

PILGRIMAGE TRADITION AT THE TOMB OF KYAI AGENG MUHAMMAD BESARI TEGALSARI, PONOROGO: RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND STRENGTHENING NATIONAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the pilgrimage tradition at the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari in Ponorogo, East Java. The article aims to reveal the figure of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and its role in Ponorogo, and the form of rituals and motivations of pilgrims. Further, it explores the aspect of religious tourism of this tomb and how it could be related to the strengthening of national identity. The study employed qualitative design. The data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The study results show that the tradition of pilgrimage of the tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besar has ritual and social aspects; the motivations of pilgrims are based on: mystical beliefs, worship, appreciation of ulama, and simply grave pilgrimage (ziarah kubur). This study enriches the literature on the religious tourism and socio-religious practice of the local people by visiting the grave of pious figures.

Keywords: Pilgrimage Tradition, Religious Tourism, National Identity, Muhammad Besari, Tegalsari.

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengkaji tradisi ziarah Makam Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari. Tujuannya untuk mengungkap figur Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari dan peranannya di Ponorogo, bentuk ritual dan motivasi para ziarah. Di samping itu, artikel ini akan mengungkap potensi pengembangan wisata religi di Makam Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari, baik situsnya sendiri maupun ekonomi rakyat. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif. Pengambilan data dilakukan dengan cara observasi, wawancara, dan studi dokumentasi. Hasil pembahasan menunjukkan bahwa tradisi ziarah makam Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besar memiliki aspek ritual dan social; motivasi peziarah antara lain karena kepercayaan mistis, ibadah, apresiasi kepada ulama, dan sekadar ziarah kubur.

Kata Kunci : Tradisi Ziarah, Wisata Religi, Identitas Nasional, Muhammad Besari, Tegalsari

INTRODUCTION

There are many historical sites and relics in Ponorogo, East Java, many of which are not widely known by the public. These sites are highly valuable as historical treasures which are local in nature, but their value can be national, even international, or universal. Local values or local wisdom are contained in these ancient heritage sites; which is essential in the development of national character and becomes the basis for strengthening national identity. National identity is a specific identity, characteristic and nature that grows and develops within a nation-state so that it becomes a differentiator from other nation-states.¹ National identity refers to the identity of citizens or communities with different historical and cultural traditions in each country. National identity contains moral values, ideals, beliefs, social, culture, and national sovereignty.² These ancient heritage sites can also be developed to have implications for improving the economy and

¹ Yeyen Sormin, Yayang Furi Furnamasari, and Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, "Identitas Nasional Sebagai Salah Satu Determinan Pembangunan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 5, no. 3 (2021): 7278–85.

² Ravita Mega Saputri, Alil Rinenggo, and Suharno, "Eksistensi Tradisi Nyadran Sebagai Penguatan Identitas Nasional Di Tengah Modernisasi," *Civic Education and Social Science Journal (CESSJ)* 3, no. 2 (2021): 99–111.

welfare of the surrounding community. Communities can take many benefits from local wisdom for a good life in the future.³

Locality cannot be separated from local history. In this regard local wisdom is related to local history. It is very synonymous with spatial concepts, namely the concept of territory. Taufik Abdullah explained that local history is the history of a place or about a locality, the boundaries of which are very dependent on and determined by the author. The boundaries are geographical in nature, namely a place where ethnic groups live, cities or villages. This limitation is related to the past so that administratively at this time, it is possible that the place has changed, which was previously a level I region or province, but now it has been split into two or three provinces. Likewise, level II, districts/cities, could have been split or even merged into one administrative area. Therefore, this limitation is a geographical limitation, and not a theoretical-philosophical ones⁴. "The importance of local history for the community is not supported by the awareness of the community itself about the importance of its conservation efforts. This can be seen from the lack of writing about local history. The transmission of history from generation to generation is still in the form of an oral tradition..."⁵ In this regard, there is one local historical legacy in Ponorogo, East Java which is very important to be inherited to the current generation, namely the Tomb Complex of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and the Tegalsari Mosque in Tegalsari Village, Jetis Subdistrict.

The existence of the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and the Tegalsari Mosque has the potential to be developed as a religious tourism destination. This religious tourism can at least provide three benefits, namely: "1) Religious tourism can raise awareness about humanity's past heritage and provide

³ Tutiek Ernawati, "Pewarisan Keberagaman Dan Keteladanan Melalui Sejarah Lokal," *Sejarah Dan Budaya* XI, no. 2 (2017): 206.

⁴ Taufik Abdullah, "Di Sekitar Sejarah Lokal Di Indonesia," in *Sejarah Lokal Di Indonesia*, ed. Taufik Abdullah (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1985), 15.

⁵ Ernawati, "Pewarisan Keberagaman Dan Keteladanan Melalui Sejarah Lokal," 206.

multiple resources for its maintenance; 2) Religious tourism can contribute to regional development; and 3) Religious tourism can also build cultural understanding.”⁶

The graves of ulama, especially for Muslims, are considered "sacred", and this has become one of the centers in the pilgrimage tradition. The pilgrims, according to their etiquette, during the pilgrimage say *salām* (please be upon) to the saints or people who are considered noble. Not infrequently they also rubbed the tombstone, the walls of the tomb house, or kissed the door, and some even prostrated themselves at the foot of the grave—which was considered excessive. There are also visitors who give offerings during the pilgrimage, for example in the form of certain food or cakes and various and colorful flowers, which visitors deliberately bring as offerings, a sign of gratitude, or *tabarukan* (*ngalap berkah* or seeking blessings) from figures who are sacred at the pilgrimage site. ⁷ In the archipelago, such traditions were inherited from pre-Islamic times. In the afterward development, these traditions experience some kind of "purification" and are always directed at increasing faith and gratitude to Allah, God who has bestowed the enjoyment of life in this world. The pilgrimage is a kind of reminder of the merits of the ancestors, including parents, and the day after when all human beings return to their Creator. ⁸

In this regard, it is necessary to convey the meaning of pilgrimage. The word pilgrimage comes from Arabic, *zāra-yazūru-ziyārah*, which literally means visiting, both those who

⁶ Kevin Griffin and Razaq Raj, "Editorial: The Importance of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage: Reflecting on Definitions, Motives and Data," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 5, no. 3 (2017): ii, <http://arrow.dit.ie/ijrtp/>.

⁷ Amirul Nur Wahid, Sumarlam Sumarlam, and Slamet Subiyantoro, "Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik)," *Journal of Art, Design, Art Education And Culture Studies (JADECS)* 3, no. 1 (2018): 9, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/um037v3i12018p8-22>; Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot, *Ziarah Dan Wali Di Dunia Islam* (Jakarta: Serambi, École française d'Extrême-Orient, dan Forum Jakarta-Paris, 2007), 196.

⁸ A Khoirul Anam, "Tradisi Ziarah: Antara Spiritualitas, Dakwah Dan Pariwisata," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 8, no. 2 (2015): 393.

are still alive and those who have died. *Ziyārah* means visit. The meaning of pilgrimage in the Indonesian Language Dictionary (KBBI) is "a visit to a place that is considered sacred or noble (tombs and so on)"⁹. In practice, *ziyārah* or the meaning of pilgrimmage has been reduced or changed in society to the activity of visiting certain graves, for example the tombs of the Prophet, friends, guardians, scholars, clerics, *buya*, *gurutta*, *tuan guru*, heroes, parents, families, and other people.¹⁰ There were internal and external factors in the change, namely: "Internal factors include the existence of communication or interaction that exists between people, the way of thinking of the community, the occurrence of conflicts, revolutions and others. Meanwhile, external factors include natural disasters, wars, climate change and other cultural influences. With modernization, the existing cultures in Indonesia have begun to be abandoned because they are considered to be out of date..."¹¹ The pilgrimages in this study, therefore, means visits to places that are considered holy or sacred or visits to the graves of saints, religious leaders and community, especially Islamic leaders.¹²

On the other hand, pilgrimage is generally carried out for the ancestors, parents, and other family members. The purpose of pilgrimage in this context, apart from remembering death for pilgrims, is to glorify Allah, God Almighty, and pray for the

⁹ Tim Penyusun, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008), 1632; "Ziarah," accessed March 6, 2022, <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/ziarah>.

¹⁰ Zaura Sylviana, "Ziarah : Antara Fenomena Mistik Dan Komunikasi Spritual," *Jurnal Darussalam: Jurnal Pendidikan, Komunikasi Dan Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (2018): 122–23, <https://doi.org/10.30739/darussalam.v10i1.273>; Suherman Arifin, "Pola Perubahan Ziarah Makam Sebagai Arena Sosial," *At-Taqaddum* 12, no. 2 (2020): 136–37, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.21580/at.v12i2.6354>; Muhaimin A.G., *Islam Dalam Bingkai Budaya Lokal: Potret Dari Cirebon* (Ciputat: Logos, 2002), 252–53.

¹¹ Muhammad Misbahul Mujib, "Fenomena Tradisi Ziarah Lokal Dalam Masyarakat Jawa: Kontestasi Kesalehan, Identitas Keagamaan Dan Komersial," *IBDA, Jurnal Kebudayaan Islam* 4, no. 2 (2016): 136, <https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v14i2.2016pp.204-224>.

¹² Griffin and Raj, "Editorial: The Importance of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage: Reflecting on Definitions, Motives and Data," ii–ix.

spirits of grave experts to be accepted by Allah. This is the sunnah act and is recommended. This practice is usually referred to as grave pilgrimage (*ziyārah al-qubūr*). Another meaning of pilgrimage that is more common, especially in Indonesia, is a visit to various places, usually to tombs, houses of worship or historic mosques, the remains of religious figures, sultans, kings, and their families, and to places or generally in the form of religious complex of the tombs of the saints who contributed to spreading Islam in Indonesia.¹³ In the context of Javanese society, this is related to three fundamental aspects, namely 1) religion, 2) reality, and 3) communality. The religious aspect concerns the rituals performed to get closer to God. The reality aspect concerns the appreciation of certain events or the form of widespread acceptance. While the communality aspect concerns the unity of the community that is built or born based on values, customs, and traditions ¹⁴.

In providing a conceptual and theoretical framework in the context of grave pilgrimage, several terms are used, namely *sowan*, *nyekar* and the word *ziarah* (pilgrimage). The *ziarah* term comes from Islamic tradition, taken from Arabic, *ziyārah*. This is different from the terms *sowan* and *nyekar* which have a more local feel, especially for Javanese people. This pilgrimage practice is basically the same as visiting graves in Islam, but there is a tradition and cultural basis from Javanese society. *Sowan* is a term in Javanese which means 'visiting those with a higher social status'. The term *nyekar*, which also comes from the Javanese language, means 'carrying and giving bouquets to certain people who have died, usually for the family or parties who are considered influential and respectable in society'.¹⁵

¹³ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, "Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik)."

¹⁴ Aser Lasfeto et al., "The Immersion of Ziarah Kubur- Slametan Tradition in Kejawan Culture With The Christianity in The Scope of Oneness," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 20, no. 1 (2022): 118–19, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v20.i1.1037>.

¹⁵ Machi Suhadi and Halina Hambali, *Makam-Makam Wali Sanga Di Jawa* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1994), 28, [https://repository.kemdikbud.go.id/13328/1/Makam makam wali sanga di jawa.pdf](https://repository.kemdikbud.go.id/13328/1/Makam%20makam%20wali%20sanga%20di%20jawa.pdf).

“Both *ziarah* and *nyekar* are based on the belief that after death, the soul, at least temporarily, resides in the grave. Saints are thought to have the ability to commute between heaven and their tombs.”¹⁶ There is another term among Javanese people, namely *nyadran*. The form of pilgrimage in the form of *nyadran* is usually more interpreted with the intention of awakening or reminding.¹⁷

Nyekar as a tradition of visiting graves in Javanese terms is actually a very important activity according to the Javanese religious system. The tradition of visiting the tombs is slightly different from the *nyadran* tradition. *Nyadran* is a series of activities carried out by the Javanese once a year in order to pray for the ancestors who have passed away so that they get a proper place with God. The tradition of visiting graves can be done at any time, while *nyadran* is only once a year. The Javanese usually visit the graves of their ancestors after a thousand days. They put flowers and sometimes also burn incense and light candles over the tomb¹⁸.

In the pilgrimage tradition, there are two things that are often practiced by the community, namely *tabarukan* or *ngalap berkah* and *tawasulan*. The term *tabaruk* comes from the Arabic *tabārūk*, which means "to seek or take blessings"¹⁹. *Tawasul* also comes from the Arabic *tawāsul*, which means "to intermedate"²⁰. *Tabarukan* becomes something important in pilgrimage because it implies getting a blessing or gift from God²¹. *Tabarukan* in pilgrimage is then used as a ware or intermediary,

¹⁶ Nelly Van Doom-Harder and Kees De Jong, “The Pilgrimage to Tembayat: Tradition and Revival in Indonesian Islam,” *Muslim World* 91, no. 3–4 (2001): 327, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.2001.tb03720.x>.

¹⁷ Mujib, “Fenomena Tradisi Ziarah Lokal Dalam Masyarakat Jawa: Kontestasi Kesalehan, Identitas Keagamaan Dan Komersial,” 211.

¹⁸ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, “Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik),” 11.

¹⁹ “Tabaruk,” accessed February 20, 2022, <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/tabaruk>.

²⁰ “Tawasul,” accessed February 20, 2022, <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/tawasul>.

²¹ Muhaimin A.G., *Islam Dalam Bingkai Budaya Lokal: Potret Dari Cirebon*.

generally intermediary with the good deeds of holy people to pray to Allah. It is in this context that pilgrimage to the tombs of saints is a manifestation of love for these saints who are believed to be God's beloved with the hope that pilgrims become people loved by God and their prayers can be answered²². Jamhari mentions that blessings (*berkah*) in this context involve worldly blessings and transcendental blessings. Blessings in the world include prosperity, wealth, welfare, or adequacy in worldly life. The transcendental blessings include luck and reward from God in the hereafter and increased spiritual strength (*kadigdayan*).²³

Studies on pilgrimage traditions in the archipelago and such as to the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari have been carried out by previous researchers. For example, an article written by Mohammad Takdir Ilahi entitled "Pilgrimage and the Taste of Archipelago Islam: Religious Tourism in the Frame of Local Wisdom". This article explains that "the pilgrimage tradition is not a threat to the collapse of one's faith, but rather it becomes a harmony for the maintenance of the Archipelago's Islamic tradition which is full of spiritual dimensions. Pilgrimage in the Islamic tradition is one of the religious practices or rituals that are in line with the local culture which represents the diversity of the archipelago with an extraordinary taste."²⁴

An important book on the pilgrimage tradition is *Le culte des saints dans le monde musulman* (Indonesian version: *Ziarah dan Wali di Dunia Islam*), a collection of writings on pilgrimage traditions in various parts of the Islamic world collected by Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot²⁵. Guillot and Chambert-Loir wrote "Tomb of Sunan Gunung Jati" (pp. 361-366) which stated

²² Asmaran Asmaran, "Membaca Fenomena Ziarah Wali Di Indonesia: Memahami Tradisi Tabarruk Dan Tawassul," *Al-Banjari : Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 17, no. 2 (2018): 199, <https://doi.org/10.18592/al-banjari.v17i2.2128>.

²³ Jamhari, "The Meaning Interpreted: The Concept of Barakah in Ziarah," *Studia Islamika* 8, no. 1 (2001): 113.

²⁴ Mohammad Takdir Ilahi, "Ziarah Dan Cita Rasa Islam Nusantara: Wisata Religius Dalam Bingkai Kearifan Lokal (Local Wisdom)," *Akademika* 21, no. 117-132 (2016): 131.

²⁵ Chambert-Loir and Guillot, *Ziarah Dan Wali Di Dunia Islam*.

that the pilgrimage phenomenon "gives an impression of extraordinary spirituality"²⁶. Another article in this book is "About the Tomb of Kyai Telingsing in Central Java" by Denys Lombard. This article describes Kyai Telingsing who is of Chinese descent whose real name is The Ling Sing and is also called Sunan Sungging. He lived during the time of Sunan Kudus and was his best friend. It is said that he helped Sunan Kudus in spreading the teachings of Islam, and taught woodworking techniques to the Kudus people. Pilgrimage to this tomb is not as busy as a pilgrimage to the tomb of Sunan Kudus, for example, but it is interesting to see the involvement of the Chinese in the process of spreading Islam in the archipelago, which is still being discussed until nowadays.²⁷

Another article entitled, "Pilgrimage and Graves from Religious Rituals to the Tourism Industry", written by Ala'i Nadjib, explains pilgrimage in the Islamic dimension. In the pilgrimage tradition, according to him, changes and shifts in culture are caused by three factors, namely the struggle for influence, commercialization of tombs and figures, and pilgrimage to become religious tourism.²⁸ And the other is "Dampak Sosial Ekonomi Wisata Religi Makam K.H.R. As'ad Syamsul Arifin" (The Socio-Economic Impact of Religious Tourism of the Tomb of K.H.R. As'ad Syamsul Arifin" by Nuris Satriawan, et al. explain the impact of religious tourism on the socio-economy of the surrounding community of Sumberejo, Situbondo, East Java.²⁹

²⁶ Claude Guillot and Henri Chambert-Loir, "Makam Sunan Gunung Jati," in *Ziarah Dan Wali Di Dunia Islam*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot (Jakarta: Serambi, École française d'Extrême-Orient, dan Forum Jakarta-Paris, 2007), 367.

²⁷ Denys Lombard, "Seputar Makam Kiyai Telingsing Di Jawa Tengah," in *Ziarah Dan Wali Di Dunia Islam*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot (Jakarta: Serambi, École française d'Extrême-Orient, dan Forum Jakarta-Paris, 2007), 373.

²⁸ Ala'i Nadjib, "Ziarah Dan Makam Dari Ritual Agama Sampai Industri Wisata," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 7, no. 1 (2014): 7–12.

²⁹ Nuris Satriawan, Bambang Soepeno, and Rully Putri Nirmala Puji, "Dampak Sosial Ekonomi Wisata Religi Makam K.H.R As'ad Syamsul Arifin," *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya* 3, no. 2 (2019): 113–19.

Another study is “Pilgrimage from the Perspective of Cultural Studies (Study at Mbah Priuk Tomb Site, North Jakarta)”, which explains from the point of view of interactions occur in the pilgrimage procession, there is “meaning of brotherhood, meaning of sympathy, togetherness, mutual respect” in the pilgrimage. There is also a “welfare meaning”, namely “the existence of a tomb with various ritual activities in it has given blessings to many parties, traders, transportation service entrepreneurs and so on, and the third is the meaning of legitimacy”.³⁰

In the article entitled, “Rituals at the Tomb of Ki Ageng Besari, Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo”, by Muhammad Widda Djuhan, it is explained that “the public’s belief in the rituals at the tomb of Ki Ageng Besari is not singular. There are many motivations and goals desired by each pilgrim, according to the intention in his heart. For those who clearly state their motivation, it can be categorized as having beliefs based on traditional Islamic patterns, there are those who are heavily influenced by mystical beliefs based on tradition, and there are those who believe in them purely rationally.”³¹

Based on some of the previous studies above, this article more specifically deals with the pilgrimage tradition at the tomb complex of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari. The difference with previous studies is related to his role in teaching and spreading the teachings of Islam in the Ponorogo which is associated with this pilgrimage tradition. Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari was a figure who had spread Islam in the Ponorogo by establishing Pesantren Tegalsari. He had continued the da’wa of his teacher, Kyai Donopuro, at Pesantren Setono. Meanwhile, Pesantren Setono itself was stopped after the death of Kyai Donopuro and his students were transferred to Pesantren Tegalsari. The Islamic religion was growing rapidly in the Ponorogo. The existence of the Tegalsari site with its graveyard and mosque complex has the

³⁰ Syahdan, “Ziarah Perspektif Kajian Budaya (Studi Pada Situs Makam Mbah Priuk Jakarta Utara),” *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 13, no. 1 (2017): 96–97.

³¹ Muhammad Widda Djuhan, “Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo,” *Kodifikasia* 5, no. 1 (2011): 184, <https://doi.org/10.21154/kodifikasia.v5i1.224>.

potential to become a national-level religious tourism destination which in turn can improve the welfare of the surrounding community as well as the maintenance of the religious site. This point is still required for further study so that it becomes another differentiating point from previous studies. It can also be added that the potential for its development to become a national religious tourism destination has been proven by the establishment of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (1926 AD), in Gontor Village, Mlarak, which is a descendant of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. This Modern Islamic Boarding School is well known to foreign countries. Apart from that, Pesantren Tegalsari also gave birth to great figures such as R. Ngabehi Ronggowarsito and HOS Cokroaminoto. Therefore, the Tegalsari Cemetery site can become a religious tourism attraction especially in Ponorogo, and commonly at the national level. Its development will bring many benefits to society, both individuals and groups. Among the benefits are arousing religious passion, increasing understanding of the history of the clergy, finding character and identity, and increasing socio-economic activities which have implications for increasing people's welfare ³².

With reference to the background of the study above, this article examines the pilgrimage tradition at the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari in Tegalsari. The research problems include who was Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and what was his role in Ponorogo? How is the pilgrimage tradition at the Tomb of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari nowadays; what are the forms of the ritual and what are the motivations of the pilgrims to do this? And how is the potential for developing religious tourism, both in Tegalsari and Ponorogo?

To analyze social phenomena in this pilgrimage tradition, Berger and Luckmann's interpretation of the theory of faith,

³² Satriawan, Soepeno, and Puji, "Dampak Sosial Ekonomi Wisata Religi Makam K.H.R As'ad Syamsul Arifin," 113–15; Putra Pratama Idris and Nur Aini, "Manajemen Krisis Disbudparpora Ponorogo Dalam Menangani Penurunan Kunjungan Wisata Religi Masjid Tegalsari Selama Pandemi COVID-19," *Estesial: Journal of Communication* 7, no. 2 (2022): 84.

social reality, and individual experience or personal biography is used. This interrelation gives birth to symbols which are objectified and externalized. Therefore, the spiritual experiences of individuals and groups which are referred to as religious beliefs related to everyday life give rise to social situations that are embodied in religious rituals and pilgrimage traditions to reach a better stage.³³ National identity is the identity of a nation that belongs to that nation and is different from others. "National identity is understood as a dynamic condition that is not only formed due to ethnicity, region, language, religion, and the like, but also due to developmental factors in the context of globalization." National identity is molded because of similarities in history, point of view, philosophy, and personality, in addition to cultural, social, religious, and economic similarities, as well as geographical boundaries are distinguished factors of national identity.³⁴

The study employs qualitative research design. Qualitative research is a research process that is carried out fairly and naturally in accordance with objective conditions in the field.³⁵ The tradition of pilgrimage to the tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari is a social-religious activity and is related to people's beliefs. The approach used in this research is a sociological approach, in the sense that this research involves humans. The researchers explore the empirical experiences of pilgrims in the field and are equipped with social concepts or theories for the phenomena found.³⁶ This step was carried out to make a description of the field findings, classify and categorize, and then carry

³³ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, 10th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 114–15, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315775357>.

³⁴ Sormin, Furnamasari, and Dewi, "Identitas Nasional Sebagai Salah Satu Determinan Pembangunan," 7280.

³⁵ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, "Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendi Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik)," 11.

³⁶ Abdullah, "Di Sekitar Sejarah Lokal Di Indonesia," 20–21.

out an analysis of the intentions and objectives of the pilgrims according to the conceptual and theoretical framework above.³⁷

Data collection was carried out by means of observation, interviews, and literature or documentation studies (library research). Observation is intended as an effort to observe the situation and conditions at the research location. The type of observation is more involved observation or active observation. Researchers involved themselves in pilgrimage processions, such as praying, reciting remembrance, and laying flowers while observing the behavior of the pilgrims. Theoretically, "Active observation is a special way and the researcher does not act passively as an observer but plays various possible roles in a situation related to his research, taking into account the access he gets which can be used for data collection".³⁸ The research location is Tegalsari Village, Jetis, Ponorogo. The area of Tegalsari Village in the north it is bordered by Jabung Village and Gandu Village; to the east it is bordered by Mojorejo Village and Karanggebang Village; to the south it is bordered by Jetis Village and Wonoketro Village; and west is bordered by Wonoketro Village.³⁹

The next method is an interview, namely meeting several pilgrims to ask for information or opinions about the meaning and purpose of pilgrimage, both for themselves and for the community. Interviews were also conducted with descendants of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and the people surroundings concerning the theme and research objectives. The study of literature or documentation was tracing the sources or literature and documents related to the pilgrimage and the main figures in the pilgrimage complex, especially those related to Kyai Ageng

³⁷ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, "Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik)," 11.

³⁸ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, 11.

³⁹ Farih Ighfar Ikhwanil Fauza, "Peran Takmir Masjid Dalam Melestarikan Budaya Keagamaan Di Masjid Jami' Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ponorogo, 2018), 40–41.

Muhammad Besari and the meaning and purpose of the pilgrimage and its economic impact.⁴⁰

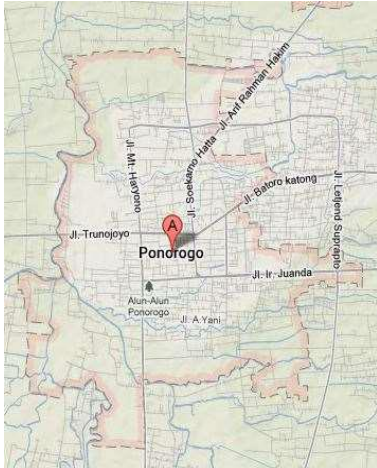
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Geographical Location of Research Location

This research was conducted in the Tegalsari Mosque and the tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besar, which are located in Tegalsari Village, Jetis Subdistrict, Ponorogo Regency, East Java Province. Ponorogo Regency is about 200 km southwest of the capital city of East Java Province, Surabaya, and about 800 km east of the capital city of the Republic of Indonesia (RI), Jakarta. Ponorogo Regency is located between 1110 07' to 1110 52' East Longitude and 070 49' to 080 20' South Latitude. Based on its geographical location, Ponorogo Regency has the following boundaries: North is bordered by Magetan, Madiun and Nganjuk Regencies; South is bordered by Pacitan Regency; West is bordered by Pacitan Regency and Wonogiri Regency, Central Java Province; and the east is bordered by Tulungagung and Trenggalek Regencies. The area of Ponorogo Regency about 1.371,78 km², and is divided into 21 Subdistricts, and consists of 307 villages.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, "Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik)," 11.

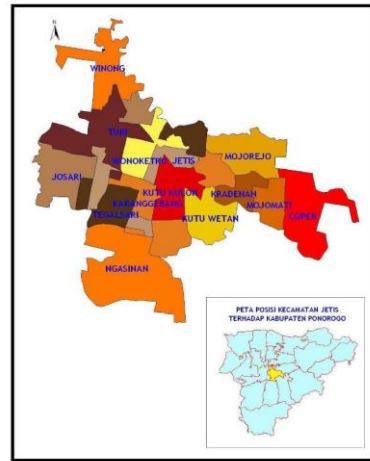
⁴¹ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Ponorogo, *Kabupaten Ponorogo Dalam Angka 2018* (Ponorogo: BPS, 2018), 3–4.



Source: Rido Kurnianto, 2017: 9; Cf. BPS Ponorogo District, 2018: iii

Figure 1.

Map of Ponorogo Regency



Source: BPS Ponorogo District, 2018: v

Figure 2.

Map of the Subdistricts in Ponorogo Regency

Jetis is one of the subdistricts in Ponorogo. The boundaries of the Jetis are as follows: North is bordered by Siman and Mlarak Subdistricts; East is bordered by Sambit Subdistrict; The south is bordered by Balong and Bungkal Subdistricts; and the west is bordered by Balong Subdistrict. The total area of Jetis Subdistrict is around 2,241 hectares or 22.41 km².⁴²

Pilgrimage Tradition in Ponorogo

One of the well-known grave pilgrimage traditions in Ponorogo Regency is the pilgrimage tradition to the grave of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. This tradition cannot be separated from the symbols in it. These symbols usually have certain meanings that vary from one to another. The meaning contained in a symbol can also be referred to as symbolic meaning. The word 'meaning' is the main element in oral and written communication. There are certain meanings in oral and written communi-

⁴² Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Ponorogo, 3.

cation. This also occurs in cultural communication contained in the tradition of pilgrimage tradition.⁴³

Tegalsari as one of the regions in Ponorogo which later gave birth to the figure of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari related to Kyai Donopuro Setono. It is said that Kyai Anom Besari had three sons, namely Ketib Anom, Muhammad Besari, and Nur Shodiq, who went to study in Setono. Young Muhammad Besari married the daughter of Kyai Nur Salim, another kyai who was less well known than Kyai Donopuro. However, it was stated that Kyai Nur Salim had royal blood as a descendant of Ki Ageng Mentawis or Ki Ageng Pemanahan. Kyai Donopuro then ordered his students to open their own land to the east of Pondok Setono which was a moor (*tegalan*) owned by the Kyai Donopuro. Later, when this “*tegalan*” developed, it was named Tegalsari. This was where the Pesantren Tegalsari stood. Even when Kyai Donopuro died, all the students at Pondok Setono moved to Tegalsari. Muhammad Besari later became known as Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. Pesantren Tegalsari then continued to grow so that its current assessment was that the Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari Tomb Complex and the Tegalsari Mosque have become one of the pilgrimage destinations.⁴⁴

Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari was said to have been an adviser to Sunan Paku Buwono II, the King of Surakarta. His grandson, Kyai Kasan Besari, became the teacher of R. Ngabehi Ronggowarsito, a poet of the Surakarta Palace. Likewise, the son of Kyai Kasan Besari, namely RT Cokronegoro, became the Regent of Ponorogo in 1856-1882. RT Cokronegoro passed down a major national figure, who was his grandson, namely Hadji Omar Said (HOS) Cokroaminoto, who was the sixth generation of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari.⁴⁵ Therefore, it is not surprising that the Tegalsari site is visited by many pilgrims.

⁴³ Wahid, Sumarlam, and Subiyantoro, “Tradisi Ziarah Makam Bathara Katong Pendiri Peradaban Islam Di Ponorogo (Tinjauan Makna Simbolik),” 8.

⁴⁴ Dawam Multazam, “Akar Dan Buah Tegalsari: Dinamika Santri Dan Keturunan Kiai Pesantren Tegalsari Ponorogo,” *Mozaic Islam Nusantara* 4, no. 1 (2018): 6–7, <https://doi.org/10.47776/mozaic.v4i1.119>.

⁴⁵ Multazam, 2.



Source: Guillot (1985: 141)

Figure 3.

Setono (Setana) Mosque



Source: Source: Guillot (1985: 149)

Figure 4.

Pondok of Ronggoworsito in
Tegalsari

Pilgrims to the tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besar have certain goals in interpreting the pilgrimage tradition. Nonetheless, basically, they made a pilgrimage to the grave of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari to commemorate his merits as a preacher of Islam in Java, especially in the Ponorogo area and its surroundings.

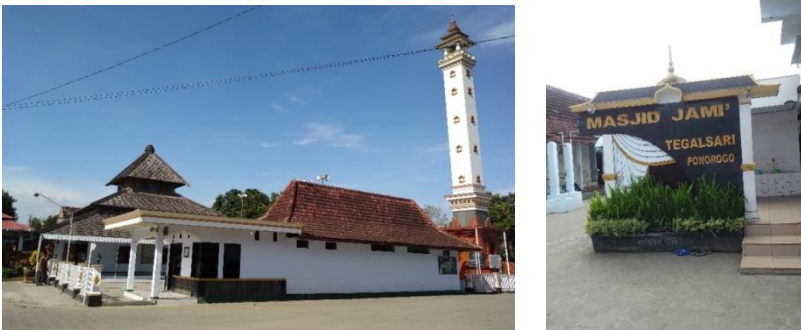
Pilgrimage Locations

1. Tegalsari Mosque

Tegalsari Mosque in one of the oldest mosques in East Java. The mosque was founded around the 18th century. Tegalsari was originally a forest that was cleared by two brothers, Prince Sumende and Kyai Donopuro to build a mosque and pesantren. Tegalsari nowadays is also a term to refer to the burial complex. From Javanese, *tegal* means dry land and *sari* means flower. This place is so called *Tegalsari* because it was previously an area discovered from a ritual process carried out by his teacher, Ki Ageng Donopuro. Ki Ageng Besari was ordered to move to a new place where the land smelled good in developing Islamic teachings.⁴⁶ One of the students studied at

⁴⁶ Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 144.

that time was named Muhammad Besari from Caruban who was known to be very clever. Kyai Nur Salim from Mantub Ngasinan took him as son-in-law. Then Kyai Donopuro gave Muhammad Besari a land in the east of Setono Hamlet which later built the Tegalsari Mosque and pesantren.⁴⁷ In the beginning, Tegalsari Village was led by a *lurah* (village head) and a role model with the title "Kyai Ageng". At that time there was the *Geger Pecinan* (*Geger Pacinan*) at the Mataram Kartosuro Palace led by Raden Mas Garendi who was then able to occupy the palace. Paku Buwono II, the *Susuhunan* (King) of Mataram, fled to Ponorogo and stopped at Tegalsari Village. He gathered strength and was finally able to conquer the rebellion.⁴⁸ In return for the favor, Tegalsari Village was made a fief and the Head of Tegalsari Village was given the title "Kyai Ageng", which meant Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, the son of Kyai Anom Besari from Kuncen.⁴⁹



Source: Author's Documentations 2018

Figure 5.
Jami' Tegalsari Mosque

⁴⁷ Claude Guillot, "Le Rôle Historique Des Perdikan Ou «villages Francs» : Le Cas de Tegalsari," *Archipel* 30, no. 1 (1985): 139, <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.1985.2249>.

⁴⁸ Guillot, 139–40.

⁴⁹ Hadi Kusnanto and Yudi Hartono, "Masjid Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo (Makna Simbolik Dan Potensinya Sebagai Sumber Pembelajaran Sejarah Lokal)," *Gulawentah: Jurnal Studi Sosial* 2, no. 1 (2017): 43, <http://e-journal.unipma.ac.id/index.php/gulawentah>.

According to Mukhlis Paeni,⁵⁰ there are various kinds of mosques in Indonesia which can be divided into four types, namely (1) traditional style or style with the main characteristic being a multilevel roof (overlapping), (2) Romanesque style which is characterized by using a dome as the roof of the mosque, usually large, and often coupled with a series of curved arcs on the porch, (3) with the style of modernism, the mosque tries to leave all the traditional and old idioms and icons, forms that are born entirely new. It is precisely because of this that mosques with this style are not much appreciated by the public, and (4) eclectic or mixed styles, this style can be condensed with its three demands namely, pan-Islamism, present day, and locality.⁵¹

The building style of the Tegalsari Mosque is an acculturation of Islam, Java, and Hinduism. The Tegalsari Mosque was first restored by the Government and inaugurated by President Soeharto in 1978. This restoration gave a modern touch to the front of the mosque's foyer, expanded the land in front of the mosque, and replaced the original shingle-shaped roof tiles with ordinary tiles. The second restoration was carried out by the East Java Antiquities Service in 1997. This restoration was to replace the old walls and restore the original shape of the roof tiles which were originally in the form of shingles, this was done to maintain the authenticity of the building. The elements of the building, namely:⁵²

- a) Mihrab of the Tegalsari Mosque. The mihrab as a pulpit for sermons was inscribed with the year 1700 and carved leaves. There are two lamps in the shape of a bell, a bell is a device that can produce sound, meaning that it is a sign that human affairs with God are the most important thing to do.
- b) The main room has 36 pillars; if added $3 + 6 = 9$; it has the philosophy of *Wali Songo* (nine saints) who spread Islam in Java.

⁵⁰ Mukhlis Paeni, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Indonesia: Arsitektur* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2009), 251–52.

⁵¹ Kusnanto and Hartono, “Masjid Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo (Makna Simbolik Dan Potensinya Sebagai Sumber Pembelajaran Sejarah Lokal),” 44.

⁵² Kusnanto and Hartono, 46–47.

- c) The foyer is supported by pillars which have 12 pillars lined up with 6 pillars left and right which means that they symbolize the 6 Pillars of Faith in Islam.
- d) The "bancik" stone is a river steppingstone located in front of the mosque. The stone has writing but it can't be read but the informants explained that the stone was a relic from the Hindu era. The stone depicts the end of the Hindu Majapahit era depicting and changing the Islamic era.
- e) The roof of the mosque in the form of a triple overlap means three things that must be possessed by Muslims in their life, namely Iman (Faith), Islam and Ihsan. The three-overlapping roof can also be interpreted as three practices that must be carried out by humans who live in the world, namely sharia, *haqika* (truth), and *ma'rifa* (knowledge of God).
- f) The fence in convex, curved, and jugged outward shapes has the meaning of prevention for the incident that happened before, namely when the fence is still straight, if you don't ride a bicycle, you will get hurt or fall.
- g) *Gapura* (the gate) as a place for the congregation to enter on the right side in front of the mosque has the meaning of forgiveness of sins (*gapura* from *gafūr(an)* in Arabic) this can be related if someone with good intentions converts to Islam, then their sins will be forgiven by God.⁵³

2. Pesantren Gebang Tinatar or Pesantren Tegalsari

Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari was believed to be a descendant of Brawijaya V, the King of Majapahit and received the Tegalsari land from Kyai Donopuro, Kyai of Pondok Setono. Simultaneously with the establishment of the Tegalsari Mosque, the Pesantren Gebang Tinatar was also founded around the 18th century AD. Pesantren Gebang Tinatar was also called Pesantren Tegalsari.⁵⁴ The Jami' Tegalsari Mosque was also the legacy of

⁵³ Kusnanto and Hartono, 46–47.

⁵⁴ Ernawati, "Pewarisan Keberagaman Dan Keteladanan Melalui Sejarah Lokal," 207; Dawam Multazam, "The Dynamics of Tegalsari (Santri and Descendants of Pesantren Tegalsari Ponorogo Kiai's in 19-20th)," *ISTIQRO'* 15, no. 02 (2017): 402–3; Muhammad Sam'ani, "Kyai Khasan

Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. This mosque was located at the same area of a 4500 m² territory with Pesantren Tegalsari. Pesantren Tegalsari was originally called the Pesantren Gebang Tinatar. But it was later better known as the Tegalsari because it was in the village of Tegalsari. During its heyday, Pesantren Tegalsari was a large Islamic boarding school with thousands of students. The greatness of this pesantren is famous everywhere. Pesantren Tegalsari had many students, both from around Tegalsari and from outside, even from outside the Ponorogo area. Among the students from outside the Ponorogo area were Bagus Burhan (Rongowarsito), and Paku Buwono II.⁵⁵ Unfortunately, the pesantren is no longer there today; its existence has carved out the history of the development of Islam in Ponorogo. The triumph of Pesantren Tegalsari was continued by the large pesantren which still exist today, among others were Pesantren Darul Huda Mayak, Pondok Modern Gontor, and Pondok Termas Pacitan.⁵⁶ Multazam explains the renewal of the education system by one of the descendants of Kyai Tegalsari, namely Pondok Modern Gontor:

In Gontor for example, the great teachings of predecessors could be combined with the renewal of the education system to meet the challenges of modernity. The descendants of Kyai Tegalsari who later established Gontor, provided that Tegalsari's folk was receptive to new ideas. Although the reputation of Pesantren Tegalsari was strong enough as a model of pesantren at that time, but the founders of Gontor was able to receive the new model in the form of Islamic teaching system. In this case, the principle of *al-muḥāfaẓah 'ala al-qadīm al-ṣāliḥ wa al-akhẓu bi al-jadīd al-aṣlah* which is the typical concept in Islam in Indonesia can be applied very well. This blend was finally proven to make Gontor can survive and thrive. Until now, Gontor had contributed much,

Besari: Biografi Dan Perananya Bagi Pondok Pesantren Gebang Tinatar Tegalsari Ponorogo (1797-1867 M)" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Salatiga, 2017).

⁵⁵ F. Fokkens, "De Priesterschool Te Tegalsari," *Tijdschrift Voor Indische Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 24 (1877): 318–36.

⁵⁶ Fokkens, 318–36.

not only for the communities around Ponorogo, but also the people of Indonesia and even for the international world.⁵⁷

The arrival of Paku Buwono II at Ponorogo was due to being pressured in the face of Raden Mas Garendi's rebellion at his palace, namely Kartasura in 1742. The attack by the rebels was so great that Paku Buwana II and his troops were badly defeated. Raden Mas Garendi became the King of Surakarta with the name Sunan Kuning. After suffering defeat, Paku Buwana II and his followers left the palace to the east of Mount Lawu and finally arrived at Ponorogo. There were several places that became his remains, formerly these places were the places of his hermitage in Ponorogo. These places were Pulung Village on Mount Selayon, Mangkujayan Village, Sawoo Village, and Tegalsari Village. In the latter place, he met Kyai Kasan Besari. He then boarded and studied, became *santri*, in Tegalsari.⁵⁸

During his study with Kyai Kasan Besari Pesantren at Pesantren Tegalsari, Paku Buwana II was directly forged by Kyai. Paku Buwono II was taught to surrender completely to Allah. He was gathered to meditate and pray only to Allah. In this place, Paku Buwono II gained additional Islamic religious knowledge. All the teachings given by Kyai he followed earnestly. Kyai Kasan Besari also always prayed that Susuhunan Paku Buwono II would be given strength by the Creator to continue to lead Kartasura.⁵⁹

According to Multazam, Pesantren Tegalsari was estimated to have been established around 1742 AD. The leadership of the pesantren was as follows: 1) Muhammad Besari (1742-1773); 2) Ilyas (1773-1800); 3) Kasan Yahya (1800-1820); 4) Kasan

⁵⁷ Multazam, "The Dynamics of Tegalsari (Santri and Descendants of Pesantren Tegalsari Ponorogo Kiai's in 19-20th)," 422.

⁵⁸ Ernawati, "Pewarisan Keberagaman Dan Keteladanan Melalui Sejarah Lokal," 207-8; Multazam, "The Dynamics of Tegalsari (Santri and Descendants of Pesantren Tegalsari Ponorogo Kiai's in 19-20th)," 402-3.

⁵⁹ Ernawati, "Pewarisan Keberagaman Dan Keteladanan Melalui Sejarah Lokal," 207-8; Fokkens, "De Priesterschool Te Tegalsari," 318-25.

Besari (1820-1862); 5). Kasan Anom I (1862-1873), and 6). Kasan Kalipah (1873-1883).⁶⁰

The geneology of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and his descendants and students, as follows:

Sanad (genealogy) that existed on the path of ancestor's aristocratic ruler (Brawijaya V) and preachers (Sunan Ampel), and coupled with a significant role- relationship- in the environmental authorities in that period (Keraton Surakarta) showed that sociological building that formed Pesantren Tegalsari is compatible with the characteristic of Islam Nusantara. It had a solid relationship from the various aspects, both from the aspect of heredity, spiritual, and others.

Moreover, the existence of diaspora performed by students and descendants of Kyai Tegalsari, provided great benefits for the community. Although Pesantren Tegalsari as an educational institution is no more active, its folk (students and descendants of Kyai) that spread in the community could take important roles, such as kyai *langar* (small mosque), kyai pesantren, officials and political activists. The spread of students and descendants of Kyai in many regions, with various characters, showed the extent of the coverage of Tegalsari folk diaspora.⁶¹

3. Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari

There are many ancient tombs in Ponorogo, scattered in several villages and subdistricts. The tombs are classified as very old and hundreds of years old. The surrounding community believes in *karomah* (sanctity) and its blessings and is believed to have many mysteries. Among these graves are in the Tegalsari Mosque complex or the Tomb Complex of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, in Tegalsari Village, Jetis, Peonorogo.⁶² "The location of the grave (Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari's grave, *auth.*) is on the edge of the city's southern ring road, a new

⁶⁰ Multazam, "The Dynamics of Tegalsari (Santri and Descendants of Pesantren Tegalsari Ponorogo Kiai's in 19-20th)," 410–12.

⁶¹ Multazam, 421–22.

⁶² Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 176–78.

residential development area, about 12 km from downtown Ponorogo. To the west of the tomb is a large river from the south. To the north is the Residential area and further north there is a river too.”⁶³

This tomb is guarded and cared for by a caretaker. "Because the tomb complex is in the fiefdom and family area, the caretaker was appointed from within the family itself. The appointment model is based on the consensus of influential community leaders, especially parents and family members. The caretaker is chosen alternately, with an inheritance or descent system. Based on the unwritten agreement of the local community, the caretaker is chosen from within the family or descends from Kyai Ageng Besari. This of course has its own aims and objectives.”⁶⁴



Source: Author's Documentations, 2018

Figure 6.

Tomb complex of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari
from the Tegalsari Jami Mosque

A sacred tomb is a tomb that is in a cupola or a building consisting of three tomb buildings. The existence of this tomb is old enough that it is difficult to find a source that can confirm exactly when the tomb existed. The figures buried here are Kyai

⁶³ Djuhan, 175.

⁶⁴ Djuhan, 176–78.

Ageng Besari, Kyai Ilyas, Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari and Kyai Sibaweh.⁶⁵ Kyai Sibaweh was considered as preacher who helped develop Islam in Ponorogo around the 17th-18th century AD. To be noted, the name of Kiai Ageng Besari written on the tomb even though his real name was Muhammad Besari son of Kiai Anom Besari who is buried in Kuncen Caruban, Madiun Regency to the east of Ponorogo City about 45 km. The nickname to mention the qualifications of the figure was Kyai Ageng or Ki Ageng, usually a term for a great person among Javanese people who shows the quality of one's closeness to Allah Almighty and became *pengageng* (the magnificent) or leader in the religious field that leads to spiritual life.⁶⁶

In the western part there are also three tombs, which are smaller than others. These tombs were later than the main tomb in the east. Those are known as the “Tombs of the Descendants of Kyai Ageng Besari” and are well known by people and pilgrims. The tomb that was built in a beautiful cupola to the west is believed to be the tomb of Ronggowarsito.⁶⁷ This tomb also has its own sacredness, especially for the State Officials and Priyayi; if they encounter difficulties while carrying out state duties and are threatened by their power, they pray to Allah to be rescued. Performing rituals or visiting the grave of Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari is believed that help will come, and the circumstance slowly improved so that duties could be completed properly, and the power can be saved.⁶⁸

4. Tomb of Kyai Ilyas

The location of Kyai Ilyas's grave is in the Tegalsari Cemetery Complex, where local residents and the general public often visit him.⁶⁹ To the east of this tomb is the tomb of Kyai

⁶⁵ Kunto Pramono, “Interview” (Tegalsari, Ponorogo, October 10, 2018).

⁶⁶ Djuhan, “Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo,” 177–78.

⁶⁷ Fokkens, “De Priesterschool Te Tegalsari,” 319–20.

⁶⁸ Djuhan, “Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo,” 177.

⁶⁹ Djuhan, 178.

Ageng Besari, his father. To the west is the tomb of his son Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari. Apart from the grave of Kyai Ilyas, there are several graves next to it, especially those of his family. The tombs are his wife and his relatives who are in his cupola. They were relatives and close families who played a role in spreading Islam in Ponorogo, especially in Tegalsari.⁷⁰



Source: Author Documentations, 2018

Figure 7.

Nyai Ilyas (Wife II) - Kyai Muhammad Ilyas Besari - Nyai Ilyas (Wife I)

5. Tomb of Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari

Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari's grave is located west of the grave of Kyai Ilyas, his father. Its position is parallel but in better condition and only contains two graves, namely Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari and his wife. The position of the tombs which are in the west, even though it is a bit to the side, is still crowded with pilgrims or visitors to pray for. The tombs are in good condition and well-maintained, inside a building measured 3 x 4 m, while the tombs are located to the west of his father's tomb approximately 3 x 5 m.⁷¹

Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari was a figure who preached Islam. He then continued his mission as a Kyai and religious

⁷⁰ Pramono, "Interview" and based on the results of on-site observations.

⁷¹ Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 178–79.

teacher in Tegalsari with the support of the Surakarta Palace, *Susuhunan* of Mataram, namely Paku Buwono IV.⁷² In addition to the main tomb of Kyai Muhammad Ageng Besari, the tomb of Kyai Ageng Hasan Besari is also sacred, and local people call the tomb of "Ki Ageng".⁷³



Source: Author's Documentation, 2018.

Figure 8.
Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari and Nyai

There are two tombstones made of white marble on the tomb. On the outskirts of the tomb are mosquito nets or white curtains with a height of approximately 1.5 m. There are many pilgrims inside this building carrying out rituals so that when this place becomes crowded, some pilgrims perform their rituals outside the tomb building.

The three tombs are always crowded with people. On normal days there are always pilgrims coming, even though the busiest is Kliwon Friday Night. Every Friday night, the tombs are crowded with people who come from almost all over the city of Ponorogo as well as from other areas. They usually come in groups. There are certain months that are also crowded with people, namely Rajab, Sha‘ban and *Maulud* (Rabi‘ al-Awwal), as well as just before the departure of haj pilgrims (Dzu al-Hijjah).

⁷² Guillot, "Le Rôle Historique Des Perdikan Ou « villages Francs » : Le Cas de Tegalsari," 146–47.

⁷³ Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 179.

In the time of Eid Al-Fitr it is also very crowded with pilgrims, especially a week after Eid.⁷⁴

Apart from the tombs described above, there are also public facilities at the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, including main facility, namely the Jami' Mosque of Tegalsari building, two ablution places or *padasan* and two toilets. The view we can see nowadays is that the cupola building is so clean and there are lots of flowers of former pilgrims on the tomb.⁷⁵

Overview of Pilgrimage Traditions at the Tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari

1. Pilgrimage Activities and Motivation

Community belief in sacredness, such as the graves of public figures, clerics and kyais, is easy to find in the Ponorogo community. Historically, it started since Islam entered the Wengker area, in the southeast of Mount Lawu around the 14th century AD when the society at that time was rife with animism or dynamism beliefs. Even though many things from the old belief have been erased, the sacred belief in people who are considered holy cannot be eradicated. Those who are purified include historical figures who have contributed to the spread of Islam in Ponorogo. While several old mosques are still sacred, including the old Tegalsari Mosque. The graves that are sacred include the tomb of Ki Ageng Donopuro Setono, the tomb of Bathoro Kathong Setono, the tomb of Jayengrono Pulung Merdiko, the tomb of Prince Alap-Alap, the tomb of Astana Srandil Sumoroto, and the tomb of Tumenggung Brotonegoro on Mount Larangan.

⁷⁶

The grave of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari has always been the target of visits by many people. The pilgrims are very busy visiting the grave on Kliwon Friday night, public holidays,

⁷⁴ Pramono, "Interview"; Wafik, "Interview" (Tegalsari, Ponorogo, October 10, 2018).

⁷⁵ Pramono, "Interview" and based on the results of on-site observations.

⁷⁶ Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 171.

Islamic holidays, *ketupat* holidays, and certain other days. This tradition has been passed down for such a long time that was difficult to predict its beginning.⁷⁷ Regarding the purpose of the pilgrims visiting the tomb is very diverse; some because they want to recover from an illness, the desire to quickly find a partner, hoping to get abundant fortune, asking for sales in trading or business, and wanting to be free from danger. All that they do because of their belief in the sacredness of these tombs.⁷⁸ The purpose most often found is to remember the services of the figure—in preaching Islam—by praying for him and hoping for the blessings of life (*barokah*).⁷⁹ The same purpose found in the Tembayat; It was clear stated when listening to the prayers said by *juru doa*, “... gain more respect, may his colleagues be satisfied with his work, and may he be popular with his superiors. May he reach his promotion with ease, and may, by the intercession of the saint and his grandchildren, his income be blessed.”⁸⁰ Other purpose, “... many come to improve their health or to pray for their family’s health.”⁸¹

Community visits to various graves are always accompanied by certain traditions and rituals according to their respective habits. This ritual model is sometimes very strikingly different from one person to another or one group to another. It all depends on the traditions passed down from generation to generation or the beliefs that each party has.⁸² At the tomb complex, which is the object of research, there are certain things that make it different, especially because there are special characteristics that exist around the tomb complex. This is what influences the ex-

⁷⁷ Pramono, “Interview”; H. Hidayat, “Interview” (Ponorogo, October 8, 2018).

⁷⁸ Wahid, “Interview” (Ponorogo, October 8, 2018); Hidayat, “Interview.”

⁷⁹ Pramono, “Interview”; Wafik, “Interview”; Hidayat, “Interview”; Taufiqurrahman, “Interview” (Gontor, Ponorogo, October 9, 2018).

⁸⁰ Van Doom-Harder and De Jong, “The Pilgrimage to Tembayat: Tradition and Revival in Indonesian Islam,” 344.

⁸¹ Van Doom-Harder and De Jong, 344.

⁸² Lasfeto et al., “The Immersion of Ziarah Kubur- Slametan Tradition in Kejawen Culture With The Christianity in The Scope of Oneness,” 119.

pression of society in carrying out various ceremonies and rituals. These rituals include sowing flowers (*nyekar*), wiping the face/head/body with water, recitation of the Qur'an, *zikr* and *tahlil*, thanksgiving (eating), and asking for the caretaker's prayer.⁸³

The large number of visitors to the tombs shows that the community has special beliefs. That belief is usually based on the belief about the sanctity (*karomah*) of the buried person. As Geertz said, religion is a cultural system, therefore religion is centered on human thoughts and feelings which are then used as a reference for acting, also to interpret the reality it faces.⁸⁴

In Islam, the tradition of visiting graves was forbidden by the Prophet Muhammad—peace be upon him—as an act that was not right and endangered the faith. But the prohibition was temporary because the Prophet saw the good and bad side. However, the Prophet then allowed visiting the graves. The reasons and wisdom behind this include: 1) the assertion that death is only a process leading to a more eternal afterlife; and 2) the relationship between the living and the deceased can still be continued even though the pattern is not the same as the horizontal relationship pattern when humans are both still alive. In a hadith, the Prophet said, “*(In the past) I forbade you to visit the graves then it appeared to me that they soften the heart, bring tears to the eyes, and remind one of the Hereafter.*” (Hadith by Ahmad and Ibn Majah).⁸⁵ In another hadiths, the Prophet said, “*Whoever wants to visit a graveyard, let him do so, because it reminds us of the Hereafter.*” (Hadith by Muslim).⁸⁶

⁸³ Djuhan, “Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo,” 180.

⁸⁴ Djuhan, 181.

⁸⁵ Djuhan, 182.

⁸⁶ Imam Yahya ibn Sharaf An-Nawawi, *Riyad As-Salihin* (London: Turath Publishing, 2020), 580; Imam Yahya ibn Sharaf An-Nawawi, “Riyad As-Salihin » The Book of Miscellany - كتاب المقدمات,” accessed June 5, 2023, <https://sunnah.com/riyadussalihin:580>.

Referring to Berger and Luckmann's theory above about the interrelation between faith or religiosity and social reality,⁸⁷ this phenomenon as found in the pilgrimage tradition shows the socio-psychological situation of pilgrims facing death on the one hand, and visiting saints on the other. The motivation to gain blessings and goodness indicates the social practice of the previous pilgrims who felt less fortunate; remembering that death can make one closer to God, and through the blessings of a saint, by respecting and praying for him, it is hoped that blessings and goodness can also be obtained for themselves. Therefore, they seek blessings and goodness from holy figures or saints such as Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari.

2. Religious Activities at the Tegalsari Mosque

Tegalsari Mosque has its own characteristics in the context of religious activities. At the Jami' Tegalsari mosque there are relics in the form of religious teachings that have existed until now.⁸⁸ The people of Tegalsari really respect Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. Until nowadays, Tegalsari Mosque is increasingly in demand and visited by pilgrims, both from Ponorogo and outside Ponorogo. Therefore, *takmir masjid* (the mosque official) seeks to preserve Islamic religious traditions and culture that have been passed down by their predecessors. Preservation of this religious culture is very influential in fostering congregations with morality by using teaching methods and socio-cultural approaches. Besides the people come to worship, they also visit the grave of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. In honor of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari's merits, the *takmir* played a role in preserving new religious culture such as the commemo-

⁸⁷ Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, 114–15.

⁸⁸ Ali Makhrus and Rizki Amalia, "The Harmony of Islamic and Javanese Values in Pesantren: A History Study of Pesantren Tegalsari Teaching as Local Wisdom," in *Proceedings The 4th International Seminar on Social Studies and History Education (ISSSHE)* (Bandung: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2019), 413.

ration of the death of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari (*khaul*), as well as old traditions such as Friday night prayers.⁸⁹

The religious tradition of the ancestors of the legacy of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari is still preserved and implemented. These traditions include: 1) *Selawat Sallallahu* every Maghrib, led by the Kyai of the mosque as well as the Imam of the prayer; 2) *Selawat Ujud-Ujudan* every Friday at dawn and led by the Kyai of the mosque; 3) *Selawat Utawen* every Taraweeh prayer in the month of Ramadan led by the Kyai of the mosque; 4) *Maulud* greetings every month of Maulud which is led by the Kyai of the mosque and followed by the community of Tegalsari and its surroundings; 5) *Tahlil* and *abengan* every major Islamic day such as *Muludan*, Suro moon night, Isra Mikraj and after Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayers, and when the mosque gives thanks for the activities that have been done; 6) The study of the Yellow Book (*Kitab Kuning*) every 'Asr and 'Isha, led by the Kyai of the mosque and the teachers of Tegalsari Village; 7) *Mujahadah Mawafil Pray*, which is to perform *Hajat Pray*, *Tasbih Pray*, *Taubatan-Nasuha Pray*, *Awabin Pray* every Friday night after Maghrib led by the Kyai of the mosque; 8) *Iktikaf* (stay on in the mosque) and night prayers (*Tahajud*) every month of Ramadan on the odd nights of the last 10 days of Ramadan; and 9) *Unto-untongan* art of Ronggo Besari.⁹⁰

In addition, there are also several other activities carried out at the Tegalsari Mosque, namely: 1) *Simā'an al-Qur'ān bi al-Nazr* (Listening to the Qur'anic Recitation) every Sunday Pon and ends with joint *zikr* and *tahlil*, which are attended by both the people of Tegalsari Village and outside Tegalsari; 2) *Qirā'atul-Qur'ān* (Qur'anic Reading) Guidance every Thursday afternoon; 3) *Zikr al-Gafilin* (A Warning against Heedlessness) every Kliwon Friday night, attended by Kyai and Pondok Darul Huda Mayak students and the local community, led by Kyai Pondok Darul Huda Mayak; 4) *Haul* (Death Commemoration) of

⁸⁹ Fauza, "Peran Takmir Masjid Dalam Melestarikan Budaya Keagamaan Di Masjid Jami' Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 7–8.

⁹⁰ Fauza, 46–47.

Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, contains a grand recitation by inviting local preachers or from out of town. Next, *ambengan kubro* and *tahlil*, speech and *hadrah* contests, cultural carnival, and *unto-untongan* of Ronggo Besari art from the Setono Mosque to the Jami' Tegalsari Mosque; and 5) Pilgrimage to the grave of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari.⁹¹

The pilgrimage tradition has a significant role in the context of religious tourism, namely that religious tourism is seen as being able to increase the character of religiosity or religious enthusiasm, including the following: 1) increasing religious practice (worship), such as reading the Qur'an and praise; 2) increasing religious belief, namely believe in Allah, especially in praying and *munajat*; 3) increasing religious knowledge, through religious studies delivered by *ustaz* or their mentors; 4) increasing religious feeling, such as the engaging in religious studies, *zikir*, and *tahlil*; and 5) increasing the religious effect, namely become better able to interact well with each other.⁹²

In the socio-cultural context, religious activities at the Tegalsari Mosque that maintain and preserve the good traditions of their ancestors show social phenomenon, which according to Berger and Luckmann's terms are "reality-maintenance". "For a community to be able to survive and continue their life, they must develop reality maintenance procedures to maintain and guarantee a degree of symmetry between objective reality and subjective reality".⁹³

The objective reality referred to in the context of religious activities in Tegalsari are beliefs and behaviors related to routine activities and become traditions passed down from generation to generation in the community. Meanwhile, subjective reality exists in every individual which constitutes the basis of their involvement in the process of externalization and social

⁹¹ Fauza, 48–49.

⁹² Sari Narulita et al., "Pembentukan Karakter Religius Melalui Wisata Religi," *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Tahunan Fakultas Ilmu Sosial Universitas Negeri Medan* 1, no. 1 (2017): 166, <http://semnastafis.unimed.ac.id>.

⁹³ Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, 166–67.

interaction in their community. From the process of externalizing, each individual together in their community, then they together carried out objectification so that the objective reality construction is born, namely social knowledge or collective memory to jointly protect and preserve their ancestral traditions. These communal actions are based on social values and norms which constitute the "symbolic world" within the community, such as the sanctity of holy figures. Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari is believed to be a holy figure and has sacred properties is a symbol of collective memory in gaining good and blessings, including through religious rituals, *zikir*, *tahlil*, and night prayers for example, so that we are kept away from badness and brought closer to goodness, or the blessings of life.⁹⁴

Economically speaking, the number of visitors on normal days is not too much. The average, around 50 people per day. This number increased greatly on Friday nights, especially on Kliwon Friday night, approximately around 500 to 750 people. Tegalsari area is annually the center of the Eid al-Fitr celebration in Ponorogo. On the Eid al-Adha, Tegalsari area was filled with people from various Ponorogo areas because of the large number of sacrificial animals. Since the last few years, it has even been used as a venue for tourism development and the local government's religious tourism route.⁹⁵

Some of the Tegalsari people who were formerly agricultural laborers, later became traders around the Tegalsari Cemetery and Mosque Complex. For example, the clothing trade that generates between Rp. 400,000-500,000 every week.⁹⁶ This shows the influence of religious tourism on the community's economy in Tegalsari although still relatively minimal. In this regard, efforts to increase economic potential are still needed to be carried out, among others by involving the government in increasing the production capacity of goods or typical souvenirs

⁹⁴ Berger and Luckmann, 176.

⁹⁵ Djuhan, "Ritual Di Makam Ki Ageng Besari Tegalsari Jetis Ponorogo," 180.

⁹⁶ Pramono, "Interview"; Wafik, "Interview."

of Tegalsari, such as decorative knick-knacks with the characteristics of the ancient Tegalsari Mosque, posters from the genealogy of the extended family of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari, or special clothing of Ponorogo.⁹⁷ Efforts to increase tourist attractiveness include carrying out routine activities which are traditions in Tegalsari such as *ujud-ujudan*, *selawatan*, and *unto-untolan* art of Ronggo Besari.⁹⁸

During the Covid-19 pandemic, pilgrims visit to Tegalsari decreased. However, gradually, pilgrims began to flock back to this religious tourism object in Tegalsari. In 2019, before Covid-19 pandemic, the number of visitors reached 42,560 people. In 2020-2021 it has decreased, namely 23,738 and 12,469 visits per year. This decrease was due to the imposition of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (LSSR/ PSBB) due to Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, after the PSBB was lifted, the number of pilgrims rose dramatically to 62,073, or an increase of around 49,000 more pilgrims than in 2021.⁹⁹ The significant increase in these pilgrims has also had a significant impact on traders in the Tegalsari religious tourism complex. In 2022, traders' income, especially on Kliwon Friday nights, can reach Rp. 500,000,- per day. Revenue from parking fees reached the highest, that is Rp. 1.500.000,- per day on Friday night.¹⁰⁰ Although in general, the average trading income per week reaches Rp. 500,000,-, for example, as experienced by Pak Faiz (cap trader) and Bu Yuli (coffee trader), Pak Narlan (dawet ice trader), and Pak Cepu (*angkringan* trader), basically, this religious tourism has a

⁹⁷ Taufiqurrahman, "Interview."

⁹⁸ Nijla Shifyamal Ulya and Faruq Ahmad Futaqi, "Analisis Pengembangan Potensi Ekonomi Pariwisata Religi Di Masjid Jami Tegalsari Ponorogo," *Niqosiya: Journal of Economics and Business Research* 2, no. 1 (2022): 185, <https://doi.org/10.21154/niqosiya.v2i1.750>.

⁹⁹ Idris and Aini, "Manajemen Krisis Disbudparpora Ponorogo Dalam Menangani Penurunan Kunjungan Wisata Religi Masjid Tegalsari Selama Pandemi COVID-19," 83–84.

¹⁰⁰ Ulya and Futaqi, "Analisis Pengembangan Potensi Ekonomi Pariwisata Religi Di Masjid Jami Tegalsari Ponorogo," 182.

positive economic impact on traders and other facilities in the Complex.¹⁰¹

Finally, religious tourism also provides space for dynamic social interaction. Social interaction can occur dynamically and there is a process of bargaining to realize a change in value systems which is simply a shift between values, or a conflict between values or a clash between these values. Whatever the form and circumstances of the cross-cultural, it needs to be guided and even controlled, or at least strive for a mechanism that can integrate them.¹⁰² This process also occurs when someone undertakes religious tourism through the pilgrimage tradition to the tomb of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari. There is a process of social interaction between pilgrims, pilgrims with traders, and pilgrims with the surrounding community. This social interaction is very beneficial for various parties, such as tomb managers, pilgrims, traders, and the surrounding community. Meanwhile, in terms of benefits, it can be felt from cultural, social, and economic aspects.

CONCLUSION

Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, sometimes called Kyai Ageng Besari, was a religious preacher, especially in Tegalsari Village, Ponorogo, East Java. He founded Pesantren Tegalsari which was seen as one of the oldest pesantren in the Archipelago. Many well-known figures have studied at the pesantren, such as Paku Buwono II, Ronggowarsito, and passed down a national figure, namely HOS Cokroaminoto. Among the developments of Kyai Ageng Besari's grandchildren are Pesantren Darul Huda Mayak in Ponorogo, Pondok Termas in Pacitan, and Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) in Gontor.

The pilgrimage tradition at this tomb occurs not only as a religious ritual but also as a concrete form of public appreciation

¹⁰¹ Muhammad Husni Mubarak, "PERILAKU PEDAGANG MASJID TEGALSARI PONOROGO PERSPEKTIF ETIKA BISNIS ISLAM" (Universitas Islam Indonesia Yogyakarta, 2021), 88–91.

¹⁰² Asrul Muslim, "Interaksi Sosial Dalam Masyarakat Multietnis," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam* 1, no. 3 (2013): 485.

for their merits in developing Islam. In this pilgrimage tradition, there are various motivations or goals according to the diversity of the pilgrims. Even though there is motivation due to mystical beliefs according to ancestral traditions, the motivation for worship and longing for the ulama is a strong enough impetus for pilgrimage. Some others simply believe that pilgrimage is something that is usually done by people who are still alive to remember death and pray for the deceased.

In the context of developing religious tourism, the tradition of pilgrimage to the graves of religious figures such as Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari, has an important contribution to the pilgrims. Religious tourism through the pilgrimage tradition can be seen to increase religious enthusiasm, which in turn can also shape the character of religiosity and the character of individuals and/or groups of pilgrims. One of the important things is to remind every pilgrim of his identity as a creature that is weak on the one hand, but on the other hand can be very beneficial for the people, nation, and state. In more detail, the significance of the pilgrimage tradition for religious tourism is that it can increase faith in the Creator, Allah, God Almighty, the practice of worship and at the same time its purification, religious knowledge, and religious enthusiasm and passion, and love for noble ancestors as well as maintenance religious sites.

The preservation of pilgrimage traditions that lead to the formation of national character and identity and building bonds of togetherness needs to be preserved. In addition, practices that are considered not in accordance with Islamic religious guidance can slowly be reduced. At the same time, the implications of developing religious tourism also contribute to improving the community's economy and people's welfare.

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APPENDIX:

Source: Author’s Doc., 2018



The House of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besasi

PILGRIMAGE TRADITION AT THE TOMB OF KYAI AGENG MUHAMMAD BESARI TEGALSARI, PONOROGO: RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND TRENNGTHENING NATIONAL IDENTITY — *Indrawan Cahyadi, Asep Saefullah*



Left: Kyai Cholifah and Wife (*Nyai*); **Right:** Family Cemetery/Descendants of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari



Kyai Kasan Yahya and Wife (*Nyai*)



Kyai Imam Soebaweh and Wife (*Nyai*)



Kanjeng Kyai Bagus Kasan Besari and Wife (*Nyai*)



Kanjeng Kyai Bagus Kasan Besari and Wife (*Nyai*)



Dalem Ageng of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari



In front of the Entrance of the Tomb Complex of Kyai Ageng Muhammad Besari