

Burdah Al-Bushiri Poetry Perception of Kapuas Muslim Scholars

Emawati

IAIN Palangkaraya, Indonesia
email: emawati@iain-palangkaraya.ac.id

Fimeir Liadi

IAIN Palangkaraya, Indonesia
email: fimeirliadi@gmail.com

Putri Rafi Salihah

Al-Azhar University, Egypt
email: putrirafikashalihah@gmail.com

Abstract

This article studies the perceptions of Muslim scholars on the tradition of reading Burdah poetry by al-Bushiri. This research was conducted with intensive field work in Kapuas, Central Kalimantan. A visit to the area opened an opportunity to make involved observations, which helped to understand the daily social life among Muslim scholars and Muslim community in Kapuas. Purposive sampling technique has been used in the selection of informants and interviewed eight key informants. The results revealed that reading Burdah poetry is one of the representations of socio-cultural and traditional phenomena in Kapuas Muslim community. Most of these scholars do not practice it regularly but at certain times such as during dry season, epidemic of disease, because it is considered as tawassul repellent. The perception of Kapuas Muslim scholars on Burdah Poetry can be classified into two. First, Muslim scholars who declared Burdah poetry as a high literary work having very beautiful arrangement and meaning and there was praise to the Prophet, therefore it was in line with blessings to the Prophet. The second



classification, some Muslim scholars did not align Burdah poetry with blessings to the Prophet.

[Artikel ini mengkaji tentang persepsi ulama dan tradisi pembacaan Syair Burdah karya al-Bushiri. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan kerja lapangan intensif di Kapuas, Kalimantan Tengah. Kunjungan ke daerah tersebut membukakan kesempatan untuk melakukan pengamatan terlibat, yang membantu pemahaman terhadap kehidupan sosial sehari-hari kalangan ulama dan masyarakat Muslim Kapuas. Teknik *purposive sampling* telah digunakan dalam pemilihan informan dan mewawancarai delapan informan kunci. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembacaan syair Burdah merupakan salah satu representasi dari fenomena sosial budaya dan tradisi di masyarakat Muslim Kapuas. Tradisi pelaksanaannya memiliki dua kategori, yaitu ulama yang melaksanakan pembacaan syair burdah secara rutin, namun sebagian besar ulama tersebut tidak mengamalkannya secara rutin hanya pada saat-saat tertentu misalnya pada musim kemarau dan musim wabah penyakit, karena dianggap sebagai tawassul penolak bala. Persepsi ulama Kapuas pada Syair Burdah dapat diklasifikasikan menjadi dua, *pertama*, ulama yang menyatakan syair Burdah sebagai karya sastra tinggi yang sangat indah susunan maupun maknanya dan terdapat puji-pujian kepada Rasulullah maka sejajar dengan shalawat. Klasifikasi *kedua*, sebagian ulama tidak menyejajarkan syair Burdah dengan shalawat.]

Keywords: al-Bushiri; perception; Burdah poetry; Kapuas muslim scholars

Introduction

One of the traditions expressing Muslim religiosity in Indonesia is the recitation of blessings to the Prophet. It is a *tawassul* considered to be the most powerful. The blessings are sung and strung in a poem with the nuances of one's love expression for the Prophet Muhammad. Related to this theme, there is a lot of literary works known in Indonesia including *Qasidah al-Burdah* by Imam Muhammad al-Bushiri, *Qasidah Diba'iyah* by Sheikh 'Abdurrahman ibn ad-Diba'i as-Syaibani, *Qasidah Syaraf al-Anam* by Sheikh Ahmad ibn al-Qasim al-Hariri, *Qasidah al-Barzanji* by Sheikh Ja'far ibn Hasan al-Barzanji and Sya'ir



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Maulid by Muhammad al-‘Azab.¹ Among these poems, the burdah poem is one of the popular works and is widely read by people in various regions in Indonesia, such as Sumatera (Jambi),² Jawa,³ Sulawesi (Manado),⁴ Bali,⁵ Kalimantan Tengah (Kapuas).⁶

Burdah poem is a poem of praise to the Prophet Muhammad written by Imam Bushiri to express his longing and contains knowledge about the history of Islam. Burdah poetry was very well accepted by Muslim community, especially in Indonesia. Burdah poetry was later developed and adopted by Muslim-majority countries. In Indonesia, the reading of Burdah poetry is a popular tradition and is recited at least once a month. In some assemblies of mosques and suraus, there are those who recite burdah almost every Thursday night. Burdah is not only popular in *pesantren* environment but also in some communities.⁷

This phenomenal Burdah poem is of course widely accepted by scholars whether it is a practice or just a traditional cultural recommendation. This literary work is very well known and made the attention point of poets, researchers, literary observers, scholars and loved by the general public. Their attention is centered on the beauty of its language, its content, even its efficacy, because of their assumption that Burdah poetry contains sacred values.⁸ Burdah poetry as a text of

¹ Ulin Nihayah, “Qasidah Burdah Imam Al-Bushiri: Model Alternatif Dakwah Pesantren,” *ANNIDA: Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 7, no. 1 (2015): 33, doi: <https://doi.org/10.34001/an.v7i1.289>.

² Rosalinda, “Tradisi Baca Burdah dan Pengalaman Keagamaan Masyarakat Desa Setiris Muaro Jambi,” *Kontekstualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 28, no. 2 (2013): 171, <https://www.neliti.com/publications/145535/tradisi-baca-burdah-dan-pengalaman-keagamaan-masyarakat-desa-setiris-muaro-jambi>.

³ Nihayah, “Qasidah Burdah,” 33.

⁴ Gayda Bachmid, “Kitab ‘Burdah’ Karya Sastra Lisan Arab dalam Perspective Masyarakat Muslim di Manado, Sulawesi Utara,” *Kajian Linguistik* 7, no. 1 (2019): 66-84, doi: <https://doi.org/10.35796/kaling.7.1.2019.25018>.

⁵ Riesta Maulidya M. et al, “Pengaruh Akulturasi Budaya Masyarakat Loloan Terhadap Struktur Syair Burdah di Bali,” *Salingka: Majalah Ilmiah Bahasa dan Sastra* 15, no. 1 (Juni 2018):11-15, doi: <https://doi.org/10.26499/salingka.v15i01.256>.

⁶ Observation in Kapuas area, August 2017.

⁷ Muhammad Adib, *Burdah Antara Kasidah, Mistik dan Sejarah* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: LKiS, 2009), 27.

⁸ Bachmid, “Kitab Burdah,” 66.



Arabic literary works can be said to be meaningful and useful when it has been read and enjoyed by its readers. These different perceptions are very natural and possible because the backgrounds and experiences of the Muslim scholars are indeed different. It is also inseparable from other aspects of the person, the way of looking at the problem critically, the ability to think and feel. For example, a Kapuas Muslim scholar stated: “The burdah poem is an antidote and repulsive force recited every Friday night or there is a catastrophe such as a long drought, seeing the appearance of fire ghosts, then Burdah poetry can cool and repel future plagues”.⁹ This is interesting to be examined. How is the position of Syair Burdah, which is actually become the practice of most Muslim communities. Related to the study of perception, the problems to be further identified are: (1) how is the burdah poem written by Sheikh Syarafuddin Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Said al-Bushiri in the practice of Muslims in Kapuas? and (2) how is Burdah Poetry in the perception of Kapuas Muslim scholars?

Methods

Research site was in Kapuas, Central Kalimantan. The interesting thing in this site is that most Muslims practice the tradition of reciting burdah poems. This is inseparable from the fact that Muslims are the majority and Islam is the largest religion in Kapuas; as typical of the territorial waters that the process of Islamization in the archipelago starts from the port cities then there will be a contact of Islam with local culture. As an area bordering the province of South Kalimantan, it is not surprising that there will be cultural contact between the two and their people is quite heterogeneous¹⁰ but the attitude of mutual appreciation is quite high. This study used descriptive methods to delve the problems in society, the customs in society, attitudes and views of certain phenomena, in this case, the perception of burdah poetry. Normative surveys were conducted to obtain factual evidence. Research data were in the form of primary data and secondary data. The primary data was

⁹ An interview with KH. MK, The principal Babussalam Islamic Boarding school of Kapuas Regency, September 2017.

¹⁰ Ethnic of Banjar, Dayak Ngaju, Dayak Bakumpai, Javanese ethnic, etc.



the perception of the Kapuas Muslim scholars on the burdah poem and its position in religious practices. Secondary data were the information on religious conditions in Kapuas. In general, the types of data extracted are in the form of language,¹¹ actions,¹² experiences¹³ and history.¹⁴ Data investigation was in accordance with the type of data collected. Language data were expressions, chats, statements, and burdah poems were collected through listening¹⁵ and in-depth interviews, by making a simple interview guide.

The interviewed informants were divided into two categories, namely key informants consisting of eight Muslim scholars in Kapuas and informants supporting the perpetrators involved in Syair Burdah's practice. Behavioral data were obtained through direct observation in burdah activities, so that cross-checking can be carried out to see the suitability between words and actions. Historical data were collected through documented literatures. The perception data of Muslim scholars were needed since in its development, Muslim scholars had become important institutions. If looking at their role, Clifford Geert stated that Ulama function as cultural intermediaries. The designation for ulama varies. The most common terms were *wali*, *murshid* and *sheikh*. In North Africa it is called a murabit, sometimes the word 'sidi' was used. In Indonesia, some Muslims in Kalimantan and Lombok use the term *tuan guru*. In West Sumatra, the term better known is *buya*¹⁶. *Ulama* in the view of Kapuas society in Kapuas is considered role models in speech and behavior. There were eight key informants, namely the selected ulamas consisting of the leaders of the Islamic boarding school and the

¹¹ The data were in the form of expression or informants' talk, what they talked was their reflection of Burdah practice.

¹² The behavior of the informants while doing the Burdah practice shows that every behavior has value.

¹³ The data are related to the experience of informants involved in practicing burdah.

¹⁴ In the form of documents and oral history inherited from generation to generation in the community. The data are important to look at the historical background about the Muslim scholars' perception of burdah poetry and the implementation of its practice.

¹⁵ Andri Rosadi, "Mencari Barokah dan Karomah: Analisis Makna Ziarah Makam di Situ Lengkong Panjalu, Ciamis", *Laporan Penelitian dalam Kegiatan SCME*, Kemenag RI, 2012.

¹⁶Rosadi, "Mencari"



leaders of religious organizations in Kapuas Regency. The selection of these eight informants since they were considered to have the potential contribution in extracting answers to research problems, deepen and experience firsthand the reading of burdah poetry and they were considered to have deep religious knowledge and know about the implementation of this tradition.

Results

Recognizing Burdah Poetry as a Literary Work

The poem Burdah¹⁷ was a collection of poems about the life history of the Prophet Muhammad. It was the composition of a 13th-century Egyptian poet, Muhammad ibn Sa'id al-Bushiri (d. 1295 AD). "The original name of the poem was *Al-Kawakib ad-Durriyyah fi Madh Khair al-Bariyyah* (Glittering Stars on Praise to the Best Man)"¹⁸. Muhammad ibn Sa'id al-Bushiri was born during the decline of Arabic literature under the rule of the Mamluk dynasty. Burdah poetry, as a work of ancient Arabic literature received great response from the literary community in the world from time to time. It was the result of a high civilization. The emergence of Burdah Poetry at the period of Mamlūk Dynasty was considered to have a unique history due to Arab culture at that time. After experiencing great progress in the past, then half the power of Mamlūk Dynasty, Arabic literary works experienced a qualitative decline. The emergence of Syair Burdah at the time of decline was seen as a ray of light illuminating human being living in the midst of darkness.¹⁹ The poem burdah was a pioneer reviving the compilation of poems of praise to the Prophet Muhammad. It was the earliest poem of *al-mada'ih an-Nabawiyyah* after a very long vacancy. Then other *al-mada'ih* poems appeared after it. Burdah was a *mada'ih* poem (praise) to the Prophet, written by Imam Bushiri. He expressed his

¹⁷ Burdah etymologically has many meanings, among others: cloth (jubbah) which is one of the attributes of the caliph, the name of the Qasidah presented to Rasulullah SAW composed by Ka'ab bin Zuhair bin Abi Salma.

¹⁸ Rosalinda, "Tradisi," 171.

¹⁹ Fadlil Munawwar Manshur, "Polemik Pemaknaan Kasidah Burdah Al-Busiry: Kajian Estetika Negatif," *Adabiyāt: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* 11, no. 2 (Desember 2012): 169, doi: <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajbs.2012.11201>.



feelings of love and longing for the Prophet, through his poems entitled *alkawakib al-durriyah fi madh khayr albariyyah* (star shining in praising the best creatures)²⁰ which later became famous as *qasidah al-burdah*. This poem included the wealth of Arabic literature that had a true and perfect pattern in praising the Prophet. It contained a complete lesson pearl about respect in the presence of God's chosen creatures and lovers of the whole universe. The beauty of its orderly language arrangement made poems using the suffix *mimiyat* easy to memorize. In addition, *burdah* can also be read with various songs, so that *burdah* became the only strongest surviving Arabic literary poem. Many writers were interested in the beauty of their language, especially in *mathla'* (the beginning of the poem *Syair Burdah*).²¹ The poem of *Burdah* consisted of 160 verses (poems) written in an interesting, soft and elegant style of language. It contained a brief guide on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, love, control of lust, prayer, praise for the Qur'an, Isra' Mi'raj, jihad and tawassul.

The basic obligation of man to love the Prophet is the word of Allah in the Qur'an Surah at-Taubah verse 24 (Q.S. 9: 24). The verse describes the human obligation to love the Prophet after loving Allah SWT. If a human being loves his father, children, relatives, wives, relatives, property, and houses where he lives more than he loves to Allah and the Prophet, then that person will be punished in this world and the hereafter. It is this verse that inspired al-Bushiri to compose the verses of his love for the Prophet in the *Burdah* Poems, among others in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th verses translated by Darman Fauzy Z (1975).²² The interesting thing is that the narration composed by *Syair Burdah*. When al-Bushiri suffered from paralysis, so that he could not get up from his bed, so he made poems that contain praise to the Prophet with the intention of asking for his intercession. In his sleep he dreamed of meeting the Prophet Muhammad, where the Prophet rubbed the face of al-Bushiri, then the Prophet took off his robe and put it on the body

²⁰ Eko Setiawan, "Nilai-nilai Religius dalam Shalawat *Burdah*," *LiNGUA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra* 10, no. 1 (June 2015): 1, doi: <https://doi.org/10.18860/ling.v10i1.3027>.

²¹ Setiawan, "Nilai-nilai Religius", 2.

²² Manshur, "Polemik Pemaknaan", 172.



of al-Bushiri, and when he woke up from his dream, immediately he recovered from his illness. Al-Bushiri's thoughts in Burdah's Poetry began with the expression of grief over experienced by the poet and people those close to him.²³ It became commonplace for classical Arabic poets to begin their work of poetry always referring to the place where he gained deep memories in his life. Then the idea of al-Bushiri continued with strands that illustrated the vision related to the teachings of lust control.²⁴ Next the most important is the praise to the Prophet Muhammad. It described how the Prophet Muhammad was sent to the world to be a light that illuminated the two worlds: humans and jinn, leaders of two races: Arabs and non-Arabs. He was like a priceless gem, with a high spiritual experience.²⁵ Al-Bushiri's praise for the Prophet Muhammad was not limited to personal traits and qualities, it also revealed his most important strengths, namely the greatest and most lasting miracle in the form of Qur'an. A book that does not contain doubts, is not weathered by the changing times and always has a broad context with historical events that are temporal in nature.

Thematic Contents of Syair Burdah

The Burdah book contained spiritual meaning, religious messages. Literary style like this was so popular with the user community so that this work was timeless and charming for anyone who loves it. The contents of Burdah Book were in the form of historical literature. This work was very monumental having intrinsic and extrinsic charm, expressed in the form of poetry or classical verse. The structure of the language was Arabic fusha. It is Arabic, which is good and correct and easily understood by various levels of society. The structure of Burdah is dominated by poetry or poetry with nuances of emotion, imagination and ideas. Poetry is the focus of research because poetry opens a transcendent dimension to the side of human life as well as having a moral obligation that serves to give a warning to things that tend to be dirty and deviant, learning about exemplary even as a moral force to

²³ At the early verse.

²⁴ Verse number 18.

²⁵ Verse numbers 34-59.



guide users to the right path.²⁶ In general, the themes discussed in Burdah poetry were ten, namely: The prologue was 12 verses, warning of the dangers of following lust 16 verses, praise 30 verses, the birth story 13 verses, Miracles 16 verses, the Qur'an as many as 17 verses, Isra Mi 'raj 13 verses, Jihad 20 verses, Regret and application of 12 verses, and closing 12 verses.

Prologue

The first part of the Burdah was the prologue to the poetry of *syakwa al gharam* (the poet's inner expression). In this prologue, a poet usually expressed his heart through hyperbolic narrative, full of figures of speech and symbols. The prologue was usually a measure of the poet's expertise in composing literary works. At the beginning of the verse, he showed his love for the Prophet, with a story that began with fate, which was an expression of grief over the grief experienced by the poet and people close to him, namely his neighbor in Dzu Salam. It was common for classical Arabic poets to begin their work of poetry which always referred to the place where he acquired deep memories in his life.²⁷ In the prologue of the poem Burdah, Al-Bushiri expressed his grievances. He made a kind of imaginative dialogue between Figure I as the one who was depressed with Figure II as the party who observed and reprimanded him. It was illustrated that Figure I was experiencing a deep longing, until tears flowed non-stop, even as if mixed with blood. Certainly the condition invited harsh reactions and condemnation from Figure II.

Warning of Lust

The second part of the Burdah poem contained a reminder of the language of lust (*tandzir hawa annafs*). The total number was 16 verses, which was an expression of heartfelt grievances and deep remorse to forget that age has crept up and will soon be called to God, while deeds in life were very few supplies of good deeds. In the teachings of lust control, al-Bushiri advocated that the will of lust be thrown away, not

²⁶ Bachmid, "Kitab Burdah", 73-74.

²⁷ Nihayah, "Qasidah Burdah", 34.



pampered and ruled, because lust was misguided and misleading. Hunger and satiety, both can be destructive, so it should be taken care of in a balanced way. The urge and persuasion of lust and the devil should be resisted with all force, not obeyed.²⁸

Praise (Al-Mada'ih)

It contained 30 stanzas expressing praise for the privilege of the Prophet Muhammad. By playing role himself as Figure I, al-Bushiri wanted to express his deep regret that he was experiencing a decline in his spiritual life.

Birth

The fourth part of Burdah contained a birth story of the Prophet Muhammad (*al-maulid an-nabawi*) as many as 13 verses. In this section, it was displayed the birth event of the Prophet Muhammad as well as various amazing events around it.

Miracles

This section consisted of 14 stanzas describing the various miracles of the Prophet Muhammad, both physical and invisible, and in this session al-Bushiri revealed many non-physical sides of miracles.

Al-Qur'an

This section had 17 verses, where al-Bushiri revealed the miracles of the Prophet as Al-Quran which was a miracle of intellectual spirit.

Isra Mi'raj

This section had 13 verses talking the story of holy journey of the Prophet Muhammad to Sidratul Muntaha and this journey was a special journey with a great mission from Allah.

²⁸ Ulin Nihayah, "Konsep Seni Qasidah Burdah Imam Al Bushiri Sebagai Alternatif Menumbuhkan Kesehatan Mental," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 34, no.1, (Juni 2014): 301, doi: <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v34.2.488>.



Jihad

The jihad expressed in this session was jihad against the enemies of Islam at that time and al-Bushiri described the courage, strength of the Prophet in facing the enemies of Islam and fighting on the battlefield.

Regret and application

The ninth part of Burdah was 12 verses expressing any remorse and any request made by al-Bushiri for his habit in the past composed poems of praise to officials and rulers in order to get material rewards, until he realized and asked for forgiveness for his mistake. He was very grateful because since he concentrated only composed poems of praise to the Prophet Muhammad, his heart became spacious, peaceful and his life became bright.

Closing and Prayer

In this section, al-Bushiri's skills in expressing matla ' were seen so that at the end of this chapter, al bushiri composed sentences as beautiful as possible. This section was also al bushiri's hope that his sins were forgiven. The editorial and word structure of the last part was made as beautiful as the closing part. Poems debated by scholars about the number of verses, some say only 12 verses and some others say 19 verses.

Discussion

Burdah Poetry Reading Tradition in Kapuas

Talking about tradition, it was inseparable from a culture practiced by the local community. Culture will be influenced by its geography, habitat and cultural background. Therefore, before commenting on the tradition of reading Burdah poetry in Kapuas, it was necessary to describe the condition of the region. Kapuas Regency with its capital city Kuala Kapuas is located on the border area between Central Kalimantan and South Kalimantan. Ngaju Dayak tribe claimed to be the indigenous people of Kapuas district. This tribe consisted of two sub-tribes: The tribe Oloh Kapuas-Kahayan and Oloh Otdanum. According to the heirloom narrative *Tetek Tatum*, The ancestors of Dayak Ngaju tribe initially settled around the Schwazener mountain in the center of



Kalimantan. Only later in the development of Dayak Ngaju people who settled along the banks of Kapuas river and Kahayan river. In the 16th century in the *Negarakertagama* manuscript written by poet Empu Prapanca from Majapahit in 1365 AD, it was mentioned the existence of settlements. Then in Banjar history text, Chinese news during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and the agreement charters between Sultan Banjarmasin and Dutch government in 19th century contained news on existence of settlements along the Kapuas River and Kahayan River, which were called Lewu Juking settlements.²⁹

As a result of the displacement of the population of Lewu Juking and its surroundings, along the direction of Kapuas river and Kapuas Murung river, new settlements emerged, such as the Palingkau settlement led by Dambung Tuan, the Handiwung river settlement led by Dambung Dayu, Apui river settlement (opposite the palingkau) led by Raden Labih who was later replaced by his son Tamanggung Ambu. While on the banks of the Kapuas River there are new settlements, such as the Basarang river led by Panglima Tengko, the Bapalas river by Panglima Uyek and the Kanamit river led by Sutil officials. The distribution of population along the riverbank cannot be estimated at the right time and space. This area downstream is still a tidal swamp that is unlikely to produce spices as a trading commodity.³⁰ Along with fort in the place, the name of “Kuala kapuas” was born which was taken from the pronunciation of the locals, who said in Dayak Gnaju language “Tumbang Kapuas”. Along with that, it was placed a Dutch official as

²⁹ Lewu Juking is a long-house settlement located at the mouth of Kapuas Murung River (western part of the island delta, which ends in Java Sea) about 10 kilometers from the coast of Java Sea led by a tribal chief named Raden Labih. The residents of Lewu Juking and the surrounding population are often attacked by pirates. Although several times the pirate party was pushed back by the residents of Lewu Juking and its surroundings, the residents felt less safe living in the area, so that in 1800 many residents moved to find a place that was much safer from pirate interference. Admin, “Sejarah Singkat Kapuas,” Dinas Komunikasi dan Informasi Kabupaten Kapuas, accessed August 8, 2020, <https://www.kapuaskab.go.id/index.php/profile/sejarah-kapuas>.

³⁰ Admin, “Sejarah Singkat Kapuas,” Dinas Komunikasi dan Informasi Kabupaten Kapuas, accessed August 8, 2020, <https://www.kapuaskab.go.id/index.php/profile/sejarah-kapuas>.



Gezaghebber (the rulers) who was accompanied by the commander of the fort, so that the area was no longer under the supervision in Marabahan. The completion of Kapuas Regency history book on 1-2 December 1981 in Kuala Kapuas determined the anniversary of Kuala Kapuas city on 21 March 1806 based on the establishment of Betang Sei Pasah in 1806. The formation of Kapuas district government, since the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945 when the arrival of Australian troops who were tasked to disarm Japanese troop under the leader of Colonel Robson who joined Dutch group from the armed organization NICA under the leader of Major Van Assendep. Before the Australian troops left Banjarmasin on October 24, 1945, the NICA compiled a government administration for southern Borneo region under the leader of Resident Ablay until early December 1945.³¹ Nowadays, Islam is the majority of religious people, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Muslims in Kapuas Regency in 2019³²

No.	Agama	Jumlah
1	Islam	342.217
2	Christian	46.606
3	Catholic	2.065
4	Hinduism	23.031
5	Buddhism	53
6	Konghuchu	5
7	Belief	790

³¹ Admin, "Sejarah Singkat Kapuas," Dinas Komunikasi dan Informasi Kabupaten Kapuas, accessed August 8, 2020, <https://www.kapuaskab.go.id/index.php/profile/sejarah-kapuas>.

³² Admin, "Data Keagamaan," Kantor Kementerian Agama Kabupaten Kapuas Kalimantan Tengah, accessed August 8, 2020, <https://kalteng.kemenag.go.id/kapuas/artikel/43066/Data-Umat-Beragama-Di-Kabupaten-Kapuas>.



With the majority of Muslims in Kapuas, the traditions practiced by Muslims are quite diverse. The tradition of reading Burdah in Kapuas is inseparable from the geographical context of the region. It will also affect the perception, understanding and belief of the people on the burdah poem. The process of understanding is the historical awareness caused by the dialogue among past, present, and future. Kapuas people practice reading Burdah poetry with assumption that Burdah has many functions. One of its functions as a repellent. This can be seen from the reading of burdah poetry during the dry season, trials, or when there is a disaster in the area. The people belief with reading Burdah poetry is interpreted as a multi-function card. It is inseparable from the traditional experience where they live. Their understanding and interpretation of the Burdah function has always been in harmony with its own existence or the space and rolling time. The meaning of this aspect really depends on the quality of education, social status, cultural and religious affiliation of the community. The results of interviews indicated that the majority of Burdah's poetry practitioners came from local residents who lived around the boarding school in Kapuas area. With regard to religious affiliation, the majorities of Burdah's poet practitioners are followers of religious organizations and are closed to Islamic boarding schools. Based on the observation, it appears that the practice of reading Burdah poetry by the community and religious leaders in Kapuas shows that they are closer to the Nahdhatul Ulama culture than Muhammadiyah.

Burdah poetry: Perception of Kapuas Muslim scholars

Perception studies emphasize on what a person wants to see is not necessarily the same as the actual facts. It is one's desire that causes two people who see or experience the same thing to give different interpretations of what they see or experience.³³ Judging from this context, perception gives birth to interpretations that everyone does not have the same judgment depending on their background knowledge, experience and even social and psychological conditions when they give an assessment. Maybe according to A, someone is good, but according

³³ Sondang Siagian, *Filsafat Administrasi* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1997), 98-99.



to B someone is not good. Person A judges it is good because there are other factors that underlie it, whether because of the knowledge or experience that is felt during the years associated with that person, or because of the prevailing social and psychological conditions. For example if he states that someone is not good then he will lose his position and so on. Unlike the B, perhaps he also has experience and knowledge about that person and he is not under pressure from social and psychological conditions, so that he speaks honestly according to the experience and knowledge he feels while associating with that person. The exploration of the Kapuas Muslim scholars' perceptions of Burdah's poetry can be seen in the classification of the ulama who were used as informants of this study, namely leaders of religious organizations and leaders of Islamic boarding schools in Kapuas.

Leaders of Religious Organizations

One of the leaders of the religious organization that was used as an informant was the chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council of Kapuas Regency. On the morning of September 28, 2010, researchers met KH. A.M at his residence to conduct an interview. The appointment was made long before. He is over half a century old. The head of the MUI has authority as a place to ask about the scholars' perception of burdah poetry and its relation to the amaliah performed by the community.

Burdah poetry according to KH.A.M: *“merupakan syair nang menyejukkan hati. Ulih sibab itu banyak para ulama nahdiyyin menganjurkan untuk membacakan syair burdah sebagai amalan punduk. Aku manyitir pendapat Ibrahim Al-Bajuri dalam Kitab Hasyiyah Al-Bajuri ala matn al Burdah, ujar beliau di dalam kitab itu, jika kitab burdah dibaca berulang-ulang mulai habis Isya hingga taguring insya Allah urang nang malakukannya akan bamimpi tatatmu lawan Nabi Muhammad SAW. Selanjutnya syair Burdah dinamai jua dengan Qashidah asy-Syada'id atau tembang pengusir bala. Kalo pina musim kemarau panjang atau banyak musibah nang terjadi maka selain bermunajat dan minta perlindungan kepada Allah SWT, sebaiknya kita juga membaca syair burdah, sabab syair Burdah menurut beberapa pendapat Guru adalah syair panyajuk dan bisa manulak bala, kaya ka*



mandahan, wabah penyakit dan lain-lain. Tapi hati-hati lawan tauhid, hati jangan sampai tabawa bahwa syair Burdah nangn bamujijat, kalo kaya itu tasalah am, nang bujur kita bermunajat kepada Allah lawan bahasa nang baik, salah satunya adalah bahasanya syair Burdah, jadi bukan karena syair Burdah manulak bala, nah itu tasalah banar bisa bakafiran kita, jadi perantaraan keindahan syair Burdah, mudah-mudahan kahandak kita, hajat kita dikabulkan” (Burdah poem is a poem that calms the heart. Therefore many Nahdhiyyin scholars recommend to recite the burdah poem as a practice of boarding school curriculum. I quote the opinion of Ibrahim Al-Bajuri in the Book of Hasyiyah Al-Bajuri ala matn al Burdah, that if the book of burdah is read repeatedly after Isya until he falls asleep, God willing, he will dream meeting the Prophet Muhammad. The poem Burdah is also called Qashidah asy-Syada'id or the song of the expulsion of the army. People read burdah poems, because Burdah poems according to some scholars are cooling and repellent poems, such as fire disasters, disease outbreaks etc. What needs to be noted is that we pray to God with good language, one of which is the language of Burdah poetry, so not because Burdah poetry rejects reinforcements, but the mediation of the beauties of Burdah poetry, hopefully our wishes are granted).

Researchers also conducted an interview with ³⁴ KH. Drs. R.I, leader of the Ta'lim Assembly and Bakumpai community figures. According to him, the poem Burdah is a beautiful poem, full of meaning and a lot of content and lesson materials. In one of the verses of poetry, for example, there is a complaint of the heart of a person who regrets his life that has already done serving lust. At the age of twilight, it begins to feel that he is already old, and will soon face God. He said, I do not practice this poem. I think it is better for me to recite the blessings to Rasulullah as the blessings that have been organized and recited by the companions, namely *Allahummasholli 'ala Muhammad*. The reading of Burdah and the like such as syair ad-Diba'i, Syarafal Anam and others need to be learned by Islamic intellectuals in order to provide good treasures and good examples in actualizing the teachings of Islam.

³⁴ 29 September, 2017.



Boarding School Leaders

It is interesting to reveal how the perception of the leaders of Islamic boarding school under Burdah poetry. There are six Islamic boarding school leaders who were used as informants in this study. KH M.K, leader of Babussalam boarding school reveals: “*urang-urang di pondok pesantren khususnya yang tradisional di tanah Jawa, membaca syair Burdah sudah jadi amalan setiap malam Jumat dan Senin. Syair Burdah adalah karya sastra yang sangat tinggi dan berkualitas, sebagaimana pendapat Ali Najib ‘Athawi dalam kitab Syair Al-Mada’ih an Nabawiyy wa Alahumaha. Beliau bercerita bahwa Ash-Shahib Baha ad-Din Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Salim Ibn Hana, seorang pejabat yang memiliki seorang sekretaris bernama Sa’ad ad Din Al Fariqi, mengidap penyakit mata yang sangat parah bahkan handak buta, kisahnya salinan syair Burdah itu diusapkannya ka mata Sa’ad dan beberapa hari kemudian mata yang hampir buta itu berangsur-angsur sembuh. Sejak peristiwa itu Ash Shahib sang pejabat bersumpah akan selalu memiliki wudhu, memakai jubah dan mengenakan tutup kepala saat membaca syair Burdah. Itulah salah satu mukjizat syair Burdah, menurut saya itu hanya kabatulan saja karena memang kehendak Allah sudah sampai, jadi jangan terlalu melabih-labihkan.* (People in boarding schools, especially the traditional ones in Java, read Burdah poetry and practice it every Friday and Monday night. Burdah poetry is a very high and quality literary work, as Ali Najib ‘Athawi in the book *Syair Al-Mada’ih an- Nabawiyy wa Alahumaha*, he narrated that Ash-Shahib Baha ad-Din Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Salim Ibn Hana, an official who had a secretary named Sa’d ad Din Al Fariqi, suffered from severe eye disease to nearly of blindness. Then, a copy of the Burdah poem was rubbed into Sa’ad’s eyes and a few days later the almost blind eyes gradually healed. Since then Ash Shahib the official vowed to always have ablution, wear a robe and wear a head covering while reciting Burdah poetry. That is one of the miracles of Burdah poetry, in my opinion it is just a coincidence because the will of God has arrived, so do not over do it).

About Burdah itself, I and the students only read at certain times, not routine. I read a lot of blessings as taught by the Prophet, and blessings that are always read by the companions, namely



Allahummasholli ala saidina Muhammad wa 'ala ali saidina Muhammad. The leader of Pondok pesantren Nahdlatussalam, KH. S³⁵ state that “*ujar Guru, tatuha disini, mambaca Burdah itu baik, gasan pandingin, baik lahir maupun bathin, ulih sibab itu kami di punduk ngini, mamalakan syair Burdah setiap malam Jumat, habis Isya. Kalau syair lain, malam-malam lain habis Isya jua kakanakan ba Habsyian. Malam Sanen kami mambaca Diba'i lawan Syarafal anam, dan itu sudah tradisi punduk kami. Kalau malihat maknanya banyak pujian-pujian kepada Rasulullah SAW, ulih sibab itu, para guru disini manyambat Syair Burdah itu sama dengan shalawat, karena memuji kebesaran Allah, Rasulullah dan Al-Qur'an.*” (according to muslim scholars here, reading Burdah is good, for cooling, both born and inward, so we are on the shoulder here, imitating Burdah poetry every Friday night, after Isya. If other poems, other nights after Isya are also children- children do Habsyi. On Monday night we read Diba'i and Syarafal anam, and that is our tradition. If seeing its meaning, there are many praises to the Prophet. That is why, the teachers here called Burdah poetry as blessings since it praises Allah, the Messenger of Allah and the Qur'an).

KH. AK, Leader of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Islam said “that the poem Burdah is the work of Al-Bushiri, according to some scholars, it is good to practice, but my boarding school has not practiced the poem, because our dormitory is not finished, second, our mosque is not finished, so there is no special place in carrying out special activities. However, our children have carried out Habsyian activities, namely reading Habsyi poetry accompanied by tambourines. So we have not had time to practice Burdah poetry”. KH. B, leader of Pondok Miftahussalam Tajepan, Kapuas Murung: “Our school has not yet practiced Burdah poetry, but at certain times such as the dry season, the sick season, we read Burdah gasan manulak bala (we read burdah to repel).” I.G, leader of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Hidayah, Anjir Serapat: “In the past, I sat in Darul Ulum Jombang, precisely in the village of Peterongan, reading Burdah poetry became an obligation every Friday night. Since this school stood I have not implemented the practice, because my students do not stay in the

³⁵ Interview on, September, 30, 2017.



dormitory because we do not have a dormitory, so it is quite difficult to give the practice of the practice of Burdah.”

B, the leader of pondok Abnauth Thalibin, Tamban km. 20 states: “*Syair Burdah menurut pedapat Guru Sakumpul, ujar sidin baik haja diamalkan, jadi maamalkan jua, meski kada rutin, paling satangah bulan sakali, langsung ulun nang mamimpin. Manurut pandapat Guru, banyak faedah dan fadhilahnya, disamping pandingin, banyak nasihat nang terkandung dalam syair Burdah, seperti kecintaan kepada Allah dan rasulNya, anjuran mendalami Al-Qur’an. Nang terpenting amalan ini baik untuk diamalkan, kada manyasat akan bahkan manambah keyakinan kita dalam menjalankan ibadah agama.*” (Burdah poetry according to the opinion of *Guru Sekumpul*, is good if practiced, so he practices as well, although not routine, once a month, directly led by him. Many benefits and virtues, in addition to cooling, many advices contained in Burdah poetry, such as love of God and His messenger, encouraged to deepen the Qur’an. The most important thing in this practice is good to practice, even increase our confidence in performing religious worship). The followings were the perception of Muslim scholars in Kapuas.

Table 2 Muslim Scholars’ Perceptions of Burdah Poems

No.	Key Informants	Perception
1	KH. A.M.	The poem of burdah is a poem that calms the heart. What needs to be noted is that we pray to Allah with good language, one of which is the language of Burdah poetry, which is used as an intermediary, hopefully our wishes will be granted
2	KH. Drs. R.I.	I do not practice this poem. In my opinion, it is better to recite the blessings to Rasulullah as the blessings that have been



		recommended and read by the companions, namely <i>Allahummasholli 'ala Muhammad</i>
3	KH. M.K.	About the Burdah poem itself, I and the students only read at certain times, not routine, I read a lot of blessings as taught by the Prophet, and blessings that are always read by the companions, namely <i>Allahummasholli ala saidina Muhammad wa 'ala ali saidina Muhammad</i>
4	KH. S.	Reading Burdah is good, for cooling, both physically and mentally, we are in the school, practicing Burdah poetry every Friday night
5	KH. A.K.	In particular, our school does not practice Burdah poetry, but we have carried out Habsyi poetry reading activities accompanied by tambourines.
6	KH. B.	The recitation of Burdah poetry is carried out at certain times such as the dry season, the sick season, as one of the efforts to repel the plague.
7	I.G.	I do not practice the practice of reading burdah poems, because my students do not stay in the dormitory because we do not have a dormitory, so it is quite difficult to give the practice of Burdah practice.
8	B.	There are many virtues and advice contained in Burdah poetry. Applying this practice is good, it even increases



		our confidence in performing religious worship.
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Conclusion

The practice of reading Burdah poetry is one of the representations of socio-cultural and traditional phenomena in the Muslim community of Central Kalimantan, especially in Kapuas. It is a representation of the way society thinks in finding solutions to problems related to the problems of natural, social and cultural phenomena; also a representation of the religiosity of society in understanding the relationship between man and God, and evidence of love for the Prophet Muhammad.

Tawassul is a way to utilize the mediator. Based on the findings of research on the perception of the eight Kapuas Muslim scholars in the Poems of Burdah can be classified into two. First, Muslim scholars who declare the poetry of Burdah as a high literary work that is very beautiful arrangement and meaning. In the poem of Burdah there are praises to Rasulullah then in line with blessings to the Prophet. The second classification, some Muslim scholars do not align Burdah poetry with blessings. In general, most of these Muslim scholars do not practice Burdah poetry on a regular basis, but practice it at certain times such as during the dry season, the epidemic of disease, because it is considered as *tawassul* repulsive forces.

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