

Cultural Education and Value Formation in Banjarese Women

(A Study on Women's Al-Qur'an Recitation Community in Martapura, Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan, Indonesia)

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Abstract— This article aims to investigate the contribution of *Pengajian* or Al-Qur'an recitation community as an institution on the transformation process for Banjarese in South Kalimantan. It is not only playing a role as the transformation of the Islamic knowledge but also social and cultural values especially Banjarese values. Through applying various activities and rites, the Al-Qur'an recitation community produces social and cultural values. Although there is not any significant contribution by the government, historically, the Al-Qur'an recitation community proves that it functions as a medium of transformation for Banjarese women. This community is not only able to cover the need of society for Islamic knowledge but also able to produce Banjarese values. This community appears to play multiple roles for Banjarese women. It can be a place for Banjarese women to contribute in public areas.

Keywords: *Al-Qur'an recitation community; social cultural; Banjarese women*

I. INTRODUCTION

As a religious educational community, *pengajian* or Al-Qur'an recitation community has been developed in *Banjarese* society, especially in South Kalimantan since the 18th centuries (Anshari, 2002:19). The Al-Qur'an recitation community appears as a community which has a role to identify the existence of the individual in this area. The Al-Qur'an recitation community is an early form of the upcoming model named by *Pondok Pesantren* or Islamic boarding school. The system that was previously introduced by Khatib Dayyan from Demak, East Java was continued by Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjary who modified to be a closely related to Islamic boarding school. He, then, developed a newly learning and teaching model. Previously, the Al-Qur'an recitation community took place in a house, small mosque or *Mushalla*, or royal palace. Then, it was changed to class forms such as *mushalla* and boarding house for *santri* or students (Daud, 1997:54).

The Al-Qur'an recitation community is an educational community that leads by *Guru* or teachers who have several criteria such as scholars and alumni from Islamic boarding

school who have to broaden their knowledge about Islam. They teach various Islamic knowledge such as *tauhid*, *fiqh*, or even *tasawwuf*. Commonly, they have a well-known and reputable book (*mu'tabaroh* or *Kitab*) as a teaching material for *Santri*.

The Al-Qur'an recitation community usually is held frequently in several places such as; Mosque, small mosque (*langgar*) or even in the house of the *Guru* itself. Everybody is allowed to attend it without considering the age, educational background, or individual status. The *santri* or students bring the *Kitab* and listen to the lecture by *guru*. For those who are able to understand and Arabic written *Kitab*, they listen and making a note from the lessons. The Al-Qur'an recitation community usually appears in monolog forms without dialogue between the *Guru* and *Santri* or students.

This article aims to investigate the role of the Al-Qur'an recitation community in the effort to transform the social and cultural values for Banjarese women especially in the Al-Qur'an recitation community that takes place in Sekumpul, Martapura under the supervisor of Mrs. Hajjah Naffsiah. This the Al-Qur'an recitation community is chosen by several considering points. First, this Al-Qur'an recitation community is supervised by Women. Second, it has around 500 participants (*Jamaah*) from various backgrounds.

II. PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF THE AL-QUR'AN RECITATION COMMUNITY'S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

In order to be able to understand the contribution of the Al-Qur'an recitation community in the process of cultural transformation in Banjarese women, this section specifically explains the target group, material, and method that are usually operated by the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiyah. The basis assumption was from the indication that the Al-Qur'an recitation community appears as an agent of transformation for Banjarese women. This section will deeply explore who the targets of the transformation are, what the values to be transformed are, and how to transform the values.

The majority of participants in the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiah are around the age of 30 with various educational and occupational backgrounds such as housewife, teacher, trader, civil servant, farmer, even government officer. They come from several places which are far enough from Martapura such as Banjarbaru, Binuang, even Rantau. This Al-Qur'an recitation community is held weekly.

The Al-Qur'an recitation community has similarity with the other the Al-Qur'an recitation communities that they teach basic Islamic knowledge (*tafaqquh fi al-din*). This similarity can be seen from the given contents. Almost all the Al-Qur'an recitation communities in South Kalimantan teach basic Islamic subject which are Al Quran (*tajwid, tafsir, and tafsir method*), *hadist, aqidah or tauhid, akhlak or tasawuf, fiqh, and ushul fiqh, Arabic language (nahwu, sharaf, mantiq, and balaghah), also tarikh (History of Moslem)*. Although it has similarity, some the Al-Qur'an recitation communities specify several contents depending on teachers' specialization. For example, there is an Al-Qur'an recitation community which specializes to study *hadist* or *tafsir* only.

The books as the teaching materials (*Kitab*) are written both in Arabic and Indonesia language. Usually, the Arabic *Kitab* in pesantren is called *Kitab Kuning* which is associated by the color of the book which is yellow. This book is also called "*Kitab Arab Gundul*" or the script that is written without *harokat* (the mark of short and long vowels in Arabic script). In Banjarese idiom, this *Kitab* is usually called by "*kada babaris*". In other occasion, the Al-Qur'an recitation community takes *Kitab* in which the script is not written in Arabic but in the Malay language.

The purpose of teaching through the Al-Qur'an recitation community depends on the content of the *Fiqh Kitab* contained the Islamic law (*Religious* and *Syariat*). *Fiqh* discusses practical issues upon the relation between Allah and human (*Ibadah*) as well as the relation between human (*Muammalah*) and the other creatures.

Aqidah or *Tauhid* is the most important and principle in the Al-Qur'an recitation community teaching. The ultimate goal of teaching the *tauhid* is to establish Muslim's personality who believe in the existence of Allah and adhere to the basic principle of Islam. Teaching *tasawuf* or *akhlak* plays a role to develop a religious personality through vertically relation to Allah (*hablum minallah*) and horizontally relation with human and other creatures.

The content in the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiyah is *fiqh, tauhid, and tasawuf*. This Al-Qur'an recitation community uses "*Hidayah Al-Salikin*" *Kitab*. The script contains Malay language written in Arabic by Abd Al-Samad Al-Falimbani, an expert of *tasawuf* who deploying the *tarikah Samaniyah* throughout Indonesian archipelago (Bruinessen, 2012:369).

This script was adapted from the idea of Al-Ghazali who explained the basic principle of faith in Islam and the commitment for those who followed the way of sufism (Azra, 2002:130). This script discusses *tauhid, fiqh, and tasawuf*. In the beginning, this script discusses *tauhid* and *aqidah*, the character of Allah, the character of the prophet, and guidance

to have Islamic religious worship such as how to do *wudhu, sholat*, purifying from *najiz*, and other form of worships. The other section discusses on *fiqh* is the procedure of worships and etiquette in learning religious knowledge such as how to behave with the *Guru, kyai*, and elderly.

One of the contents of this script is about *Zuhud*. Different from the popular notion of *zuhud* which avoids profanity as an ultimate ethic of *tarekat* (Kuntowijoyo, 1999: 47), this the Al-Qur'an recitation community pursues the concept developed by *Guru Sekumpul* who keeps *Zuhud Neo Sufism* with more oriented into maximizing profanity. This action aims to accumulate the prosperity as an establishment to the heaven way (Alfisyah, 2005:80-81).

In fact, there is a difference between the learning system in the Islamic boarding school and in the Al-Qur'an recitation community. Teaching *Kitab* in the Islamic boarding school is divided into several stages, the beginner, intermediate, and advance. Meanwhile, teaching in the Al-Qur'an recitation community is not divided into various stages. *Jamaah* or participants have similar treatment both from the old and new *jamaah*. It happens because there is different treatment between Islamic boarding school and Al-Qur'an recitation community. *Pesantren* has the vision to establish their students to be teachers and leaders in Islamic matters while the Al-Qur'an recitation community functions to strengthen the Islamic knowledge for their everyday life.

Teachers in the Al-Qur'an recitation community usually have various Islamic educational backgrounds either formal or informal. In addition, they also usually have learned from many Islamic teachers namely *Ulama, Kyai* or elderly with their specific knowledge. To be more precise, sometimes, the teachers learn in Middle East especially Haramain. According to Horikoshi (1987:211), this factor leads to the development of charismatic *ulama*.

Based on the explaining above, it can clearly be seen that the Al-Qur'an recitation community in South Kalimantan and Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiyah's Al-Qur'an recitation community particularly are categorized into *Salaf* or *Salafiyah* perspective rather than *Khalaf*, a modern form of the Al-Qur'an recitation community which is very popular in Indonesian television recently.

Salaf and *Khalaf* (Modern) have their own characteristic both in method and material. The Al-Qur'an recitation community with *Salaf* method is operated by utilizing classical *Kitab* as an important reading material. They operate *halaqah* as the teaching method, where teachers give the lecture by reading the *Kitab* and students listen to and take note of the lesson. In *khalaf* method, the students usually listen to the teacher without making a note. In this model, there is no criteria for completing the overall lesson.

For Banjarese, the lesson where teachers are sitting closely to the student is named by *mangaji duduk*. This is associated with traditional style of Al-Qur'an recitation community where teachers read the *Kitab* and students listen to by giving *didhobit* to the *Kitab*. The lesson will finish as soon as the teacher finishes reading the *Kitab*. If the teachers feel that the lesson should be discussed again, they will discuss the *Kitab*

directly to the section where it should be discussed. Nowadays, there is a necessity that this model is implemented to students who are eager to master one particular *Kitab*.

There is a teaching method which utilizes Malay Arabic script with Banjarese language. This method is named by *balalajaran* system. This system has closely similar with *mangaji duduk* in terms of the condition that students do not necessarily give punctuation to the *Kitab*. They only make a note for important information of the *Kitab*.

Balalajaran's system has similar *bandongan* system in Moslem boarding school at Java Island, even though there are differences between those two systems. Dhofir (1994:28) noted that *Bandongan* system is a teaching method where a group of *santri* or students consists of approximately between 5 to 500 listen to the explanation by teachers, discuss, translate, and argue on one particular *Kitab* in Arabic script. In this occasion, students make a note to their *Kitab* and have translated from Arabic script. For *Balalajaran*, The *Kitab* is not all arabic written. So, there is no necessity to translate the script.

In Javanese Moslem boarding school tradition, *Bandongan* is a continuous step from *sorogan* where the students will be able to do *bandongan* if they complete the *sorogan* system. From this explanation, it can clearly be seen that *Bandongan* demands students to complete a particular competence. On the other hand, *balalajaran* does not require students to finish their lesson. Students differing both of being able to write Arabic or not literate to Arabic script are allowed to join the lecture.

Guru in the Al-Qur'an recitation community does not implement grammatical translation approach. It is because the purpose of *Guru* is giving an appropriate understanding in learning *Kitab*. He or she ensures that they have similar understanding with the *santri* in reading the *Kitab*. Sometimes, *Guru* adds their explanation by quoting from *Al Quran* and *Hadist*.

Based on the ability and learning method, *jamaah Pengajian* can be classified into two groups; first, *jamaah* who have ability in literate Arabic language. It is shown by their performance in reading, writing, and understanding the script in Arabic. The second is the passive *jamaah* who are not able in literating the Arabic script. They only listen to the lecture without actively taking a note.

There is an intense interaction between *Guru* and *Jamaah* in *Balalajaran* system. It is a dialogue between *Guru* and *Jamaah* if they find difficulty on the subject regarding to the *Kitab*. This fact is rather different with *Bandongan* system that was quoted by Muhtarom (2005:26). As an object of the research, the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Nafsiyah is identified as an active learning. It has a gender factor where the *Guru* has similar sex with the audience.

The Al-Qur'an recitation community has a unique sitting setting. Usually, students or *jamaah* sit on the floor with pad and surrounding the teacher or *Guru*. *Guru* is sitting above the thin mattress which also indicated that this mattress is a place for teacher. The mattress makes teachers more visually seen by the students. The mattress can be used by someone who

have socially equable with *Guru*'s social stratum. This action is associated with an effort to maintain the charisma from the teacher. This is due to charisma is important thing to ensure the transformation of values by the *Ulama* (Hirokoshi, 1987:211-236).

III. MANAKIB RECITATION AND SOCIAL CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Besides the weekly the Al-Qur'an recitation community schedule, there is a monthly occasion that some Banjarese people have *Manakib*. Differ from javanese Al-Qur'an recitation community, *Manakib* commemorates the founder of *Qadiriyyah Tarekat*, Syekh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani (Kuntowijoyo, 45). In the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiyah, the purpose of reciting *Manakib* is for commemorating Siti Khadijah, wife of the the Prophet of Muhammad SAW. This recitation is named *pambacaan manakib Siti Khadijah*. This *manakib* recitation usually uses a specific book that is illustrated the life of Siti Khadijah.

There are three versions of the *manakib Kitab* commonly used by the Al-Qur'an recitation community in Martapura. The first is the *manakib Kitab* of Sayyidah Khadijah by As-Sayyid Muhammad bin 'Alawi al-Maliki al-Hasani which is translated by al-Haj Muhammad Syukry bin Unus Ibn Ali bin Abdul Rashid al-Banjary. The second is *manakib* al-Sayyidah Khadijah al-Kubra compiled by Abu Fatimah al-Haj Munawwar bin Ahmad Gazali al-Banjary and the third is the *manakib* of Siti Khadijah composed by Guru Syairaji Kandangan. The first two books were written in Malay Arabic writing as most of the other books composed by Banjar scholars, while the third book was written in Indonesian. Besides telling about the spirituality of Siti Khadijah, it also illustrates her social and humanity values. It tells that Siti Khadijah is a rich, generous, smart, and wise in all aspects woman. She has good trading skills, knowledge, and a great spirit (Munawwar, 2004:12).

The recitation of *Manakib* Siti Khadijah itself began since the last 10 years, especially in the area of Martapura and Kandangan. In the Martapura area, the recitation of *Manakib* Siti Khadijah took place in the Al-Qur'an recitation community of *Guru* Munawwar, Kampong Melayu Martapura, the Al-Qur'an recitation community of *Guru* Syukri in Antasan Senor Martapura and in the Al-Qur'an recitation community of Mrs. Hajjah Nafsiyah at Gang Muhaimin Sekumpul Martapura. In Kandangan municipality, the recitation is undertaken by *Guru* Syairaji. Later on, this *manakib* recitation is increasingly wide spread for Banjarese, not only in women's Al-Qur'an recitation community but also in other religious rituals such as the departed of hajj, rituals of seven months of pregnancy, and other religious rituals involving women as participants. In this context, it seems that the changes of society and the campaign of purification are not able to halt the development of this tradition reading. The supernatural help, the magic, and the faidah (benefits) that can be obtained to those who read *manakib* seem to add to the appeal of this reading. Here quoted some parts of *Manakib* Siti

Khadijah taken from the book by Al-Haj Munawwar Al-Banjary (2004: 18):

For those who are regularly read *Manakib* Khadijah on the date of the eleventh of Ramadhan or on every date of eleven months of Hijriyah, Allah may give *halal* fortune, and will be giving an ease for their business. He/she will maintain her position both live and after death. If he/she is scholars, Allah may give an ultimate science to these people. For those who have abundant debt, he/she has to recite the *Manakib* and slaughtered the goat and be giving to people, ask that the reward should be giving to Sayyidina Khadijah. Allah may extend their fortune, able paid the debt, and all their intention will be granted by Allah.

Through this recitation, the *Banjarese* women were taught ascetic ways of life. They were taught about the attitudes of *zuhud*, intensification of religious devotion with the excitement of work instead of escaping from the profanity. In this recitation, it is said that as Moslem's "enrich themselves" is part of the efforts to prove that Islam is rich. Capital accumulation is not prohibited, but it should be used for the *syi'ar* of religion.

The reading of *manakib* Siti Khadijah shows a change of religious orientation towards the economic view. The hope of being given the abundance of sustenance and prosperity as depicted in the *manakib* of Siti Khadijah became part of the ideals within the *jamaah*. *Manakib* recitation reflects the ideals of life of *Banjarese* women, from the problem of ethics and theology to the problems of daily life

Through the reading of great people story, *Jamaah* or participants are expected to reap the wisdom of the story. These religious traditions continue by *Kyai* as their effort in institutionalizing religious understanding. The institutionalization of religious understanding conducted by these *kyai* according to Muhtarom (2005:270) is a unique way of traditionalist groups to maintain establishment in the belief system in society.

The author did not find a specific explanation about the beginning of *manakib* recitation in *Banjarese* society. Before the recitation of this *manakib* was popular, *Banjarese* people usually recite the *manakib* of Syekh Semman. The recitation of *Manakib* Siti Khadijah becomes intensified during the time of Guru Sekumpul. Syekh Arsyad was considered as the most responsible ulama that spreading of the Sammaniyah congregation in Kalimantan, and he received the Sammaniyah tarekat from Al-Sammani (Azra 1995:253). However, according to Bruinessen (2012:381) in Arsyad's published work, there is no hint of the congregation of Sammaniyah. Bruinessen is more convinced that the existence of the Sammaniyah tarekat in South Kalimantan was introduced by Sheikh Nafis. The *Ulama* who studied to Arsyad in Dalam Pagar Martapura also stated that they never heard of Arsyad teaching the practice of the Sammaniyah congregation but has popularized the qasidah of Sheikh Samman which is still implemented to present.

In spite of the *manakib* recitation, the Al-Qur'an recitation community also commemorates *haul*, *nisfu sya'ban*, and also

the other holy day such as *Isra Mi'raj* and *Maulid Nabi*. These activities are almost accompanied by recitation of *Zikir*, *Qasidah*, and praise to the Holy Prophets and certain religious figures such as Syekh Semman and *Guru Sekumpul*.

In all of these activities, *Guru* or *Tuan Guru* almost never withdraw payments from their students, but the awareness of the students is by giving *infaq* to the teachers in the form of money or goods. Almost all of the contribution and participation given by the students hope to get a blessing from such participation. The function of the Al-Qur'an recitation community as a transformative institution in the field of social culture and education cannot be separated from the role of *Tuan Guru* or teachers. They are not just mediators and communicator to the Islamic world based in Mecca with local people. Furthermore, *Tuan Guru* is an agent who is able to 'package' and utilize the Al-Quran to motivate, mobilize, accelerate, and even change the habit. The position and role of *Tuan Guru* as a cultural broker in the Banjar society is similar to the *kyai* in the Javanese society (Dirdjosanjoto, 1999:23).

The Al-Qur'an recitation community also takes an important part in the implementation of development programs in the economic field which often demands the deployment of capital and labor. This effort is done by the *Ulama* in building motivation to *jamaah* to help each other and cooperate through the idea of *Silaturahmi*. Annual rituals such as *haul* and commemorates of *Hijriah* calendars such as *nisfu sya'ban* emphasizes cooperation and capital accumulation which have given encouragement to the public to work maximally in order to continue to take part in the development. This idea has altered the individualist orientation that is often associated with the merchant community to the orientation of togetherness (Alfisyah, 2009:85). All rituals perform in the study of religious teachings, *zikir*, *manakib recitation*, *haul*, *nisfu sya'ban* have spawned a cultural encounter between *santri* and the *abangan* 'outsiders', or between the pious and the *jaba*.

IV. CONCLUSION

The role of the Al-Qur'an recitation community as a transformative institution can be seen through the process of production and reproduction of the value both from the teachings of Islam and local culture. The socio-cultural values established through the study not only bring about changes in Islamic understanding, but also in the wider social life through education and economy.

The study material that supports the formation of ethics and behavior that is indispensable in development has made the institution has an important role in the transformation process. The values associated with the welfare and the abundance of *rizki* and the supernatural help for the followermake of the Al-Qur'an recitation community attract many people, especially *Banjarese* women and managed to survive for centuries until now.

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