious commodities and reframing economic activity in Islamic terms (Ismail 2006, 2). In recent decades there has been a significant increase in the number of pious or ‘santri’ Muslims in a process termed santrification which has accelerated the Islamisation of Indonesian society. Warburton (2008, 3) defines the term santrification as referring to an increase in Islamic piety and stricter adherence to Islamic practices across large sections of the Indonesian society. This she argues has resulted in a blurring of the boundaries between santri and abangan (nominal Muslim) as more and more Indonesians appear to fit into the santri category. Far more Indonesians now regard Islam as a central part of their life. This can be measured in the popularity of ‘Islamic dress’, increased mosque and religious school attendance, greater numbers undertaking the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and growing sales of Islamic literature.

As a concluding comment in my discussion on the ‘conservative turn’ in Indonesia, I refer to Hadiz (2016, 187) where he suggests that there is no direct relationship between either the rise of piety or religious consciousness with the Islamisation of politics. He argues that Indonesian society can easily be portrayed as being more ‘Islamic’ than it was half a century ago and that current examples of Muslims wearing garments associated with religious identity, the screening of popular television with an emphasis on religious morality and Islamic expressions of pop culture are now well established in Muslim Indonesia. In everyday life many Muslims readily accept a capitalistic lifestyle without it necessarily making
them less pious; their manner, dress, cuisine and entertainment continue to reflect a strong message of religious morality.

2.2 The Four Traditions in Java

Who approves of Ziarah and Who doesn’t?

Ziarah is approved by three diverse traditions of Islam that coexist in Indonesia. These are the Sufi tradition, the Syncretistic Javanese tradition of kejawen or kebatinan (Javanese Mysticism) and the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organisation. One important tradition that is opposed to the practice of ziarah is the modernist Muhammadiyah organisation. Ricklefs (1991, 13) describes these four traditions as currents that interact and are not discrete elements in the observance of Islam. There is no doubt there is a diversity of Islam in Indonesia and some would claim there is polyphony in this diversity. To try to clearly define Islam and its practices in Indonesia for over 200 million Muslims is troublesome at best. Islam is not monolithic and often when trying to categorise Muslims into different groups the defining lines become blurred. It is not possible to categorise Muslims as being either moderate or radical. Perhaps the traditions concept is an acceptable place to start in the hope of understanding who practices ziarah and why.

The Sufi Tradition

Sufism can be described as a poetic, mystical form of Islam which can involve practices such as meditation, singing and ecstatic dancing in its adherent’s quest to become closer to God. Sufis are regarded as Muslims who aim to seek a personal knowledge of God. Howell (2001, 701-702) argues that Sufism is often described as an “inner” (batin) spiritual expression and that it can be seen as complimentary to the “outer” (lahir) expressions of Muslim religiosity. Nicholson (1975, 91-92) emphasises that for the Sufis the inner dominion in pilgrimage is equally important as the religious rituals by stating that in pilgrimage: “it in the eyes of a Sufi is null and void unless each of the successive
religious acts which it involves is accompanied by corresponding ‘movements of the heart’” (cited in Woodward, 1989, 189).

Sufism is popular with Indonesians both in the city and in country areas; with the educated; as well as members of the national elite. Sufis approve of practice of saint veneration and make pilgrimages to the graves and tombs of saints and pray to the saints to seek their *baraka* (blessings) Rothman (2014, 147-148).

**The Javanese Tradition of Syncretism**

**Kejawen and Kebatinan**

Java has been greatly influenced by both the Buddhist and Hindu religions and culture from around the 8th Century. Throughout Java there are thousands of *candi* (temples or shrines), with two of the most famous in Indonesia being Borobudur and Prambanan which are both found near the city of Yogyakarta, in Central Java. Borobudur is a majestic Buddhist temple stupa and Prambanan a series of Hindu temples. Buddhism and Hinduism as reflected in the prominence of the two structures are a symbol of the way the Javanese were able to syncretise religions into their own culture. The term syncretism is often used to describe the way the Javanese have been able to adapt, absorb and practice the various religions that came to their land. When Islam arrived in Java sometime in the 14th Century the Javanese were able to syncretise Islam into their own cultural traditions and what took place was regarded as a ‘peaceful penetration’ rather than an inwardly or outwardly violent conversion to Islam (Kern, 1947, 14; cited in Arsyad, 2010, 3). Not only that argues Boogert (2015, 12) the Javanese were able to blend beliefs and practices from Islam with the beliefs and practices from the religions that preceded it such as Hinduism and Buddhism as well as with animism and ancestor worship. The development of *ziarah* in Java therefore can be seen as a syncretic process deep and complex in its Javanese cultural interaction (Jamhari 2000, 74).

*Kejawen* can be referred to as Javanism and *kebatinan* as *agama jawa* (Javanese Religion). The distinction between the two words to me are not clear other than *kejawen* is the original Javanese term often used when referring to these practices.
and traditions. Hefner (1993, 1) states that Muslims who were *abangan* (nominal Muslim) preferred to refer to themselves as *kejawan* (“Javanist”) practitioners of Islam or just Muslim which had more emphasis on the mystical dimension of Islam. Rothman (2014, 148) concluded that *kebatinan* supported the traditional Javanese spiritual belief which is a combination of animism, ancestor worship, Hinduism, Buddhism and a Sufi influenced Islam. Both *kejawan* and *kebatinan* refer to Javanese Mysticism. *Kebatinan* is perhaps spiritualism relative to one’s inner self or spirit and *kejawan* mysticism associated with the Javanese view of the world. The practice of *ziarah* for both *kejawan* and *kebatinan* followers is popular in Java however the influence of how the tradition is practiced will vary according to how Javanese perceive their own Islam. The adherents of the ‘local indigenous religion’ of *kejawan* and *kebatinan* can be classified under the term *kepercayaan* (belief system) and as a part of Javanese mystical sects (Widiyanto 2013, 166). It should be noted however that any official recognition of *kebatinan* as a Javanese religion is opposed by orthodox Muslim leaders and policy makers because of the concern that people would become unfaithful to orthodox Muslim practices and the potential it had for social divisiveness (Cochrane 2009, 112).

The Nahdlatul Ulama Organisation (NU) “The Awakening of the Islamic Scholars”

The NU is a traditionalist conservative Sunni Islamic organisation which was founded in Surabaya East Java in 1926. The NU value rituals and the incorporation of local cultural as forms of expression within their religion. The NU is the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia which has an estimated membership of over 40 million with about 42% of Muslims identifying themselves to some extent with the organisation (refer to footnote 6). It has a particularly large following in rural areas of Java. The NU is committed to the development of democracy and a flourishing civil society. It places emphasis on moderate values, particularly the brotherhood of all humanity. The NU promote social thought for the common good through the idea of *rahmatan lil ‘alamin* (mercy on the universe) which is a minimum requirement for respecting and
protecting human rights as well as having a concern for the economic conditions of vulnerable Indonesian people (Falaakh 2001, 34).

Falaakh writes:

The NU is involved in the strengthening of civil society by concentrating on the social and cultural aspects of politics, rather than on the dimensions of power politics. The NU is involved in promoting national integration, preserving pluralism, strengthening toleration, and achieving a prosperous welfare society measured according to the above-mentioned ideas of common good and human rights principles. By so doing, the NU is involved in the development of an independent civil society in Indonesia through about 330 branches at the district level, more than 6,000 pondok pesantren (Muslim boarding school), and 21,000 schools over the country. (Falaakh 2001, 40)

The NU is supportive of the principles of Pancasila (the five foundational principles of the Indonesian state) and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) and fully endorses the practice of *ziarah* as long as it conforms to their Islamic traditions.

The popularity of *ziarah* in Java today is driven by the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama organisation particularly with pilgrimages to the Wali Songo. The NU not only allow pilgrimages to gravesite but openly encourage them as long as the *ziarah* rituals are not incompatible with Islam (Doorn-Harder and Jong 2001, 347). Fox (2002, 161) suggests that an increasing popularity of *ziarah* was because of a new form of collective mobility stating that “it is common now for a group of villages to rent one or more buses to carry out a tour of ziarah sites or to visit a particular tomb” often these tours were organised by the NU. There is no doubt in my mind that the NU is the main driving force behind the increase in pilgrimage numbers to ziarah sites and particularly the Wali Songo. Their campaign of Islam Nusantara and open support for pilgrimages as part of their own Islamic practices explicitly condones the practice and welcomes it by NU members. Saintly worship is alive and well in the eyes of the NU. My conversations with the local people and pilgrims particularly in my fieldwork at Makam Sunan Giri led me to conclude that the majority of Muslim pilgrims that visited the site belonged to the NU.
Islam Nusantara

Islam Nusantara means “Islam of the Southeast Asian Archipelago” and primarily refers to Islam as practiced by traditionalists with the concept strongly supported and promoted by the NU. So much so that the NU advocated this concept in the 2015 feature length film called The Blessing of Islam Nusantara (Oceans of Revelation: Islam as a Blessing for All Creation) (Woodward 2017, 182). The film is an attempt to counter Salafi-Wahabi attempts to transform Indonesian Islam and is also a counter offensive to the violent extremists’ movements. One of the prominent themes that is pursued throughout the whole film is the depiction of the violent Salafi-Wahhabi groups such as the Islamic State (ISIS) against the images of a peaceful Islam Nusantara in which there are numerous references made to ziarah and saintly worship such as pilgrimages to the Wali Songo in Java. The concept of Islam Nusantara can best be described as a blending of Islamic theological values with Indonesian local traditions and culture. The NU, Islam Nusantara is an association to the historical facts about the spread of Islam in Indonesia which uses a cultural approach and argues against a rigid radical doctrine of Islam. Islam is preached by embracing the traditional culture, aligning the culture with Islam, respecting the culture and not repressing the culture (Widodo, 2016, 4). Islam Nusantara uses a peaceful, open, tolerant and respectful approach to promote Islamic theological values which aligns with the traditional culture of Indonesians.

The Muhammadiyah Organisation

The Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912 in Yogyakarta as primarily a religious organisation for social welfare with modernist beliefs and principles and numbers approximately 30 million with between 12% to 15% of Indonesia’s Muslims identifying themselves with the organisation (Bruinessen 2013, 1; Rothman 2014, 150). The Muhammadiyah can be seen as a civil society organisation that is non-political, works for a better ordering of society through culture and education. It promotes social and religious education within Muslim communities, maintains Islamic family values and has a commitment to community based programs.
The Muhammadiyah represent what is termed reformist or modernist and advocate practices that have strong and authentic scriptural references. The basic objectives of the Muhammadiyah as summarised by Muki Ali (1962) (cited in Arsyad 2010, 5) is the purification of Indonesian Islam from corrupting influences or practices, the reformulation of Islamic doctrine in light of modern thought, the reformation of Muslim education and the defence of Islam from external influence and attack.

Martin, Woodward and Atmaja (1997, 142) argue that the faith of the Muhammadiyah however is a theological conservatism that borders on fundamentalism and that one of their central theological principles is that God and Islam can only be known through the Qur’an and the Hadith. The Muhammadiyah today however, remains an important and influential social, cultural and religious organisation that aims to purify Islam in Indonesia, particularly of its local syncretic practices and rejects all practices associated with ziarah and regards them as being syirik (a sinful form of idolatry) and bid’ah (heresy) (Slama 2014, 115).

2.3 Contested Interpretations of Ziarah

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama
The NU (traditionalist) and the Muhammadiyah (modernist) agree on the construction of Indonesian Islam and both accept Pancasila as the national ideology and nationalism as the ideal for Indonesian Muslims. They regard Indonesian Islam as different though not necessarily distinctive from other countries (Burhani 2013, 47). As previously stated however one of the major sticking points is that with the NU there is an adherence to traditional practices such as ziarah and for the Muhammadiyah there is a disregard and even an opposition to these practices. The NU condones a number of practices including ceremonies at the time of a person’s death, making pilgrimages to graves and tombs of local saints or other tokoh as well as to the tombs of the Wali Songo. The modernists also do not participate in the tarekat (religious orders) to the tasawuf (mysticism especially of the Sufi school) nor the array of other rituals that are popular with the traditionalists (Fox 2004, 6). Numerous other studies have...
concurred with the Fox’s findings regarding the difference in interpretation for the practice of *ziarah* and to what is permitted and what is not between the Muhammadiyah and the NU.¹⁸ Bush (2009,32) claims that according to the modernists the practice of *ziarah* is not taught in the *Qur’an* and that by sanctioning these adat practices, traditionalists are committing *bid’ah*. Quinn (2007, 5) on the other hand suggests that *ziarah* is sanctioned by tradition and that pilgrims have frequently stated to him that the justification for their *ziarah* comes from a *Quar’anic* verse which reads:

*O you believe, honour God. Seek ways and means to come closer to Him. Do all you can in His cause and if you do so you will prosper.*

*Al-Mā’Midah* verse 35 (Translation Quinn 2007, 5)

The interpretations for practicing *ziarah* is however clearly contested between the Muhammadiyah and the NU and for Muslims in Indonesia as to whether or not *ziarah* is permitted may just depend on one’s allegiances, personal beliefs and practices.

### 2.4 *Wisata Religi* (Religious Tourism)

The New Order period in Indonesia under President Suharto (1965-98) created the foundation for the popularity of *ziarah* today. It was during this period that there was improvement in infrastructure, such as better roads, accommodation and the renovation of the sacred sites. After Suharto’s demise from power in 1998 *ziarah* became increasingly popular in Java through a government supported campaign of Religious Tourism which became part of a broader trend of Government that supported coalition between market forces and Islam. This coalition enabled private Islamic and state agents to create ‘*Wisata Religi*’ by turning a religious or spiritual *ziarah* into a nationally marketed product. This has resulted in Indonesia never witnessing a time when *ziarah* was as popular as it is today (Slama, 2014, 114-115, 137).

Indonesia’s first dually elected first President following reformasi (1999 to 2001) was the long-time president of the NU; Abdurrahman Wahid. President Wahid openly supported saint veneration which he considered an important part of his Islamic practices and bestowed an additional legitimacy to what some saw as a contested practice. During this period and following; the Ministry of Tourism embraced the phenomenon and its rising popularity, commissioning a project called Penelitian Pengembangan Wisata Religi (Research for the Development of Religious Tourism) (Slama 2014,116). By 2006 Wisata Religi was officially established. The Government however was careful to distance themselves from practices that were contrary to ‘the principles of Islam’ such as forms of worship that could be regarded as syirik whilst maintaining a theological legitimisation of ziarah. The focus however was on the economic aspects of ziarah. Good management of pilgrimage sites would boost a “micro–economy” by creating employment and improving the conditions of the local population.

The pilgrimage site of Sunan Ampel was a classic example of Kawasan Wisata Religi (area of religious tourism). Here, cigarette advertising was conspicuously placed on a large archway on the main road to the tomb. The marketisation of ziarah was further extended by the naming of a hotel, pharmacy and a travel agency after the Wali Songo. Wali Songo T-shirts, posters and other religious items pertaining to the saints were sold in a myriad of stalls in the almost kilometre long laneway in the Arab quarter of Makam Sunan Ampel, the saints are ubiquitous. The Wali Songo are present in all media including private television and the latest development was a trade show held in Jakarta in 2011 Pameran Wisata Religi Indonesia (Indonesia’s Religious Tourism Exhibition). The event was sponsored by the ministries of Religion and Tourism and several religious organisations (Slama 2014, 115-117).

Doorn–Harder and Jong (2001, 349) assert that there was a trend in Government to preserve popular pilgrimage sites in Java because of their archaeological value. This also led to the phenomena of ‘wisata ziarah’ where the tourist pilgrim not only came for blessings but also for entertainment and some souvenirs. Cochrane (2009, 114-117) argues that the large numbers of domestic tourists in Indonesia that visit scared sites there should be regarded as “pilgrimage” tourists. Their motivating factor is for travel and to attend rituals, to engage with the spirit world,
to enhance their inner powers or add some benefit to their lives or to ensure that
the gods and spirits are placated. Cochrane adds that there are indications that
kebatinan, the Javanist belief system is regaining strength and popularity.
Pilgrimage and traditional ritual events are likely to become more significant as
time goes on especially as more Indonesians become wealthier and live longer
and travel more after they retire. For some these visitations will turn into a
holiday thus further confusing the dividing line between pilgrimage and tourism.
Collins-Kreiner (2010, 443) concludes that frequently the links between
pilgrimage and tourism have become unclear, blurred and poorly classified.
Pilgrims and tourists are distinct actors at opposite ends of the pilgrimage
continuum what can be labelled as the sacred and the secular, what lies in the
middle is a range of possibilities or combinations of sacred-secular. Perhaps this
can be referred to as the ‘Wisata Religi’ that the Indonesian government
promotes. From my conversations with visitors at Pesarean Gunung Kawi with
regards to their ziarah there does seem to be some blurring of the borders between
tourism, leisure, education and a religious experience. For example, some visitors
I talked to at Gunung Kawi who were teachers said they came to find out if the
stories they had heard about Gunung Kawi were true but still participated in
ziarah rituals whilst enjoying the fresh mountain air and the scenery (see
Appendix D).

2.5 Increasing Popularity of Religious Pilgrimage

In Local Pilgrimage in Java and Madura: Why it is booming? Quinn (2004)
highlighted the popularity of pilgrimage in Java. He contends that it is a fact that
pilgrimage numbers are booming in Java and Madura and that this boom is
becoming an important part of Indonesia’s rapidly changing religious landscape
(see page 6). There is also a strong Islamic religious conviction to participate in
ziarah which is permitted according to a Quar’anic verse which exhorts pilgrims
to seek ways and means to bring themselves closer to god (Quinn, 2007, 5).

Some other examples of studies that have shown an increase in pilgrimage
numbers in Java are detailed below: Christomy in Signs of the Wali a study on
the sacred sites in Pamijahan, at the tomb of Shaykh Abdul Muhyi’s, custodians
maintained that there was a significant increase in pilgrims coming to the site each year without any soliciting on their part (2008, 159). Chambert-Loir and Reid (2002, xvii) also stated that sacred grave visitation are of immense importance in Java which involves thousands of sites and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims. Fox (2002, 161) concurs with the large numbers of visitors however, puts the figure in the millions of Javanese performing ziarah on a regular basis and suggests the practice is continuing to grow. Armstrong (2006, 65) researched visitor numbers in East Java at a number of important gravesites and reported some substantial increases in visitor numbers. One example was at Makam Malik Ibrahim in Gresik who is regarded as the first of the Wali Songo which showed an increase in visitor numbers from 128,905 in 1988 to 1,556,651 in 2005, an increase of 1,108 %. At the Shrine of Sunan Ampel in Surabaya another of the Wali Songo, the Custodian of the Shrine, H. Zeid Mohamad reported that they have between 10,000 to 15,000 visitors per day and three times as many in the final ten days of the fasting month of Ramadan. This would then put the figure between 3,650,000 to 5,475,000 per annum (The Blessing of Islam Nusantara, 2015, 1:01:23 mins). At the tomb of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) who was President of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001 and is widely regarded as the tenth wali particularly by NU followers, has as many as 10,000 visitors per day or approximately 3,650,000 per year (Woodward 2017, 188).

Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Sunan Giri Visitor Numbers

My own research into pilgrimage numbers at the two pilgrimage sites researched indicate that there has been increases at both locations.

Pesarean Gunung Kawi

One of the only official Government written books on Gunung Kawi I am aware of Titled Budaya Spiritual Dalam Situs Keramat Di Gunung Kawi Jawa Timur provided statistics of visitor numbers for three years from 1991 to 1993 which were between 76,545 and 80,201 each year (Tashadi et al. 1994/95). From a document that I was given at Gunung Kawi by a local hotel owner, Ibu Reren titled Profil Desa Gunung Kawi visitor numbers from a table sourced from
Pemerintah Desa Wonosari & Penyusun showed that between 2002 and 2005 there were between 111,608 and 140,853 visitors each year (Kuncoro, 2006, 32). This is comparable with a figure quoted by Duncan Graham, an Australian Journalist who lives in Indonesia where he quoted an annual figure of 126,000 visitors coming to Pesarean Gunung Kawi in article he wrote for the Jakarta Post (Graham, 2006). In comparing the 1991-1993 visitor numbers and the 2002-2005 numbers they indicate around an increase of approximately 75% over about a 12-year period. If the same increase of 75% was calculated for the next 12 years to 2017 the number of pilgrims visiting Pesarean Gunung Kawi would be around 245,000 visitors for the year.

Makam Sunan Giri

One recent thesis by Muainul Islah (2018, 6) revealed that there were between 1,250,785 and 1,477,287 visitors each year to Makam Sunan Giri for the years 2011 to 2016. In the film Rahmat Islam Nusantara (East Indies Islam as an Expression of Divine Grace, 2015, 1:02:26) the juru kunci of Makam Sunan Giri, Pak Shobirin said they started counting visitors in 1993 and there had been a 2.5% increase each year. There were now a minimum of 1.8 million visitors arriving each year by bus. This figure is in fact much higher as they did not count cars and motor bikes.

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19 Statistics were presented as Table 1.1 taken from Disbudparpora, Kab. Gresik 31, Desember Tahun 2016.
Chapter 3

Pesarean Gunung Kawi at the third gateway. The mausoleum of Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono is just above the gateway to the right. No photos of the mausoleum are permitted.

3.1 Fieldwork at Pesarean Gunung Kawi

In June/July of 2018 I visited the pilgrimage sites of Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri in the province of East Java, Indonesia. My objectives were to make observations about the people, their culture and society, observe rituals being performed, familiarise myself with the physical locations and then make comparisons between the two pilgrimage sites. Collecting this information would assist in answering my research question: Why have pilgrimage numbers been on the rise in Java in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia? In the case of both Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri further questions were explored such as: how can ziarah be understood or conceptualised at the two sites researched? What are the significant differences between the two sites? Are there tensions between what some consider an acceptable Islamic practice and what is not? What are the motivations of the people who visit? I have attempted below to find some interim answers to these questions.
**Pesarean Gunung Kawi**

The Gunung Kawi pilgrimage site is located in the village of Wonosari which is about 40 kilometres south west of the city of Malang in the province of East Java. The site is about 800 meters above sea level and sits at the base of the Gunung Kawi Mountain which is over 2,500 meters high. The mountain certainly looks mysterious and is often shrouded in an eerie mist. At the pilgrimage site there is quite an elaborate mausoleum which houses the tombs of two revered saints, Eyang Djoego and Eyang Raden Mas Iman Soedjono who died in 1871 and 1876 respectively. Pilgrims come regularly to pay homage to the two saints and to perform *ziarah*.

Pesarean Gunung Kawi is famous throughout Java as a place to come for good fortune and where ‘your wishes may come true’ and often related to ‘business success’. The business success concept is particularly renowned amongst the Chinese Indonesian pilgrims and one story that has gained almost myth like status in Indonesia is the story of the success of the Bentoel cigarette company. The owners of this company assert that their business became successful only after their grandfather, Ong Hok Liong who dreamt that Mbah Djoego told him to change the name of his brand of cigarette to P T Bentoel. After he did this the business became very successful and now employs over 18,000 workers and is an important sponsor of the pilgrimage site (Jonge 1998, 17; Wardoyo, Anang and Anam 2009, 34). This one story, though there might be others, is responsible for attracting an ever increasing number of ethnic Chinese to visit Gunung Kawi in order to achieve the same business success.

Pesarean Gunung Kawi is also famous as a place where there is *pesugian* (agreement or promise). It can perhaps be best illustrated by the following story by Jamhari in *The Meaning Interpreted: The concept of Barakah in Ziarah* where he describes a visitor as saying:

> Once a neighbour suggested that I search for *perolehan* at Mountain Kawi. He had gone to the mountain to become rich. He obtained a *pesugihan* called a ‘green giant’ (*buto ijo*) from the Mountain Kawi and was told that he had to feed the giant with special food. He never told me about the food that he had to give the giant. Villagers assumed that the giant was fed with children, because all my neighbour’s children died at an early age. To obtain such a *pesugian* at Mount Kawi, people have to enter a contract with the giant. The contract specifies the duration of the *pesugian* will be
possessed, the feeding requirements of the *pesugian* and other requirements. Furthermore, people have to conduct a special meditation that consists of making offerings in special homage to the spirit who looks after the mountain (*danyang*), by making offerings such as their children, and fasting for fourteen days in the mountain area. The wealth gained from pesugian does not last long. Those who possess it often meet with an accident or die suddenly. My neighbour, for example had his wealth destroyed by fire. (Jamhari 2001,121)

The existence of *pesugian* at Pesarean Gunung Kawi or the village of Wonosari is however adamantly denied by all the stakeholders I met at the site. Numerous academic articles, books and videos however, have been written and made about Gunung Kawi, particularly in reference to *pesugian*. Jonge (1998, 17) outlines a story about *pesugian* where a pilgrim who visited Gunung Kawi and said that the prosperity of his business was realised only at the expense of his brother who had gone mad. He was told beforehand by the *juru kunci* that he would have to make heavy sacrifices. Pemberton (1994, 173-174) suggests that *pesugian* involves a contractual pay back exchange but that this pursuit as an access to wealth is thought of by many Javanese as being highly questionable. In my conversation H R Tjandra Jana Soepodojono one of the *juru kunci* at Gunung Kawi the notion that there was *pesugian* at Pesarean Gunung Kawi was emphatically denied and it was almost as if I had said something quite offensive to him by asking. It was also denied by Arif Yulianto Wicaksomlo, the *juru kunci* at Kesamben which is located near Blitar, East Java where Eyang Djoego had his *padepokan* (residence) before he passed away. People from the local Wonosari community that I met also denied that there was any *pesugian* occurring at Pesarean Gunung Kawi and from my own observations there was no indication of *pesugian* at the site nor in the village of Wonosari which is about one kilometre below the mausoleum.

The earliest available literature and documentation that I have been able to find on Pesarean Gunung Kawi dates back to 1953. An ethnic Chinese Indonesian journalist/writer, Tan Hong Boen wrote under his pen name of Im Yang Tju a historical narrative on Eyang Djoego called *Riwajat Eyang Djugo Panembahan* (A Dedication Narrative to Eyang Djugo). The book gives a very poignant description of the history of Eyang Djoego, his residence at Kesamben near Blitar, his gravesite at the village of Wonosari below the Gunung Kawi Mountain and other locations of interest to the history of Gunung Kawi. The book is written
using the old spelling of Indonesian words, includes numerous old photographs and provides some illuminating stories but does not have a bibliography and therefore is difficult to authenticate. The other publication that is widely referred to in articles about Gunung Kawi was written by R.S Soeryowidagdo and published in 1989 called “Pesarean Gunung Kawi Tata Cara Ziarah dan Riwayat Makam Eyang Panembahan Djoego Eyang Raden Iman Soedjono di Gunung Kawi Malang” (The Gunung Kawi Gravesite Correct Pilgrimage Procedure and the Narrative of the Gravesite of Eyang Djoego and Raden Mas Iman Soedjono at Gunung Kawi, Malang). It is a small publication on the history and procedure for ritual of the Gunung Kawi religious pilgrimage site.

I also discovered that not only was there no official historical documentation about Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono but also there were neither photographs taken of them nor any drawings or paintings or other representations made of them. I was told by some of the local people that the saints did not want any depictions made of them because they did not want the notoriety. There are however, stone carvings of their story engraved on both sides of the third gateway nearest to the mausoleum at Gunung Kawi but this is a recent addition to the site. I have never seen any photographs, portraits or other illustrations of the two saints at the site nor in any of the books on Gunung Kawi. These facts I think add to the mystery surrounding the Gunung Kawi pilgrimage site which may in turn be responsible for the increase in popularity through intrigue.

Meetings and Conversations
During my fieldwork at Pesarean Gunung Kawi I had meetings with Pak Jana the juru kunci, Pak Panut the information officer, and I had a number of short conversations with visitors and pilgrims at Gunung Kawi and a few brief casual conversations with some students and visitors. I also met with Mas Arif the juru kunci at Kesamben and had an enlightening conversation with a beautician who worked as an assistant to her father, an alternative healer at Kepanjen, a town

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20 Saints, Mystics or Tokoh? Although I would probably regard Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono as either mystics or tokoh, the consensus from the people that I met including the juru kunci of Gunung Kawi and Kesamben was that they were in fact saints. Perhaps however, not quite in the same league as the Wali Songo

21 See Appendix D for a record of my short conversations with pilgrims.
close to Gunung Kawi where I stayed during my research at Gunung Kawi. Bowo my *pemandu* (guide) who lives in Wonosari was also invaluable in introducing me to people from the local community and showing all the significant locations of interest. In what follows is a summary of my conversations with Jana, Pak Panut, Mas Arif and Bowo. I have also given a description of the ritual activities at Pesarean Gunung Kawi and some additional information on conversations I had with visitors.

![Stone carving of Mbah Djoego surrounded by his students at the time of his death. These carvings are located at the third gateway just beneath the mausoleum, the only representation of the saints that I discovered.](image)

**Jana**

Tjandra Jana Soepodojono, Juru Kunci Gunung Kawi and is a direct descendant of Iman Soedjono who passed away in 1876 and is entombed at the site. I met Jana through his sister Reren who is from Jakarta and the owner of the Roro Hotel which is located in the main walkway leading up the mausoleum. I asked Jana about some of the history about Gunung Kawi and he said that Mbah Djoego fought with Prince Diponegoro and moved to Blitar after the prince was captured by the Dutch (Java War 1825-1830). He established a teaching, meditation, healing and Muslim centre in Kesamben at a place now called Djugo village.
Mbah Djugo told his students that when he passed away he wanted to be buried in the mountains at Gunung Kawi. Jana said there were two juru kunci at Gunung Kawi, himself and Bapak Nanang who shared the duties at the pesarean. Many people came in search of business success or prosperity. Jana explained that he was responsible for not only the opening times of the pesarean but the sharing and rostering of duties with the other juru kunci. Sometimes people have visions inside the hall (where the tombs of Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono are located) and if requested would interpret them. Jana was quite clear about the fact that prayers were only directed to Allah. However, as Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono are considered close to God the prayers of the pilgrims performing ziarah are more likely to be answered.

Pak Panut
Panut Aryo, Information Officer at Gunung Kawi
I talked to Pak Panut who has worked at Gunung Kawi for some years. I asked him how many visitors came to Gunung Kawi each year but said he didn’t know as there were no accurate records kept. He was reluctant to hazard a guess but in the end put the number at about 50,000 per year but added that on Sundays and public holidays there would be over a thousand visitors and on days of commemoration for the Saints the number would be a lot more. He thought that the majority of pilgrims were Muslims, followed by Tri Dharma\(^\text{22}\) and then there were a small percentage of Christians and Hindus. Pak Panut also said that the majority of visitors came to Gunung Kawi for ziarah and a small percentage came as tourists. Pak Panut said that RM. Iman Soedjono was panglima (commander) in the war against the Dutch and that Eyang Djugo was ulama besar (Great Muslim Religious Scholar or Leader). He thought that Gunung Kawi was a good place and very suitable for berdoa (prayer) especially at the makam.

\(^{22}\) The term Tri Dharma represents the three religions of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. Sam Kauw Hwee (the Association of the Three Religions) which later became known as Tri Dharma was established in the mid 1930’s in Indonesia. (Suryadinata 2005, 79).
Mas Arif

Arif Yulianto Wicksono, Juru Kunci, Padepokan Eyang Djoego, Kesamben, Blitar.

During my visit to Gunung Kawi I also made the journey to Djugo village in Kesamben near Blitar which is about 40 kilometres south west of Gunung Kawi. It was here that I met Mas Arif quite a young man by all appearances, who said he was the only juru kunci at the site. He said he was a keturunan (descendant) of one of Mbah Djoego’s original students. He regarded both Mbah Djoego and RM. Iman Soedjono as being wali. Mbah Djoego was originally from Yogyakarta and was of Javanese descent and stayed at the site for 25 years until he passed away. Mas Arif said that Mbah Djoego was ‘ilmu tinggi’ (a person who possesses esoteric knowledge of the highest) and shared two stories about Mbah Djoego. One was that when he went in search of water one day, he hit his tongkat (stick or staff) against a large rock and water sprouted out it. Another story was that he planted a seed in the ground and within one day a sizeable plant had grown. Mas Arif said that Mbah Djoego used kejawen (Javanese mysticism or knowledge) practices as part of his pengobatan (treatment, healing). He showed me Mbah Jugo’s bedroom and some of his heirlooms and personal possessions. Towards the back of the room the weapons he used in fighting the war with Prince Diponegoro were displayed including swords, spears and daggers. At the conclusion of our meeting one of Mas Arif’s assistants showed...
me around the complex where there were not only traditional Javanese style buildings but similar to Gunung Kawi, an assortment of buildings of Chinese architecture such as those for Ciamsi and Tri Dharma temples of worship.

Bowo Pemandu Pesarean Gunung Kawi in front of the guci kuno (ancient jars) containing holy water.

**Bowo**

Agus Arbowo (Bowo) was my *pemandu* (guide) whilst I was doing my fieldwork at Gunung Kawi. Bowo was extremely helpful in showing me all the important locations at Gunung Kawi. These included the mausoleum where I participated in the ritual worship of the offering of flowers. After making a donation at the tombs of the saints I received two small newspaper wrapped packets, one containing flowers that had been blessed and another containing a small piece of crystallised rock. I was unclear what I was to do with these other than to receive them gratefully. From inside the mausoleum which is quite a spacious hall with the tombs of the *wali* located at the back, partially screened by curtains, I was able to observe the procedure for *ziarah*. Firstly, on entering the hall pilgrims would remove their shoes and then approach the tombs in an orderly fashion, heads bowed, kneeling whilst making the offerings of flowers and *sumbangan*
(donation). Some pilgrims even crawled their way towards the tombs with their heads bowed. After they had presented their flowers and made their discrete donation they in turn received their two newspaper wrapped packets. Pilgrims would then return to a corner of the hall where they would quietly wait, meditate or even check their mobile phones as the case may be.

The hall was adorned with numerous grandfather clocks and antique glass lamps which had been donations from previous pilgrims. During what seemed like a lengthy period of time waiting for proceedings to commence and I even succumbed to my own weariness and fell into a timeless dream-like state. On awakening I noted the juru kunci assistants (who are all men) bringing the selamatan food offerings into the hall. The most senior of them then recited prayers over the selamatan which included specifically naming all the people who had paid for their selamatan. At the conclusion of the ceremony pilgrims would collect the food they had purchased and either eat the meal directly outside the mausoleum on tables and benches, or take the food home.

Bowo also showed me the sacred Dewandaru tree located adjacent to the mausoleum and which is protected with wire mesh. It is here, if you are fortunate enough to find a fallen leaf, you can be assured of blessings and good luck or so the story goes. I did notice a constant stream of visitors scanning the concrete pathway around the tree looking for a fallen leaf or twig and I couldn’t help but join in the search. It is not allowed however, to shake the tree, pluck leaves or in any way touch the tree to obtain a leaf and the rule is reinforced by signs located around it.
Pesarean Gunung Kawi spring located 500 metres beneath the mausoleum. The spring called 'sumber manggis' is actually on the left where a tree is protruding out of the roof. Pilgrims can also bathe before performing ziarah in one of the many private baths.

Another ritual is drinking air suci (holy water) which is available near the mausoleum, sumbangan expected and comes from a spring some 500 metres below the pesarean. The other water available to drink (and one which is also regarded as air suci) comes from two guci kuno (ancient jars) which are located a short distance below the mausoleum. The water is said to cure disease and make children smarter. The sign above the guci kuno is written in both Chinese and Indonesian. The Indonesian monograph reads ‘air suci untuk kesahatan dan keberkahan’ (holy water for health and blessings).
Located close to the guci kuno is a large mosque, which apparently was built from funds donated by pilgrims. Nearby are the buildings which have a direct link to Chinese culture. One of these buildings is used for Ciamsi (Chinese fortune telling) where for a small cost people may have their fortune read. The pilgrim rattles bamboo sticks out of a container (the first stick that falls out of the bunch gives the reading) and then gets the corresponding oracle in the form of a coloured piece of paper from one of the assistants at the counter. There are also two other buildings close by, one which houses an assortment of Buddhist statues including the Goddess of Mercy, Kwan Yin and the other Confucian and Taoist representations. The three religions collectively are known in Indonesia as Tri Dharma, which is a term that is frequently used.
Additional Conversations

One group of Muslim women that I spoke with at a local coffee shop at Gunung Kawi were quite clear that they did not think coming to Gunung Kawi and performing *ziarah* was in any way in conflict with their Islamic beliefs or practices. This was a frequent answer I received from pilgrims that I met when I posed that question. I also noticed that Muslims do not like stating what sort of Islamic group, branch, denomination or sect they belong to. They frequently just say my religion is Islam or I am a Muslim. I have been reluctant to pursue this any further than I did in case I offended anyone. On one of my daily visits to Gunung Kawi, I met a group of Islamic students in front of one of the many stalls that were selling pilgrimage artefacts and we discussed the fact that many different religions were represented at Gunung Kawi and that many people of different religions visited. One of the girls emphatically stated that this occurred because there was “*saling toleransi*” (mutual tolerance) to which we all agreed and were all happy that this was occurring at Gunung Kawi.
Makam Sunan Giri in the background of this picture. Notice pilgrims enter the mausoleum through a small timber doorway. The tomb of Sunan Giri is inside the mausoleum in another viewing chamber.

3.2 Fieldwork at Makam Sunan Giri

Sunan is a title given to holy men who first brought Islam to Java and Giri was the name of a hill where Sunan Giri first established his base for his dakwah. Sunan Giri is famed throughout Indonesia as being one of the Wali Songo and also has the title of Prabu (king) Satmata (Satmata is one of the names of the Hindu God Shiva). Sunan Giri’s tomb is located on a large hill in the village of Kedhaton, in the Gresik district which is about 45 kilometres north west of Indonesia’s second largest city Surabaya, East Java. The Tomb of Sunan Giri is located adjacent to the Sunan Giri Mosque and was where I conducted my preliminary research speaking with the juru kunci, pilgrims and people from the local community. Sunan Giri is highly revered by Muslims in Indonesia and Makam Sunan Giri today remains an important and popular pilgrimage site.
Meetings and Conversations

During my fieldwork at Makam Sunan Giri I had a casual discussion with Pak Shobirin the *juru kunci*, five conversations with pilgrims and one more in depth conversation with a local business owner who was a member of the Muhammadiyah. This conversation provided me with an opposing viewpoint on whether participating in *ziarah* is permitted for Muslims (see Appendix E).

Pilgrims leaving their shoes and sandals at the entrance to the *pendopo* (large open verandah) which covers the mausoleum at Makam Sunan Giri.

Pak Shobirin

A Shobirin, Juru Kunci Makam Sunan Giri.

I met Pak Shobirin at his office at the Sunan Giri pilgrimage site one morning. The meeting was held in a large office area which had a large board room table positioned to one side of the room. He entered the room with his entourage consisting of numerous assistants, some retired men that were connected with the site and members of the Military who had been designated to guard the area. Pak Sobirin said he was number two out of 15 *juru kunci* at the site which indicated
there was a hierarchy in being a *juru kunci*. I had my driver Pak Ariff attend this meeting with me. I met Pak Ariff a few days earlier when I ordered a ‘grab’ taxi and he arrived to pick me up from my hotel to take me to Makam Sunan Giri. From then on we spent quite a few days together visiting the Makam and some other pilgrimage locations. Pak Ariff became an important support person for me and broke the ice on more than a few occasions when I wanted to talk to pilgrims. He spoke some English and managed to translate some words that I didn’t understand.

Pak Ariff my driver and translator during my fieldwork at Makam Sunan Giri. We also visited the tomb of another Wali Songo, Syekh Maulana Malik Ibrahim located in Gresik.

Everyone was very hospitable at the meeting and all were eager to meet with me. They said they liked having a Westerner visit the site and were open to answering any questions I had for them. I started the ball rolling by showing Pak Shobirin a short clip of him on my mobile phone answering some questions in the film titled *Rahmat Islam Nusantara* (East Indies Islam as an Expression of Divine Grace) where he was discussing the number of pilgrims that visited the Sunan Giri site.
He seemed quite bemused by the notoriety and I was surprised that he hadn’t seen the clip before although I am sure he would have remembered the filming. He then discussed with me the number of people that came to visit and said that they only count pilgrims arriving by the bus load, not individual cars or on motor bikes or by any other means of transport. He said that each year there was an increase of a minimum of 5% to a maximum of 20%. In 1998 he said there were 1,200,000 pilgrims and in 2012 there were 1,800,000 by the bus load. He estimates that by 2020 there will be over 3,000,000 visitors each year.

Pak Shobirin said that there were times when it was busier such as if there was a natural disaster, pilgrims would then come and pray to make things aman (safe) again or if there was a political event such as an election and politicians would provide free trips to Makam Sunan Giri. Pak Shobirin said that 90% of the pilgrims are from Java and Madura but others come from other parts of Indonesia including from Sumatra, Aceh, Kalimantan and Bali. Some even come from as far away as Singapore, Malaysia, India and even Holland. Pak Halfidin, an Assistant Juru Kunci, added that 99% of the people who visit the site are Muslims and that all the people who visit Makam Sunan Giri come with the intention of performing ziarah and only a few like myself have another purpose. Pak Shobirin then added that pilgrims come to Makam Sunan Giri to pray to God and to thank Sunan Giri for bringing Islam to Java. They hoped they would sin less in their lives.

When I asked Pak Shobirin if other Islamic groups visited the site (presuming most that came were NU), he said that the Muhammadiyah did not come here and then he recounted a story of a group of radicals that recently visited the site. It should be noted that I did my exploratory fieldwork at Sunan Giri about 6 weeks after the Surabaya bombings of May 2018. Pak Sobirin said that they benci (hate or dislike) radicals and had turned them away from visiting the site. I asked how he knew they were radicals and he replied by their dress and added we “hate terrorists and that a religious person was not allowed to kill”.
Helping out with accepting donations at Makam Sunan Giri sign translates as ‘Donation/Fund for the Upkeep of Makam Sunan Giri’.

3.3 Findings and Summary of Conversations

Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri

My conversations at both Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri were all with Muslim pilgrims. At Gunung Kawi most pilgrims participated in the ritual activities such as selamatan, drinking the holy water and visiting the sacred tree. They were all aware about the stories about Gunung Kawi such as pesugian but thought they were more of a myth. They did seem to think that people mostly came to Gunung Kawi for business success or some financial reward. The Dewandaru tree was mention a few times with one pilgrim regarded it as falling into the pesugian realm. There was also a mixture of reasons for visiting which was as a tourist to enjoy the scenery, out of curiosity to see if the stories about Gunung Kawi were true and to participate in the ritual activities at the site (see Appendix D).
At Sunan Giri it was clear from my conversations that all pilgrims recited the *tahlil* when they performed *ziarah*. Most pilgrims were affiliated with NU except for one who belonged to Muhammadiyah but was an infrequent visitor to the site. There was a consensus amongst pilgrims that radicals were not allowed to visit which was something Pak Shobirin, the *juru kunci* of Makam Sunan Giri had already told me. Pilgrims visiting this site that I spoke with emphasised that their prayers were directed to God/Allah and not to the saints. One strong impression that I gained from my fieldwork at Makam Sunan Giri was that there was a great religiosity in the pilgrims practice of *ziarah* and that this seemed to permeate the whole site. I noticed this in and around the mausoleum, under the *pendopo* where the pilgrims would gather and wait and in the surrounding terraced areas beneath the main tomb.

One of the most interesting conversations I had at Makam Sunan Giri was with Pak Shodik, a High School Teacher who lives in Jombang. He has been a member of NU since birth. He comes with his family every six months to adore the ‘charisma of Sunan Giri’. He encouraged me to visit the tomb of Gus Dur in Jombang.

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23 *Tahlil* repeated recitation of the confession of faith saying the words *La ilaha illa Allāh* (There is no God but Allah).
3.4 Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri Compared and Contrasted

In making a comparison between the two sites from my observations undertaken during my fieldwork in June/July 2018 I would conclude that there are some similarities but many differences. The one similarity is that they both are very popular pilgrimage sites in East Java that pay homage to saints. There is a lineage of *juru kunci* at both sites that play an important role in *ziarah* and both sites rely on *Wisata Religi* as an important source of income for the local community. At both locations there is also an onus on some form of *sumbangan* although my impression was that this was more overt at Gunung Kawi where all the pilgrims who approached the tombs of the saints were expected to make a donation whereas at Sunan Giri the leader of a group of pilgrims would make a donation on behalf of their group. Both sites have their own versions of laneway stalls *pedagang* (trader, merchant) that sell an assortment of merchandise and items that might be used for *ziarah* or simply a memento to take home. One other important similarity at both sites that I discovered was that Muslim pilgrims did not pray directly to the saints but to God. It was repeatedly emphasised by pilgrims and the custodians that prayers were only made to Allah and not to the *wali*. There are other significant differences that I discovered between Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri (see Appendix F).

3.5 Fieldwork Conclusion

I undertook the fieldwork with the idea that this would in some way help me answer my research question *Why have pilgrimage numbers been on the rise in Java in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia?* It would be stating the obvious that a pilgrim probably would not embark on a pilgrimage to either Pesarean Gunung Kawi or Makam Sunan Giri if it was in conflict with their Islamic beliefs or principles. My conversations with pilgrims at Makam Sunan Giri all emphasised the importance of the *ziarah* ritual in their lives and the practice of *ziarah* was permitted, valued and encouraged as they were all members of the NU. My conversations with one local person at Makam Sunan Giri did however indicate that for members of the Muhammadiyah there was opposition to *ziarah* although she did indicate that members were free to decide for themselves. The Gunung Kawi site is quite different however, as there
are representations from three of Indonesians six approved religions namely Islam, Buddhism and Confucianism in the form of rituals and places of worship. Pilgrims are not only Muslim but include Buddhist, Confucian and Christian. At Gunung Kawi the pilgrimage to the tombs of the saints seems to break down the barriers of religious divisions and allows a more tolerant and pluralistic cooperation between pilgrims whilst practicing ziarah.

At Pesarean Gunung Kawi the increasing popularity for pilgrims and tourists alike appears to be from the shared narrative of the ability of the two saints to assist people in achieving their personal objectives in life. The concept of pesugian and the curiosity of the many rituals is also a factor in the sites popularity. The main reason I believe the site has become increasingly popular is because of the personal objectives of pilgrims for either business success, financial reward or some other tangible personal benefit.

Another theme that emerged from my pilot study was the fact that Muslim pilgrims at both sites indicated that they prayed only to Allah and did not pray directly to the saints. Pilgrims however, from both sites recognised that the tombs of the saints were indeed special places and that there was a certain power associated with the location and that it was only by participating in ziarah that there could be some sort of intercession by the saint on the pilgrim’s behalf. One pilgrim that I spoke with at Makam Sunan Giri described the importance of the saints and performing ziarah at the tombs saying:

They were tokoh besar, not normal people. All their lives were for Allah and Dakwah, they were close to Allah and were ‘special people’ and the locations are ‘special places’. You can pray at home but it is better to pray at a special place in front of a special person who gave their lives for the people and to Allah.

The Pesarean Gunung Kawi site seemed to have a much stronger kejawen influence with the selamatan ritual practiced as an essential element of ziarah whereas at Makam Sunan Giri the only obvious ziarah ritual was the repeating of the tahlil. Pesarean Gunung Kawi is also represented by not only Islam,
Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism\textsuperscript{24}, as well as Christianity and Hinduism at the ‘Kraton’ (palace) which is about six kilometres higher up the mountain.

As stated previously the increased popularity of Makam Sunan Giri appears to be driven by the NU, the concept of government sanctioned and supported \textit{Wisata Religi} and other reasons such as improved infrastructure, transport and more disposable income. Nearly all of the pilgrims that visit Makam Sunan Giri are Muslims and it is their faith that is the overriding driving force and the importance that these pilgrims place on the practice of \textit{ziarah} as a part of their Islamic beliefs and practices.

### 3.6 Recommendations for Further Research

My recommendations for further research are listed below:

1. Research is needed on the role of women in \textit{ziarah}. One finding from my research was that there appeared to be very little distinction made between men and women performing \textit{ziarah}, both genders participated in the same ritual activities and the numbers of men and women seemed to be about equal. Why is there a seeming equality between genders in performing \textit{ziarah}? One would expect that \textit{ziarah} would be a more male dominated activity and the same divisions of Islamic practices that occur in mosques would apply at pilgrimage sites.

2. Was Mbah Djoego Javanese or Chinese? Further historical research is needed to ascertain if Mbah Djoego was in fact originally Javanese as all the Indonesian documentation and stakeholders suggest or was he originally from China. If his ethnicity was Chinese, it would explain the Chinese connection, Chinese students, treatment methods, Chinese architecture and his popularity and connection with the Chinese community. I discovered one reference by Salmon and Lombard (1977, XLIX) that had Mbah Djoego as being an officer in China who fled to Java after the fall of the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864). The authors also cite five Chinese gravesites in and around Jakarta which have references to Mbah Djoego.

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\textsuperscript{24} Taoism is not recognised as one of Indonesians six official religions
3. To what extent is the intercession of the saint required to receive ‘blessings’ and or other tangible benefits? Do pilgrims pray to God or the saint directly to ask for blessings and intercession? Further research on these questions through structured interviews may uncover the answers, which would however require a great deal of discretion.

3.7 Thesis Conclusion
This thesis has given the reader a definitive explanation of what constitutes ‘ziarah’ in Java and provided answers to the research question asked: Why have pilgrimage numbers been on the rise in Java in the face of a more conservative interpretation of Islam in Indonesia? I have argued that the increased popularity of pilgrimage in Java has occurred because the Nahdlatul Ulama represents over 40 million Indonesian Muslims and wholly supports traditional practices such as ziarah as long as it conforms to their Islamic traditions. They are the driving force of the increasing popularity of ziarah in Java. I have also argued that there has been a deliberate government run campaign in the popularising and marketing of ziarah to Indonesians through Wisata Religi, particularly in relation to the Wali Songo. I have identified seven other factors or combination of factors that I argue has led to an increase in the popularity of ziarah: 1. improved infrastructure in Java such as better access roads to pilgrimage sites and improved accommodation. 2. large numbers of visitors now arrive by the bus load in organised tours. 3. many Indonesians have more disposable income to enable them to travel and tour the pilgrimage sites. 4. for some Muslims that are unable to undertake the Hajj it is regarded as a ‘little Hajj’. 5. the widespread use of the internet and social media has generated more information to be shared amongst pilgrims that are interested in undertaking ziarah. 6. the increased religiosity of Indonesian society is a factor when it conforms with the traditionalist perspective. 7. following reformasi there was a decentralisation of the Indonesian government which gave local communities more responsibility in raising money and one important form of revenue raising was the maintaining and promoting of the practice of ziarah at the sacred sites in those communities.

The ‘conservative turn’ in Indonesia I argue has not affected the increased popularity of ziarah in Java because for many traditionalist Muslims it is
condoned and encouraged as an Islamic practice. Traditionalist Muslims can still be devout and orthodox Muslims whilst performing ziarah. There is no outcry in Indonesia about the practice of ziarah being un-Islamic, the main tensions that exist seem to be between the Muhammadiyah and the NU. Radical or fundamentalist Muslim groups have not directly opposed the practice. One could only conclude that there is enough support for ziarah in Java for this to be tolerated because it is in fact a traditional Javanese Islamic practice that is ever increasing in popularity.

In this thesis I have also provided an overview of Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri and its pilgrimage practices. I have described how some pilgrims conceive of their ziarah and their motivations for visitations and have looked at the similarities and differences between the two sites.

In closing, I would like to say that I hope in some way my thesis will add something that is of benefit to the scholarly research on ziarah in Java. In researching and writing this thesis I have gained a greater understanding of the practice of ziarah in Java. Most of all however, I have been personally enriched by the experience of visiting, studying and meeting with Indonesians at both Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri, holding in awe their culture and devotion to their practice of ziarah in Java.
Appendix A

Blessings and Intercession of the Saints

The primary motivation for pilgrims to perform ziarah at the tomb of a saint is to receive the saints’ barakah (blessings) or for ngalap berkah (petitioning for personal favours) (Muhaimin 2006, 176). The Indonesian word barakah (blessed) also spelt baraka, is derived from the Arabic word barakah and adopted into Javanese either with a ‘h’ or a ‘t’ such as berkat and berkah. All these words are used interchangeably by the Javanese (Jamhari 2001, 108 and 124). The hope is that the pilgrim can enlist the help of the wali to convey a message directly to God and therefore be a means of communicating with God (Jamhari 2000, 75). A visitation to the grave of a saint is highly regarded as a source of barakah which can be defined as an innate force and can be understood as the “blessings” which dead and living saints or holy people possess especially at the particular pilgrimage site to which they are associated. It is an emotive force and experienced in a personal way by pilgrims performing ziarah. Saints through their charisma, devotion, exemplary learning and piety possess a substantial amount of barakah that make them become an object for pious visitation (Meri, 1999, 46).

Saints have a special relationship with God and are particularly well placed to act as intermediaries to him. Wali are close to God and are a “mysterious wonder-working force” and are not only venerated during their life but also after their death (Jamhari 2001, 116). Chambert-Loir (2002, 132) writes that the saints were blessed with supernatural powers and that these powers were concentrated in his being when alive and after death lay in his grave. Ziarah therefore with few exceptions, is performed only at the saint’s grave.

Laksana (2014, 83) argues that for Javanese Muslims ziarah is very personal and highly complex in developing a deeper understanding of their lives in connection with God and the saints. It is not an equal relationship however, although it is a loving one and there is a type of dependency created towards the saints in the form of devotion, proximity, friendship and protectorship. Pilgrims understand that God is the one in charge. The saints do not have the power to grant their prayers; only God does but the saints can participate in God’s power.
What is clear is that pilgrims in Java consistently emphasised that they were seeking God’s favour through *tawassul* (the mediation of the saints). In order to have a successful *ziarah* pilgrims should have *niyat* (correct intention) *ziarah* which is considered an essential part of their friendship and devotion to the saint. Unanswered prayers or supplications could signal flawed intentions on the pilgrim’s part which may require further purification of their heart and intentions. This process can be seen as motivating force for a spiritual transformation or growth for pilgrims. This unveiling of the self through supplication makes *ziarah* more personal and puts the pilgrim in a lasting and deeper relationship with God, the saint and his shrine.

There is a distinction seen between *berkah* and *perolehan* (result or acquisition) *perolehan* – for further information on the differences between barakah and perolehan relative to Sunan Tembayat at Bayat in Klaten, Central Java; see (Jamhari 2001, 91 and 120, 121); *The Meaning Interpreted: The Concept of Barakah in Ziarah*. The former effects a true spiritual peacefulness which transcends a mere worldly existence and the latter is worldly and ambiguous in its effect on the integral welfare of the pilgrim. *Baraka* can imbue the pilgrim with *tentren* (peacefulness of the heart) as a result of being in touch with the divine (Laksana, 2014, 83 - 87). Bruinessen (1996, 19) alludes to the transactional nature of *ziarah* mentioning that after pilgrims pray and recite verses from the Qur’an they can in exchange ask for intercession with god; for the cure of a disease, business success or other forms of supernatural assistance or seek a divinatory dream or vision.

Performing *ziarah* at the tombs of the saint is a fundamental requirement to gain the saint’s blessing or intercession. A pilgrim needs to make the journey and be in the presence of ‘divine power’ to have a successful *ziarah*. Saints are thought to reside simultaneously in their tombs and in heaven which makes the pilgrimage to the site all that more important. Smith and Haddad (1981, 53) observe that this “reflects a long standing and commonly held belief concerning the active intervention of deceased saints in the lives of those who come to their tombs with petitions” (cited in Woodward, 1989, 174). Muhaimin (2006, 162) states that the ‘fragrance’ of the saint’s honour still remains posthumously and thus these places contain *berkah*. 
Appendix B

Selamatan

Selamatan (slametan) is one of the most important ziarah rituals that a pilgrim can participate in. It is a communal meal that is offered to the revered personage and is usually eaten after paying homage and is a way of sharing the profound experience with family and friends and therefore a communal experience.

Another aspect of the selamatan is that pilgrims believe that the food after it is offered will contain berkah. The procedure, timing and emphasis vary from site to site; for example, at Tembayat writes Jamhari (2001, 109) some pilgrims do not eat the rice which has been blessed because they regard it as too valuable and is better served as fertilizer for their crops. Although the selamatan is an important ziarah ritual at many pilgrimage sites its core lies in the Javanese religious system. Geertz (1960, 11) explains: “at the centre of the whole Javanese religious system lies a simple, formal, undramatic, almost furtive, little ritual: the slametan”. Woodward (1988, 54) however argues that the selamatan is not just a village ritual, but one in which blessings and food are linked, where its religious and social goals are defined in terms of Islamic mystical theory and are rooted in essentialist Islamic texts and that elements of the selamatan are derived from pre-Islamic traditions but interpreted in Islamic terms. It should be noted that selamatan is not practiced at some of the Wali Songo sites. There was no evidence of selamatan at Makam Sunan Giri in Gresik where the only ritual ziarah activity I observed was the tahlilan which was practiced in earnest by all pilgrims inside and outside the mausoleum. At Pesarean Gunung Kawi however, selamatan was an important and integral ritual ziarah activity for pilgrims.
Appendix C

Juru Kunci

The term juru kunci consists of two Javanese words, juru (master) and kunci (key). Therefore, the juru kunci signifies a person or a custodian that is primarily responsible for the activities at a sacred place or building such as a palace or graveyard. Their importance is not just in the ritual ziarah activities but they can play a central figure in ngalamat (interpretation of signs from dreams) that can offer an indication of barakah (Jamhari 2001, 91). Harris (2009, 55) explains that the juru kunci uses his genealogy to acquire legitimacy as part of a patrimonial hierarchy. Most juru kunci in Java are descendants from the ancestors, saints, founders and heroes from Indonesian history and form a hierarchical socio-political system which is highly symbolic. Most juru kunci are descendants of the personage in the tomb at which they serve and usually there is a genealogy of the juru kunci in or near the tomb as evidence of his authority. The juru kunci holds unique authority over that particular tomb that he is responsible for and only he alone can alert the pilgrim to the peculiarities of the site (Fox 2002, 160). Hellman (2017, 7) concludes that the juru kunci are the custodians of the sacred sites where they safeguard its secrets, implement religious protocol and act as guardians for the historical knowledge of the site. Woodward (1989, 772) adds that the juru kunci live near the shrine and are responsible for its maintenance and regulate pilgrimage activities such as the opening hours. The juru kunci offers guidance, mediation and interpretation for pilgrims and can be the intercession between pilgrim and the saint. Jamhari (2001, 92) elaborates on the importance of role of juru kunci in ziarah stating that they are central figures in interpreting signs gained in dreams (ngalamat) and that this interpretation of dreams constitutes one of the fundamental elements in the transmission of barakah.
Appendix D

Conversations with Pilgrims

Pesarean Gunung Kawi

The following visitors I met at the many local *rumah makan* (restaurants) located in the main lane way leading up to the mausoleum:

*Conversation 1*

Person is male aged 50 from Purwokerto in Central Java. Religion Islam. He came to Gunung Kawi with his whole family and had already been there for two days. He first heard about Gunung Kawi from a friend from Surabaya, who often told the story about Gunung Kawi, and that it was a great place to visit and was especially good for *tirakat* (to do something ascetic such as fasting, in order to fulfil a wish). He was aware of all the ritual activities at Gunung Kawi and he always participated in *ziarah* and the *selamatan*. He said he heard about the myths but was unsure about whether there was *pesugian* at Gunung Kawi. He thought that *pesugian* was part of the myth of the *pesarean*. He always performed the correct prayers and hoped there would be an intercession on his behalf in order to help with his affairs. He did not say who would intercede or if he prayed directly to Allah or directly to the saints.

*Conversation 2*

Person is female aged 48 lives in Mojokerto, East Java. Works as a teacher. Religion Islam.

She said this was her first visit to Gunung Kawi but had heard from friends about the place. She didn’t know too much about the history of Gunung Kawi but the point of coming was to perform *ziarah* at the makam of Mbah Djoego and Mbah Soedjono. She thought the experience of coming to Gunung Kawi was a positive one. What she thought was important was to pray with sincere intention. She not only performed *ziarah* whilst here but also enjoyed the scenery. She said that some of the myths about Gunung Kawi were quite strong and that some people came only to receive a financial benefit.

*Conversation 3*

Person is female aged 46 lives in Pasuran, East Java and is Muslim. She said that this was her first time coming to Gunung Kawi. She had heard about the makam of the *wali* which was said to be favourable for the religion of Islam. She was very curious about the story that there was a tree that brought good luck
(Dewandaru) and could help with success in business. She wanted to find out if this story was true or not.

Conversation 4
Person is female aged 33 lives in Mojokerto, is a teacher and is Muslim. Siti said that this was her first time to Gunung Kawi and that she had come with a group of people. She had heard a lot of stories about Gunung Kawi and that there was pesugian here. She was persuaded to come along to see for herself if the stories were true. She had seen all the ritual activities at Gunung Kawi and thought there was quite a strong myth about the place compared with what was actually real. She said she was curious about the place and as she was a teacher she thought it was important to add this experience to her knowledge.

Conversation 5
Person is Zyze is aged 43, lives in Kepanjen, is married with 3 children and is Muslim. She works as a Beautician and Assistant Therapist to her Father who describes himself as Penyembuhan Alternatif (Alternative Healer). I met her through her father as I was in need of a massage for my aching body and sought some treatment. I first met her father and was expecting to receive some treatment from him but he quickly ushered her in to provide the treatment. It was from this initial meeting that I was able to ask her questions about Gunung Kawi. She said that she had been to Gunung Kawi three times. She is a member of the NU and does not regard the two deceased tokoh at Gunung Kawi as being wali, but more ketuahan (possessing supernatural powers, able to bring good luck or fortune). She was very clear in stating that it was neither ok to ask for berkah (blessings) from people who had died nor to ask for anything else for that matter. Mendoakan (praying for something to happen) should only be directed to Allah/Tuhan (God) and people should not ask the wali for anything. She regarded mengunjungi (visiting) the same as performing ziarah, that pesugian attracted Muslims to Gunung Kawi and that Dewandaru (the sacred tree located adjacent to the mausoleum at Gunung Kawi) tree fell into the pesugian realm. She said that Muslims are not allowed to practice pesugian.
Appendix E
Conversations with Pilgrims
Makam Sunan Giri

The following visitors I met at or near the local warung (shops, stalls) just below Makam Sunan Giri. It was here, close to the mausoleum that many pilgrims would congregate, to rest, eat and drink:

Conversation 1

Person is male aged 55 and comes frequently to Makam Sunan Giri, he is a Muslim and belongs to the NU. He comes to Makam Sunan Giri with his family and prays to Allah when performing ziarah and said that the blessings were from Allah. He said there was no problem with Islam to visit. When he performs ziarah he recites the tahlil and feels more ‘damai’ (peaceful) and tenang (calm and quiet) after. He added that many of his friends come to Makam Sunan Giri. He first came here when he about 14 or 15 years old and has noticed that there are more people visiting now than when he was younger. The government made the site bigger and offering more protection for the Makam about 10 years ago by building a large pendopo. He stated the Government had spent money on Wisata Religi and added that radicals were not allowed to visit.

Conversation 2

Person is male aged 57 and works in a wood factory. His religion is Islam and he came to perform ziarah. He has visited Makam Sunan Giri more than 50 times. When he performs ziarah he reads the tahlil and prays to Allah. He said that it was better to go inside the makam. He comes to receive blessings from Allah and to receive a ‘calm heart’.

Conversation 3

Person is male aged 43, has 2 children and is Muslim. He comes to visit Makam Sunan Giri to perform ziarah and to recite the tahlil. He stays about 30 minutes and has been here 4 times. He recognises that Sunan Giri brought Islam to Java. He shared the story of his sister who had been trying to fall pregnant for some years and eventually came to Makam Sunan Giri and ate the fruit of the mengkudu tree or buah noni and became pregnant.
Conversation 4

Person is male aged 50, lives in Jombang and is Muslim. He works as a High School Teacher *(Sekolah Menengah Pertama)*, in East Java and came to Makam Sunan Giri with his wife. He comes once every 6 months with his wife and other members of his family and sometimes he comes alone. He has been a member of NU since childhood and went to the NU *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Jombang. He said he thinks Gus Dur (Abdurrahman Wahid, the 4th President of Indonesia) is a *wali*. He said he comes here to adore the charisma of Sunan Giri who brought Islam to Java. He comes to give thanks and to help him become a more peaceful person. He said he performs *ziarah* he reads the *tahlil* and prays to God and not to Sunan Giri. He does not expect anything as he believes it is all in God’s hands. He said that a religious experience cannot be told in words and that it was “in my heart” and that when I come here “I become more peaceful, calm and quiet, I feel it”. He added that God makes his own plans and one can only hope but never ask. He mentioned that it was in the prophet’s tradition of *hadith* (a sacred text of Islam) that taught him to perform *ziarah* at Makam Sunan Giri.

Conversation 5

Person is male a local *warung* owner at Makam Sunan Giri and is Muslim. In my discussions with him he mentioned a few interesting things. First that *kesadaran* (awareness or consciousness) comes from inside your heart and second that radical groups were not allowed to come to Makam Sunan Giri. He mentioned that only a small percentage of Muslims were radical and used the figure of 0.001%. He said that the Government had allowed some of these groups to exist and he said he didn’t like the new era *kemajuan zaman* (progress of the times) and that it was *jalan Setan* (the road to Satan or the devil’s road)

Conversation 6

Person is female and the owner of a local laundry shop near Makam Sunan Giri where I would take my washing. She is aged 41 and is a member of the Muhammadiyah. I her twice and was interested in her opinion on *ziarah* as she comes from an organisation that does not support sacred grave visitations. She said that she seldom visits to Makam Sunan Giri and if she does it is to pray to Allah and not to Sunan Giri which would be *syirik* (forbidden on religious grounds). She said there were no rules with Muhammadiyah and that if someone
wanted to visit it would be ok and that if not that would also be ok. Individuals are bebas (free) to decide. She doesn’t know if Sunan Giri is a wali but believes he is close to God and added that he listens to the prayers of pilgrims, their hopes and wishes for their ziarah and that if it is granted it is from Allah. She thought that Sunan Giri was full of sakti (power) and that “semoga doanya dikabulkan” (hopefully your prayers will be granted). She emphasised that a pilgrim could not ask for blessings from a deceased person and that a pilgrim could only pray to God to ask for blessings.
## Appendix F

**Pesarean Gunung Kawi and Makam Sunan Giri**

**Compared and Contrasted**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pesarean Gunung Kawi</th>
<th>Makam Sunan Giri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pesarean Gunung Kawi has only two tombs</td>
<td>Makam Sunan Giri has one main mausoleum where Sunan Giri and his wife are entombed. Next to the makam are numerous other tombs in close vicinity and perhaps over a hundred other tombs/graves are scattered on the terraced hill where the Makam is located.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mbah Djugo and R.M Iman Sudjono were laid to rest in 1871 and 1875 respectively</td>
<td>Sunan Giri died in 1506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No representations made of the tokoh (no photographs, paintings or drawings) except for a recent stone carving at the gate nearest to the mausoleum</td>
<td>Numerous representations made as part of the Wali Songo for example books, paintings, posters, clothing and amulets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No documentation pre 1950’s. Importance of the narrative in maintaining the legend.</td>
<td>History can be traced back to the Babab Tanah Jawi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims make up 50% of Pilgrims/Tourists</td>
<td>Muslims make up 99% of Pilgrims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerous Ritual Activities: Selamatan, offerings of flowers, use of incense, Dewandaru tree, air suci and guci kuno (holy water and water from ancient jars), location for sumber manggis below the pesarean, the mausoleum is adorned with gifts from pilgrims such as grandfather clocks and antique lamps. Some form of tahlil is read by the juru kunci or his assistants</td>
<td>Few Ritual activities: Islamic observant practice of tahlil by individual pilgrims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kejawen influenced rituals, practices, celebrations and dress</td>
<td>Islamic influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regarded as a probable location for pesugian by many Indonesians</td>
<td>Pesugian not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The site has become famous within the Chinese community after a Chinese businessman became very wealthy after a visit to Gunung Kawi where he was said to have a dream and subsequently changed the name of his</td>
<td>No famous narratives on business success of becoming wealthy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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cigarette brand to the name Bentoel which in the 1950’s became extremely successful and his family subsequently became very wealthy.

Representative of Indonesia’s religious pluralism with all of Indonesia’s main religions being represented at the Pesarean itself or at the Kraton located about 5 kilometres above the Pesarean.

Representative of only Islam.

Important buildings at the Pesarean and the Kraton include: the mausoleum, the Eyang Jugo Masjid, Tri Dharma temples, Ciamsi temple, a Christian church, a Hindu shrine and a large pendopo which covers the Makam and surrounding tombs where pilgrims are able to sit. The Sunan Giri Masjid (Mosque) is located adjacent to the Makam.

Important buildings are the mausoleum, the Eyang Jugo Masjid, Tri Dharma temples, Ciamsi temple, a Christian church, a Hindu shrine and a large pendopo which covers the Makam and surrounding tombs where pilgrims are able to sit. The Sunan Giri Masjid (Mosque) is located adjacent to the Makam.

Significant Chinese cultural representations in buildings Buddhism, Confucianism and Ciamsi

No Chinese representations in buildings

Personal objective spiritual even mystical very often in the pilgrims self-interest such as requesting prosperity for business or other personal requests

Personal or group observant religious objective
Glossary

abangan – syncretistic or nominal (Javanese) Muslim whose beliefs and practices incorporate elements of customary law (adat) and elements of other religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, indigenous spirituality)

adat – local traditions, custom or customary law as opposed to Shari’a or Muslim law

agama – religion

air suci – holy water

Allah - God

aman - safe

azan – call to prayer

babad – chronicle

barakah – (baraka) blessing, god’s blessing, the divine power from a holy man

batin – inward, esoteric, inner aspects, quest for knowledge about Allah; deceased spirits of heroes, saints and long dead kings

benci – hate, dislike

berkah – (barakah) blessings

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika – Unity in Diversity, the official national motto of Indonesia

bid’ah – (bid’a) forbidden or unwarranted religious innovation in religion, heresy,

buto ijo – green giant

candi – temple or shrine

ciamsi – to predict the future by casting sticks

danyang – place spirit
dakwah – religious proselytizing, missionary endeavour

dewan daru – sacred tree at Gunung Kawi a leaf from the tree is said to bring good fortune. Pilgrims are not permitted to touch or shake the tree which is fenced off. Pilgrims often wait to collect a falling leaf by sleeping underneath the tree at night

doa – prayer

Eyang – a term of address and reference for a grandparent, also used for ‘the ancestors’

fatwah – religious legal opinion

Front Pembela Islam – (FPI) Islamic Defenders Front

giri – hill or mountain

guci knuo – ancient jars

Hadith – traditions based on the actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad

hajj – annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca

haram – forbidden

hijab – (jilbab) head covering for Muslim women, exposes the face but not ears, neck or hair

Hizbut Tahir – (HTI) Indonesian Party of Liberation, aim is to revive the caliphate

ibadah – worship, ritual observance, pious activity

ibadat – acts of worship, subject area in Islamic jurisprudence dealing with rituals and practices including prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage, going to the mosque

ilmu – knowledge

ilmu tinggi – a person who possesses esoteric knowledge of the highest
Jemmaah Islamiah – (JI) Islamic community; covert jihadist Islamic organisation

jihad – struggle, against one’s baser instincts and also against the enemies of Islam, holy war

juruj kunci – caretaker in a graveyard; gatekeeper. Key bearer. A person of some importance at the sacred site and is the custodian of the site and is responsible for the opening of the site as well as often acting as a vehicle of communication between the pilgrim and the deceased

karamat – honour or regard from god. Javanese kramat; also karamah

kawasan – area

kebudayaan – culture

kesakten – potency, a piece of the saint’s power

keturunan – descendant

kebatinan- mysticism, spiritualism; related to one’s inner self; spirit (Javanese mysticism)

kejawen – mysticism associated with the Javanese view of the world; general Javanese knowledge (Javanese mysticism), Javanism

kepercayaan – something or someone whom one can rely on; faith, trust, confidence, belief (Javanese mysticism)

keramat – sacred, holy; possessing supernatural qualities, shrine’ sacred spot

keraton – palace, court. (kraton)

keturunan – descendent

kuburan – cemetery, grave

kyai – revered religious leader, respected or authoritative religious teacher

lahir – outer aspects, behaviour

Laskar Jihad – radical Islamic group formed in early 1998
Majlis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) the Indonesian Ulama Council

makam – grave, resting place, burial plot, tomb

Mbah – leader, champion

ngalap berkah – petitioning for personal favours, repeated blessings, to access a personal favour that has a supernatural origin

ngelmu – knowledge or wisdom

niyat – intention, required before performing prayer or ritual action

nusantara – archipelago, the Indonesian Archipelago

padepokan – residence

Pancasila – the five guiding principles of the Indonesian state

pengobatan – treatment

penyebar Islam – spreader of knowledge about Islam

perjuangan – struggle

perolehan – something that is obtained from, derived from *oleh*, meaning to get. A spiritual power residing in certain things such as mountains, rivers etc. Not regarded as pure and aligned with *pesugihan*

pesantren – school of Koranic studies for children and young people, most of whom are boarders (Islamic boarding school)

pesarean – cemetery, grave gravesite, sacred tomb, ritual activity, also pasarean – taken from the verb to sleep *sare*

pesugihan – involves agreement, promise and may have various negative risks; a means of acquiring wealth, evil power to earn wealth, make an agreement with an entity (using magical powers) to have wishes realised but would have to sacrifice something eg the death or illness of a member of the family or a child, give something in return for the granting of wishes
Qur’an – the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad

Raden – title of nobility

reformasi – “Reform”, dictum of the 1998 student-led movement, post New Order era

santri – religious, pious, observant Muslim; orthodox leaning Muslim pesantren student

selamatan – (slametan coll Jv) communal meal to observe occasions of ritual importance

suci – pure, purified; holy

sumber – well; source

sumbangan – contribution, donation

Sunan - title for the holy men who first brought Islam to Java

Suni (Sunni) Sunni Islam is has the largest denomination of Islam in Indonesia

syariah – (shari’a) Islamic religious Law, the ‘clear path’, Islamic law in its widest sense

syirik – idolatry, polytheism

tahlil – repeated chanting of the confession of faith

tahlilan – Islamic chanting, ritualised recitation of zikir and prayers

tarekat – path for mystics to follow, especially Sufism

tasawuf – mysticism especially of the Sufi school

tawassul – attempt to obtain something by means of an intercessor mediation or intercession by a prophet or saint or another figure close to God on behalf of the believer

tentrem – tranquillity and inner peace

tirakat – do something ascetic in order to fulfil a wish or commemorate an event
tokoh – personage, prominent figure

tongkat – stick, staff

Ulama – Islamic religious scholar, a Muslim who masters religious knowledge

umrah – a lesser pilgrimage (than the hajj)

wali – saint, friend of God

Wali Songo (Wali Sanga) - nine saints, refers to the revered nine saints of Java that were said to have first brought and spread Islam throughout the island of Java. Wali meaning saint or holy man. Songo or sanga is the number nine in Javanese. Also written as Walisongo or Walisanga (one word)

Wisata Religi – Religious Tourism

ziarah – make a devotional visit to a sacred place, pilgrimages to graves, using a particular procedure when visiting a sacred place

zikir – reciting or chanting praises, glorifying and “remembering God”
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