

**The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an  
in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community**

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## ABSTRACT

This Dissertation is on the reception of the Qur'an as it elaborates the place of the Qur'an in a non-Arabic speaking community in Indonesia. The Qur'an is the scripture and the primary source of Muslim teachings, a universal text in terms of time and place. The Qur'an was revealed during the life of Muhammad (pbuh) and has been transmitted and preserved in Arabic as its only language as all the prophets in Islam had been sent in the language of its immediate people. For its universal purpose, its target audience is all humankind regardless of their language or even religious affiliation. For Muslims, not only does it urge them to respond to its message and information, but also to believe in it. Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world. Although Arabic is not the language of the people of this country, they perceive and share the Qur'an in Arabic as other Muslims do all over the world, and place it in the context of their local needs and situation.

This study addresses two main issues: how Indonesians, in the case of The Banjars, the primary inhabitant of Banjarmasin, the Capital of South Borneo, as non-Arabic speaking Muslims perceive the Arabic Qur'an and how they appropriate the Qur'an for themselves in both their local contexts and its universal meaning. In both questions it identifies strategies of local community in claiming a universal value of the scripture (the Qur'an) as well as keeping their local identity. These strategies provide explanations of modes of reception of the Qur'an in various aspects of their life.

In order to answer the questions, the Qur'an is placed in the axis of Muslims life. This scripture is a product of a revelation process during the era of the Prophet

Muhammad and his Companions composing the early Muslim community. This community is regarded as the models for perceiving and practicing the Qur'an. On the other side of the axis, contemporary Muslims perceive and practice the Qur'an in their particular contexts. In the distance of time and space, they may read the models and universal values, while they may also create new practices to fit particular contexts. So, during this period, contemporary Muslims may perform a dual appropriation, namely appropriating their reading and practices to the past as a model and universal value and to the present as an actual need and strategy to respond to their own context.

Using a phenomenological approach, this study finds that Muslims as a community of faith perceives the Qur'an as a written as well as recited text, which each form of it has different but related structures to be received. As the implied readers of the Qur'an, Muslims receive perspectives from those structures, while entertain their own perspectives responding the text in "structured act".

In the case of this study, the Qur'an has been in the lives of Banjars extensively. The Qur'an fills in most critical situations of Banjar lives, exemplified by its presence in various life passages rites from cradle to grave. Dealing with language barriers, the main mode of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars is through recitation. It emphasizes the oral tradition of the Qur'an, which is perceived as a way to invite the blessing, rewards, and devotional values of the Qur'an, rather than its guidance value. Any parts of the Qur'an recited would be valuable and efficacious to meet their material and spiritual needs. In most—if not all—rites, the recitation is followed by supplication in which they leave the case to God's final destiny to be followed wholeheartedly.

By this mode of reception, the Banjars in the case of this study, in general preferred functional reception with performative functions of the Qur'an. However, it is not necessarily that their functional reception is totally free from the exegetical tradition. The latter might come through the layers of works, or extra-Qur'anic texts, inciting the practices and the role of local religious leaders as cultural brokers. Such works range from a thorough explanation of the meaning, excellences, and practices of the Qur'an to handbooks of particular use of the Qur'an. The local leader might play a role to connect the provided information to popular practices in order to justify, found, or transform the performative functions of the Qur'an.

In the second problem of this study, the Banjar use a dual appropriation: they appropriate themselves to the model and also the current local context. They can relate themselves to the model and idealized past through tradition, which keeps their memory as well as structures of the model. Materially, they have kept a long-lasting tradition of knowledge preservation and transmission in Islam through *ijazah* (sacred pedigree). As a cultural broker, a religious leader who has personal *ijazah* infuses the communal tradition and practices of the Qur'an. The tradition can also be transmitted communally through the consulted works on the practices. It can be merely substantial by considering the general value of practices in the past to be appropriated in a totally new situation. The Qur'an is then appropriated into their local context to answer their specific needs and ends through creative reading of the past presented in several layers of extra-Qur'anic texts.

## DEDICATION

To whom they have an endless love, support, and prayer for me, my highly respected and beloved Dad and Mom, H. Tabrani Basri and Hj. Rasyidah.

It is also for those who deserve more praise and pray for their sacrifices in my absent as husband and father, my wife, Nurain and our kids and our saving for the Hereafter, Amina, Azad, Ziyad, and Kafin.

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Philadelphia, August 2014.

Sincerely Yours,

Ahmad Rafiq

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Inquiry

This study is on the reception of the Qur'an as it elaborates the place of the Qur'an in a non-Arabic speaking community in Indonesia. The Qur'an is the scripture and the primary source of Muslim teachings, a universal text in terms of time and place. The Qur'an was revealed in the Arabian Peninsula 14 centuries ago during the last 23 years of the life of Muhammad (pbuh). It has been transmitted and preserved in Arabic as its only language. However, because of its universal purpose, its target audience is all humankind regardless of their language or even religious affiliation. Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world.<sup>1</sup> Although Arabic is not the language of the people of this country, they perceive and share the Qur'an in Arabic as other Muslims do all over the world, and place it in the context of their local needs and characteristics.

As the scripture and the primary source of Islamic teaching, the Qur'an states in many places that its principal characteristic is guidance (*hudā*). At the very beginning, Allah says "This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah" (2:2)<sup>2</sup>; in other places the Qur'an says: "Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and

<sup>1</sup> Based on the latest national census on 2010, Indonesia has 207.2 million Muslims, about 87.1% of the total population, <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?wid=0000000000&tid=321&fi1=58&fi2=3> (accessed June 2, 2014). This number constitutes 13.1% of the world Muslim population, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-muslim/> (accessed June 2014).

<sup>2</sup> English translations of the Qur'an are from Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* (Beltsville, MD: Amana, 2006), except where noted. The notation (2:2) means Qur'an Surah (QS) 2 verse 2.

judgment (Between right and wrong)” (2:185); and “These are verses of the Qur'an, a book that makes (things) clear. A guide: and glad tidings for the believers” (27:1-2).<sup>3</sup> The basic idea of guidance in the Qur'an is to show people the right path according to its teaching and give them help and advice to achieve this goal. The Qur'an not only declares itself guidance for those who fear Allah (*al-Muttaqūn*) and believers (*al-Mu'minūn*), but also places itself as guidance for mankind.

Moreover, it states in many places that to be clear guidance the Qur'an is in Arabic. For instance, Allah says: “Had We sent this as a Qur'an (in a language) other than Arabic, they would have said: ‘Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! (a Book) not in Arabic and (a Messenger) an Arab?’ Say: ‘It is a Guide and a Healing to those who believe’” (41:44); “We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that ye may be able to understand (and learn wisdom)” (43:3); “We know indeed that they say, ‘It is a man that teaches him.’ The tongue of him they wickedly point to is notably foreign, while this is Arabic, pure and clear” (16:103).<sup>4</sup> So, having the Qur'an in Arabic is to facilitate a clear<sup>5</sup> meaning and enable humankind to understand it.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Qur'an also states its place as guidance for doers of good (*al-Muhsinūn*). See, for example, QS 31:2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Similar expressions can also be found, for example, at QS 12:2, 20:113, and 39:28.

<sup>5</sup> Clear meaning in these verses refers to Arabs in the Prophet era who challenged the Qur'an as an adopted text from Judeo-Christian tradition or claimed it had strange expressions. The Qur'an states that it is clear, even fluent Arabic Arabs usually use. For some commentaries, see Abi Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ansari Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jāmi' Li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān (Tafsīr al-Qur'ān)* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), juz 15, 225, 329-30; Muhammad Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān (Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī)* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, n.d.), juz 21, 482-86.

<sup>6</sup> As it is clearly Arabic, the Qur'an challenged Arabs to think about and comprehend its meaning. Clarity and comprehension referred to its earliest audience, the Arabs. Al-Tabari cited Prophet Muhammad's speaking of four facets of comprehension of the Qur'an: the first is what anyone could understand easily such as issues on lawful and unlawful (*halal* and *haram*); the second is what all Arabs could comprehend for it is their language; the third is what needs an explanation by the scholars ('*ulama*); the last is those ambiguous verses that only Allah knows. See al-Tabari, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, juz 1, 73.



Clear meaning in Arabic is in relation to the language of the first community of the Prophet Muhammad in the Arabian Peninsula. The Qur'an states that divine messages were always sent in the language of the people of each prophet (QS 14:4),<sup>7</sup> so the Arabic language of the Qur'an is not because it is deemed clearer than other languages, but because it was the language of the Prophet (SAAS) and his people. Hence, it was clearer for its speakers in the moment of revelation of the Qur'an and rejected the objection to its strange and foreign message. As the Qur'an was introduced to vast numbers of non-Arabic speaking Muslims, keeping the message in one language has kept the message united, although it is also open for commentaries.

However, to clarify their understanding, sometimes the Companions, who were mostly Arabs and knew Arabic, needed additional information from the Prophet to confirm the intended meaning. For example:

When the Verse: "It is those who believe and do not confuse their belief with wrong (i.e., joining others in worship with Allah" (6:83) was revealed, we said, "O Allah's Apostle! Who is there amongst us who has not done wrong to himself?" He replied, "It is not as you say, for 'wrong' in the Verse and 'do not confuse their belief, with wrong means 'SHIRK' (i.e., joining others in worship with Allah). Haven't you heard Luqman's saying to his son, 'O my son! Join not others in worship with Allah, verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed.'"<sup>8</sup>

For the same issue, another narration tells that the Companions would never come to the Prophet to ask single verses of the Qur'an, but did so every ten verses, as they learned,

<sup>7</sup> "We sent not an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make (things) clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of Wisdom," QS 14:4.

<sup>8</sup> QS 31:13. See Isma'il ibn Umar ibn Kathir al-Qurashi al-Dimashqi, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm (Tafsīr Ibnu Kathīr)* (n.p.: Dar al-Tayyibah, 2002), juz 6, 336-37; Al-Qurtubi, *Tafsīr al-Qurtubī*, juz 14, 56.; al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/56, Hadith No. (henceforth HN) 31, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1/311, HN 178, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book. The text is from Sahih al-Bukhari, <http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/results.php5> (accessed June 21, 2014).

comprehended, and practiced the meaning.<sup>9</sup> So the realm of the Qur'an is through comprehending its Arabic expression practiced as guidance in life.

Nonetheless, the Companions' interactions with the Qur'an are not always on the direct textual meaning. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, one of the prominent Companions, narrated a hadith<sup>10</sup> when Uthman ibn 'Affan, the third Caliph, visited him in Kufah. Uthman asked him to leave a will so that when he departed from the world, Uthman would take care of his daughters. He refused by replying: "I taught them surah al-Waqi'ah, I have heard the Prophet say: whoever recites it—I suppose he says every night—is free from poverty."<sup>11</sup> This story reveals another type of reception of the Qur'an among the Companions. Ibnu Mas'ud's story highlights the practical value of recitation of the Qur'an rather than its textual meaning.<sup>12</sup> It still requires Muslims to recite the Qur'an in Arabic, but it does not imply a need to grasp its meaning.

<sup>9</sup> Narrated from 'Abdurrahman al-Sulami; a number of men, who recite us the Qur'an, including 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, Ibnu Mas'ud, and Ubay, narrated to me: "indeed the Prophet Muhammad pbuh recites us ten (meaning ten verses of the Qur'an), as we do not ask for another ten until we comprehend how to practice their content. So, we have learnt the Qur'an and how to practice it at once." See al-Tabari, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, juz 1, 32; al-Qurtubi, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, juz 1, 39; 'Iyadah ibn Ayub al-Kubaysi, *Abraz Usus al-Ta'āmul ma'a al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Dubai: Dar al-Buhuth lil-Dirasat al-Islamiyah wa Ihya' al-Turath, 1998), 48.

<sup>10</sup> Hadith is the saying, deed, or confirmation of the Prophet Muhammad. It is the second primary source of Islamic teaching after the Qur'an.

<sup>11</sup> Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb Ibn al-Ḍurays, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa mā unzila min al-Qur'ān bi Makkah wa mā unzila bi al-Madīnah* (Dimashq: Dar al-Fikr, 1987), 103. Abu 'Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Sallam collected another version of the story, "narrated 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, he says: I asked my daughters to recite surah al-Wāqi'ah every night, for I have indeed listened the Prophet says: whoever recites surah al-Wāqi'ah every night is secured from poverty." Abu 'Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1991), 138. This story is particularly poignant in view of the hostile relations between 'Uthmān and 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd.

<sup>12</sup> Another case also in al-Bukhari (d.870) narrated a story of a number of the Companions who were traveling. As they passed a tribe and found that the leader was sick, one of the Companions helped heal him by reciting al-Fatihah, the first chapter of the Qur'an. When they reached Madinah (City of the Prophet) and told the Prophet their story, the Prophet confirmed what they did and replied: "what made you realize that this chapter is protective words." See Muhammad bin Isma'il Al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (n.p.: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Islami, n.d.), juz 6, 231.

The two sides of the Qur'an, meaning and recitation,<sup>13</sup> are always in the center of discussion anywhere the Qur'an is perceived. Meanwhile, Islam has continued to spread and reach non-Arabic lands. At the present time, 80 percent of the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world live in non-Arabic speaking countries.<sup>14</sup> Since the early period of Islam, there have been non-Arab Muslims. Among the most prominent non-Arab Companions of the Prophet was Salman al-Farisi or Salman the Persian. He was the first translator of the Qur'an into a non-Arab language, when he translated QS Al-Fatihah (1) into Persian at the request of his family in Persia.<sup>15</sup> Salman's translation initiated a long discussion of the status of translation of the Qur'an. Eventually, all scholars agreed that the translation is a kind of interpretation or explanation of the true Arabic Qur'an.<sup>16</sup>

Translation and commentary are a way for non-Arabic Muslims to deal with the meaning of the Qur'an, and the practical value of recitation of the Qur'an has also spread, for it only requires Muslims to recite in Arabic. Non-Arabic speaking Muslims need no literacy in Arabic at all, for they can recite it as the Word of God in litany and prayers, at least the required chapter (*al-Fāṭihah*) in the compulsory prayers (*ṣalāh*). Furthermore, not understanding Arabic does not hinder them from perceiving the Qur'an either as a single book or as parts with divine value that fulfill varying needs of the reciter through the recitation. Wilfred Cantwell Smith even describes this mode of Muslim reception of

<sup>13</sup> Frederick Denny describes "exegesis and recitation" as the two main features of the Qur'an since the early period of Islam. See Frederick M. Denny, "Islam: Qur'an and Hadith," in Denny and Rodney L. Taylor, eds., *The Holy Book in Comparative Perspective* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1985), 95-97.

<sup>14</sup> Pew Research: Religion and Public Life, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-muslim/> (accessed June 2014).

<sup>15</sup> On the place of Salman's case on translation of the Qur'an into non-Arabic languages see Anna M. Gade, *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010), 101-3; A. L. al-Tibawi, "Is the Qur'an Translatable?" *Muslim World* 52, 1 (1962): 4-5.

<sup>16</sup> See al-Tibawi, 9-10.

the Qur'an as "the true meaning of a scripture,"<sup>17</sup> for a text is perceived as scripture in its relation to its reception by people.<sup>18</sup> For those who have Arabic, the textual meaning of the Qur'an may fulfill their needs, but for non-Arabic speakers it can still fulfill their needs in other ways, such as mere but deep recitation. So, the Qur'an is always scripture. Moreover, oral recitation of the Qur'an has been the initial mode of reception since the era of the Prophet. The reciters are not necessarily comprehending the Qur'an, but experiencing the Qur'an beyond the limit of (Arabic) language proficiency.<sup>19</sup>

Indonesians are non-Arabic speaking Muslims living in the most populous Muslim country in the world. Before the coming of Islam to the lands later known as Indonesia,<sup>20</sup> people had had their own history and sociocultural lives. The local characters of Indonesians have been shaped by the numerous ethnic groups inhabiting thousands of large and small islands in the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>21</sup> These historical, sociocultural, and spatial backgrounds provide a distinctive local context for perceiving the universal Qur'an in Arabic. However, with the same Qur'an and different local contexts, their reception may is not necessarily is the same or different from the center of Islam, Arabic

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<sup>17</sup> See W. C. Smith, *What is Scripture? A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993)

<sup>18</sup> Smith, 18.

<sup>19</sup> See Harold Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text* (New York: Orbis, 1988), 81; Abu Bakar, *Sedjarah al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Sinar Bumi, 1956).

<sup>20</sup> Some say that Islam had come to Indonesia by the 7th century, but the strongest evidence is around the 15th century. Aboebakar Atjeh, *Sekitar Masuknya Islam ke Indonesia* (Solo: Ramadhani, 1971); M. Harun Yahya, *Kerajaan Islam Nusantara Abad XVI & XVII* (Yogyakarta: Kurnia Kalam Semesta, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> In the Indonesian National Census ethnic groups are not explicitly itemized. A team of Institute for Social and Economic Research, Education & Information (LP3ES) studying the spread and growth of ethnic groups in Indonesia conclude based on the 2000 census that there are more than 1,000 ethnic groups in Indonesia, but 15 with more than 1 million population and 11 with 500,000-1 million compose almost 90% of the total population. See Leo Suryadinata, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, and Anis Ananta, *Indonesia's population: ethnicity and religion in changing political landscape* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2000), 6-7.

speaking lands.<sup>22</sup> The Qur'an is and always must be in Arabic, the language of the center of Islam shaped by its surrounding environment. Thus, while perceiving the Qur'an in Indonesian local history, society, or culture, Indonesian Muslims also need to relate their reading to the center, either to keep the initial meaning of the Qur'an or to show that it is in line with the center. Therefore, when reading the Qur'an in Indonesia, they have a double task: appropriation to their local system as well as to the larger teaching of Islam from the center.

## **B. Scope and Context of the Study**

This study is about the reception of the Qur'an in the specific context of a non-Arabic speaking community. Based on the background above, it addresses two main issues: how Indonesians as non-Arabic speaking Muslims perceive the Arabic Qur'an and how they appropriate the Qur'an for themselves in both their local contexts and its universal meaning. In both questions it identifies strategies of local community in claiming a universal value of the scripture (the Qur'an) as well as keeping their local identity. These strategies provide explanations of modes of reception of the Qur'an in various aspects of community life. The study focuses on the place of the Qur'an in local Indonesian Muslim rites of passage. Passages of life are significant because they represent a relatively comprehensive description of a community, times when a community may experience moments in which it needs to enhance its distinctive identity. Here, we can see how the universal Qur'an is placed in such moments of claiming local identity. A

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<sup>22</sup> I borrow from Richard Bulliet the concept of the center to name Arabic speaking lands, especially around Makkah and Madinah, as the heartland of Islam. Indonesia could be regarded as the edge, or peripheral. See Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 7-9.

phenomenological perspective focuses on the community as a social entity, not merely on figures in the community, although the latter may influence the former significantly.

This study was carried out in Banjarmasin (sometimes called Banjar), the capital of South Kalimantan Province, South Borneo, Indonesia. The primary inhabitants are the Banjarese or Banjars. In 2000, the Banjarese numbered about 3.4 million. They are regarded as a Malay ethnic group that has inhabited this area for centuries, with no exact historical data on the first settlement. The name Banjarese has been used since the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the Hindu kingdom of Negara Daha became an Islamic sultanate and changed its name to Banjarmasin (previously Bandar Masih). Since then the ethnic name Banjarese has locally been identical with Islam (Muslim).

Historically, from the era of the Hindu kingdom, the proto-Banjarese had relations with the Dayaks (the other indigenous inhabitants of Borneo), the Makasarese (a Muslim ethnic group from South Sulawesi), the Javanese (either Hindus or Muslims), and even Arab and Chinese merchants. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after the death of the king, Negara Daha experienced a civil war between the prince (Pangeran Samudera) who should be the king and his uncle (Arya Tumenggung). The prince, who eventually won the war, was supported by the Makasarese and Sultanate Demak from Java as well as the Dayaks. The chosen king declared his conversion to Muslim and changed his kingdom to a sultanate.<sup>23</sup> This was the beginning of Islam in Banjar, and has shaped the development of Islam in the area historically, socially, culturally, and even religiously.

The Javanese Islam and Makasarese/Bugisness to some extent also influenced the

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<sup>23</sup> See J. J. Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar: A Study in Malay Historiography* (Leiden: Nijhoff, 1968).

development of Islam in the area, along with previous Hindu traditions. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, a few Banjarese traveled to Makkah. Their return also significantly shaped the form of Islam. During the colonial period, Sultanate Banjar was also known as the gate of Borneo with its port.<sup>24</sup> This "port culture" also shaped the form of Islam in Banjar, where there has always been contact with people from outside, such as British, of course Dutch, and the other groups mentioned.

Contemporary practice of the Qur'an among the Banjarese also reflects a long historical development of Islam in this area and Indonesia in general. As the Banjarese developed their identity as Muslims, they also confirmed their identity as local people shaped by their local history and culture. Islam and Banjar are two sides of the Banjarese coin. Hence, although this study will offer an ethnographic survey of contemporary practice of the Qur'an among the Banjarese, it also needs to reveal how the practice relates to both their Muslim and Banjarese identity.

### **C. Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study can be seen in three ways: broadening the field of Qur'anic studies specifically and Islamic studies in general; an interdisciplinary approach to Qur'anic studies; and exposition of a local Muslim community. In Qur'anic studies, this study is among the few that relate phenomena of the Qur'an to phenomena of Muslim society. The Qur'an is limited by its language forms, but its study can be broadened by relating it to the community that perceives it. The community may produce

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<sup>24</sup> See, e.g., Alexander Aitchison, *Modern Gazetteer Modern Gazetteer: being a compendious geographical dictionary of all the nations, kingdoms, empires, states, republics, provinces...in the known world, MDCC, XCVIII* (Perth: R. Morison, 1978), 248.

a social, cultural, and religious system based on their reception of the Qur'an. So, the study of the Qur'an can also be the study of society.

This study is also significant in applying an interdisciplinary approach to the Qur'an. It uses not only textual but also social, cultural, and historical analysis to show the problems of the Qur'an in shaping Muslims life, or scriptures in general in multiple aspects of shaping human lives. It reveals actual functions of the Qur'an as a composed text, scribed letters or recitation, besides its ideal function as guidance. As a composed text, I mean that the Qur'an is composed of words and languages with textual meaning. As scribed letters, the Qur'an could be Arabic scripts composing the verses of the Qur'an or pieces of the Qur'an bundled into a tablet (*muṣḥaf*). As a recitation, the Qur'an is recited orally and aurally.

Finally, this study offers a micro-history of a local Muslim community, the Banjarese Muslims in South Borneo, Indonesia. In a global perspective, it is significant in providing a balancing discourse for the study of Islamic society. Such studies are mostly directed to Muslims in the Middle East as the “center” of Islam, whereas the majority of Muslims are not in that area, but in South and Southeast Asia. In the Indonesian context, this study is significant in providing information about Muslims outside Java, which dominates cultural, social, and historical exposition of Islam in Indonesia. This micro-history is also significant in responding to the grand narrative of Muslim society, which may over-generalize and homogenize Muslim societies. Muslim social phenomena are not a single body but a dynamic society that cannot be reduced to a single sentence.



#### D. Literature Reviews

The Qur'an is a dual phenomenon. Initially it meant a nonmaterial text, as in the context of the Prophet Muhammad pbuh receiving the Qur'an. It has been an oral reading or recitation rather than reading a written text.<sup>25</sup> However, the Qur'an also calls itself *al-Kitab*,<sup>26</sup> which equals *scripture* in English, meaning a religious authoritative book or piece of writing, from Latin *scripture* (written material), from *scribere* (to write).<sup>27</sup> Both phenomena, as recitation or written text, have brought about varying reception of the Qur'an as scripture among Muslims, non-Muslims, or human beings in general as the intended audiences of the Qur'an.<sup>28</sup>

In regards to the reception of scripture, a holy book in general and its audience are two sides of a coin. A scripture may have a statement of its divine status and holy place; it is also intended to be accepted as holy and followed as guidance by those who believe in it. Therefore, to study scripture is also to study those who perceive it as scripture. Wilfred Cantwell Smith in *What is Scripture?* insists that “the quality of being scripture is not an attribute of texts. It is a characteristic of the attitude of person—groups of persons—to what outsiders perceive as texts. It denotes a relation between a people and a text”<sup>29</sup> that be traced through historical or phenomenological evidence.

<sup>25</sup> See the story of the first revelation between the Angel Jibrīl (Gabriel) and the Prophet Muhammad in Hira Cave, when the written text of the Qur'an did not yet exist. Ibnu Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fatḥh al-Bāri bi Sharḥh Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, juz 1 (Madinah: Dar al-Al-Rayyan, 1986), 31-38.

<sup>26</sup> See for example QS 2:2, 3:3, 7:2.

<sup>27</sup> *Collin Cobuild Advanced English Dictionary and Grammar*, offline version.

<sup>28</sup> The Qur'an has two common ways to call its intended audiences. It may use “O ye who believe...” to call only those who believe in and follow Muhammad's message (*mu'min*), e.g., QS 2:104, 4:1, 49:11 or “O mankind...” to call all human beings, e.g., QS. 2:21, 49:1, 2, 6, 11.

<sup>29</sup> Smith, *What is Scripture?*, 18.

Smith's insistence on the relation of a people and a text in scripture has grounded some further discussions of such issues. In *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective*, edited by Miriam Levering,<sup>30</sup> the notion "rethinking" in the title is clearly triggered by the need to study the human relation to scripture proposed by Smith.<sup>31</sup> Former studies of scripture tended to focus on the phenomenon as merely a written text. In her Introduction, Levering lists four possible polarities of discussing phenomena of a scripture: (1) *form* and *fluidity*, whether scripture has a single and unchanging form or not; (2) *orality* and *writtenness*: scripture at first literally refers to written texts but in reality it is "part of living religious experience" and "[they] have never been mere books to be read silently but have had their life in oral-aural reception";<sup>32</sup> (3) *boundedness* and *openness* as in Hindu and Jain scriptures; (4) *vectoring* and *being vectored*, directing or being directed by others.

Levering classifies modes of reception into *informative reception*, for "studying and taking seriously, the authority and the message of the text"; *transformative reception*, such as personal transformation gained by a Buddhist monk reciting the scripture; *transactive reception*, "to bring about certain changes in the experience of others, or in the circumstances affecting one's own practices"; and *symbolic reception*, so that its "intimate connection with truth and power, can come to symbolize, even to be an icon of, the truth and power that comes through them."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Miriam Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989).

<sup>31</sup> Levering, Introduction to *Rethinking Scripture*, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Levering, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Levering, 13-14.

William Graham, in his chapter, “Scripture as Spoken Word,” later extended to be *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of the Scripture in the History of Religion*,<sup>34</sup> restates Smith’s criticism of Western failure to comprehend the predominant oral aspect of relational attribute of the scripture. In a predominantly oral tradition, scripture gains its meaning through a “community of faith—persons who hear it in the fullest sense of the word, who listen to its words, love, and cherish them, and live by, with, and for them.”<sup>35</sup> It is more than eyes following script. Nonetheless, Graham also describes scripture being authoritative, lasted, and an object of veneration when it is written down.

The chapters in *The Holy Book in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Denny and Taylor, are intended to gain a fuller conception of scripture and its reception. (Smith uses the same perspective in *What is Scripture*, in which he successfully shows the various conceptions of scripture as well as the main and crossing features of scriptures.) They cluster the issues in the scriptures into origins, forms (including language), and functions (informative/performative) (conceptual/practical). In the issue of function they found “scripture-centered piety” in various traditions.<sup>36</sup> The idea of informative and performative functions is introduced by Sam D. Gail in the last chapter of *The Holy Book*.<sup>37</sup> Gail describes the functions as predominantly taking place in nonliterate traditions. However, he differentiates nonliterate from illiterate, since the former actually has literacy in particular contexts and places. The informative function of the scripture is

<sup>34</sup> William Graham, “Scripture as Spoken Word,” in Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture*, 129-69; William Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of the Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>35</sup> Graham, “Scripture as Spoken Word,” 152.

<sup>36</sup> Denny and Taylor, Introduction, 2-9.

<sup>37</sup> Sam D. Gail, “Nonliterate Traditions and Holy Book: Toward a New Model” in Denny and Taylor, eds., *The Holy Book*, 224-39.

an interpretive approach to understand what is said in the text. The performative function is what is done with the text. So, a scripture in any religion can have both functions with varying emphasis.

With those phenomena of scripture, Vincent L. Wimbush has launched the Institute for Signifying Scriptures (ISS) at Claremont University.<sup>38</sup> The project not only discusses relational attributes of scripture, but also criticizes sociocultural practices and politics in relationship to the scripture. This mode of study of the scripture is intended to open “epistemic status,” in which human beings in general, especially subordinate peoples who have been usually neglected, should be described in their uniqueness freely. In their relation to the scripture we can value “how certain people in particular, and then by critical extension human beings in general, come to know, create, and shape their reality and thereby shape the world around them.”<sup>39</sup> For Wimbush, the performance of scripture—through reciting, chanting, repetition, movement, garments, material objects, etc.—is as effective as the informative message. So the study of scriptures is an effort to understand human beings—their “languages, rhythms, rituals, performances, orientations, their collective psyches, power relations, their fears, pain, ecstasies, and aspirations.”<sup>40</sup>

Various theses on the reception of scripture to some extent shape the discussion of reception of the Qur’an in various works. Smith,<sup>41</sup> Denny and Taylor,<sup>42</sup> Kassam,<sup>43</sup> and

<sup>38</sup> See Vincent L. Wimbush, ed., *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientation to a Cultural Phenomenon* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008).

<sup>39</sup> Wimbush, Introduction, in Wimbush, ed., 14.

<sup>40</sup> Wimbush, Introduction, 16.

<sup>41</sup> “The True Meaning of the Scripture: The Qur’an as an Example,” in Smith, *What is Scripture?* 65-91.

<sup>42</sup> Frederick M. Denny, “Islam: Qur’an and Hadith,” in Denny and Taylor, eds., *The Holy Book*, 84-108.

<sup>43</sup> Tazim R. Kassam, “Signifying Revelation in Islam,” in Wimbush, ed., *Theorizing Scriptures*, 29-40.

Coward<sup>44</sup> have book chapters on the Qur'an elaborating the model approaches described. For Coward, the basic meaning of the Qur'an is "recitation" or "something to be recited," which refers to the Qur'an in its totality or in part. As the Qur'an is the word of God, it has divine power for prayer, liturgy, devotion, worship, and so forth. However, the power is in its oral-aural dimension. The written text primarily functions as a "script of oral performance."<sup>45</sup> By imposing an oral-aural dimension, we can see that the tradition of the Qur'an is a "living chain of student and teacher."<sup>46</sup> In order to analyze the dominantly oral dimension in the Qur'an, Coward proposes the concept of hearer-response as a complement of reader-response (both are reception). In hearer-response, "the scripture is symbol rather than sign."<sup>47</sup>

Denny generally categorizes two phenomena of Muslim response to the Qur'an: exegesis and recitation.<sup>48</sup> By exegesis he means an interpretation of or commentary on the Qur'an. Such exegesis has mostly consisted of scholarly works that require Arabic proficiency. In recitation Muslims of various cultural and social backgrounds recite and perceive the Qur'an in Arabic in their particular contexts for various purposes besides or other than exegesis. Denny's discussion on recitation is followed by Kristina Nelson. She employs ethnomusicology to emphasize the recitation phenomena of the Qur'an in Egypt and the Egyptian response to them. Egypt is well known as a center of the best reciters of the Qur'an in the world. In her intense involvement with a number of great reciters and

<sup>44</sup> "Scripture in Islam," in Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, 81-104.

<sup>45</sup> Coward, 171.

<sup>46</sup> Coward, 166.

<sup>47</sup> Coward, 182.

<sup>48</sup> Denny, "Islam: Qur'an and Hadith," 95-97.

Qur'an schools in Egypt, she found that "the Qur'an is not the Qur'an unless it is heard."<sup>49</sup> Nelson shows a dynamics of melodious recitation of the Qur'an in Egypt and how the reciters develop their meaning of the Qur'an through such a model of recitation. For her, the nature of the reception of the Qur'an in Egypt enforces the prominence of oral performance of the Qur'an to send the message through its sound. This tradition then shapes people's attitude toward the Qur'an, the recitation, the reciters, and the society itself.<sup>50</sup>

The description of reception is also used to introduce the Qur'an in some works, especially ones intended for a Western audience, such as those of Ingrid Mattson and Anna M. Gade.<sup>51</sup> As an introduction to the Qur'an, Mattson's book is unusual in elaborating the historical and sociocultural phenomena of the Qur'an from the early to later periods with examples of its reception in different places. Although Mattson does not develop a theoretical concept of the Qur'an like the one in the scriptural discussion above, she describes its historical, social, and cultural dynamic throughout Muslim history. She demonstrates that the Qur'an and the sciences derived from it never detach themselves from their surrounding sociohistorical environment.

Gade's *Perfection Makes Practice*<sup>52</sup> is an anthropological study of Indonesian Muslims in South Sulawesi, learning, reciting, and memorizing the Qur'an. By referring

<sup>49</sup> Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 1985), xiv.

<sup>50</sup> Nelson, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Ingrid Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an: Its History and Place in Muslim Life*, 2nd ed. (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); Anna M. Gade, *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Qur'an in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

to Clifford Geertz's definition of religion, which emphasizes "moods and motivation,"<sup>53</sup> she finds that the emotive sides of people in her study shape their spirit of learning, reciting, and memorizing the Qur'an. Hence, she entitles her book "perfection makes practice" rather than the opposite, as Muslims' ideal perception of the Qur'an encourages them to keep practicing (learning, reciting, memorizing, and even competing).

Anne K. Rasmussen's *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia*<sup>54</sup> is an ethnomusicological study of reciting the Qur'an in Indonesia. She states that her study to some extent is influenced by Nelson's *Art of Reciting the Qur'an*,<sup>55</sup> which focuses on a similar issue in Egypt. Rasmussen appraises Islamic Qur'an recitation performance in Indonesia, especially by women, in the private but also public sphere, which is not uncommon in Indonesian culture. The Qur'an being in Arabic does not hinder Indonesians, including those who do not understand it, from performing it. Indeed, it contributes to make its sound in recitation powerful. In terms of musicality, she found that various contemporary recitation practices in Indonesia show some mixture between Arab (Middle Eastern) and Indonesian (Southeast Asian) cultures.

In traditional Islamic literatures, we can also find descriptions of reception of the Qur'an, in the generic meaning of how people react to something. Works on the excellence of the Qur'an (*Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān*) include a number of narrations on how the Prophet and his Companions used the Qur'an substantially and practically for devotion,

<sup>53</sup> Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice*, 51-54.

<sup>54</sup> Anne K. Rasmussen, *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an*, 1985.

worship, prayer, protection, and even cure.<sup>56</sup> Works of etiquette for bearing the Qur'an (*Ādāb Ḥamalāh al-Qur'ān*) suggest attitudes, gestures, tones, and paces—to mention some—in dealing with the recitation as well as the text (scripts).<sup>57</sup>

I have carefully considered some theoretical bases of functions of the scripture in the community as described by Smith, Coward, Graham, and Gail. Their emphasis on orality of the scripture opens space for non-Arabic speakers to perceive the Qur'an in their local context as well as a universal value of the Qur'an (or Islam in general). As I will show later, the case of study in this research may follow or divert from the existing theories. Some works on the reception of the Qur'an either in a global context or in Indonesia provide comparisons to the present case to show a distinctive mode of reception in the community. Finally, some traditional Islamic works in Islam on the early reception of the Qur'an are very helpful to show the material and substantial relation of limited modes of reception in one place, such as the case of the Banjarese in Indonesia, with a historical and universal description of Islam and the Qur'an.

<sup>56</sup> See Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Firyābī, *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa mā jā'a fih min al-Faḍl, wa fī kam yuqra', wa al-sunnah fī zālik* (al-Riyād: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1989); Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb Ibn al-Ḍurays, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa mā unzila min al-Qur'ān bi Makkah wa mā unzila bi al-Madīnah* (Dimashq : Dār al-Fikr, 1987); Ismā'il ibn 'Umar Ibn Kathīr, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1989); 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad al-Rāzī, *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa tilāwatuh* (Beirūt : Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyah, 1994); Abu 'Ubadi al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1991).

<sup>57</sup> See Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Nawāwī, *Al-Tibyān fī ādāb ḥamalāt al-Qur'ān* (Makkah al-Mukarramah: Maktabat Nizār al-Bāz, 1999); we can also find such books in contemporary work, for example, 'Iyadah ibn Ayub al-Kubaysi *Abrāz Usus al-Ta'āmul ma'a al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Dubai: Dar al-Buhuth lil-Dirasat al-Islamiyah wa Ihya' al-Turath, 1998).



## **E. Plan of Analysis and Methodology**

The axis of this study is the Qur'an, the Muslim scripture. Historically, this scripture is a product of a revelation process during the era of the Prophet pbuh. Throughout the time of revelation (about 23 years), the Qur'an was surrounded by various limited and extended contexts. "Limited" means the contexts of revelation, stated clearly in various transmissions from the Prophet or his Companions describing the situations (events or questions) responded to by a verse or verses of the Qur'an. The general description of the Prophet's lifetime and its communities and climates can be regarded as the extended context.

As scripture, the Qur'an stands as the primary guidance for Muslims to practice: the manifestation or application of its messages. The Prophet and his Companions are the main models for practicing the Qur'an. Some practices are stated clearly in the transmissions, while others are implied. In relation to the practice and the message of the Qur'an, practice did not always refer to language-based information of the Qur'an. Of course, it is generally considered as the main feature of practicing the Qur'an: grasping its linguistic formation and practicing based on it. However, some transmissions reveal stories of Companions who practiced the Qur'an based on its merits and excellences related to particular events in their lives. In other words, they referred to the Qur'an in its practical rather than its exegetically based meaning. For example, certain verses or chapters, such as QS 1:1-7, are recited for healing or protection based on their excellence, not necessarily on elaboration of the exegetical meaning of the verse recited. So, the

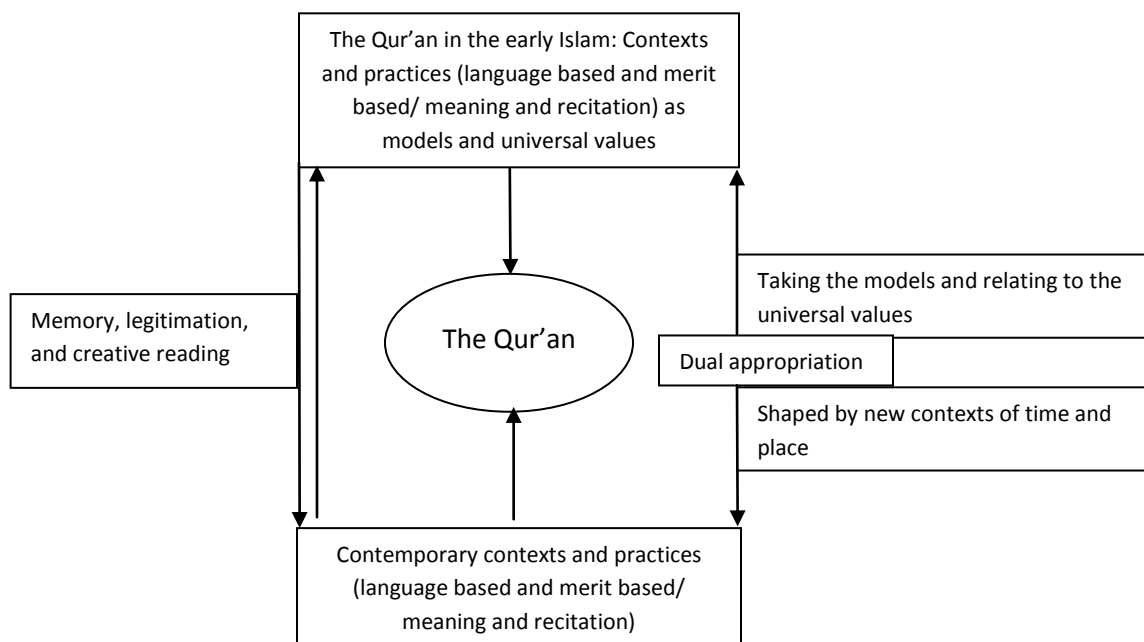
practices of the Prophet and his Companions can be understood in language- and merit-based practice of the Qur'an.

Contemporary Muslims perceive the Qur'an and ways to practice it in their particular contexts. The distance in time and space from the initial contexts of the Prophet and his Companions era opens possibilities for expanding ways of receiving and practicing the Qur'an. With the doctrine of the Qur'an in its original words as universal guidance, contemporary practices are not necessarily new or detached from past practices. At the same time, they are not always linear with the past.

Contemporary Muslims may read the Qur'an and the contexts and practices around the time of revelation as models and universal values. These contexts and practices cover the era of the Companions, and mainly refer their practices to their experience or interpretation of their interaction with the Prophet. This reading is facilitated by the transmission that reaches the contemporary era through various sources, especially written. In possibly the same process as first generations perceiving the Qur'an, reading the Qur'an and information regarding it in contemporary time is not limited to the structural linguistic formation of the information given. The information can present specific particular practices as well as trigger practices that have no material precedent. Moreover, contemporary generations may even create totally new practices to fit particular contexts. So, during this period, contemporary Muslims may perform a dual task, dual appropriation. They appropriate their reading and practices to the past as a model and universal value and to the present as an actual need and strategy to respond to their own context. In performing this dual appropriation, there might be

several modes of practices in relating contemporary practices to the past: justification, interpretation, memorization, or even innovation.

This line of reasoning above is summarized in the following scheme:



This research uses a phenomenological approach, taking the Banjars as a community as subject. It was conducted in the period January to December 2012, mainly in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. I did two consecutive steps in doing the research. I began by finding the place of the Qur'an in the contemporary contexts and practices of the Banjars. The practices are focused on the various passages around the Banjars' life cycle. The data were collected primarily through observation, especially participant observation, and documentation, especially in regards to some material related to the practices, such as the "handy reference books" used in certain rituals and manuals of certain practices. I did several interviews to confirm the steps and related equipment of the practices, especially with the leader and participants of certain rituals. I also used a

few documents for certain practices that did not take place during the period of research, as I indicate by citation later.

The second step was to elaborate the Banjars' view of values and meaning of the practices, especially ones related to the Qur'an, as Banjars and as Muslims. I show how Banjars value their practices and relate themselves to the model and universal value. To get a general point of view of Banjars as a community, during and after the observation I conducted interviews, usually with more than one person in a form of semi-focus group discussion. I could see them share and change their view of the value of practices. However, in some cases I did several in-depth interviews, especially with religious leaders, for the practices are religious practices, with cultural leaders, for they are also cultural, leaders of certain rituals such as *batamat* and burial procession for intimate meaning, and randomly selected participants to confirm the shared meaning and practices.

To see how the practices related to the past, I combined the study with literature reviews, mostly to traditional Islamic works on the excellences of the Qur'an. There are two ways in doing this review: from the top in which I studied some classical works in Islam, such as the books of the excellences of the Qur'an and the etiquette of bearing the Qur'an, and the other way round, following the references in the handbooks or manuals in particular practices. These reviews allowed me to evaluate models applied by Banjars in relating themselves to the universal value during the dual appropriation.

## **F. Problems Anticipated**

The data in this research require at least three languages other than English. The primary sources for the Qur'an in its early contexts and early reception are mostly Arabic. The vernacular language of Indonesians in general is Bahasa Indonesia, and the Banjarese use it besides their local language, Banjar (Malay). In my educational background in Madrasah (Islamic schools) from junior high school on, Arabic, especially reading, has been my third language after my local and national languages. Banjar is my native language, as I grew up in that environment. Bahasa Indonesia is my national language, a formal instructional language in schools in any level in Indonesia.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BANJARS: SETTING THE SCENE

#### A. The Origins of Banjars

As described in Chapter 1, the Banjars (called interchangeably Banjarese) are a group of people who predominantly live in contemporary South Kalimantan Province, Republic of Indonesia. They dominate Banjarmasin, the capital. Banjarmasin has been famous as a port city since the precolonial era, as noted by the Dutch and British governments and companies,<sup>1</sup> to which a number of people from various ethnic backgrounds came; some stayed and lived in Banjar for trade.



Figure 1: Map of Banjarmasin. <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Banjarmasin/@-3.3172277,114.5847493,13z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x2de4209aa1eec961:0x26030bfcc09204d2> (accessed June 2014)

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Aitchison, *Modern Gazetteer: being a compendious geographical dictionary of all the nations, kingdoms, empires, states, republics, provinces...in the known world, MDCC, XCVIII* (Perth: R. Morison, 1978), 248, 311.

There are three theories of the origins of the Banjars: Malays, Javanese, and a collective name, not an ethnic group.



Figure 2: Banjarmasin in the Kalimantan (Borneo) Island, <http://www.welt-atlas.de/datenbank/karten/karte-6-649.gif> (accessed May 2014).

The first theory is held by Alfani Daud,<sup>2</sup> who believes the Banjars were originally Malays who mainly lived in Sumatera Island (Sumatra). His thesis is based mainly on the closeness (if not similarity) of the Banjar language to that of Malays. Banjars in their new location only developed a new dialect of Malay. For Daud, Banjar is a sub-ethnic group

<sup>2</sup> Alfani Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar: Deskripsi dan Analisa Kebudayaan Banjar* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 1996).

of Malays who migrated into Kalimantan more than 1,000 years ago.<sup>3</sup> Daud theorizes that the valleys where Banjars now live used to be a huge lake, downstream of a number of rivers from the upper Meratus Mountains. The rivers contained a large amount of mud and sand (as we still can see) that became the lowlands and swamp areas we find today. Daud believes the migration of Malays into Kalimantan who later became Banjars occurred during the era of the great lake, and they continued to live in the newly transformed lower lands along the riverbanks.<sup>4</sup>

Daud argues that Malay sub-ethnic migrations into South Kalimantan occurred several times. Before those who became the Banjars, Orang Bukit<sup>5</sup> (Dayaks living in the mountainous area along the Meratus Mountains to distinguish them from Dayaks in other parts of Kalimantan<sup>6</sup>) migrated from Sumatera. Traces of Malay among Orang Bukit can be found in the archaic Banjar language. However, by the the second wave of migration, they were pushed farther into higher lands, the upper course in the mountainous Meratus Mountains areas. The second wave brought the Malays who became Banjars. Members of the first wave who stayed in the lower lands mingled with the new group and were also

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<sup>3</sup> Daud, 25

<sup>4</sup> Daud, 31-32.

<sup>5</sup> Noer'id Haloei Radam uses the term Orang Bukit (People of Mountainous Area) to avoid negative connotation of Dayaks as a remote tribe (Suku Terasing) as used by the Indonesian Government Document. See Noer'id Haloei Radam, *Religi Orang Bukit* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Semesta, Yayasan Adikarya IKAPI, dan Ford Foundation, 2001). Nonetheless, Anna Tsing prefers to use Dayak Meratus (Dayaks of Meratus Mountains); see Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 7-8.

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed discussion of Dayak Meratus, see Radam, *Religi Orang Bukit*; compared to the Dayaks living in neighboring area, for example, see Hans Scharer, *Ngaju Religion: The Conception of God among a South Kalimantan People*, tr. Rodney Needham (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963).



regarded as Banjars. Later, when the Banjars became identified as Muslims, Dayaks who converted to Islam were no longer called Dayak, but Banjar.<sup>7</sup>

Thus the Malay origin of the Banjars shows transformations taking place in three phases: from Malay migration into South Kalimantan, to the spatial arrangement of Dayak Bukit and Banjar, to the current ethnoreligious composition.<sup>8</sup> In the first phase, the making of Banjars is in the spreading of subethnic Malays through migration. In this case, Banjars and Dayaks in Kalimantan have the same origin as Malays. In the second phase, Banjars are characterized geographically in the lower lands as opposed to the previous Malay subethnic group in Kalimantan, the Dayaks in the Meratus Mountains in South Kalimantan.<sup>9</sup> Any Dayaks in the lower lands would be identified as Banjar. In the last transformation, after converting massively to Islam, the Banjars as people of the Islamic Sultanate of Banjar are associated with being Muslims. As a consequence, non-Muslim Dayaks converting to Islam are no longer Dayaks, but Banjars. Banjar equals Muslim, and has been associated with an ethnic, religious, and ethnoreligious identity.

The identification of Banjars as Malays is also present in some colonial documents. J. J. Ras shows the case in *Hikajat Banjar* (The Chronicle of Banjar). The Chronicle was of interest to British colonials in Indonesia and was turned over and copied

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<sup>7</sup> To grasp more of the dynamic relation of the Dayaks and Banjars see Mujiburrahman, Alfisyah, and Syadzali, *Badangsanakan Dayak-Banjar: Identitas Agama dan Ekonomi Etnisitas* (Yogyakarta: Center for Religious and Cross Cultural Studies, 2011); Moh Sohadha, Ahmad Muttaqin, and Ahmad Rafiq, "Agama Lokal dan Pemberadaban Masyarakat: Eksistensi dan Strategi Kaharingan berhadapan dengan Kebijakan Agama dan Misi/Dakwah Agama Resmi," *Research Report* (Jakarta: Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI) 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Such models of transformations represent a "riddle" in identity which at the same time shows that identity is constructed and adapting. See Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>9</sup> This phase actually relates to another theory of the origins of Banjars. Radam believes that the Banjars are not the second migration of Malays, but Dayaks from the first migration who converted to Islam.

under Dutch colonials. Both British and Dutch had interests in trade power in South Kalimantan.<sup>10</sup> Ras noted that this text is part Malay literature or Malay chronicles.<sup>11</sup> Two main arguments of associating the Chronicle with Malay are of course the language, “literary Malay,”<sup>12</sup> and the parallel of stories in it with others in Malay chronicles.<sup>13</sup>

Nonetheless, the *Hikajat Bandjar* associates the origins of the the Banjars with a place called Keling and subsequently with certain Javanese. Some scholars, such Ras,<sup>14</sup> Daud,<sup>15</sup> and Bondan,<sup>16</sup> believe Keling refers not to a place in the Indian subcontinent, but rather to the Kalingga Kingdom in East Java, based on the description of the place. The reference to Kalingga is in line with the Javanese origin that develops more in the *Hikajat*. In this second theory of origins, Banjars are originally Javanese.

Although this Chronicle mixes historical facts and myths of origins of the Banjars, it provides their internalized assumption of their origins referring to the Javanese. It begins with the story of a group of immigrants from Keling, under a holy order from the king to find a new land. Daud hypothesizes that it may have taken place

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<sup>10</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 1-3. The British colonial notes show its factory in Kalimantan as located in Bandjar; see Adam Anderson, *An historical and chronological deduction of the origin of commerce, from the earliest accounts. Containing an history of the great commercial interests of the British Empire. To which is prefixed, an introduction, exhibiting a view of the ancient and modern state of Europe; of the importance of our colonies; and of the commerce, shipping, manufactures, fisheries, &c. of Great-Britain and Ireland; and their influence on the landed interest. With an appendix, containing the modern politico-commercial geography of the several countries of Europe. Carefully revised, corrected, and continued to the present time*, 4 vols., vol. 3 (London, [1787-1789]; New York: A.M. Kelley, 1967), Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Another document describes the appeal of diamonds in that area: “The agreeable medley or, universal entertainer,” Malton, MDCCXLVIII. [1748], Eighteenth Century Collections Online (accessed February 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Ras, 4-7.

<sup>12</sup> Ras, 7.

<sup>13</sup> Ras, 81-155.

<sup>14</sup> Ras, 183-84.

<sup>15</sup> Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 26.

<sup>16</sup> Amir Hasan Kiai Bondan, *Suluh Sedjarah Kalimantan* (Bandjarmasin: Fadjar, 1953), 2-3.

about 1300 CE, a period when there was chaos over a power transition in East Java.<sup>17</sup> They landed in Southeast Kalimantan, and Mpu Djatmika, leader of the group, was appointed king. This new land was in recent Amuntai, capital of District of Hulu Sungai Selatan, approximately 200 km north of Banjarmasin. Mpu Djatmika left a will for his successor to find a new king through an ascetic meditation. Lambung Mangkurat, a son of Mpu Djatmika, did an ascetic meditation until he met a princess coming out from dense foam in the middle of the river. The princess was named Putri Junjung Buih, “a princess lifted in foam.”<sup>18</sup> The princess had to be married to a man found through ascetic meditation as well. In a day dream in his meditation, Mpu Djatmika directed Lambung Mangkurat to Raden Putera, a prince of Majapahit in East Java. The king of Majapahit led the prince through an ascetic meditation. Raden Putera then was named Pangeran Suryanata, married Putri Junjung Buih, and was crowned king. It was from this couple that the kings and dynasty of Banjar have all descended. In departing from this worldly life, they were believed to hold much power in the unseen world (*alam gaib*).<sup>19</sup>

The kingdom was a Hindu kingdom until Suryanata’s great-great-great grandson, Pangeran Samudera (1475-1548) converted to Islam with the help of the Islamic Sultanate of Demak in Java and started the Islamic Sultanate of Banjar (1526). During the era of the Hindu Kingdom, the name Banjar was not yet known. The initial name was

<sup>17</sup> Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 26. This date is among Daud’s reasons for Javanese origins.

<sup>18</sup> Ras, *The Hikajat Bandjar*, 272-76.

<sup>19</sup> Although the story seems to mix facts with myths, some Banjars accept it as historical. Some even believe Pangeran Suryanata still holds power in the unseen world around the Banjar Kingdom in recent time, although the Sultanate Banjar collapsed in 1905, during Dutch colonialism in South Kalimantan. For Daud, such belief in people of the unseen world (*orang Gaib*), especially ancestral figures, is among the characteristics of Islam in Banjar. The belief does not contradict their faith in Islam, for such people are treated as familial figures who just moved to another realm still connected to Banjarese worldly life. This belief for Banjars is comparable to that in other unseen creatures such as angels and devils. See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 552-61, 568-70.

Negaradipa. Since this era, the area attracted merchants from various places in the archipelago and even abroad to come for trade; some of them settled permanently. For Daud and Yusliani,<sup>20</sup> the trade character of the Banjars developed along with the development of several ports on its Barito and Martapura Rivers in Banjarmasin and Muara Bahan River in its neighboring city.

The kingdom later changed its name to Negara Daha and then Daha, where the great-great grandson of the founder of the Kingdom, Pangeran Tumenggung, held power. Tumenggung, who came into power by the death of his brother, the previous king, was in conflict with his nephew Pangeran Samudera, son of the deceased king. Living in disguise, Pangeran Samudera consolidated his power in a new place, Bandar Masih, named for local leader Patih Masih,<sup>21</sup> in the northern part of modern Banjarmasin. Bandar Masih was then orally and formally transformed to Banjarmasin. Pangeran Samudera claimed the kingdom with the help of the Islamic Sultanate of Demak. Referring to the name of the new place he declared his capital, he called his kingdom the Sultanate Banjar and also changed his name, to Sultan Suryanullah or Sultan Suriansyah. It was the beginning of the name as well as Sultanate Banjar. Anyone living in that area was called “orang Banjar” or “people of Banjar” (Banjars). The development of the Sultanate Banjar from Hindu kingdom to Islamic sultanate to some extent shapes the characteristics of Islam in Banjar, as we will see in the next part of this chapter.

<sup>20</sup> Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 29; Yusliani Noor, “Islamisasi Banjarmasin (Abad 15-19)” (Master’s Thesis, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin, 2011), 71-72.

<sup>21</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 400; see also Bondan, *Suluh Sedjarah Kalimantan*; Noor, “Islamisasi Banjarmasin,” 71-72.

In this Chronicle, we can grasp the idea that Banjar has a dual meaning: a place used for the people living there, the Banjars, and perhaps a political sphere of the Sultanate Banjar distinguished from the previous Hindu kingdom. This duality leads us the third theory of the origins of the Banjars. In this theory, Banjar is not an ethnic group but a collective name of various groups living under one political power. It is believed to be orally transmitted, there was a statement of Pangeran Samudera directed to the people at the initial moment of his reign: “Urang Masih, urang Balitung, urang Balit, urang Dayak, urang Jawa, urang Bugis, urang Pasir, pian sabarataan **banjaranku**”,<sup>22</sup> “People of Masih, people of Balitung, people of Balit, the Dayaks, the Javanese, the Bugisness, and people of Pasir, you are all my **assembly**.” All those named at the beginning of his statement are either people living in certain places such as People of Masih and People of Balitung, or ethnic groups, such as Dayaks and Javanese. They were all considered **banjaran**, meaning the assembly supporting the reign of Pangeran Samudera. Banjar in this context was a collective name for various groups who shared supports of Pangeran Samudera. So, Banjar is actually a political identity that covers various ethnic groups and uses Islam as a distinguishing feature of identity.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Mujahidin, “Banjar: Identitas Politik, bukan Etnik” (paper presented in Taman Budaya Banjarmasin, 2012).

<sup>23</sup> A similar statement without naming the notion Banjar but to declare the power of Sultanate Banjar and its political relation to various places around Banjar was in Pangeran Samudera’s speech after winning the war against his uncle: “After this all the people from Sabangan, Mandawai, Sampit, Pambuang, Kota Waringin, Sukadan, Lawai, and Sambas received gifts of clothes and were sent home. But every south-west monsoon envoys from these countries come to bring tribute, returning home again with the north-east monsoon. The people from Takisung, Tambangan Laut, Kintap, Hasam-hasam, Laut-Pulau, Pamukan, Pasir, Kutai, Barau and Karasikan also received gifts of clothes and were sent home. But every north-east monsoon envoys from this countries come to bring their tribute and returned home again with the south-west monsoon,” Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 441. Pangeran Samudera declares a political assembly of all people named in his speech assigning the gifts they receive and the tribute they have to offer to keep the relationship. These are all troops supporting Pangeran Samudera in the war against his uncle. It also

This idea refers to the initial history of the Sultanate, having shared the perspective of Banjar as a political identity; Mary Hawkins refers to a historical moment during the colonial period, much closer to our time. She believes the ideas of Banjars and urang Banjar are “not 'indigenous' or 'primordial' identifications, but rather categories whose emergence is intimately associated with the emergence of Indonesia as a nation.”<sup>24</sup> Previously, people identified themselves according to a narrow place where they lived, such as urang Negara, urang Kandangan, urang Amuntai for those living in Negara, Kandangan, and Amuntai, respectively. In the interest of the modern Indonesian state, about 1930, these people were grouped into a wider ethnic group, Banjar. For Hawkins, this identification also influences the association of Banjar with Islam, which is also recent.<sup>25</sup>

If we consider the three theories historically, the idea of the Banjars as Malays is the oldest. If we consider the Chronicle proposing the Javanese origin of the Banjars historically factual, it does not necessarily reject Malay origins. It may in fact strengthen the argument, as Malay immigrants had been settled in the island for centuries when a group of Javanese landed. As for the mythology of the prince and princess, Ras and Daud argue that it was developed deliberately to claim the couple’s worldly and mystical power as well as their right to hold the throne,<sup>26</sup> so it does not prove any historically factual origins. Furthermore the presentation of the Chronicle shared characteristics of some other chronicles of Malay as well as Javanese. First, in language the Chronicle is clearly

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describes the Sultanate Banjar territories that cover the coastal areas of the Southern to the Western part of Borneo Island in the first group, and the Eastern to the Northern in the second group.

<sup>24</sup> Mary Hawkins, “Becoming Banjar,” *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 1, 1 (2000): 33.

<sup>25</sup> Hawkins, 24-36.

<sup>26</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 97-99; Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 27.

Malay. Second, the idea of mystical origins of the primeval kings or queens is shared with other Malay and Javanese stories. Ras calls it “the result of borrowing” from other folklore.<sup>27</sup> Finally, the Chronicle emphasizes the Islamic elements of the Sultanate, which shares and refers mostly to Islam in Sumatera, the original Malay lands, Malay, where Islam had grown in advance.<sup>28</sup>

In relation to the third theory, the political character of an ethnic group does not dismiss the Malay origins of Banjar. The notion had been used long before the foundation of the Indonesian state. Furthermore, a new ethnic identity might emerge combining elements of existing groups. This development might be triggered by various factors, including politics. So, when “urang Negara” (people of Negara), Hawkins explains, interact with people from a neighboring area such as Amuntai, they would not refer to themselves as “urang Banjar,” for they share the identity. But when they have contacts with non-Banjar, they may refer themselves as “urang Banjar.” So, Hawkins might be correct in emphasizing the political dimension of “becoming Banjar,” but it does not indicate that the Banjars became a political identity only after the colonization era.

The Malay origin of Banjar does not necessarily mean that this ethnic group loses its significance, for at least three reasons. First, Malays in South Kalimantan have their own history and context that might be related to as well as different from those in Sumatera. Second, related to the first, Malays in South Borneo have moved even into hinterlands that may be common to the islands, such as Sumatra and Borneo, with many

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<sup>27</sup> Ras, 97.

<sup>28</sup> A similar conclusion appears in some recent findings of the Malay origins of the Banjars; see Mujiburrahman, Alfisyah, and Syadzali, *Badangsanakan Dayak Banjar*, 28-29.

low-lying forested areas and navigable rivers. That there are no volcanoes in Borneo (by contrast to Sumatera) allowed the Banjars to be more mobile into the hinterlands and from the upper rivers to the lower lands. Last, as Banjar developed its own port, people from various places came directly to the island. This last argument indicates diverse elements forming Banjars, such as Dayaks, Javanese, Bugisness, Arabs, and Chinese, besides Malays themselves.<sup>29</sup> This shapes the character of Islam in Banjar as we will see.

### **B. Islam in Banjar: “The View from the Edge”<sup>30</sup>**

In describing Islam in Banjar in this chapter, we should consider the origin of Banjar as well as that of Islam. In relation to its ethnic origin, Banjar could be regarded as an edge with Malay in Sumatera as the center. When Islam in Banjar is related to the heartland of Islam in the Middle East, Makkah and Madinah, and Indonesia in general, including the Banjars or precisely Islam in Banjar, are also an edge.

Banjar has been a cultural and political phenomenon in South and Southeast Kalimantan. As I noted from *Hikajat Bandjar*, it was among the first Islamic sultanates in the Kalimantan when its king converted from Hinduism to Islam in the first quarter of the sixteenth century and lasted until 1857.<sup>31</sup> It covered major coastal areas of Borneo. After the mass conversion of its people, Banjar has been ethnically associated with Islam. However, with its historical, cultural, and spatial background, Islam in Banjar has

<sup>29</sup> See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 34.

<sup>30</sup> The notion “the view from the edge” is borrowed from Bulliet as indicated in Chapter 1.

<sup>31</sup> Formally, this sultanate lasted until 1905, when the last crowned sultan, Pangeran Muhammad Seman, passed away. However, in practice it had no longer held power since 1857, when there was a fight among family members for the successor and the sultanate fell under the control of the Dutch. See Amir Hasan Kiai Bondan; also “Sejarah” in the City Government of Banjarmasin official website, <http://banjarmasinkota.go.id/Banjarmasin/profile/sejarah.html> (accessed 19 June 2013). In 2010 the descendents of the sultanate launched a cultural movement to re-erect the Sultanate Banjar.



distinguishing characters to compose the edge in Bulliet's term. This section will elaborate how Banjar created its own micro-history of Islam, and how it relates to and also departs from the center. These will provide underlying factors of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars as we will see in the following chapters. The part will refer primarily to *Hikajat Bandjar*.

**Islam in Banjar as the edge.**<sup>32</sup> As discussed, the term Banjar represents historical, political, cultural, and religious entities living in southeast areas of Kalimantan. Historically, Banjar was the name of a sultanate holding power around Central, South, and Southeast Kalimantan, founded September 24, 1526. It had to be Hindu Kingdoms, from Candi Agung, to Nagara, to Nagara-Dipa, and last Daha (sometimes called Negara Daha). *Hikajat Bandjar* tells that the founder of the Kingdoms was Mpu Djatmika, a man from Keling. There is an unresolved dispute among historians whether Keling here refers to a place in India in Java. Ras tends to the latter, especially because of the high influence of Java in Banjar vocabularies and cultures, although Banjar is Malay. Briefly speaking, Pangeran Samudera, the last prince of Negara Daha, should succeed to the throne. However, his uncle, who did not want him to do so, tried to

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<sup>32</sup> Bulliet classifies the presentation of Islam in history into the views from the center and the edge. The former represents Islam in its birth land, in Arabic speaking lands, or in the modern kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For him, the center represents more about the rule and political expression of Islam. It is more about political institution. This also creates a meta-history of Islam in which Islam is associated with the Arab and Arabization. This view influences not only the presentation of past history of Islam, but also expressions of Islam in the contemporary world. On the contrary, the latter represents the newly converted areas of Islam. These areas are mostly non-Arabic speaking. For Bulliet, they converted to Islam not always on familiarity with the Prophet Muhammad and Arab culture, but after contact with Muslim communities, through conquests or trade. Meanwhile, the edge also has a dynamic relationship with the heartlands of Islamic rulers. Therefore, the edge is not homogeneous for it might be very local. The edge emerges from individuals scattered in many places and speaking many languages, not through a political institution as in the center, but also the edge may also has relationship with the center. By its scattering facets, the edge is everywhere and has "its own micro-history." Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge*, 8-10.

kill him and ignite a civil war. Realizing his limited power, Pangeran Samudera asked help from the Sultanate of Demak in Java.

Eventually, Pangeran Samudera defeated his uncle and was crowned. He converted to Islam as he promised when he asked for the help, and he also asked his close relatives and helpers to do so as well. He changed the Kingdom into Sultanate Banjar after Bandar Masih, the new capital, on December 24, 1526.<sup>33</sup> Penghulu, a religious scholar sent by Sultan Demak to teach him Islam, changed his name to Sultan Surjanu 'llah or Sultan Suriansjah. As soon as he announced the changes, most of his people converted to Islam.<sup>34</sup> However, as a sultanate, it was not necessary that everyone change to Islam. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Sultanate Banjar started to have an idea of Qadi and Mufti of, beside an Islamic advisor, penghulu that had been known since the early period. The Sultanate also still asked *upeti*, a kind of tribute paid by conquered people, from some small rulers around it to guarantee protection, though they had converted to Islam as well.<sup>35</sup>

So, historically and politically, the Banjars are a sign of transformation from Hindu kingdom to Islamic sultanate. In this new identity, they also signify a new culture as Muslims with formal and intensive contact with Islam-Java. From that time on, being Banjars has been identical with being Muslim. As an ethnic group, the Banjars may also be called the Banjarese. Generally Banjars are accepted as Malays. However, after the transformation, the Banjars were believed to be a mixture of Malays, various groups of

<sup>33</sup> This date is celebrated as the day Banjarmasin was formed. See official website of City Government of Banjarmasin (accessed June 2013).

<sup>34</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, Chapters 10–14, 375-443.

<sup>35</sup> See fn. 23

Dayaks, Javanese, and some other groups. Malays are still the biggest part of the population; in the 2010 census about 3.5 million of 230 million Muslims in Indonesia.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, in their contact with the Dayaks, the supposed earlier inhabitants of Kalimantan, conversion also meant ethnic conversion. A Dayak who converted to Islam from an indigenous religion, Kaharingan, no longer called her/himself Dayak, but Banjar. It was actually a general feature of Malays in Kalimantan that people from other ethnic groups would be Malay when they converted to Islam.<sup>37</sup>

It is reasonable to say Islam in the Banjars is the edge for its local process of becoming Muslim. Among the features of being the edge in Islam for Bulliet is lack of familiarity with the Prophet Muhammad and Arab culture as the center in the process of conversion. In *Hikajat Bandjar*, the substance of Islamic teaching was absent during that process. The Banjars held Islam more as a political and cultural identity, and some elements of Hinduism were preserved in the era of the sultanate.<sup>38</sup> Pangeran Samudera's conversion was more about gratefulness and a political move to familiarize himself to Sultanate Demak, which later became his main partner in trade.

To some extent, the mass Banjar conversion resembles that in Bengal in Richard Eaton's case. Among the key points of that conversion is the charismatic agency and cultural diffusion of local people with Islam. Charismatic agency is represented by the Sufi leader who cleared the land and opened the possibility to develop local agriculture.

<sup>36</sup> See "Sensus Penduduk 2010-Penduduk Menurut Wilayah dan Agama yang dianut di Indonesia," <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?wid=000000000&tid=321&fi1=58&fi2=3> (accessed June 2014), compared to the one in 2000 in Ian Chalmers, *Indonesia: An Introduction to Contemporary Traditions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 42.

<sup>37</sup> Victor T. King, *Poples of Kalimantan* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 32, 82.

<sup>38</sup> This case also occurs in some sultanates in Java after their conversion to Islam; see Daniels, *Islamic Spectrum in Java*, and Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of the Java* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960)

For traditional agricultural people such agency was very important and highly respected. Those who could provide land and plants would be considered holy. This chemistry facilitated the close relation between *sufi sheikh* or holy men (*pir*) and local people and resulted in gradual conversion. Among the consequences was the new element of Islam in this newly converted land.<sup>39</sup>

Pangeran Samudera and his first circle, *patih*s (the title for highly respected political, religious, or cultural figures) could be regarded as charismatic figures. In his early contact with people in Bandar Masih, he was treated as a low-profile person and a victim of a repressive king. He lived among the people in disguise for a long period until he decided to take over the throne from his uncle with the advice and support of many parties. They were the people who eventually joined his army in the war for the honor of the Negara-Daha throne. His *patih*s were also public figures who helped him hide from his uncle's assassination attempt. In this situation, when figures convert to Islam, they became models who are more cultural than political. As a consequence, a mass conversion did not happen suddenly in the Sultanate Banjar; rather, there was a gradual process of transformation from Buddhist-Hindu tradition to a new tradition under the sultanate. *Hikajat Banjar* does not report any mass conversion even on the return of panghulu Demak to Java.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the story of Pangeran Samudera asking help from Sultanate Demak shows that contact between people in Kalimantan with Islam had occurred before the conversion of Pangeran Samudera, especially through Muslim Javanese merchants. There had been a gradual process of cultural exchange between

<sup>39</sup> Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 207-19.

<sup>40</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 438-40.

Islam and local people, and Islam was familiar as a nonpolitical movement.<sup>41</sup> When Pangeran Samudera and his *patih* converted to Islam, they corroborated the positive existing contact. As a result, the conversion occurred gradually.<sup>42</sup>

This gradual process of conversion led to the character of Islam in Banjar. *Hikajat Bandjar* displays the process of synthesis<sup>43</sup> between the earlier and new identity of the Banjars. For example, having the fact that Banjar was formally a name after Islam, the Banjars built a positive imaginary figure in their past as part of Islam. I call this politics of genealogy. Ras found that there had been additions of Islamic figures to Banjar genealogy, even in the top lines of the genealogy. For instance, they put Raja Iskandar (Iskandar Zulqarnain or Alexander the Great), and Nabi Chadir (the Prophet of al-Khaydir) as the descendent of king of Keling in the line of Mpu Djatmika, founder of the old Banjar Kingdom, Candi Agung.<sup>44</sup> This kind of imagined genealogy was not rare, but it may be a typical strategy of a non-Arab people to claim origins in Islam or raise their bargaining position. If I may compare, the Dayaks in Meratus Mountains in South Kalimantan use the same strategy in their contact with Banjars who control the economic power in the area. In this case Banjars might be the center to the Dayaks who are the edge. To show their equal position with Banjar, the Dayaks use a genealogy saying that they are also descendents of Adam as Banjar who are Muslim. They say Adam had 41

<sup>41</sup> See Noor, "Islamisasi Banjarmasin," 542-63.

<sup>42</sup> Harun cites a note that before the era of Sultanate Banjar, Sunan Giri, one of the prominent Nine Saints (Wali sanga) in Java, had traveled to the port of Kuin in Bandar Masih. It shows the early contact of the Banjars occurred before the foundation of the Sultanate. See Harun, *Kerajaan Islam Nusantara*, 73 as he also cites Syaifuddin Zuhri, *Sejarah Kebangkitan Islam dan Perkembangannya di Nusantara* (Bandung: Al-Ma'arif, 1981), 389; King, *Peoples of Kalimantan*, 21-22.

<sup>43</sup> I am avoiding saying syncretism as it sounds negative for me, but use synthesis to describe the crossing of different elements in creating a new element in neutral or even positive tone.

<sup>44</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 123.

sons, instead of the 40 in Muslim history. The 41<sup>st</sup> son disappeared in the air and eventually delivered the Dayaks through his marriage with another holy figure in the sky.<sup>45</sup> So, Banjars developed a synthesis through politics of genealogy by creating an imagined genealogy that links their culture, before and after Islam.

Another case is elements of non-Islam that still exist in the *Hikajat Banjar* and the actual practice of Islam among Banjar. Ras compares the story of Mpu Djatmika's daughter-in-law with the similar line of mythology among the Dayak of Ngaju who inhabited the area around Muarabahan, an area bordering Bandarmasih, the capital of Sultanate Banjar. It was about Putri Junjung Buih, a princess descended from heaven who emerged in the world through foam in the river. In her marriage with Raden Putera or Pangeran Suryanata from Majapahit, they had a son emerging from bamboo. All the places represent their power over the world, heaven and earth. The Dajak of Ngaju held a similar logic of mythology. They had the idea of Sangiang, the goddess who lives in heaven and is associated with the upper and nether world through living in the river in the upper and lower lands. By this mythology, the power in life is the harmony of upper and lower world in the earth with the upper world in the heaven.<sup>46</sup>

Various elements of contemporary practice of Islam in Banjar preserve the element of practice before the transformation. *Hikajat Bandjar* several times tells the practice of *badudus*.<sup>47</sup> This was a kind of Hindu anointing practice among kings or their successors before they were assigned to an important position. The practice was led by a

<sup>45</sup> See Sochadha, Muttaqin, and Rafiq, "Agama Lokal dan Pemberadaban Masyarakat," 45.

<sup>46</sup> Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 95.

<sup>47</sup> Ras, 384-86.

religious (Hindu) leader by pouring blessed water on the kings. This practice was transformed to *tapung tawar* in contemporary Islam in Banjar. There is a bowl of water with various elements of flowers and plants in it to create a good smell. Then, a religious leader or at least a senior in the community recites something over the water. In some places, people gather and recite Chapter 36 (Yasin) of the Qur'an to ask for a blessing in—or through—the water. The water is then poured on people, offering the blessing for them. The difference is that *tapung tawar* in contemporary Banjar is no longer an exclusive practice of rulers but a popular practice used for a bride and groom, an expectant mother, and newly assigned officials, for example. Therefore, through the identification of Islam with Banjar, Islam in Banjar keeps certain elements of the past .

This example shows not only the synthesis of two traditions in the edge, but also the strategy of the edge to associate their local history with a new element that tends to be universal. Consider *tapung tawar* for a woman in the seventh month of pregnancy and the recitation of Surah Yasin in preparing the water. *Badudus* in the Banjar kingdom before Islam was a sacred practice used at a very important moment in life. Therefore, it was only used for the kings' family and in the assignment of kings and their successors to certain important positions. A pregnancy shares with the kings' assignment an element of primary passage of life. Therefore, contemporary Banjars fulfill this moment with a “sacred” practice. So *badudus* and *tapung tawar* are kinds of rites of passage. However, the synthesis has not ended yet. To negotiate that this practice is “Islamic,” they need to include an Islamic element in it. There is a tradition in the Prophet and his Companions'

era that emphasizes the excellence of Surah Yasin 36<sup>48</sup> by writing it in a cup from saffron, and drinking water from it. The Banjars combine this tradition in their practice of *tapung tawar* and to negotiate that they are Muslim as well as Banjar, again an “edge” feature.

To sum up, Muslims in Banjar with their micro-history and traditional ways of being Muslim are at the edge and cannot detach themselves totally from their historical facts or imagination. The fact that there had been a powerful Hindu kingdom in the area influences Banjarese ways of being Muslim. The politics of genealogy they use to show their shared ancestry with Arabs always infuses elements of the center into elements of the edge. Banjars infuse two figures in the Qur’an, Iskandar Zulqarnain and the Prophet Khidir, into their genealogy. This infusion occurs in a written document, so it could be handed down from generation to generation strictly. This cultural infusion also occurs in contemporary Banjar, such as the case of *badudus* and *tapung tawar*. These cases also exemplify the strategy to combine their historical memory as Banjarese with the elements of teaching of Islam.

Islam in Banjar is also an edge, as it did not come from the Arabs. In local history, it is clear that Banjars understand and get Islam from another edge in Indonesia, Islam in Java. To continue this theory, even the Javanese in general did not get their Islam from the center directly.<sup>49</sup> Thus as an edge far away from the center, it would get Islam from multiple layers of edges.

<sup>48</sup> I discuss more of this practice in the next chapter on the practices of the Qur’an in Banjars’ life cycle.

<sup>49</sup> Yahya, *Kerajaan Islam di Nusantara*.



However, the farther the edge from the center does not necessarily mean its Islam is far from right. Bulliet's project is that the edge and the center are not about the rightness and purity of Islam, but about the trends and tendencies of various ways of being Muslim shaped by a particular place and time. For me, the universality of Islam leans on its ability to engage in these various particulars. The edge does not need to be the center and vice versa; they have their own logic of being Muslim. By this characterization, I will show how these historical, social, and cultural backgrounds more or less shape and influence the issues of Islam among the Banjars that later on also shape and influence their practices of the Qur'an.

### C. Issues of Islam in Banjar

I turn now to the issues of Islam among the Banjars. From these we will later be able to see some influencing factors of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars. Although Islam has been adhered to in Banjar since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there was no explanation of how it was practiced at that time. *Hikajat Bandjar* has a story that after the conversion, Sultan Suriansyah let Penghulu, a figure sent by Sultan Demak to guide Suriansyah and his people in Islam, return to Demak with a number of presents as sign of gratefulness.<sup>50</sup> Nonetheless, Khatib Dayan, a figure believed to be Sultan Suriansyah's religious teacher from Demak, was still in Banjarmasin until his last day of life, for we can find his tomb in the Sultan Suriansyah cemetery complex. An Arab merchant was in Banjar, as said in *Hikajat Bandjar*, advising Pangeran Samudera to change his name into Sultan Suriansyah, but there was no further information of the role and existence of the

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<sup>50</sup> See Ras, *Hikajat Banjar*, 440.

merchant. Moreover, in *Hikajat Bandjar*, we find a number of practices of the Buddhist-Hindu kingdom during the era of the Sultanate, such as *badudus*, keeping the regalia from Negara Daha, and even the king's mystical relation to the unseen world.<sup>51</sup>

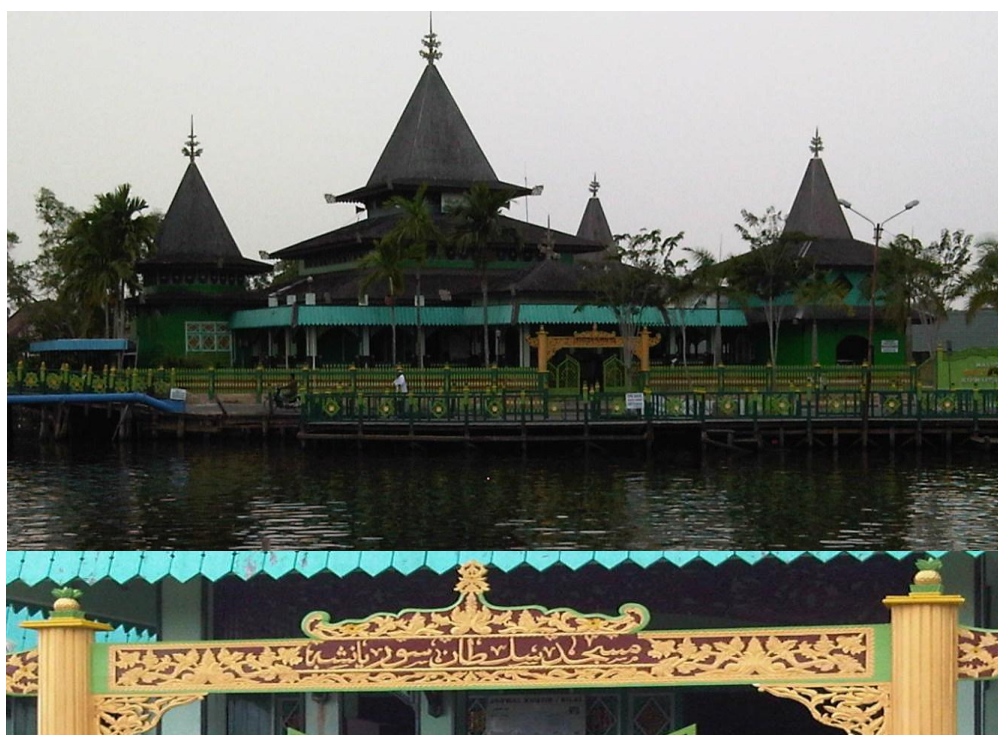
Before the era of Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there were few records of Sultanate religious advisors and intensified practices of Islam. In his commencement as the first Sultan of Banjar, Sultan Surainsyah made a command to build a mosque known by his name, Masjid Sultan Suriansyah that is still preserved and in use (see figure 3 & 4). It is about a hundred meters west of the sultanate family graveyard, including the sultan's tomb, on the Kuin riverside. In about the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Syekh Ahmad Syamsuddin al-Banjari wrote *Asal Kejadian Nur Muhammad* (The Creation of the Light of Muhammad), which was presented as a gift to the Acehnese queen, Sultanah Seri Ratu Tajul Alam Safiatuddin Johan Berdaulat (1641-1675). This work is on Islamic mysticism influenced heavily by Ibn al-Arabi's view on *wahdah al-wujūd*. This historical account shows a warm relation between Sultanate Banjar and Aceh, as well as the existence of Sufism or Islamic mysticism and its scholars in 17<sup>th</sup> century Banjarmasin.<sup>52</sup>

In return, Sultanate Aceh sent Nuruddin ar-Raniri's *Kitāb Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (The Right

<sup>51</sup> See Ras, 502-4.

<sup>52</sup> *Wujudiyah* is taken from Ibn al-Arabi's (d. 1240) views of *wahdat al-wujud*, "the oneness of being" or "the unity of being." This mystical position views God as the only existence of all beings in the world. This view has invited varying responses and discussion among Muslims and non-Muslim scholars. See William C. Chittick, "Wahdat Al-Wujud." *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard C. Martin, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 2004), 727. The trend of *wujudiyah* continues to the present. Even, in the era of Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, as we will see later, the trend grew stronger. It can be seen from some works by local *ulama*, such as *Al-Durrun-Nafis* by Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and *Risalah Amal Ma'rifah* by Abdurrahman Siddiq, al-Banjari's descendent standing as a Mufti in Sultanate Indragiri, Siak, Riau, in the nineteenth century. For a description and analysis of the trend of *Tasawuf* (Mysticism in South Kalimantan), see Mujiburrahman, "Tasawuf di Masyarakat Banjar: Kesenambungan dan Perubahan Tradisi Keagamaan," *Kanz Philosophia* 3, no. 2 (Dec. 2013): 153-83. This trend was in line with a general trend of Sufism in the Indonesian archipelago during that period; see, for example, A. H. Johns, "Islam: Islam in Southeast Asia." in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones. 2nd ed., vol. 7 (Detroit: Macmillan, 2005), 4656-73.

Path). Al-Raniri (d. 1658), whose origin was Guajrat, India, was an outstanding Muslim scholar in Sultanate Aceh in the 17th century. This book, on *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) in the Shafi'i school, was written in 1055 H. It was widely used in Banjar until Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari wrote *Sabīlal Muhtadīn* (Path of the Guided Ones) in the same school. We will see later how this prominent school in Banjar has to some extent shaped practices and reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars.<sup>53</sup>



Figures 3 & 4. Above: Masjid Sultan Suriansyah (Sultan Suriansyah Mosque) in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. Below: Banner of the mosque (Personal Collection)

With the coming of Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, the practices of Islam in Banjar became more enlivened and recorded. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Sultan Panembahan

<sup>53</sup> These historical facts, for Noor, to some extent prove that Islamization in Banjarmasin developed gradually and in varying ways. Military aid was only one prominent element of a process that had been occurring since before the sultanate. Other ways included amalgamation, marriage, trade, and migration. See Noor, *Islamisasi Kerajaan Banjar*.

Kuning (reigned 1720-1745) sent Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari to Makkah to learn Islam. After living about 30 years in Makkah (1740-1773), on his return to Sultanate Banjar, al-Banjari was appointed by Sultan Tamjidillah (1745-1778) as Mufti of the sultanate. His activities of writing and teaching Islam were pursued by his offspring, who spread not only through South Kalimantan, but also to other places in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, especially Malay speaking areas and even to the heartland of Islam, Makkah and Madinah.<sup>54</sup>

On the demand of the Sultan, Arsyad wrote several books, some of which still exist and are consulted as religious references. The first was *Tuḥfah Al-Rāgibīn*<sup>55</sup> (The Gift for the Seekers) on *Tawḥīd* (Islamic Theology on the Oneness of God). The book in general follows the Ash'ariyah<sup>56</sup> school of Islamic theology. The exposition of the book is in a general feature of works of Tauhid in Sunni schools by showing the attributes of God and listing sects going astray, with the combination of rational and textual arguments from the Qur'an as the primary sources. The only difference in this book is that it touches on local issues of traditional practices, not only the commoners but also the king and sultanate figures. The practices, inherited from non-Islamic tradition, were *manyanggar* (offerings to an unseen being in order to save and protect the lands) and *mambuang*

<sup>54</sup> See Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari* (Martapura: Madrasah Sullamul Ulum, 1996); Wan Mohd. Shaghir Abdullah, *Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari: Pengarang Sabilal Muhtadin* (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fagthaniyah, 1990).

<sup>55</sup> The complete title of the Book is *Tuḥfaturrāgibīn fī Bayān Haqīqah al-Mu'minīn wa ma yufsidu min riddah al-Murtaddīn* (The Gift for the Seekers: an explanation of the true meaning of being the believers and the lapse of the apostates), finished in 1774. See Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, *Tuḥfaturrāgibīn* (Banjarmasin: TB Murni, 2005).

<sup>56</sup> Ash'ariyah or Ash'arite is the largest Sunni school in Islam. It was named after its founder, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (873-935). M. Sait Özervarli, "Ash'arites, Asha'ira," *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Martin (New York: Macmillan, 2004), 82-84.

*pasilih* (offerings to an unseen sibling of one who may harm the person). Arsyad insists these practices are a misleading innovation going astray.<sup>57</sup>

Like his other books, this one is in Malay using Arabic script, which is usually called “*al-Lugah al-Jawiyah*” (Javanese<sup>58</sup> Language) or “*Arab Melayu*” (Malay Arabic), although he was fluent in Arabic since he learned and taught in al-Masjid al-Haram in Makkah and al-Masjid al-Nabawi in Madinah for more than 30 years. Moreover, all his works were written after his return to the Sultanate Banjar. Besides his close relation to the sultanate, which had brought him up since he was seven, the language and timing of his works implies his intimate connection to the issues of Islam among the Banjars. It does not hinder the spread of influence of his works outside Sultanate Banjar lands.

As indicated above, Arsyad’s *magnum opus* is *Sabīl al-Muhtadīn li-Tafaquhi fi Amr al-Dīn* (The Path of the Guided Ones in Comprehending Religious Matters) on *fiqh*. This book has been published in many places including Cairo, Istanbul, Beirut, Jeddah, Singapore, and Surabaya. It is still considered among the main references, especially in the Malay world, for any *fiqh* problem, especially in Shafi’i *madhhab*, as the book follows. It is used in Islamic classes (*pengajian*) not only in and around South Kalimantan, but also throughout Malay speaking communities in Southeast Asia, in Brunei, Malaysia, Pattani, Cambodia, and Vietnam.<sup>59</sup> Some recent publishers print the

<sup>57</sup> al-Banjari, *Tuhfaturragibin*, 36-37.

<sup>58</sup> During this period, Jawi or (lit. Javanese) means language and space in the archipelago (Nusantara), not limited to the Javanese ethnic group and land in contemporary Java land.

<sup>59</sup> On Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari’s works and influence see Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari*; Wan Mohd, Shaghir Abdullah, *Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari*; Mujiburrahman, “Islamic Theological Texts and Contexts in Banjarese Society: An Overview of the Existing Studies, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (Forthcoming, Dec. 2014); Sugahara Yumi, “The

work with (*Hāmishah*) *Kitāb Sirāṭal Mustaqīm* by Nuruddin al-Raniri, used in Sultanate Banjar before Arsyad's time. Al-Raniri's work was also in use during Arsyad time. Having the two in one binding make both works accessible and lasting.<sup>60</sup> *Sabīlal Muhtadīn* presents all basic practices of Islam from prayers, to purity, to preparing the deceased, to fasting, to alms giving, and eventually to pilgrimage and sacrifice (*ṣalāt*, *ṭahārah*, *janazah*, *ṣiyām*, *zakāt*, *ḥajj*, and *uḍḥiyah*).<sup>61</sup>

There is no record that Arsyad wrote a book on *tasawuf* (mysticism) However, in his era Abdul Hamid Abulung (or Datu Abulung), a local saint al-Hallaj-like,<sup>62</sup> taught the *wujudiyah* type of Sufism. Nonetheless, it was not for his mystical view of *wujudiyah* that he was accused of heresy and got death penalty: he was also accused of apostacy by claiming to be a false saint who could cease himself from God's orders on what are lawful and unlawful. By Arsyad's response in *Tuḥfaturrāgībīn*, Datu Abulung was

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Publication of Vernacular Islamic Textbooks and Islamization in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 27 (2009): 22.

<sup>60</sup> See for example the Jeddah and Singapore edition "*Sabīlal Muhtadīn lit-Tafaquhi fi Amrid-Din* atas Mazhab Imam Shafi'i Radiyallahu 'anhu Karangan Kyai al-Imam al-'Allamah Al-Hammam al-Fahhamah al-Shaikh Muhammad Arshad bin Abdullah al-Banjari...di Tepi Kitab ini ada yang Bernama *Kitab Sirataql Mustaqim* bicara Ilmu Fiqih Ibadah karangan Syekh Nuruddin Muhammad Jailani bin 'Ali bin Hasnaji bin Muhammad Hamid al-Raniri pada Ulama Aceh" (Jeddah: al-Haramain, n.d.). "*Sabīlal Muhtadīn lit-Tafaquhi fi Amrid-Din* in Shafi'i school Written by Kyai the learned, courageous, deeply erudite Imam, the Shaikh Muhammad Arshad bin Abdullah al-Banjari...at side of this book is a work entitled *Kitab Sirataql Mustaqim* on the the worship jurisprudence by Syekh Nuruddin Muhammad Jailani bin 'Ali bin Hasnaji bin Muhammad Hamid al-Raniri of Acehnese scholars.

<sup>61</sup> There are some other books, especially on *fiqh*, written by Muhammd Arsyad al-Banjari, such as *Luqtatul 'Ajlān* on women's period and its related issues, *Kitab Bab al-Nikaḥ* on marriage in Islam, *Kitab al-Farā'id*, on inheritance. The last two had been used as the main references among Banjars until the issuance of a Presidential Decree on Islamic Marriage in 1974 and Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam*) in 1991.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Husain ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj (AH 244–309/857–922 CE), was known among Muslims as "the martyr of mystical love." He was accused of spreading "heretical" teachings by claiming divinity. Annemarie Schimmel, "Hallāj, Al-," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Jones, vol. 6.

sentenced to death by the sultanate.<sup>63</sup> So, Arsyad's position was not really against Sufism. Furthermore, he translated into Malay a Sufi book, *Fathur-Rahmān* by Zakariya al-Ansari. Another work related to him is *Kanzul Ma'rifah*, although there is an unresolved dispute among researchers whether the work, in manuscript, was written by Arsyad.<sup>64</sup>

The outstanding work on Sufism was by Arsyad's contemporary Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, writing *Al-Durr al-Nafis*, a book on *tasawuf*. The biography of Nafis al-Banjari is not easy to trace, but it is recorded that he went to Makkah and Madinah to see several Syekhs, some of whom were also teachers of Arsyad al-Banjari and his contemporaries. Nafis al-Banjari taught the concept of the Light of Muhammad (*Nur Muhammad*) as the origin of all existence in the world under God's creation, the seven stages of Sufism (*martabat tujuh*), and the concept of *tawhīd*, which includes *Tawhīd al-Af'āl* (The Oneness of God's Actions), *Tawhīd al-Asmā'* (the Oneness of God's Names), *Tawhīd al-Ṣifāt* (The Oneness of God's Attributes), and *Tawhīd al-Dhat* (The Oneness of God's Being). By some he was accused of heresy in following the *wujudiyah* point of view.<sup>65</sup> Along with the controversy of this book, *Al-Durr al-Nafis* was been printed in many places, from Makka, Cairo, Singapore, and Surabaya, until the mid-14th century

<sup>63</sup> See Sykeh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, *Tuhfaturragibīn*, 32; see also M. Asyawdie Syukur, "Naskah Risalah Tuhfaturragibin" (Research Report, IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin, 1990), as cited in Mujiburrahman, "Tasawuf di Masyarakat Banjar," 159-60.

<sup>64</sup> See Mujiburrahman cited in Wardani that proposes the possibility that the work belongs to Abdurrahman Siddiq, al-Banjari's offspring, assigned as Mufti in Indragiri Riau, who also wrote another book on Sufism, *Risalah Amal Ma'rifah*, which resembles *Kanzul Ma'rifah* in many places. See Wardani, "Sufisme Banjar: Telaah atas Kitab *Kanz al-Ma'rifah*," *Kandil* 2, no. 4 (February 2004): 54-73; Mujiburrahman, "Tasawuf di Masyarakat Banjar."

<sup>65</sup> See Abdul Muthalib, "The Mystical Thoughts of Muhammad Nafsi al-Banjari: An Indonesian Sufi of the Eighteenth Century" (Master's Thesis, McGill University, 1995); see also Mujiburrahman, "Tasawuf di Masyarakat Banjar."

Hijrah.<sup>66</sup> Up to this point we can see that Islam in Banjar has been presented in three different realms of knowledge, *tawhid*, *fiqh*, and *tasawuf*.

Later on, in the era of Sultan Adam Al-Wathiqubillah (1825-1857), a student of Arsyad Al-Banjari and his son Mufti Jamaluddin ibn Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, even the Sultan issued a statute law well known as “Oendang-oendang Sultan Adam” (1835). Its preamble stated:

Pada hoedzrat 1251 pada hari kamis jang kalima belas hari boelan Almoeharram djam poekoel sambilan pada koetika iteolah aku Soeltan Adam memboeat oendang-oendang pada sekalian ra’iatkoe soepaja **djadi sampoerna agama ra’iatkoe dan atikat mereka itoe** dan soepaja djangan djadi banjak djadi2 perbantahan mereka itoe dan soepaja djadi kemoedahan segala hakim-hakim menghoekoemkan mereka itoe akoe harap-harap djoea bahwa djadi baik sekalian hal mereka itoe dengan sebab oendang-oendangkoe ini maka adalah oendang-oendangku ini beberapa perkara:...<sup>67</sup> (the bolded sentence is from me)

(On the year of 1251, on the day of Thursday the fifteenth of Muharram, at 9 o’clock, I am, Sultan Adam, issuing laws for my people in order **to perfect their religion and belief**, to eliminate contradiction, to help judges to make decision among the people. I hope that may laws could give them any good. May laws consist of several articles:...)

The preamble and the articles of the law clearly state the issues of *tawhid* and *fiqh*.

The first article is on the obligation of following Ahlus-sunnah wal-Jamaah and the power of Judges (*hakim*) to make decisions on any breaking of the law. The next articles are on *fiqh* for prayer in congregation, lands, marriage, and divorce, deciding the beginning and the end of Ramadan, and so on. The laws also send a message that in an Islamic sultanate, the Sultan as a leader can take a part in religious affairs; even judges

<sup>66</sup> Ahmadi Isa, “Ajaran Tasawuf Muhammad Nafis dan Pendapat Ulama Hulu Sungai” (Master’s Thesis, IAIN Shahid Jakarta, 1990), 65, as cited by Muthalib, “The Mystical Thoughts of Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari,” 3-4.

<sup>67</sup> *Oendang-Oendang Soeltan Adam*, Serie L. Borneo no. 18 (1835) (n.p.: n.p., n.d.)



who are religious judges (*hakim*) were to obey the laws of the sultan. On both issues, *tawhid* and *fiqh*, the sultan used Arsyad's al-Banjari's works as his main references.<sup>68</sup>

Up to this point, there had been three transformations of the place of Islam in the sultanate. The first was from the beginning of the sultanate to the coming of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. Islam had been the formal religion of the sultanate, though some old practices were still performed. The second was that the role of religion had been more formalized by having several works on specific issues in Islam, especially *fiqh* and *tawhid*, which is also to some extent used to appraise or evaluate sufistic practice and thought in the sultanate. The last is that the sultanate even had had a formal act referring to Islamic jurisprudence. So, a religious advisor of the sultan was assigned to be more than a *Mufti* (who gives religious opinions on certain matters), but also a *Qadi* (who makes decisions based on the act) under the sultan's power as highest ranking leader.

By the last transformation, some more practical books had emerged among the Banjars, such as a number of books of *parukunan*. The word *parukunan* is from *rukun* with prefix "pa" and suffix "an," a place where *rukun* could be found. *Rukun* was borrowed from Arabic *rukn*, literally pillar. The publications are titled *parukunan* for they contains several basic issues in Islam, arranged in pillars in each issue, such as pillars of faith (*rukun Iman*), pillars of Islam (*rukun Islam*), pillars of prayer (*rukun salat*), and so on. This type of work is actually a combination of work on *tauhid* and *fiqh*, although the *fiqh* part is more dominant.<sup>69</sup> The books of *parukunan* are mainly simple and practical

<sup>68</sup> *Oendang-Oendang Soeltan Adam*.

<sup>69</sup> The *tasawuf* dimension of Islam was not obviously discussed in the books of *parukunan*. However, in the middle of various discussions on *tauhid* and *fiqh*, the author raised recitations or formulas which are

“how to” books. They are widely used among Banjars as the practical references of practicing Islam in daily life as well as a primary book for children to start learning the practices of Islam.<sup>70</sup>

There are at least three kinds of *parukunan* from several generations in Banjar. All were written “al-Lugah al-Jawiyah,” as previous works we discussed. The oldest is *Parukunan Jamaluddin*. It is attributed to Jamaluddin for the name of author, Mufti Jamaluddin ibn Al-Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, a Mufti in the era of Sultan Adam. Nevertheless some believe it was the work of Fatimah binti Abdul Wahab Bugis, Arsyad’s granddaughter.<sup>71</sup> Both had direct interaction or learned directly from Arsyad al-Banjari. In *Dalam Pagar*, he introduced for the first time the concept of religious school; it would be known as the first *pesantren* in South Kalimantan. This school taught the basic teachings of Islam from learning to recite the Qur’an to practicing Islam in the daily life.<sup>72</sup> Both Mufti Jamaluddin and Fatimah learned first hand in this school and later taught people there.

With the closeness of its time to Syekh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, the book gives practical explanations of both pillars (*arkān*) of faith and pillars of Islam by referring mainly to al-Banjari’s works. However, not all issues in both pillars are explained. In the pillars of faith, the book only discusses in detail the belief in angels and prophets, then moves to “hukum air” or regulation of water. Water here means water that can be used to clean in *wuḍu* (ritual ablution) and *gusl* (spreading water over the whole

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spiritually beneficial to be practiced regularly as a kind of remembrance (*wird*), protection (*hizb*), or cure (*‘ilaj*). We can see the explanation in the details of each existing *parukunan* among the Banjarmasin.

<sup>70</sup> See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*; Noor, *Islamisasi Banjarmasin*.

<sup>71</sup> Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari*, 54.

<sup>72</sup> Abu Daudi, 42.

body). The discussion of water is as a preparation to the next *rukun* on prayers. From the prayers, the discussion moves onto fasting, and there is no talk on almsgiving<sup>73</sup> or pilgrimage. In the next chapter the book returns to prayer and cleaning the deceased with issues on how to clean, prepare, and pray on the dead body. It is worth notice that the topics of the book in general cover mainly the issues of *fiqh* in a practical way. The topics are to some extent practical and simple explanations of the ones in *Kitāb Sabīlal Muhtaḍīn* by Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari.

The topics and issues in *parukunan* digress or widen in the next generation of *parukunan*, *Parukunan Besar Melayu* by Haji Abdur Rasyid Banjar (1885-1934). The cover of the book states “diambil daripada **setengah**<sup>74</sup> karangan Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari,” literally “taken from **half** of the works of Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari.” The word “half” here does not mean really a half part; it is a Malay local translation of the word “min” followed by a noun in Arabic. So, the author actually attributes most—if not all—contents of the book to Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. Up to this point, this book may share most issues with the former *parukunan*, which belong to the first generation after the Syekh.

Nonetheless, besides the “how to” of several practices in Islam, this second generation of *parukunan* introduces some supplications and recitations outside the

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<sup>73</sup> Criticism of the contents of *parukunan*, which mostly do not cover almsgiving, is suggested by the head of MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia/Asssembly of Indonesian Islamic Scholars) South Kalimantan Province. He notes the tendency of Muslims in Banjar to emphasize personal piety through prayer, reciting Qur’an, and reciting *shalawat* (prayer and praising) the Prophet Muhammad, rather than social piety. For him, this may be triggered by the focus of handbooks such as *parukunan* that have no emphasis on that issue. He notices that such a mis-focus is a common problem among Muslim in Banjar, even criticizing that a few people may prefer to spend money for *shalawat* and *zikr* in a big congregation rather than on the poor.

<sup>74</sup> My boldface.

“pillars,” which are not found in *Kitab Sabilal Muhtadin* or *Parukunan Jamaluddin*. After the description of pillars of prayer (*arkān al-ṣalāh*), the book tells *wird* (Arabic), meaning regular recitation as prayers (*du'ā* Ar.), which combines recommended prayers from the Hadis of the Prophet and the Qur'an.<sup>75</sup> All the prayers are in Arabic with no translation or explanation. We may note that this teaching is among the first sources of practices of the Qur'an on a regular basis, though those who practice it might not realize that they are the Qur'an, for they are introduced as prayers rather than recitation of the Qur'an.<sup>76</sup>

In the next part of the book, the author relates the issue of ritual ablution (*wuḍū'*) with the prohibition on touching or carrying the Qur'an for those who does not have *wuḍū'*.<sup>77</sup> The emphasis on the prohibition not only highlights the way to behave to the Qur'an physically, but also shapes the idea of holiness and purity of the Qur'an, even its material stuff, a physical tablet. In the middle of the exposition of the pillars, the author inserts unrelated prayers practically useful for children, namely, “Doa untuk anak segala macam demam jika dibaca niscaya sembuh” (prayer for children who get fever, its recitation would heal him/her). The author says:

*Bismillāhirrahmānirrahīm, wa law anna Qur'ānan suyyirat bihi al-jibālu aw quṭṭi'at bihi al-arḍu aw kullima bihi al-mawtā bal lillāhi al-amru jamī'a. Ya Shāfī ya Kāfī yā Mu'āfī. Wa bil-haqqi anzalnāhu wa bil-haqqi nazal. Dan Baca pula bersama2 surah Alam Nashrah. La Ba'sa la ba'sa Rabbi al-nāsi ishfi wa anta al-shāfī la shifā'a illa shifā'uka. Qāla Rabbi innī wahana al-'aẓmu minnī washta'ala al-ra'su shaiban wa lam akun bidu'ā'ika rabbi shaqiyya.*<sup>78</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Haji Abdurrasyid Banjar, *Ini Kitab Parukunan Basar Malayu* (n.p.: Dua Tiga, n.d.), 10-11.

<sup>76</sup> Compared to the story of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud when he was visited by Caliph Uthman ibn 'Affan on the recitation of Surah al-Waqi'ah and Surah al-Fatihah in curing the sick. Both are presented in Chapter 1.

<sup>77</sup> Abdurrasyid Banjar, *Ini Kitab Parukunan Basar Malayu*, 35.

<sup>78</sup> Abdurrasyid Banjar, 79.

*Bismillāhirrahmānirrahīm, wa law anna Qur’ānan suyyirat bihi al-jibālu aw quṭṭi’at bihi al-arḍu aw kullima bihi al-mawtā bal lillāhi al-amru jamī’a* (from QS 13: 31). Ya Shāfi ya Kāfi ya Mu’āfi. *Wa bil-haqqi anzalnāhu wa bil-haqqi nazal.* (From QS 17: 105). And recite also together chapter Alam Nashrah (QS 94: 1-7) La Ba’sa la ba’sa Rabbi al-nāsi ishfi wa anta al-shāfi la shifā’a illā shifā’uka (It does not matter, it does not matter, The Lord of human being, heal, You are the [only] Healer, there is no healing except yours). *Qāla rabbi innī wahana al-‘azmu minnī washta’ala al-ra’su shaiban wa lam akun bidu’ā’ika rabbi shaiyya* (QS 19:4)”

Following the general pattern of the book as a practical guide, this generation presents not only how to practice Islamic teaching in theology and law (*tawhid* and *fiqh*), but also some practical use of Islamic teaching, or precise use of the Qur’an, for a practical or functional end, in this case healing feverish children. In general, such books are Islam for beginners, mostly children, but the prayer above is meant for their parents. So, in general, though the general issue of Islam in this cluster is *fiqh*, it starts also to introduce some practical reception of the Qur’an, from regular prayers to keeping the purity of the tablet (*muṣḥaf*), to practical use.

It is also worth noting that this book was written in the era of the Banjar war (1860-1905) against the Dutch colonials, absent in the background of the first *parukunan* or the last, as we will see later. During the war, the *ulama* was prominent not only as the advisor of the Sultan or *guru* (religious teacher) of *pengajian*, but also as the motivator and leader of people against the invaders. This model shaped issues of Islam infused to the people. Islam was not only for performing services to Allah (*‘ibadah*) or regulating human to human interaction (*mu’āmalah*) but also for inducing power and protection against the invading Dutch. Therefore, Abdurrasyid imbues such spirit in *parukunan* under the topic “yang marusak iman” (things that could break one’s faith). The seventh of the ten things is imitating unbelievers. Unbeliever here could be anybody, but the

indication here is it is intended to the Dutch in the nineteenth, wearing unbeliever clothes or accessories such as “tali leher dan cipiye.” Tali leher is tie and cipiye is a parabola-like round hat, both usually worn by the Dutch.<sup>79</sup> The examples are not found in the first, *Parukunan Jamaluddin*, which was written before the war and the Dutch invasion, and the last *Kitab Rasam Parukunan*, written after the decline of the sultanate.

Before moving to the last *parukunan*, note that the case of spiritual inducement against the invader was also typical of religious movement in Banjar in that era. A number of social movements against the Dutch were organized and initiated from spiritual groups, *ṭarīqah*,<sup>80</sup> movement of *beratib beamal* in various places in the sultanate where the Dutch landed. *Beratib* literally means chanting an organized formula, while *beamal* means doing an action. The movements were a kind of spiritual inducement through intensively chanting certain formulas of remembrance of Allah and the Qur’an recitation, which infuse power to all people to take weapons against the invaders in the fullest faith to Allah. Among the most prominent movements of *beratib beamal* is one led by Gusti Muhammad Seman, son of Pangeran Antasari, a leading figure in the sultanate who actively pursued guerrilla warfare against the Dutch.<sup>81</sup> *Kitab Parukunan Basar Melayu* by Abdurrasyid Banjar provides some of the formulas.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Abdurrasyid Banjar, 3.

<sup>80</sup> The word *ṭarīqah*, road or path, also signifies "mode" or "method" of action as well as "way" or code of belief. In Sufism, *ṭarīqah* refers to both the path of spirituality itself—"the way"—and the manner of traveling (*sulūk*) along this path as the wayfarer passes through various stages (*manāzil*) and stations (*maqāmāt*) in the quest to approach nearer to God." A. H. Johns and F. D. Lewis, "Ṭarīqah," *Encyclopedia of Religion*. ed. Jones, 2nd ed., vol. 13, 9003-9015.

<sup>81</sup> See Mujiburrahman, "Tasawuf di Masyarakat Banjar," 157-58; also his citation to Helius Syamsuddin, *Pegustian dan Tumenggung, Akar Sosial, Politik, Etnis, dan Dinasti Perlawanan di Kalimantan Selatan dan tengah 1859-1906* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2001).

<sup>82</sup> See Abdurrasyid Banjar, *Kitab Parukunan Basar Melayu*, 70-72.

The last book of *parukunan* is *Risalah Rasam Parukunan* by Al-Hajj ‘Abdurrahman ‘Ali al-Amuntai. This book is smaller than the previous two, and the topics are closer to the first. However, the contents of each topic touch not only practical guides of the law (*fiqh*) but also spiritual sides of each practice. For example, before presenting in practice the *rukun* or pillars of prayers (*ṣalāt*), the book classifies the prayers into four classes: “ketahuilah olehmu, bermula yang dinamakan sembahyang itu terbagi atas empat bahagian”<sup>83</sup> (You should know that prayer is classified into four classes). The four classes are “sembahyang shariah” (*sharī’ah*<sup>84</sup> prayer), “sembahyang tariqah” (*tariqah*<sup>85</sup> prayer), “sembahyang haqiqat” (*ḥaqīqah*<sup>86</sup> prayer), and “sembahyang ma’rifat” (*ma’rifah*<sup>87</sup> prayer). The first class is the simplest one as one performs prayer by strictly following and keeping the pillars of prayer as taught in *fiqh* from *niat* (intention), *takbīratul iḥrām* (raising hands to signal starting prayer), and so on until the last, *salām* (moving face to right and left while saying *assalāmu’alaikum waraḥmatullāh*), in order. For the second class, the one who performs prayer also keeps his/her prayer from any material or deeds that may invalidate the prayer and performs the prayer in devotedness (*khushū’*) and total submission to God (*khudū’*). The third class is for those who are aware and realize that one’s ability to perform prayer is not from him/her but from God, so one performs prayers in following God’s Destiny and Will on him/her. The highest prayer is for those who can combine all the classes at once while praying.<sup>88</sup> The book continues that model for *wuḍū’* (ritual ablution), then begins explaining the detailed

<sup>83</sup> Al-Hajj ‘Abdurrahman ‘Ali al-Amuntai, *Risalah Rasam Parukunan* (Amuntai: Al-Rahmaniyah, n.d.), 6

<sup>84</sup> Shariah in this context means law, namely formal law, that is, *fiqh*.

<sup>85</sup> *Tariqah*, literally way, means following the right way.

<sup>86</sup> *Haqiqah* literally means substance. In this context it means having the deeper meaning of praying.

<sup>87</sup> *Ma’rifat* literally means knowledge or awareness or consciousness.

<sup>88</sup> al-Amuntai, 6

practice of *rukun* (“pillars”) as others. So, with the emphasis on *fiqh* for the practices of Islam, these works have broadened the issues. They present not only the theology for the basis of being Muslim, but also the spiritual side of the practice, which is actually the main issue in *tasawuf*. Even those four classes are actually the common stages in *tasawuf*.<sup>89</sup>

Only at the end of the book does the author present some prayers (*al-du'ā*) and recommended practices to gain certain ends. If the Qur'an in the second generation of *parukunan* was presented in some cases for practical use or to be recited at certain times, this latest book only talks about the latter or to be recited in certain way as part of a recommended prayer. It refers, for instance, to the Prophet saying that

Barang siapa membaca kemudian daripada sembahyang pada hari Jumat sebelum memperubah iya akan kalakuan duduknya dahulu daripada berkata2 yaitu Fatihah 7 kali, Qul Huwallah Ahad ...dst 7 kali, Qul a'udhubirabbil-falaq ...dst 7 kali, dan Qul a'udhubirabbinnas ... dst 7 kali niscaya diampuni Allah Ta'ala akan dosanya yang terdahulu dan yang terkemudian dan diberi pahala baginya sebilang2 hamba yang beriman dengan Allah dan RasulNya”<sup>90</sup> (p. 64)

(whoever, at the end of Jumah prayer before changing his sitting gesture and saying any words, recites Fatihah (QS 1:1-7) 7 times, Qul Huwallah Ahad...and on (QS 112:1-4) 7 times, Qul a'udhubirabbil-falaq...and on (QS 113:1-5) 7 times, and Qul a'udhubirabbinnas...and on (QS 114:1-6) 7 times, Allah will forgive his past and future sins, rewards him as the number of those who believe in Allah and His Messenger).

<sup>89</sup> This common classification is also emphasized in line with some other *ulama* in Banjar; see Muhammad Sarni bin Jarmani bin Muhammad Siddiq al-Alabi, *Mabadi 'Ilm Tasawuf* (Banjarmasin: Murni, 2009); Muhammad Sarni bin Jarmani bin Muhammad Siddiq al-Alabi, *Tuhfaturragibin fi Bayan Tariq al-Salikin*, (Banjarmasin: Murni, 2004); Haji Basri bin Ali Hamid, *Nurul Arifin fi Tahqiq Ma'rifath Rabb al-'Alamin* (Banjarmasin: Murni, 2004); and *ulama* of Banjar those migrated to Sumatera, such as Haji Abadurrahman Siddiq, *RisalahAmal Ma'rifah serta Taqirir Mengesakan Allah Ta'ala yang dinuqilkan dariapda Kitab tasawuf dengan Ikhtisar* (Banjarmasin: Mudah, n.d.). The works on *tasawuf* by Abdussamad al-Falimbani, al-Banjari's contemporary in Makkah and Madinah, are also widespread and read massively in Banjarmasin. See the book, Abdussamad al-Falimbani, All the works are written in *Jawi* or Malay in Arabic script.

<sup>90</sup> al-Amuntaiy, *Risalah Rasam Parukunan*, 64.



The development of “how to” books also signifies two current developments of Islamic issues among the Banjars. The first is the Gazalian model of presenting Islam. The Gazalian model is for al-Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Gazali (1508-1111) in his work *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, where he presents Islam, which consists of belief (*aqīdah* or theology), practice (*fiqh*),<sup>91</sup> and spirituality or mysticism (*taṣawuf*), into the description and analysis of any topics in his book.<sup>92</sup> It is the features we can see from some works of *parukunan* besides some works on particular issues in *Aqidah* or *fiqh* or *tasawuf* such as presented in his notes 40, 42, and 46. The second is that besides the practical guides of practicing and performing Islam in its basic aspects, such as basic of faiths, prayers, almsgiving, etc., Muslims in Banjar would use religion for various functional and practical ends in their daily life. This latter use, to some extent, supports the emergence of various handbooks of Islam. I found rough data from several bookstores in Banjarmasin of the three best-selling handbooks there. They are *Senjata Mukmin* (The Weapon of the Believers) by Al-Hajj Husain Qadri<sup>93</sup> from Martapura, *Risalah Amaliyah* (a book of practice) by Qusairi Hamzah<sup>94</sup> from Pantai, and *Majmu’ Sharif* (the collection of virtues) by an anonymous writer. The two former are by the Banjars, while the last is a nationwide handbook.

<sup>91</sup> There are hardly any works on *fiqh* by Ulama in Banjar after Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. Therefore, a number of Islamic classes in mosques (*pengajian*) use some books in Arabic, besides al-Banjari’s books themselves. Among the most used are Abu Bakar Usman ibn Muhammad Shatta al-Dimyati al-Bakri’s *Hāshiyah I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn ‘alā Alfāz Faḥul-Mu’īn* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, n.d.); Ahmad Zainuddin ibn Abdul ‘Azīz al-Ma’bari al-Malibari al-Fannāni al-Shāfi’ī, *Faḥul-Mu’īn bi Sharḥ Qurātil-‘Ayn bi Muḥimmah al-Dīn*, (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2004).

<sup>92</sup> See Nelly van Doorn-Harder and R. Michael Feener, “Indonesia,” in Kathryn Coughlin, *Muslim Cultures Today: A Reference Guide* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2006).

<sup>93</sup> Al-Hajj Husin Qadri, *Senjata Mukmin*, 4th ed. (Martapura: n.p., 1962)

<sup>94</sup> M. Qusairi Hamzah, *Risalah ‘Amaliyah* (Banjarmasin: TB Mutira, n.d.)

Up to this point, the main issues among the Banjar have not been in the Qur'an or its interpretation, while the belief in the Qur'an is part of the main pillars of faith. The issues of the Qur'an emerge in the model of its practical use for any purposes, not in its exegetical discussion. The Qur'an here is recited more for devotion and litany or for worldly practical benefit, not as a source of guidance. The Qur'an may also appear frequently in other works, to be cited as reference, justification, or explanation of certain topics.<sup>95</sup> The typical presentation of such handbooks is simple information of the benefit, significance, and excellence of certain recitations that are mostly parts of the Qur'an: chapters, verses, or even parts of verses. Then, the books provide the formula and texts to be recited. Such handbooks could reach many aspects of human life to fill them with religious formulas, as we will see in the next chapter. These books also serve as a front-line written document for keeping the tradition of the Qur'an among the Banjars for its simplicity in content, information, and handling.

It is rare to find works specifically on the Qur'an by a Banjar scholar. It is not necessarily that the study of the Qur'an is absent in the life of the Banjars. Moreover, study of *tafsīr* is compulsory in a religious formal or informal school (*pesantren*). However, they will take a book of *tafsīr* commonly used in many places in Indonesia, or even abroad, such as *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* and *Tafsīr Ibnu Kathīr*. At the same time, the Qur'an is always quoted in many places during religious discussion, but not as a complete study of the whole Qur'an.

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<sup>95</sup> Such referencing justifying or explaining certain notions or topics can also be found in some works on *tauhid* by *ulama* in Banjar. See, for example, Abdurrahman ibn Haji Muhammad Ali, *Kifāyatul-Mubtadi'īn fī I'tiqād al-Mu'minīn: Sifat Dua Puluh Jalan I'tiqād Ahlul-sunnah Wal-Jama'ah* (Amuntai: al-Rahmaniyah, 1981); Haji Asy'ari bin Haji Sulaiman, *Sirājul Mubtadi'īn* (Banjarmasin: Murni, n.d.)

The only work on the Qur'an from the early generations of the Banjars is Syekh Muhammad Al-Banjari's handwritten manuscript, which is still kept. The manuscript was written on his return from Makkah like his other works. It shows al-Banjari's expertise in the Qur'an, though he never wrote any other book on it. The size of the book is about 1 x 0.75 m. The manuscript comprises the whole 30 parts of the Qur'an, bundled into three groups, each of 10 parts (*juz*) of the Qur'an. The first is from part 1 to 10, the second from part 11 to 20, and the last from part 21 to 30. The first and last bundles are kept in the Provincial Museum of South Kalimantan in Banjarbaru; only the first is exhibited for public in a glass box. The second bundle is kept by the heir of al-Banjari in Dalam Pagar Martapura, *guru* Irsyad Zein alias Abu Daudi. The script is *naskh* (a common script of the Qur'an) with 18 lines on each page. Among the most important meta-data of the manuscript are that along the sides of the manuscript, al-Banjari wrote any variant of reading (*Qirā'āt*) available for each verse on the page in question. There has not been any research on the number and variants of *qirā'āt* covered in the manuscript. Nonetheless, the detail and neatness of the script and the *qirā'āt* on the sides of the manuscript shows al-Banjari's deep knowledge of the Qur'an.

The issues of Islam in Banjars do not directly put the Qur'an in the center of discussion, but it is actively involved in the tradition and daily life of the Banjars by the development of various books on Islam. Historically and recently, the issues of Islam in Banjars mostly emphasize the three main aspects of Islam, *aqidah*, *fiqh*, and *tasawuf*. These emphases along with the prominence of the Qur'an as the holy book of Islam mean that the Qur'an is cited, referred to, and recited in many places in many ways. It may be cited in many works to legitimize and explain certain issues. For example, in explaining

the twenty attributes of God, Abdurrasyid cites the verses of the Qur'an to show its justification in every attribute he discusses.<sup>96</sup> At the same time, in many places in the works mentioned above, the Qur'an is merely referred to be recited. Al-Banjari highly recommends the practice of reciting Surah Yasin (36) next to a dying person, though the topic is not on the Qur'an.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, handbooks such as *Risalah Amaliyah* and *Senjata Mukmin* are full of practice of reciting the Qur'an for various ends.

#### **D. Chapter Conclusion**

Historically and socially the Banjars have been positively associated with Islam. The association has given Banjar multiple facets as an ethnic, spatial, social, or religious identity. The blend of all identities has led Islam in Banjar to keep transforming in accordance with its sociocultural and historical contacts. It is why Islam in Banjar does not drastically detach itself from tradition. Moreover, in their practice as Muslims, the Banjars may transform some old values while keeping the form or keeping the value in a new form.

This dynamic feature of Islam and Banjars continues to shape issues of Islam in Banjar, from a partial approach in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to fluidity in recent time. This transformative character also suggests that Islam in Banjar is friendly with tradition. At the same time, it opens space for various new issues of Islam that has not been covered in this research yet, such as contemporary issues of democracy, feminism, environment, and Islamic states.

<sup>96</sup> Abdurrasyid Banjar, *Kitab Parukunan Basar Melayu*, 27-31.

<sup>97</sup> Syekh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, *Sabīlal Muhtadīn lit-Tafaqquh fi Amr al-Dīn atas Mazhab Imam Shafi'i radiyallahu 'anh* (Bandung: Al-Maarif, n.d.), juz 2, 65-67.

All in all, this transformative character has opened spaces for the practices of the Qur'an to be varied; although it has never been treated directly as a central topic, it is always there in arguments and practices of Muslims in Banjar.

## CHAPTER III

### FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE: THE QUR'AN IN BANJAR PASSAGES OF LIFE

#### A. The Qur'an: A Religio-socio-cultural Text

Though the Qur'an is not a dominant discourse in the works of local *ulama* among the Banjars, it is not necessarily the case that this scripture is absent in their life. The presence of the Qur'an in the great variety of Muslim lives in general, including the Banjars, has a multifaceted character. As scripture, the Qur'an is of course a sacred text for Muslims. This statement is one of the pillars of faith in Islam: to believe in scriptures sent by God. Furthermore, as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in his sociocultural realm, the text responds as well when directed to present sociocultural phenomena. For example, the earlier verses of QS al-Mujādilah (58) were revealed in response to Khawla bint Tha'labah's complaint against her husband's *zihār* by saying "you are like my mother's backside" (*anti ka zahri ummī*), which, according to Arab custom, put her in uncertain position. Her husband could not touch her any longer, but she also could not move on as a free woman from a marital bond. Although Khawla and her husband would love to reform their familial life, in Arab custom, there was no way for them to either return or separate in *zihār*. As she did not get any answer for her question to the Prophet regarding her case, Allah responded her by revealing QS Al-Mujādilah (58) 1-2 saying:

**1.** Allah has indeed heard (and accepted) the statement of the woman who pleads with thee concerning her husband and carries her complaint (in prayer) to Allah, and Allah (always) hears the arguments between both sides among you: for Allah hears and sees (all things). **2.** If any men among you divorce their wives by *Zihar* (calling them mothers), they cannot be their mothers: None can be their mothers

except those who gave them birth. And in fact they use words (both) iniquitous and false: but truly Allah is one that blots out (sins), and forgives (again and again).

The verses are then pursued by:

**3.** But those who divorce their wives by *Zihār*, then wish to go back on the words they uttered,- (It is ordained that such a one) should free a slave before they touch each other: Thus are ye admonished to perform: and Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that ye do. **4.** And if any has not (the wherewithal), he should fast for two months consecutively before they touch each other. But if any is unable to do so, he should feed sixty indigent ones, this, that ye may show your faith in Allah and His Messenger. Those are limits (set by) Allah. For those who reject (Him), there is a grievous Penalty.<sup>1</sup>

These verses bring about a social transformation in Arab lives.<sup>2</sup> It allows them to keep their family by requiring the husband to repent and pay the penalty (*kaffārah*) for his wrongdoing in saying *zihār*.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'an that has been revealed also triggered new practices and cultures among the Companions. Abi Sa'id al-Khudry narrated a saying of the Prophet Muhammad regarding a Companion who had spent his night reciting QS al-Ikhlās (112) repeatedly. He reported to the Prophet that this man seemed to discount the Qur'an into a single chapter. However, the Prophet confirmed the man's practice by saying "indeed, the chapter equals one third of the Qur'an."<sup>4</sup> The man in this narration developed his own culture of reciting the Qur'an, although it had no precedent. Abu Sa'id al-Khudry also told a story of a Companion who used QS al-Fatihah (1) to cure a person bitten by a scorpion, although there was no previous guidance from the Prophet to do that.

<sup>1</sup> Abdulah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, 11th ed. (Beltsville, MD: Amana, 2006), 1432-33.

<sup>2</sup> See Mattson, *The Story of The Qur'an*, 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> QS 58:1-2 responds to Khawla bint Tha'labah's complaint, while QS 58:3-4 responds to the wish of Aws ibn Samit, Khawla's husband, to return to his familial bond with Khawla. See Al-Wahidi, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl, al-Maktabah al-Shamīlah* e-book, ver.2., 144.

<sup>4</sup> Abi 'Ubad al-Qasim ibn Salam, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1991), 142.

Eventually, when the story reached the Prophet, he confirmed it.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Mattson sees that this story founded the development of healing practice using the Qur'an.<sup>6</sup>

The religio-socio-cultural character of the Qur'an can also be grasped from various definitions of the Qur'an. There are at least two ways scholars introduce the Qur'an: proposing a definition and describing its context. After comparing several opinions, Al-Zarkashi provides a moderate definition that could cover various definitions of the Qur'an. He says the Qur'an is *al-lafz al-munazzal 'alā al-Nabī saw, al-manqūl 'anhu bil-tawātur, al-muta'abbad bitilāwatih* (the Word sent down to the Prophet pbuh, transmitted from him successively, and its recitation devotion).<sup>7</sup> A definition by Ummul Qura University in Makkah is "Word of Allah sent down to the Prophet Muhammad pbuh, its word is inimitable, its recitation is devotion, transmitted successively, written in tablets commenced by al-Fatihah and ended by al-Nas."<sup>8</sup>

From the definition, we can see some elements related sociocultural life of the Prophet or Muslims in general. The first element is "Word of Allah," which is in the realm of belief for it is a decree that all Muslims have to believe, but the rest are about social life. The second is that the Word was sent to the Prophet Muhammad. The process of revelation is in the realm of belief, as nobody could prove or disprove it. However, the

<sup>5</sup> Al-Imam al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Hadith No. 4623, juz. 15, 411; *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book, ver. 2

<sup>6</sup> Mattson, 168.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Abdul 'Azim al-Zarkashi, *Manāhil al-'Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, (Cairo: Dar Ihya Kutub al-Arabiyyah, 1970), 20.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://uqu.edu.sa/page/ar/146950>, accessed May 20, 2014. This definition shares all points in an extended definition by al-Zarkashi, see al-Zarkashi, *Manāhil al-'Irfān*, 19; Ali Rida added an element of "challenge" the definition to express the inimitability. Fuad 'Ali Rida, *Min 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dar Iqra, 1986), 14; a similar definition can be compared to Mustafa al-Baga and Muhyiddin Mastu, *al-Wādīh fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2nd ed. (n.p.: Dar al-Kalam al-Tayyib, 1989), 15.



Prophet who received the Word was in the historical and social realms. The story of Khawla bint Tha'labah corroborates the historical and social realms of Prophet Muhammad in receiving the Word. The third is the inimitability of the Qur'an, which is heavily related to its surrounding social life. The inimitability is always in relation to one's lack of ability to imitate the Qur'an. In Arabic, inimitability is *mu'jiz*, an active noun formed from a transitive verb *a'jaza* that needs objects, namely human ability to imitate the Qur'an. The fourth is successive transmission, which is inherently historical and social, for it covers a successive number of people receiving the Qur'an from the Prophet to be transmitted to the next generation in the same manner. This element also simplifies an extensive tradition of Qur'an learning and teaching in Islam through uninterrupted links. The last element is devotional value of its recitation.<sup>9</sup> Since early generations of Islam, this value has encouraged Muslims to recite the Qur'an as much as they could.<sup>10</sup> In the spread of Islam to most non-Arabic speaking lands, including Indonesia, this element could be a prominent reason for the Qur'an to be recited massively.

The second model of introducing the Qur'an is by describing limited and wider contexts from any period—revelation, codification, ornamentation, printing, and so on. The main point is to show the Qur'an as a text with religious as well as historical and social values. With varying details, the common initial way of presentation is by

<sup>9</sup> Although he does not propose any definition of the Qur'an, al-Suyuti discusses all elements and emphasizes more the last element of devotional value. He describes devotional value as one of the prominent characters of the Qur'an in two places in his work of *al-Itqān*, under the topics of several names of the Qur'an and the excellences of the Qur'an. See Jalaluddin al-Suyuti al-Shafi'i, *al-Itqān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, (Cairo: v.p., 1861 CE/1278 H), in names of the Qur'an, juz 1, 63-65, and *Faḍl al-Qur'ān* or the excellences of the Qur'an, juz 2, 183-185.

<sup>10</sup> As exemplified by the story of a Companion who keeps reciting QS al-Ikhlās all night.

describing the early context of the Qur'an as a wider context, and Prophet Muhammad's personal life as a limited context. Such models range from Muslims to Orientalist scholars such as Ingrid Mattson,<sup>11</sup> Farid Esack,<sup>12</sup> M. A. Draz,<sup>13</sup> Anna M. Gade,<sup>14</sup> and Neal Robinson,<sup>15</sup> to mention some. Such works suggest that the Qur'an has fulfilled many needs of human life since the early period of revelation.<sup>16</sup>

The two models of presentation of the Qur'an share sociocultural phenomena of the Qur'an throughout the history of Muslim all over the world. These phenomena assign a universal value to the Qur'an. At the same time, they imply local reception of the Qur'an in varying sociocultural loci. As indicated in the elements of the definition, non-Arabic speaking Muslims might accentuate the devotional element of the Qur'an rather than the one of inimitability.

It is in context that I see how the Qur'an fulfills various functions of Banjar life. As part of a universal Muslim community, Muslims in Banjar share the Qur'an and its surrounding early contexts with global Muslims. However, this universal value is received by Banjars in their local context and value as well. To grasp a wider aspect of Banjar life and a distinctive feature of this group, I will focus on Banjar passages of life. Passages of life can show critical moments in any social group. During critical moments,

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<sup>11</sup> Mattson, *the Story of the Qur'an*.

<sup>12</sup> Farid Esack, *The Qur'an: A Short Introduction* (London: Oneworld, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> M. A. Draz, *Introduction to the Qur'an* (London: Tauris, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Anna M. Gade, *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Neal Robinson, *Discovering Qur'an: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text* (London: SCM Press, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Farid, *The Qur'an*, 16

the society would accentuate its identity as well as adapt to passages they are facing.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars in various passages of life will give an idea of how they are part of universal Islam in a distinctive limited context.<sup>18</sup>

In each moment of Banjar passages of life, I will only show the passages where the Qur'an is there. So after describing the passage moment and its meaning, I show the mode of reception of the Qur'an as practiced in that passage and how it is related to the identity of Banjar Muslims. The latter will make up the phenomena of the Banjar to be Muslim as well as Banjar in receiving the Qur'an through their actual practices.

## **B. Banjar Life Cycles and the Qur'an**

### **1. Pregnancy (Reciting the Qur'an as a Personal Practice)**

Banjar passages of life are started from the moment a woman is pregnant. While a woman is pregnant, the prospective father or mother or both recite certain chapters of the Qur'an for specific purposes. In early pregnancy, as they do not know the sex of the future child, the prospective father will recite QS Yusuf (Joseph [12]), and the prospective mother will recite QS Maryam (Mary [19]). The chapters are recited in full, usually at night after *magrib* (sunset) prayer, although there is no specified time so long as it is conducted daily in a regular way. In contemporary time, prospective parents may

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<sup>17</sup> For the critical moment in the passages of life see Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passages*, tr. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 11; Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passages*," in *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967).

<sup>18</sup> For the dynamic of universal Islam in local non-Arab lands see Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge*.

have access to the sex of the future baby. When they are relatively sure of the sex of the baby, both will recite QS Yusuf for a male and Maryam for a female baby.

Some perceive the above practice as a minimum recitation. While the husband recites a chapter according to the possible sex of the baby, the best practice is actually to recite the whole Qur'an. In this case, the prospective mother dominantly carries out this task. She recites the Qur'an from beginning to end as often as she can in her leisure time or after each daily prayer. Every night before going to bed, the prospective father recites QS Al 'Alaq (96) 1-5 for the baby three times directed to the mother's body where the baby is.

In general, before several modern inventions of the good impact of beautiful sounds around a pregnant mother to the baby in the womb,<sup>19</sup> the Banjars, and Muslims in general, believe Qur'an recitation will have a high impact on the baby, for it will invite blessing by the holy book from God.<sup>20</sup> Any recitation of the Qur'an will be beneficial and meaningful, regardless of the meaning of the verses recited. So, this practice is based on a general reception of the Qur'an as a whole as a sacred book that may bring blessing and rewards from God for those who recite it. This general feature can be found in some other practices in passages of life, as we will see more detail later.

The recitation of a specific chapter goes farther than the blessing to particular intentions and hope for the future child. Surah Yusuf is recited with the hope of a smart,

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Marcy Marten, "Plenty of Womb to Learn," *International Journal of Childbirth Education*. 28, 2 (Apr. 2013): 73-75.

<sup>20</sup> For various practices of inviting the blessing of the Qur'an among Muslim communities, see Esack, *The Qur'an*; Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*; Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'an*.

good-looking, successful life like Joseph. The story of Joseph in the Qur'an is among the exceptions, as Allah provides the story in detail, compared to other stories. The chapter is recited in full for that hope and intention. Recitation of Surah Maryam has a similar intention. Because of all the positive and best qualities of Maryam, it is hoped the future child will grow up a strong and pious woman like her. These hopes may consider or disregard the detailed information of the chapters, for the main point is on the blessing of performing reciting the Qur'an. Surah Maryam, for example, is actually also talking about some other prophets. There are stories of Zakariya (Zachariah) and his son Yaḥya (John the Baptist), Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and his offspring Iṣḥāq (Isac), Ya'qūb (Jacob), and Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Mūsā (Moses) and his family, and Idrīs (Enoch).

The two chapters above are in reference to personal figures in the Qur'an, Joseph and Mary. The recitation of QS al-Alaq (96) 1-5<sup>21</sup> is different. To some extent, it refers to the wording and general context of the verses. It is a hope for the baby to grow as one who loves reading and learning in general, especially the Qur'an, as signs of Allah, and other religious teachings based on the excellent qualities stated and implied in the chapter. The verses assign an early order to the Prophet Muhammad, to read. However, it was not mere reading, for an illiterate Muhammad followed the Angel Jibril (Gabriel)'s recitation of signs of Allah. It was a divine reading under God's guidance.

<sup>21</sup> اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (١) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢) اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ (٣) الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤) عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)

(1)Proclaim! (or Read) in the Name of Thy Lord and Cherisher, Who Created—(2) Created Man, out of a (mere) leech-like clot of congealed blood: (3) Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful—(4) He Who taught (the use of) the Pen—(5) Taught man that which he knew not. Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, 1672-1673.

In the cases above, the Qur'an is recited and presented in oral and aural modes as a personal activity. The oral mode is based on the recitation of the Qur'an, through reciting the tablet (*mushaf*) or by heart as the prospective parents have memorized the chapters. The aural aspect is that the recitation is intended to be heard by the baby in the womb as guidance and prayer.

I could not find an exact reference to the practice, in conversations or literature. The people I asked always referred to it as a good tradition and an important practice of past generations they need to preserve and pass to the next generation, especially in such a critical time as pregnancy. So, for the Banjars the practice of reciting the Qur'an in this context has a dual meaning. It is their actual practice appropriate to their current need, such as reciting one chapter (Maryam or Yusuf) for their pregnancy and future child. At the same time it is also a form of keeping memory of and respect for their ancestors. In short, through the practice, the people show how they understand the past and what they can do in their current context.

## 2. Pregnancy (Reciting the Qur'an as a Communal Practice)

Another moment of pregnancy is celebrated by recitation of the Qur'an in congregation as a communal practice. There are two models in this case, for those in their first and later pregnancies. In a first pregnancy, there will be a religio-cultural ceremony, the seventh-month shower ritual or *bamandi-mandi tujuh bulanan*.<sup>22</sup> I call it religio-cultural for it has some elements of religion, such as recitation of the Qur'an, *shalawat*

<sup>22</sup> *Bamandi-mandi* means shower, *tujuh* means seven, *bulanan* means month. So, it is a ritual shower at the seventh month of pregnancy.

(praise) to Prophet Muhammad, and prayer led by a religious leader. However, it was initially a merely cultural practice that might be a religious practice that predates Islam in Banjar, as we can see from some elements of ritual. This ritual is usually carried out by those who traditionally have direct or indirect blood relations to the court family of Sultanate Banjar or who had such tradition in the family line. Alfani Daud reports a detail of the ritual as follows:

“In the ritual of shower, a pregnant lady wears a beautiful cloth and jewelries sitting on *lapik*<sup>23</sup> in the middle of the room while having shell of coconut of her lap. Before her is a number of traditional cakes, which is called *wadai empat puluh*<sup>24</sup> (lit. 40 cakes) for the number of the cakes. When everything is ready, the lady is taken into shower place that must be on the area where there is nothing block her to the sky, usually in front of veranda. The place is called *pagar mayang* for it is surrounded by young stems of coconut tree (*mayang*) that are arranged in a form resembling a square fence (*pagar*). On her way to the shower place, people chant *salawat* (praise and prayer to the Prophet Muhammad) loudly. Changing her cloth to a shower cloth that is still covering her body, she hands over the shell of coconut to an old lady around her. The shower ritual starts as people which all are ladies shower her in turn with a special blend of water. Parts of the blend are *banyu yasin* (water that has been recited, *Surah Yasin*/Chapter 36 of the Qur’an), *banyu doa* (water that has been sprinkled with prayers from a religious leader), and *banyu burdah* (water that has been recited, *burdah*<sup>25</sup>). At the

<sup>23</sup> *Lapik* is several long cloths (at least two), folded into squares and arranged in layer on the floor, usually in the middle of the house, where the ceremony takes place. It is provided as a place where the prospective mother sits. Two square cloths one on the other make a *lapik* with eight angles.

<sup>24</sup> The number of cakes is actually 41, so sometimes it is called *wadai empat satu* (41 cakes). In Banjar oral tradition, it is believed that the number was actually made to confront the number of spiritual beings in an unseen world around where Banjars live. Offering the cakes is intended to create harmony between Banjars’ lower world and the upper unseen world. Therefore, *wadai 41* is frequently used in other rituals in Banjar. However, with the coming of Islam, *wadai 41* has gradually become more mundane and used as dishes for guests in any ritual as well as symbolic hopes and prayers of the host. See Syamsiar Seman, *Wadai Banjar 41 Macam* (41 kinds of Banjar Cakes) (Banjarmasin: Lembaga Pendidikan Banua, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> *Burdah* is a poetry book praising and praying for the Prophet Muhammad composed by al-Imam al-Busiri (609-694 CE). *Burdah* is famous among Banjars as a spiritual composition of excellent quality, especially to avoid unpleasant things. In some areas, *Burdah* is also recited regularly weekly or monthly, and recited every Friday night during hajj/pilgrimage season in a house where one or more family member is doing hajj in Makkah. It is believed by some that the recitation will protect those in Makkah from hot and cold weather so they can perform hajj successfully and in tranquility. See the poems in *Dalā’il al-Khayrāt wa talīha al-Istigfārāt wa Qaṣīdah al-Burdah wa Gairuhā* (Banjarmasin: Sayyid Ahmad al-Habshi, n.d), 1-44; *Majmū’ah al-Mawālīd wa Ad’iyah* (Semarang: Karya Toha Putera, n.d.), 201-26.

end of shower procession, she stands and steps on an egg to break it. Having done with shower, she changes her clothes and returns to the middle of the room and sits on previous *lapik* accompanied by recitation of *salawat* as before. The next phase is *batumbang*<sup>26</sup> where a number of cakes, especially white and red *apam* and *cucur* are served in front of the lady. Then, lead by someone, usually a religious leader, all recite *Surah Yasin* (Chapter 36) of the Qur'an. When they reach verse 58 "*Salāmun Qawlan min Rabbir-Raḥīm,*" *apam* and *cucur* are shared to all people in the room while they move on to finish reciting the chapter followed by prayer at the end of the ritual."<sup>27</sup>

Any elements in the ritual represent their respective values for the lady and the future child. *Lapik* symbolizes support to the lady in her pregnancy, and we will see the same model in other rituals, such as of marriage, *salamatan*<sup>28</sup> for Hajj, and a child who finishes reciting the whole Qur'an. Coconut shell is for the baby, who will be taken carefully and in full of love from all people, especially the mother. The cakes are now only for dishes to be served to the guests. Some cakes may have environmental value, as we will see in the ritual of *batamat* later. *Pagar Mayang* means protection for those in it, the lady, as the materials used to make it are believed those in it from any evil and unpleasant things. The act of showering itself is believed as the practice of showering the lady with all positive and excellent qualities from the blend of water. It has elements of flowers and herbs that will shower good smell, beauty, health, and power for the lady and

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<sup>26</sup> *Batumbang* literally means having something on the top of something else. In this case *batumbang* is symbolized by the number of *apam* and *cucur*, traditional cakes formed like a small plate. The cakes are hung on a stick from a coconut tree approximately as tall as the lady. The cakes are served to guests as a compensation for safety, health, and easiness for the lady and her baby.

<sup>27</sup> Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 267-68.

<sup>28</sup> *Salamatan* is more or less similar to *Slametan* in Java, as described by Clifford Geertz (see Geertz, *Religion of Java*). It is a communal moment conducted under guidance of a religious leader to pray together according to the intention of the host.



the future baby. It has also elements of *shalawat*, supplications, and Qur'an recitation.<sup>29</sup>

At the end, they also recite certain part of the Qur'an together.

There is no further explanation of the recitation of QS Yasin (36) in this occasion, except that Yasin is among the most prominent *surahs* in the Qur'an and will shower those who recite it with many excellent. However, from several works of the issues of Islam in the previous chapter, we can see that Yasin is among the chapters of the Qur'an frequently referred to and recommended to be recited regularly or occasionally. We can see later in other passages of Banjar lives, Yasin is among the most recited chapters of the Qur'an for various occasions. Moreover, a massive publication of a small handbook consisting of Surah Yasin and some supplications makes recitation more accessible.<sup>30</sup>

A moment of reciting *Salāmun qawlan min Rabbir-rahīm* (QS Yaṣīn [36] 85) ("Peace!" a Word [of salutation] from the Lord Most Merciful)<sup>31</sup> is a moment of give and take between the lady and the guest while offering supplication to God. In Banjar local language, *salām* also means *salamat*, meaning safe or safety. So as all those present recite this, they stop for a moment and share *apam* and *cucur* to symbolize alms from the lady and supplication and support from everybody. All share the prayer to God to bless the

<sup>29</sup> There is no information as to when Surah Yasin and also other religious elements such as *Shalawat*, *Burdah*, and supplications became part of the rituals. However, as the practice of *bamandi-mandi* or showering is among pre-Islamic Banjar traditions, it can be concluded relatively that this practice is among efforts to introduce Islamic teaching into preexisting Banjar practices. See Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 259.

<sup>30</sup> We can see it from a huge number of handbooks of *Yasin dan Tahliil*. For example, *Majmu' Syarif* has no information as to its author. The original uses Jawi script. It is Malay language in Arabic script. However, for its numerous use throughout Indonesia, including Banjar, it has been transliterated and translated into Bahasa Indonesia by a number of people. In Banjar, *Risālah 'Amaliyah* by Qusairi Hamzah has been printed more than ten times. Some handbooks also contain other *surahs*, usually Al-Mulk (67), al-Waqi'ah (56), al-Fath (48), and al-Kahf (18). The books explain the excellences of the *surah* and the way to recite it on a regular basis or on certain occasions.

<sup>31</sup> Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, 1129.

lady and the baby with safety in pregnancy and delivery. By this, any elements of the ritual that used to be part of an offering to unseen powers have been dismissed totally and transformed to a social value. This practice also has transformed *bamandi-mandi* to be a socio-religious practice. This practice takes the Qur'an as the heart of religion to symbolize its Islamic practice. Meanwhile, it has transformed as well as kept some old sociocultural practices such as cakes and *pagar mayang*.

During the ritual, the practice of reciting the Qur'an is both personal and communal. The first is a personal recitation in which the Qur'an is recited to water to be blended with other water and showered on the pregnant lady. There is no information as to who recites the Qur'an in this case, but people get the result of the recitation over the water. The second is a communal recitation; it may resemble the oral and aural practices by the future parents. The recitation signifies a form of social cohesion<sup>32</sup> where the lady and the guests share in the rituals that unite them into one society, the Banjar. So, the recitation as well as the ritual are not only Banjars' response to their immediate needs for safety in pregnancy and delivery, but also their way to keep their inherited identity as Banjar Muslim which has been handed over in generations.

The second model of reception of the Qur'an, during the seventh month of pregnancy or *manujuh bulan* (the seventh month) is the recitation of the three chapters

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<sup>32</sup> See Emile Durkheim, *The Rule of Sociological Method*, tr. W. D. Halls, ed. Steven Lukes (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1982), 83, on social solidarity. See also Lukes, Introduction to *The Rule of Sociological Method*; Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, tr. Joseph Ward Swain (London: Allen & Unwin, 1976), 4, in which he defines religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices that unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them. This definition puts social cohesion as the sacred element of a society.

Yasin, Yusuf, and Maryam altogether. It looks much like the ritual of showering in which the family of the prospective mother and father invite people to gather in their house. However, it is usually held by more female commoners, and the steps and elements of the gathering are much simpler. The gathering usually takes place in the afternoon, after *Asar* (afternoon prayer). The women guests sit together in a room with the prospective mother. A few male guests usually sit on chairs outside the house accompanied by the prospective father. There is no special place to sit for the lady as long as it is comfortable and in sight of most of the guests in the room. There are also *apam and cucur*, but not to be prepared for *batumbang*. Such cakes are served just to keep the tradition of having them on such an occasion. Main dishes served are also special, not “cakes,” but blends of sour-sweet-spicy fruits and spices. The sour taste is from young mango, pineapple, *kedondong* (plumlike fruit), and other fruits to meet the lady’s taste in pregnancy. The sweet taste is from palm sugar, blended with peppers to give a spicy taste.

A female religious leader begins the gathering with *bahalarat* reciting QS *al-Fātiḥah* (1). *Bahalarat* is a rendering of an Arabic word *ḥaḍrah* into the local tongue *halarat*, the prefix *ba* to indicate doing *halarat*. It refers to the expression *ila ḥaḍrati...* , meaning “to whom it is presented....” It is usually recited at the beginning of any gathering or beginning a prayer. The leader then leads everybody to recite al-Fatihah for those in her recitation, as all recite the chapter together. In one gathering, *bahalarat* can be carried out several times for several people or groups of people. The first and most

important one is usually to the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>33</sup> The second is usually to the past *ulama* from any generation.<sup>34</sup> And the third, if they have one, is usually for the deceased in the family (sometimes they say the name distinctly) and for all Muslims who have passed away.<sup>35</sup> Eventually, they recite al-Fatihah for all goodness and virtues desired for the prospective mother and her future baby. *Bahalarat* by reciting al-Fatihah can be considered the most recitation of the Qur'an carried out among the Banjars. It is conducted in almost all situations personally or communally.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Ilā haḍratin-Nabiyyil-Muṣṭafā Muḥammadin ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, wa ‘ala ‘ālihi wa ṣahbihi ajma’in shai’un lillāhi wa lahumul-fātiḥah* (to be presented to the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, his family, and his companions, something from Allah, for them Al-Fatihah)

<sup>34</sup> *Ilā haḍratil-‘ulamā’i l-‘āmilīn wal-qurrā’i l-mukhlīṣīn wa ilā sādāti ṣūfiyatil-muḥaqqiqīn, shai’un lillāhi wa lahumul-fātiḥah* (to be presented to the pious learned Muslims, the devout Qur’an masters, and the spiritual leaders who reaches the true knowledge, something from Allah, for them al-Fatihah). Sometimes, the leader may name explicitly several figures, such as Syekh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani and Syekh Abu Yazid al-Bustami.

<sup>35</sup> *Ilā arwāḥi ābā’inā wa ummahātinā wa azwājīnā wa zawjātinā wa li jamī’ arwāḥ al-muslimīn wal-muslimāt wal-mu’minīn wal-mu’minat, shai’un lillāhi wa lahum al-fātiḥah* (to the souls of the deceased, of our fathers, our mothers, our male and female spouses, and to the souls of all deceased of male and female Muslims, male and female believers, something from Allah, for them al-Fatihah)

<sup>36</sup> The basic idea of *bahalarat* is, to begin with, to relate people’s prayers and activities to their ancestors who have excellent qualities in their past religious lives from the prophet Muhammad until now. *Bahalarat* is also to send and share rewards and excellences of reciting al-Fatihah, the mother of the Qur’an (Ummul Qur’an), to the deceased. The coming of reformist Islam has tried to dismiss both objectives for the belief that first, the prayers should be subjected directly to God without any mediatory, moreover the decess; second, the decess could not get any benefit from people who are still alive, except for three reasons, namely ongoing alms, pious descendents praying for their parents, and useful knowledge shared to others. See Achmad Fedyani Saifuddin, *Konflik dan Integrasi: Perbedaan Fāham dalam Agama Islam* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1986). Some reformists still recite al-Fatihah at the commencement of various occasions, but not in terms of *bahalarat*. *Bahalarat* has also developed among the Banjars in another meaning, namely reciting special formula prayers asking forgiveness and protection from Allah (*doa bahalarat*). One formula is a prayer after al-Fatihah as follows: *Allāhumma lā tada’ lanā fi maqāminā hāzā zanban illā gafartah, wa lā hamman illā farrajtah, wa lā ‘ayban illā satartah, wa lā ḍāllan illā hadaitah, wa lā ḥājatan min ḥawā’ijid-dunya wal-ākhirati illā qaḍaytah, biraḥimika yā Arḥamar-rāḥimīn* (O Lord! do not leave us in our recent state in sinfulness but you forgive it, not in sorrowfulness but you dispel it, no blemish but you cover it, not in astray but you guide it, not any need both in the worldly life and the Hereafter but you accomplish it.) See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 171. Another variant of *du’a* can be found in Hamzah, *Risalah ‘Amaliyah*, 207; H. Abdurrasyid Banjar, *Kitab Parukunan Besar Melayu* (n.p.: Dua Tiga, n.d.), 53.

Having done with *bahalarat*, the leader calls everybody to open the Qur'an. In this gathering, most participants have the Qur'an tablet (*mushaf*) with them, as it usually has been indicated in the invitation. They start by reciting Surah Yasin in full followed by Surah Yusuf: 1-20 and Surah Maryam: 1-40.<sup>37</sup> Though the whole chapter of Yusuf consisting of 111 verses is on Yusuf, the recitation is limited to simplify it. Verses 1 to 20 cover the story of young Yusuf until a caravan found and sold him in the market. Verses 1 to 40 of Surah Maryam cover two stories. Verses 1-15 are on the story of Zakariya and the birth of his son, Yahya, while the rest is the story of Maryam as she firmly got a message of having a baby in the Power of Allah, gave birth to Isa and an inimitable power of Isa and the declaration of Isa as among God's creatures. The recitation is completed by reciting al-Fatihah once more before the leader recites supplications asking God for health, safety, and easy delivery for the lady and her baby, and blessing the baby with beauty, cleverness, piety, and all positive and excellent qualities of life. Recently, the *guru* is also asked to give a short religious speech.

Holding the same purpose with a more complicated ritual of *bamandi-mandi* (washing ritual) the Qur'an in this case is recited together as a communal practice.

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<sup>37</sup> The ending of the recitation is indicated by the symbol  $\xi$  or *ruku'* in the Qur'an. The symbol is found in the Indonesian printed edition of the Qur'an, a Bombay edition (*Qur'an Bombay*). The symbol has two related meanings. First it indicates the end of one episode of the story or information in the chapter. Second, it indicates that that end is an appropriate place to stop the recitation or do Ruku' (bowing) in prayer to designate one *rak'ah* (element of prayer). See, for example, *Mushaf al-Qur'an*, (Bandung: al-Ma'arif, n.d.) This sign is omitted in the Saudi edition well known as *Qur'an Madinah*. See Ali Akbar, "Percetakan Mushaf al-Qur'an di Indonesia," *Suhuf: Jurnal Kajian al-Qur'an dan Kebudayaan*, Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf al-Qur'an, Balitbang dan Diklat Kemenag RI, 4, no. 2 (2011): 271-87. So this sign also represents the early development of Qur'an printing as well as the coming and spread of Islam in Indonesia. Among the prominent theses is that Islam spread to Indonesia through the Indian sub-continent. See Aboebakar, *Sedjarah al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Sinar Bumi, 1956), 193-206, 289-316; H Aboebakar Atjeh, *Sekitar Masuknya Islam ke Indonesia* (Solo: Ramadhani, 1971); Drs. H. M. Harun Yahya, *Kerajaan Islam Nusantara Abad XVI & XVII* (Yogyakarta: Kurnia Kalam Semesta, 1995).

Bahalarat in the commencement of the gathering is to connect the practice to Muslims and Banjar ancestors up to the Prophet Muhammad. The recitation of QS al-Fatihah and QS Yasin in the gathering is a form of reception to the general features of the Qur'an as a Holy Book and Words of God that have a dual function. On the one hand, they have been attributed with several excellent qualities and rewards by Allah, for those who recite both have touched the gist of the Qur'an. On the other hand, recitation of both *surahs* as a whole would mediate the supplication for any goodness they want. The simple and general descriptions of the excellences of certain chapters in the Qur'an, especially Al-Fatihah and Yasin, in some handbooks in Banjar, as discussed in the previous chapter, have to some extent triggered the extensive practice of reciting it, including the one in the discussion above.

The emphasis on reciting certain verses of Surahs Yusuf and Maryam is unlike that for al-Fatihah and Yasin. It is more about hope and prayer to be like the figures in the chapter, Joseph and Mary. The mode of such reception is called *tafā'ul* (تفائل) from Arabic “a good omen” or a sign of “a favorable thing.”<sup>38</sup> It resembles personal recitation by the prospective parents except with fewer verses recited. Reducing the number of verses is intended to make communal recitation simpler, not to reduce the quality of prayer and recitation. So, compared to the personal full recitation of both chapters above, *tafa'ul*<sup>39</sup> is put on the power the Qur'an recited, moreover with a number of people together. The

<sup>38</sup> Rohi Ba'labaki, *Al-Mawrid: A Modern Arabic English Dictionary* (Beirut: Dar Ilm lil-Malayin, 1995), 813.

<sup>39</sup> Because of its frequent use in this work, henceforth *tafā'ul* will be written as *tafa'ul*, except when it refers to a specific use in Arabic.

objective of *tafa'ul* is accomplished as long as the figures in the prayers are covered in the recitation, regardless of the content or part of the story in the verses recited. In this case, the one who recites does not look for a good sign during the recitation, but decides the good sign s/he wants.

For the practitioners themselves, the recitation of the Qur'an in this case is a moment of prayers and supplication as well as total submission to God. Therefore, it has never been related to the result. It means that through the recitation and prayer they have submitted everything to God. While hoping the best that God will give, as the signs they choose from the Qur'an, they also prepare themselves to be ready to accept whatever God gives them. So, when the result is not as they hope in their supplication, they never blame the recitation as failed. In other words, the communal recitation as such is more about a spiritual preparation than a material one.<sup>40</sup> I suppose it is among the reasons the practices are still preserved in the community, though the results may vary. Such mode of recitation as prayer can be found in most practices of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars, as we will see later.

### 3. Childbirth (The Power of Sound, Word, and Script of the Qur'an)

The next reception of the Qur'an is at the moment of delivery. The practice regarding the Qur'an in this case is mostly based on efforts to help a lady have an easy and safe delivery, and varies from one person to another. Most practices are personal, as usually a person, most commonly a religious figure, recites some part of the Qur'an over

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<sup>40</sup> Some handbooks providing various supplications emphasize this submission value. See Hamzah, *Risalah Amaliyah*, back cover; H. Husin Qadri, *Senjata Mu'min* (Martapura: n.p., 1370 AH), 2.

the water. The lady who is about to deliver the baby may drink and wipe the water on her body, hoping for a trouble-free and successful delivery. Let me take two examples to describe mode of reception:

The first case is a senior man acting as a local religious leader<sup>41</sup> in the suburban area of Banjarmasin. On a daily basis, he teaches small children to recite the Qur'an and leads the five daily prayers. He was a *santri* of the oldest traditional *pesantren* in South Borneo, Darussalam in Martapura (approx. 40 km east of Banjarmasin). He is regarded as the most religiously learned person in his village. When a woman is about to deliver, the man is asked to provide the water poured with prayers. His formula is first to recite QS al-Fatihah (1) 1-7, and then *Alhākumut-takāthur*<sup>42</sup> (QS al-Takāthur [102] 1), while praying in his heart “mudah-mudahan bayinya keluar mendusur,” a local language expression (Hopefully the baby comes out “mendusur”). *Mendusur* is a Banjar local word meaning fast and easily functioning as an adverb. So, he associates the ending sound of the verse recited “...thur” with the ending sound of his prayer “...sur.” So, he is praying for the baby to come out from the mother’s uterus easily and fast.

The second is a well-known *guru* who lives in the center of Banjarmasin. He had a traditional Islamic education from an old *pesantren* in South Borneo as well as from Makkah. When someone comes asking him to prepare water for a lady who is about to

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<sup>41</sup> He could be called “Kyai Langgar” (religious scholar or religious leader of a small mosque or musalla) to distinguish him from “Kyai Pesantren,” a religious leader who has *pesantren* (traditional Islamic school in Indonesia) and hundreds, even thousands *santri* (students of such traditional Islamic school). See Pradjata Dirdjosanjoto, *Memelihara Umat: Kyai Pesantren, Kyai Langgar di Jawa* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999).

<sup>42</sup> Literally “the mutual rivalry for filling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from the more serious things).” Ali, *The Meaning of The Holy Qur'an*, 1690.



deliver, he recites QS al-Fatihah (1) combined with other recitations that can meet the need for fast, easy, and effortless childbirth. He inherited the recitation from his grandfather orally. The water will be sounded off QS *al-Inshiqāq* (84) 1-4, and the last verse (46) of QS *al-Nāzi'āt* (79). QS *al-Inshiqāq*:1-4 says: *Idhas-samā'un shaqqat; wa adhinat lirabbika wa huqqat; wa idhal arḍu muddat; wa alqat mā fīha wa takhallat* (When the sky is rent asunder; and hearkens to [the Command of] its Lord—and it must needs [Do so]—; and when the earth is flattened out; and casts forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty).<sup>43</sup> By this recitation to the water, it is hoped that the way of delivery is open and wide, that the baby is going to be out to empty the uterus. It is followed by *Ka'annahum yawma yarawnahā lam yalbathū illā 'ashiyyatan aw duḥāhā* (79:46) (The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had tarried but a single).<sup>44</sup> The baby will not stay any longer in the womb but a moment.

In both cases above, the Qur'an is recited over the water. The cases share the excellence of al-Fatihah as some other cases abovementioned. However, they have different modes of reception in regard to the other parts of the Qur'an to be recited. In the former, the leader associates the ending sound of the verse recited with the ending of the local word in his prayer, which shares the sound "...thur" and "...sur." He does not pay any attention to the actual meaning of the verse, even the word, which has no relation to the prayer. It works for he believes in the power and blessing of the Qur'an to be recited. So, he perceives the sound of the Qur'an by itself, regardless of its textual meaning, as efficacious. In the second case, the detail of the story in the two chapters recited is also

<sup>43</sup> Ali, 1622.

<sup>44</sup> Ali, 1597.

unconnected to the delivery. But some wording in the verses in their fragmented form could be useful and meaningful in the process of delivery. The word *inshaqqat* in 84:1 is opening the uterus, while *wa alqat mā fihā wa takhallat* (84: 4) is forcing and emptying the uterus. The process of emptying meaning delivery runs in *‘ashiyyatan aw duḥāhā* (76: 46), very fast that left no pain to the mother. So he associates his prayer with the fragmented meaning of words of the Qur’an.

In the former there is no clear indication how he gets the formula of recitation. He receives only the sound of Arabic words in the Qur’an and the sound of the meaningful local language of Banjar. In the latter, he clearly states he received the recitation from his grandparent who had transmitted it orally. He uses fragmented meanings of words in the Qur’an in a newly limited context, the delivery process. We can compare these two practices to the last example, which has a different model of reception, where the Qur’an is not recited but written for the same purpose.

Another *guru* who usually gives a regular *pengajian* (religious speech or class) in one village (kampong) in Banjar, Sei Jingah, reads and explains a *fiqh* book, *I’ānatut-Ṭālibīn*<sup>45</sup> The book is a commentary (*sharḥ*) of *Fatḥul-Mu’īn*.<sup>46</sup> He refers to the book to give a formula for those who are about to give birth. The formula is as follows:<sup>47</sup>

يكتب في إناء جديد : أخرج أيها الولد من بطن ضيقة إلى سعة هذه الدنيا أخرج بقدره الله الذي جعلك في قرار مكين إلي قدر معلوم , لو أنزلنا هذا القرآن علي جبل لرأيت خاشعا متصدعا من خشية الله و تلك

<sup>45</sup> Abu Bakar Usman ibn Muhammad Shatta al-Dimyati al-Bakri, *Hāshiyah I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn ‘alā Alfāz Fatḥul-Mu’īn* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, n.d.); henceforth, al-Bakri, *I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn*.

<sup>46</sup> Ahmad Zainuddin ibn Abdul ‘Azīz al-Ma’bari al-Malibari al-Fannāni al-Shāfi’ī, *Fatḥul-Mu’īn bi Sharḥ Qurratil-‘Ayn bi Muḥimmah al-Dī* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2004).

<sup>47</sup> al-Bakri, *I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn*, juz 2, 385.

الأمثال نضربها للناس لعلهم يتفكرون هو الله الذي لا إله إلا هو عالم الغيب و الشهادة هو الرحمن الرحيم هو الله الذي لا إله إلا هو الملك القدوس السلام المؤمن المهيم العزيز الجبار المتكبر سبحان الله عما يشركون هو الله الخالق البارئ المصور له الأسماء الحسني يسبح له ما في السموت و الأرض وهو العزيز الحكيم , و نزل من القرآن ما هو شفاء و رحمة للمؤمنين . ثم يمحي بماء و تشربه الحامل و يرش علي وجهها منه.

It is written on a new vessel: “O baby! come out from a tight womb to this spacious world, come out by the power of Allah who makes you in a safe place (womb) for a known period, [“]had We sent down this Qur’an on a mountain, Verily, thou wouldst have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of Allah. Such are the similitudes which We propound to humans, that they may reflect. Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god—who Knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god—the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. Glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names; whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth declare His Praises and Glory; And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.[”]<sup>48</sup> [“]And We send down in the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe.[”]<sup>49</sup>, and then removed by (pouring) water. The prospective mom drinks the water and sprinkles the rest of water to her face.”

To use the formula, the *guru* may do it and share the water with those who need it. He may also copy the formula and let the family who need it to do it by themselves if they wish. The former frequently takes place by request of the family, for it is not considered mere writing, but a prayer from a pious and learned person. Though it is not stated in the formula, it is actually using Qur’an verses. The expression of “fī qarārin maknūn ilā qadarin ma’lūm” is from the QS Al-Mursalāt (77) 21-22, which is integrated into the prayer formula. The first part I put in quotation marks is from QS Al-Ḥashr (59) 21-24. The second part in quotation marks is from part of QS al-Isrā’ (17) 82. The first expresses the power of God through chanting a number of His attributes and names. The

<sup>48</sup> This expression is actually QS 59:21-24), which will be explained later. For the translation, see Ali, *The Meaning of The Holy Qur’an*, 1449-50.

<sup>49</sup> QS 17:82. For the translation, see Ali, 697.

second, actually part of a verse, states the healing and mercy power of the Qur'an that Allah has set for the believer.

This last case represents another mode of reception, for the Qur'an is written. It may be recited by those who write it while the formula is inscribed on the vessel, but the basic of the practice is the inscribing. Like the first two practices, it is a personal practice by request of someone who is about to give birth. However, this practice has a different mode of reception. Those who take the formula may or may not realize that they are taking verses from the Qur'an. The verses are also not directly on the issue of delivery. However, the *guru* also argues that it contains names and attributes of God, which are highly recommended in Islam to be recited during our supplication to Allah.<sup>50</sup> So the recitation has a dual effect. To begin with, it is the recitation of the Qur'an, which must have its own excellent rewards. It is also a supplication in a recommended way by calling God's attributes and names. The formula is for those in a childbirth process that needs to be healthy and successful, as represented in the second verse quoted in the formula, stating the healing and mercy attributes of the Qur'an. The supplication is then recited in Arabic, believed to be most favorable language in prayer for it is the language of the Qur'an. This reception takes the closest meaning of the verses cited for the specific end of its user, supplication for a healthy, fast, and easy delivery by the blessing of Names of God and His Words in the Qur'an.

<sup>50</sup> *Wa lillāhi al-asmā' al-ḥusnā fad'ūhu bihā*, QS Al-A'rāf (7) 180 (The Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them). Ali, 397.

Compared to the first two models, this reception refers directly to a written text, *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn*. This book is actually a work on Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). However, like some books of *parukunan* in the previous chapter, it also touches some nonlegal material that suggests some practical reception of the Qur'an. So, this practice shares the general feature of reception of the Qur'an in the history of Islam in Banjar. The reception of the Qur'an comes not directly from an act of exegesis of the Qur'an, but through issues of *tawhid*, *fiqh*, or *tasawuf*. The reception is based on the actual and practical needs of the Banjars, not a deductive linguistic explanation of the Qur'an verses. It is not necessary that the reception be in line with the intended meaning of the Qur'an as we find in this formula. The book of *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn*, which is read widely in Banjar, has mediated the text to the practice in the community.

#### 4. *Tasmiyah* or Naming the Baby (A Good Omen in the Qur'an)

When a baby is born, the Banjars have a ceremony of *tasmiyah*,<sup>51</sup> from Arabic تسمية - يسمي - يسمي ( *sammā - yusammī - tasmiyah*) meaning giving name.<sup>52</sup> The ceremony is usually held at the same time as *aqiqah*, which is a recommended offering in Shafi'ite<sup>53</sup> by sacrificing two goats or lambs for a male baby and a goat or lamb for a female one. Unlike animal sacrifice in the festival of Idul Adha,<sup>54</sup> in which be a cow,

<sup>51</sup> In *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn*, the notion *tasmiyah* is also used. However, it is not to describe a ceremony or ritual, but an order to the parents to name a newborn baby. The book discusses an ideal time to name the baby, before or after having *aqiqah* (sacrifice for newborn baby), and desirable and undesirable names. See al-Bakri, *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn*, juz 2, 382, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

<sup>52</sup> Ba'labaki, *Al-Mawrid*, 643.

<sup>53</sup> Shafi'ite refers to the school of Islamic jurisprudence (*mazhab fiqh*) attributed to al-Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, one of four prominent schools of *fiqh* in contemporary Islam.

<sup>54</sup> Indonesians, including Banjars, usually call it *Hari Raya Haji* or *Hari Raya Kurban*. Hari Raya means a Great Day. An attribute of Haji refers to an occasion of Pilgirmage (Haji) in the Makkah at the same time,

goat, or lamb is sacrificed and the meat shared in communities where the sacrifice takes place, in *aqiqah*, the meat is highly recommended to be cooked and served to the community as meals. The meals are commonly served at the time of *tasmiyah*, usually the baby's 7<sup>th</sup> day and the maximum at the 40<sup>th</sup> day. Neighbors and families of the parents are invited to come, pray, and be served the special meal together. Because it is regarded as a religious event, everybody wears suitable attire: long pants or sarong, long sleeve shirts, and *kupiah* (headdress)<sup>55</sup> for men, and long shirts and *jilbab* (clothes covering heads except their faces) for women.

Traditionally, a *guru* leads all segments, but in modern times the host family may ask someone to be a master of ceremonies. It begins by reciting al-Fatihah together, as is common in other rituals in Banjar. It seems that recitation of al-Fatihah at the opening of any activity religious or not is a “must” among the Banjar. Regardless of the meaning of the verses recited, with the excellences attributed to al-Fatihah as the first *surah* of and the mother of the Qur'an (*Umm al-Qur'ān*) as well as al-Fatihah as representing the Qur'an in general, the recitation has—at least—a dual meaning. It is a sort of prayer to

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10<sup>th</sup> day of Zulhijjah in the Islamic calendar. It may also have an attribute of Kurban (from Arabic *Qurban*), a sacrifice carried out on that day.

<sup>55</sup> Black head-dress (*kupiah*) is also worn as Indonesian national identity. Among Banjars, traditionally, the black *kupiah* is for common people, and the white one (*kupiah putih*) for those who have performed Hajj to Makkah. So, the white one is also called *Kupiah Haji* (Hajj head-dress). However, in the next development, as having performed Hajj also symbolizes piety, many people, usually *santri* (*pesantren* students), love to imitate whatever their syekh or pious people do and wear to get the blessing of his piety, including *kupiah putih*. So, it is now not easy to distinguish them based on their *kupiah*. Recently, for some, a head-dress of black, white, or even other colors, is regarded as simply a sort of garment. Attributing religiosity to *kupiah* among Banjars is actually initiated by one of the requirements of prayer in nothing must block the forehead from the floor during *sujud* (bowing from kneeling, where the forehead touches the floor). As a consequence, people need to have something on their heads to keep their hair from falling and covering the forehead. It is then regarded as impolite or even undesirable not to wear a head-dress during prayer, though one can guarantee that hair will not block the forehead during *sujud*. Wearing *kupiah* then becomes regarded as a symbol of religiosity and piety. So, simply speaking, we can see the development of wearing *kupiah* from a practical meaning, to a jurisprudential issue, to an ethical one.

ask for blessing and success from God mediated by the recitation of the *surah*. At the same time, it also symbolizes the Islamic identity of Banjars. As a consequence, al-Fatihah is recited at the outset of many occasions, from the celebration of Indonesian national independence, which is held formally, to the opening ceremony of a regional football competition, to one's birthday party, to—of course—regular or occasional religious activities.<sup>56</sup>

The leader (or MC) invites a Qari<sup>57</sup> deliberately for such an occasion to recite the Qur'an. In Banjar, part of the Qur'an to be recited in *tasmiyah* has been standardized and established culturally, namely QS *Āl 'Imrān* (3) 31-37.<sup>58</sup> All Qaris usually invited for such occasion know the text and even have the verses by heart for frequent use. Even

<sup>56</sup> Farid Esack reports Muslim LGBT activists in California name their organization “Al-Fatihah.” There is no detailed reason for such naming, except to describe how the image of the Qur'an spreads into various lines of Muslim life in the world. See Esack, *The Quran*, 8.

<sup>57</sup> A Qari has an exclusive way to recite the Qur'an melodically. Melody is called *nagam* that has several stages (*maqam*) and variants. Therefore, not all those who can recite the Qur'an can be a Qari. Melodious recitation of the Qur'an in Indonesia has referred mainly to the Egyptian style; see Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an*; Rasmussen, *Women and the Recited Qur'an*. In the early period of Islam Qari meant Master of the Qur'an, who has the Qur'an and its variant readings by heart. In this case, Qari is sometimes interchangeable with *Hāfiẓ* (one who memorizes or has the Qur'an by heart). See Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*, 95-111.

<sup>58</sup> إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ (٣٣) ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٣٤) إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَدَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (٣٥) فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ (٣٦) فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَلْبَسَهَا ثِيَابًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (٣٧)

(33) Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of Imran above all people. (34) Offspring, one of the other; and Allah heareth and knoweth all things. (35) Behold! When the wife of Imran said: “O Lord! I do dedicate unto Thee what is in my womb for thy special service: so accept this of me: for Thou hearest and knowest all things.” (36) When she was delivered, she said: “O my Lord! Behold! I am delivered of a female child!” and Allah knew best what she brought forth—“And no wise is the male like the female. I have named her Mary, and I command her and her offspring to thy protection from the Evil One, the Rejected.” (37) Right graciously did her Lord accept her: He made her grow in purity and beauty; to the care of Zakariya was she assigned. Every time that he entered (her) chamber to see her; he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: “O Mary! Whence (comes) this to you?” She said: “From Allah: for Allah provides sustentances to whom he pleases without measure.” Ali, *The Meaning of The Holy Qur'an*, 135-37.

participants, Banjars in general, recognize the verses recited well as *ayat innallahastafa*, referring to the first expression of the verses, though they do not know exactly in which part of the Qur'an the verses are and what they mean. When the Qari reaches the last part of verse 37, *innallāha yarzuqu man yashā'u bigairi ḥisāb*, all participants are following the recitation loudly.

During the recitation, most commonly the baby's father, but on a few occasions the grandfather, sits on *lapik*<sup>59</sup> before the Qari holding the baby in his arms. It embodies the objective that the recitation of the Qur'an is to be heard by the baby at the beginning of his/her life. Commonly, the Qari provides the tablet of the Qur'an (*mushaf*) in front of him, between him and the baby and his/her father. Although the Qari may recite the Qur'an from memory, the presence of the *mushaf* during the ceremony is still needed for the recitation, and the tablet will invite more blessing for the baby and the family, as the Qur'an should be the first thing the baby will learn when s/he grows up to be a child. Next to the *mushaf*, the family provides a small bowl of water with *pandan* leaves in it, scissors on a tray, and honey, a date, and a piece of red palm sugar on a small plate.

Having done with the recitation, the *guru* leads the steps of *tasmiyah*. Moving a bit to the front of the baby, the *guru* stretches forth his right arm touching the baby's head while saying a mixed formula in Arabic and local language:

يا غلام (*Ya Gulām*) mudah-mudahan Allah jadikan engkau anak yang salih, berbakti kepada kedua orang tua, berikan engkau badan yang sehat, rizki halal, jiwa yang bersih, pikiran yang suci, lisan yang fasih dalam al-Qur'an dan Sunnah

<sup>59</sup> This is the same model described in the ritual of *bamandi-mandi*.



*nabi Muhammad SAW, permata bagi kedua orang tuamu dan seluruh kaum muslimin dan muslimat, سميناك (Sammainaka)...*

*(O baby, may Allah grant you being a pious kid, devoted to and obeying your parents, bestow you a physical healthiness, rightful prosperity, pure soul and clear mind [in God], a fluent tongue in the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad pbuh, make you a jewel for your parents and all Muslims, we have named you ...)*

It is followed by declaring the baby's name. As the name is said, all the participants answer loudly: *بارك الله له (ها) و لوالديه (ها) و لنا جميعا (Bārakallāhu lahu [laha] wa liwālidaihi [lahā] wa lanā jamī'an / May Allah Bless him [her], his [her] parents, and us altogether).* The saying and the answer are repeated three times, immediately followed by supplication (*du'a* or prayer) led by the *guru*. So, among the Banjars, the baby's name is kept among the immediate family until it is declared during *tasmiyah*.

Besides repeating prayers while declaring baby's name and some other hopes, the prayer also contains some parts of Qur'anic verses, such as:

١. رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ
٢. رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فِرَّةً أَعْيُنَ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِمَنْتَقِينَ إِمَامًا
٣. رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ . رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

The first is from QS Āl 'Imrān (3) 38,<sup>60</sup> the second is QS al-Furqān (25) 74,<sup>61</sup> and the last is QS Ibrāhīm (14) 40-41.<sup>62</sup> However, as the object pronouns of first and the last verse are singular such as “Grant unto **me**” at the first and “Make **me**” at the last, the

<sup>60</sup> Its context in the Qur'an is Zakariya's supplication to God: “O my Lord! Grant unto me from thee a progeny that is pure: for Thou art He that heareth prayer.” Ali, 137.

<sup>61</sup> This is among the sayings of those who repent as they say: “O our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) the lead the righteous.” Ali, 906.

<sup>62</sup> In coming to the bare land of Makkah, Ibrahim prays to God: “O Lord! Make me one who establishes regular prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring O our Lord! And accept Thou my prayer. O our Lord! cover (us) with Thy Forgiveness—me, my parents, and (all) believers, on the Day that the reckoning will be established.” Ali, 615.

*guru* changes the pronouns and some related words into plurals for covering all participants. For example, the first prayer is transformed to be *Rabbanā hab lanā* (O our Lord, grant unto **us**) instead of *Rabbi hab ĩ* (O Lord, grant unto **me**). In the third, he prays: *rabbanā ij-‘alnā muqimis-ṣalāti wa min zurriyyātina...* ( Make **us** one who establishes regular prayer, and also (raise such) among **our** offspring...), *rabbanā igfir lanā wa liwālidīnā...* (O our Lord! cover (us) with Thy Forgiveness—**us**, **our** parents,...). However, among the Banjars in general it is not considered as changing the Qur’an, for that is absolutely prohibited. They get the blessing by imitating Qur’an wording in prayers, which are very beautiful. When they pray, it is a prayer, not reciting the Qur’an, so they may appropriate the expression according to the actual context of the prayer such as praying for many people in a gathering as in the case of *Tasmiyah*.

The next step is *tahnīk*, giving a sort of initial “sweet” experience for the baby.<sup>63</sup> It is believed among the community that this practice follows the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>64</sup> When Companions came to see him with a baby, asking him for prayer blessing the baby, besides giving prayer, he took a date, chewed it, and put it in the baby’s mouth. However, it is also believed that the Prophet’s mouth is totally incomparable to any human mouth. Therefore, Banjars take the ideal of the practice while doing a similar but slightly different practice. They provide a date, honey, and palm sugar for the *guru*, who chips a bit of date flesh with his right ring finger and lets the baby’s lips taste its sweetness. He continues with the same gesture for a tiny bit of palm sugar, followed by honey. On the

<sup>63</sup> *Tahnīk* is from Arabic *ḥannaaka*, “make experienced.” Ba’labaki, *al-Mawrid*, 492.

<sup>64</sup> It is said *I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn* that *tahnīk* is from the tradition of the Prophet. However, it is performed in the moment of childbirth; the baby hears *āzān* (call for prayer) in the right ear and *iqāmah* (call signifying prayer is about to start) in the left ear, then *tahnīk*. al-Bakri, *I’ānah al-Ṭālibīn* juz 2, 384.

gestures touching the baby's lips, the *guru* recites *bismillāhirraḥmānirraḥīm* (In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful). The first sweet experiences of the baby's lips contain hope and prayer for the baby having nice words in social life and a fluent tongue in religious life, so people will love him/her as his/her life will be full of "sweetness."

As the *guru* says *Alḥamdulillāh* (all praises be to Allah) indicating *tahnik* is accomplished, a person recites loudly: *Innallāh wa malā'ikatahū yuṣallūna 'alan-nabiy yā ayyuhalladhīna āmanu ṣallū 'alaihi wa sallimū taslīmā,*<sup>65</sup> answered by a number of people starting chanting *salawat* (praise to and prayer for the Prophet Muhammad), answered by all participants with the same *salawat* while everybody begins standing. In the old time, they chanted parts of *salawat* of *Maulid al-Dibā'ī*<sup>66</sup> or *Maulid al-Barzanjī*.<sup>67</sup> However, since the mid-1980s they have started to change to *salawat* of *Maulid al-Habshī*<sup>68</sup> for the emergence of *guru* Sekumpul (Tuan *guru* Haji Zaini Abdul Gani alias *guru* Ijai) in Martapura, who has a weekly *Majelis* reciting that *maulid* with thousands people coming to his *Majlis* (a kind of religious congregation to learn or perform services). He is believed to inherit knowledge, piety, and charisma of Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari.

<sup>65</sup> This expression is from QS al-Aḥzāb (33) 56 means "Allah and His Angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye that believe! Send ye blessings on him, and salute him with all respects." Ali, 1076.

<sup>66</sup> The *salawat* was composed by Ja'far ibn Hasan Ibn Abdul Karīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Rasūl al Barzanjī (1126-1184 AH/1690-1766 CE). See *Majmū'ah Mawālid wa Ad'iyah* (Semarang: Maktabah Karya Toha Putera, n.d.)

<sup>67</sup> By Abdurrahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Umar ibn Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Ahmad ibn 'Umar al-Dibā'ī al-Shaybanī al-Yamānī (844-944 AH). See *Majmū'ah*.

<sup>68</sup> *Simtuddurar fi Akhbar Mawlid al-Bashar wa ma lahu min akhlaqin wa awsafin wa siyarin* or *Simtuddurar* by al-Habib Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Husein al-Habshi. The descendents of the author lived in Indonesia until recently, the fourth generation. They lived in Solo not far from the area of Banjar diaspora in Surakarta, around Pasar Kliwon. This also makes a close relation of the book with Banjars. On Banjar migration to Solo or Surakarta, see Hasan Basri, "Perpindahan Orang Banjar ke Surakarta: Kasus Migrasi Inter Etnis di Indonesia," *Prisma* 3, 18 (1988): 42-56.

While everybody is standing, the father takes his baby to the *guru* to cut a bit of the baby's hair, pray over him/her once more, and sprinkle water on the baby's head using the pandan leaf in the small bowl. He moves on to the Qari to do the same and on to seniors in the family and community until they finish chanting the *salawat*.

Almost at the end of the procession, the *guru* leads the prayer for the second time. In some cases, the *guru* will be asked to give a short religious speech, a kind of homily, for parents of the baby and all the people at the gathering. The prayer concluding the gathering is to ask for goodness and all the best not only for the baby and the parents, but also for all people in the gathering and even all Muslims in the world. They call the prayer *doa selamat*, "prayer for goodness." Such a prayer is frequently recited at many other occasions as well.

There are three moments in the the story where the Qur'anic verses recited by Qari in which the Banjar take their *tafa'ul*. The first is the expression of *wa innī sammaytuhā Maryam* (v. 36: "and indeed I have named her Mary"). So, in the moment of declaring the baby's name during *tasmiyah*, the *guru* as the leader of the ceremony imitates the boldface expression in Arabic and appropriates its pronouns to the context of the *tasmiyah* (giving name to) ceremony. So, instead of *sammaytuhā* (I have named **her**), the *guru* says *sammaynāki* (**We** have named **you**) for a baby girl and *sammaynāka* for a boy. The second is an expression of 'Imran's wife saying: "*innī u'īdhuhā bika wa dhurriyyatahā minash-shaitānirrajīm*" (I command her and her offspring to Thy

protection from the Evil One, the Rejected).<sup>69</sup> So, the recitation of the verse is not a mere recitation but a prayer to protect the baby from the greatest enemy of God’s servants, *al-Shaitān*, or Evil, as Maryam’s protection invoked in her mother’s prayer. The same case is as the last part of the recitation, “*inna Allāh yarzuqu man yashā’u bigairi ḥisāb*” (surely, Allah provides sustenance to whom he pleases without measure) with hope that the baby’s life will be prosperous in Allah’s will.

In recent times, some *gurus* and Qaris have started to introduce other verses of the Qur’an in accordance with the sex of baby. QS Āl ‘Imrān (3) 33-37 is of Maryam’s birth and early life. Maryam is of course clearly a female. So, for a baby boy, it seems to be more appropriate to recite QS Maryam (17) 1-15.<sup>70</sup> The verses are of Yahya’s birth in

<sup>69</sup> Only this part is recommended to be recited in *I’ānah al-Tālibīn*; see al-Bakri, *I’ānah*, juz 2, 384, but *ulama* in Banjar develop it into the recitation of one *ruku’* of the story. In *I’ānah al-Tālibīn*, the recitation is also indicated as personal, but Banjars develop it as a primary part of a ceremony.

<sup>70</sup> QS Maryam (19) 1-15:

كهيص (١) ذُكِرَ رَحْمَةً رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا (٢) إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا (٣) قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا (٤) وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا (٥) يَرِنُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ وَاجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا (٦) يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا (٧) قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا (٨) قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا (٩) قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا (١٠) فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا (١١) يَا يَحْيَى خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَنبِئْهُمْ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا (١٢) وَحَنَانًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَزَكَاةً وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا (١٣) وَبِرًّا بِالِدِينِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا (١٤) وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُعْتَدُ حَيًّا (١٥)

(1) Kāf Hā Yā ‘Ain Ṣād. (2) (This is) a recital of the Mercy of Thy Lord to His Servant Zakariya. (3) Behold! He cried to his Lord in secret. (4) Praying: “O my Lord! Infirm indeed are my bones, and the hair of my head doth glisten with grey: but never am I unblest, O my Lord, in my prayer to Thee! (5) “Now I fear (what) my relatives (and colleagues) (will do) after me: But my wife is barren: so give me an heir as from Thyself—(6)” (One that) will (truly) represent me, and represent the prosterity of Jacob; and make him, O my Lord! one with whom thou art well-pleased!” (7) (His prayer was answered): “O Zakariya! We give thee good news of a son: his name shall be Yahya: on one by that name have we conferred distinction before.” (8) He said: “O my Lord! How shall I have a son, when my wife is barren and I have grown quite decrepit from old age?” (9) He said: “So (it will be): thy Lord saith, ‘That is Easy for Me: I did indeed create thee before, when thou hadst been nothing!’” (10) (Zakariya) said: “O my Lord! give me a sign. “Thy Sign,” was the answer, “shall be that thou shalt speak to no man for three nights, although thou art not dumb.” (11) So Zakariya came out to his people from his chamber: He told them by signs to celebrate Allah’s praises in the morning and in the evening. (12) (To his son come the command): “O Yahya! Take hold of the Book with might”: and We gave him Wisdom even as youth. (13) And pity (for all creatures) as from Us, and purity: he was devout, (14) and kind to his parents, and he was not overbearing or

Zakariya's family and all the goodness and excellent qualities of Yahya as a servant of Allah, a son of his parents, and a member of the living world (all creatures). Allah granted him peace in all moments of his life.

The basic reception of these verses in the ceremony of *tasmiyah* appropriates the sex of the baby with that in the verses recited. Nevertheless, the practice of imitating an expression of "We Have named you" from the story of Maryam in QS Āl 'Imrān is still used with the same spirit. Various excellent qualities of Yahya described in the second group of verses are actually secondary to the sex of the baby, although they can be a good omen also for the baby's life. However, it represents a development of reception of the Qur'an in the case of *tasmiyah*.

*Tasmiyah* then is full of practices of reception of the Qur'an. The primary mode of reception during the ceremony is the Qur'an to be recited. Most of the recitation is personal but intended to be heard by others, the baby, parents, and all guests. So, it is a personal recitation intended for others. In a small part of the ceremony the recitation is communal, when people recite the last expression of QS Āl 'Imrān together to accompany the Qari to end the recitation. However, this does not occur when the Qari changes the verses to be recited for a baby boy. It shows that it is really a recent development, for Banjars in general are not familiar with it. To some extent, modes of reception in *tasmiyah* consider the verses and their meaning well. We can see that some parts of the verses have been imitated in an appropriate context, such as the expression

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rebellious. (15) So peace on him the day he was born, the day he dies, and the day he will be raised up to life (again)! Ali, 744-47.

“we have named you” from “I have named her.” Moreover, the recent development of choice between two groups of verses in accordance with the baby’s sex indicates that the reception is based on the meaning of the verses of the Qur’an recited. Nonetheless, this exegetical reception is at the level of *guru* and Qari. For commoners, the recitation is more about an integral part of a ritual. They are familiar with the former verses for it has been a tradition among the Banjars, but they do not reject the latter for it is also on the blessing of the Qur’an as an integral part of the ritual. This is corroborated by the reception of the Qur’an in the case of prayer wording above as the changes of pronouns from singular to plural are allowed, for it is only a practice of imitating the Qur’an to invite the blessing of it, not a recitation of the Qur’an itself. We can say that *guru* and Qari see more of an informative function of the Qur’an, while most participants and commoners see performative ones, borrowing Sam D. Gill’s notion.<sup>71</sup>

In *tasmiyah* we can see how a dominant element of Islam is compared to some other practices in previous Banjar passages of life. Some elements of the ceremony are claimed to refer to the earliest tradition of Islam, though they inherit the tradition from past generations. The choices of verses, replacement of *tahnik* elements, and some equipment for the ceremony, to mention some, are distinguishing features of Islam in Banjar that are not found in other places.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, the Qur’an recitation and the tradition of *tahnik* from the Prophet claim uninterrupted tradition from the first

<sup>71</sup> See Gill, “Nonliterate Tradition and Holy Books,” 224-36. This model of informative and performative will be used frequently in the analysis.

<sup>72</sup> Compared to, e.g., Mark Woodward, *Java, Indonesia, and Islam* (London: Springer, 2011); Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

Muslim tradition. The claim of the link to the Prophet tradition is an important point of how Banjars value their practices of the Qur'an in a global as well as a local context.

### 5. Other Passages of Banjar Children

Before moving to the next passages of Banjar life, when children start learning the Qur'an around the age of circumcision, I need to show briefly that there are a number of rites of passages for children among the Banjars as traditions inherited from early generations for three reasons. First, the rites are less performed in recent times for several reasons, especially the changing of time and situation. Second, the rites are also less performed especially in the urban area of Banjarmasin; some may be still held in districts outside Banjarmasin, but they are less frequent as well. Finally, there are not as many elements (not to say absent) of the reception of the Qur'an in practices in discussion.

To begin with is *bapalas bidan*. It is a ritual in which a *bidan* (a midwife, a traditional specialist in helping childbirth) surrenders the newborn baby to the parents. In old tradition of Banjars, it is believed that spiritually the baby belongs to the *bidan* helping the delivery process. At maximum 40 days after delivery, parents must hold a *bapalas bidan* ritual to get the baby back from *bidan* by providing certain offerings.<sup>73</sup> In recent times, this process is less performed because the roles of *bidan* have been transformed. Most people go to a hospital or a health center for childbirth. So, an element of prayers in the ritual has been transferred to the ceremony of *tasmiyah* or *aqiqah*.

<sup>73</sup> See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 240-45; "Garing dan Penambaan: Sakit dan Penyembuh dalam adat Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan," <http://melayuonline.com/ind/culture/dig/2689/garing-dan-penambaan-sakit-dan-penyembuh-dalam-adat-banjar-kalimantan-selatan> (accessed May 1, 2014).



The second is *batumbang*, for small children starting to learn walking. The ritual in general is similar to that of *batumbang* in *bamandi-mandi* (see fn. 26). This ritual is hardly ever performed in Banjarmasin. In some areas of Pahuluan in south Kalimantan, Banjars still hold it, but not necessarily for the first time the baby's feet touch the earth. They perform it at a moment of celebrating *idul fitri* (the festival of the end of Fasting Month/Ramadhan), when family from many places gather. They don't do it as strictly as before, it seems to be just a ceremony to celebrate family gathering in *idul fitri*. The baby is carried in his father's arms to the local mosque and given to an Imam of the mosque to support the baby's feet as they touch—as if s/he walks at—the *mimbar*,<sup>74</sup> with the hope that the baby will grow up a pious and religiously learned person. The procession may have *bahalarat* and sometimes be accompanied by chanting *salawat* together.<sup>75</sup>

Another rite of passage for children is *baayun* (swing).<sup>76</sup> In the past, the first time a baby has *baayun*, it has to be performed in a certain ritual with a number of offerings, especially 41 cakes (*Wadai Empat Puluh Satu*), to protect the baby from any evil and bad spirit around him/her. In the coming of Islam to Banjar, *baayun* became affiliated with the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. It is now called *Baayun Maulud*, which is not only for children, but for anyone—regardless of age—who would like to get the blessing of celebrating Maulud. The primary part of the celebration is

<sup>74</sup> Mimbar is a rostrum in a mosque that traditionally has a number of step-stairs facing front (usually 2 to 4 steps), where a *khatib* (speaker) stands during the speech, especially in the Friday service (*khutbah Jumat*). This model of rostrum is believed to be transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad tradition in the earliest period of Islam.

<sup>75</sup> See Imam Hanafi, "Batumbang," Tradisi Sebelum Menginjak Bumi," Oase, *Kompas*, June 6, 2012.

<sup>76</sup> *Baayun* is a gerund, while its equipment is called *ayunan*. The traditional *ayunan* in Banjar is a long cloth whose two ends are tied with two strings tied to a wooden beam in the middle of a house. It is important to note that until recent times, houses in Banjar were mostly made of wood.

chanting *salawat* for the Prophet Muhammad from several books of Maulud I have discussed above, while people of various ages are having *baayun*. In a recent development, the district government in the northern part of South Kalimantan Province, District Tapin, holds the tradition in a big celebration inviting thousands of people to have *baayun* together. The moment is promoted as an annual tourism religious event.<sup>77</sup>

## 6. Circumcision or *basunat* (Learning the Primary Book of the Qur'an)

The next point in a Banjar life passage in which the Qur'an plays a significant role is of a child being circumcised (*basunat*) at around 6-9 years old.<sup>78</sup> Recently, circumcision itself for Banjars is more a familial event than a communal one. So, the prayer or *salamatan* for the health and successful circumcision for child is held among limited internal family members. Daud notes that circumcision used to be celebrated in a big festival, but this is no longer the case in Banjar.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, the small *salamatan* is still held in the morning of the day of circumcision. It still preserves some traditional elements such as *lakatan* or *nasi ketan* (sticky rice) and *hinti* (a blend of coconut scrapings and palm sugar). Traditionally, *lakatan* and *hinti* are among main part of *wadai 41*, for they are among the favorite meals of the unseen world. However, their value has been transformed into the character of the *lakatan*, which is sticky and will enhance the

<sup>77</sup> *Baayun Maulud* in an annual commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday (*mawlud*) in Masjid Banua Halat (Masjid al-Mukarramah), among the oldest masjids in South Borneo from 17th century, District Tapin, South Borneo Province, [www.tapinkab.go.id/content/obyek-wisata-di-kabupaten-tapin](http://www.tapinkab.go.id/content/obyek-wisata-di-kabupaten-tapin). (accessed May 15, 2014).

<sup>78</sup> In Java, circumcision is as big as a marriage ceremony. In Java in general, a child circumcised is called "pengantin sunat" (groom of circumcised). Generally speaking, In Java, the average age for circumcision is 12-15. See Geertz, *Religion of Java*, 51-52.

<sup>79</sup> Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 254-56.

cure process after circumcision. The sweetness of *hinti* represents hope and optimism of a good expected result.

For the Banjars, a significant passage initiated by circumcision is that it is a timely sign for children to start to learn to recite the Qur'an and to go to a mosque to pray in congregation (*Sambahyang Bajamaah*), especially for Friday prayer (*Sambahyang Jum'at*). The average age of children having circumcision indicates a period of children starting to go to school for more social contact and experience. At the same time as children go to a formal school, commonly in the morning, they also have to start reciting the Qur'an. Some have started learning to recite the Qur'an in an earlier age disregarding when they have circumcision. In the afternoon after *asar* (afternoon prayer), children go to TKA, Taman Kanak-kanak Al-Qur'an (Qur'an Kindergarten) or TPQ, Taman Pendidikan al-Qur'an (Qur'an Primary School). The former is for children in the kindergarten ages (up to seven) and the latter for older children. In some areas in Banjar, children still follow a long-standing way of learning the primary book of the Qur'an by going to the Qur'an teacher's house every evening between Magrib (sunset prayer) and Isha (evening prayer).<sup>80</sup>

In Banjarmasin, the primary books used in this phase vary from the oldest one, *Alifan* (al-Qaidah al-Baghdadiyah),<sup>81</sup> to the current ones *IQRO*<sup>82</sup> and *Tilawati*,<sup>83</sup> to

<sup>80</sup> This is comparable to the way children learn the Qur'an and its primary book in South Sulawesi, another province in Indonesia; see Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice*. See also the historical survey of learning Qur'an in various places in the world, from the center, Arabian lands, to many peripheral lands, including Indonesia in H. Aboebakar (Abubakar Aceh), *Sedjarah al-Qur'an* (Surabaya-Malang: Sinar Bumi, 1956).

<sup>81</sup> This book used Bombay style script. So, although it is entitled *Al-Qaidah al-Baghdadiyah* meaning "the Principles of Bagdad" referring to a city in Iraq, it is very possible the book came to Indonesia through

mention some. The basic idea of the books is to introduce recitation of the Qur'an from fragments of Arabic script, to letters with vowels, to simple Arabic expressions, to short verses from the Qur'an, to longer ones, and eventually to short chapters before the student can begin to recite the Qur'an. The main difference between an old book such as *Alifan* and some modern books is that *Alifan* starts by introducing single Arabic letters followed by letters with vowel (*harakah*), while in the current model, students are introduced at an early stage to Arabic letters with vowels. *Alifan*, which is only one book, is also called *Juz 'Amma*, for it is actually another name of the last chapter of the Qur'an (chapter 30) which begins with the expression '*amma yatasā'alūn* (QS al-Naba 78:1). *Alifan* bundles *Juz' 'Amma* at the end of the book in reverse order, from Chapter 114 (QS al-Nās) to Chapter 78 (QS al-Nabā'). Other current books are staged in several *jilid* (volumes or books). They have fragmented verses of the Qur'an as models to teach and test the ability of the students to recite the Qur'an.

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Indian Muslim lines, for it is also well known among Muslims from the Indian sub-continent (current India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh). There is no historical trace of its coming to Indonesia, except that it has been used widely in almost all the islands.

<sup>82</sup> This book is a sort of criticism to the old model of Baghdadiyah that takes a long time for the student to go through the Primary to the Qur'an. This book is taken as a pilot project of development of Primary Book of the Qur'an by LPTQ Nasional (Lembaga Pengembangan Tilawatil Qur'an or National board of Center for Development of the Qur'an Recitation) in Indonesia. It is used massively in Indonesia in more than 30,000 schools of Qur'an for Children. It is written by K. H. As'ad Humam, *Buku IQRO: Cara Cepat Membaca al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Balai Litbang LPTQ Nasional, Team Tadarus AMM Yogyakarta, 1988).

<sup>83</sup> *Tilawati* is written by a team of Indonesians and used widely in Indonesia. The team consists of four teachers of the Qur'an in a *pesantren* in East Java, Pesantren al-Qur'an Nurul Falah. The members of the team are Drs. H. Hasan Sazili, Drs. HM. Thohir Al Aly, M.Ag., K.H. Masrur Masyhud, and Drs. H. Ali Muaffa. This book comes later after IQRO but it seems to combine some old elements of *Alifan* into modern methods of teaching and learning the primary. Drs H. Hasan Sazili et.al., *Tilawati: Metode Praktis Cepat Lancar Belajar Membaca al-Qur'an untuk TK/TP Al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah, n.d.). This team also provide online service for teacher and student by developing their own website, see Pusat Pendidikan guru al-Qur'an (Center of Training of Qur'an Instructor), Pesantren Al-Qur'an Nurul Falah at <http://www.nurulfalah-sby.com/2014/>.

For Banjars as Muslims, the basic way to life in the Muslim community is religious knowledge, so it starts with learning the Qur'an. Therefore, the moment when one has been circumcised is the moment of having more social roles and sphere. To make that passage safe, children start to learn religion by learning the Qur'an and a few obligations in Islam, particularly the five daily prayers. Traditionally in Banjar, after circumcision a child is obliged to recite the Qur'an and go to a mosque. Going to a mosque means having prayer in congregation (*jama'ah*). On the one hand, it means the child will have more social contact symbolized by a mosque. On the other hand, being in the mosque to pray, he has to be able to do the basic recitation in the prayers, namely QS al-Fatihah (1:1-7) and some other short verses, such as QS al-Ihklāṣ (112:1-4), QS. al-Falaq (113:1-5), and QS al-Nas (114:1-6). As a consequence it is also a timely sign that a child has to start to learn the Qur'an. So, learning the Qur'an as a consequence of having had circumcision has social as well as religious meaning.

Learning the primary books of the Qur'an brings about another ritual for children. Children learning the primary books are waiting for a passage from the Small Qur'an (*Qur'an halus*) to the Big Qur'an (*Qur'an ganal*). The small Qur'an is the primary book of learning the Qur'an, and the big Qur'an is the Qur'an as a full tablet (*mushaf*). As noted, in case of *Alifan*, children experience two significant passages. The first is as they finish the fragmented Arabic letters and words and move to the short chapters of the Qur'an (*Juz 'Ammā*) bundled in one book. The second is when they finish the whole last chapter in reverse order from chapter 114 (al-Nās) to 72 (al-Nabā) and begin reciting the whole Qur'an from the beginning (Chapter 1/al-Fatihah) to the end. The transition is

marked by a small celebration with *lakatan hinti*, sometimes *nasi kuning* (yellow rice), and *masak habang*<sup>84</sup> at the teacher's house to be served for everybody. Unlike the value of *lakatan* in circumcision, here it means a hope that the ability to recite the Qur'an that has been achieved will "stick" in the children's tongues and memories forever. Before the meal, the teacher leads a prayer for blessing and goodness and many other excellent qualities of having finished one step of learning the Qur'an.<sup>85</sup> Because the speeds of the children are different from one another, there may be several celebrations on different days depending on when they reach the transition.

Other modern primary books share general features with *Alifan*, except at certain points. The primary books, such as *IQRO* and *Tilawati*, consist of several stages indicated by volumes. *IQRO* and *Tilawati* have 6 volumes. In general, there is no celebration in moving from one volume to another. It is held only at the end of the last volume when children are ready to begin reciting the Qur'an. It will also have a similar meal. Because *IQRO* and *Tilawati* are usually taught in TKA or TPA with more students, meals are limited to *lakatan* and *hinti*, but parents may add some snacks or candies such as a goody bag on a birthday. However, I found a case of a mother who is about 40 years old, from a generation who had only *Alifan* to learn the Qur'an. Her daughter goes to a Qur'an teacher for *IQRA*, but the mother keeps following her progress. Whenever she passes one

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<sup>84</sup> *Habang*, red, refers to the color of the meals from the long dry peppers blended with other ingredients to make sauce. Fish, most commonly snakehead, which can be found easily in Kalimantan, chicken, or meat is cooked in the blend to be served as a side dish with *nasi kuning*.

<sup>85</sup> See an almost identical mode of reception in Africa in Esack, *The Qur'an*, Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*.

volume and moves to the next, the mother provides a meal in the teacher's house for the teacher and her child's fellow students.

For some, learning the primary is very difficult, as the teacher instructs carefully (if not strictly) to provide a good basis for the children. It may take a long time for the children to finish the primary. As a result, some children have not finished the primary when they think they are able to recite the Qur'an. It is also not rare that in the middle of a long time learning the primary, the teacher sees that a child is able to recite the Qur'an. Such a child jumps directly to the Qur'an. Therefore, this small rite of passage is frequently passed. It is also among the reasons some people prefer to send their children to TKA or TPA using the contemporary primary books such as *IQRO* and *Tilawati*.

The Qur'an in this passage is recited and learned as an object of recitation, not meaning. To begin with, it represents the Islamization of Banjar lives from early life. At the same time, the Qur'an is received by Banjars as an early step in being a good Muslim, and in social life. Children have to recite and memorize short verses for prayer and go to a mosque for congregation (*sambahyang berjamaah*). The Qur'an in this mode of reception is the Qur'an in a broader sense, not a particular verse or chapter. However, during the early stage, children do not recite the Qur'an, but primary books, or segmented words of the Qur'an in the upper level. Except in the second phase of *Alifan* (when children recite *Juz 'Amma*), the Qur'an Banjars have in this mode of reception is actually an imagined Qur'an, for they are learning Arabic letters and words. Banjars associate Arabic with the Qur'an so that to some extent we can see practices of honoring Arabic as

equal to honoring the Qur'an.<sup>86</sup> This reception in general also represents non-Arabic speaking Muslims (the edge) perceiving the Qur'an in its surrounding environment (the center).

### 7. *Batamat* (Celebrating the Qur'an)

The next passage is *batamat*, a celebration of completing recitation of the whole Qur'an. Initially, it is held when people, especially children (boys or girls), finish reciting the whole Qur'an for the first time. Some still hold it at the second and third time (at a maximum). This rite is also carried out when a groom and bride are about to get married and on several other occasions. It is held when a group of people finish reciting the Qur'an together (*tadarusan*). It can occur in or out of the month of Ramadan. It may also be celebrated when someone has a special wish or demand, personal or even political. These various occasions share elements of *batamat* and mark Banjar identity through the ritual.

The word *batamat* consists of a prefix *ba* and a noun *tamat*. The prefix *ba* in Banjar can mean doing or carrying out something. *Tamat* is a Malay word meaning end or complete. It is borrowed from Arabic *tamma-yatimmu-tamaman*,<sup>87</sup> to complete-be complete.<sup>88</sup> The Qur'an uses the word to say *wa tammam kalimatu rabbika sidqan wa 'adlan*<sup>89</sup> (the Word of your Lord has completed in truth and in justice). For most Qur'an

<sup>86</sup> The third formula above for helping a woman in the process of delivery to some extent exemplifies this mode of reception. In this case, the formula is fully in Arabic for it is preferable in prayer expression.

<sup>87</sup> See Muhammad ibn Mukram ibn Manzur al-Ifriqiyy al-Misriyy, *Lisan al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir, n.d.), juz 12, 60; *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

<sup>88</sup> Ba'labaki, *al-Mawrid*, 367.

<sup>89</sup> QS al-An'am (6) 115.



commentators, “the Word of your Lord” in this verse is the Qur’an.<sup>90</sup> So Banjars transform *tammāt*<sup>91</sup> (a verb) into *tamat* (a noun) meaning completing, either reciting the entire Qur’an at one time or completing reciting the Qur’an as a whole.<sup>92</sup> The whole Qur’an here means the Qur’an consisting of 30 *juz* (parts) and 114 *surah* (chapters) from Surah al-Fatihah (1:1-7) to Surah al-Nas (114:1-6). Recently, Banjars have also adopted the notion *khataman* for *batamat*, as has been done in Bahasa Indonesia.<sup>93</sup> It is borrowed from Arabic, *khatama-yakhtimu-khatman* initially meaning to cover, to seal, which may connote the end of something.<sup>94</sup> The gerund form of *khatman* is transformed into Bahasa Indonesia *khataman* meaning to end or complete the recitation of the whole Qur’an. While the notion *batamat* is still used widely on such occasions in Banjar, TPAs in general use *khataman* for their annual commencement day program for those who finish reciting the Qur’an as a whole.<sup>95</sup>

As described above, the initial practice of *batamat* is a celebration for a child who has just finished reciting the Qur’an as a whole the first time. The celebration may also be

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, Muhammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid ibn Kathir ibn Galib al-Amili Abu Ja’far al-Tabari, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān fī Ta’wīl al-Qur’ān (Tafsīr al-Tabarī)*, (n.p: Mua’assah al-Risalah, 2000), juz 12, 62-63, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Abū al-Fidā Isma’īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr al-Qurashi al-Dimashqi, *Tafsīr al-Qurān al-‘Aẓīm (Tafsīr Ibnu Kathir)*, taḥqīq Ibn Muhammad Salamah (n.p.: Dar al-Taybah, 1999), juz 3, 322, *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; al-Qurtubi, *Tafsīr al-Qurtubi*, , juz 1, *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

<sup>91</sup> This expression—*tammāt*—is actually a verb for a past action with feminine subject, *kalimatu rabbika*.

<sup>92</sup> In Java, *batamat* is called *khataman* referring in the same sense to the word *khatam* meaning finish or end. See Rafiq, “Khataman al-Qur’an: A Negotiated Symbol,” paper presented in IIIT Summer Scholar Program, 2010; Andre Moller, *Ramadan in Java: The Joy and Jihad of Ritual Fasting*, Lund Studies in History of Religions (Lund: Almquist & Wiksell, 2005), 311-13, also published online on ampere.net.

<sup>93</sup> See *KBBI-Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, KBBI Offline Versi 1.1, <http://cbsoft.we.id>, <http://pusatbahasa.diknas.go.id/kbbi/>.

<sup>94</sup> See ibn Manzur, juz. 12, 163; Ba’labaki, 504.

<sup>95</sup> TPAs have a regular—usually annual—program to held *khataman* in a group for a number of their students. They call the program Khataman Masal. See, for example, “Khataman al-Qur’an TPQ LPTQ Kal-Sel,” <http://www.kemenag.go.id/index.php?a=berita&id=121836> (accessed May 14, 2014).

held for the second and the third, but not more than that. While a child starts learning to recite the Qur'an from a primary book in his/her early age, children in Banjar usually make every effort to have their first *batamat* before puberty. It is a big celebration compared to passages in the primary book. Besides children, fellow learners and neighbors of various ages come to the celebration. *Batamat* can also be considered an event of *basalamatan* (a ceremony to pray for goodness), so it is *basalamatan tamat Qur'an* (a ceremony to pray for goodness on finishing reciting an entire Qur'an).

The ceremony is usually led by the children's Qur'an teacher (*guru mengaji* or *guru*), who can be male or female, with several dishes and special attire for the child performing *batamat* (which will be elaborated later). The ceremony is started by the *guru*, who invites all the people in the gathering to recite al-Fatihah several times (usually three times, though there is no exact rule). This recitation resembles the ones in *tasmiyah* or *bahalarat* at *manujuh bulan*. Then the *guru* recites loudly *lā ilāha illallāhu wallāhu akbar wa lillāhil-ḥamd*<sup>96</sup> to let the child know it is time to start *batamat* by reciting the Qur'an. With the tablet of the Qur'an before the child, the recitation starts from Surah al-Duha (69) to Surah al-Lahab (111). At the end of each chapter, the *guru* invites all the people to recite again and again *lā ilāha illallāhu wallāhu akbar wa lillāhil-ḥamd*. Then the *guru* invites them to recite the rest of the recitation together with the child. They recite Surah al-Ikhlās (112) three times, interrupted by *lā ilāha illallāhu wallāhu akbar wa lillāhil-ḥamd*, and continue with Surah al-Falaq (113) and Surah al-Nās (114) in the same manner. Then, still reciting together, they return to recite the first chapter of the Qur'an,

<sup>96</sup> There is no deity but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest, and all praises be to Allah.

al-Fatihah (1), 1-7 followed by the first five verses of Surah al-Baqarah (1). The *guru* leads everybody to recite *wa ilāhukum Ilāhun wāḥid, lā ilāha illā Huwa al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*,<sup>97</sup> to pursue reciting the Throne verse (*Ayat al-Kursi*) in about the middle of the second half of Surah al-Baqarah (2:255). Eventually, they jump to the end of Surah al-Baqarah to recite the last three verses (284-286). Having done with the last part recited, they all together recite *wa **tammāt**<sup>98</sup> kalimatu Rabbika sidqan wa ‘adlan, lā mubaddila likalimātihi wa Huwa al-Samī’ al-‘Alīm*<sup>99</sup> three times. As the origin of the notion *batamat*, the word **tammāt** in the last verse recited signifies that the child has finished (*tamat*) reciting the whole Qur’an, so it is repeated three times to emphasize the message. Finally, the *guru* says “*al-Fatihah*” to invite everybody to recite the chapter in full, followed by supplications the *guru* recites.

Supplications for *batamat* are more or less special, but they vary according the text referred to. More often than not, the *guru* only recites *du’ā khatmil Qur’ān*, provided at the end of the Qur’an tablet (*mushaf*) printed in Indonesia (see Appendix 1.a.). The prayer is different from the one we may find at the back of the *mushaf* printed in the modern kingdom of Saudi Arabia, well known as *Qur’an Madinah* (see Appendix 1.b). The former contains fewer prayers transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad and more composed by later scholars; the latter has all prayers from the Prophet Muhammad. In the

<sup>97</sup> And your God is One and the Only God, there is no deities but Him, Who is Most Gracious and Most Merciful. QS Al-Baqarah (2) 163.

<sup>98</sup> Boldface is to highlight the referred word in the Qur’an regarding the notion *tamat* or *batamat* in Banjar.

<sup>99</sup> QS al-An’am (6:115). “The Word of thy Lord doth find is fulfillment in truth and in justice: None can change His Words: for He is the One Who Heareth and Knoweth all,” Ali, *The Meaning of the Qur’an*, 328.

former, scholars composed prayers emphasizing the blessings and benefits of having finished reciting the entire Qur'an (*khatmul Qur'an*). Then the prayers ask for goodness in worldly life and the hereafter and the blessing of *khatmul Qur'an* on every single Arabic letter in the Qur'an.

*Khatmul Qur'an* as a practice is not known in the era of Prophet Muhammad, for the Qur'an was still in the process of gradual revelation; the prayers transmitted from the Prophet are limited to blessing and benefits of reciting Qur'an in general, and general prayers for goodness in worldly life and the hereafter.<sup>100</sup> None of the prayers in the former are composed by *ulama* from Banjar, for they only recite the one on the back of the *mushaf*. The preference for the former composition of prayer represents a particular model of reception of the Qur'an among Banjars, for it emphasize more the blessing of the Qur'an and the moment of *khatm al-Qur'an* or *batamat*.

The more specific form of reception of the Qur'an among Banjars in an event of *batamat* is on ritual equipment and procedures. A boy or girl who is performing *batamat* wears *baju haji* (pilgrim attire). Pilgrim attire is for those who have gone to Makkah to do a pilgrimage performing the fifth pillar of Islam (*Hajj*). A boy wears *gamis*, an Arab style cloth, a long white man's dress, and a white headdress with a white turban. A girl wears a

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<sup>100</sup> The "contestation" between two forms of supplications can be also traced in daily and occasional prayers. Banjars in general refer to handbooks, such *parukunan*, and books, such as *Penolong Bagi Orang Mukmin* (Aids for a Believer) by Ibrahim Zuhri Mahfuz, *Risalah 'Amaliyah* (Letters of Regular Practices) by M. Qusairi Hamzah, and *Senjata Mukmin* (A Weapon of a Believer) by Husin Qadri. A few reformist groups introduce another way to pray to Allah. Not only is it on the contents of the prayers, such books emphasize clearly in the introduction and in explanation of each prayer that formulations of prayers are valid from the Prophets. See for example *Bukraton wa Aşīla* by Haji Gusti Abdul Muis and the currently spread handbook by Hasan Al-Bana translated into Indonesian *Al-Ma'thūrāt (Wazīfah Şugrā)*. The emphasis in the last two books is reliability of sources of prayers.

long white woman's dress and a white head cover. The clothing describes to some extent how Banjars relate themselves to center of Islam as we will discuss more in the next chapter. During *batamat*, the child sits on *lapik* as described above, next to a *payung kambang* (an umbrella fully decorated with flowers).

*Payung kambang* is made of an approximately 2 meter stick. About 25 cm below its top, a rim made of bamboo is attached by two horizontal crossing sticks. There are more rims, indicating the frequency of *batamat* held for the particular child. The maximum frequency of three times would mean three rims arranged from the largest at the bottom to the smallest at the top of umbrella. (The case is different for a groom and bride as we will discuss later). The umbrella is decorated with flowers such as *kenanga* (ylang-ylang or cananga), *cempaka* (magnolia), *melati* (jasmine), *pudak* (pandanus), and *kaca piring* (gardenia). So the *payung kambang* is not only beautiful but also aromatic and fragrant. Traditionally, for *batamat* the child's family will make the *payung kambang*. Therefore, the flowers used are those commonly planted around Banjar houses since they are also useful for herbs. They reflect the green environment and *apotek hidup* (living pharmacy) around Banjars. However, recently, because of limited land to plant herbs or flowers and development of and dependence on modern medicine, such flowers are rarely found around Banjar houses. I found a few houses with some such flowers, but not all those listed above. As a consequence, the family will get the flowers from a market, or even order a readymade *payung kambang*.

A number of cakes are provided for a child having *batamat*. *Batamat* uses the same concept of the cakes as *wadai empat satu* (41 cakes) in *bamandi-mandi*. However,

with the transformation of cake values among the Banjars, most commonly they use only seven in *batamat*. Furthermore, seven cakes are more economical for the host. The main cake that must be there is *lakatan* (sticky rice). There are two kinds of *lakatan* as primary dishes. The first is *lakatan bahinti* (white sticky rice with a blend of coconut scrapings and palm sugar) as in *basunat* (circumcision) and some other rites. The other is *gunung emas bermata perak* (a silver eye on a gold mountain). The gold mountain is yellow sticky rice shaped like a parabola with a boiled duck egg as a silver eye on top. On the circular sides surrounding the “mountain” are a number of boiled duck eggs. There are also *apam*, *cincin*, *cucur*, and banana. *Apam*, *cincin*, and *cucur* are all basically made of rice flour. *Apam*, which can be white or red, is made through a steam process and *cucur*, which is always dark red, is fried in vegetable oil; both are shaped like a small plate. *Cincin* (literally ring) is ring-shaped and also fried. After the prayer all the dishes are served to the guests. Usually, at the moment the *guru* finishes his prayer; other children move closer to *gunung emas* and snatch the eggs.” It is a belief that eggs blessed by the Qur’an recitation and prayers will help other children recite the Qur’an fluently and have *batamat* soon.<sup>101</sup>

Like local expression in *payung kambing*, dishes and their presentation show locally significant values of Banjar life. The dishes are generally made of rice and sticky rice produced locally in Banjar. In the past, the host family harvested the ingredients from their own farms. So, initially, having farms precedes the dishes they provide, not the

<sup>101</sup> In some areas in *pahuluan*, children compete to grab the eggs when the recitation reaches *alam tara-kayfa* (QS Al-Fil [105] 1). The verse means “Don’t you see how...” as it is actually an unfinished verse. In Banjar local language *alam* means the world and *rakai* means destroyed or damaged. It is the time the gold mountain representing the earth is destroyed so people grab the eggs to save their lives.

reverse. Serving any rice-based cakes was an expression of gratitude for having land and its produce. It is also the reason underlying the shape of *gunung emas*. The parabola is the shape of *tanggui*, the traditional enormous hat of Banjar farmers.<sup>102</sup> The hat is made of dried sago palm leaves (*daun rumbia*) knit together. *Mata intan* (diamond eye) of duck eggs represents that duck has been among the primary domestic animals in swampy or river areas such as Banjar or South Borneo in general.<sup>103</sup> In the 1980s it was not difficult to find ducks in households in Banjarmasin. So, the dishes sent a message of the agricultural and river style of Banjar life. To have *batamat* is to keep farmlands productive with plants and domestic animals. However, with shrinking numbers of farmlands and growing commercial value of lands, the dishes in *batamat* may lose or at least reduce sociocultural values in Banjar except as part of a ritual.<sup>104</sup>

The same dishes minus *payung kambing* are also served in *batamat* of *tadarusan* (exchanging views or learning together), a group of people who have regular meetings, usually weekly, to recite the Qur'an together. The group can be men or women but not mixed. I found the largest number of 25 and the smallest of 10, although there is no exact limitation. The group may have a target to recite one part (*juz*) in each meeting, but may vary. Some groups move regularly from one house to another; I also found groups

<sup>102</sup> The same shape is used for the dome of the main mosque of South Kalimantan Province, Sabital Muhtadin. This shape influenced many mosques around South Borneo, except in the last few years some are changing to the "Arab" (Mediterranean) style dome.

<sup>103</sup> In August 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture Republic of Indonesia assigns District of Hulu Sungai Utara, South Borneo as the livestock breeding center of a locally high-yielding variety of duck which is well known as *itik alabio*. See [www.humas-pemkabhsu.com/?p=1562](http://www.humas-pemkabhsu.com/?p=1562).

<sup>104</sup> The case is comparable to the existence of *nasi tumpeng* (reverse cone shape yellow rice) with various vegetables and dishes around it and *ingkung* (intact chicken with coconut water spice) in Java. The dishes come from surrounding plants and animal in a community. So, serving such dishes is in line with preserving their lands and their plants. However, recently, people can get the dishes by ordering even online. See Rafiq, "Khataman al-Qur'an."

holding it regularly in the mosque or musalla.<sup>105</sup> A group gathering at a house is most commonly based in a neighborhood, while one in a mosque or musalla may have wider participants. Usually, each group has at least one person regarded as able to watch and help correct the recitation. Nonetheless, in practice, when a participant recites his/her part (about one or a half page) the other participants are listening and following the recitation through *mushaf* before them. During a recitation people may raise their voice to correct any mistake noticed. The practice is called *tadarus*, for all participants learn from one another.

*Tadarus* can also be held during Ramadan, usually only for men. Every night, after performing *tarawih* and *witr* (recommended prayers at night), several men stay in the mosque or musalla to carry out *tadarusan*. It is not common in Banjar for an Imam (leader of prayer) in *tarawih* to recite one *juz* of the Qur'an during the prayer, but this is done in *tadarusan*. I found that some places recite two *juz* of the Qur'an every night, but most only one. In the former they finish the entire Qur'an twice in a month. There will be no celebration for the first finish, except reciting the *du'ā khatmil Qur'an*. Both have a celebration of *batamat* in the mosque on the last night of Ramadan.<sup>106</sup> It has the same pattern as *batamat*. It is a group recitation, so all participants recite a chapter one after another from QS al-Ḍuḥā (93) until they reach QS al-Lahab (111), followed by reciting the rest together as in *batamat* for a child. At the end of the procession, the *guru* or one

<sup>105</sup> In Banjar—and some other parts of Indonesia—Muslims distinguish between *masjid* or mosque and *musalla*, also a mosque but smaller. A *masjid* holds Friday service (*Jumat*), which is not held in a musalla. A kampong usually has one mosque and several musallas.

<sup>106</sup> Compared to the tradition of *tadarus* and *khataman* in Java; see Moller, *Ramadan in Java*; Rafiq, “Khataman al-Qur'an.”



who leads the celebration recites the supplication of *batamat* provided at the back of the Qur'an, the Bombay edition printed in Indonesia.

Both models of *tadarus* share some elements of *batamat*. Meals served are simpler than for the initial *batamat* of a child. Here, they may only provide *lakatan hini* and *gunung amas bermata perak*. Sometimes, they only provide *lakatan hinti* with other foods participants will have together for a “late” dinner. *Batamat* after *tadarusan* also does not require *payung kembang*, for it is assumed that it is not their first, second, or third time, but more than that, although I found that for some members it is actually their first time of reciting the entire Qur'an for they never finished it in their childhood.

During the celebration, the participants are not only those who usually come to the regular *tadarusan*. In the weekly or Ramadan *tadarusan*, on the night of *batamat*, people from neighboring areas are invited. They include men and women, adults, teenagers, and children. I found that some participants who come had never had their own *batamat* and or come to *tadarusan*. However, they share and admit the excellent moment of *batamat*. The regular participants can be distinguished from the occasional guests from their gestures and seating arrangement. All regular participants hold or have the Qur'an before them and recite chapters one after another, while the others only listen to and follow the recitation when it is indicated by the *guru*, such as reciting ends of every *surah* and the *tahlil*, *takbir*, and *tahmid* acclamations between *surahs*. In a *batamat* held in a mosque, regular participants sit in a circle in the middle of the mosque, holding the

Qur'an tablet, while other participants sit around them.<sup>107</sup> This *batamat* is transformed into a wider communal event, for people from varying backgrounds come together, at home or mosque, and share the blessing of *batamat*. For its power to invite people to come to a *batamat*, some people may hold it outside the various events mentioned. They have it for specific personal, social, or political purposes hoping for prayer from all people who come into the gathering.

If the above practices of *batamat* refer to an actual end of finishing reciting the entire Qur'an, it has a further meaning as a significant sign of Banjar passage of life in the marriage ceremony. *Batamat* is usually held one night before a groom and bride have a marriage contract (*akad nikah*<sup>108</sup>) in their respective houses. The elements and steps of *batamat* are almost identical to the initial *batamat* for a child. Moreover, it has *payung kambang*, with three rims. However, the number does not indicate the third time the bride and groom has *batamat*; it signifies that at their age mature enough to have marriage they might pass that number, since three is the maximum number of rims.

Having *batamat* for a groom and bride is an element of their passage rites, regardless whether they have finished the Qur'an or not. Since it is a public recitation of the Qur'an from QS al-Duha (93) to al-Lahab (111), followed by recitation in congregation until the end of the ritual, it is not rare for the groom or bride to have just prepared the verses, especially if they have never had *batamat* or recited the Qur'an.

<sup>107</sup> Compared the detail with Rafiq, "Khataman al-Qur'an"; Geertz, *The Religion*; Frederick Denny, *Islam and the Muslim Community* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).

<sup>108</sup> It is Bahasa Indonesia to call Arabic *'aqd al-nikāh* in Arabic meaning marriage contract that consists of *ijab kabul* (*al-ijab wa al-qabul*, Ar.). *Ijab* is a statement from a bride's guardian to marry her daughter to a man, and *kabul* is the statement of the groom to accept the marriage.

Beginning to learn the Qur'an right after circumcision suggests the beginning of a child's independent social life. Facing greater responsibility and independence in social or family life, in getting into marriage, Banjars must recite the entire Qur'an indicated by *batamat*. In the past, when going to a Qur'an teacher was a living tradition among the Banjars, almost all children had the experience of learning to recite the Qur'an.<sup>109</sup> As a consequence, *batamat* as part of the marriage ceremony was not shocking for them. However, since the tradition has started to fade, it sometimes makes *batamat* for a groom and a bride challenging. Some even try to avoid it.

*Batamat* has been a tradition in Banjar for generations. It is a communal practice that still keeps some transformational elements of Banjar reception of the Qur'an. The tradition refers to the practice of the Qur'an primarily as a recited text, orally and aurally, especially when a number of people gather during the ritual. As also occurred in other modes of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjar, *batamat* has some elements of pre-Islamic Banjar, such as required meals. However, it has transformed ancient values into contextual sociocultural ones. The dishes in *batamat* also are assigned a close relation between reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars and the surrounding physical environment for holding *batamat*, in line with preserving (farmlands). Unfortunately, recently *batamat* has become to some extent mere ritual as the surrounding environment has changed. Eventually, as the Qur'an in other previous reception, *batamat* fills in a

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<sup>109</sup> During my research, I had conversations with a number of adults around 50 and over with various backgrounds, a politician, a merchant, a local artist, a peasant, a fisherman, and an unemployed man, and of course a religious leader, as they shared the same story of going to a Qur'an teacher during their childhood. Some of them ceased learning midway, some learned until they finished reciting the Qur'an, some even pursued further education in religion in general and the Qur'an specifically. We will elaborate this more in the last part of this chapter.

liminal period<sup>110</sup> of Banjars getting married. Traditionally, *batamat* in a passage of marriage is a continuation of a living tradition of learning the Qur'an among the Banjar. Recently, it has been transformed to a mere rite of passage on the occasion of marriage.

### 8. Marriage Contract and Marriage Ceremony (The Qur'an as a True Guide)

Having accomplished *batamat* for the bridal couple, all parties are busy preparing for the next day's marriage ceremony. There are two parts in a Banjar marriage ceremony: declaring the marriage contract (*akad nikah*) and the ceremony where the bridal couples sit on their "throne" (*pangantin batatai*). They can be undertaken the same day, in the early morning (around 6 or 7 a.m.) and approximately 10 a.m. The latter is full of Banjar traditional events, from the coming of the groom and his family to the house of the bride, to sitting together on a traditionally decorated dais (*pelaminan*), to having *wadai 41*, and so on. In general, it is a time of proclaiming and introducing to the public a new bridal couple. There is no specific practice of the Qur'an, except reciting al-Fatihah together before the groom leaves for the bride's house to pray for a safe, undisturbed, and successful trip and ceremony. When he gets to the destination, he is welcomed by *salawat* chant along with percussion cadence.<sup>111</sup> I skip more detail of the marriage ceremony, for it is in the marriage contract ceremony where we can see a number of forms of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars.

The marriage contract is considered more a religious practice than a cultural one. Traditionally, only the groom and men are present in a main room in the bride's house

<sup>110</sup> See Turner, "Betwixt and Between; Van Gennep, *Rites*, 11.

<sup>111</sup> See Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 80-84.

where the ceremony takes place. Women sit in a separate room with the bride.<sup>112</sup> The groom wears a sarong, shirt, coat, and *kupiah*. Guests also wear a sort of “religious” attire as in *tasmiyah*. When the groom steps into the house, he and all people share *salam*,<sup>113</sup> and a man shouts a *salawat* answered by all the people. In the room, sitting on the floor before the bridal dais, the bride’s father or guardian, some *gurus*, and a KUA<sup>114</sup> official have been waiting for him. Because it is regarded as an important religious event, a number of *ulama* are usually invited to come. The couple’s family and neighbors sit along the sides of the room. The groom sits in front of the guardian on *lapik*.

When everything is settled, a Qari recites the Qur’an. Unlike in *tasmiyah*, it is not necessarily for Qari to have a tablet before him. He may hold a small Qur’an or even recite it by heart. The message is clear that it is assumed this should be not the first time for the groom—and also the bride in the other room—to have the Qur’an in their life. Moreover, he should have held *batamat* the day before. As in *tasmiyah*, the Qari recites traditionally established verses for the marriage ceremony: QS al-Nisā (4) 1-2<sup>115</sup> and QS

<sup>112</sup> In current development of change of life mode, some Banjars have men and women in the main room, although on opposite sides. The bride and groom sit side by side before the guardian or bride’s father. However, the tradition is still held by most Banjars.

<sup>113</sup> Usually it is only a short *salam: Assalamu’alaikum* (peace be upon you) replied by another short one: *wa’alaikumussalam* (peace be upon you too).

<sup>114</sup> KUA stands for Kantor Urusan Agama, a Sub-District Religious Affairs Office, the body that has authority to record the marriage on behalf of the state.

<sup>115</sup> QS al-Nisa (2) 1-4:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا (١) وَأَتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْبَطِيئَ بِالطَّيِّبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا (٢) وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَالْكِفْؤُا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَشَىٰ وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أُذُنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا (٣) وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صِدْقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَرِيئًا (٤)

1. O mankind! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;- fear Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you. 2. To orphans restore their property (When they reach their age), nor substitute (your

al-Rūm (30) 20-23.<sup>116</sup> Some may add QS Al-Ḥujurāt (49) 13.<sup>117</sup> All the verses talk about a couple, a man and a woman. QS al-Nisā' (2): 1-4 emphasizes marriage as a form of preserving reverence to God and the bride's right to get dowry from the groom. QS al-Rūm (30) 20-21 highlights briefly the process of human spread in the world and most importantly the objectives of being a couple in marriage. Eventually, QS Al-Ḥujurāt (49) 13 reminds people of a single couple as a source of various ethnic, race, and national groups in the world.

The next step is the marriage contract (*ijab kabul*), usually led by *guru*. The procession is entirely following marriage procedure as prescribed in Islam. The *guru* begins by giving an obligatory *khutbah nikah* (marriage sermon) in 100 percent Arabic. The obligatory part of the sermon is actually only the sermon, with no restrictions on the language to be used. In fact, most *guru* will deliver the sermon fully in Arabic. Some even clearly refer to a text of *khutbah* provided in *Parukanan Basar Malayu*. In the

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worthless things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by mixing it up) with your own. For this is indeed a great sin. **3.** If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice. **4.** And give the women (on marriage) their dower as a free gift; but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, Take it and enjoy it with right good cheer.

<sup>116</sup> QS al-Rum (30) 20-21

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ (٢٠) وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٢١)

**20.** Among His Signs is this, that He created you from dust; and then, - behold, ye are human beings scattered (far and wide)! **21.** And among His Signs is this that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.

<sup>117</sup> QS Al-Ḥujurāt (49): 13

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ (١٣)

**13.** O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).

*khutbah*, the *guru* repeats some verses recited by the Qari, and recites some other verses and some hadis (Prophet Muhammad sayings). The recitation of the Qur'an verses in the *khutbah* is a must. So, even though most of the audiences do not grasp the meaning of such fully Arabic *khutbah*, they perceive it as part of a ritual that must be followed strictly. At the end of the ceremony, after the prayer, a *guru*, even some *gurus*, may give religious speech in local language in regard to marriage. Then the *guru* lets the bride's guardian and the groom perform the marriage contract orally. Some Banjars still prefer to have the contract in Arabic, but some may do it in local language. All listen carefully to the detailed statement of marriage contract of the groom and the bride's guardian. Traditionally, it is believed that there must be no pauses during proclaiming the contract orally. When the two witnesses from both parties proclaim that the contract is valid, all people in the gathering say together *Bārakallāhu laka fihā wa ja'ala baynakumā al-tayyiba al-kathīr innahu 'ala mā yashā'u qadīr wa bil-ijābah jadīr* (May Allah bless you and grant you two, the couple, a numerous goodness, He indeed has power over what He pleases, and [may He grants] worth reply).<sup>118</sup> The *guru* leads delivering prayer for the new couple.

In general, Qur'an reception during a marriage ceremony in Banjar follows a common feature of the Qur'an to be recited. In a wedding reception, the Qur'an is only recited once, at the moment the groom steps out of his house to the bride's house. Unlike in many other occasions in Banjar, the recitation of QS al-Fatihah (1) 1-7 not only follows a general mode of reception of the blessing of the Qur'an for the primary place

<sup>118</sup> See *Parukunan Basar Malayu*, 66. Some even only say a short prayer, *bārakallahu lakuma wa wa jama'a baynakumā fil khayr* (May Allah bless you and gather both of you in the best)

and excellences of this chapter, but is also for protection of the groom on the way to the wedding reception site.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, for its frequent recitation beginning various occasions in Banjars, the blessing and protection value of the chapter might be secondary to its place as a prescribed rite and a symbol of Islam. More practices of recitation of the Qur'an in the marriage contract event, to some extent may share such a level of value of the Qur'an in general.

During this occasion, we can see that without disregarding some traditional elements, the rule of *fiqh* on marriage is dominant, for marriage contract is regarded as a religious event. So, the recitation of the Qur'an to some extent is an integral part of the religious event. Moreover, if no Qari can come to the ceremony, a *guru* or participant will act as a Qari to recite the verses intended. So the recitation is initially not part of the prescribed rules of a marriage contract in Islam, but a part of a religiocultural<sup>120</sup> rite of a marriage contract in Banjar. Nonetheless, all verses recited by the Qari or *guru* in the marriage sermon to touch directly on aspects of marriage. So, the verses might send a message of *tafa'ul* of having tranquility, love, and mercy in the life of the couple (QS 30:21), or the encouragement of Islamic rules in the marriage (QS 3:1-4), or emphasizing and proposing wider social values of a marriage (QS 49:13).

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<sup>119</sup> In a number of informal conversations regarding marriage, Banjars have a myth transmitted orally that when a groom was on the way to get married, either to his wedding reception or a marriage contract, his competitor to get the the bride would do magical things to hinder him to reach the place, and eventually the marriage would not be held. The recitation of the Qur'an is performed to protect them from such hindrance.

<sup>120</sup> I call this as a religiocultural practice, for the value of the recitation on such occasions is a religiously theological concern of the blessing of the Qur'an. However, it is culturally integrated into a religiously prescribed rite, the marriage contract. So, it is religious as well as cultural.



The ceremony of the marriage contract, including the integration of the recitation of the Qur'an, represents the "Islamization" of marriage rite in Banjar. Referring to *Hikajat Banjar* to mention some, marriage has been full of traditional elements that represent spiritual relations between the lower and the upper, unseen world.<sup>121</sup> Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjary wrote several books, including *Kitab an-Nikah*, that put a line of an Islamic marriage rule.<sup>122</sup> The practice of Islamizing the ritual of marriage in Banjar could be exemplified by the practice of separate rooms for men and women during the marriage contract, although the rooms are side by side.<sup>123</sup>

### **9. *Batajak Tihang* or Bulding a New House (Protecting and Blessing a House with the Qur'an)**

Before moving on to reception of the Qur'an in events of dying and death in Banjars, let me present some possible passages in Banjar life in which the Qur'an is used significantly between marriage and aging and death. Banjar families may face various passages. They may have various different directions in their life that shape the passages they may have. In this case, I will pick a passage that might face most Banjar. To begin with is a ritual of building a new house. A new family may live with their parents, most commonly on the bride's side. However, eventually they may build—or buy—a new

<sup>121</sup> See Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar*, 92-95. There is also no explanation of the detail of the marriage ritual.

<sup>122</sup> See Shaghir Abdullah, *Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari*; Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari*.

<sup>123</sup> The practice of separating men and women in different rooms is a general feature of rituals in Islam. In a marriage contract, the prayer—delivered promptly after the oral contract is confirmed valid—shows the need of separation clearly. All variants of the prayer linked back to Prophet era always say *barakallahu laka*, May Allah bless you (a man) in singular male pronoun. It means that only a groom (man) attends marriage contract declaration. The expression can be traced back to several early works on *hadis* collection. See for example Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī: Sharḥ Ṣaḥ'īh al-Bukhārī*, (n.p.: Dār al-Rayyān li al-Turāth, 1986), juz 14. 425, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

house. If they build a new house, Banjar has a ritual of *batajak tihang* (building house foundation). We should keep in mind that the idea of a house in Banjar traditionally is a wooden house on generally marshy land.<sup>124</sup> *Tihang* means wooden pillar and *batajak* means putting the pillar underneath to provide a stable foundation for building a house on it. Having laid the foundation, Banjars put large wooden blocks as pillars at several corners for hold frame of the house from the floor to the roof. They put on a permanent roof, which is also from slices of very hard wood (*ulin* or Borneo ironwood) that can be only found in Kalimantan, or just a temporary tarpaulin on the frame. Then they place several long boards for a temporary floor to hold a ritual *basalamatan batajak tihang* (praying for goodness in building house foundations).

There are two moments of *batajak tihang* where Banjars use the Qur'an. First is when they are about to place the several blocks for bunching the main frame of the house. Each spot where the blocks are put has water poured on it, over which has been recited *fatihah empat* (fatihah four). *Fatihah empat* means QS al-Fatihah (1) and the last three chapters of the Qur'an, Al-Ikhlâs (112), Al-Falaq (113), and al-Nas (114). Except for al-Ikhlâs, which is recited three times, the other chapters are recited once. The second moment is when the frame is done and the temporary floor is set. The owner invites neighbors around the newly built house, usually in the morning right after *fajr* (Morning Prayer). Some people may come directly from the mosque. It has also a social message of introducing a new member of the neighborhood. They usually have meals of *lakatan*

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<sup>124</sup> For characters of traditional Banjar houses, see Syamsiar Seman and Irhamni, *Arsitektur Tradisional Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan* (Banjarmasin: Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pelestarian Budaya Banjar, Kal-Sel, 2006).

*hinti* and additional dishes for breakfast. Usually a *guru* will lead. They only recite *fatihah empat* followed by Surah Yasin in full and finish by prayer to have meals together.

For Banjars, besides Surah Yasin, which is recited on many occasions as we will see later, and Surah al-Fatihah, which is recited frequently to begin many occasions, *fatihah empat* also has a frequent use. It is believed to have an equal value to reciting the entire Qur'an plus. Traditionally and theologically, without referring to any specific books but to the saying of a *guru*, Banjars believe the value of reciting Surah al-Ikhlās three times equals reciting the entire Qur'an.<sup>125</sup> It is connected with the recitation of *mu'awwidhatain*, or the last two chapters of the Qur'an, beginning with statements of seeking refuge from Allah, which will protect human beings from undesirable things, powers, or beings that may harmful.<sup>126</sup> When this recitation is completed with Surah Yasin, considered the heart point of the Qur'an,<sup>127</sup> the Banjars believe they they have taken the maximum power of the Qur'an for ensuring the successful, safety, and ease of building their houses from any seen or unseen harm. It is finished by a general supplication (*doa selamat*).

<sup>125</sup> Some commoners refer their belief to the *gurus*, but *gurus* could show clearly the reference and practice to tradition of the Prophet. See Abi Zakariya ibn Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Nawawi al-Dimashqi (al-Imam al-Nawawi), *al-Azkar al-Nawawiyah*, (Riyad: Dar Ibn Khuzaimah, 2001), 241; Al-Imam al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, hadith no. 4627-4628, 419 *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Al-Imam al-Tirmizi, *Sunan al-Tirmizi*, hadith no. 2821-2826, juz 10 134-139 *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; al-Imam al-Darimi, *Sunan al-Darimi*, hadith no. 3491-3501, juz 10, 327-335, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book. The reference actually talks about the value of the chapter (112), which equals a third of the Qur'an. Muslim scholars later interpret reciting it three times as a complete Qur'an.

<sup>126</sup> The excellent values of the two chapters are also presented clearly in some information from the Prophet, for example, al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4629-4630, juz 15, 422-423; al-Tirmizi, hadith no. 2827-2828, juz 10, 141-142; al-Darimi, hadith no. 3502-3504, juz 10, 339-341.

<sup>127</sup> For the excellences of QS Yasin, see, for example, *Al-Tirmizi*, hadith no. 2812, juz 10, 121; *al-Darimi*, hadith no. 3478-3482, juz 10, 311-315; al-Nawawi, *al-Azkar*, 238.

The formula of a simple *al-fatihah* or *fatihah ampat* or Yasin<sup>128</sup> is the most frequent recitation of the Qur'an on many occasions of passages and daily life. Banjars may use it to open a new store, start the day, go to bed, drive a vehicle, and so forth; some write or have beautiful calligraphy of it on the wall of the house. When Banjars move into a house already built, they may hold the same gathering and recitation as in moving to a new house.

Following a general mode of reception from the beginning, the Qur'an is recited and listened to either personally as the recitation off the water. In this practice, the reception of the Qur'an is emphasized in its oral but not aural power. The values and excellences of the chapters of the Qur'an recited are also considered means of protection from unintended things that may interfere with their activities.

### **10. Death and Dying (The Qur'an as the True Company)**

The next passage in the life of Banjars is when one is seriously ill. I found two models of recitation of the Qur'an that use the same practice. The first is when a family gathers to recite Surah Yasin (36) next to and around an ill person. The other, less frequent, is reciting Surah al-Ra'd (13) in the same manner. They try to have 40 people altogether to recite Yasin and make *du'a*.<sup>129</sup> Sometimes, if there are not enough family members, neighbors including a *guru* are invited. The recitation is followed by supplications for the cure of the ill family member. During the recitation the host family provides fresh water in a kettle. The water is drunk by the sick person if s/he can, or used

<sup>128</sup> Sometimes, to enhance the protection value, Banjars add the recitation of the Throne verse (ayat Kursi), QS al-Baqarah (2) 255.

<sup>129</sup> See below.

to wash the patient's face or part of the body if allowed, or just sprinkled to touch the patient symbolically. No special meal is provided, for it is considered merely a gathering for making *dua* or supplication for the cure of ill person, although the host may serve the participants a meal.

All values in the gathering are directed to prayer and Qur'anic efficacy to cure the illness. A *guru* leading the recitation may initiate the gathering by *bahalarat* (see fn. 36) hoping for the blessing of God through the first al-Fatihah<sup>130</sup> and a benefit from their respect for their ancestors for whom they recite al-Fatihah. The recitation may also be combined with *Fatihah Ampat* for a similar purpose. The recitation of Yasin is also for the excellences of Yasin explained in many places, from books in various *pengajian*, such as Al-Azkar,<sup>131</sup> to many handbooks as explained above. The one emphasized most in this practice compared to previous passage rites is the limited number of people. The minimum number is forty, but the family may limit the total number at one time for practical reasons, giving a chance for the ill family member to rest. At the same time, to enhance the efficacy of their communal supplication, the Banjars believe in the number 40 as an efficacious number of people to have sufficient supplication. There is a traditional belief among the Banjar that when 40 people make a supplication together, at least one of them, which is unknown, has a sufficient supplication. In other words they

<sup>130</sup> Referring to the story of the Prophet Muhammad's Companions narrated by Abu Sa'id Khudry, Al-Nawawi then recommends recitation of Surah al-Fatihah in visiting an ill person. See *bab ma yuqrau 'indal-marid* (chapter on what need to recited on an ill person), Imam al-Nawawi, *Etiquette with the Qur'an-Al-Tibyan fi Adab Hamalat al-Qur'an*, tr. Musa Furber (Chicago: Starlatch Press, 2003), 109.

<sup>131</sup> See al-Nawawi, *Al-Azkar*, 239; Qusairi Hamzah, *Risalah 'Amaliya*, 5-6; Al-Imam al-Tirmizi, *Sunan al-Tirmiz*, hadith no. 2813, 121.

belief that in every forty people gathering in doing righteous acts, there must a disguised person who is very close to Allah.<sup>132</sup>

In this practice, the Qur'an is oral and aural recitation at once. It is oral because the most important part of the recitation is sounding the Qur'an together, which makes the practice communal as well, although in limited numbers. It is aural because the sound of recitation is initially intended to be heard by the sick family member. The recitation of Yasin and the Qur'an is believed to be a protection from unpleasantness, including sickness. So it will corroborate the following prayer hoping for the cure for the sick person. So, the reception of the Qur'an recited in this case is for protection and healing.

In regard to the number of 40 in gathering is not initially for healing and protection. The number refers to a general reception of Banjar of the significant number 40, which one unknown is very close to God. This number initially comes from a minimum number for having Friday service among Shafi'ite opinions. Shafi'ite (*Shafi'iyah*) is for Islamic law scholars who follow Al-Imam al-Shafi'i's<sup>133</sup> school and method of building opinion in Islamic law (*madhhab* in *fiqh*). Some *fiqh* works commonly used by Banjars, such as *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn* and *Sabīlal Muhtadīn*, emphasize the number by developing several arguments, including the one above.<sup>134</sup> In the next steps, the significance of the number 40 is preserved among the Banjars for any sufficient supplication, accepted righteous acts, and any religious communal activity.

<sup>132</sup> The significance of the number is accentuated again in the prayer for the deceased (*sambahyang jenazah*), as we will see later. See also Daud, *Islam dan Masyarakat Banjar*, 298-99.

<sup>133</sup> Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, (767-820 CE/150-204H).

<sup>134</sup> See al-Bakri, *I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn*, juz 2, 67; Syekh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, *Sabīlal Muhtadīn lit-Tafaqquh fi Amr al-Din atas Mazhab Imam Shafi'i radiyallahu 'anh* (Bandung: Al-Maarif, n.d.), juz 2, 45-46.

The next passage is when Banjars accompany a dying family member. Traditionally, they have a sort of *metis*<sup>135</sup> (borrowing from James Scott) to see the physical appearances of a passage from critical illness to dying. When a seriously ill person is in a state of dying, all relatives are invited to get closer to the dying person; then start to recite Surah Yasin (36) as much as time allows. They may also recite the Qur'an through *muqaddaman*, a practice of reciting the entire Qur'an by dividing the parts (*ajza'*) among several people.<sup>136</sup> They recite the parts at the same time, for as much as they can. Although they may finish the entire Qur'an—not only once but several times—there is no celebration of *batamat*, except delivering *doa* (supplication) at the end of reciting the last chapter of the Qur'an before continuing from the beginning. In some cases, I found that they combine the two practices, with some reciting Yasin (which is easier and more familiar) and others performing *muqaddaman*. While people recite the Qur'an in any model, a person<sup>137</sup> gets close to the side of a dying person to guide him/her in proclaiming the oneness of God or *tahlil* by saying *lā ilāha illa Allāh* (there is no god

<sup>135</sup> I am borrowing Scott's concept of *metis* for practical knowledge gained through repetitive experiences. See James Scott, *Seeing like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 311-12.

<sup>136</sup> Such a practice of *Muqaddaman* is a common practice of Muslims in general. I found the same practice among Indian and Pakistani Muslim in Philadelphia in the moment of commemorating a deceased family member. The general practice of reciting the Qur'an is also familiar among other Muslim groups in Indonesia, such as in Java. See K.H. Muhammad Sholikhin, *Ritual dan Tradisi Islam Jawa*, (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2010), 112. There is no information on practices around death and dying in Banjar before Islam. However, Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari discussed specifically this topic in his *Sabilal Muhtadin*. See Al-Banjari, *Sabilal Muhtadin*, 65-67 on the recitation of Yasin or the Qur'an next to a dying person. The significant value of reciting the Qur'an, especially *surah* Yasin emphasize briefly in various handy books used widely in Banjar, see, for instance, M. Qusairi Hamzah (Ibnul-Amin), *Risalah Amaliyah: Berisikan Amalan-amalan yang Bagus untuk Diamalkan Oleh Kaum Muslimin dilengkapi dengan Kumpulan Doa, Surah Yasin, al-Waqi'ah, dan al-Mulk*; n.n., *Majmu' Syarif*. Moreover, the practice of reciting Yasin next to a dying person is also emphasized by HAMKA, a former head of MUI and Muhammadiyah in his *magnum opus* tafsir al-Azhar. See Prof. Dr. HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1988), juz 23, 4.

<sup>137</sup> Usually a *guru* accompanied by the *asabah* or closest family member of the dying person in the male line.

but Allah).<sup>138</sup> The practice of guiding a dying person is called *talqin* (Arabic dictation), referring to the recommended tradition from the Prophet Muhammad. *Talqin* is recited next to the ear of the dying person.<sup>139</sup> These events have no elements except reciting the Qur'an (or its specific chapter) and *tahfil*. Food and drink may be served, although this is not an integral part of the rite.

In general, the practice of the Qur'an regarding a dying person follows the common model of reception of the Qur'an in oral and aural aspect. Here the practice is much simpler, with no any additional elements except the recitation. The recitation is intended to shape a religious atmosphere as well as to be heard and told to the dying person to ease the moment of shifting from a worldly life to the next life. It can be understood as a very critical moment in *liminality*.<sup>140</sup> It is also a very strict practice of Islamic rites, prescribed in several Islamic works widely spread among the Banjars. For example, compared to all previous passages of life, al-Banjari talks only about the topic of decease (*bab al-janazah*) covering from dying to burial, beside other topics on *fiqh* in his *Sabilal Muhtadin*. The same mode of presentation is followed by several later *parukunans* that combine the topics with discussion of pillars of faith and Islam. A general feature of practices from dying to death and after death rites is that they are communal, not personal.

<sup>138</sup> It is a general belief among Muslims, including the Banjars, that those whose last words are a statement of the oneness of God (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*) will enter paradise. This belief actually refers to Prophet Muhammad's saying narrated in many places. See Abu Daud, *Sunan Abi Daud*, juz.8, 376, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Al-Hakim, *Al-Mustadrak 'ala Sahihain*, juz 3, 326, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Al-Tabarani, *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, Bab.4, juz. 15, 24, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi, *Jami' al-Ahadith*, juz. 17, 452, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Syarafuddin al-Nawawi, *Al-Azkar*, 143, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

<sup>139</sup> See al-Nawawi, *al-azkar*, al-Banjary, *Kitab Sabilal Muhtadin*, 65-67.

<sup>140</sup> See fn. 110.



When a person has just passed away; the Banjars move on the next passage, taking care of the deceased (*penyelegaraan janazah*). When it is declared that s/he has passed away, all stop reciting the Qur'an briefly and respond by saying *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn* (To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return).<sup>141</sup> The person next to the deceased closes the deceased's eyes if they are open, straightens the body if possible, ties the jaws to close the mouth, takes off the clothes and covers the body with a clean cloth,<sup>142</sup> and puts the right hand on the left hand across the front between chest and belly, resembling the position of performing prayer. The body is then moved carefully to a living room. The room is divided by a temporary curtain to put the body in the inner part but leave a spacious room for many people to sit around it. Some will keep reciting the Qur'an; one will go to a mosque to spread the mourning news with a microphone on the mosque to reach more people; others will start to prepare various related materials. It is believed that an ongoing recitation of the Qur'an until the body is taken to be prayed over will ease the deceased passing at the moment of death.

In general, Banjars strictly follow the Islamic procedures in *Kitab Parukunan* regarding the body, from washing the body, to shrouding the body, to performing prayer for the body, to burial. All four have to be carried out and may not be interrupted. The Banjars believe an appropriate time for burial is the late morning (around 10-11 a.m.) or between noon prayer (*Zuhr*) and afternoon prayer (*'Asr*). So, if someone dies in the late

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<sup>141</sup> It has been a common expression in Banjar, as well as Indonesian, for news of a person who has just died, regardless of his/her religion. The expression is from QS Al-Baqarah (2) 156, but it has become so common when hearing of someone's death that many people do not realize or consider it as reciting a verse of the Qur'an. The same occurs with *Alhamdulillah* (All Praises to Allah, Al-Fatihah [1], 1), *in shā' Allah* (God willing, a transformation of Surah al-Kahf [17]; Al-Baqarah [2] 70; Yusuf [12] 99; etc.) .

<sup>142</sup> The cloth is comonly made of cotton with a *batik* motif.

afternoon or at night, the steps will be performed the next day. If someone dies in the morning or not long after noon prayer, the steps may be done the same day. So it takes less than 24 hours for the body to be buried. In both scenarios, there are always people reciting the Qur'an next to the body.

While the body is in the living room, some people sit on the floor around him/her to keep carrying out *muqaddaman* (as described above). Others may come and go to pray for the deceased. Some may stay a bit longer and join *muqaddaman*, while others sit for awhile and recite only QS Yasin (36), *fatihah empat*, *tahlil*, and pray for the body. For that reason, the mourning family provides a number of handbooks of Yasin around the body. Some may take a seat for a shorter time just to recite *fatihah empat* and then pray. If the body stays for a night, a number of people remain with it while reciting the Qur'an. Since it will be a whole night recitation, people in the neighborhood organize shifts to save energy for the next day. The company is not only for reciting the Qur'an but to keep the body from inappropriate and undesirable conduct and other matters.<sup>143</sup>

Relatives and neighbors provide food, meals, and drinks for the family and all guests coming to visit. All the people usually give *sadaqah* (alms; amount of money put in an envelope) for the mourning family, especially through the closest relative of those who passed away. There will be usually a male and a female representing the family to receive the *sadaqah*. The envelopes are handed over when they shake hands to express their condolences. The money and food are used to finance everything related to taking

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<sup>143</sup> The Banjars have a myth that a cat must not pass the body; if it happens, the body will erect. See Daud.

care of the body until the end, or to serve people invited to come and pray together in the next days after the burial (see below).

As stated above, the Banjars believe that the four prescribed steps of washing, shrouding, praying, and burying must be done without a break. Ideally, the closest relatives should wash the body in accordance with the sex of the body. However, as it needs a special skill and is considered as a religious practice, the family may invite a male or female or *guru* in the neighborhood to lead the washing and shrouding. Traditionally, Banjars believe that at every step of washing and shrouding, there are a number of prayers that should be delivered. The prayers can ease the person who passed away, and should therefore be led by a pious and learned person.<sup>144</sup> At the end, the *guru* will be given the best cloth and scarf of the deceased if female, or sarong and *sorban* if male, or the family may buy her/him something equivalent. The gifts are considered *sadaqah* for the benefit of the deceased and a sign of gratefulness for the help.

When the body has been shrouded top to toe with white simple clothes, the relatives are usually given a last chance to see it before it is taken to the mosque. In order to let it go wholeheartedly, close relatives may slightly open the shroud covering the face to kiss, pray, and say goodbye. The body is then moved to the mosque, where people have been waiting to perform prayer for the deceased (*sambahyang janazah*).<sup>145</sup> In

<sup>144</sup> A number works of *Parukunan* present details of the process and practices of washing and shrouding. See Mufti Jamaluddin bin Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, *Parukunan Jamaluddin Malayu* (Surabaya: Al-Haramain, n.d.), 25-32; Haji Abdurrahman bin Aly al-Amuntaiy, *Kitab Rasam Parukunan*, (Amuntai: Rahmaniyah, n.d.), 26-43.

<sup>145</sup> Banjars usually name it *sambahyang kifayah*, actually a combination of the prayer and the attribute of the prayer. *Sambahyang* is Malay word in a local dialect to call *salat* (prayer). *Kifayah* is actually an attribute of prayer for the deceased which is from *fard al-kifayah*, that is, an obligation performed by a

Banjar, people traditionally prefer to perform the prayer at once in a massive congregation lead by an Imam. They believe the congregation must reach and preferably exceed 40. To make sure the number is met, it is sometimes not enough just to announce the news in the mosques, The family may then send envelopes of invitation with a small amount of money in them, stating the place, date, and exact time of sambahyang *kifayah*. I found another practice in which the family do not send the envelopes as invitations, but give them to everyone at the gate of the mosque when the prayer is done. The money in the envelopes is also intended as *sadaqah* for the benefit of the deceased family member. Of course, this model is for those who can afford it; if not, the general invitation and announcement are sufficient to call people to come to the mosque at the time planned.

The prayer for the body is performed standing, with four *takbir*, reciting *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest). Saying the expression of *takbir* is accompanied by the movement of raising both hands to the sides of the ears with palms to the front, then putting them back to the front of the body between chest and belly by crossing the right hand on the left. After the first *takbir*, all recite QS al-Fatihah (1); after the second, they chant *salawat* to the Prophet Muhammad; after the third they pray for the deceased; and after the last they pray for all Muslims, alive or passed away. All the recitations, chants, and supplications during the prayer are performed silently. Only *takbir* by the Imam is recited loudly to lead the congregation. The prayer is closed by saying *salam* (*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullah/peace and Allah's mercy be upon you*) to the left and

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number of Muslims that satisfies the obligation of the rest. Prayer for the body is an obligation for Muslims that is sufficient when performed by some of them. However, it is also allowed to perform it many times.

the right as in a regular prayer. The Imam leads the recitation of al-Fatihah (1) three times until he leads the supplication for the best for the deceased. At the end, the Imam proclaims and asks the congregation in Arabic, *Ishhadū bi anna hādhal-mayyit*<sup>146</sup> *min ahlil-khayr* (bear witness that this male body is among the righteous ones), all people reply, *khayr* stating “indeed he is among them.” Banjars believe these are all practices of the Prophet Muhammad. Nonetheless, I found that some groups of Muslims in Banjar affiliated to Muhammadiyah<sup>147</sup> leave out all the practices after *salam* because they are considered as having no precedent in the Prophet tradition. This dispute opens space for analysis of how Muslims in Banjar in general relate themselves to the past, as I discuss later.

The last stage is the burial. The body is carried on a kind of litter (*keranda mayat*). In the past the litter was made from bamboo and carried by four people. More recently permanent litters made of steel that needs six to eight people to carry. Banjars believe that on the way from the mosque to the burial ground, the deceased must be accompanied by prayers. All people accompanying the walk chant *tahlīl (lā ilāha illa Allāh)* until they get to the grave and put the body next to it.<sup>148</sup> The *tahlil* chanting eases the soul of the deceased, which is believed to be still around the body. When the body is

<sup>146</sup> For a female the Imam says *hazihi al-mayyitah* (this female body)

<sup>147</sup> Muhammadiyah is a sort of Muslim reform organization in Indonesia founded in 1918. It has millions of followers in Indonesia and been considered as the second largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia after NU (Nahdlatul Ulama). See Achmad Fedyani Saifuddin, *Konflik dan Integrasi: Perbedaan Faham dalam Agama Islam*, (Conflict and Integration: Diversity in Islam) (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1986).

<sup>148</sup> It is worth noting that it is now not rare for the body to be carried by car when the burial ground is too far to reach on foot. There are at least two reasons for this. First is the limited amount of land for graves in Banjarmasin as the city and grows. Second is the development of transportation (road and car), so that people may be buried in their origin place outside Banjarmasin such as *Pahuluan*.

ready to be put in the grave, someone will call *adhan* and *iqāmah*,<sup>149</sup> and all the people start to recite QS Yasin (36). Three people get into the grave to receive the body and put it on the ground; his/her face is facing the *qiblah* (prayer direction) with the shroud covering the face opened to let the face touch the ground. Before the grave is covered, a few people, usually the *guru* and close relatives, take three small clods of earth. They throw the first clod softly to the grave, saying *minhā khalaqnākum* (From the [earth] did We create you), the second while saying *wa fihā nu'īdukum* (and into it shall We return you), and the last while saying *wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratān ukhrā* (and from it shall We bring you out once again).<sup>150</sup> The grave is then covered fully.

After the grave is covered, the Banjars have a rite of *talqin*. Unlike the previous *talqin* next to a dying person, this *talqin* is recited by a *guru*—sometimes three *gurus*—on the side of the grave. The *talqin* is a sort of set of reminders and advices consisting of citation of several Qur'anic verses, the Muslim belief of the state of the grave, and a prayer for goodness of the one in the grave. The verses remind the deceased and the soul, which is believed to be still around, the divine decree of death and any states related to death.<sup>151</sup> *Talqin* also reminds everybody and the deceased of the questions directed to the

<sup>149</sup> *Azan* is a call for prayer to indicate that the time of prayer is coming; *iqamah* is a call that the prayer is about to begin.

<sup>150</sup> These expressions are from QS Ṭāhā (20): 55.

<sup>151</sup> Among the verses are: *Kullu shai'in hālikun illā wajhah*, QS. Al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 88 (Everything [that exists] will perish Except His own Face), Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of ...*, 985; *Kullu nafsin zā'iqatul-maut wainnamā tuwaffawna ujūrakum yawmal-qiyāmah famān zuḥẓiḥa 'an al-nār wa udkhila al-jannah faqad fāz wa ma al-hayāh al-dunyā illā matā'u al-gurūr*. QS. Āl 'Imrān (3): 185 (Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life): For the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception) Ali, 177; *minhā khalaqnākum wa fihā nu'īdukum wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratān ukhrā*. QS Ṭāhā (20) 55 (see fn. no. 133); *hāzā mā wa'ada al-Raḥmān wa sadaqa al-Mursalūn, in kānat illā ṣayḥatan wāḥidatan fa iżā hum khāmidūn*. QS. Yāsīn (36) 52-53 (“This

deceased in an early state in the grave. The questions are all about the faith and practice of Islam during the lifetime and should be kept to be remembered until one is in the grave. The last part of *talqin* is supplication for all the goodness and best for the deceased (see appendix of the complete text of *talqin*). *Talqin* is held because of the belief among the Banjars that one who has passed away still can listen, follow, and even get the benefits of righteous acts of living people.

For the same reason, Banjars may have *muqaddaman* or *tadarusan* at the graveside. There are two models of *muqaddaman* or *tadarusan* held at the grave. The first is carried out for three consecutive days and nights, the second by finishing one entire Qur'an (one *khatam*). The family builds a temporary tent for those who recite the Qur'an. The number of reciters varies. To save energy, those involved take shifts as long as the recitation is uninterrupted. The family serves meals for those at the grave. The family holds another rite at home to pray for the deceased, as I describe in the last Banjar passage of life.

The mode of reception during the rites of death among the Banjars accentuates the oral recitation of the Qur'an. The ongoing recitation also conveys the aural aspect, for Banjars believe that the soul of the person who has passed away is present around them throughout the rites. The recitation will ease and help the soul to make the passage easily. However, besides leaning on the excellences of the Qur'an, either as an entire book or as a particular chapter, along the process of death, the Banjars also integrate their exegetical

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is what (Allah) Most Gracious had promised, and true was the word of the messengers!" It will be no more than a single Blast, When lo! They will all be brought up before Us!), Ali, 1128.

reception of the Qur'an in accordance with the moment of death. *Muqaddaman* and the recitation of QS Yasin represent the former; the expression of *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn* and recitation of *minhā khalaqnākum wa minhā nu'idukum wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratān ukhrā* while throwing small clods of earth into the grave, and several verses cited in *talqīn*, are of the latter.

While some people are finishing reciting the Qur'an at the grave, in their house, the family hold a kind of commemoration or service every night for the first three nights after burial (*manyahari* [first day], *mandua hari* [second day], *maniga hari* [third day]). During the event, female neighbors help the family to provide meals for guests, and male neighbors and relatives sit in the living room to perform the service. During this event, the preference of number forty is still held. There are three models of doing the service that may take place. The first is holding *muqaddaman* to recite the entire Qur'an once every night. The second is holding *tadarusan*, in which they recite about a third (10 parts) of the Qur'an each night and finish the entire Qur'an the last night. At the end of reciting the Qur'an they recite *du'a khatmil Qur'an* and pray for the one who has just passed away. The last model, which is more common, is gathering to recite Surah Yasin and *tahlil* every night. *Tahlil* in this case is not limited to reciting *lā ilāha illa Allāh*; it is a set of recitations and chants that combine reciting some fragmented verses of the Qur'an, praising and glorifying God, praying for the Prophet, and eventually praying for the



deceased. The prayer or supplication in all models is for the rewards and benefits of reciting the Qur'an and all righteous acts during the services for the death.<sup>152</sup>

Lead by a *guru*, *tahlil* is basically started by reciting al-Fatihah together several times (commonly three) to be presented to the Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions, past pious prominent Muslim figures (sometimes they name them, such as Syekh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani and Syekh Abu Yazid al-Bustami), and all their ancestors and family and fellow Muslims who have passed away.<sup>153</sup> At the last al-Fatihah, the *guru* states clearly the name of the one who has just been buried. Then, they recite *fatihah empat* by reciting Surah al-Ikhlās (112) three times and Al-Falaq (113), al-Nas (114), and al-Fatihah (1) once each. The rest of the recitations include chanting *salawat* to the Prophet Muhammad, chanting *dhikr* (remembrance of God) by saying *tahlil* (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh* [there is no god but Allah/the God]) 100 times and *tasbīh* (glorifying) and *taḥmīd* (praising) (*Subḥānallāh wa biḥamdih* [Glory to God and praise to Him]) 33 times.<sup>154</sup> The set of *tahlil* is finished with supplications to send the rewards of recitation of the Qur'an and *dhikr* to all the figures named in presenting al-Fatihah, especially the family member who has just passed away.

Although handbooks of Yasin and *tahlil* are plentiful, the *guru* leads them from his memory. Some participants may follow the recitation of Yasin from the books or

<sup>152</sup> There are long discussions among Muslims in general, including Banjars, on the benefit of holding such services for one who has passed away. Banjars in general, except some reformist groups, believe in it, so the tradition is kept. See Saifuddin, *Konflik dan Integrasi*; see also H. Soelciman Fadeli dan Muhammad Subhan, *Antologi Sejarah, Istilah, Amaliah, Uswah NU* (Surabaya: Khalista dan LTN NU Jawa Timur, 2007).

<sup>153</sup> See the description of *bahalarat* in the event of women in pregnancy.

<sup>154</sup> There are some new variations of performing *tahlil* as a set of *zikr* among the Banjars. However, the basis of the *zikr* is still kept.

Qur'an tablet (*mushaf*),<sup>155</sup> but most use their memory or just follow the *guru* and congregation. They have the recitation and *dhikr* by heart, for such events occur frequently for people from the old generation or later. Although all the formulas of recitation and zikr are in the books, they claim they have been acquainted with and performed them long before they had the books, even from childhood, by joining the same event in the past. The ability of Banjars to perform Yasin and *tahfīl* by memory assigns a long tradition of that practice among them. Some people who are sixty or seventy years old remember following the tradition during their grandparents' lifetime.

The commemoration is held again on the 7th (*manujuh hari*), 25th (*manyalawi*), 40th (*mamatangpuluh*), and 100th days (*manyaratus*), and eventually annually (*haul*). Although the Banjars generally use the Gregorian calendar in their daily activities, *haul* is considered based on Islamic calendar (or AH). During all the events, they carry out a same pattern of reciting Surah Yasin and *tahfīl*. Although it is called *haul* for annual, it does not really calculate the exact date. Besides the calculated days, Banjars sometimes also held *haul jama'*, commemorating and praying together for a number of people who have passed away. *Haul jama'* can also be held for a number of people who passed in the same month (in the Islamic calendar). It is usually held by a big family for all their ancestors, or by a community in a neighborhood. The time is usually taken to held *haul jama'* is around fasting month or Ramadan, *idul fitri* (celebrating the end of fasting

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<sup>155</sup> In many mosques in Banjar, Surah Yasin is also recited daily after Morning Prayer in the congregation. Since its highly frequent recitation, Banjars commonly know the *surah* by heart. Even those who cannot recite the Qur'an well can recite Yasin from memory as a result of imitating the congregation.

month), or during the celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday (*maulud*), though there is no exact regulation for when it is to be held.

Passages of death and dying among Banjars are full of religious elements compared to other passages described previously. The recitation of the Qur'an is in almost every step. As we have seen for *tasmiyah* and marriage contracts, rites of death and dying for Banjars are specified in detail in a number of sources. Moreover, even compared to *tasmiyah* and marriage contract, are only these rites specified in detail in *Kitab Parukunan*.

The heavy load of Qur'an recitation and prayers conveys a dual meaning. It can be counted as Banjars' reception of highly critical passages for human death and dying. Van Gennep, followed by Turner, emphasizes the time as the passage of separation or post-liminal.<sup>156</sup> It also assigns a mode of reception of the Qur'an among Banjars. For a highly critical moment, they need a more "powerful" formula, the Qur'an recitation. So, not only do they accompany the deceased during the recitation, but they also believe that the value of the recitation of the Qur'an will continue to accompany the deceased. The Qur'an is the true company of the deceased.

### C. Chapter Conclusion

From cradle to grave, the Qur'an is in the life of Banjars. The main model of practice is recitation either by heart or through following the script of the Qur'an on the tablet (*mushaf*). It also exemplifies how the oral tradition of the Qur'an is preserved.

<sup>156</sup> Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passages*; Turner, *Forest of Symbols*.

Nonetheless, the written text to some extent also influences modes of practice. Among the influential factors on the absence or detail of practices of the Qur'an among the Banjars is written texts of practicing Islam, such as a handbooks and *parukunan*. This fact shows that the oral and written traditions of the Qur'an corroborate each other. On the one hand, it signifies the distinctive character of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars. On the other hand, it is a way Banjars claim the universal value of Islamic heritage linked to the early generations of Islam.

In the detail of the practices of the Qur'an among the Banjars, it is worthwhile to note two points: the preference of devotional value of the Qur'an, and that Qur'an is a scripture to be performed personally and communally. It is undeniable that the devotional element is strongly influential in Banjar practices of the Qur'an. Based on that value, the recitation is perceived as a mediation to meet personal or communal ends. Therefore, in almost all cases, the recitation is followed by supplications. Supplications can be meant for inviting the blessing of the Qur'an or protecting oneself from undesirable things through the Qur'an, for easiness and tranquility to pass a crisis in the power of the Qur'an, or for celebrating the Qur'an in life or guiding oneself self in the realm of the Qur'an. The supplication can refer to the Qur'an in general, particular chapters or verses, or even the material appearance of the Qur'an, such as sound.

To borrow Gail's term, for the devotional purpose, Banjars accentuate a performative function of the Qur'an. They hardly ever read the translation of the verses or chapter recited in a ceremony for passages in life. The exegetical issue of the verses is an issue; using the Qur'an for certain purposes is another. They can be related, for the latter

might be inspired or directed by the former. The former might happen in various religious sermons or classes (*pengajian*). Among the Banjars, *pengajian* and works of *ulama* are dominantly on *tauhid* (theology), *fiqh* (juriprudence), and *tasawuf* (mysticism). However, it is not necessarily that the *tafsir* (exegetical) aspect of the Qur'an is totally absent in the life of Banjars. Exegetical as well as functional reception of the Qur'an can also be delivered in the three dominant *pengajian* as they also cite the Qur'an for justification or argument of what they explain to people. We can find such kinds of argument in works of *tasawuf*, such as *Mabadi' Ilm Tasawuf*, or of *tauhid*, such as *Tuhfatur Ragibin*, or of *fiqh*, such as *Sabilal Muhtadin* or *I'anutul-Talibin* as we have discussed. .

## CHAPTER IV

### RECEPTIONS OF THE QUR'AN AMONG THE BANJARS

#### A. Modes of Reception of the Qur'an

We have seen in Chapter 3 that the Qur'an is entwined in most of the Banjars' life cycle. They perceive the Qur'an not only as a scripture that has to be believed theologically, but also as a holy book that fits into their religio-socio-cultural needs. Therefore, the Qur'an is not merely about what the Qur'an tells the believers. It is also about what the Banjars actively do to it.

The Banjars's active reading of the Qur'an is an act of reception. Reception in its generic term means an act of receiving something.<sup>1</sup> As a theoretical framework it is used initially in literary theory to emphasize the role of the reader in shaping the meaning of a literary work. A literary work gets meaning and significance when it is perceived by a reader through reception: "Literary texts do not exist on bookshelves: they are processes of significant materialized only in the practice of reading."<sup>2</sup> The text always leaves gaps and blank spots in its composition for the limitation of words to describe ideas as well as the diverse significance of words for the author and the reader. Terry Eagleton says:

The reader makes implicit connections, fills in the gaps, draws inferences and tests our hunches; and to do this means drawing on a tacit knowledge of the world in general and of literary conventions in particular. The text itself is really no more than a series of "cues" to the reader, invitations to construct a piece of language into meaning. In the terminology of reception theory, the reader "concretizes" the literary work, which is in itself no more than a chain of

<sup>1</sup> Collin COBUILD *Grammar Plus-Lexicon*, offline programe.

<sup>2</sup> Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 64.

organized black marks on a page. Without this continuous active participation on the reader's part, there would be no literary work at all.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the reader is not an absolutely unconstrained actor. A reader is socially and historically constructed by the surrounding environment. The surrounding environment corresponds to the "horizon" in hermeneutics.<sup>4</sup> It provides the readers, deliberately or not, a pre-understanding of the text as well as a direction to read the text. Therefore, this environment and horizon possibly construct the reader, the author, and the text as well.

When a text is produced using a certain set of language expressions to convey an idea or ideas, it may have an intended reader. Wolfgang Iser sees the possibility of the real reader, "known...by his documented reaction."<sup>5</sup> This is the reader who has actually received the text and has a documented response to it. "Documented" means that the reception can be traced socially or historically. The existence of the real reader is opposed to the hypothetical reader, "upon whom possible actualizations of the text may be projected."<sup>6</sup> Eagleton cites Stanley Fish, who insists that the meaning of the text relies heavily on the reader. Therefore there is only one real reader. So, the object of study and criticism in literary work is not the text, but what the reader does to the text: "the

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<sup>3</sup> Eagleton, 66.

<sup>4</sup> Eagleton, 72. In hermeneutics, this discussion is between romanticists and subjectivists. The former "venerate" the author's intended meaning, which can be grasped in hermeneutics; the latter view hermeneutics as grasping the meaning of the reader. In an extreme case, the author may be dead or extremely determinant. See Richard Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969); Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 27.

<sup>6</sup> Iser, 27.

structure of the reader's experience, not any 'objective' structure to be found in the work itself."<sup>7</sup>

In dealing with such difficulties as having two extremes of intended meaning of the text, by the author and the reader, Iser suggests the concept of "implied reader."<sup>8</sup> The idea of implied reader is rooted in "the structure of the text," not in the real reader. This concept has two interrelated aspects: "the reader's role as a textual structure, and the reader's role as a structured act."<sup>9</sup> The structure of the text in some ways has represented various limited perspectives. When the reader receives the text those perspectives come out from the structure and to some extent shape the mental image of the reader. The text has not been meaningful until the reader—who may have his/her own perspectives—responds to the perspectives represented in the structure of the text. The meaning of the text comes out in the "meeting place" where these perspectives meet in the mind of the reader.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the text is not totally in control of its meaning, while the reader is not totally free from the structured meaning in the text.

The Qur'an as an object of reception is not fully identical to the literary text, but it is also composed in a structure like literary works. Putting aside the discussion of the Qur'an as Word of God, which is faith-based discussion in sociological perspective, the Qur'an as a scripture invites not only a structural response toward its composition, but also the act of believing it as a scripture. Theologically, the intended readers of the Qur'an are all humankind, which should be also sociologically its implied readers.

<sup>7</sup> Eagleton, 74; see also Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980),

<sup>8</sup> Iser, *The Act of Reading*, 34.

<sup>9</sup> Iser, 35-38.

<sup>10</sup> Iser, 36.



Therefore, the reader is not totally free from the structure of the Qur'an to make it meaningful. At the same time, the reader may have his/her own perspectives of the Qur'an's meaning, which to some extent is also driven by the structure of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the Qur'an as a scripture is not only a written text, but also a recited text that may compose "structure" other than the written one. As a consequence, it may also fish for different perspectives of meaning in its structure or in the mind of its readers. In these conceptual frames, the reception of the Qur'an might range from the structure of a written text to that of a recited one, from a reader heavily driven by the structure of the text to a looser one.

### 1. Exegetical Reception

Exegetical reception is the act of receiving the Qur'an by the exegesis of the meaning of the Qur'an. The basic idea of exegesis is the act of interpretation.<sup>11</sup> Exegesis etymologically is from Greek meaning "explanation," "out-leading," or "ex-position," denoting "the interpretation or explanation of a text or a passage of a text."<sup>12</sup> Historically in an ancient Greek sanctuary, exegetes, those who did the exegesis, were assigned to "translate" oracles or prophecies of God to humans. Hence, exegesis is usually used for religious texts or scripture.<sup>13</sup> In the context of the Qur'an, Jane Dammen McAuliffe says exegesis is a translation of an Arabic *tafsīr*. Therefore, "exegesis signifies primarily the

<sup>11</sup> In this context I distinguish exegesis from hermeneutics as principles of understanding. I will discuss these differences later in this chapter.

<sup>12</sup> Christoph Auffarth, "Exegesis," *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, ed. Kocku von Stuckrad et al., vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2006), 692-93.

<sup>13</sup> Auffarth.

process and results of textual interpretation, particularly scriptural interpretation.”<sup>14</sup> Based on this context, exegetical reception is the act of receiving the Qur’an as a text that conveys textual meaning disclosed through the act of interpretation.

The practice of exegetical reception has existed since the early period of Islam. McAuliffe concludes that classical and contemporary Muslim sources are in agreement that the act of interpreting the Qur’an began in the period of its revelation, for “the Prophet Muhammad sought to explain ambiguous or unfamiliar references to his earliest audiences.”<sup>15</sup> The earliest audiences are the Prophet’s Companions, composing the implied readers of the Qur’an during that period. See, for example, the information of ten verses discussed in Chapter 1 above. The Companions never came to ask new verses of the Qur’an from the Prophet until they memorized ten verses, learned their meaning, and applied them in their life.<sup>16</sup> Another example is the story of Khawla bint Tha’labah at the beginning of Chapter 3, in which the Qur’an was revealed in response to her question. By the way verses were revealed, their clear meaning and obvious context were enough to apply them.<sup>17</sup> When there was an obscure or unclear meaning, the Companions would come to the Prophet as the most authoritative source of interpretation. For example, the

<sup>14</sup> Jane Dammen McAuliffe, "Exegesis," *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, ed. Gerhard Bowering (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 161-63.

<sup>15</sup> McAuliffe.

<sup>16</sup> Narrated from ‘Abdurrahman al-Sulami; a number of people who recite us the Qur’an, including ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, Ibnu Mas’ud, and Ubay, narrated to me: “indeed the Prophet Muhammad pbuh recite us ten (meaning ten verses of the Qur’an), as we do not ask for another ten until we comprehend how to practice their content. So, we have learnt the Qur’an and how to practice it at once.” See al-Tabari, *Tafsīr al-Tabarī*, juz 1, 32; al-Qurtubi, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, juz 1, 39; ‘Iyadah ibn Ayub al-Kubaysi, *Abraz Usus al-Ta’āmul ma’a al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, 48. See Chapter 1, fn. 9.

<sup>17</sup> See Mattson, *The Story of The Qur’an*, 1-3. QS 58: 1-2 responds to Khawla bint Tha’labah’s complaint, while QS 58: 3-4 respond to wish of Aws ibn Samit, Khawla’s husband, to return his familial bond with Khawla. See Al-Wahidi, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, in *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book, ver. 2, 144. See Chapter 3, fn. 2 and 3.

Prophet explained the meaning of “wrongdoing” (*al-zulm*) (QS 6: 82) by comparing it with another verse (QS 31: 13).<sup>18</sup>

Some early commentators on the Qur’an, such as Abdullah Ibn Abbas, al-Farra, and al-Tabari, were also in this mode of reception. Later Muslim or non-Muslim scholars of the Qur’an set the rules for their practices of interpretation to fit with the concept of hermeneutics.<sup>19</sup> This mode of reception has produced a number of exegetical works of the Qur’an. Ingrid Mattson states that:

To understand the development of Qur’an interpretation in the centuries after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, it is important to recognize that the act of exegesis does not require an explicit hermeneutics. That is to say, all sorts of people have interpreted and do interpret the Qur’an without an explicit or consistent methodology. Historically, the early generations of Muslims did not begin by saying: let us first develop a proper system of hermeneutics, then we can proceed to interpret the Qur’an. Rather, interpretations were offered, some were challenged, and this necessitated the development of a more formal methodology. The interpretations that “won out” at any particular time, however, were not necessarily the most coherent or obvious. Political power, personal charisma, economic crises, social upheaval, and emotional appeals, among other factors, contributed to the popularity of some interpretations and some interpreters over others.<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, we can place hermeneutical reception as an independent mode of reception, for it is an act of the reader by receiving the Qur’an as a book interpreted by certain principles.<sup>21</sup> It is these principles that guide the reader to view the Qur’an. Or it

<sup>18</sup> See Isma’il ibn Umar ibn Kathir al-Qurashi al-Dimashqi, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm (Tafsīr Ibnu Kathīr)* (n.p.: Dar al-Tayyibah, 2002) juz 6, 336-37; Al-Qurtubi, *Tafsīr al-Qurtubi*, juz. 14, 56.; al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, 1/56, Hadith No. (henceforth HN) 31, in *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1/311, HN 178, in *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book. See Chapter 1, fn. No. 7.

<sup>19</sup> See for example, Huscini Muhammad al-Dhahabi, *Al-Tafsīr wal-Mufasssīrūn* (Cairo: Wahbah, 1976), juz 1-3; the difference between exegesis and hermeneutics is the same as *tafsīr* and *usul al-tafsīr* in Islamic tradition. See Fahd ibn Abdurrahman ibn Sulayman al-Rumi, *Buhuth fī Usul al-Tafsīr wa Manhijuh* (Riyad: al-Taubah, n.d.).

<sup>20</sup> Mattson, *The Story of the Qur’an*, 186-87.

<sup>21</sup> In this case, hermeneutics is defined as rules or principles of understanding of interpretation or “science and art of interpretation” which is distinguished from exegesis as an act of interpretation. See Richard

can also be positioned as underlying principles in exegetical reception. The former brings about a number of rules and principles interpreting the Qur'an. For example, as Mu'adh ibn Jabal was about to be sent by the Prophet to Yaman, the Prophet asked him how he should make decisions. He replied that he would consult with the Qur'an, the Prophet tradition, and his personal opinions consecutively in case he could not find the answer in the previous sources.<sup>22</sup> Mu'adh's answer is regarded as the earliest prescribed principles of Qur'anic interpretation. It set the rules for sources of interpretation of the Qur'an. In the history of the sciences of the Qur'an, the first book to set rules and principles of interpretation of the Qur'an systematically was *al-Risālah* by al-Shafi'i (150-204 AH). This book is on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, actually the principles of discerning jurisprudence from the Qur'an of the Prophet tradition (*istinbāṭ al-ḥukm*).<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, for the latter, hermeneutical reception is implied in any exegetical reception. So, an exegetical reception has an explicit or implicit hermeneutical reception in it.<sup>24</sup>

In Southeast Asia in general and especially Indonesia, this feature of reception can also be found in various places and has produced a number of works of *tafsir*. It can be traced from the seventeenth century to contemporary time. Examples are *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* by Abdur-Ra'uf al-Sinkili in Jawi, *Marahḥ Labīd* by Muhammad al-Nawawi al-

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Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*; Richard M. Seklecki, "Hermeneutics," *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. H. James Birx, vol. 3 (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2006) 1154-55; or hermenutics as "the art or theory of interpretation, as well as a type of philosophy that starts with questions of interpretation," James Bohman, "Hermeneutics." *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Robert Audi, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 377-78.

<sup>22</sup> See Abu Tayib Muhammad Shamsul-Haq al-'Azhim Abadi, *'Aunul Ma'būd Sharḥ Abī Dāūd* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1985) 402-405, <http://library.islamweb.net> (accessed 10 June 2014)

<sup>23</sup> See Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *al-Risālah*, ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shakir (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1939).

<sup>24</sup> See fn. 21.

Bantani in Arabic, *Tafsir al-Ibrīz* by Bisri Mustafa in Javanese with Arabic Script, *Al-Furqan* by A. Hasan and *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by HAMKA in Bahasa Indonesia, to mention some.<sup>25</sup> However, as described in Chapter 2 on the issue of Islam in Banjar, specialized works on this mode of reception cannot be found. It is not necessarily that such reception is totally absent among the Banjars. Exegetical reception of the Qur'an can be found in various works of *aqidah*, *fiqh*, and *tasawuf*, in which they refer to Qur'anic verses to justify or build the basis of their arguments.

## 2. Aesthetic Reception

The aesthetic reception of the Qur'an is the act of receiving the Qur'an aesthetically. The act can be in two ways. It may receive the Qur'an as an aesthetic entity in which the reader can experience the aesthetic value in his/her reception. It may also be an aesthetical approach in receiving the Qur'an. Iser distinguishes "the artistic and the aesthetic" poles of a text.<sup>26</sup> The artistic pole is the text itself and the aesthetic is "the realization accomplished by the reader." In both modes the reader experiences an aesthetic that is personal and emotional,<sup>27</sup> but could be transferred to others who may receive it in the same or different way.

The aesthetic reception of the Qur'an has been experienced by Muslims since the early period of Islam. The earliest such reception was the recitation of the Qur'an in

<sup>25</sup> See R. Michael Feener, "Southeast Asian Qur'anic Literature," in McAuliffe, *he Encyclopedia of the Qur'an* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 5: 98-102; Abubakar Aceh, *Sedjarah al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Sinar Bupemi, 1956), 193-208; Howard Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an*, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1994).

<sup>26</sup> Iser, *The Act of Reading*, 21.

<sup>27</sup> An aesthetic experience is "whether there is some special emotion or attitude or other internal sign that enables one to recognize that what one is having is an aesthetic experience and not some other kind." Marcia Muelder Eaton, "Aesthetic Experience," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Donald M. Borchert, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference, 2006), 1: 32-35.

melodic ways. When the Qur'an is recited it is melodious and musical. This inherent attribute was developed to a regulated science of reciting the Qur'an (*ilm al-tajwīd*) in the tenth century. Although the Qur'an is in Arabic, *ilm al-tajwīd* has beautified the sound of the recitation, which takes its aesthetic—and even divine—experience apart from regular Arabic sound.<sup>28</sup>

The aesthetic reception of the Qur'an also comes into reality through material cultures. Fahmida Sulayman says:

Many Muslims continue to express their faith and devotion through visual artistic means: for example, by producing exquisite illuminated copies of the Qur'an, or by carving out the sacred word as architectural ornament, or by painting verses from the Qur'an on a digital canvas. Although the art forms vary from country to country and age to age, the unifying factor is the inspiration derived from God's word – connecting the metalworker in Syria to the calligrapher in China.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, the aesthetic reception of the Qur'an is not only about receiving the Qur'an aesthetically, but also about having a divine experience through an aesthetic way. In such manner, an aesthetic reception may lead to veneration of a material object, the Qur'an. A striking example is *Kiswah*, or the cover of the Ka'bah (a cube of Muslim prayer directions in Makkah). Its initial function is to decorate the Ka'bah with very beautiful, outstanding, artistic calligraphy of the Qur'an. It also functions to cover and protect the Ka'bah.<sup>30</sup> Once a year, in the month of pilgrimage (*Dhulhijjah*), *Kiswah* is

<sup>28</sup> See Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1985); Rasmussen, *Women and The Recited Qur'an*.

<sup>29</sup> Fahmida Sulayman, "Introduction," in Fahmida Sulayman, ed., *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and its Creative Expressions (Selected Proceedings from the International Colloquium, London, 18-21 October 2003)*, (London: Oxford University Press in association with Institute of Ismaili Studies London, 2007), 1.

<sup>30</sup> See "The Making of Kiswah," *Islamic Arts and Architecture*, <http://islamic-arts.org/2012/the-making-of-kiswa/> (accessed 10 June 2014)

replaced by a new one. But even after its removal, it is venerated as still preserving the power of protection, so it is cut into pieces and shared as “blessed relics.”<sup>31</sup>

Aesthetic reception of the Qur’an among the Banjars takes place in various ways. For example, during *tasmiyah* (naming the newborn baby), a Qari or Qur’an reciter is invited to recite the Qur’an before the baby. The Qari is not a regular reciter of the Qur’an; s/he is one who can recite the Qur’an melodically. Moreover, the Banjars are also famous as a source of the many of the best national and international Qari in Indonesia.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, in the material culture, even since the early period of Islam in the sixteenth century, the first mosque attributed to the first Sultan, Sultan Suriansyah, has been decorated by wooden calligraphy. This type of aesthetic material culture of the Qur’an, in general, is comparable to the same mode of reception in the Malay Peninsula.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Sulayman, “Introduction,” 16.

<sup>32</sup> See Murjani Sani, A. Gazali, and M. Abduh Amri, *Mengukir Prestasi Emas: Profil Qari-Qariah Kalimantan Selatan yang Berprestasi di Tingkat Nasional dan Internasional* (Banjarmasin: COMDES, 2010). This book lists 33 best Qur’an reciters from South Borneo who have had national and international achievement in the Competition of the Qur’an Recitation from the 1960s to the present.

<sup>33</sup> Husim Tan, “Qur’anic Inscriptions on Woodcarvings from the Malay Peninsula,” in Sulayman ed., *Word of God, Art of Man*, 205-15.



Wooden Calligraphy in interior of Masjid Sultan Suriansyah, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan (Personal Collection)

### 3. Functional Reception

The last mode of reception of the Qur'an is functional reception. Functional basically means practical: reception of the Qur'an based on the practical ends of the reader, not on theory. Functional reception entertains the vantage of the reader's perspectives as an implied reader in dealing with the structure of the text, oral or written. For Harold Coward, the reception of a scripture that has had strong stress in the oral tradition like the Qur'an should be complemented by "hearer-response" besides "reader response." In such reception, Coward sees the scripture working as a "symbol" rather than a "sign."<sup>34</sup> In reception of the Qur'an as a sign, the reader uses Iser's concept of

<sup>34</sup> Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, 182.



“textual structure,”<sup>35</sup> in which perspectives of the text are emphasized. In reception as a symbol, the reader is in a “structured act.”<sup>36</sup> The reader is not free from the structure of the Qur’an, written or oral, but the Qur’an in his/her reception can symbolize practical values shaped by reader’s perspectives.

The functional reception of the Qur’an includes a performative function. Gail distinguishes an interpretive act in an informative function from a performative one. The former is of “what is said” about the scripture, the latter of “what is done.”<sup>37</sup> The informative function is in the exegetical reception of the Qur’an as I discuss above. It may bring about certain practices in applying what is said in the text. The performative function is in the functional reception of the Qur’an. The Qur’an is performed through recitation or scribing to meet a particular need. In this function, it of course brings about certain acts and practices that are appropriated to the ends of the reader or hearer.

The earliest example of a functional reception in the era of the Prophet Muhammad is the story of a Companion who recites al-Fatihah in curing a person bitten by a scorpion.<sup>38</sup> The Companion of course kept the structure of the *surah* as it was transmitted from the Prophet. At the same time, he had a particular need that had not been modeled in the Prophet tradition or suggested explicitly in the structure of the text. He might refer to a general perspective of the excellences of the *surah* to be performed in healing the sick person.

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<sup>35</sup> Iser, *Act of Reading*, 35-38.

<sup>36</sup> Iser.

<sup>37</sup> Gail, “Nonliterate Traditions and Holy Book,” 232-35. Gail discusses both functions of a scripture in what he calls a vertical dimension, the “interpretive dimension” of the scripture. In the “horizontal dimension,” the scripture is distinguished as “text” or written and “non-text” or oral and aural or recitation.

<sup>38</sup> See Chapter 1, fn. 12.

For the Banjars as a non-Arabic speaking community, this mode of reception is practiced more than others. It is present in most passages of Banjar life. Consider the three examples, pregnancy, *tasmiyah*, and burial, described earlier. During pregnancy, the recitation of QS Maryam (19) and Yusuf (12) is of the actual need of the prospective parents. Both chapters contain more messages to be followed by Muslims exegetically. However, the functional need of the parents is in having the modeled figures, Maryam and Yusuf. Therefore, the two chapters are performed in both personal and communal practices. In the case of *tasmiyah*, the story of an ‘Imran family naming a daughter accompanied with prayers is of the need of the family who have just had a new baby (3:32-37). Since the need is a once in a lifetime moment, the verses are performed in recitation by an invited highly qualified reciter of the Qur’an in a community gathering. The people coming to the gathering can share and support the intention of the host family. In both cases, the Banjars share a general perspective of the excellences of the Qur’an, such as the rewards and devotional values of its recitation. The same perspective is also taken in to account in reciting QS Yasin (36) several consecutive nights after a burial. Hence, the prayer during the ritual of nights after burial consists of hope to send reward to the deceased. The Banjars usually identify such practices as *tafa’ul* or taking a good omen.

### **B. *Tafa’ul* as a practice of reception among the Banjars**

*Tafa’ul* is the most frequent practice of reception of the Qur’an among the Banjars. As described briefly in the Chapter 3, *tafa’ul* (تفاؤل) is from Arabic literally

meaning “a good omen” or “a sign of a favorable thing.”<sup>39</sup> *Tafa’ul* is an acting noun (or gerund like) from *tafā’ala-yatafā’alu-tafā’ul* from a basic noun *al-fa’lu* (pl. *fu’ūl*) meaning good omen<sup>40</sup> or good sign as opposed to *al-ṭiyarah* or evil sign. So, *fa’lu* has a positif connotation as opposed to *ṭiyarah* that has a negative one. A good omen or sign is a means of encouragement. So, in the expression *tafā’altu bi kadhā* means “I took a good omen of this...” or “I was encouraged by this...” Ibn Manzur exemplifies the practice of *tafa’ul* as someone who says “*yā sālim*” (hi, you healthy one) in visiting a sick person. This expression sends encouragement to one who is sick to have positive thoughts of being cured. Ibn Manzur says that in a hadith<sup>41</sup> “*annahu SAW yuhibbu al-fa’la wa yukrihu al-ṭiyarah*” (the Prophet pbuh was in favor of *al-fa’lu* and disliked *al-ṭiyarah*). So, *al-fa’lu* is a favorable sign which is encouraging, while *al-ṭiyarah* is unfavorable, which is discouraging. Abu Zayd as quoted by Ibn Manzur perceives *tafa’ul* as an expression one’s hope and need (*ḥājah*).<sup>42</sup>

*Tafa’ul* has been practiced since the era of the Prophet Muhammad. Ibn Manzur cited a hadith that is narrated in a reliable source, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, as the Prophet Muhammad says: “no *’adwā* (infection) and no *ṭiyarah* (evil portent), I am delighted by *al-fa’l al-ṣāliḥ* (favorable omen), the favorable omen is “the nice word.”<sup>43</sup> In another hadith the Prophet Muhammad says about *al-fa’lu*: “*al-kalimah al-ṣāliḥah yasma’uhā*”

<sup>39</sup> Rohi Ba’albaki, *Al-Mawrid: A Modern Arabic English Dictionary* (Beirut: Dar Il lil-Malayin, 1995), 813.

<sup>40</sup> “Omen” by itself can have positive or negative sense depending on the attribute before it. Literally omen means “a phenomenon or occurrence regarded as a sign of future happiness or disaster,” *Collins COBUILD Grammar Plus-Lexicon*, offline program.

<sup>41</sup> He does not specify the hadith, but similar substance can be found in other hadith as we will see later.

<sup>42</sup> Muhammad ibn Mukarram ibn Manzur al-Ifriqi al-Misri, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir, n.d), juz 11, p. 513, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn Manzur; Al-Imam al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, HN. 5315, 18/44, *al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* e-book.

*aḥadukum*“ (the nice word that you hear it”).<sup>44</sup> ‘*Adwā* and *ṭiyarah* is a practice of taking a negative omen from natural beings such as stars, sounds of animals, and weather changes to lose hope and be discouraged or dispirited. On the contrary, *al-fa’lu* infuses hopes and encouragement. The former are prohibited for they are regarded as perceiving God negatively as well as polytheistically. Losing hope of God is regarded as wrongdoing in Islam. The latter is a form of positive thinking of God and prayers to God. Positive thinking is one of the requirements of sufficient prayers.<sup>45</sup> An important point from the practice of *tafa’ul* in the Prophet’s saying above is that the “nice word” is “heard.” To be “heard” emphasizes the oral and aural aspects of the the practice as we will see later.

As a form of prayers, *tafa’ul* has even been practiced for the deceased. Ibn ‘Abbas narrated that Ali ibn Abi Talib came out from the Prophet’s house in a sickness that took his life. When people asked him about the Prophet, Ali said: “In the Praise of Allah, he was cured/recovered.”<sup>46</sup> Ali’s notion of cured or recovered (*bāri’*) was a *tafa’ul* of, whatever Allah’s destiny to the Prophet, he was actually recovered from his sickness. Another hadith from Ummu Salamah even insisted the power of *tafa’ul* for a dying and deceased one, as the Prophet said: “if you come to see a sick person or a deceased say

<sup>44</sup> Al-Bukhari, HN. 5314, 18/43.

<sup>45</sup> Rahman quotes directly from Muqaddimah Ibnu Khaldun on the power of faith to cure sickness: “Hence it is improper to regard any medical material that has gone into genuine Hadiths transmitted from him as a forming part of the Sacred Law, since there is nothing to indicate this. However, if someone uses them [such medicines] by way of seeking God’s blessing and with firm faith, they will have palpable effect—except that theirs would not be scientific medicine but would be a result of strong faith, as happened to the one suffering from stomach trouble when treated with honey,” Fazlur Rahman, *Health and Medicine in Islamic Tradition: Change and Identity* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 33; see also Ibn Khaldun, *al-Muqaddima* (Cairo: 1867), 412 as quoted by Rahman.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Imam Sharaf ibn Muhammad al-Nawawi, *Al-Azḳār* (Jordan: al-Mar, 1990), 171.

‘good’ (*khayr*), as the Angels support your saying to be answered”<sup>47</sup> Citing Ibn Sina, Fazlur Rahman says that the philosophical basis of cure is “suggestion and prayers”.<sup>48</sup> Suggestion in this case is a form of encouragement by giving positive hope and good sign. So, *tafa’ul* as encouragement and prayers works in various segments of human life. In its practice, *tafa’ul* represents not only a human to God relation for it has been an ever hope to God, but also a form of human to human relation for it is encouragement and prayers for for others.

*Tafa’ul* then is not a passive practice in which people wait for the sign following it such as in *ṭiyarah*. It is an active practice as people deliberately decide and choose a “sign” that they are in favor in the situation they are facing. The Qur’an has its place in this deliberate choice of *tafa’ul*. Rahman cites Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jauziyyah on a tradition the Prophet used to prohibit using the Qur’an as an amulet, for it may break one’s faith in the God of monotheism, but later he allowed it as long as the verse cited is in accordance with the intended end as a form of prayer.<sup>49</sup> However, the agreement between the cited Qur’an and the intended end is an open notion that relies on the active readers of the Qur’an. Some model of agreement might have precedent in the practices of early Muslim community,<sup>50</sup> some might not.

<sup>47</sup> “*Izā haḍartum al-marīḍ aw al-mawt faqūlu khayran, fa inna al-malā’ikah yu’ammīnūna ‘alā mā taqūlūn*” Al-Nawawi, 183; this hadith initially in Muhammad ibn ‘Isa ibn Surah al-Tirmizi, *Sunan al-Tirmīzī* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, n.d.), HN 977, juz 3, 307.

<sup>48</sup> Rahman, *Health and Medicine in Islamic Tradition*, 36

<sup>49</sup> Rahman, 34; see also Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr Ibnu-Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, *Medicine of the Prophet (al-Tibb al-Nabawī)*, trans. Penelope Johnston (Cambridge: Islamic Text Society, 1998).

<sup>50</sup> See the case of ibn Mas’ud on al-Waqi’ah and Abu Sa’id al-Khudry on al-Fatihah in Chapter 1; another example is from the use of Surah al-Baqarah (QS: 2) or the throne verse (*al-āyah al-Kursī*) for protection, as the information has been narrated directly from the Prophet Muhammad. See, e.g., Abu ‘Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Salam, *Faḍā’il al-Qur’an wa Ma’ālimuh wa Adabuh*, taḥqīq, Ahmad ibn Abdul Wahid al-Khayyati (Magrib: Wazarah al-Awqaf wa al-Shu’un al-Islamiyah, 1995), juz 2, 32-37.

The active reader is an element of reception of the Qur'an in *tafa'ul*. Based on the historical and normative meaning of *tafa'ul*, such reception is restricted by three concepts. First, having the Qur'an as a 'closed' corpus, this active reader is limited by the Qur'an, which is in Arabic and consists of 114 chapters from beginning to end. Although the basic practice of *tafa'ul* in Arab tradition, which might possibly had started in the pre-Islamic era, has covered any wording, *tafa'ul* as a practice of reception of the Qur'an then is restricted by Qur'anic wording. Second, *tafa'ul* is intentional, for the reader deliberately takes g orally and aurally meaningful wording (one who utters the chosen word and its hearer). So, in doing *tafa'ul*, the reader has a preexisting understanding of the words to be meaningful. This understanding is shaped by the reader's historical horizon. In this way, *tafa'ul* with the Qur'an is universal and individual as well.

Recalling my statement in the introduction, the universal Qur'an, which is in Arabic, has spread into realms in varying non-Arabic speaking lands, including Indonesia. Indonesian Muslims, the Banjars in this study, perceive the Qur'an in Arabic thoroughly. This reception is not only limited by the conceptual framework of the Qur'an which is in Arabic, but also a theological reception, for it is the only form of the Qur'an that has a scriptural level in Islam. Qur'ans not in Arabic are merely interpretation or translation. Nonetheless, for the latter concept of *tafa'ul*, the local "horizon" of Indonesians in general and the Banjars in particular have shaped the way they put a "meaning" of the word, namely the Qur'an. The meaning may correspond to its use in its initial place, Arabic speaking people, and may not. However, this intended particular meaning does not hinder the basic idea of *tafa'ul* as a form of encouragement by

providing a good sign, except that the idea of good sign may be very limited in certain culture.

With this concept of universal Qur'an in a particular non-Arabic speaking community, I found four modes of practices of reception of the Qur'an through *tafa'ul*:

### 1. *Tafa'ul* with the Fragmented Sounds and Words of the Qur'an

As indicated in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad quoted above, the main mode of practice of *tafa'ul* is to be heard or in aural mode. It is “*al-kalimah al-ṣāliḥah yasma'uhā aḥadukum*” (“the nice word that you hear it”).<sup>51</sup> In the context of Prophet Muhammad of Arabia in the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE, “the nice word” was an orally and aurally comprehensible word. Both speaker and hearer shared the word and its meaning. However, when the nice word is from the Qur'an, the shared meaning is secondary to the belief in the divine attribute of the Qur'an as the word of God. Therefore, the efficacy of the word to be qualified as “nice” is not merely relying on its denotative meaning such as healthy, recovered, smart, and good, but also on “the strong faith”<sup>52</sup> accompanying it. So, reciting and hearing the word of God send a spiritual meaning of the word that founds “the strong faith.” The basis of this spiritual meaning is a universal concept, for the Qur'an is believed as the word of God and a pillar of faith with devotion in reciting it.<sup>53</sup> However, the spiritual meaning itself might be very personal and limited, and practical.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Bukhari, HN. 5314, 18/43.

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Khaldun as quoted by Rahman, *Health and Medicine in Islamic Tradition*, 33.

<sup>53</sup> We can see this concept in Chapter 3 on the religious and sociocultural meaning of the Qur'an. The universal concept of the Qur'an in general is in shared elements of varying definition of the Qur'an. See al-Zarkashi, *Manāhil al-'Irfān*; Shamsuddin Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Tafsir Al-Qurtubi: Classical Commentary of the Holy Qur'an, juz 1*. trans. Aisah Belwey (London: Dar al-Taqwa, 2003); al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jāmi li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, juz. 1 (Cairo: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr, 1967).

In the case of the Banjars, we could see that this spiritual meaning can be gained through mere fragmented sounds or words of the Qur'an. Both cases can be conceptualized from the use of the Qur'an during childbirth. For the former, the association of the ending sound of the verse recited "...thur" in *Alhākumut-takāthur*<sup>54</sup> with the ending sound of his prayer "...sur" in the baby comes out "mendusur" creates the reciter's personal meaning. For the practitioner, the efficacy of this mode of *tafa'ul* is not on the universal shared meaning of the words,<sup>55</sup> but on the power of imitating the fragmented sound of the divine word, the Qur'an.

The *tafa'ul* through fragmented words can be seen in the second case of Qur'an recitation for helping the childbirth process. The word *takhallat* in a verse "*wa alqat mā fīha wa takhallat*" (84: 4) literally means "become clean and empty," which initially on the Last Day fragmentally used to "clean and empty" the uterus. It is followed by *Ka'annahum yawma yarawnahā lam yalbathū illā 'ashiyyatan aw duḥāhā* (79: 46) (The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had tarried but a single), which is also on the coming of the Last Day. The intention of its recitation is to make the process of childbirth faster. This case shares the former for the efficacy is not on the initially whole meaning of the verses, but on its fragmented words of the Word of God in the Qur'an.

In both cases the Qur'an is recited to be heard by the reciters themselves and be sounded off the water. The meaning was constructed in the individual intention of the reciters with a universal wording of the Qur'an. In the former, the meaning is totally in the local realm of non-Arabic speaking Banjars. In the latter, the meaning as a

<sup>54</sup> QS al-Takāthur (102) 1.

<sup>55</sup> The verse literally means "the mutual rivalry for filling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from the more serious things)," which has nothing to do with childbirth.



fragmented word is not totally detached from the meaning of a single word. However, it is detached from its whole context, except that it is in the Qur'an. Therefore, it does not fit exegetical reception or informative function. In both cases the Qur'an has been perceived in functional reception with the emphasis on its performative function.

## 2. *Tafa'ul* with Selected Chapters or Verses of the Qur'an

The second mode of *tafa'ul* is with the selected chapters or verses of the Qur'an. The notion of Qur'an can mean that the Qur'an in its entirety is described in its definition or also be parts of it. The parts of the Qur'an can be grouped into sections (*juz*) in which the Qur'an has 30 parts, or chapters (*sūrah*) that consist of 114 chapters, or verses (*āyah*) which are 6,195 verses altogether in the Qur'an. The elements of the definition of the Qur'an cover all these parts, including its devotional value in its recitation. The story of the Prophet's response to Abu Sa'id al-Khudry's complaint of a companion who spent his night reciting al-Ikhlāṣ (QS 112: 1-4) repeatedly establishes<sup>56</sup> the equal values of certain parts of the Qur'an in comparison with the Qur'an in general.

Regarding this issue, the practice and meaning of the Qur'an to be used in *tafa'ul* might come from two bases: the excellences or contents of the chapters or the verses. For the former, the information of the excellences of the chapters or verses is presented primarily in forms of transmissions from early generation of Islam. They can be from the Prophet, clustered into three types: the Qur'an revealed to him, *al-ḥadīth al-nabawī* (namely any account of the Prophet's saying/*al-ḥadīth al-qawī*, action/*al-ḥadīth al-fi'li*, and confirmation/*al-ḥadīth al-taqrīrī*), and *al-ḥadīth al-qudsī* (namely the accounts of

<sup>56</sup> See Chapter 3, fn. 4.

God's saying in the Prophet's wording). It can also from his companions either by referring to the Prophet Muhammad or based on their own experiences and interpretation.

Consider the one from the Qur'an, for example, QS al-Isrā' (17) 82, in which Allah says: *“Wa nunazzilu minal-Qur'ān mā huwa shifā' wa rahmah lil-mu'minīn...”* (And we reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for believers...). This verse emphasizes the mercy and curative excellences of the Qur'an. Al-Qurtubi conveys two different interpretations of the scholars regarding the word healing (*shifā'*) in this verse. Some say that the healing is for spiritual illnesses, others that the word is related to physical illnesses.<sup>57</sup> For the excellences of the Qur'an from the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions discussed previously, such as the case of QS Al-Fatihah (1) for curing the one who was bitten by a scorpion, QS Yasin (36) in helping a dying person passing the critical moment, and a narration from Ibn Mas'ud on the excellences of QS al-Wāqi'ah (56) for protecting his family from poverty.

Based on the sources of the information above, the information of the excellences of the Qur'an could be either substantial or functional. The substantial meaning is related to the Qur'an as the ultimate source of Islamic teaching and the true guidance of Muslims, such as the ideal meaning of the Qur'an for spiritual illnesses. The functional meaning is on the practical use of the Qur'an for particular ends, such as healing and protection. The substantial meaning is more about exegetical reception and informative, while the functional meaning is shaping mostly the functional reception and

<sup>57</sup> For spiritual illnesses, the Qur'an is sent down to bring the light for those who are in the darkness of ignorance, astray, disbelief, and so forth. Hence, the healing and mercy are provided specifically for the believer as they have been cured from such illnesses. Others say that this word is related to physical illnesses. The healing could be in terms of cure for illness or protection from a danger or illness. See Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abu Bakar al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*, juz 13, 156-161.

performative. Substantial meaning to some extent requires comprehension of the Qur'an, while functional meaning requires the practice and action.

On these realms, the Qur'an in Banjar passages of life is heavily shaped by the functional meaning of the excellences of the Qur'an leading to functional reception and performative. Most of the practices are on recitation of the Qur'an. The most striking example is the recitation of QS al-Fatihah, Yasin, and *Fatihah Empat*, which are there in most of the Banjars' life cycle. Although some people in Banjar, especially religious leaders, may be able to explain the substantial meaning of the verses, especially al-Fatihah and *Fatihah Empat*, the practices are based not on the meaning, but on the tradition referring to the excellences of the chapters. For that reason, the practices of reciting these verses can also be transmitted massively from one generation to the next. The excellent qualities of the chapters are the source of the encouragement in *tafa'ul*, for they can be used for any intentions.

The second base of *tafa'ul* with certain chapters or verses is on the contents of those parts of the Qur'an. The contents may refer to general or specific information in the part of the Qur'an selected. General information is exemplified by the recitation of QS Maryam (19) and Yūsuf (12)<sup>58</sup> on the story of both figures covered in the chapters in question. Specific information is of the case of QS Al 'Imran (3) 31-37 on the story of Maryam's birth and QS Tāhā (20) 55 on the origins of humankind and its end.<sup>59</sup> Unlike the excellence-based practices that leave meaning as secondary and devotion as primary, the contentbased practices deal with the meaning of the Qur'an while keeping the

<sup>58</sup> See Chapter 3 on pregnancy.

<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 3 on *tasmiyah* (naming the newborn baby) for the first example, on Death and Dying for the second.

devotional value. Having meaning and devotion at once, the meaning in this regards is not on the exegetical reception, but still on the functional one.

So the meaning provided in the chapters or verses is being consulted in order to be used in the ritual or performance. The figures of Yusuf (Joseph) and Maryam (Mary) in both chapters named for them are taken as a good sign for the future children during pregnancy. The signs are recited repeatedly personally or communally to support and encourage the prospective parents. To perform this mode of *tafa'ul* the Banjars do not need special skill in Arabic, for they can grasp the general idea of the chapters through the existing tradition. A higher level of Arabic is needed to understand the transformation<sup>60</sup> of choices between reciting QS Al 'Imrān (3) 31-37 on the birth of Maryam and QS Maryam (19) 1-15 on the birth of Yahya (John) in accordance with the sex of the newborn baby to be named during *tasmiyah*. However, this meaning comprehension only takes place for the limited number of people, namely Qari and *guru*. Eventually, the verses are recited as a primary part of the ritual *tasmiyah*, to provide a good omen for the baby celebrated. The recitation is intended to be heard by the baby and the parents as a form of *tafa'ul*.

### 3. *Tafa'ul* with Recitation of the Entire Qur'an

The next mode is of *tafa'ul* with the recitation of the entire Qur'an. The notion of the Qur'an above covers initially the Qur'an in its entirety. The devotional value of the Qur'an covers all parts of it from the very beginning until the end. So, the recitation of

<sup>60</sup> See Chapter 3 on *tasmiyah* in the case of new initiative of some Qari and *guru* to provide choices of Qur'an to be recited according to the sex of the baby. The existing tradition is recitation of QS Al 'Imrān (3) 31-37. However, since it is on the birth of Maryam, a girl, the new initiative proposes QS Maryam (19) 1-15 on the birth of Yahya for a boy.

the entire Qur'an is also mainly based on the excellent value of doing so, with the same source as *tafa'ul* with recitation of selected parts of the Qur'an. There are two ways of the encouragement of having *tafa'ul* with the entire Qur'an recitation. The first is the narration referred to, where the Prophet encourages Muslims to recite the Qur'an as much as they can during their lifetime.<sup>61</sup> The recitation will be a way to collect supplies in the hereafter. The second is through the prominent value of the moment of finishing reciting the entire Qur'an to start again from the beginning.<sup>62</sup>

So, the *tafa'ul* with the recitation of the entire Qur'an is on the extremely high value of the moment to meet any human intention. For that reason, the Banjars perform varying practices from a regular endless group recitation of the Qur'an (*tadārus*), to reciting the entire Qur'an repeatedly during pregnancy, to a repeated recitation of the whole next to a dying and deceased person all the way to the graveyard, to a big celebration during *batamat* (completing reciting the entire Qur'an). Although the value of recitation and completion the recitation is in both worldly life and the hereafter, the

<sup>61</sup> The one who loves to recite the entire Qur'an again and again is called *al-ḥall al-murtaḥil* (a sojourning traveler) and the Prophet proclaimed it was the best way of reciting the Qur'an. Al-Imam al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad 'Abd Allah ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Darimi, *Musnad al-Dārimī*, ed. Husain Salim Asad al-Darani (Riyadh: Dar al-Mugni, 2000), part 4, 2179-86; Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984), 1:14.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Darimi also narrated 14 hadith from several companions on their experiences and memory of the moment of finishing reciting the entire Qur'an. For example, Thābit said that Anas ibn Mālik gathered his sons and all family members anytime he was completing recitation of the whole Qur'an and he prayed for their advantages. This narration is related to another companion's experience, namely al-Ḥakam and Mujāhid. "Narrated from al-Ḥakam, he said that al-Mujāhid sent somebody to invite him and said: indeed we invite you as we are going to complete the recitation of the Qur'an and we were informed that any supplication following the completion of recitation of the Qur'an is sufficient. Al-Ḥakam said: made supplications then." Another companion, namely Ḥumaid al-A'raj even narrates that supplication following *khatm al-Qur'ān* is espoused by four thousands angels. The prominence of supplications following the *khatm al-Qur'ān* assigns the functional excellences of the Qur'an as this stands as a reward or benefits for the reader, even the reader could share the benefits to others through his/her supplications. See al-Darimi; See also Ahmad Rafiq, "Khataman al-Qur'an: a negotiated symbols," paper presented in IIIT Summer Scholar Program (2010).

practices of *tafa'ul* here are preferably for worldly functional ends. Therefore, they Banjars may perform it in some critical situations in their life passages, such as pregnancy and death and dying.

#### 4. *Tafa'ul* with Script and Tablet (*Mushaf*) of the Qur'an

The last mode of practice is *tafa'ul* through the script of the Qur'an and the tablet (*muṣḥaf*) of the Qur'an. The initial attribute of the Qur'an is recitation, which is oral and aural in character. The first model of transmission of the Qur'an is in oral and aural recitation. This model even has been preserved until recently as the best model of preserving and transmitting the Qur'an.<sup>63</sup> However, with the spread of Islam into various places the need for standardized written documents of the Qur'an arose. Therefore, the writing of the Qur'an, which was individual,<sup>64</sup> was transformed to a communal practice that began in the era of the Uthman ibn Affan, the third of four "Rightly Guided Caliphs" (*al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidīn*) in Islam. The process of such codification has continued until Muslims have the complete standardized scripts and tablet of the Qur'an as we know nowadays.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> For the prominent oral and aural recitation of preserving and transmitting the Qur'an see Muhammad Karim Kawwaz, *Kalām Allāh: al-Jānīb al-Shafahī min al-Zāhirah al-Qur'āniyah* (London: Dar al-Saqi, 2002); Mattson, *The Story of The Qur'an*; to see the power of oral recitation see Harold Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, 82-85.

<sup>64</sup> The emphasis on recitation, did not necessarily mean that writing the Qur'an was absent in the earliest period of Islam. However, the written documents of the Qur'an have been scattered in various means of writing as well as preserved individually by Companions as personal collections. See Gregor Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: From the Aural to the Read*, trans. Shawkat M. Toorawa (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 5.

<sup>65</sup> For the history and transformation of the script and text of the Qur'an see Gregor Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam*; Abu Usamah Salim ibn 'Id al-Hilali, "Muqaddimah" in Abu Bakr 'Abdullah ibn Sulaiman ibn al-'As'as al-Sijistani or Ibn Abi Daud, *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif* (n.p.: Guras, 2006); Muhammad Mustafa al-Azami, *The History of the Qur'anic Text from revelation to Compilation: A Comparative study with the Old and New Testaments* (London: UK Islamic Academy, 2003); 'Abd al-Ṣabur Shāhīn, *Tārīkh al-*

The development of the Qur'an from the oral to the standardized written tablet does not necessarily mean that the latter supersedes the former. In fact, the prominence of oral transmission of the Qur'an is still preserved. A person cannot be acknowledged as a *hafiz* (one having the Qur'an by heart) or a *Qari* (one mastering all variants of the Qur'an recitation) until s/he can prove it orally. Meanwhile, the written Qur'an has also gradually increased its prominence. The written text is frequently used to learn basic recitation as well as to appraise the correctness of recitation.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the script and the tablet of Qur'an have also been assigned a "divine" attribute, as the recitation, for it carries the Word of God, the holy book. From Farid Esack in Africa to Neal Robinson's research in Pakistan to Anna Gade's findings in Indonesia, there are a number of local attitudes and practices to honor the tablet of the Qur'an which is universally sanctified as "holy." Up to this point, we can see the transformation of the venerated Qur'an, from the transcendent Word of God, to its blessed recitation, to the sanctified text holding its script.

The venerated script and text of the Qur'an have to some extent gained an independent status from the recitation to be used in *tafa'ul*. As a consequence, the encouragement will always be gained not through an aural aspect of the Qur'an, but through personal practice of scribing the Qur'an. There are two cases among the Banjars where the script and the tablet of the Qur'an play an independent role. The first is the last

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*Qur'ān*, (n.p.: Dar al-Qalam, 1966); Abu 'Abdillah al-Zanjani, *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (Beirut: Mu'assasah A'lami lil-Matbu'at, 1969).

<sup>66</sup> For example, one of the requirement of to evaluate a reliable variant of reading of the Qur'an (Qira'ah) is through its agreement with the codified *Mushaf Uthmani* as the standard. See, for example, Abu 'Amr Usthman ibn Sa'id al-Dani, *Al-Muḥkam fi Nuqat al-Maṣāḥif*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1997); Ibn al-Mujahid, *Kitab al-Sab'ah fi al-Qira'at*, tahqiq Shauqi Daif (Egypt: Dar al-Ma'arif).

case of helping childbirth process in inscribing a formula on a new vessel. The formula consists of two sets of verses that contain the expression of the power of God in His attributes and names (59: 21-24) and the healing and mercy power of the Qur'an that Allah has set for the believer (17: 82). The second is in the moment of *tasmiyah* (naming the newborn baby), where the tablet of the Qur'an should be presented between the father holding the baby in his arms and a Qari reciting the Qur'an, regardless whether the Qari recites the Qur'an from memory or the tablet. The tablet itself is believed to "encourage the baby growing up in the light of the Qur'an. Both can be seen as performative functions of the Qur'an in a functional reception. However, there is an element of exegetical and informative in the former. Nonetheless, the "efficacy" of the formula is laid primarily on the "the strong faith" of the Qur'an itself. More such practices entertaining the script and the tablet of the Qur'an can be seen in the tradition of having amulet in various traditions.<sup>67</sup>

### C. Dual Appropriation: Reception of the Qur'an, Memory, and Identity

*Tafa'ul* as the most frequent practice of reception of the Qur'an in the Banjars has conveyed three related issues of the Qur'an in a non-Arabic speaking community. On the side of the Qur'an as the object of reception, it accentuates the reward and devotional value of its recitation rather than its self-attributed guidance value. As a consequence, on the other hand, on the side of the Banjars, the Qur'an is more perceived in the mode of functional reception with performative function. The reception of the Qur'an is always in

<sup>67</sup> See Rahman, *Health and Medicine in Islamic Tradition*, 34, compared to, for example, al-Syaikh Ahmad al-Dairabi, *Al-Mujarrabat al-Dairabi al-Kabir al-Musamma bi al-Fath al-Malak al-Majid al-Muallaf li Naf' al-'Abid* (Singapore: al-Haramain, n.d.)



relation to practical needs of the Banjars, from cradle to the grave. In its functional reception, the Qur'an has been performed in oral and aural recitation. This recitation is an actual practice as well as means of transmission of the practice from generations to generations making up the tradition of the Qur'an in Banjar.

This mode of practice represents the place of the Qur'an as an axis in the life of Muslims. On the one hand, the reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars is a practice of keeping the ideal value of the Qur'an as prescribed and transmitted from the early period of Islam. This is perceived as the model and ideal of the practices around the Qur'an. In the case of the Banjars, for the commoners, the model and ideal are simply by keeping the Qur'an in Arabic, which has devotional value and blessing from God, regardless of their comprehension of its meaning. This reception is manifested in encouragement to learn reciting the Qur'an in pure and sound Arabic from early ages<sup>68</sup> as well as keeping reciting the Qur'an at various events in their live. So, the Banjars keep the model and ideal they believe from the past through their living tradition in various rituals in their life cycle. In line with that, the ideal is also transmitted textually through the handbooks used during the ritual.

On the other hand, the manifestation of models and ideal in living tradition is constructed in a limited local context. The ideal value of devotion and blessing in reciting the Qur'an has been placed at various critical moments in the Banjars' passages of life. For example, selected chapters and verses are recited during pregnancy, *tasmiyah*, and

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<sup>68</sup> The association of the Banjars to Muslims as discussed in Chapter 2 also shapes a living tradition of learning to recite the Qur'an. This tradition has significantly produced a number of best reciters of the Qur'an from Banjar at the national or international level. See Sani, Gazali, and Amri, *Mengukir Prestasi Emas*.

marriage to mention some. The sound of a word in Qur'an recitation has also been associated with the similar sound of a word in local language, such as in the case of childbirth, although the words have no relational meaning at all. Some practices have no precedent in early Muslim practices except in a broader concept of the excellences of the Qur'an, but some others have. The recitation of Yasin during death and dying rituals, for example, more or less refers to similar practices recorded from the Prophet era.

Therefore, the reception of the Qur'an as an axis of Muslim life is the practice of a dual appreciation. During the practices in the reception, Muslims in Banjar appropriate themselves to the models and ideals of the Qur'an from the early Muslim communities. At the same time, they also appropriate themselves to their local context to have the Qur'an as theirs. The next question is how they appropriate themselves to the models and ideals as reflected in their practices, and how they appropriate themselves to their current local context.

### 1. Reception of the Qur'an, Memory, and Legitimate Practices

As discussed above, the centrality of the Qur'an in Muslim life is unavoidable. Smith, Conrad, and Graham even put this as a major issue in understanding the place of the Qur'an among Muslims, not in its exegetical issue.<sup>69</sup> To understand Muslim history is to understand the way they use the Qur'an in their life.<sup>70</sup> Muslims throughout history have always taken the Qur'an as the primary source of their practices—in any realms,

<sup>69</sup> See Smith, *What is Scripture?*; Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*; William Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of the Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>70</sup> The centrality of the Qur'an and the Prophet's tradition has shaped Muslims' lives throughout their history; see Akbar Ahmed, *Discovering Islam: making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (London: Routledge, 2002), 15-29.

religious, social, political, etc.—to be legitimate. This prominent place has to some extent opened contestations among Muslims from the early period to claim the intended meaning and practices of the Qur'an.<sup>71</sup> This contestation brings about a prominence of the record of the Prophet Muhammad and early Muslim community life as the main source of the initial intention of the Qur'an.<sup>72</sup> So, to be Muslim, one has to refer to the Qur'an and claim Muhammad's legacy. The way to do it is through appropriating the record of Prophet's life. So, on the one hand, Muhammad is also central for Muslims to claim their reception of the Qur'an. On the other hand, their claim of following Muhammad is based on their interpretation of the Prophet and his tradition, which can be very biased and influenced by the surrounding environment.<sup>73</sup>

So, the reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars, which is heavily attached to various local traditions, is not merely a practical response to limited needs in their cycle of life. It is also a form of keeping their memory of the early generation of Islam. Having that memory, to some extent, means that the the tradition is relatively legitimate. Meanwhile, Danielle Harviue Leger finds the chain of memory, not the sacred, as the essence of religion. Doctrines and rituals are made up in a religious tradition in order to keep their memory. The memory is transmitted through number of traditions to attach people into one religious community. The existence of a religion in modern time primarily depends on memory preserved in various traditions.<sup>74</sup> The fewer traditions are

<sup>71</sup> For example, the idea of 'pious forebears' (*al-salaf al-sāliḥ*) is an arena of contestation between Islamists and modernists in current Muslims; see Asma Afsaruddin, *The First Muslim: History and Memory* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008), 148-82.

<sup>72</sup> Afsarudin, *The First Muslim*; Ahmed, *Discovering Islam*.

<sup>73</sup> Clinton Bennet, *In Search of Muhammad* (New York: Cassel, 1998), 192.

<sup>74</sup> See Danielle Harviue Leger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, trans. Simon Lee (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

held, the fewer memories are kept, and the less prominent is such religion in life, and vice versa.

The Banjars also use their memory of the early Muslim community to relate themselves to the models and ideals. Clinton Bennet explains this trend as the claim of “Muhammad’s posthumous authority.”<sup>75</sup> For example, on the issue of leadership, in Sunni the Prophet’s lineage was not important, but the Abbasids used it to contrast themselves from the Umayyad who emphasized the needs of leadership rather than lineage.<sup>76</sup> Shiites accentuates the Prophet’s lineage to their living leaders (Imams).<sup>77</sup> Meanwhile, Sufis claim their relation to the Prophet in their *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), which has links back to the Prophet and their piety and humbleness imitating the Prophet as they found in hadith.<sup>78</sup> Thus, the relation to the models and ideals could be material, as Abbasids claim, or a chain of transmission of *dhikr* as in Sufism.<sup>79</sup> It could also be substantial by showing piety, devotion, and humility in Sufism as the characters of the Prophets or as exemplified by the Umayyad claim of authoritative leadership.

Both material and substantial relations can be found in the practices of reception of the Qur’an among the Banjars. In material relations to the past, the Banjars are shaped by the concept of *ijāzah* or “sacred pedigree”<sup>80</sup> to have a legitimate practice of religion.

<sup>75</sup> See Bennet, *In Search of Muhammad*, 156.

<sup>76</sup> Bennet.

<sup>77</sup> Bennet, 169-70. For the early disputes on the Prophet’s posthumous leadership, see also W. M. Watt, *The Formative Periods of Islamic Thought* (London: Oneworld, 1998); Afsaruddin, *The First Muslim*, 19-58.

<sup>78</sup> Bennet.

<sup>79</sup> In Sufism, it is believed that *zikr* or remembrance has been set up through an uninterrupted chain of transmission from the Prophet Muhammad to the Companions and on to their Syekhs. The order of this *zikr* is organized under the various groups of *tariqa*, or Sufi orders.

<sup>80</sup> Ingrid Mattson uses the notion to represent the similar case of the required chain of transmission for the legitimate reciter of the Qur’an. See Mattson, *The Story of the Qur’an*, 79-80.

Ijazah has a chain of transmission from the latest *guru* who gives ijazah to the current Banjars to perform the practices of the Qur'an. Ijazah may even be in a very limited detail of practices, such as recitation of QS Al-Fatihah (1) 1-7 for prayers.

There are three types of Ijazah among the Banjars. The first is by having a detail of chain of transmission from the *guru* giving ijazah back along history to the Prophet Muhammad pbuh. This ijazah must be in detail and explicitly name every person in the chain of transmission. For example, a *guru* in Martapura showed me his letter of ijazah (see Appendix 3) stating his chain of transmission from the late Tuan *guru* H. Zaini Abdul Gani and tracing back in 27 figures to the Prophet Muhammad and eventually to the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) and to Allah, The God who sent down the Qur'an. This model of ijazah is not necessarily for memorizing the Qur'an, but for a general recitation which was carefully guided by the teacher giving the ijazah as a sound and correct recitation according the chain stated in ijazah. Nevertheless, this ijazah requires an oral and aural recitation of the Qur'an whether by heart or following the tablet, before the *guru* (*samā'* and *talaqqī*).<sup>81</sup>

The second model of *ijazah* is a general written permission stated clearly in books containing of certain practices of the Qur'an and some other practices. For example, this model could be found in the back of *Senjata Mukmin* by Haji Husin Qadri. This book contains recitation of selected chapters or verses of the Qur'an to be recited in various

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<sup>81</sup> This is considered the earliest method of learning and transmitting the Qur'an from the Prophet era. The method is still preserved in many places of Muslim world, especially for the school of memorizing the Qur'an. See Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*; Abubakar Aceh, *Sedjarah al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Siner Bupemi, 1956); Jarmo Houtsonen, "A Traditional Qur'anic School in a Southern Moroccan Village," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26, 3 (Aug. 1994): 489-500; Helen Boyle, *Qur'anic School: Agent of Preservation and Change* (New York: Routledge Palmer, 2004)

particular situations for varying practical ends. There is no detail of chain of transmission in this book, but at the end of the book the author—an important *guru* in Banjar—states:

*Khatimatun: Sampai di sini telah tamat Risalah ini. Sekali lagi saya du'akan semoga Allah jadikan Risalah ini besar manfa'atnya bagi kita kaum muslimin dan muslimat. Dan dengan ini saya berikan Ijazah bagi saudara-saudara qaum muslimin dan muslimat yang telah memiliki Risalah ini untuk mengamalkan isinya. Wa bihādhihī al-Kitābah al-idhn wa al-ijāzah lahum wa awṣāhum bitaqwallāh al-'Azim wa la yansauni bid-du'ā.*<sup>82</sup> (The End: this book ends at this point. I pray once again that this book is greatly beneficial of male and female Muslim. And, at this end I provide *ijazah* for all male and female Muslim brother and sister who hav this book to practice its content. [Then in Arabic] By this book, they get permission and *ijazah*, I advise them to fear Allah the Almighty and they do not forget me in their prayers).

Without the detail of the chain of transmission, this model of *ijazah* relies totally on the *guru* or the writer. The *guru* is trusted to have a reliable chain of transmission to the past. This model has spread more practices of the Qur'an among the commoners for it does not require direct contact with the *guru* (*talaqqī*).

The last model of *ijazah* is oral, as exemplified by the second case in the childbirth passage. The speaker claims to have his formula orally from his grandparent. This model is more open. There is no stated detailed chain of transmission. Forms of the practice transmitted can only be reckoned from the statement of the last person who performs it.<sup>83</sup> However, this openness has also made possible another mode of claiming the past, namely, tradition or ritual, which composes a substantive relation to the Prophet.

In varying mode of practices, almost all exemplified practices of reception of the Qur'an in the life of Banjars in Chapter 3 have this mode: ritual and tradition as ways to

<sup>82</sup> Haji Husin Qadri, *Senjata Mukmin*, 4th ed. (Martapura: n.p., 1962), 151-52.

<sup>83</sup> Similar verses recited, with slightly different practices, can be found in *Mujarrabat*, a book of traditional and spiritual medicine among the Malays translated from the Arabic; see *Kitab Mujarrabat Malayu yang dinamakan akan dia Fawa'id al-Bahiyyah diterjemahkan dengan Bahasa Malayu oleh Setengah daripada al-Ulama al-Salihin daripada Ahli Negeri Kalantan* (Jakarta: al-Maktabah al-Murniyah, n.d.), 41.

claim their relation to the past. Among the relative typical of an edge is that they make the acquaintance of Islam not necessarily from direct knowledge of the Prophet as the ultimate human source of Islam but from their contact with Muslims who reached their lands.<sup>84</sup> The contact mostly occurred during regular rituals or traditions.

For example, in the practice of Yasin and *tahlīl*, they recite QS (36) in congregation followed by chanting several formulas of praising and glorifying Allah and finishing by making prayers. The ritual is held after the burial procession. All the recitation until the prayers is in Arabic. All the participants with their unequal knowledge of Arabic can follow the recitation and every single part of the rituals. None of them, including the leader or *guru*, can give a reference for the set of the practices, but they point to the lasting tradition in their community.

Furthermore, this set of practices is not unprecedented in any way for them. They can refer generally to the tradition of the Prophet for segments of the practice, such as the excellences of the QS Yasin to be recited next to a dying or deceased person.<sup>85</sup> It is also in the prophetic tradition to say *khayran* (Good) in one who passed away.<sup>86</sup> The most general argument for them is that there is nothing wrong for Muslims to recite the Qur'an for it always has blessing and rewards in its recitation.<sup>87</sup> They receive the practice from ritual and tradition whose origin they cannot trace except to their forebears, but they could substantiate the Prophet tradition into their practice.

<sup>84</sup> See Bulliet, *Islam: the View from the Edge* and the similar explanation in Chapter 2, Islam in Banjar.

<sup>85</sup> See Chapter 3 on the Death and Dying Ritual: the Qur'an as a true company.

<sup>86</sup> See a hadith cited on Tafa'ul, "*Idhā haḍartum al-marīḍ aw al-mawt faqūlu khayran, fa inna al-malā'ikah yu'amminūna 'alā mā taqūlūn*" Al-Nawawi, 183; this hadith initially in Muhammad ibn 'Isa ibn Surah al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 307.

<sup>87</sup> See Chapter 3 on the Qur'an as a religio-socio-cultural text.

So people are mirroring what they believe as the practice of the Prophet in their limited contexts. By mirroring the practice they may experience or symbolize the presence of the Prophet.<sup>88</sup> So performing the ritual is to claim their relation to the prophet. and keep their memory of the prophet.<sup>89</sup> Some rituals are even held to invite the presence of the Prophet: “the Prophet was transported from historical location and brought directly into the ritual practices of Muslims.”<sup>90</sup> In other words, by keeping this tradition, they Banjars do not comprehend the Qur’an, but they experience it and substantiate their experience to their unspoken memory of the Prophet.

This last model of claiming the past through tradition leads me to the second mode in dual appropriation, the reception of the Qur’an into the Banjars’ locally limited context.

## 2. Reception of the Qur’an as an act of Creative Reading

The reception of the Qur’an that pays attention to the people who perceive it discloses the active role of the readers of the Qur’an. I use the notion reader for a general act of reading and perceiving the text, which can be a concrete reading by following the scripts or an abstract one by entertaining the mind during reading acts. Readers in general are persons limited by their realms, either physical in time and place or psychical in their pre-knowledge and understanding. In other words, the reader is in his/her horizons when

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<sup>88</sup> Marion Holmes Katz, “The Prophet Muhammad in Ritual,” in Jonathan E. Brockopp, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 139-57.

<sup>89</sup> Katz, 141-42.

<sup>90</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, “Epilogue: Muhammad in the Future,” in Brockopp, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Muhammad*, 300.



reading a text. This is the case for the reception of the Qur'an in general, including for Banjars.

With gaps in context and information of the past, reading the Qur'an as an act of reception may involve creative reading, taking past or previous information to be appropriated in a new context. The gaps may vary from one reader to another, but the act is relatively similar. Let's take an example from the Companions living in the same era with the Prophet in the case of QS al-Fatihah (1) 1-7. In several places, the Prophet utters the excellences of the Chapter as the opening of the Qur'an, the Mother of the Qur'an, the chapter that has no precedent in its quality compared to the previous scriptures sent to previous Prophets, the chapter covering contents of all the previous scriptures and the entire Qur'an in only seven verses, etc.<sup>91</sup> With such excellent qualities, a Companion facing a challenge to help someone bitten by a scorpion recited the chapter with no precedent for such practice, even from the Prophet himself. His recitation was efficacious and then confirmed by the Prophet.<sup>92</sup> This Companion substantiated the excellences of al-Fatihah to be read creatively in unprecedented contexts. In the same manner, Al-Nawawi refers to the hadith of the efficacy of al-Fatihah for physical illness: "It is recommended to recite al-Fatihah in your presence to someone ill as the Prophet said: what made you realize that this chapter is protective words" (narrated by al-Bukhari).<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> See Abu 'Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1991), 116-19; Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb Ibn al-Ḍurays, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa mā unzila min al-Qur'ān bi Makkah wa mā unzila bi al-Madīnah* (Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr, 1987), 79-80.

<sup>92</sup> See Chapter 1, fn. 12, a hadith cited from Muhammad bin Isma'il Al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (n.p.: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Islami, n.d.), juz 6, 231.

<sup>93</sup> al-Nawawi, *Etiquette with the Qur'an-Al-Tibyan fi Adab Hamalat al-Qur'an*, tr. Musa Furhber (Chicago: Starlatch Press, 2003), 173.

The example above shows a line of transformation of recitation of QS al-Fatihah based on the creative reading of figures in the transformation. Initially, at the hand of the Prophet, QS al-Fatihah was treated substantially referring to the contents of the chapter. In the same era, a Companion used it practically in an unprecedented context confirmed later by the Prophet. In the seventh century AH, al-Nawawi substantiated the particular case of the Companion and the confirmation of the Prophet to practically use QS al-Fatihah for a sick person regardless of the illnesses.

The Banjars in their context developed the concept of *bahalarat*, for example, in the same manner of substantiating the excellences of QS al-Fatihah. As I talked in Chapter 3, *bahalarat* is part of almost all rituals during Banjar passages of life. It can be performed to get a blessing and reward of its recitation to be present to their forefathers in filial piety. It can also be performed to accompany a supplication for protection in their lives. In both, the Banjars have creatively read the chapter to be appropriated with their strong filial bond and with their current challenges. The practice might be hybrid<sup>94</sup> in form, but it shares the substantial excellence of the chapter.

Another exemplifying case is the tradition of *batamat*, or completing the recitation of the entire Qur'an (*khatm al-Qur'an*). The Prophet praised those who finish reciting the Qur'an and return to start it again from the beginning. He named it *al-ḥāll al-murtaḥil* (sojourning traveler).<sup>95</sup> The Prophet of course did not have much experience reciting the entire Qur'an, for its revelation was during his lifetime. So, the last verses were revealed nearly at his last day. With such praise from the Prophet, companions such

<sup>94</sup> I deliberately use the notion hybrid not innovation to avoid a theological discussion of the practices, which is not the topic of this dissertation.

<sup>95</sup> Al-Darimi, *Musnad al-Dārimī*, part 4, 2179-86; Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*, 1:14.

as Anas ibn Malik and Abdullah Ibn Abbas loved to gather their family at the moment they finishing the Qur'an. They substantiate the praise of the Prophet as an excellent time to pray to Allah for their good during *khatm al-Qur'an*.<sup>96</sup> In the next generation, the generation of the Followers (*al-tābi'īn*), not only the family, but also their surrounding neighbors were invited to perform it in congregation.<sup>97</sup> Based on these modes of reception, al-Nawawi in the seventh century CE suggested having khatm al-Qur'an in congregation, as well as praying for "the best for all Muslims, for the Sultans, and for all Muslim leaders."<sup>98</sup> Al-Nawawi covered his own context of having Sultans to be included in this excellent moment.

The Banjars then substantiate such an excellent moment in their microhistory and local context. Excellent moments must be held in an excellent way. They include locally significant symbols, such as a flowered umbrella, particular clothes, sticky rice, and various dishes to catch such excellent moments for their benefits. They also prefers a supplication that touch much the blessing of the moment although it is not transmitted directly from the Prophet, but from later Muslim scholars, *ulama*.<sup>99</sup> As for *bahalarat*, the Banjars creatively read the information in the context of celebrating a significant phase in their life.

In both cases, we can see two significant points in dual appropriation in the reception of the Qur'an. One is the significance of oral and written corroboration in the reception; the other is the role of the religious leader as a cultural broker. In the former,

<sup>96</sup> Al-Darimi.

<sup>97</sup> See al-Nawawi, *Al-Tibyān fī Ādāb ḥamalāh al-Qur'ān*, taḥqīq: Sayid Zakaria (Makkah and Riyad: Nazar Mustafā al-Baz, 1999), 150-51.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Nawawi, 152-153; see also al-Nawawi, *al-Azkar*, 137-38.

<sup>99</sup> See Chapter 3 on *batamat*.

the existing written text to some extent has shaped the way the Banjars perceive the Qur'an. The information on the practices of the Qur'an in the written texts developed in a pyramid shape until it comes into actual current practices i. Let's return to the case of al-Fatihah, which starts with the substantial excellences of the chapter, transformed to practical reception in a limited sense in a general collection of hadith, such as the book al-Bukhari and Muslim. The hadith also are cited and accentuated exclusively in the books of the excellences of the Qur'an (*Faḍa'il al-Qur'an*), such as books by al-Qasim bin Salam, Ibnu al-Durais, and later Ibnu Kathir. In the next generation, the hadith is accentuated more in new topics, not on the excellences of al-Fatihah, but directly on its particular excellence, namely, curative value. So, for example, al-Nawawi cited the hadith with a new explanation under the subtopic "what should recite in visiting a sick person."<sup>100</sup> In some other books such as *Mujarrabat al-Dairabi al-Kabir*,<sup>101</sup> the hadith is even cited to base various formulas for protection and healing illnesses using the chapter. Eventually, simply speaking, without citing directly the hadith, but stating the excellences of the chapter, some handbooks, such as *Sanjata Mukmin* and *Risalah Amalaiyah*,<sup>102</sup> provide the information for practicing reciting the chapter in certain moments for particular ends. This last kind of is used directly by Banjars for and during their rituals. So, the reception of the Qur'an in a non-Arabic speaking community such as the Banjars reveals a dynamic between the written and oral tradition as well as layers of information on the practice of the Qur'an from the early generation of Islam up to the current practices of Muslims.

<sup>100</sup> See al-Nawawi, *Etiquette of Bearing the Qur'an*, 173.

<sup>101</sup> al-Dairabi, *Al-Mujarrabat al-Dairabi al-Kabir*, 10-12.

<sup>102</sup> See for example, Qadri, *Sanjata Mu'min*, 5-10; Hamzah, *Rislah 'Amaliyah*, 38-41.

Those layers of information represent the role of the local religious leader as a cultural broker. We saw, for example, in the third case of helping childbirth through the formula of reciting the Qur'an from a book of *fiqh*, which is also the explanation of another book.<sup>103</sup> The *guru* in that case cites the formula and shares it with people, although the formula is totally in Arabic. Here, the *guru* bridges the tradition described in the book to the practice of people based on the people's trust on him, not on their comprehension of the textual meaning of the formula. Clifford Geertz attributes such religious leader as a "cultural broker."<sup>104</sup>

#### D. Chapter Conclusion

The reception of the Qur'an is the act receiving the Qur'an. Developed from literary theory, reception of the Qur'an assigns an implied reader who receives perspectives from the structure of the text and at the same time also entertains his/her own perspectives responding the text, a structured act. The meeting points of the two perspectives bring about the act of reception. The Qur'an as an object of reception invites not only a response towards its structure of text, but also the act of believing it as Word of God. Furthermore, the Qur'an as a scripture is not only a written text, but also a recited text that may compose "structure" other than the written one. So, the response to the Qur'an as a written as well as a recited text may range from exegetical reception to grasp its applicable textual meaning, to aesthetic reception to experience the Qur'an

<sup>103</sup> See Chapter 3, the third case of childbirth on the formula cited from *Kitāb I'ānah al-Ṭālibīn* which is a commentary (*sharḥ*) of *Fath al-Mu'īn*.

<sup>104</sup> Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, 2 (January 1960): 230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/177816>.

aesthetically, to functional reception to perform it and practically use the Qur'an meeting human varying particular needs. The forms have been there throughout Muslim history.

The Banjars as a non-Arabic speaking community elaborate the Qur'an in their local context. With varying comprehension of the Qur'an, which is in Arabic, the Banjars mostly use it to "guide" them living as Muslims. The functional guide is in the form of *tafa'ul*, taking a good omen and encouragement, which can be with the sound of selected chapters and verses of the Qur'an, with the recitation of the entire Qur'an, and the material culture of the Qur'an, its script and tablet (*muṣḥaf*).

The basic assumption of the *tafa'ul* and most practices of the reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars is the excellence qualities of the Qur'an as Word of God that has divine power and blessing. This basic assumption provides a model and ideal for the reception of the Qur'an from the early generation of Islam, the basis for the legitimation for current material or substantial processes. This ideal and model is then appropriated into current local context to answer the Banjars' limited needs and particular ends through creative reading of the past presented in several layers of extra-Qur'anic texts. This dual appropriation is needed in the place of the Qur'an as the axis of Muslim life.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The reception of the Qur'an is an act of receiving the Qur'an. As the scripture and the primary source of Islam, it urges Muslims not only to respond to its textual structure but also to believe in it. So, there is an act of reading of the Qur'an as well as an act of believing in it. For Muslims as a community of faith the two acts of reception of the Qur'an are inseparable. The Qur'an as an object of reception is written as well as recited, so that each form of it has different but related structures to be received. As the implied readers of the Qur'an, Muslims receive perspectives from those structures and at the same time entertain their own perspectives responding the text in "structured act". How they receive the perspectives from the structures and how their own perspectives are shaped by contextual-historical horizons that make the act of reception in various communities may be unique.

Since the conversion to Islam in the beginning of sixteenth century, the Banjars have been associated positively with Islam and becoming Muslims. The association results in an ongoing transformation of Banjars' identity as an ethnic, spatial, a social and religious identity in accordance with the changes of the sociocultural and historical contexts. With distance in time, place, and culture from the heartlands of Islam, this transformation has also shaped a continuing dynamic between new values of becoming Muslims and the ever existing values of traditions and lives since pre-Islamic Banjars. The dynamic can be seen from the issues of Islam in Banjars which in some cases has

based foundations of Islam, while responding to or confirming the values in the community.

Although the Banjars have no exclusive interest of the Qur'an as a separate work, the Qur'an has been in the lives of Banjars extensively. It is referred to primarily in all works of Banjars under the topics of theology, jurisprudence, or mysticism. The Qur'an also fills in most critical situations of Banjar lives, exemplified by its presence in various life passages rites from cradle to grave. Because of the general language limitation in Arabic, the former is more in the hands of learned and religious figures, while the latter is in the hands of most commoners.

Dealing with language barriers, the main mode of reception of the Qur'an among the Banjars is through recitation either by heart or through following the script of the Qur'an on the tablet (*Mushaf*). It emphasizes the oral tradition of the Qur'an, which is corroborated by the written one. The recitation is performed primarily in responding or meeting certain needs of the Banjars, from pregnancy to burial, for instance. In the use of the Qur'an at such various times, recitation is perceived as a way to invite the blessing, rewards, and devotional values of the Qur'an, rather than its guidance value. Therefore, any parts of the Qur'an recited regardless of readers' meaning comprehension would be valuable and efficacious to meet their material and spiritual needs. The material achievement is sensible and traceable, while the spiritual one is more about the affect of devotion. In most—if not all—rites, the recitation is followed by supplication. Supplications and prayers are not only about asking something, but also about leaving the



case to God's final destiny to be followed wholeheartedly. It is among the reasons for the tradition to be preserved while the material varies from one case to another.

By this mode of reception, the Banjars in the case of this study, in general preferred functional reception with performative functions of the Qur'an rather than exegetical reception with informative functions. However, it is not necessarily that the Banjar functional reception is totally free from the exegetical tradition. The exegetical tradition is not always in the form of direct meaningful translation of the Qur'an recited during the act of reception. It is of course almost totally absent in the practices of reception in question. It comes through the layers of works, or extra-Qur'anic texts, inciting the practices and the role of local religious leaders as cultural brokers. Such works range from a thorough explanation of the meaning, excellences, and practices of the Qur'an to simple handbooks stating how to use the Qur'an in various particular situations. The local leader, who might have better comprehension of exegetical issues of the Qur'an as well as the works inciting its practices, would connect the provided information to popular practices. However, the exegetical issue does not always lead to exegetical reception. For Banjars, it is also directed to legitimate, found, or transform the performative functions of the Qur'an.

This last point bring us to the second problem of this research, on the way the Banjars claim their relation to the ideal and model of becoming Muslim as in the early Muslim community while putting the ideal in their local context. They use a dual appropriation: they appropriate themselves to the model and also the current local context. By disregarding comprehension, they can relate themselves to the model and

idealized past through tradition, which keeps their memory as well as structures of the model. Materially, they have kept a long-lasting tradition of knowledge preservation and transmission in Islam through *ijazah* (sacred pedigree), which is commonly personal. A religious leader who has personal *ijazah* plays a role as a cultural broker to infuse the communal tradition and practices of the Qur'an. The tradition can also be communal from the very beginning through the spread of consulted works on the practices. It can be merely substantial by considering the general value of practices in the past to be appropriated in a totally new situation. The most common practices of relating to the ideal is by keeping the structure of the Qur'an, both written and in recitation, with the devotional value to be used in any situation, whether it has a precedent in the past or not. This is the form of reception in which the practice of *tafa'ul* among the Banjars is very typical as a non-Arabic speaking community. The Qur'an is then appropriated into their local context to answer their specific needs and ends through creative reading of the past presented in several layers of extra-Qur'anic texts.

All in all, the Qur'an in its only language, Arabic, belongs to any Muslims in many ways, regardless of their Arabic comprehension. For the Banjars, the Qur'an is not only a way of life but life itself. Eventually, as William Graham formulates, "scripture is relational, not an absolute term. It refers always to a text that is precisely *more* than meets the eye, to one that *lives* in the faith and piety of particular persons. A text is only scripture insofar as it exists in relation to a community of faith—persons who hear it in

the fullest sense of the word, who listen to its words, love, and cherish them, and live by, with, and for them.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Graham, “Scripture as a Spoken Word,” in Miriam Levering, ed. *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 152.

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