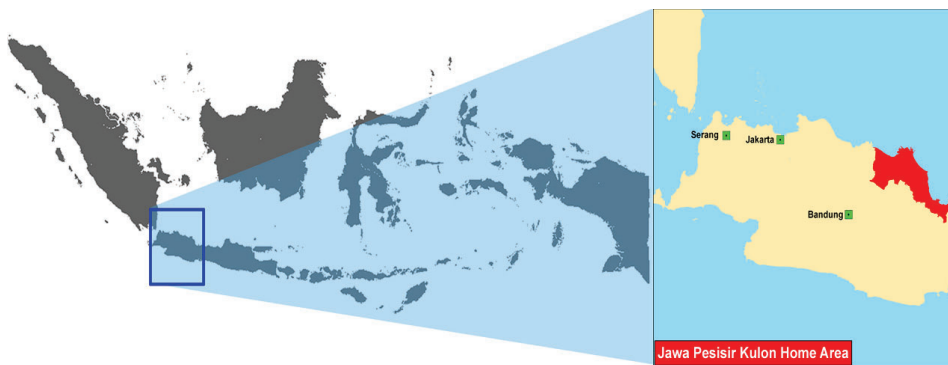


# JAWA PESISIR KULON



Karl Müller



Demography	Jawa Language	Status
Location: West Java Population: 5.000.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: Yes Jesus Film: Yes Online Media: Yes (Kromo)	Believers: <6.000 Engaged: Yes Indigenous Church: Some

## Identity and Location

The Jawa Pesisir Kulon people are also called “Jawa Cirebonan” or “Cerbon people.” The primary homeland of the Jawa Pesisir Kulon is in the regencies of Cirebon and Indramayu on the northern coast of West Java Province. They live in small cities like Patrol, Anjatan, and Haurgeulis as well as to the east in the vicinity of the Sanggarung River and across the river where there are several Cirebonan villages located in the province of Central Java. Mount Ciremai marks the southern border of their area while the Java Sea coastline marks the northern border. Geographically, the Jawa Pesisir Kulon people live in the Sunda homeland, yet they use the Jawa Ngoko Cerbon language. This language is a mixture of the Jawa, Sunda, Arab, and Malay languages, and possibly others as well. The Cerbon Ngoko language is taught to every Cerbon child from first through tenth grades.

## Society and Culture

The Jawa Pesisir Kulon people tend to be open and spontaneous in their social interactions. This is visible in their vibrant, colorful, and artistic clothing. One of the best-known local cuisines is nasi jamblang, a delicious dish made of rice wrapped in teak leaves, served with a variety of side dishes. The word Cirebon is a combination of two words--ci which means “water” and rebon which means “shrimp.” Cirebon has always been famous for its salted fish and fresh shrimp, as well as petis and terasi (shrimp pastes used as spices in local cuisine). Most Jawa Pesisir Kulon people are fishermen or farmers. Their land is very fertile, and many of their crops are exported, including coffee, sugar, tobacco, citrus fruits, and the well-known Dermayu mango. There is a local government-owned oil refinery which employs many people, while many also work in government and private institutions.

Craftsmen make a wide variety of products, using the world-famous batik material, clay, wood, and rattan. The city of Cirebon is also considered a tourist destination because of the many historical and sacred landmarks including the palaces of Kasepuhan, Kanoman, Kacirebonan, and Kaprabonan, the Panjunan Mosque, Sunyaragi Cave, and Panjang Jimat (a place of mystical meditation).

## Beliefs

The majority of Jawa Pesisir Kulon people are Sunni Muslims, with a Sufi Muslim minority. Their culture tends more toward Islamic culture than traditional Jawa culture. They consider Islam the foundation of national culture, which they value more highly than the traditional Jawa cultural values that continue to take precedence in Central and East Java. The city of Cirebon was the primary area where Sunan Gunung Jati (one of the Wali Songo, the Nine Apostles of Islam in Indonesia) spread Islam. As a result, Islamic practices and perspectives are quite strong in Cirebon. Despite this, the practice of occultism is very evident. The dukun (shaman/healer/occultist) is still heavily relied on and a variety of ceremonies and ritual meals are practiced to bring health, happiness, safety, and peace.

## Needs

The economic development of the Cerbon region is promising with great hope for an upward spiral of productivity. The question is: “Who will profit from this productivity?” The living standard of the masses remains fixed at about \$40.00 per month. They need quality, practical vocational training and teaching, including appropriate technology. Present industries need to be expanded, and the transportation infrastructure must be developed to better enhance the distribution of their products.