



## **Pilgrimage as a New Way to Define and Characterize the Sainthood**

**Anwar Masduki**

CRCS-UGM, Yogyakarta

email: [interreligiosity@gmail.com](mailto:interreligiosity@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Pilgrimage (*Ziarah*) is one of the common activities done by Indonesian Moslems especially in the tradition of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Indonesian Muslim organization in Indonesia. There are many popular pilgrimage destinations in Indonesia specifically in Java such as graves of *Walisongo*, *Kiai*, Moslem leaders and many other well-respected persons who have been considered as giving great contributions towards the spread of Islam and its teaching in Indonesia. One of those very well respected persons is Abdurrahman Wahid, commonly known as Gus Dur, the fourth President of the Indonesian Republic from 1999 to 2001 who Passed away in Jakarta on December 30, 2009. His grave has become one of the most favorite and most visited pilgrimage destinations in Indonesia. This article examines the phenomena happened in Tebuireng since the end of 2009, after the death and funeral of Gus Dur. By using Giddens's social practice perspective, this article found that the recent pilgrimage in Tebuireng has altered and influenced the social life there. This social practice itself involves two basic elements of Giddens's theory namely; actor and structure to form its social reality. This article highlights the intersection actions between actor and structure and shows how those actions mark a new way the people define and characterize one's sainthood. The result of research suggests that the pilgrimage phenomena in Tebuireng involve many actors, from lay people to government, from the economic view to religious reason. Those actors have actively engaged in the practice and new consciousness of pilgrimage (as a structure), as a door to recognize someone as *Wali*.

### **Keywords:**

Pilgrimage, Social practice, Sainthood

## Introduction

Abdurrahman Wahid, commonly known as Gus Dur, was born in 1940 into a highly respected family of traditionalist Muslims (Barton 2002). He eventually became a leader of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Indonesian Muslim organization in Indonesia, and the fourth President of the Indonesian Republic from 1999 to 2001. Passed away in Jakarta on December 30, 2009, his death made big headlines in daily newspapers, on television and in online media. Since the day of his burial at Pesantren Tebuireng (Tebuireng Islamic Boarding House) in Jombang, East Java, his gravesite has been crammed with visitors from morning till night. A large number of people visited his grave on the traditional commemorations of the seventh, fortieth, one-hundredth, and one-thousandth day after his death. During first seven days after the burial, as the first groups of pilgrims began to arrive, an interesting incident happened. The board of Pesantren Tebuireng decided to fence his grave off with a piece of rope to prevent pilgrims from taking soil and flowers from the area. Some pilgrims believed that his grave's soil and flowers would bring them *berkah* (blessing). The rumor was that the soil could act as an amulet, to cure disease and bring good luck. This incident is an example of the new transformation which happens to Gus Dur's graveyard, confirming that the *berkah* of his soil is one of the signs of Gus Dur's sainthood.

In addition, several local books have been published in Tebuireng claiming that Gus Dur is the Tenth Saint, or at least a saint. However, the most important thing that connects the idea of sainthood with Gus Dur is the pilgrimage itself. Many pilgrims who visit the graves of *Wali Songo* said that their pilgrimage tour is incomplete if they do not visit Gus Dur's grave (interview, 21/02/2013). It appears that pilgrimage to Gus Dur's grave is fast becoming an obligatory destination in addition to the graves of *Wali Songo*. Gus Dur's grave has acquired a special status as a pilgrimage destination, not only for Muslims from Java but also for

people from other islands and overseas. Some pilgrims are even non-Muslims (interview, 19/04/2013). Since its location is nearby the grave of Soekarno in Blitar (the first president of Indonesia), a professor from ANU (Australia National University), George Quinn (information, 17/07/2013) noted that some “secular” pilgrims come to Gus Dur’s grave regarding his important role in the Indonesia’s secular political history, as the series of pilgrimage after visiting Soekarno’s grave.

Giddens (1984) suggests the term of social system as “reproduced relation between actors and collectivities organized as regular social practice” to scrutinize the social phenomena. Therefore, the term of social practice is very important in Giddens’s theory (Ritzer, 1992:95) which offers a deep understanding to reveal all of the factors relating to a phenomenon. According to Giddens (1984, p. 5), the human actions (agency) appear on three elements i.e. reflexive monitoring, rationalization and motivation of action. Those three are influenced by both the unintended consequences and unacknowledged conditions in human actions. Reflexive monitoring refers to not only the way human beings think about their own acts, but also how they reflects their act into others and the surrounding aspects including social and physical contexts (Giddens 1984: 5). Rationalization means that human beings will always ground their acts with some rational reasons which will be their basic argument to explain (Giddens 1984:6). In another side, motivation of action according to Giddens refers to the nuances or motives behind every action.

Defining structure with an element that consists of “rules and resources” (Giddens 1984: 17), He argues that structure itself is practiced in social system. This is because Giddens believes that structure is not a rigid, outside or external thing that always becomes coercion for human being as an actor. Therefore, the structure has manifested itself in social practices. Here, the idea of structuration theory rises by saying that actor and structure has a dialectical relationship to influence each other, not

a dualism but a duality. Therefore, seeing *ziarah* as a social practice in Giddens' way will be very useful since we can acquire the combination of actor and structure in sainthood phenomena. This view also benefits us from seeing that the pilgrimage phenomena are dialectic and always developed time by time. This paper will highlight what has become the intersection between actor and structure and shows how those actions mark a new way the people define and characterize one's sainthood.

### **Pilgrimage in Java**

Pilgrimage in Islam and sainthood has tight relationship. Cornell (1998), provides empirically rich and analytical nuanced of it in case of Moroccan Muslims saint. He differs between *wilaya* and *walaya* (similar meaning; sainthood) and employs both concepts interchangeably upon its functions in the reality. The best example to portray those categories socially can be drawn from the practice of pilgrimage. The veneration of saint in Java appears on the pilgrimage to the saint's tomb (*ziarah*). Muslims do *ziarah* as the way to obtain *berkah* (blessing) from the persons buried there and the effectiveness of prayers, since the saint or a person buried is an "intermediary" of prayers to God (Lukens Bull 2005: 32). Those convey the roles played by saints as an intercessor, a function of *tawassul* (mediation). As noted by White (2008), those *berkah* and *tawassul* become the manifestation of the practice of saint veneration in a pilgrimage. (White 2008)

Many studies about Javanese Islam reveal one thing that cannot be ignored in the life of Javanese Muslims; it is a belief in mysticism. Geertz (1976), in his idea of *abangan*, and scholars who criticize him, appear to agree that mysticism plays an important role in Javanese life. Beatty (1999) proposes that the syncretism of Islam and local belief is at the heart of Javanese Islam, since the first propagators of Islam in Java came from the mystical path of Islam (*sufism*). Accepting this close

connection, Dhofier (Dhofier 1878: 17) prefers to use the term Islamic sufism rather than mystical Islam, since the terms mysticism and sufism are not synonymous. Following Nicholson, Dhofier (1978) suggests that Sufism has specific religious connotations and is restricted to Muslims alone. Sunyoto himself (2011) explains that there is a tight relationship between Islamic Sufism - an Islam of the type propagated by the *Wali Songo* - with the local religion called *Kapitayan* (Sunyoto 2011). The result of this synthesis can be perceived in the practices that are followed by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia.

Ricklefs (2007) proposes a “mystic synthesis” to define the kind of Islam practiced Java. He notes three elements of the synthesis: “Islamic identity, fulfillment of the five pillars of Islam and acceptance of local spiritual forces” (Ricklefs 2007: 6, 11). Examining history from the early arrival of Islam in Java until recently, Ricklefs states that Sultan Agung, the greatest king of Mataram, was among the first to initiate this new reconciliation between Islam and Javanese royal tradition. He did so by visiting the graveyard of a local saint in Tembayat, Klaten, reconciling with a defeated prince from Surabaya who claimed to be the descendant of one of the *Wali Songo*, creating a new javano-lunar calendar converting the old Javanese Hindu Saka calendar into Islamic months, and importing some Islamic inspired works into court culture (Ricklefs 2007: 3). These elite attempts then inspired and became integrated into the daily life of Javanese commoners as was later reported by some European observers (Ricklefs 2007: 7, 10).

In light of this mystic and Islamic sufism, the veneration of saints can be understood as one of the ways of expressing religious life in Java. This mystical side therefore posits and informs the common understanding of local saints in Java. Bruinessen (Bruinessen 2012: 499) states that when Javanese talk about a saint (*wali*), it conceptually relates to *Wali Songo*, the nine propagators of Islam who are believed to live in Java

in fifteenth to sixteenth century. This is interesting since it is known that actually the Javanese respects many saints, not just those nine. Chambert-Loir has counted the tombs which have become pilgrimage destinations, and estimates that there are tens of thousands, so many in fact that it is impossible to know the exact number of them. (Cambert-Loir 2002: 134).

### **Pilgrimage at *Pesantren* Tebuireng**

*Pesantren* Tebuireng (Tebuireng Islamic boarding house) is located in Tebuireng hamlet, Diwek, Jombang regency, East Java. *Pesantren* is a term for an Islamic boarding school that emphasizes Islamic teachings (Barton 2002: 14). Tebuireng is located about seven kilometres to the south of the city centre. Standing majestically along the national highway from Jombang to Malang, *Pesantren* Tebuireng has a great history and respected position among the thousands of *pesantrens* in Java. Established in 1899 by Kiai Hasyim Asy'ary (Ma'shum 1998: 74), Gus Dur's grandfather and the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), *Pesantren* Tebuireng has played a role of unparalleled importance in the history of Islam in Indonesia. Under Kiai Hasyim's supervision, many *santri* (students) of *Pesantren* Tebuireng later become the founders of many famous and large *Pesantren* schools, such as *Pesantren* Guluk-Guluk in Madura, the *Pesantren* Lirboyo in Kediri, the *Pesantren* Buntet in Cirebon, and *Pesantren* Asembagus in Situbondo (Ma'shum 1998).

Kiai Hasyim and his families were buried in the family cemetery behind the old mosque of the *Pesantren* Tebuireng, together with other family members and some *santri* or *ustadh* (teachers) of the *Pesantren*. Gus Dur also was buried there in a simple grave, adjacent to the equally simple graves of his father and grandfather. Many *santri* and ordinary people go there to visit their tombs. Pilgrims who visit the tombs of the Wali Songo also sometimes drop in here as an add-on package of Wali Songo pilgrimage tour. From Thursday afternoon until Saturday night,

the graveyard is more crowded than the other days. Most pilgrims come in groups but some come individually. For some years, people have been able to visit the graves in peace and safety any time they want without having to get permission from the *Pesantren*'s security personnel.

However, after the funeral of Gus Dur at the end of 2009, the pilgrims visiting the Tebuireng family grave yard rapidly increased and immediately changed the landscape of pilgrimage. In the beginning, those pilgrims who came during work hours really disturbed the activity of *Pesantren* Tebuireng. One said that those pilgrimage activities within *Pesantren* stopped the activity of *santri*'s learning almost for three months (interview, 21/02/2013). Therefore, the *Pesantren* board decided to strictly impose an open and close regulation to the pilgrims. This regulation then was followed by some policies regarding the pilgrimage activity within the *Pesantren* such as the appointment of new security officer (*satpam*) and the *Pesantren*'s rule as the adaptation against new conditions they face.

The pilgrimage in Tebuireng is an old phenomenon. The grave of Kiai Hasyim and his family here are more than enough to attract people to visit; including the fact that *Pesantren* Tebuireng has many *santri* and alumni until today. Somehow, people in Tebuireng admit that the flooding pilgrims after Gus Dur's funeral makes them realize that there is a huge different number of pilgrims who visit Tebuireng family's graveyard before and after Gus Dur's funeral.

The family graveyard itself is located in western side within *Pesantren* complex, in front of the Kiai Hasyim's mosque. Consists of nearly one hundred graves, the main site is the grave of Kiai Hasyim, Kiai Wahid Hasyim and Gus Dur himself. Their graves are simple, only marked by two poles of marble and the scattered flowers. Gus Dur's is located by itself, in the southern of Kiai Hasyim. Those graves now are surrounded by a black iron fence; no pilgrims can enter except those who have permission from the family. In the outside, there is name plaque of marble containing

names of people buried in the graveyard. Most of them are the family of *Pesantren*, a few *ustadh* (*pesantren* teacher) and some beloved *santris* of Kiai Hasyim, also few local people.

Adjacent to the graves, there are two open halls to accommodate the pilgrims. In front, a small and old hall is used to accommodate the pilgrims for Kiai Hasyim. Since Gus Dur's funeral, a larger two-storey hall has been built behind the old one to accommodate the ever increasing number of pilgrims. Firstly, the pilgrims will try to sit and pray at the old one because of its closeness to the grave, although finally most of them will sit in the big new building hall since it is much bigger and can therefore accommodate many more people.

Similar to another pilgrimage site, people doing pilgrimage here can be divided into two kinds; the group and individual pilgrims. The most noticed difference on this division can be seen from the keeping time they have in the grave. Groups only have a few minutes and time; doing general things used to be done in the *ziarah* traditions as noted before. *Tablil* (*dzikir* chant) and *tawassul* (intercession) becomes the most important thing that every group of pilgrims does here. The groups need only short visiting time since usually they do the series of pilgrimage in 2 or 3 days length. Therefore, they do not have much time to stay in the grave, only doing important thing then leave to continue their journey. They come with rented buses or private cars.

Conversely, the individual pilgrims in Tebuireng will have their free time in the grave yard. One pilgrim who stayed at *Pesantren's* guest house for 2 days said that he prayed in the graveyard from the end of *Isha'* till the dawn. The next day, he only came to the grave for a short time. He said that he only chanted *dzikir* in the grave. Other pilgrims only spend their time to recite Qur'an and silently meditate in amidst the crowded of other pilgrims.



Another thing to notice here is that the peak of the crowded pilgrims usually happens from Thursday night until the Saturday night. Those nights become the prime time to visit especially for people who live in Jombang. They will come in group and individual, from the school student or *santri*, the *jamaah pengajian* (religious congregation) and many affiliated groups. Some special pilgrims sometimes come to pilgrimage, they can be non-Muslim prominent figures such as monks and priests, politician, a group of *kebatinan* (local belief) or even a scholar from overseas.

In conclusion, the recent pilgrimage in Tebuireng shows that the practices of saint's veneration widely become the main activities to strengthen the construction of Gus Dur's sainthood. When people massively come, pray and make intercession in his grave, people admit that Gus Dur has special position of closeness to God that can help them to tackle their problem of life which is reflected on their belief that Gus Dur is a *wali* (information, 20/02/2013).

### **Maintenance of Pilgrimage Site**

The pilgrimage phenomena in Tebuireng have attracted many people to come and visit. These conditions make the *Pesantren* board decides to manage this condition in well manner. In general, the maintenance of this pilgrimage site is under the division of LSPT (*Lembaga Sosial Pesantren Tebuireng*/The Social Division of Pesantren Tebuireng). In the favor of the pilgrimage, this division task includes the appointment of custodians, the maintenance of kiosks inside the entrance, the pilgrim's donation and the maintenance of the graveyard itself.

The custodian here is not a person who usually becomes the guide for the pilgrims to do *ziarah*. Most of them only serve as the security agent who put their eyes on the pilgrimage activity to guarantee that everything is clear and under control since the pilgrims will do their *ziarah* on behalf of their own. For some cases, if there is a pilgrim who needs guidance to

do *ziarah*, most of them will be guided by the official *Pesantren* boards or directly under the guidance of Gus Sholah, the recent leader of *Pesantren*.

Those treatments also differentiate the other maintenance sides of pilgrimage. Most of people who come freely into the grave cannot enter the location where Gus Dur and Kiai Hasyim were buried. They will only sit and pray in front of the fence surrounding the graveyard, under the old verandah or the new 2-storey large hall behind. In this sense, the LSPT and *Pesantren* board has deliberately restricted the number of pilgrims who can enter the grave directly. However, if there is special pilgrim (usually also becomes the guest of *Pesantren*) willing to do *ziarah*, they will go inside the direct location of grave and pray there. As long as they visit the grave with the family of *Pesantren*, there is no strict limitation to the pilgrims' background. A friend of the researcher, although he is a Hindu, he could freely enter the direct location of the grave and did pilgrimage there since he came to the site with a family member of *Pesantren*.

Fox tells us that the role of custodian places special position in order to connect the historical significance of a saint to the visitors, from the past into recent stories (Fox 2002: 161-2). At Gus Dur's tomb, though it appears on exclusive practices, its role still plays on its track. It is to guarantee that the story of Gus Dur's life still continues and is delivered well to the visitors. One of Gus Dur's cousins in Tebuireng said that the several stories which are not popular in order to strengthen that Gus Dur is truly an exceptional figure that can achieve the level of sainthood. Those "insider stories" are some ways to perpetuate, preserve and prove the continuity of constructing Gus Dur as a saint.

### **Initiatives of Local Government Toward the Pilgrimage**

In accordance to the involvement of local government into the pilgrimage, (Quinn 2007: 63-79) records particular role played by the government. In the development of Gus Dur's pilgrimage, this notion

seems accurate. Not too long after the burial of Gus Dur, the local government of Jombang regency has initiated a plan to make Tebuireng becomes the destination of *Wisata Religi* (Religious Tourism) by declaring Gus Dur's grave as the main visit. First step is by repairing and expanding the road infrastructure in front of the *Pesantren* to the central city in north around 7 km in length.

Another step is that the local government also actively approached the *Pesantren* family to accommodate the futuristic master plan which will revolutionarily change the face of *Pesantren* Tebuireng. This master plan will make Tebuireng become a highly maintained pilgrimage destination combined with bus station, local market, beautiful park and Islamic center. Until now, the process of land acquisition to make a new bus station and the road expansion behind the *Pesantren* area is still in progress. According to interview result during the research (interview, 27/01/2013), this process would still continue until all of the plans regarding to Gus Dur's pilgrimage have finished.

This master plan strongly describes the high interest of local government to capitalize the pilgrimage site in Jombang in order to attract pilgrims and visitors. There is no doubt that the economic interest has played behind this policy. In addition, the local government also tried another way to strengthen Gus Dur's influence in Jombang. In November 2012, there was an official ceremony to announce the new name of *Jalan Merdeka* (Merdeka road) into "Presiden Kiai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid road", now it is well known as *Jalan Gus Dur* (Gus Dur road). Merdeka road is one of the triangle heart roads in the Jombang city (other two are Wahid Hasyim and Ahmad Yani road).

The replacement of the road name actually involved other roads which were devoted to three *kiais* of the famous *pesantrens* in Jombang (*Pesantren* Tebuireng, *Pesantren* Darul Ulum Rejoso and *Pesantren* Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar). However, apparently the coronation of *Jalan Gus Dur*

only became the main agenda since there is no similar ceremony to two other new street names. In this sense, no wonder that some in Jombang also perceive this as the strategic way of the local government to strengthen the importance of new Gus Dur's image ( information, 26/01/2013).

### **The Impacts of Pilgrimage in Tebuireng**

Generally, people believe that those changes occurred in Tebuireng are signs of Gus Dur's sainthood. Ibu Fulanah, a seller of VCDs and books in front of the *pesantren* gate said, "This change is Gus Dur's blessing (*berkah*). Since Gus Dur was buried here, I can make money and feed my family by doing this job." (Interview, 19/04/2013). Gus Dur's funeral in Tebuireng also convinced Pak Zaid (interview, 20/04/2013) to send his son to study as a *santri* in Tebuireng. He believes that Gus Dur has added to the already great prestige of *Pesantren* Tebuireng since his burial. Here are some changes that happen soon after the massive pilgrimage in Tebuireng.

### **Physical Changes**

To some extent, the pilgrimage in Tebuireng has changed many things. The physical changes lie in the development of road infrastructure, the expanded pilgrimage location, the construction of a parking lot, also separation of the buildings used by the *santri* (students) from those used by pilgrims. The most noticeable change has taken place at the site of Gus Dur's grave. To provide shelter for thousands of pilgrims, the initiative came from the local government of Jombang Regency to expand the place of pilgrimage. With the permission of the family, the government has built a large new hall behind the old, small, *joglo*-roofed pavilion pilgrims had previously used. This new building extends from the north to the east and is a two-storey structure around 25 meters in length. Surrounded by the black fence, this hall has become the new barrier between the cemetery and the *Pesantren* properly.

Besides the new large hall, the government has also built a one-way entrance and exit for pilgrims behind the *Pesantren*. Previously, pilgrims could enter the grave from the *Pesantren's* front gate and exit from any gate around the *Pesantren* perimeter. Since the rebuilding was finished, pilgrims can only enter the grave from this new entrance and they exit by way of the same gate. This new one-way gate is very helpful for the *Pesantren* because the arrival of thousands of pilgrims 24 hours had disrupted the school's study schedule. Indeed in the days between the burial of Gus Dur and the 100 days commemoration, study activity in the *Pesantren* stopped altogether, because so many pilgrims were freely passing through the *Pesantren* area (personal interview, 18/04/2013). In implementing the one-way gate policy, the *Pesantren* board has restricted the visiting hours. The gate is open from 7 am to 4 pm, and from 8 pm to 3 am. It means that pilgrims cannot enter the gate between 3 am and 7 am, or between 4 pm and 8 pm. These hours are devoted solely to study within the *Pesantren*.

Pilgrims come and go through the single gate. There is an open corridor connecting the outside directly to the grave. Inside this corridor now there are many kiosks selling a variety of foods, handicrafts and products to do with Gus Dur. The kiosks were organized by the LSPT (*Lembaga Sosial Pesantren Tebuireng*/The Social Institute of the *Pesantren* Tebuireng School). LSPT has special responsibility of managing the commercial side of the pilgrimage, especially to manage all things connected with Gus Dur's grave such as giving permission to rent the kiosks inside the corridor, caring for the grave, and raising funds via charity boxes (*kotak amal*) (interview, 19/04/2013). After walking along the corridor, pilgrims will directly reach the family cemetery.

### **Socio-Economic Changes**

Among the most important of the socio-economic and cultural changes is the emergence of a new class of merchants offering a wide

range of goods and services, including informal parking attendants and the official grave custodians, it has created new occupations for people as a commercial characters of local pilgrimage (Quinn 2007: 63-79). Even, there is a marine who prefers to give up his work at Indonesian Navy, for only being a merchant at Tebuireng (interview, 21/02/2013).

The appearance of these instant merchants at the Tebuireng complex is a very noticeable development. Most of them are people from outside Tebuireng, even outside Jombang regency. They come from Kediri, Pare and Nganjuk, three places outside Jombang. This has triggered a negative reaction among local people who feel that they have a greater right to be merchants at the pilgrimage site than the people from outside Jombang. The local people of Tebuireng have felt shocked by the number of merchants who have come and occupied the areas immediately outside the Pesantren (personal interview, 21/02/2013). This local feeling has inspired them to establish a legal organization for local merchants only called the *Paguyuban Pedagang* (The Merchants Association) (interview, 21/02/2013). This organization has around 250 members. One of its goals is to reduce the percentage of outside merchants to a ratio of 80% local merchants, 20% from the outside (interview, 21/02/2013).

### **Socio-Religious Changes**

Another change has also taken place in the socio-religious life of Tebuireng. One of the impacts of the increasing number of pilgrims is an increase in the number of *santri* who study at the *Pesantren* Tebuireng. According to Gus Sholah, the Chief *Kiai* of Tebuireng, the number of new admissions has been limited and he has required prospective students to take an examination to prevent the increasing number of new *santri* from exceeding the carrying capacity of the school (personal interview, 19/04/2013). Some informants with no doubt believe that the number of *santri* have increased significantly after Gus Dur's funeral. Because of

this, conditions in the Tebuireng have rapidly become more crowded than before. Many *santris* are now living there to study both Islamic teachings and secular teaching in the secular or religious school within *Pesantren* and around Tebuireng hamlet.

Another thing is that those huge numbers of *santri* and pilgrims also slowly alter customs of local people to visit the tomb of Kiai Hasyim and Gus Dur in particular. After the massive pilgrimage, they realize that they will have no much time to do *ziarah* in quiet condition (*kehusu'*). Some try to find another time to visit the grave, especially in the midnight or after the door entrance was closed (personal information, 21/02/2013). In that condition, they can feel free to chat and meditate quietly as they used to do in the past.

## Conclusion

Pilgrimage in Tebuireng shows us that the interaction between actor and structure gives a new and developed understanding on how people connect the idea of sainthood into their lives. The families of *Pesantren* Tebuireng enjoy their new role as a “householder” who served the pilgrims there. This role, to some extents, mainly affects the ways they operate their *Pesantren* and how they should maximize the chances given by the pilgrimage effects to raise the prestige of *Pesantren* Tebuireng.

Local people and sellers around Tebuireng also receive the advantages of those phenomena. Soon after the burial, the shops, vendor-sellers and even hotels have emerged surrounding the *Pesantren* in the idea that this is a great chance to have an economic advantage from pilgrims. However, many of them believe that the economic reason is not the only reason to them. They believe that their economic acts are always connected to the blessing of Gus Dur’s sainthood. Therefore, they have a religious reason to do their economic business.

Local government of Jombang Regency also sees this pilgrimage as a chance to raise the prestige of Jombang as new religious tourism. Supporting the families of *Pesantren* with funds and connections, they create many local policies used to enhance and boost this idea. Enlarging the road of Tebuireng, building a new bus station and market and changing the name of one main street in Jombang city as Gus Dur street (*Jalan Gus Dur*) has marked their serious effort to involve in the pilgrimage phenomena.

The last but not the least, the pilgrimage itself attracts many *santris* to be one of the part of *Pesantren* Tebuireng students. This conditions eventually alter the way people see Tebuireng and it is undeniably has placed it into the one of the important place to visit, stay and learn there.

Underlining those phenomena, the pilgrimage in Tebuireng marks the importance of sainthood issue in the daily lives in Indonesian Muslim, and especially Javanese Muslim. The Gus Dur's effects proves that pilgrimage, as a social practice, is not a rigid phenomenon where people are forced to follow it, rather the people and pilgrims in Tebuireng are actively and consciously engaged and create the phenomena of pilgrimage.

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