RESEARCH REPORT

Islamic Theological Texts and Contexts in Banjarese Society: An Overview of the Existing Studies*

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This article will describe and analyze the continuities and changes of Islam in Banjarese society, Indonesia, by looking at the existing studies of theological texts produced and transmitted by the Banjarese ulama since the eighteenth century up to the early twenty-first century. There is a scholarly controversy on the authorship of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, but there is strong evidence that it was written by Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari in the eighteenth century. In this theological text, the author proposes a wider view of Sunnism, and at the same time attacks some local religious rituals considered opposed to Islamic monotheism. From the eighteenth to nineteenth century, the theological texts were written in Jawi. By the twentieth century, the ulama had also produced theological texts in Indonesian language, but the use and production of Arabic and Jawi texts still continued. From the early twentieth century, the Sanusi's conception of Sunni theology has become the dominant among the Banjarese. However, since the 1920s, this dominant theology has been challenged by Salafism introduced by the reformist Muslim group, the Muhammadiyah. By the 1990s, some of the ulama had proposed the theology of God's Beautiful Names as an alternative to the Sanusi's conception. All of these theological conceptions, however, seem to pay too little attention to the challenges of the increasing religious plurality of Banjarese society.

Keywords: Islam, theology, Banjarese, Indonesia

According to the statistics compiled for the year 2000 on ethnic identities, the Banjarese ranked 10th among the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia (Suryadinata *et al.* 2003,

31–68).[1] Most Banjarese live in South Kalimantan, and many of them live in Central and East Kalimantan, as well as in Sumatra, especially in Bangka Belitung, Riau, Jambi, and North Sumatra.[2] The Banjarese are generally identified as Muslims. Starting around the sixteenth century, the Banjarese Kingdom was converted to Islam by the Javanese Sultanate, Demak, as a compensation for the latter's military aid.[3] The process of Islamization apparently became more intense by the eighteenth century after the return of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari from his study in the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina. During the Banjar war (1859–1905), and the revolutionary war in the first half of the twentieth century, the Islamic leaders and organizations also played an important role. Presently, Muslims constitute 97.3% in South Kalimantan.

Islamization is a continuing process, and probably would never end. One of the ways to see the development and dynamics of Islam among the Banjarese is to study Islamic theological texts written and taught by the ulama in the region. During the last three decades, there has been a number of studies on the subject, undertaken by Banjarese scholars, and most of whom are of the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN), Antasari, Banjarmasin. Given the fact that most of these studies are largely unknown, unpublished, and simply sitting on the library shelves gathering dust, I am interested in investigating these texts, hoping that, through my own interpretation and analysis, we can find a general picture of change and continuity in Islamic theological thought in Banjarese society.

Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari's Theological Text and Context

There is no doubt that Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (1710–1812) is a very important

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1) The 10 largest ethnic groups in Indonesia are: Javanese (41.65%); Sundanese (15.41%); Malay (3.45%); Madurese (3.37%); Batak (3.02%); Minang (2.72%), Betawi (2.51%); Buginese (2.49%) Bantenese (2.05%); Banjarese (1.74%).

2) Alfani Daud maintains that, given the vast similarities between Malay and Banjarese language, the ancestors of the Banjarese probably came from Sumatra (Alfani Daud 1997, 1–4). In contrast, Noerid Haloei Radam (1995) argues for two possible hypotheses. The first is that the Banjarese were a hybrid of various ethnic groups who came to South Kalimantan. The second is that the Banjarese were the Dayak people who assimilated with the migrants, thereby cultivating their own unique culture. Moreover, Mary Hawkins argues that the Banjarese were not identified as an independent ethnic entity until the coming of the Dutch and later, the emergence of the Indonesian state (Hawkins 2000, 24–36). While these theories can be justified in one way or another, there is one important element of the Banjarese ethnicity that is very obvious, namely the Banjarese language. It is true that there are several words which are uniquely used by people of Banjar Hulu as opposed to Banjar Kuala, but both groups generally can understand each other.

3) The myth of the conversion is found in Ras (1968). For an analysis of the conversion myths to Islam in the archipelago, see Russell Jones (1979, 129–158).

figure in the Islamization of Banjarese society. At the age of 30, he was sent to Mecca by Sultan Tamjidillah (1734–59) to perform hajj and to study all branches of Islamic knowledge with the prominent ulama in Mecca and then Madina. After more than 30 years of study, he came back home, and then became the advisor to the Banjarese sultanate.[4]

As an Islamic scholar, Arsyad al-Banjari wrote a number of works on Islamic teachings, including Islamic theology.[5] There are at least two works of al-Banjari discussing the Islamic theological doctrines, namely *al-Qawl al-Mukhtaṣar fî 'alâmât al-Imâm al-Mahdi al-Muntazhar* (A short explanation on the signs of the expected Imam al-Mahdi), and *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn fî Bayâni Haqîqat Îmân al-Mu'minîn wa Mâ Yufsiduh min Riddat al-Murtaddîn* (A gift to the seekers, explaining the essence of faith of the believers and its damages due to the apostasy of the apostates). The former is academically less studied than the latter.[6] It is probably because *al-Qawl al-Mukhtaṣar* is only concerned with eschatological doctrines, while *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, besides describing basic Islamic theological doctrines, also attacks certain existing traditional rituals. In addition, its authorship also triggers a scholarly controversy.

Therefore, this section will only analyze the studies of the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. The treatise was written in 1774, two years after al-Banjari's return to the Banjarese Sultanate (1772). Like most works of the ulama of the archipelago in that period, this work by al-Banjari was written in the Malay language using Arabic script or the so-called Jawi script. The earliest print edition known to a researcher is the one published in 1887 by al-Mathba'ah al-Haj Muharram Affandi, Istambul (Hasan 2007, 71). The transliteration of the book into Latin script was carried out by Abu Daudi (2000) and M. Asywadie Syukur (2009). The existing research on this treatise raises the following questions: Is *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* the work of al-Palimbani or al-Banjari? What are the theological views presented in the work? What are the possible sources of al-Banjari's theological views? Are these theological views relevant to our times? What influence does it have on Banjarese society?

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4) For the studies of al-Banjari's life, see Jusuf Halidi (1968), Zafri Zamzam (1979), and Abu Daudi (1980).

5) There are some terms used to refer to Islamic theology, such as *'ilm al-tawḥîd*, *'ilm al-kalâm*, or *'ilm al-'aqîdah*. The main issues discussed in Islamic theology are the conception of monotheism, the prophethood, and life after death.

6) There are a few scholarly studies on *al-Qawl al-Mukhtaṣar*, two of them deserve to be mentioned, namely a small part of Chapter III of the research report by Tim IAIN Antasari (1989) and Khairil Anwar (2009, Ch.V). The last work is originally a PhD thesis at the State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, in 2007.

The Author of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*: al-Palimbani or al-Banjari?

It seems that the question of whether *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of Abd al-Shamad al-Palimbani or Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari had emerged, particularly among the Banjarese intellectuals, after the publication of M. Chatib Quzwain's dissertation in 1985. In his dissertation, with reference to two Dutch Scholars, P. Voorhoeve and Drewes, Chatib Quzwain argues that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of al-Palimbani (Chatib Quzwain 1985, 14–25). This issue gave rise to serious discussion during the seminar on the research report on Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, held at the IAIN Antasari on November 17, 1988, and another discussion attended by Banjarese intellectuals on December 25, 1988 (Analiansyah 1990). The question of the authorship of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is also analyzed in an undergraduate thesis written in the same year by a student of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari (Yusran 1988). M. Asywadie Syukur, a professor of Dakwah Faculty at IAIN Antasari also wrote a research report on the same controversy in 1990 (Asywadie Syukur 1990). Finally, 17 years later, it was to be discussed again by Noorhaidi Hasan, a Banjarese by origin and a lecturer at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta (Hasan 2007).

All of the researchers agree that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of al-Banjari, not al-Palimbani. Yusran, without any mention of the opposing view, proposes some arguments to prove that al-Banjari is the author of the treatise. First, Yusran indicates that there is a clear similar diction of the introduction, particularly the doxology, of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* with that of *Sabîl al-Muhtadîn*, another and most famous work of al-Banjari. Second, there are several Banjarese words found in the text. Third, the text mentions two Banjarese traditional rituals, namely *manyanggar* and *mambuang pasilih*. Fourth, some authoritative books on Arsyad al-Banjari's biography also mention that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is one of his works. Fifth, some prominent Banjarese ulama and descendants of Arsyad al-Banjari also affirm that it is the work of al-Banjari.

Moreover, M. Asywadie Syukur, besides mentioning similar arguments, attempts to extend these arguments by examining the text in more detail, comparing it with the works of al-Palimbani and, refuting the arguments of Voorhoeve and Drewes (Asywadie Syukur 1990, 18–32). First, Asywadie Syukur does not only show the same dictions of the doxology between *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* and *Sabîl al-Muhtadîn*, but also indicates their differences from that of the works of al-Palimbani. He also finds that al-Banjari usually uses the personal pronoun of "aku" or "daku" (means "I"), while al-Palimbani uses "hamba" (which means "slave"). Likewise, to begin each chapter, and to indicate the year of writing of their respective works, al-Banjari and al-Palimbani use different phrases and style. Finally, unlike al-Palimbani, al-Banjari never mentions the place where his

work was written.

Second, Asywadie Syukur also finds a number of Banjarese words in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. While Yusran draws attention to only two words, *kasarungan* (possessed by spirit) and *manyarung* (possessing), Asywadie Syukur adds the following words: *simpun* (concise)*, pataruhan* (treasure), *manyaru* (to call)*, lamuhur* (ancestor), *disambur* (being sprayed by water through mouth), *mahangusakan* (to burn), and *lanjuran* (trap). Asywadie Syukur particularly finds that al-Banjari also uses the word *simpun* in his two other works, namely *Luqaṭ al-'Ajlân* and *al-Qawl al-Mukhtaṣar*.

Third, like Yusran, Asywadie Syukur argues that the rituals called *manyanggar* and *mambuang pasilih* mentioned in the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* are Banjarese traditional rituals. For Asywadie Syukur, *manyanggar* is a ritual in which people give certain offerings to evil spirits to appease them and to avoid their bad influences. The ritual is usually held when people suffer from natural disaster or moral troubles such as adultery and quarrel. In contrast, *mambuang pasilih* is a ritual held for a family who is believed to have a hidden brother or sister. It is believed that, the hidden person will do harm to the family if the ritual is not carried out. Like *manyanggar*, in *mambuang pasilih*, the family also gives certain offerings to the hidden brother/sister.

Moreover, in 1987, Asywadie Syukur observed the *manyanggar* ritual being held in Barikin village of Central Hulu Sungai District, South Kalimantan.[7] He also found the *mambuang pasilih* ritual held in Banjarmasin and Barito Kuala of South Kalimantan. The evidence, argues Asywadie Syukur, indicates that Drewes' assumption that the rituals are found in the hinterland of Palembang is weak. Moreover, Drewes only mentions the *manyanggar* ritual, not *mambuang pasilih*. The latter is clearly a Banjarese ritual because it is based on the local belief in the existence of hidden people (*urang gaib*), which now-adays can still be found in Banjarese society. In addition, the discussion on rituals in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is quite detailed. The author describes a dialogue (real or imagined) between himself and the participants of the rituals. This is certainly difficult to do for al-Palimbani who already left Palembang as a teenager, and never came back.

Fourth, in his introduction to Asywadie Syukur's research report, Analiansyah cites a number of books which confirm that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of al-Banjari. Most of the books are also mentioned by Yusran in his undergraduate thesis. Asywadie Syukur,

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7) In addition to the *manyanggar* ritual, Asywadie Syukur also refers to a research report published in 1978 by the Provincial Government of South Kalimantan, regarding the *mambuang pasilih* ritual which took place in Candi Agung, a Hindu temple, in Amuntai. The actors were the descendants of an aristocratic family of the Banjarese court. The influence of Javanese culture in this ritual is obvious because it uses the Javanese traditional music, *gamelan* and *gong* (Asymadie Syukur 2009, 10–16).

however, makes no mention of them, but refers to another evidence, namely the second printing of the book, published by al-Ihsan Surabaya in 1929 based on the request of Abdurrahman Shiddiq (1857–1939), a Muslim scholar and a descendant of Arsyad al-Banjari. This edition clearly puts al-Banjari as the author of the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. In contrast, the Voorhoeve manuscript, which is believed to be the work of al-Palimbani, does not mention the name of the author.

Fifth, Asywadie Syukur also refutes the arguments made by Voorhoeve and Drewes. Voorhoeve manuscript is a gift from Braginsky. It is written on the manuscript "Van Doorninck 1876," the name of a Dutch official who worked in Palembang in 1873–75. It was, argues Voorhoeve, the period when Abd al-Shamad al-Palimbani produced a lot of writings. Moreover, this manuscript is also accompanied by a treatise on *jihâd* (holy war), which is, according to Voorhoeve, a special expertise of al-Palimbani. Drewes speculates that the work was written in Mecca based on the request of Sultan Najmuddin or Bahauddin, and was brought to Palembang by returning pilgrims. For Asywadie Syukur, all of these arguments are weak. The fact that Van Doorninck worked in Palembang does not necessarily mean that the manuscript is the work of al-Palimbani. Moreover, in that period, the Banjarese Sultanate was already abolished by the Dutch. It was not surprising, therefore, if many Ducth people came and forth to Banjarese region at that time. Regarding the treatise on *jihâd*, for Asywadie Syukur it is clearly another independent work, not part of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, because at the end of the manuscript, we find that it is closed by prayer which indicates that the work is already finished. In addition, the manuscript of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* and the treatise on *jihâd* are written in different fonts. Finally, like al-Palimbani, al-Banjari was also prolific in this period.

Sixth, Drewes argues that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* rejects the Sufi doctrine called *wujûdiyyah* which may indicate that this Sufi doctrine was found in Palembang, as it was also criticized by al-Raniri in seventeenth century Aceh. This argument, for Asywadie Syukur is not strong enough to support that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of al-Palimbani because in *Sair al-Sâlikîn*, he accepts *wujûdiyyah* as the peak spiritual achievement. On the other hand, for Asywadie Syukur, al-Banjari opposes *wujûdiyya* doctrine and even gave a fatwa of capital punishment for Abdul Hamid Abulung, a Banjarese Sufi believed to embrace the *wujûdiyyah* doctrine. Asywadie Syukur assumes that the fatwa is expressed in the statement of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*: ". . . tiada syak pada wajib membunuh dia karena murtadnya, dan membunuh seumpama orang itu terlebih baik daripada seratus kafir yang asli" (there is no doubt about the necessity to kill him because of his apostasy, and killing such a person is better than killing a hundred of genuine unbelievers).

Those are the arguments put forward by Asywadie Syukur to affirm that *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is truly the work of al-Banjari rather than al-Palimbani. It is noteworthy that

almost all of the arguments analyzed in Noorhaidi Hasan's work are the same as those in Asywadie Syukur's work. It seems that the only new argument from Hasan is that, a Malaysian scholar, Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah wrote that Dawud al-Patani (1740–1847) mentioned *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* as the work of al-Banjari. If this information is true, argues Hasan, then it is an early piece of evidence that the author of the work is al-Banjari because Dawud al-Patani was al-Banjari's friend when both studied at Mecca (Hasan 2007, 71–72).[8] Moreover, in his article Hasan directly refers to the existing manuscripts, and the fact that he had communicated with V. I. Braginsky who gave the manuscript to Voorhoeve. Last but not least, Hasan successfully put the issue for the international scholarship, because his work was published in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (*BKI*).

All of the arguments proposed by the above researchers are apparently convincing, except Asywadie Syukur's view that the execution of Abdul Hamid Abulung was based on al-Banjari's fatwa in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. Did that truly happen? As far as I know, historical evidence for Abulung's life is very scarce.[9] Steenbrink maintains that Abulung's story is very similar to that of Siti Jenar in Java. Since Banjar has close relationships with Java, it is possible that Abulung is a Banjarese version of Siti Jenar, and Siti Jenar is a Javanese version of al-Hallaj (Steenbrink 1984, 96). Moreover, Feener argues that, although Siti Jenar's narrative (and Abulung) are similar to that of al-Hallaj, it does not mean that the teachings of al-Hallaj were already introduced to Southeast Asia. The narrative, he said, "may in fact be a reflection of an earlier indigenous or Hindu-Javanese motif recast in a Javanese Muslim setting" (Feener 1998, 578).

In addition, Asywadie Syukur's quotation from the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* regarding the death penalty is not specifically related to Hallajian teachings, or to *wujudiyyah* as he claims, but to a false saint claiming to be beyond the shari'a law.

> Kata Imam Ghazali, jikalau menyangka seorang wali akan bahwasanya ada antaranya dan antara Allah ta'ala martabat, dan hal yang menggugurkan wajib sembahyang, dan menghalalkan minum arak seperti disangka oleh kaum yang bersufi-sufi dirinya, maka tiadalah syak pada wajib membunuh dia karena murtadnya dan membunuh seumpama orang itu terlebih baik daripada membunuh seratus kafir asli. (Arsyad al-Banjari 1983, 32)

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8) Hasan refers to Wan Mohd. Shaghir Abdullah (1982, 106). In fact, this information is not found there but in the revised edition of the same work (Abdullah 1990, 106). As we can see in the latter, it was Abdurrahman, a Banjarese intellectual and currently a Supreme Judge, who suggests Wan Mohd. Shagir Abdullah to investigate the issue. In a letter sent to M. Chatib Quzwain, dated January 13, 1986, Abdurrahman argues that most Arsyad al-Banjari's biographers say that the treatise is his work. Abdurrahman then sent a copy of the letter to Abdullah.

9) A recent research indicates the scarcity of such evidence, apart from the myth regarding the relocation of his grave (Mufidatun Nisa 2009).

[Imam Ghazali said, if a saint assumes that there is a position between him and God that abolishes the obligation to perform daily prayers, and allows him to drink alcohol as it is believed by pretending Sufis, then there is no doubt about the necessity to kill him because of his apostasy, and killing such a person is better than killing a hundred of genuine unbelievers.]

In fact, only after those sentences al-Banjari starts describing the *wujûdiyyah*. In his description, he does not say that the followers of *wujûdiyyah* should be punished with the death penalty. He only said that the *wujûdiyyah mulḥid* is one form of *kâfir zindîq* (true unbeliever), without mentioning any punishment for the followers of this doctrine. Moreover, in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn,* al-Banjari said that there are two kinds of *wujûdiyyah*, *mulḥid* and *muwaḥḥid*. He only opposes the former, not the latter. In his explanation, the former seems to be the view that the entire universe, including human beings are God. However, he does not explain what *wujûdiyyah muwaḥḥid* is. Probably, for him, the *wujûdiyyah muwaḥḥid* is the teachings of Ibn al-'Arabi and his students, which strike a balance between God's immanency and transcendency. In fact, this is also the position of 'Abd al-Shamad al-Palimbani which is probably shared by al-Banjari. Moreover, one of the important works of Banjarese ulama of the eighteenth century, *al-Durr al-Nafîs* by Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, apparently follows the same line (Muthalib 1995). It seems, for Arsyad al-Banjari, al-Palimbani and Nafis al-Banjari, the works of al-Ghazali do not contradict those of Ibn 'Arabi and the like because they are aimed at different audiences. The works of al-Ghazali are for elementary and intermediate levels (*mubtadi'* and *mutawassiṭ*), while those of Ibn 'Arabi are for the *muntahi*, the advanced level.[10]

The *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, Its Teachings, Relevance, and Influences

What are the theological teachings presented in the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*? If we compare this work with other popular Islamic theological texts in South Kalimantan or even in the archipelago, the structure of this work is obviously unique. The contents of the work are divided into three parts: on the essence of faith, on the things endangering faith, and finally on repentance. All researchers find that the work follows the line of Sunni theological thought of Ash'ariyyah and Maturidiyyah. In addition, the research team at the IAIN Antasari has discovered that the description in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* on deviant sects (based on the hadith which predicts that Muslims will be divided into 73 groups), is

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10) This classification is found in al-Palimbani's work, *Sair al-Sâlikîn* (Palimbani n.d., 176–187). However, the fact that Arsyad al-Banjari and Nafis al-Banjari had the same line of masters, it could be safe to argue that they have the same position as that of al-Palimbani.

similar to that of *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* by al-Shahrastani, although the latter describes them in more detail.[11] In contrast, after careful investigation, Khairil Anwar finds that the names and classification of the deviant sects in the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* are not similar to those of *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, but to another theological book, namely *Uṣûl al-Dîn* by al-Bazdawi (d. 1100) (Khairil Anwar 2009, 69–70).

   As a follower of the Sunni theological school, al-Banjari explains in the first part of the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* that the essence of faith is believing with one's heart (*taṣdîq*), while the oral confirmation (*iqrâr*) and its actualization through action (*'amal*) are not the essence but the perfection of faith (*kamâl al-îmân*). Al-Banjari, however, also quotes Abû Hanîfah and some Ash'arite figures, who argue that faith includes both believing and oral confirmation. The latter's view, for al-Banjari, is also found in Sunnism, but it is not sanctioned (*ghair mu'tamad*). Moreover, to support his criticisms of those sects considered deviant, al-Banjari refers to al-Ghazali (an Ash'arite figure), 'Umar al-Nasafi (a Maturidite figure), and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (a Salafi figure).

   Scholars have different views of the relevance of the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*'s theological viewpoints. Khairil Anwar, for instance, indicates that some ulama do not accept the authenticity of the hadith mentioned in the treatise, which predicts that the Muslim community will be divided into 73 groups, but only one will gain salvation.[12] Khairil Anwar even notices another hadith with the opposite meaning quoted by the ulama, namely that 72 groups will go to heaven, and only one will go to hell. He argues that the prominent Indonesian Muslim scholars such as Quraish Shihab, M. Thalhah Hasan, and Nurcholish Madjid, prefer this hadith, because it is more inclusive and relevant to the present plurality of Muslim groups. Shihab and Thalhah Hasan quote 'Abd al-Halim Mahmud's *al-Tafkîr al-Falsafî fi al-Islâm* in which the author said that the hadith is *sahîh* according to al-Hâkim, while Nurcholish Madjid refers to al-Ghazali's *Faishal al-Tafriqah* which quotes the same hadith (*ibid.*, 70–71).[13]

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11) The research team formally consists of 10 persons, but the theological section was probably written by M. Zurkani Jahja (d. 2004). See also Zurkani Jahja (2005, 157–158).

12) The authenticity of this hadith is controversial. Ibn Hibbân, al-Hâkim, and Ibn Taimiyah believe that the hadith is *saḥîḥ li ghairih* (authentic based on various similar reports), but Ibn Hajar and Tirmidzi consider it *ḥasan* (literally "good," which is below the *saḥîḥ*), while Ibn Ḥazm and two modern Muslim scholars, Yusuf al-Qaradawi and 'Abd al-Rahmân Badawi put it as *dha'îf* (literally "weak") (Khairil Anwar 2009, 90, 182). Another modern Muslim scholar, Fazlur Rahman, sets up a general principle to reject similar kinds of hadith. He says, "a Hadith *which involves a prediction, directly or indirectly, cannot, on strict historical grounds, be accepted as genuinely emanating from the Prophet and must be referred to the relevant period of later history*" (Rahman 1995, 46). Italics is original.

13) It is interesting that al-Ghazâlî tries to synchronize the two opposite hadiths. For al-Ghazâlî, the statement of the hadith that only one group will go to heaven refers to those Muslims who enter ↗

On the other hand, as has been mentioned earlier, al-Banjari believes that the essence of faith is believing with one's heart, while oral confirmation and its implementation are only the perfection of faith. This minimalist view of the essence of faith, according to the research team at the IAIN Antasari, is relevant to the present plurality of Muslim people. This view would enhance religious tolerance and inclusiveness because if the essence of faith is believing with one's heart, then no one knows the quality of a person's faith except God, and that a believer whose conducts do not accord to the teachings of Islam does not necessarily become an infidel. Moreover, the fact that al-Banjari refers to different figures of Sunni theological schools, namely of Asha'rite, Maturidite, and Salafi, indicates that he has a wider conception of Sunnism (Tim IAIN Antasari 1989, 49–50; Khairil Anwar 2009, 95). Al-Banjari's view is actually wider than that of the Indonesian Muslim traditionalist organization, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which in theory follows the Ash'arite and the Maturidite, but in reality, only follows the Ash'arite. Similarly, as we shall see, the later dominant theological views in Banjarese society only follow the line of Ash'arite formulated by al-Sanusi.

Moreover, the research team at IAIN Antasari points out that, although al-Banjari has a minimalist view of the essence of faith and a wider view of Sunnism, he does not neglect the importance of making one's faith functional in daily life. This is indicated by the fact that al-Banjari explains various beliefs and actions that may endanger one's faith, and therefore, should be avoided. As has been alluded, al-Banjari also criticizes the traditional rituals called *manyanggar* and *mambuang pasilih*. For him, these rituals may lead to polytheism because they are based on beliefs that there are other unseen forces, rather than God alone, who have power over human life. In this regard, al-Banjari's theological assessment is based on Asy'arite view regarding cause and effect relationship. He said, if the actors believe that the ritual itself can protect them from harm, then the actors are infidels. If the actors believe that only God, not the rituals, who can protect them from harm, then their action is heterodox innovation (*bid'ah dhalâlah*). Moreover, in the rituals, various cakes are given as offerings to the hidden people, and this for al-Banjari, represents a waste of food (*tabdzîr*), which is religiously forbidden (*harâm*). For the team at IAIN Antasari, al-Banjari's criticisms of the traditional rituals, are still relevant today because some pre-Islamic rituals have been revived and supported by the government, partly for tourism (Tim IAIN Antasari 1989, 37–38, 41–44).

↘   paradise without the process of interrogation (*ḥisâb*), while the only one group who will go to hell mentioned in the second version of the hadith refers to the *zindîq* (the unbelievers). So, for al-Ghazâlî, most Muslims will go to heaven, but some of them should pass through the interrogation, and some of them even should stay for a certain period of time (in accordance with their respective sins) in the hell (Mujiburrahman 2008, 358).

In contrast, in his MA thesis, M. Rusydi, an alumni of the Postgraduate Program of the State Islamic University, Yogyakarta, has more critical views of the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* (Rusydi 2005, 93-133). With reference to the Egyptian philosopher, Hassan Hanafi, Rusydi argues that al-Banjari's theology is based on faith and defense method. This type of theology is characterized by theocentric views, which glorifies God, while the position of human being is neglected. In the political realm, this type of theology tends to defend, and subject to, the rulers. For Rusydi, this is clearly indicated by the opening remarks of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* in which al-Banjari says that he was asked to write the treatise by the Sultan (namely, Sultan Tahmidillah). Likewise, the execution of Abdul Hamid Abulung who was considered heretic based on al-Banjari's fatwa mentioned in this work, argues Rusydi, is another indication of how this theology operated through political power.

Moreover, for Rusydi, al-Banjari actually could not escape from the theological debates inherited from Muslims of the Middle Ages, and therefore, he was trapped in a defense of the Sunni views against other theological views. This becomes more obvious, says Rusydi, when al-Banjari strongly attacks the traditional rituals of *mambuang pasilih* and *manyanggar*. Al-Banjari's attack on traditional rituals, is actually an attempt to defend the purity of Muslim beliefs. Thus, for Rusydi, al-Banjari's minimalist view of the essence of faith, and his wider conception of Sunnism, did not lead him to be tolerant towards other theologies.

For Rusydi, therefore, al-Banjari's theological views are not something to be maintained for the present society. This type of theology belongs in the past, not the present, nor the future. In other words, it is irrelevant to the problems of the twenty-first century. For Rusydi, in order to be relevant, Islamic theology, especially for the Banjarese people, should think of current problems of environmental destruction such as deforestation, excessive exploitation of natural resources, and the pollution of rivers. These problems, he said, are real problems for the Banjarese people in particular, and the people in Kalimantan in general.

The above conflicting views of the relevance of al-Banjari's theology demonstrate the dynamics of Islamic theological thought among the Banjarese Muslim scholars. In this regard, I would like to make some comments. *First*, it is important that we do not view the past through the lens of contemporary beliefs and values, because if we do this, we may come to two extreme conclusions: we will either glorify the past, or condemn it as decadent and backward. Therefore, it is important for contemporary scholars who study history, including history of ideas, to depict the past in an objective historical and social context. This certainly demands us to find a relatively complete description of the past in question. In the case of al-Banjari's *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, so far we have very scarce historical sources, and therefore, our description of the past is far from satisfying. For

instance, is it historically true that al-Banjari wrote this treatise because the Sultan asked him to issue a fatwa for Abdul Hamid Abulung as a Sufi heretic? On the other hand, did al-Banjari's minimalist view of the essence of faith, and his wider conception of Sunnism lead him to be tolerant towards theological differences? Honestly, if we rely on the available historical evidence, we cannot convincingly answer these questions.

Second, for believers, a religious tradition, including theological views contained in the works of the ulama in the past, is something that defines their lives at the present, and at the same time connects them with the past and the future (Asad 1986). In this regard, the Moroccan scholar, Muhammad 'Abid al-Jâbirî said that there are three approaches to studying religious tradition. First, reading the tradition within the framework of the tradition itself. This kind of study is usually ahistorical and simply intended to preserve the tradition. Second, reading the tradition as something of the past without any relevance to the present day. This is exemplified by the works of the orientalists. Third, reading the tradition with critical historical analysis, and at the same time, trying to find its relevance to the present and the future (Jâbirî 1986, 1–23). If we look at the contesting views of the researchers of al-Banjari's theological heritage from al-Jâbiri's framework, then we may say that the Muslim scholars actually try to do their best to find the relevance and irrelevance of the tradition for their present and future. Their studies, therefore, are engaged scholarships. The only problem for them, as has been said, is the limited historical evidence to support their respective views. Apart from this problem, the controversy indicates that theological studies at the IAIN are not very dogmatic, and therefore, even a young scholar like Rusydi has the courage to propose strong criticisms of the views of highly respected figure like al-Banjari.

Apart from the debates on the relevance and irrelevance of *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*, it is important to know whether the Banjarese society at large know and study this treatise. In 1988, Yusran interviewed a number of prominent ulama, and found that only 10 of them knew that the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* was one of the works of Arsyad al-Banjari (Yusran 1988, 62-63). Around the same period, the research team at IAIN Antasari interviewed 23 prominent ulama in six cities of South Kalimantan (Marabahan, Banjarmasin, Martapura, Kandangan, Negara, and Amuntai), and found some interesting facts. The interviewees generally knew of Arsyad al-Banjari not as a writer of religious texts, but as a saint imbued with the power to perform miracles, and whose tomb was frequently visited by pilgrims. Only a few of the ulama, most of whom were descendents of al-Banjari, used the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* for teaching Islamic theology. Most of the ulama did not know about al-Banjari's theological views in the treatise either, including the fatwa on the heresy of the *wujûdiyyah mulḥidah*. On the other hand, they knew that al-Banjari opposes the traditional rituals of *manyanggar* and *mambuang pasilih*. The majority of the ulama also take

the same stance as al-Banjari, in opposing any traditional rituals which may lead to poly-
theism, but they do not always succeed in stopping them. It is said that a strong attack
is not effective, but a persuasive propagation is slow in achieving the goal. Some of the
ulama tolerate certain traditional rituals because they have been Islamized, while others
say that syncretism cannot be tolerated because it pollutes the purity of the Islamic faith
(Tim IAIN Antasari 1989, 101–102).

These findings are very similar to those of the previous and subsequent studies. In
the early 1980s, Alfani Daud found in the field that *manyanggar* ritual was not practiced
anymore, but other rituals accompanying the passages of life, from birth to death, were
still practiced by many. Alfani Daud, however, also found that the contents of the rituals
have been Islamized (Alfani Daud 2000). Likewise, in 1985, the research team of the
Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari, found that many Banjarese Muslims in Martapura
and Amuntai (both are known as the cities of ulama) still believe in certain taboos, and
practice traditional rituals like *tapung tawar*,[14] shower ritual for pregnant women or for
bride and bridegroom. However, most of the Muslims no longer adhere to the beliefs
underlying the ritual anymore. They perform these rituals simply to pay respect to the
tradition of their elders (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 1985). Another source of empirical
evidence is found in the undergraduate theses of the students of the Ushuluddin Faculty
from 1995 to 1999. The theses show that Banjarese Muslims believe in sacred places,
times, goods, and symbols, and some of them are of pre-Islamic origins. Similarly, the
Banjarese Muslims still practice certain traditional rituals in which pre-Islamic and
Islamic elements are mixed.

The above empirical evidence indicates that the influence of Islamic theological
views on traditional rituals has become increasingly stronger in society, and perhaps, this
is partly because of al-Banjari's attack on these rituals in *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. On the other
hand, one may ask, why many Banjarese ulama interviewed by the researchers in the
late 1980s did not know about the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*? The research team at IAIN
Antasari try to answer this question. First, the works of al-Banjari are written in Jawi
which is difficult for younger generation to understand. Second, the economic malaise
during the Japanese occupation forced people into a struggle for economic survival, which
left them little time and energy for learning religious texts. In contrast, during the period
of Dutch colonial rule, al-Banjari's works were read in many religious gatherings by the
ulama. This explains why the ulama who were familiar with al-Banjari's works were at

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14) *Tapung tawar* is a ritual for making peace between two conflicting parties. In the ritual, coconut oil
    mixed with fragrant spices smeared on the heads of both persons in conflict. Sometimes, *bapalas
    bidan* ritual, which is believed to be a way to free a new born baby from magical power of the midwife,
    is also called *tapung tawar* (Alfani Daud 1997, 472–473).

the age of 50 or older in 1988. Third, after independence (1945), formal education at schools was open for all the people, including religious education. In this educational system, texts used in religion classes are mostly in the Indonesian language, which is easier to understand for the younger generation. On the other hand, the students of Islamic boarding schools who are specialized in Islamic studies, would prefer Arabic to Jawi texts (Tim IAIN Antasari 1989, 98–105).

Islamic Theological Texts Taught in Banjarese Society

It would be naive to say that the development of Islam in the region, including the Banjarese Muslims' theological views, simply depends on Arsyad al-Banjari's influences. The social, political, and cultural changes from the nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century, undoubtedly exerted a great influence on their Islamic theological views. In this regard, there has been a number of studies carried out by the scholars of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari, which provide empirical evidence of the develop-ment of Banjarese Muslim theological views following Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari's period to the present. These studies explore various research questions, namely: What are the theological texts taught in Islamic study gatherings (*pengajian*)[15] in South Kali-mantan? What are the theological texts written by Banjarese ulama? What are the theological texts taught in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in South Kalimantan? What are the theological schools represented by the texts? What are the philosophical elements contained in the texts? What are their possible influences on Muslim daily life?

The Theological Texts Taught and Written by Banjarese Ulama
In 1982, a team of students of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari were assigned to study the theological texts taught in various *pengajians* in South Kalimantan. The scope of the research is quite impressive. The students investigate 109 *pengajians* in three districts, namely 51 *pengajians* in Hulu Sungai Utara district, 29 *pengajians* in Banjar district, and 29 *pengajians* in Banjarmasin City (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 1982).

   The findings of the research indicate that there are 24 titles of theological texts used in the *pangajian*, and *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is *not* one of them. Many of the *pengajians* use more than one theological texts, even though they are taught by the same ulama. How-ever, most of the texts follow the Ash'arite school formulated by 'Abdullâh al-Sanûsi

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15) *Pengajian* is an Islamic study gathering with regular meetings. It can be at the mosque, *majelis taklim* (a special place used for religious teaching and gathering), or a spacious home of an ulama or a rich person.

(d. 1490). The most widely used text is *Kifâyat al-'Awâm*, the work of Muhammad Syâfi'i al-Fudhâlî (d. 1821), which is used in 47 *pengajians*. It is followed by *Ḥâshiyah 'ala Matn al-Sanûsiyyah* by Ibrâhîm al-Bâjûri (d. 1861) used in 37 *pengajians*, and *Ḥâshiyah al-Hudhudî 'alâ Umm al-Barâhîn* by Abdullâh al-Sharqâwî (d. 1812), used in 29 *pengajians*. The work of al-Sanûsi, *Umm al-Barâhîn* is only used in 12 *pengajians*. This is probably because, al-Sanûsi's work is very concise and difficult to understand. Therefore, the texts used are mostly commentaries on this work. Interestingly, the work of the founder of the Ash'arite school, Abu al-Ḥasan al-Asy'arî (d. 935), *al-Ibânah 'an Uṣûl al-Diyânah* is only used in one *pengajian* in Banjarmasin. The text is taught by Gusti H. Abdul Muis (d. 1992), a prominent Muhammadiyah ulama.

Besides the Arabic texts, there are also nine texts in Jawi. If we look at the names of the authors and the publishers of the Jawi texts provided in the research report, we

Table 1 Theological Texts Used in Religious Gatherings (*Pengajian*)

No.	Theological Texts	Usages in *Pengajian*	Author
1.	*Kifâyat al-'Awâm*	47	Muhammad Syâfi'i al-Fudhâlî
2.	*Ḥâshiyah 'alâ Matn al-Sanûsiyyah*	37	Ibrâhîm al-Bâjûrî
3.	*Ḥâshiyah al-Hudhudî 'alâ Umm al-Barâhîn*	29	Abdullâh al-Sharqâwî
4.	*Sirâj al-Hudâ**	18	Muhammad Zainuddin Ibn M.Badawi al-Sumbawî
5.	*'Aqîdat al-Nâjîn**	17	Zain al-'Âbidîn Ibn Muhammad al-Pattâni
6.	*Sharaḥ Umm al-Barâhîn al-Dasûqî*	17	Muhammad al-Dasûqî
7.	*Kifâyat al-Mubtadi'în**	16	Abdurrahman Ibn M. Ali Sungai Banar
8.	*Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în**	16	Asy'ari Ibn Sulaiman
9.	*Matn Umm al-Barâhîn*	12	Muhammad Yûsuf al-Sanûsi
10.	*Sharaḥ Jawharat al-Tawḥîd*	7	Ibrâhîm al-Bâjûrî
11.	*Fatḥ al-Majîd fî Sharḥ al-Durr al-Farîd*	6	Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani
12.	*Miftâḥ al-Jannah**	6	Muhammad Thaib Mas'ud al-Banjari
13.	*Sharaḥ Tîjân al-Durari*	4	Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani
14.	*Tuḥfat al-Ikhwân**	4	Muhammad Sarni Ibn Jarman
15.	*Kitab Sifat Dua Puluh**	4	Usman Ibn Abdillâh
16.	*Fatḥ al-Majîd Sharḥ Kitâb al-Tawḥîd***	3	Abdurrahman Ibn Hasan al-Wahhâbi
17.	*Al-'Aqîdah al-Islâmiyyah***	3	Sayyid Sâbiq
18.	*Risâlah al-Khulâṣah**	3	Sabran Ibn Kaderi al-Alabî
19.	*Nûr al-Zhalâm*	2	Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani
20.	*Al-Ḥuṣûn al-Ḥamîdiyyah***	2	Sayyid Ḥusein Affandi al-Ṭarablusi
21.	*Ḥâshiyah 'alâ Kifâyat al-'Awâm*	2	Muhammad Fadhdhâlî
22.	*Ibtidâ' al-Tawḥîd**	2	Abdul Kadir Nur Ibn Bawasin
23.	*Al-'Aqîdah al-Islâmiyyah***	2	Baṣri Ibn H. Marghubi
24.	*Al-Ibânah 'an Uṣûl al-Diyânah*	1	Abu al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arî

Source: This is based on table 1 and appendix 1–3 of Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin (1982, 12–13, 31–33).
Notes: As noted earlier, one *pengajian* may use more than one text. In an "extreme" case, one ulama uses eight texts. Perhaps, he uses one after finishing another.
   * The text is written in Jawi, mostly by Banjarese ulama.
   ** Modern or salafi texts

may conclude that they are mostly written by Banjarese ulama except the *'Aqîdat al-Nâjîn* by Zain al-'Âbidîn Ibn Muhammad al-Pattâni, and the *Sirâj al-Hudâ* by Muhammad Zainuddin from Sumba. As we can see from Table 1, a significant number of Jawi texts are used. The use of *Sirâj al-Hudâ* is 18, *'Aqîdat al-Nâjîn* is 17, *Kifâyat al-Mubtadi'în* and *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în,* each of them is 16. In total, the use of the Jawi texts reaches 86. This is much lower than the use of the Arabic texts which reaches 170, but it is still a significant number. In other words, following the example of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, the Banjarese ulama of the twentieth century also wrote theological texts in Jawi, in order to help ordinary people to learn Islam.

The table clearly shows that some texts do not follow Sanusi's Ash'arism, and some of them are written by modern ulama. The texts include *Fatḥ al-Majîd Sharh Kitâb al-Tawḥîd* by Abdurrahman Ibn Hasan, a commentary on the work of Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhâb (the founder of Wahhabism), *Al-'Aqîdah al-Islâmiyyah* by Sayyid Sâbiq (d. 2000), *Al-Ḥuṣûn al-Ḥamîdiyyah* by Sayyid Ḫusein Affandi al-Ṭarablusi (d. 1909), and *Al-'Aqîdah al-Islâmiyyah* by Baṣri Ibn H. Marghubi. It is not surprising that these texts are mostly used by ulama in Banjarmasin, the capital city of the province, and in Amuntai where the theological contest between the reformist Muhammadiyah and the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama was strong.

In another research conducted in 1994, the team of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari found almost the same theological texts used in different *pengajians* in Banjarmasin and Hulu Sungai Utara. However, there are a few new titles found in the *pengajian*s, namely *Aqâid al-îmân* by Abdurrahman Siddiq (d. 1939), *Hidâyat al-Mubtadi'în* by Muhammad Sarni, and *Risâlah 'Ilm Tawḥîd* by Ja'far Sabran, all of which are written in Jawi (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 1995). There are other Banjarese ulama who wrote Islamic theological texts in Jawi, Indonesian, and even Arabic (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 2008). Among these texts are *Risâlat al-Tawḥîd* by Muhammad Kasyful Anwar (d. 1940), written in Arabic; *Ibtidâ' al-Tawḥîd* by Abdul Qadir Noor (d. 1940), written in Jawi. Other texts are written in Indonesian, namely *Sendi Iman, Risalah Ushuluddin, Ilmu Tauhid* and *Pengetahuan Agama Islam* by Abdul Muthallib Muhyiddin (d. 1974); *Iman dan Bahagia* and *Akidah dan Perkembangan Ilmu Kalam* by Gusti Abdul Muis; and *Pelajaran Ringkas Agama Islam*, *Majmu'ah Shuhuf Pelajaran Agama Islam*, *Simpanan yang Berguna*, and *Ilmu Ketuhanan dan Kenabian* by Darkasi (d. 2003).[16]

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16) Of course, there are other theological texts written by Banjarese ulama which are not analyzed in the research. In the last notes of the 2008 research above, there are two other works which are not mentioned, namely *Risalah Pengajian Ilmu Tauhid* (in Indonesian) by Jafri bin Utuh and *al-Durr al-Farîd fi Sharḥ Jawharat al-Tawḥîd* by Muhammad Kasyful Anwar (in Arabic). See Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin (2008, 135).

In 2004 and 2005, a research team of the Ushuluddin Faculty, tried to find out the theological texts taught in traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in South Kalimantan (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 2004b; 2005). The traditional *pesantrens* include Darussalam in Martapura (founded in 1914), Ibn al-Amin in Pamangkih (founded in 1958), Darussalam in Muara Tapus (founded in 1967), and Arraudhah in Amuntai (founded in 1992). Although these four cannot represent all traditional *pesantrens* in the region, which number more than 200, they probably can give us a more general picture, particularly because, other traditional *pesantrens* follow the curriculum of Darussalam in Martapura, the oldest *pesantren*.[17]

If we look at the findings of the research, we can see that only three theological texts are taught in *pesantren* but not in *pengajian*, namely the *Sharah Tîjân al-Durari* by Nawawi al-Bantani (d. 1897), the *Kashf al-Asrâr* by Abd al-Mu'ti Ibn Salim Ibn Umar al-Shibli, and the *Tuḥfat al-Murîd 'alâ Jawharat al-Tawḥîd* by Ibrâhîm al-Bâjûri. The texts found in the research are also in line with Martin van Bruinessen's list of popular theological texts among Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. However, in the South Kalimantan case, Bruinessen does not include the *Tîjân al-Durari* (perhaps because in this region, the text used is its commentary), while the *Kashf al-Asrâr* is not mentioned by him at all (Bruinessen 2012, 175).

On the other hand, the modern *pesantrens*—mostly founded by the alumni of modern *Pesantren* Darussalam, Gontor, East Java—use different theological texts. There are four modern *pesantrens* studied in this research, namely Darul Hijrah (founded in 1986), Ibnu Mas'ud (founded in 1990), Darul Istiqamah (founded in 1990), and Darul Inabah (founded in 1995). All of these *pesantrens* use the theological texts taught in *Pesantren* Darussalam, Gontor, namely *Uşûl al-Dîn* by Imam Zarkasyi, and *Kitâb al-Sa'âdah* by Abd al-Rahîm Manâf. In addition, *Pesantren* Darul Istiqamah and Ibnu Mas'ud also use a text produced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, namely *al-'Aqîdah wa al-Akhlâq*. The modern *pesantrens* also use theological texts of Salafi-Wahhabi leanings. For instance, Ibnu Mas'ud uses a text called *al-Tawḥîd* published by Yayasan al-Shofwa, Jakarta; Darul Inabah uses *al-Ma'lûmât lâ Ya'lamuhâ Katsîr min al-Nâs* by Muhammad Ibn Jamil; and Darul Hijrah uses *al-'Aqîdah al-Wâsithiyyah* by Ibnu Taimiyyah (d. 1328), and *Ta'lîqât al-Mukhtaşar al-Mufîd* by Şalih Ibn Fauzân, a commentary on *Kitâb al-Tawḥîd* by Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhâb (d. 1792), the founder of Wahhabism.

The findings of the studies described above, highlight certain features of the develop-

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17) The official statistics of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Kalimantan indicate that the number of *pesantrens* in this region reaches 300, and certainly most of them of traditionalist type. However, one must also realize that many of the *pesantrens* are very small (Kementerian Agama 2011).

ment of Islam, especially in terms of theology, in Banjarese society. *First*, the studies conducted in the early 1980s and 1990s show us that the theological texts used in most *pengajian* follow the Ash'arite school conceptualized by 'Abdullâh al-Sanûsi. The same case is also found in traditional *pesantrens*, even up to the present time. On the other hand, certain *pengajian* use different kinds of theological text, either modern or classic, that do not follow the conception of al-Sanûsi. In the modern *pesantrens*, we find the theological texts with Salafi-Wahhabi leanings. Thus, we can see that the production of Islamic theological knowledge in Banjarese society has eventually become fragmented, and the dominant school of Sanusi-Ash'arism has been contested by Salafism/Wahhabism. This does not mean, however, that Salafism had only started developing by the late 1980s, because the reformist organization, Muhammadiyah, whose theology mostly follow the Salafi school, was already established in 1925 in this region.[18] Apparently, what happened was that, previously the Salafi theological texts were only taught in various *pengajians* and schools of Muhammadiyah, but since the second half of the 1980s, they have been taught in modern *pesantrens* as well. It is noteworthy that, unlike religious education in *pengajian* and schools, religious teaching in *pesantrens* is given to students who are prepared to become ulama. Thus, we may say that the Salafi theological school has been strengthened in Banjarese society since the late 1980s.

Second, we can see from the findings of the above studies that the Islamic theological texts written by Banjarese ulama since the eighteenth century have been in Jawi or Arabic, but since the early 1970s, some Banjarese ulama have also published theological texts in the Indonesian language. The use of Indonesian is no doubt, due to educational developments. After the independence, the younger generation had more opportunities to study at schools where Indonesian language is used. Thus, the new generation of ulama and their students are more familiar with Indonesian texts. Moreover, if we look closely at the use of the texts in terms of their language, we find that Jawi texts is mostly used in *pengajian*, while the Arabic texts are mostly taught in *pesantren* and some in *pengajian*. *Pesantren* apparently prefers Arabic texts because they are intended for students who specialized in Islamic studies.[19] On the other hand, at schools, including the state Islamic schools (*madrasah negeri*), the texts used in religious instruction are mostly in Indonesian.

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18) For a study of conflict between the traditionalists (NU) and the reformists (Muhammadiyah) in Banjarese society, see Achmad Fedyani Saifuddin (1986), and for a current and small case, see Ahmad Muhajir (2010).

19) In his careful research on "books in Arabic script" used in the *pesantren* mileu, Martin van Bruinessen calculates that around 55 percent of the books are in Arabic, and 22 percent are in Malay (Bruinessen 2012, 151).

The Contents and Relevance of the Theological Texts

As has been mentioned earlier, in 1982 the research team of students of the Ushuluddin Faculty found that the dominant school represented by the theological texts taught in *pengajian* was Ash'arism conceptualized by al-Sanusi, or we may call it, "Sanusi-Ash'arism." The research team arrived at this conclusion by analyzing the contents of the texts, particularly those on major theological issues such as the relation between reason and revelation, and the attributes of God. These texts follow the Ash'arite's view that reason is totally dependent on revelation for knowledge of the attributes of God, good and evil, and God's commands and prohibitions. Likewise, following Ash'arism, the texts explain that God has certain attributes. The attributes are different from, but inherent in, God's substance (*dzât*).

However, unlike the founder of Ash'arism, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari, 'Abdullâh al-Sanûsi classifies God's attributes into three ontological categories, the necessity (*wâjib*), the impossible (*mustaḥîl*), and the possible (*jâ'iz*). In al-Sanûsi's classification, God has 20 necessary attributes, and 20 impossible attributes (as the opposite of the necessary attributes), and 1 possible attribute. The 20 necessary attributes (and automatically the impossible attributes as their opposites) are then classified into four: (1) the selfness (*nafsiyyah*), namely the attribute of being and existence (*wujûd*); (2) the negative (*salabiyyah*) which includes: without beginning (*qidam*), without end (*baqâ'*), the opposite of temporary beings (*mukhâlafatuh li al-hawâdith*), standing on Himself (*qiyâmuh binafsih*) and oneness (*wahdaniyyah*); (3) the potential attributes (*ma'ânî*) which include power (*qudrah*), will (*irâdah*), knowledge (*'ilm*), life (*hayâh*), hearing (*sama'*), seeing (*baṣar*), speaking (*kalâm*); and (4) the actualization of the potential attributes (*ma'nawiyyah*). Finally, the possible attribute of God is doing and not doing the possible. In the same line of reasoning, al-Sanûsi also classifies the attributes of God's messenger (*rasûl*) into four necessary attributes, namely honest (*ṣidq*), trustworthy (*amânah*), delivering God's messages (*tablîgh*), and intelligent (*faṭanah*), and four impossible attributes as their opposites. Moreover, a messenger has one possible attribute, namely possible weakness as a human being. In short, the total of God and His messenger's attributes are 50, and these represent the Muslim confession: There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His messenger.

The Sanusi's conception known as "Sifat 20," is actually very philosophical, but why is it very popular? Perhaps, there are at least two reasons for this. First, many ulama of the archipelago learned this conception of Islamic theology, particularly from the nineteenth century commentaries on al-Sanûsi' treatise, with their masters in the Middle East, so when they returned home, they transferred it to the Muslims in the archipelago.

The Jawi text called *'Aqîdat al-Nâjîn* by Zain al-'Abidîn Ibn Muhammad al-Patani, which contains the Sanusi's conception, was completed in 1308 H or 1891 CE (Patani no date, 139).[20] Second, apart from its philosophical arguments, this conception is simple in terms of the number of God's and His messenger's attributes, 20 and 4 respectively. So, they can be easily memorized by ordinary people, including the illiterates. In fact, most teachers in *pengajian* encourage their audiences to memorize them.

On the other hand, the popularity of al-Sanûsi's conception drew critical responses from the ulama, especially the Muslim scholars at IAIN Antasari. Many of them say that, because of this conception, people have had only a narrow understanding of Sunni theology, which is limited only to al-Sanusi. In fact, Sunni theology includes many important figures such as al-Ash'ari, al-Mâturidi, al-Ghazâli, al-Juwaini, al-Bâqillâni, and even Salafi figures like Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal. As has been mentioned earlier, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari has this wider conception of Sunni theology, and does not refer to al-Sanûsi at all. Thus, from this perspective, the popularity of al-Sanûsi's conception is somehow a regression (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 1982, 25).

The Muslim scholars of the Ushuluddin Faculty also observed that because the philosophical arguments are not easily grasped by ordinary people, the teaching of Islamic theology eventually becomes very formal, i.e., memorizing doctrines without clearly understanding them. Therefore, it is difficult to expect that people can internalize Islamic values through learning this conception of theology (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 1995, 100). Moreover, because the arguments are mostly rational, the experiential and spiritual dimensions of faith tend to be neglected. The scholars also observed that, in a number of *pesantrens*, the method of teaching is apparently ineffective because the teacher explains the meaning of the Arabic text without trying to find its relevance to daily life. Consequently, it would separate the discourse of theology from ethics (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 2004b, 104–107).

On the other hand, there are some studies undertaken by scholars who try to explore and appreciate the philosophical contents of the texts. In 1993, a lecturer of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari, Bahran Noor Haira, attempted to understand the idea of *ta'alluq* (relation) developed in al-Sanûsi's conception. For Bahran Noor Haira, this idea is apparently related to the Ash'arite's view that God has eternal attributes different from, but inherent in His substance. The differentiation of God's substance from His attributes, is important partly in explaining the relationship between the eternal and the temporal, the creator and creature. In other words, God's attributes become the medium between the

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20) Zain al-'Abidin Ibn Muhammad is "one of the four great Patani ulama in Mecca in the 19th century, the others being Shaykh Daud, Shayk Ahmad . . . and Muhammad bin Daud" (Matheson and Hooker 1988, 34).

eternal and the temporal. For instance, God has the attributes of power (*qudrah*) and will (*irâdah*), and these attributes are related (*ta'alluq*) to the possible things. So, the eternal God creates the temporal world through the "mediation" of His will and power. This view is obviously conceptualized to oppose Mu'tazilite, who maintains that God, as a perfect being, has no attributes, and that God's substance and attributes cannot be differentiated (Bahran Noor Haira 1993).

Besides Bahran Noor Haira's explanation above, there is also another important reason behind the idea of *ta'alluq*. If we look at al-Sanûsi's arguments, it is clear that this idea is related to his basic three ontological categories, namely the necessary, the impossible, and the possible. The idea of *ta'alluq* is set up in order that we will not fall into an inconsistent logic which may lead to confusion. For instance, God's attribute of knowledge is related (*ta'alluq*) to the necessary, the impossible and the possible, but why God's attribute of power is only related to the possible? This is set up to avoid inconsistent logic, like someone asking you: Can God by His power create another God? This question is absurd because it confuses the impossible with the possible. To avoid this, al-Sanûsi makes the idea of *ta'alluq*, namely that the relation of God's power is only to the possible, not to the necessary or the impossible.

Another interesting research is by a professor of Islamic theology of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari, M. Zurkani Jahja. He undertook a study of a theological text written in Jawi by a Banjarese ulama, Asy'ari Sulaiman (d. 1981) entitled *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* (Zurkani Jahja 1995). Zurkani Jahja concentrates on finding the philosophical elements contained in the text. Because this text is based on al-Sanûsi's conception, it is actually a sample which represents a wide range of popular texts of the same line. In this study, he shows that al-Sanûsi's conception is full of philosophical elements, drawn from Greek and Islamic philosophy, both in terms of material, as well as method of arguments.

Zurkani Jahja observes that *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* uses several philosophical terminologies such as *ṣifah, dzât, jirm, jawhar, jins, nau'*, and *gerak*. For him, *dzât* is actually an Arabic translation of substance and *ṣifah* of accident, originally from Aristotle. A substance is something whose existence is independent from something else, while accident is something whose existence is dependent on substance. If we look at a red hat, then the hat is substance, while red is accident. For Zurkani Jahja, the use of these philosophical terms was also found among Muslim theologians in the Middle Ages. Likewise, the term *jirm* was used by Muslim philosophers to refer to celestial bodies, *jawhar* to substance, *jins* to genus, and *nau'* to species. The origin of these terms can also be traced back to Greek philosophy.

However, Zurkani Jahja finds that the meaning of the term *gerak* (*harakah/movement*)

in Islamic theological texts, including the *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în*, is different from that of Aristotle. In Islamic theology, according to Zurkani Jahja, the term *harakah* was initially introduced by Abu Hudzail al-Allâf (d. 784), and subsequently by other theologians. For them, *gerak* or movement simply means spatial change, as opposed to *diam* (*sukûn/calm*), while for Aristotle, movement means the change of potentiality into actuality. The wood has the potential to become a chair, so when it becomes a chair, there is a movement. On the other hand, the Muslim theologians, including Asy'ari Sulaiman in his *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în*, follow Aristotelian cosmological argument that the movement is finally moved by the unmovable mover that is God. To support this argument, they reject the idea of infinite chain of causes (*tasalsul*) and infinite rotation of causes (*dawr*).

Another important philosophical issue discussed in *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* is causality. Zurkani Jahja explains that, according to Aristotle, knowledge is to know the causes behind an object. This idea leads to Aristotelian beliefs in the necessity of cause-effect relationships. In this regard, Muslim philosophers such as al-Kindi, al-Fârabi, and Ibn Sînâ follow Aristotle. However, the Ash'arite theologian, al-Ghazâlî (d. 1111), disagrees with them. For al-Ghazâlî, the relationship between cause and effect is not necessary. It is simply God's custom to act in this world. In other words, the cause-effect relationship totally depends on the will and power of God. According to Zurkani Jahja, the Muslim theologians before al-Ghazâlî like al-Juwainî and al-Bâqillânî actually had a similar idea, but it was al-Ghazâlî who introduced it in more detailed manner. Again, *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* simply follows it.

In addition to the issue of causality, *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* also touches upon the problem of human freedom in the face of God's absolute power, or the issue of determinism versus indeterminism. For Zurkani Jahja, Aristotle apparently was not interested in discussing this issue because for him, God as the unmovable mover is far away from events in this world. In contrast, following Ash'arism, *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* argues that a person does not create his/her own acts, but God creates them. This view, according to Zurkani Jahja, is in line with that of the Christian theologian, Augustine (d. 430). In this context, it is curious why Zurkani Jahja does not discuss the idea of *kasb* developed by Ash'arism, which explains that a person acquires his/her act when God agrees with his/her will.

In terms of method, Zurkani Jahja also finds some philosophical elements in this treatise. When the author of *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* starts introducing Islamic theology as a discipline, he follows what is called *mabâdi' 'asharah* (10 foundations). The 10 foundations include its definition (*ḥadduh*), its object (*maudhû'h*), its founder (*wâdhi'h*), its name (*ismuh*), its value (*fadhluh*), its religiously legal consequence (*hukmuh*), its fruit (*tramaratuh*), its sources (*istimdâduh*), its affiliation (*nisbatuh*), and its issues (*masâiluh*).

For Zurkani Jahja, at least the idea of definition comes from Aristotle, while the 10 foundations as a whole apparently come from Muslim scholars. In this case, the author of *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* refers to a scholar named Ahmad Ibn Suhaimi who is quoted to say that the 10 foundations are necessary to identify a certain discipline. Zurkani Jahja argues that if we look at the common identification of three aspects of a discipline in modern philosophy of science, i.e., ontology, epistemology, and axiology, then we may say that the idea of 10 foundations is more comprehensive.

In addition, as one may rightly expect, like other Sanusi-Ash'arism texts, the *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* also bases its reasoning on three ontological categories called *hukm al-'aql* (which literally means rule of reason), namely the necessary (*wâjib*), the impossible (*mustaḫîl*), and the possible (*jâ'iz*). Each of the three is then divided into *dharûrî* (axiomatical), and *nazharî* (theoretical). According to Zurkani Jahja, the three ontological categories were created by the Muslim philosopher, Ibn Sînâ. The difference is only in the names, not in their meanings. Ibn Sînâ calls the impossible *mumtani'* instead of *mustaḫîl*, and the possible *mumkin* instead of *jâ'iz*.

Zurkani Jahja also explores the way in which the author of *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* presents rational arguments. It is obvious, argues Zurkani Jahja, that this treatise follows the reasoning structure devised by Aristotle called syllogism. A simple syllogism starts with a general proposition, then followed by a specific case, and finally it comes to a conclusion. For instance, it is argued in this treatise that anything that changes is temporal, and the world is changing, then it is temporal. Aristotelian syllogism is known among the Muslim scholars since the Middle Ages, when the Aristotle Logic was translated into Arabic as *Manṭiq*. Thus, like other philosophical elements mentioned earlier, *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în* and similar texts of Sanûsi-Ash'arism simply follow this classical Muslim heritage.

Having analyzed the philosophical elements in *Sirâj al-Mubtadi'în*, Zurkani Jahja poses this important question: What can we learn from this, to develop material and method of Islamic theology today? M. Zurkani Jahja then answers that, if the classical Muslim Scholars were able to keep an open mind towards Greek philosophy, and to use some of its elements in their explanation of Islamic theological doctrines, then we should adopt a similar attitude towards modern philosophy and scientific findings. By keeping an open mind, modern Muslim scholars can make Islamic theological terms and arguments familiar with, and relevant to, the contemporary society and culture.

Besides analyzing the texts of Sanûsi-Ash'arism, researchers also look at other texts of Salafi orientation as well as texts written in Indonesian language. The findings of their research indicate that the theological texts written in Indonesian apparently try to explain Islamic theological doctrines in terms familiar with, and relevant to, daily life. These texts generally do not use the intricate philosophical arguments, nor restrict themselves

to explain the attributes of God and His messengers, but move on to the whole six pillars of the Muslim faith (the other four pillars are belief in angels, holy books, day of judgment, and God's determinism). There is even a theological book in Indonesian entitled *Iman dan Bahagia* which explains how Islamic faith will bring happiness to people. This text is written by a Banjarese Muhammadiyah leader, Gusti Abdul Muis (1979). In addition, the theological texts with Salafi leanings taught in modern *pesantren* are generally written in a language easy to understand, and most of their arguments are taken directly from the Qur'an and the Hadith. Moreover, many of the Salafi theological texts are written by modern scholars. Because the impetus of the Salafi theology is the purification of the Muslim faith from allegedly un-Islamic elements, this type of theological texts are easily perceived as relevant to people's daily life (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 2004b, 104–107).

The analysis of the contents and relevance of the theological texts by the researchers above may give us a picture of the development of theological thought in Banjarese society. In general, the researchers question the relevance of the outdated and complex philosophical arguments of the Sanusi-Ash'arism. However, there are still weaknesses in this criticism. First, the criticism is generally only based on textual evidence rather than direct experiences of the actual learning and teaching process in *pengajian* or *pesantren*. In fact, it is very possible that a good teacher will not only read the text to his students, but also explains the relevance of the text to daily life.[21] At present, Guru Zuhdiannor is one of a few Banjarese ulama, who teaches a similar Sanusi-Ash'arism text in his *pengajian*, and with extraordinary skill explains the relevance of the text to Muslim ethics. This is why his *pengajians* are held regularly in two big mosques in Banjarmasin, and are usually attended by thousands of people. Besides, one must remember that in traditional Islam, the oral tradition is very important to understand the classical texts (Nasr 1992). Second, to say that the Sanusi-Ash'arism's texts neglect the spiritual dimension of faith is not completely true. For instance, at the end of a commentary on *Umm al-Barâhîn* by al-Sanûsî himself, he introduces a Sufi model of invocation (*dzikr*) or remembrance of God, to internalize the Islamic theological values. In the same text, one finds an explanation of the Islamic Sufi ethics such as *tawakkul* (sincere trust to God), *zuhd* (ascetism), *ḫayâ'* (shameness before God), *faqr* (spiritual poverty), and so on (Sanûsi n.d., 226–237).[22] Third, sometimes, a Muslim scholar who teaches in *pengajian*, uses not only a theological text, but also a Sufi text. Therefore, it is very possible, in this

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21) Similarly, there is a significant difference between the written text and oral presentation in the reading ritual of Sufi anecdotes (Millie 2008).

22) It is noteworthy that the Muslim Banjarese traditional gathering for reciting *Lâilâha illallâh* (there is no god but God) 70,000 times called "*dzikir tujuh laksa*," which is believed can save the dead person from hell, is probably based on this Sanûsi's work as well. It is still practiced up to now.

case that the teacher would explain the relationships between theology and Islamic spirituality.

In any case, some scholars of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari, have tried to offer an alternative in terms of material and method of Islamic theology. One of them is M. Zurkani Jahja. He wrote a dissertation on al-Ghazali's metholodogy in theology, supervised by the two prominent Indonesian Muslim theologians, Harun Nasution and Nurcholish Madjid.[23] From September 1998 to October 2000, Zurkani Jahja regularly wrote a column in the local weekly tabloid called *Serambi Ummah*. The column is concentrated on explaining the meaning of each of the 99 names of God (*al-Asmâ' al-Ḥusna*). For Zurkani Jahja, the theology of 99 names of God is a good alternative in terms of materials to Sanusi's 20 attributes of God because it is relatively easier to understand, and it is easily related to Muslim daily life in terms of its ethical and spiritual implications. The weekly columns were then compiled and published in two volumes in 2000 by a local publisher, Grafika Wangi Kalimantan. In 2010, the book was republished in one volume by Pustaka Pesantren, Yogyakarta (a branch of LKiS publisher), and became widely distributed all over Indonesia (Zurkani Jahja 2002; 2010).[24]

Certainly, a book on 99 names of God is not new at all, even in traditional Banjarese society. However, as Nurcholish Madjid wrote, the names were studied mostly not as materials of theology but as sources of "magical" power (Nurcholish Madjid 2012, 53–54). A Banjarese ulama, Husen Qadri (d. 1967), also wrote a short explanation on the 99 names of God in his *Sanjata Mukmin* (A believer's weapon), a work written in Jawi. This work mostly concentrates on the spiritual power of each name that could be gained by any Muslim who recites it (Husin Qadri 1971). Zurkani Jahja's work, however, is different. It is an attempt to explain Muslim understanding of God through His Names, and how they relate to Islamic ethics and spirituality. He also tries to use some western modern philosophical arguments to support his ideas, but at the same time, he still adheres to Sunni-Ash'arite theological views.

Another alternative theological material produced by a team of lecturers of the Ushuluddin Faculty at IAIN Antasari is a book entitled *Kitâb Uṣûl al-Dîn* (Tim Fakultas Ushuluddin 2004a). The book was distributed in some *pengajians* and sold in the market.

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23) The dissertation was defended in 1987 at IAIN (now UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. It was published in 1996, and reprinted in 2009 (Zurkani Jahja 2009). Unlike most scholarly works on al-Ghazali, both in the Middle East and the West, Zurkani Jahja convincingly argues that there is no contradiction among al-Ghazali's works written before and after he became a Sufi. They are simply different methods for different levels of theological views.

24) I edited both editions, and I wrote a preface to introduce Zurkani Jahja's theological views. As his student, I was quite influenced by his ideas, so I wrote my undergraduate thesis in 1994 on the same subject (Mujiburrahman 2005).

It was not accidental that the book is written in Jawi. For traditionalist Muslims, especially in Banjarese society, the Arabic script is considered sacred. Thus, the ulama usually reads a text in *pengajian* if it is written in Jawi or Arabic, not in Indonesian. The contents of the book still discuss Sanusi's formula of 20 attributes, but at the same time, it includes other pillars of faith such as the beliefs in angels, the day of judgment, and so on. The book has been used in some *pengajians*, but it probably will not replace the other popular texts.

Conclusion

We can see from the previous discussion that the existing studies on Islamic theological texts in Banjarese society may give us a clearer picture of the development of Islamic theological thought in that society. There have been continuities and changes in terms of texts, issues, and languages. The early theological text analyzed by researchers is the work of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari in the eighteenth century, *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn*. In 1988, there was a controversy over the authorship of this work. Some scholars debated whether it was the work of Asryad al-Banjari or of Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani. However, based on strong textual evidence, some scholars have convincingly argued that the *Tuḥfat al-Râghibîn* is the work of al-Banjari. In addition to the controversy, this theological text illustrates the strong influence of Sunni-Ash'arism and its application in Banjarese socio-cultural contexts. Al-Banjari's opposition to some pre-Islamic traditional rituals can be seen as his efforts to intensely Islamize his society. Al-Banjari's antagonistic attitude is also evidence that the assumption that traditional Islam in Indonesia is always accommodative to local beliefs and rituals, is contentious (Feillard 2011).

By the early twentieth century, the most popular theological texts are those which follow the Sanusi-Ash'arism. This means that al-Banjari's earlier text has a wider perspective of Sunnism than those written in the later period which limit themselves to the Sanusi conception. Moreover, due to the fact that the Sanusi theological conception is strongly based on rational philosophical arguments, researchers often assume that it is not easily understood and internalized by ordinary people. Partly because of this difficulty, since the early 1970s, some Banjarese ulama have begun writing Islamic theological texts in the Indonesian language, as well as developing more comprehensive materials and familiar arguments. Moreover, a few other Banjarese ulama, following Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, also wrote theological texts in Jawi. Given the Banjarese Muslim perception of Arabic script as sacred, even a team of the Ushuluddin Faculty produced a similar Jawi text in 2004. On the other hand, there was also an effort in using

the 99 Names of God as materials for learning Islamic theology. This was partly as a response to the inadequacy of the Sanusi conception, and an attempt to relate Islamic theological values to Islamic ethics and spirituality. Since the 1980s, some modern *pesantrens* have introduced Salafi theology which is simpler in terms of its arguments, and is clearly oriented toward purifying Muslim faith from pre-Islamic beliefs. This development is obviously a challenge to the dominant Ash'arism among the Banjarese. Unlike in the 1920s when the reformist Muhammadiyah—whose theology is a kind of Salafism—started its influence among the Banjarese mostly through *pengajian* and modern schools, since the 1980s, the salafi theology has been taught to students who are expected to become ulama.

With this development, one may ask if the traditional Sanusi-Ash'arism will soon decline? This question could be better answered by looking at the power behind the contesting theologies. To my observation, the production and transmission of traditional religious knowledge through *pesantren* and *pengajian* in Banjarese society remain strong. Most Banjarese Muslims, especially from the lower class, in terms of religious matters, still depend on what the traditionalist ulama say. This is very different from their attitudes towards Muslim intellectuals at the IAIN, even though some of them also become highly respected ulama. The influences of the intellectuals at the IAIN are apparently limited to the middle and educated class. On the other hand, Islamic sects such as Islam Jamaah and Ahmadiyah whose theologies are partly but significantly different from that of the Sunni majority, have also entered South Kalimantan, at least since 1990s. Moreover, since the Reformation Era (1998 onwards), the political theology of radical Islam, especially that of Hizbut Tahrir, has been strongly influential among university students, particularly at the secular university of Lambung Mangkurat. Daily reports on corruption, violence, sexual promiscuity, and so on, apparently make the younger generation dissatisfied with the traditionalist theology, and therefore, they become attracted to a religious utopian ideology offered by new movements like Hizbut Tahrir. Last but not least, the Banjarese society has become religiously more and more plural, both internally and externally (Mujiburrahman *et al.* 2011; Mujiburrahman 2012), and this certainly poses new important theological questions which probably cannot be answered by the classical theology of Sanusi-Asy'arism.

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