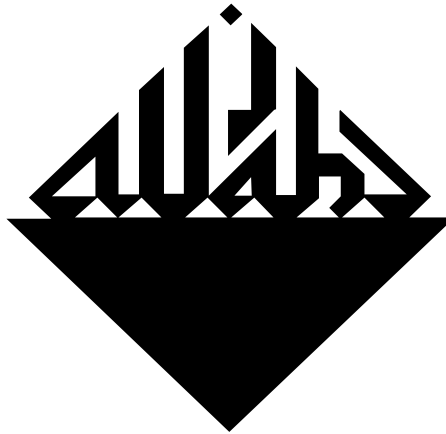


STUDIA ISLAMIKA

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PARTISANSHIP, RELIGION, AND SOCIAL CLASS:
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Mujiburrahman

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Banjarese Muslim Figures in the Works of Karel A. Steenbrink and Martin Van Bruinessen

Abstract: *This article analyzes the works of Dutch scholars Karel A. Steenbrink and Martin van Bruinessen, focusing on their research on Islam in Indonesia, particularly regarding the Banjarese ethnic group. Steenbrink examines Banjarese historical figures from the 18th and 19th centuries, while van Bruinessen extends the analysis to include figures from the 20th century and explores Sufi order movements such as the Sammaniya and Naqshabandiyah Orders, as well as heterodox groups. The article evaluates how these scholars presented and analyzed the roles of Muslim Banjarese figures in society through their writings and personal communications. The analysis generated both positive and negative responses from other scholars, indicating the impact and recognition of their work. Despite the Banjarese Muslims being a small part of their broader research on Islam in Indonesia, their contributions are well-regarded among scholars in the field.*

Keywords: Steenbrink, van Bruinessen, Banjar, Banjarese, Islam.

Abstrak: Artikel ini menganalisis karya-karya sarjana Belanda Karel A. Steenbrink dan Martin van Bruinessen, dengan fokus pada penelitian mereka mengenai Islam di Indonesia, khususnya mengenai kelompok etnis Banjar. Steenbrink mengulas tokoh-tokoh sejarah Banjar dari abad ke-18 dan ke-19, sementara van Bruinessen memperluas analisisnya dengan memasukkan tokoh-tokoh dari abad ke-20 dan mengeksplorasi gerakan-gerakan tarekat sufi seperti Tarekat Sammaniyah dan Naqshabandiyah, serta kelompok-kelompok heterodoks. Artikel ini menguji bagaimana para sarjana ini mempresentasikan dan menganalisis peran tokoh-tokoh Muslim Banjar dalam masyarakat melalui tulisan dan komunikasi pribadi mereka. Analisis tersebut menghasilkan tanggapan positif dan negatif dari para sarjana lain, yang menunjukkan dampak dan pengakuan atas karya mereka. Meskipun Muslim Banjar hanya menjadi bagian kecil dari penelitian yang lebih luas mengenai Islam di Indonesia, kontribusi mereka sangat dihargai oleh para sarjana di bidang ini.

Kata kunci: Steenbrink, van Bruinessen, Banjar, Orang Banjar, Islam.

ملخص: تحلل هذه المقالة أعمال الباحثين الهولنديين كاريل ستينبرينك ومارتن فان بروينسن، مع التركيز على بحثهما عن الإسلام في إندونيسيا، وخاصة فيما يتعلق بالجماعة العرقية البنجارية. يفحص ستينبرينك الشخصيات التاريخية البنجارية من القرنين الثامن عشر والتاسع عشر، بينما يوسع فان بروينسن التحليل ليشمل الشخصيات من القرن العشرين ويستكشف حركات الطرق الصوفية مثل طرق السمانية والنقشبندية، بالإضافة إلى الجماعات غير التقليدية. يقيم المقال كيفية عرض هؤلاء العلماء وتحليلهم لأدوار الشخصيات المسلمة البنجارية في المجتمع من خلال كتاباتهم واتصالاتهم الشخصية. ولدت تلك التحاليل ردود فعل إيجابية وسلبية من علماء آخرين، مما يشير إلى تأثير عملهم والاعتراف به. على الرغم من كون مسلمي البنجار جزءاً صغيراً من الأبحاث الأوسع حول الإسلام في إندونيسيا إلا أن مساهماتهم تحظى بتقدير كبير بين العلماء في هذا المجال.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ستينبرينك، فان بروينسن، بانجار، البانجاريون، الإسلام.

I am one of the few Indonesians who wrote a Ph.D. dissertation supervised by two prominent Dutch scholars in Islamic and Indonesian studies, Martin van Bruinessen (1946-) and Karel A. Steenbrink (1942-2022). The topic of my dissertation, Muslim-Christian relations in Indonesia during the New Order period (Mujiburrahman 2006), prompted van Bruinessen to ask Steenbrink to accompany him in supervising me. Van Bruinessen was aware of Steenbrink's familiarity with Christian literature and notable Christian figures in Indonesia. In addition, both scholars had developed a close and warm relationship since van Bruinessen started his work in Indonesia in the early 1980-s. It was Steenbrink who paved the way for van Bruinessen to enter the 'wilderness' of Indonesian Islam.¹ Thus, I was very fortunate to have them both as my supervisors to work with. As can be expected, sharp disagreements between the two never happened during my dissertation writing.

Apart from that, of all van Bruinessen's and Steenbrink's students with the Banjarese ethnic background, it seems that I am the one with the strongest Banjar identity. Van Bruinessen once e-mailed me, saying that he had three fellow students and three fellow teachers of Banjar ethnic background.² The three fellow students are Farid Wajidi, Noorhaidi Hasan, and me, and the three of us happened to come from the same regency, Amuntai, Hulu Sungai Utara. Noorhaidi Hasan was even my classmate at the elementary school. However, in terms of locality, I probably could surpass them since most of my education took place in South Kalimantan, the abode of the majority of Banjarese, while Farid Wajidi and Noorhaidi Hasan obtained their undergraduate degree from the Sunan Kalijaga State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN), Yogyakarta. Noorhaidi Hasan even completed his secondary education in the Special Program of Islamic High School (MAPK) in Yogyakarta. Moreover, I also returned to Banjarmasin after completing my doctorate in the Netherlands, and I feel comfortable working in the city. On the other hand, for his MA thesis, Noorhaidi Hasan studied the most notable Banjarese Islamic scholar, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (1710-1812), and later published an article on the work of this figure (Hasan 1999, 2007).

In addition to the three of us as fellow students of van Bruinessen, there are also three people he calls his 'fellow teachers', namely Alfani Daud, Zurkani Jahja, and Analiansyah. All of them already passed away. The first two were my lecturers at the Ushuluddin Faculty of the

Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN). Alfani Daud, who had served as the Rector of the Institute (1990-1994), seemed to be the first Banjarese man who was guided and assisted by Steenbrink in writing his Ph.D. dissertation, both in Yogyakarta and in Leiden. In the preface of his dissertation, Alfani Daud wrote:

To Dr. Karel Adriaan Steenbrink and his family, the author would like to thank him, for accommodating the author for some time in Yogyakarta, when writing, and especially to Karel because of his willingness to discuss various parts of the dissertation, and especially for his efforts, a large part of this writing was typed on a computer, making it easier for the author to re-edit it later (Daud 1997, vii).³

Alfani Daud later became a friend of van Bruinessen. According to van Bruinessen, scholarly speaking, compared to Zurkani Jahja and Analiansyah, Alfani Daud was a man with the most deeply rooted anthropological orientation. This gives the reason why van Bruinessen could establish a closer tie to Alfani Daud, let alone added by the fact that they both happened to be supervised by Jan van Baal.⁴ Martin van Bruinessen also found Zurkani Jahja, who had served as Vice Rector (1989-1997) and Dean of the Faculty of Ushuluddin (1997-2001) of the Antasari Institute for Islamic Studies, as an important figure, since they both shared the same interest in studying Sufism and Sufi orders. Zurkani Jahja was also an interesting person to van Bruinessen because he was the Executive Chairman of the Indonesian traditionalist Muslim organization, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) of South Kalimantan, who was at odds with Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). As for Analiansyah, he was the Head of the Research Center of the Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies, which would be very helpful in providing information about research on Islam in the Banjarese community and establishing contacts with several informants for a researcher like van Bruinessen.

Steenbrink visited Banjarmasin twice, while van Bruinessen has been to Banjarmasin three times. Apart from visiting and giving public lectures at the Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies, the two of them also had time to visit the grave of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (1710-1812) in Kelampayan and visited Amuntai, the city of Pesantren (an Islamic boarding school) named 'Rakha' where Idham Chalid (1922-2010), the national leader of NU, studied and then taught in his youth. I failed to find documents about Steenbrink's early visit.⁵ It is estimated that he visited Banjarmasin in 1985 or 1986, accompanied

by Alfani Daud, for a seminar on madrasah and general education. Then, as a Rector of the Antasari State Islamic University, I invited Steenbrink to deliver a lecture on “Muslim Migrants in Europe” in October 2018. After the lecture, I accompanied him to visit museums, two historical mosques, and the floating market. As for van Bruinessen, in 1987 he visited Banjarmasin twice to research the world views of the Islamic scholars, and was then invited in 1993 for a seminar on ‘The Value of Sufism in the Modern Century’. I successfully found several documents regarding van Bruinessen’s attendance at this seminar, in the form of papers, photos, local media reports, and his letter to Alfani Daud.

Therefore, although Islam in Banjarese society was not the main focus of Steenbrink’s and van Bruinessen’s works, they undoubtedly paid some attention to this field of research. This article will discuss their studies of some important Banjarese Muslim figures. Their views and analyses will be seen from the historical and social contexts, and if any, will also be compared with the views of other scholars. It is hoped that, through this way of presenting their views, we can see their respective contributions to the study of Banjarese Islamic culture and history in particular, and Indonesian Islam in general.

Steenbrink: From Antasari to Arsyad al-Banjari

Even though Steenbrink had only been to Banjarmasin twice, his contribution to the study of Muslim Banjarese figures is very important to look at, especially in the framework of the dynamics of Islamic studies in Indonesia. In general, according to the statistics, 99.55% of the Banjarese are Muslims, and according to a 2000 survey, it is ranked as the 10th largest ethnic group in Indonesia (Suryadinata, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, and Aris Ananta 2003, 31, 68). However, in his observation, Steenbrink made an interesting note that although the Banjar area has given birth to many verses and saga, which gives the impression that the Banjar language has a richer vocabulary than other Malay languages, “the Banjarmasin area ... received less attention from researchers and collectors of old manuscripts” (Steenbrink 1984, 66, 91). Likewise, there had been insufficient attention from scholars toward Banjarese Muslim figures, such as Prince Antasari (d. 1882) and Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (1710-1812). Even Steenbrink noted that the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* published by Brill (first edition?) did

not mention the name Muhammad Arsyad, even though “there was no figure who had written so widely and systematically in the field of Islamic law in the Indonesian language, such as Arsyad al-Banjari” (Steenbrink 1984, 91).

For this reason, in his book entitled *Some Aspects of Islam in 19th Century Indonesia* published in 1984, he tried, among other things, to explore the history of Banjarese Muslim figures. Steenbrink’s study primarily refers to Dutch sources, coupled with very limited local sources. Perhaps because he refers to Dutch sources on the one hand, and his attitude as an academic who must be critical on the other hand, some of Steenbrink’s statements regarding Muhammad Arsyad al Banjari, Antasari, and other figures around him are partly surprising, at least for some Banjarese people who read them. However, the controversy created by Steenbrink triggered the dynamics of academic discourses on the Banjarese community, which so far had tended to be underreported.

Steenbrink’s description of the Banjar War is quite interesting. It started with an explanation of the political unrest in the palace circle of the Banjar sultanate in the 19th century, which continued to involve Dutch intervention until the emergence of several figures who moved the community against the Dutch. Prince Antasari, who later appeared as the main figure in the Banjar War (1859-1905), was the grandson of Prince Amir who failed to accept the throne of the sultanate because it was taken over by Prince Nata who had the title of Sultan Tahmidullah II (1785-1808). Steenbrink maintains that, in the 1850s, Antasari lived simply in a village in Martapura. However, after the political upheaval, following the dissolution of the Banjar Sultanate by the Dutch in 1860, Antasari emerged as the leader of the resistance. According to Steenbrink, Antasari was given the titles of ‘Supreme Leader of Religion’ and ‘Panembahan Amiruddin Khalifatul Mukminin’, the religious titles which were “exaggerated and incompatible with reality” (Steenbrink 1984, 47).

Although Antasari’s title seems exaggerated, Steenbrink carefully observes that there was a strong religious influence on the resistance movement against the Dutch, either from Islam or from the animist and Hindu traditions that preceded it (Steenbrink 1984, 46–51). For example, it is notable from the emergence of a strange character named Aling in Muning in 1859. Aling was an old farmer, affected by leprosy and exiled from society. After ‘meditating’ for 40 days, he

fell unconscious, and when he woke up he said that he had received revelations, and deserved to gain the title of 'Lord Almighty'. Aling finally had many followers. Aling also joined Antasari, since they were connected through the marriage of Aling's daughter named Saranti to Antasari's son named Muhammad Said. With this alliance, Antasari received many supporters for the war against the Dutch. However, this alliance did not last long. According to Steenbrink, based on Dutch sources, Aling's son, who had the title of Sultan Muning and surrendered to the Dutch, admitted that he was cheated by Antasari.

Another figure highlighted by Steenbrink was Abdul Rasyid known as the Penghulu Rasyid. He was a figure who stirred up the resistance against the Dutch in 1861. Steenbrink's account of this man is quite interesting.

According to news received in Banjarmasin, Abdul Rasyid once threw away the Qur'an and said that it would give him even better confidence. Then he killed an albino from Sihang and ordered his followers to eat the flesh and drink the blood. He promised his disciples that by doing such actions, they would attain a state of immunity to the highest degree that humans could attain. At the Benua Lawas mosque, they slaughtered a buffalo and with the buffalo's blood, the mosque was cleaned (Steenbrink 1984, 50).

The account of Abdul Rasyid above is certainly surprising, especially for the Amuntai people, because he is considered a pious figure and a hero who fought against the Dutch. Even a street in Amuntai is named after him. However, since the source to which Steenbrink is referring is a Dutch one, parts of the report may be exaggerated. On the other hand, the absence of local historical sources written in the 19th century in South Kalimantan about this man makes it difficult for people to refute or counterbalance the account of the Dutch sources.

Furthermore, Steenbrink provided another description of Abdul Rasyid's movement which would later become one of the important concerns for subsequent scholars. Steenbrink noted:

Then this Penghulu Abdul Rasyid cut coconut leaves in the shape of a crocodile. By saying a few words of magic, this leaf is put into the water, in the belief that this crocodile really lives and swallows all Europeans, so that in just one month Borneo will surely become a land free of European people: free from forced labor and tax.

This group is also called 'Beratip Beamal' or 'Beratip Beilmu' because gaining immunity is the main purpose of their ritual practice. They wear very tight white or yellow cloth. Their attacks on Dutch troops were preceded by ritual practice, which usually lasted several days (Steenbrink 1984, 50).

Steenbrink's explanation of the belief or myth about the ability to create crocodiles is still heard in the Banjarese community, especially among the Kelua people. The Banjarese community also believes that some families claim to be descended from crocodiles. This issue will be discussed further in the section on Martin van Bruinessen.

As for the Beratip Beamal movement, and the Banjar War in general, the next researcher, Helius Sjamsuddin, has elaborated a lot on this issue in his dissertation, which was completed at Monash University in 1989 and supervised by Merle C. Ricklefs (1943-2019). His work was then translated and published in Indonesia, with an introduction written by the Indonesian historian, Taufik Abdullah. Like Steenbrink, Helius Sjamsuddin also referred mostly to Dutch sources, but he gave a more sympathetic description of Antasari. In Aling's case, Sjamsuddin did not see that Antasari was deceiving Aling, let alone asking him to admit to being the recipient of the revelations. According to Sjamsuddin, Antasari came later, taking advantage of Aling, who already gained many followers. Aling himself, according to his study, was a former palace member of the Banjar sultanate, who was disappointed by the internal chaos until the Dutch disbanded it, so he dreamed of restoring the Banjar sultanate. Likewise, with the Beratip Beamal movement, Sjamsuddin considered the movement as a Sufi order, supported by the 'hajjis' (people who already performed the pilgrimage to Mecca), generally wealthy merchants, who at that time were numerous. He estimated that the Beratip Beamal movement was the Naqshabandiyah Order (Sjamsuddin 2001, 214–15, 267–82).

On the other hand, several years before Steenbrink and Sjamsuddin, in 1975, M. Idwar Saleh, a historian of Lambung Mangkurat University, published an article in *Archipel* about the Banjar War. He also quoted Dutch sources concerning the role of Penghulu Rasyid, but at the same time, he gave a more explicit critical analysis than that of Steenbrink. Having described the Beratip Beamal movement and Penghulu Rasyid, Idwar Saleh said:

But the general result of this form of resistance, the psycho-cultural resistance which relied basically on supernatural forces and supernatural aids, and operated on religious-magical lines were doomed to fail every time these movements face the modern weapon and organization of the Dutch (Saleh 1975, 136–37).⁶

In addition to Antasari, Aling, and Penghulu Rasyid, the figure highlighted by Steenbrink was Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari

(hereafter referred to as 'Arsyad al-Banjari'). To study the history and thoughts of Arsyad al-Banjari, Steenbrink referred to sources written by Banjar scholars and to the famous book by Arsyad al-Banjari himself, *Sabil al-muhtadīn*, which is also the name of the big mosque in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan.⁷ Steenbrink's account of Arsyad al-Banjari was both sympathetic and critical, which led to feedback from other scholars.

Steenbrink sees Arsyad Al-Banjari primarily as an expert on Islamic law (*fiqh*), as reflected in *Sabil al-muhtadīn* and the stories surrounding his life. For example, he recounted the story of Arsyad al-Banjari when he returned to the archipelago and stopped at Batavia. He managed to correct the Qibla (the prayer direction) of Jembatan Lima Mosque, which was deflected by about 25 degrees. He also corrected the Qibla direction of the Luar Batang Mosque in Pekojan. These attempts showed Arsyad al-Banjari's expertise in the fields of *hisāb* or astronomy. According to Steenbrink, *Tahrīr aqwāl al-adillah* by Sayyid Utsman (1822-1913), the jurisconsult (mufti) of Batavia during the Dutch colonial period, is only a commentary on Arsyad al-Banjari's work on the direction of the Qibla. However, Steenbrink also noted that, in 1892, a Dutch naval commander stated that the direction of the Qibla of a Great Mosque in Banjarmasin, as previously determined by Arsyad al-Banjari, was incorrect. "Indeed, at that time, knowledge of the direction of the Qibla was somewhat more advanced than the time of Arsyad al-Banjari," wrote Steenbrink (1984, 93).

The same critical tone was also found in Steenbrink's recount of the story of the marriage of Arsyad al-Banjari's daughter named Syarifah. Syarifah, who lived in Banjar, got married to Usman. However, in Mecca, Arsyad al-Banjari also married Syarifah to Abdul Wahab Bugis. When Arsyad arrived in Banjarmasin and learned of these 'two' marriages, he then calculated which of the two marriages was earlier. In conclusion, the earlier marriage was the marriage in Mecca, which Syarifah did not attend, so the marriage in Banjarmasin was canceled. "If this folklore is not entirely correct, actually the main point of the story is to demonstrate Muhammad Arsyad's expertise in the field of astronomy," said Steenbrink (1984, 93–94).

As an expert in Islamic jurisprudence, it is natural that Arsyad al-Banjari became the mufti of the sultanate, and the following muftis in the 19th century were his descendants as well. However, it seems that

Steenbrink does not understand the difference between a mufti and a judge (*qāḍī*), so he equates the mufti as the Supreme Judge. The mufti is a jurisconsult, a person who provides a legal opinion (*fatwā*) and can serve as a consultant for judges. The judge in the Banjar sultanate system, as seen in the Sultan Adam Law (1837), is the sultan himself. This is also evident in the legend of Haji Abdul Hamid Abulung, who is said to have been accused of heresy by Arsyad al-Banjari because of his beliefs in the unification of human beings and God, similar to that of al-Hallāj. According to the legend, the death sentence for Abdul Hamid was handed down by the sultan on the advice of Arsyad al-Banjari.

In the context of the abovementioned case of Abdul Hamid, what is much more interesting is the following Steenbrink's comments:

This story is very similar to the story about Syekh Siti Jenar in Java; and if we remember the close relationship between Banjar and Java, then the conclusion immediately arises, that most likely, this story is only the Banjar version of the story of Siti Jenar, which is only a Javanese version of the narrative about al-Hallāj (Steenbrink 1984, 96).

However, Steenbrink did not immediately conclude that Arsyad al-Banjari, better known as an expert on Islamic law, is truly against al-Hallāj's Sufism. Steenbrink said that he could not make more comments on this issue because he did not find any treatise by Arsyad al-Banjari in the field of Sufism yet. However, Steenbrink suspected that as a student of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān al-Madanī (1718-1775) and a fellow student of Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani (1737-1832), Arsyad al-Banjari was a follower of the Sammaniyah Sufi Order and a follower of moderate Sufism of al-Ghazali.

Steenbrink's analysis provides an interesting niche to study further. According to Feener's research, the influence of the doctrine of *ittihād* of al-Hallāj is not found in the works of Indonesian Sufism in the 17th and 18th centuries. What can be found is simply the influence of *wahdat al-wujūd* by Ibn Arabi's and al-Ghazali's moderate Sufism. Feener even suspected that al-Hallāj's doctrines, which are referred directly to al-Hallāj's works, were only discovered in HAMKA's writings in the twentieth century, while HAMKA quoted Louis Massignon! Therefore, for Feener, the story of Siti Jenar and the like may be a reflection of local or Javanese Hindu beliefs, which appear in a Javanese Islamic background, rather than the direct influence of al-Hallāj's teachings (Feener 1998, 571–92).

On the other hand, M. Asywadie Syukur argues that the fatwa regarding Abdul Hamid Abulung's heresy can be found in Arsyad al-Banjari's work, *Tuhfat al-rāghibīn* (Syukur 1990). The quote is as follows:

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 genuine infidels.

However, as I have pointed out, the text cited by Asyawadie Syukur above does not mention the name of Abdul Hamid Abulung, nor does it mention the *hulūl* teaching, *ittihād* or *waḥdat al-wujūd*. What he put forward was precisely Sufi understanding which ignored the shari'a. The text is quoted by Arsyad al-Banjari from al-Ghazali's *Fayṣal al-tafriqah bayn al-Islām wa al-zandaqah* (Mujiburrahman 2014, 618, 2017a, 150). As a result, the legend of Abdul Hamid, as predicted by Steenbrink, historically and scientifically is still difficult to prove.

Apart from analyzing various stories about Arsyad al-Banjari, Steenbrink also analyzed the former's work, *Sabīl al-muhtadīn*. In general, Steenbrink's view is not very positive about the contents of this work. By analyzing the opening and closing of this work, Steenbrink found some valuable information such as the fact that the writing of this work began in 1193 H or 1779 CE, and was completed on 27 Rabi' al-Awwal 1195 H or 22 April 1781 CE. It was also stated that Taḥmīdullāh ibn Tamjīdullāh was the Sultan who was in power at that time. Here, Steenbrink questioned Arsyad al-Banjari's praise of the Sultan, although the same can be found in almost all the writings of scholars of that time and the Middle Ages. The problem was, according to a Dutch source, that the Sultan was a notorious figure, who for the sake of power was willing to poison his predecessor and brother-in-law to death, killed two of his children, and threw his third out of the palace. On the other hand, Steenbrink did not seem to question Arsyad al-Banjari's attitude towards Dutch colonialism and the sultans who cooperated in trade with them.⁸

For Steenbrink, in terms of contents, the *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* which is a commentary on the work of Nūruddīn al-Ranīrī (d.1658), *al-Sirāt al-mustaqīm*, discusses more speculative issues of Islamic law rather than a response to the typical problems faced by Banjarese Muslims. "Even

so, a more in-depth analysis may also produce several cases of problems that arose in the 18th century of Banjarese society,” Steenbrink added. Overall, he saw that this work only talks about worship. The issue of *tayammum* (a ritual purification using dust instead of water), which according to Steenbrink is not very relevant to Indonesia’s watery nature, is discussed at length. Meanwhile, the issue of *mu‘āmalah* (transaction) *farā’id* (inheritance), marriage, and *hudūd* (penal law) is not discussed at all in this work. Steenbrink even considered that Arsyad al-Banjari seemed too legalistic when he said that it is lawful for food owners not to provide food to hungry people. Even so, Steenbrink ended his comments by saying that as a scholar who cleared new land and irrigation, Arsyad al-Banjari must have had a practical thought rather than simply the legal one (Steenbrink 1984, 99–100).

In a seminar paper that was later to be published, Steenbrink fiercely criticized *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* (Steenbrink 1985). Here, Steenbrink questioned whether Arsyad al-Banjari is worthy of the title of a great scholar. He assessed that although it would be difficult for Arsyad al-Banjari to write in Malay, he did not show any creativity in that the Malay language of the *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* is “too Arabic-minded”. Furthermore, Steenbrink argues:

In terms of content, it can indeed be assessed as a book of *fiqh* which proves that the era was a form of decline: Islam in it includes worship only. Regarding the prayer, it has been more than 300 pages long, meanwhile, the basic questions of the state or other socio-political issues are not discussed at all! In writing issues, he also often raises issues that are less important or completely irrelevant...

His book is full of problems so strange that the etiquette of people today (to call him) a ‘great scholar’ is difficult to maintain. Indeed, he was a person of his day, a time of decline. As long as he did not make it out of the usual clerical old-fashioned of his day, he was not yet entitled to the title of a great scholar (Steenbrink 1985, 119–20).

Understandably, Steenbrink’s scathing and sharp criticism eventually sparked a response. One of those who responded to Steenbrink was Humaidy, a Banjarese who at that time was still an undergraduate student of the Adab Faculty of the Sunan Kalijaga State Institute for Islamic Studies. He wrote in the national newspaper, *Pelita*, which was published in three consecutive series. According to Humaidy, his response in the newspaper received praise from the Indonesian intellectual, Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005), who came to the Sunan

Kalijaga State Institute, for a seminar on 'Islamic Books' on October 15, 1985.⁹ Humaidy was welcomed by the Dean of the Adab Faculty, who congratulated him on the praise by Madjid. According to Humaidy, Steenbrink himself finally met him and decided to visit Banjarmasin, to seek first-hand information and explore further the Banjarese Islamic tradition.¹⁰

Unfortunately, Humaidy did not keep clippings of his article, and I haven't been able to find it anywhere else. In a conversation with me, Humaidy remembered several points of criticism he conveyed to Steenbrink. First, for Humaidy, Steenbrink's assessment of Arsyad al-Banjari was unfair because he did not try to see that man in his own time. In fact, for the people of the archipelago, Arsyad al-Banjari produced a remarkable work for his time. Second, it was only natural that Arsyad al-Banjari's Malay language sounded Arabic because he wrote about Islamic law which is rooted in the Arabic-language intellectual tradition, so it was hard for him to find the equivalents of many terms in local languages. Moreover, it is well known that the book was written in Malay Arabic script, which symbolically connects the two languages. Third, it is no wonder that Arsyad al-Banjari wrote a lot about prayer because prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam. Moreover, this book was written and taught for Muslims in general, not specifically for scholars. Fourth, Steenbrink's assessment was unfair when he said that Arsyad al-Banjari did not deserve the title of a great scholar simply by looking at one work, *Sabil al-muhtadin*. If he were to examine his other works, perhaps his assessment would be different. Apart from that, the greatness of Arsyad al-Banjari is not only proven by the fact that his work is still being studied today, but also because his students and descendants, for several generations, continue to be the leading and influential Islamic scholars.¹¹

Moreover, in line with Humaidy, a Malaysian scholar, Wan Mohd Shaghir Abdullah, also wrote a response to Steenbrink's writings. He was encouraged to write a response to Steenbrink, after receiving a letter from a Banjarese Muslim intellectual, Abdurrahman, a professor of law at Lambung Mangkurat University and later was to become the Supreme Court Judge. Attached to the letter was a photocopy of Steenbrink's writings above. In response, Wan Mohd Shaghir often refers to Steenbrink as "Orientalist" and considered Steenbrink's writings as "too brave and challenging". Some of Wan Mohd Shaghir's

responses are similar to what Humaidy has suggested, and some are different.

Some of the points put forward by Wan Mohd Shaghbir are: *first*, regarding the influence of the Arabic language on the Malay's work, for him, it is normal, as often a scholar is influenced by English, Dutch, French, and German when he writes in Indonesian. *Second*, a person who writes about rituals does not indicate a setback. Writing about 300 pages of prayers is still not considered much when compared to Hasbi Ashhidique's thicker writing about Prayer Guidelines. It is also related to this that the *tayammum* issue is important. According to him, Steenbrink does not understand Islamic law, that *tayammum* is obligatory in certain cases, even though water is available. *Third*, Arsyad al-Banjari also discusses other fiqh issues such as inheritance and marriage, but in different works. In fact, according to Abdullah, Arsyad al-Banjari once sent a letter to Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani, supporting his friend to fight for the Muslims of Kedah and Patani against Buddhist Siam. *Fourth*, the only one who deserves to judge the greatness of the ulama is the Muslims themselves. Evidently, to this day, Muslims in many places in Southeast Asia, are still studying the works of Arsyad al-Banjari. Meanwhile, other clerical figures such as Syekh Daud al-Pattani, Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Pattani, Syekh Muhammad Thahir bin Muhammad Jalaluddin al-Minangkabawi, and many others, called Arsyad al-Banjari with the title *al-'allāmah*, meaning a great scholar (Abdullah 1990, 85–103).

Steenbrink's less positive view of the *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* seems to be related to the fact that he was less interested in *fiqh*, which seemed to him to be full of details and complexities. This was also inseparable from the influence of Indonesian academics close to Steenbrink at that time, especially Harun Nasution (1919-1998). Indonesia in the 1980s was still led by the spirit of modernization, and many considered the fiqh tradition, which was mostly an imitation of the ideas of medieval scholars, to be a setback. According to Steenbrink, it was Harun Nasution who told him that the 19th century was a period of decline, and thus he was not happy when Steenbrink taught about the development of Islam in the 19th century. Moreover, when studying in the Netherlands, Steenbrink became acquainted with the rational philosophical tradition of Thomas Aquinas, which was heavily influenced by Ibn Rushd, Aristotle's Arabic commentator. While

at Gontor Islamic boarding school, Steenbrink studied *Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, Ibn Rushd's comparative study of Islamic law, but apparently, he had little interest in it (Steenbrink 2013).¹²

However, despite the polemic, Steenbrink had succeeded in triggering a more serious study of Arsyad al-Banjari. In his email to me, dated November 5, 2014, Steenbrink said that in his reading of the second volume of *Sabīl al-muhtadīn*, he made several notes, that it turns out that Arsyad al-Banjari talked a lot about fish, including river fish and fish in ponds, whether it is halal or haram. This indicates, said Steenbrink, that perhaps many undiscovered thoughts of Arsyad al-Banjari are in line with the conditions of the Banjarese people.

Indeed, the other scholars studying *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* have different opinions about its originality and contribution to the development of Islamic law. Alfani Daud mentions that Arsyad al-Banjari also describes the use of coffins (Banjar: *tabala*) for the dead, especially those buried in swampy and watery areas, and to avoid being dismantled by wild animals. This description also pinpoints the contextualization of Islamic law (Daud 1997, 224). In contrast, Muslich Shabir, who examined the thought of alms (*zakāh*) by Arsyad al-Banjari in *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* concluded that there is no original thought at all or new *ijtihād* in this work because all of his opinions can be found in the previous books by the shafi'ite scholars (Shabir 2005). On the other hand, a team of researchers at the Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies found that, among other things, it is true that al-Banjari usually did not propose a new interpretation of Islamic law, but he chose one of the existing opinions among the jurists considered more relevant to the context of his time. For instance, he chose the opinion that congregational prayer is a collective obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*), meaning that if a group of people performs the congregation in a community, the obligation is already fulfilled even though the other members of the community do not participate. Arsyad al-Banjari apparently chose the opinion because if congregational prayer is a collective obligation, then in every village, there must be a place of worship that can be used not only for prayer but also for religious teaching activities (A.N. et.al 2019, 72-74). Likewise, Muhammad Iqbal in his *Arsyad al-Banjari's Insight on Parallel Reasoning and Dialectic in Law* argues that al-Banjari's use of different forms of *qiyās* (parallel reasoning) in the *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* demonstrates an innovative and sophisticated form of reasoning, and

by this way, he could integrate Islamic law into Banjarese society (Iqbal 2022).¹³

In short, different perspectives would be resulting in different opinions regarding Arsyad al-Banjari's contribution. Overall, despite his critical attitude, Steenbrink highly appreciated Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari's contribution. For this reason, I feel honored, when he composed verses on the occasion of my doctoral promotion at Utrecht University, on September 15, 2006 (Mujiburrahman 2008, viii). The first part of the verses was:

*Dua ratus tahun telah lari
Sejak syekh besar Arsyad al-Banjari
Kembali dari Mekkah, ilmu dia mencari
Hari ini, hormat kami bagi Syekh Muda Mujib al-Banjari*

Two hundred years have run
Since the great sheikh Arsyad al-Banjari
Returned from Mecca, the knowledge he sought
Today, our respect goes to the young sheikh Mujib al-Banjari

Van Bruinessen: From Nafis al-Banjari to Idham Chalid

Some things attracted van Bruinessen's attention to Islam in Banjarese society, especially Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari's Sufism and the figures of Sufi orders of South Kalimantan. Van Bruinessen also had a particular interest in studying different beliefs and popular religious behavior in society. In addition, he was interested in South Kalimantan, partly because of his research on Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). This province is one of the strongest NU bases outside Java, and one of its national leaders, Idham Chalid, is a Banjarese.

On November 11-12, 1993, the Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies held a seminar on 'The Value of Sufism in the Modern Century'. Alfani Daud, who was then the Rector of the Antasari State Institute, took the initiative to invite van Bruinessen to deliver a paper and make a visit to observe Islam in the Banjarese society. The seminar was attended by lecturers, students, and several leading traditional Islamic scholars in South Kalimantan. Van Bruinessen presented a paper entitled "*Studi Tasawuf pada Akhir Abad ke-18: Amalan dan Bacaan 'Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani, Nafis al-Banjari dan Tarekat Samaniyah*" (The Study of Sufism at the End of the 18th Century: Practices and Recitals of Abd

al-Samad al-Palimbani, Nafis al-Banjari, and the Samaniyah Order) which was later published in his book, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat* (Bruinessen 2012, 369–87).

I was still an undergraduate student and attended the seminar, and that was the first time I met van Bruinessen. During the presentation, van Bruinessen was not too attached to what he wrote in the paper. He started his presentation with a popular idea at that time: neo-Sufism, which was put forward by Fazlur Rahman, and marketed in Indonesia by his student, Nurcholish Madjid. Quoting Rahman, van Bruinessen said that Sufism in the 18th century was called neo-Sufism because it encouraged its followers to be active in worldly affairs. If earlier Sufism encouraged people to unite with God, then this type of Sufism encouraged people to unite with the Prophet Muhammad, based on the doctrine of *Nūr Muhammad* (Muhammadan Light).

With the spirit of a young man, I dared to ask, whether the theory of neo-Sufism could be addressed to the teachings of *waḥdat al-wujūd* by Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari or not. As I recalled, in his answer, van Bruinessen also doubted whether Nafis' teachings could be categorized as neo-Sufism that advocated social activism, while the tendency was a kind of total surrender to God.¹⁴ On the other hand, Zurkani Jahja asked whether van Bruinessen agreed with his opinion, that Sufism in the archipelago of the 17th and 18th centuries, is a convergence and harmonization between Sufism of al-Ghazali and *waḥdat al-wujūd* of Ibn al-Arabi. Van Bruinessen replied that he completely agreed with Zurkani Jahja's opinion. In this regard, van Bruinessen also responded to the opinion of a scholar who considered Muhammad Nafis's Sufism to be a kind of heretical teaching. Van Bruinessen quoted Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani's opinion, which said that there are three levels of Sufi teachings, namely for the beginner (*mubtadi*), the intermediate (*mutawassit*), and the advance (*muntahi*). Ibn al-Arabi's teachings are of the last level. Van Bruinessen's response made some participants amazed.

The next day, November 13, 1993, a local media called *Dinamika Berita* (it is not published anymore) covered the seminar under the heading: "The First Samaniyah Order Circulating in Indonesia", accompanied by a photo of van Bruinessen with students and lecturers after the seminar was held.¹⁵ The local media report highlighted van Bruinessen's statement in his paper that the Samaniyah Order developed

in Indonesia due to important figures, such as Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani and Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari. Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari and Daud al-Pattani also probably practiced the Samaniyah Order, but there was no evidence yet whether they taught and disseminated it or not. In addition, van Bruinessen also mentioned the important role of Muhammad Muhyiddin bin Syihabuddin al-Palimbani, who translated Samman al-Madani's hagiography (*manāqib*) into Malay, so that it has been widely known in the archipelago.

Even more interesting is van Bruinessen's analysis of the intellectual biography of Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari. Academic studies of this figure generally focus on his work, *al-Durr al-nafis*, which contains the Sufi metaphysical thought, the *wahdat al-wujūd* in the framework of the seven stages of being which was originally taught by Muhammad bin Faḍlullah al-Burhanfuri. Nonetheless, van Bruinessen was more interested in analyzing the text of *al-Durr al-nafis* to trace Muhammad Nafis's teachers. The life history of Muhammad Nafis is not clear, when and where he was born and died. His presumed graves are found in different places (the most popular one is in Kelua), but van Bruinessen believes that he was the one who spread the Sammaniyah Order in South Kalimantan. Maybe he even spread this Sufi order in Bali and Sumbawa. Van Bruinessen quoted Wan Mohd Shaghir Abdullah that Nafis had loyal students in Bali and Sumbawa (Bima), and he visited these two areas after returning from Mecca.

In response to van Bruinessen's hypothesis, in his research on the Sammaniyah Order in South Kalimantan, Athaillah found that the *silsilah* or the chain of learning of the Samaniyya Order introduced in 1994 by the Islamic and charismatic Banjar scholar, and one of Arsyad al-Banjari's descendants, Tuan Guru Haji Muhammad Zaini bin Abdul Ghani known as 'Guru Sekumpul' (d. 2005), does not mention Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, but Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. This indicates, argued Athaillah, that the Sammaniyah Order in South Kalimantan was taught by Arsyad al-Banjari rather than Nafis al-Banjari.¹⁶

In addition, by analyzing the text of *al-Durr al-nafis*, van Bruinessen argued that the teachers mentioned by Nafis are the same as those of Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani, except for Muhammad ibn Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān who is not mentioned. However, Nafis mentions Siddiq Ibn Umar Khan, one of al-Samman's caliphs, as his teacher. This

shows, according to van Bruinessen, that Nafis was younger than Abd al Samad al-Palimbani and Arsyad al-Banjari because he did not have time to learn directly from al-Samman. This view is in line with Abdul Muthalib's research findings, namely that Muhammad Nafis called al-Sammān the *shaykh mashāyikhinā* (teacher of our teachers) and *al-marḥūm*, which means he has died. This is also Abdul Muthalib's rebuttal to Azyumardi Azra who said that Nafis had directly learned from al-Samman, al-Jawhari, and Siddiq Umar Khan (Muthalib 1995, 20–21).

In his analysis of the Samaniyah Order, van Bruinessen also tried to link it with the movement of Beratip Beamal which Steenbrink and Helius Sjamsuddin had alluded to. If Steenbrink mentions the leader is the Penghulu Rasyid, and Helius Sjamsuddin suspects that this movement is the Naqshabandiyah Order, van Bruinessen thinks that this movement is the Sammaniyah Order. Van Bruinessen's argument refers to the name of Antasari's son, Muhammad Seman. This means, he said, that Antasari is an admirer of Muhammad bin Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān. Van Bruinessen seems to have come to this view after he returned from Banjarmasin, as evident in the letter he sent to Alfani Daud, dated November 23, 1993. This argument was later included in his *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, and Tarekat* (Van Bruinessen 2012: 382). As has been mentioned above, 'Guru Sekumpul' also taught the Sammaniyah Order, whose chain of learning back to Arsyad al-Banjari. Based on this evidence, it is probable that the Beratip Beamal movement of the 19th century was the continuation of Arsyad al-Banjari's previous teachings on the Sammaniyah Order.

Apart from attending the seminar, van Bruinessen took the opportunity to be in South Kalimantan to visit and meet Banjarese Muslim figures in various places. As stated in the introduction, van Bruinessen mentioned three Banjarese academics whom he considered to be his fellow teachers (Alfani Daud, Zurkani Jahja, and Analiansyah). They were the ones who accompanied him to visit many places in South Kalimantan, as he told me in his email, dated November 18, 2009.

Thank you for sending your paper on Sufism and the study of Sufism in South Kalimantan. I really enjoyed reading it — also because I remembered three good friends who were real field researchers, and whom I learned a lot from, namely Mr. Alfani Daud, Mr. Analiansyah, and Mr. Zurkani Jahya. With Mr. Analiansyah, I got to the tomb of Sheikh Nafis al-Banjari and also briefly interviewed several prominent heterodox Sufi orders (*ghayr*

mu'tabarab), with Mr. Zurkani to Guru Ijai (Tuan Guru Haji Muhammad Zaini bin Abdul Ghani). Mr. Alfani is the most 'anthropologist' of them and is also a fellow student, because my promoter, Prof. van Baal, is also Mr. Alfani's supervisor and examiner. If I feel a bond with South Kalimantan (and especially Amuntai), it is because of the three fellow teachers — and then the three fellow students!

Thus, van Bruinessen did not only visit the Islamic scholars (*'ulamā'*) but also people who were considered to be followers of heterodox teachings. As an anthropologist, he is inclined to be attracted to marginalized groups, whom Muslim scholars consider heterodox.¹⁷ The belief that one family is descended from crocodiles, or is capable of transforming leaves into crocodiles, as described by Steenbrink about the Penghulu Rasyid above, also attracts van Bruinessen. The following is an excerpt from van Bruinessen's letter to Alfani Daud, dated November 13, 1993.

A few days in Banjarmasin last week for me were a good memory, and I am very grateful that Mr. Alfani provided so much time to take me around Martapura.

With this letter, I am sending a photocopy of Ioan Lewis's latest book, which again discusses various forms of shamanism. I have searched in my books here whether there is anything relevant to understanding the cases of families claiming to be descended from crocodiles or other animals, but I have not found them. Maybe the 'symbolic anthropology' approach can offer new interpretations, but I'm still looking for a text that can be used as an example.

Thus, if Steenbrink has raised this issue and seen it as a religious syncretism, van Bruinessen offers an analysis based on shamanism or symbolic anthropology. However, to my best knowledge, the anthropological analysis suggested by van Bruinessen has never been carried out, including by Alfani Daud himself. In addition, the analysis based on the totemism theory is perhaps much more striking as has been done by Emile Durkheim (1995) or Claude Lévi-Straus (1969) on similar phenomena. Given the fact that the crocodile myth is still not completely lost until now, this is an interesting topic to be investigated further.

In another part of his letter, van Bruinessen mentions a hypothesis about a Sufi (heterodox) sect called 'Zauq' whose adherents he most likely met during the visit to South Kalimantan.

I went back to reading my notes about Zauq, and the chain of learning (*silsilah*) I found in the Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies' thesis

regarding Zauq shows that they had learned a lesson from a Qurthubi who returned from Mecca in the first half of this century. It is quite possible that they have existed before, but are using this new chain of learning as just legitimacy.

When concluding his letter, van Bruinessen raises several topics of religious research in the Banjarese community, which were feasible and interesting to do. He wrote,

There seem to be a lot of interesting things to study in South Kalimantan, with so many religious movements that appear briefly and disappear again, and then come back with slightly different names and practices that may have been slightly modified. If Mr. Alfani could produce young researchers with a passion for research like Mr. Alfani himself ... I strongly agree with Mr. Alfani's suggestion when closing the seminar: starting with surveys of graves, teachers of Sufism, chains of learning, the practices taught (including prayer, salawat, etc.), and doctrines.

Van Bruinessen's short visit to Banjarmasin seems to be quite memorable and motivated academics for further studies, especially in the Antasari State Institute environment. Van Bruinessen's later books were also read and reviewed. This intellectual and academic dialogue continued, even though van Bruinessen never visited Banjarmasin again. This dialogue also occurs among the younger generation, such as the criticism conveyed by Ahmad Syadzali, a young lecturer at the Antasari State Institute, against a small part of van Bruinessen's book, *Tarekat Naqshabandiyah di Indonesia* (Bruinessen 1996, 200). In the book, van Bruinessen mentions the development of the Naqshabandiyah Order in South Kalimantan. He said that "the Naqshabandiyah Order was introduced in Amuntai, by a man named Muhammad Marabahan (from Marabahan sub-district), and another figure named Haji Bajuri. Since Muhammad Marabahan passed away, his Naqshabandiyah branch seemed to be gone" (Bruinessen 1996, 200).

According to Ahmad Syadzali, van Bruinessen's statement above contains several errors. First, Marabahan is not a sub-district, but a district. The possibility is, it refers to the Bakumpai sub-district. Second, the name Muhammad Marabahan is not known as a Sufi Order figure there. The only known figure is Muhammad Basiyuni Bakumpai, who was known as a Sufi order teacher along the Barito, Banjarmasin, Rantau, and Martapura rivers to the Hulu Sungai area. As for Haji Bajuri, he was Muhammad Basiyuni's cousin. Third, the Sufi order taught by these two figures is not Naqshabandiyah, but Shadziliyah.

This is in accordance with Pijper's statement that in 1931, there were representatives of Shadziliyah in Marabahan and Banjarmasin (Syadzali 2004, 87).

In addition to the question of the Sufi orders, van Bruinessen also raised the oral tradition of the Banjarese community regarding the actual author of the book, *Parukunan Jamaluddin*.¹⁸ *Parukunan* is a word formed from the word 'rukun' which refers to the basics of Islamic teachings, namely the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith. On the cover of this book is written, the name of the author is Jamaluddin (d.1863), son of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. However, according to the oral tradition of the Banjarese people, the real author of this book is a woman named Fatima (d. circa 1828), who is the niece of Jamaluddin himself. Fatima is the daughter of the marriage of Abdul Wahab Bugis (d.1786) and Syarifah (whose unique marriage case is discussed by Steenbrink above), the daughter of Arsyad al-Banjari. For van Bruinessen, this fact shows that a woman was also involved in writing a religious book in the Banjarese community, even though her name was not explicitly stated. According to van Bruinessen, this book does not place women lower than men. It does not talk about 'aqīqah¹⁹ which distinguishes men and women. It also does not suggest that menstruation is dirty, and only said that after menstruation, one should take a mandatory bath, but without using the word 'purification' (Bruinessen 2012, 211–12).

Partly as a response to van Bruinessen's assertion that Fatimah was a female writer of the popular Islamic book, *Parukunan Jamaluddin* above, a lecturer at the Antasari State Islamic University, Saifuddin, was interested in examining this issue more deeply and sharply. He examines various views of scholars about the authorship of this work and why it was attributed to Jamaluddin. He also examines the contents of this work (Saifuddin 2013, 8–9).

Saifuddin observes that there are various opinions regarding *Parukunan Jamaluddin's* authorship. Some say that the work was indeed written by Jamaluddin. The reason is obvious: on every printed edition, we find Jamaluddin's name as the author. Nevertheless, Saifuddin rejects this opinion. He found a good argument that this work was truly written by Fatimah. Besides the fact that many scholars confirmed this view, Saifuddin found that one of Muhammad Arsyad's descendants, Abdurrahman Siddiq (1857-1939), in his work entitled *Shajarat al-Arshadiyah* also said

that the real author of *Parukunan Jamaluddin* is Fatimah. For Saifuddin, this confirmation is important because, first, Abdurrahman Siddiq was a great Islamic scholar with undoubted intellectual integrity and used to be a jurisconsult for the Indragiri Sultanate in Riau. Second, it is very possible that, as a child, Abdurrahman Siddiq met Jamaluddin and old people who were Jamaluddin's contemporaries. Third, Abdurrahman Siddiq himself has family ties with both Jamaluddin and Fatimah. Therefore, he had no reason to prefer Fatimah to Jamaluddin. Fourth, at that time, the patriarchal culture was still very strong. Therefore, Abdurrahman Siddiq's acknowledgment that Fatimah was the author of the work was extraordinary. He would not do that if it was not the case (Saifuddin 2013, 63–68).

Saifuddin also tried to trace why this work was attributed to Jamaluddin. Saifuddin quoted van Bruinessen as saying that there was no copyright at that time, and it was common to copy other people's works without mentioning the source. Van Bruinessen also suspected that Fatimah's identity as the author was deliberately hidden because of society's general opinion that an author of a book was naturally a man, not a woman. Furthermore, quoting Ahmad Juhaidi, Saifuddin said that the inclusion of Jamaluddin's name was important because he was the jurisconsult (*mufti*) of Banjar Sultanate during the reign of Sultan Adam al-Watsiq Billah (1825-1857). In 1835, Sultan Adam issued a law for his people, and it was written in the law that the jurisconsult was Jamaluddin. This means that he was the person who had the religious authority so that the work in his name will be followed by the people. Last but not least, there is also Zulfa Jamalie's speculation cited by Saifuddin, namely that perhaps publishers were reluctant to print an Islamic work if its author was a woman (Saifuddin 2013, 68–72).

Furthermore, in analyzing the contents of *Parukunan Jamaluddin*, Saifuddin found that most of the explanations of this book related to Islamic law are similar to those presented in *al-Sirāt al-mustaqim* by Nūruddin al-Raniri (d.1658), and *Sabīl al-muhtadīn* by Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari. Both works are in Malay. In terms of theological content, the sources referred to in the *Parukunan* seem to be the theological works of the Ash'ariyah school. Saifuddin concluded, although some of Fatimah's discourses tend to be more friendly towards women, "there is nothing unique that reflects the perspective of a female writer in it" (Saifuddin 2013, 157–58).²⁰

Moreover, as a researcher of Indonesian Islam, van Bruinessen was not only interested in history, but also contemporary Indonesian Islamic movements. Van Bruinessen was one of a new generation of foreign scholars who paid serious attention to the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the traditional Muslim organization in Indonesia. While researching NU, he became acquainted with a young reformist figure, Abdurrahman Wahid (who was to become President of Indonesia), as well as his senior rival, Idham Chalid, a Banjarese respected cleric. Although he seemed more sympathetic to Abdurrahman Wahid, van Bruinessen quite a lot mentioned Idham Chalid in his book on NU, which was also translated by his Banjarese student, Farid Wajidi (Bruinessen 1994).

Van Bruinessen's review of Idham Chalid is quite nuanced. Idham Chalid's education at the modern Islamic boarding school Gontor, which is often seen as closer to reformist Islam, Muhammadiyah than NU, and his origin as a Banjarese, makes him a unique figure. Van Bruinessen said that Idham Chalid was a politician who was shrewd and clever at attracting Javanese kyai (Islamic scholars) with his religious knowledge. His flexible demeanor allowed him to remain in the leadership of NU from the end of the Soekarno era to the early 1980s of Soeharto era. His vocal opponents, such as Subchan ZE and Ahmad Syaichu, found it difficult to beat him. His removal in 1984 at the Situbondo Congress by Abdurrahman Wahid's group, did not necessarily diminish his influence.

Here are some quotes from van Bruinessen about people's disappointments with Idham Chalid, which led to his resignation in the early 1980s (Bruinessen 1994, 116–17).

As Chairman of the Executive Council (Tanfidziyah), he appears to be more accountable to the government than to the Consultative Council (Syuriah) (as the articles of the organization's constitution demand).

Idham is a 'suhu' – "guru or expert" behind-the-scenes political game, who handles political affairs that are not transparent, loyal and generous to friends and subordinates, but prefers to work through his networks of informal contacts rather than through the formal structure of NU.

Another complaint, behind the personal dissatisfaction with Idham, is that many Javanese clerics feel that NU is no longer their organization. The capital's politicians make their own decisions without discussing them with the kiyais, following their priorities and pursuing their own interests.

In the atmosphere of the authoritarian New Order regime, a lenient political figure like Idham Chalid was indeed unattractive. However, another foreign scholar, Greg Fealy painted a slightly different picture. According to him, “Idham is not a leader who likes to show his successes or achievements. He is the type of person who is humble and doesn’t like to attract public attention.” Like van Bruinessen, Fealy saw, Idham tried to gather supporters from both Sundanese and outside Javanese circles. At first glance, this is only a pragmatic political move, but if it is seen more broadly, said Fealy, Idham has made NU truly a national mass organization (Fealy 2007).

In contrast, apart from politics, Ahmad Muhajir tried to explore the other side of Idham Chalid, namely his life history since childhood and his influence in the Banjar community as a cleric, who gave the *ijāzah* (the authority) to recite a certain prayer, in the form of a summary of the *Dalā’il al-khayrāt*, the book of prayers originally composed by the famous Moroccan Islamic scholar, Muhammad bin Sulaiman al-Jazūlī (d. 1465). This summary was made by Idham Chalid himself and became his daily *wirid* (recitals). According to Muhajir, now many Banjarese people do not know Idham’s political role anymore, but they continue to remember him as the person who summarized the *Dalā’il al-khayrāt*, which they recite every day (Muhajir 2007, 149–60).

Indeed, most NU people are inseparable from *wirid*. This also shows the closeness of the NU people to the Sufi tradition and the Sufi order which van Bruinessen has studied a lot. In this connection, I am reminded of van Bruinessen’s story (he told me in person) about an occurrence after the NU Congress in Cipasung, in 1994.²¹ At that time, Idham Chalid’s group as well as the government supported Abu Hasan as the opponent of Abdurrahman Wahid. It is understandable why the NU of South Kalimantan, chaired by Zurkani Jahja, supported Abu Hasan. During the voting, Abu Hasan’s group lost. Then, several South Kalimantan NU figures decided to leave the congress arena, and went to Suryalaya, to meet Abah Anom (Shahibul Wafa Tajul Arifin), the leader of the Qadiriyyah-Naqshabandiyah Order. Van Bruinessen also went along with the Banjarese delegates. Surprisingly, when he stood up to greet the guests, Abah Anom said, “Alhamdulillah, we won, we won!”

Conclusion

In their respective writings, both Steenbrink and van Bruinessen discuss the characters and roles of important Banjarese figures. Steenbrink pays his most attention to Banjarese historical figures of the 18th and 19th centuries such as Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Antasari, Abdul Rasyid, Aling, and Abdul Hamid Abulung. In contrast, van Bruinessen does not only pay his attention to the historical figures of the 18th and 19th centuries such as Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, Fatimah (the granddaughter of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari), but also his contemporary political figure of the 20th century, Idham Chalid. He also explores the Banjarese figures of Sufi movements of the 19th and 20th centuries such as the Sammaniyah Order, the Naqshabandiyah Order, and the 'heterodox' Sufi group called 'zauq'.

Although Steenbrink and van Bruinessen only analyze a few issues around Islam in Banjarese society as a small part of their much broader research on Indonesian Islam, and they visited South Kalimantan only for a short period, their works have been relatively well-known and influential among scholars. This influence can be seen in the quotes and responses of scholars from Indonesia and foreign countries. For example, Steenbrink's descriptions of the Banjarese figures such as Abdul Rasyid, Antasari, Aling, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, and Abdul Hamid Abulung, received various responses and different analyses from later writers like Helius Sjamsuddin, Humaidy, Wan Mohd Shaghbir Abdullah and Michel Feener. Likewise, van Bruinessen's descriptions of Muslim Banjarese figures such as Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, Fatimah, and Idham Chalid are read, quoted, and commented upon by scholars like A. Athaillah, Ahmad Syadzali, Saifuddin, and Ahmad Muhajir.

It seems that Steenbrink's and van Bruinessen's position as foreign scholars from the Netherlands seems to attract more attention than the scholars from inside the country. In addition, as outsiders, they can see what the insiders may not see. Of course, their academic competence is also another factor that makes their works read. Last but not least, their ability in building networks and forging friendships with Indonesians enabled them to gather more information, and their presence was welcome. Meanwhile, some differences of opinion triggered by them actually encouraged healthy academic discussions. Their works have not been read in 'blind imitation' without criticisms. In short, even

though their academic discourses on Banjarese Muslim figures are relatively few, their voice in the realm of Indonesian Islamic studies is quite heard, so they can lead scholars to pay more attention to some issues that have been previously neglected.

Endnotes

- The early version of this article was presented at the International Conference on “Dynamics of the Studies on Indonesian Islam: Tribute to Karel Steenbrink and Martin van Bruinessen” organized by the Postgraduate School of the Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, on November 18-19, 2014. I would like to thank the organizer, especially Moch Nur Ichwan, for inviting me to this conference. I also thank Riza Saputera for helping me collect some important references for this article. Last but not least, I thank Dr. Simon Rae for his help in refining my English. All remaining mistakes are certainly my responsibility.
1. For his relations with, and intellectual impressions of, Karel Steenbrink, see Martin van Bruinessen (2006, 191–201).
 2. Personal email, November 18, 2009.
 3. It is noteworthy that in the late 1980s and early 1990s, computers were still rare and ‘luxurious’ tools in Indonesia.
 4. For the influence of van Baal on van Bruinessen’s academic career, see van Bruinessen’s personal account (2015, 57–58, 63–64).
 5. In my visit to the Netherlands in 2015, I talked about this issue to Steenbrink. He then tried to find his personal notes and other documents during his visit to Banjarmasin in his home library, but unfortunately did not find them. I also tried to find relevant documents in Leiden University library but did not find anything.
 6. On page 151, he also wrote that “zealotry alone was not enough against the modern invading west.”
 7. For the biography of Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Steenbrink simply refers to the work of Zafry Zamzam (2018). This book was initially published by Penerbit Karya in 1974 and republished by Antasari Press in 2018. It seems there is no Dutch account of this man, so scholars depend on Indonesian sources which are mostly based on oral tradition. There are other biographies of Arsyad al-Banjari, some of them written earlier than that of Zamzam, namely by Ahmad Basuni (1941), Jusuf Halidi (1968), Abu Daudi (1980), and Wan Mohd. Shaghir Abdullah (1990). These studies, I believe, need further critical historical analysis.
 8. The question on Arsyad al-Banjari’s attitude towards colonialism is very important but difficult to answer because we do not find any direct evidence from his writings. I have tried to answer this question based on indirect evidence, namely the historical account of the relations between Banjar Sultanate and the British and Dutch from the 17th to 19th centuries, and the teachings of Al-Banjari’s descendent in the 19th century. I argue that the issue of colonialism was not at stake during al-Banjari’s lifetime simply because the relationship between Banjar Sultanate and the Europeans was much more like between equal parties. On the other hand, by the 19th century, after the death of Arsyad al-Banjari, Dutch colonialism began, and then we found Islamic teachings and movements against colonialism among the Banjarese. See Mujiburrahman (2022).
 9. Humaidy gave me a copy of Madjid’s paper at the seminar, written in Indonesian entitled “Literatur tentang Islam dalam Bahasa Barat” (Literature on Islam in Western Languages) in which he discussed Orientalism and various books on Islam written by Western scholars (Madjid 1984).
 10. According to Humaidy, since then, Steenbrink had become closer to Banjarese students studying in Yogyakarta. Steenbrink was even willing to come for a discussion about Prince Antasari, at the Banjar student dormitory named after him (abbreviated as ‘Pantas’ Dormitory), in Samirono Baru Street, Yogyakarta.

11. In his study of the network of the Banjar Islamic scholars, Rahmadi found that many of them are Arsyad al-Banjari's students and descendants (Rahmadi 2019).
12. For more analysis of his intellectual development, see Mujiburrahman (2017b, xi–xxiv).
13. This book was originally a PhD thesis at Lille University, French.
14. Fazlur Rahman's neo-Sufism theory was sharply criticized by RS O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke (1993, 52–87). For an analysis of Fazlur Rahman's views of Sufism, see Mujiburrahman (2006, 421–44).
15. See "Tarekat Samaniyah Pertama Beredar di Indonesia" *Dinamika Berita*, November 13, (1993).
16. The *silsila* is the following: Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim al-Samman, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Syihabuddin bin Arsyad al-Banjari, Nawawi bin Umar al-Bantani, Zainuddin al-Sumbawi, Ali bin Abdullah al-Banjari, Syarwani Abdan (Guru Bangil) and Muhammad Zaini bin Abdul Ghani (Guru Sekumpul). See A. Atha'illah (2004, 226–27, 231).
17. As an anthropologist, van Bruinessen avoids making any theological judgments. In one of his Indonesian articles on religious splinter groups, he said that the heterodox group is a religious movement or school that is not in line with the views of the majority of the religious community, or more precisely, the majority of dominant religious scholars, in a certain region. See van Bruinessen (1992, 16–17).
18. This issue was originally discussed in van Bruinessen's paper entitled "Kitab Kuning dan Perempuan, Perempuan dan Kitab Kuning" (The Yellow Books and Women, Women and the Yellow Books) and presented at the Seminar on Indonesian Muslim Women held in Jakarta, on December 2-5, 1991, and then published in Marcoes-Natsir and Meuleman (1993, 173–180). It was republished in van Bruinessen (2012, 205–17).
19. *Aqiqah* is the sacrifice of animals to celebrate the birth of a child. In Islamic jurisprudence, it is recommended that at least two animals for a boy and one animal for a girl.
20. It is noteworthy that according to Ahmad Rafiq, there are three generations of *Parukunan*, whose contents reflect their respective socio-political contexts. The first is *Parukunan Jamaluddin* above, which was written at a time when the Banjar Sultanate was still collaborating with the Dutch. Therefore, the contents tend to be purely religious teachings, instead of being overly political. Second is *Parukunan Abdurrasyid* which was written during the Banjar War in the 19th century. This book shows a confrontational attitude towards the Dutch because it stated that it is unlawful (*haram*) for Muslims to wear ties and hats, like those worn by the Dutch. Certain spells are believed to give supernatural powers. Does all this show that Abdurrasyid was the Penghulu Rasyid? There is no historical evidence to support or refute this allegation. Meanwhile, the third generation of *Parukunan* is the *Rasam Parukunan* by Muhammad Ali, written in 1933, which does not only talk about Islamic law but also Sufism. According to Rafiq, maybe because this book was written when the Banjarese people had lost the war against the Dutch, they needed peace in Sufism. Ahmad Rafiq, "The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community" (Rafiq 2014).
21. For the account of this Congress, see Greg Fealy (1996).

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Mujiburrahman, *Antasari State Islamic University of Banjarmasin, Indonesia*. Email: mujiburrahman@uin-antasari.ac.id.

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2. Booth, Anne. 1988. "Living Standards and the Distribution of Income in Colonial Indonesia: A Review of the Evidence." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 19(2): 310–34.
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5. Utriza, Ayang. 2008. "Mencari Model Kerukunan Antaragama." *Kompas*. March 19: 59.
6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11th, 2007.

Arabic romanization should be written as follows:

Letters: ' , *b*, *t*, *th*, *j*, *h*, *kh*, *d*, *dh*, *r*, *z*, *s*, *sh*, *ṣ*, *d*, *ṭ*, *z*, ' , *gh*, *f*, *q*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *h*, *w*, *y*. Short vowels: *a*, *i*, *u*. long vowels: *ā*, *ī*, *ū*. Diphthongs: *aw*, *ay*. *lā marbūṭā*: *t*. Article: *al-*. For detail information on Arabic Romanization, please refer the transliteration system of the Library of Congress (LC) Guidelines.

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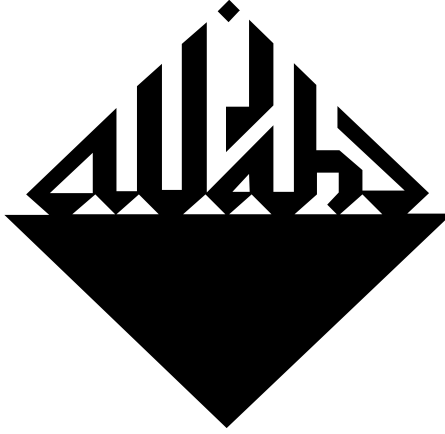
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