

KHATAMAN PRACTICE AMONG BIMANESE MUSLIMS: NAVIGATING TRADITION, MODERNITY AND THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES

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Abstract: This study elaborates on the configuration of the *Khataman* practice in Bimanese Muslim society within contemporary dynamics and the role of this practice in shaping religious identity to contend with modernity. By focusing on how the Bimanese Muslims construct the form and meaning of *Khataman* and using Bourdieu's theory of practice as a perspective, this study argues that *Khataman* among Bimanese Muslims is not only seen as a social action that goes beyond the inner dimension of subjective motives and meanings into an objective dimension that produces social life. Through an ethnographic approach, this study collects data on the contemporary development of Islamic practices in the Bimanese Muslim community related to the socio-cultural factors surrounding Qur'anic practices. This study particularly discusses the role of *Guru Ngajis* as authorities and religious institutions (teachers' houses or TPQs and schools), both traditional and modern, in constructing the form, function, and meaning of Islamic practices in general through *Khataman*. This study argues that *Khataman* transcends its basic function as a religious expression, becoming a social praxis that serves as a field of contestation where its supporters' values and social status are contested, intersecting with middle-class spirituality and the massification of Islam. For the Bimanese Muslim, *Khataman* is part of their religious and social identity, becoming an arena to face the challenges of modernity, characterized by social transformation and the growing role of religious institutions.

Keywords: *Khataman*; Cultural Practices; Identity; Islamic Massification; Modernity.

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Introduction

Islamization in eastern Indonesia is inextricably linked to the development of Islamic practices that have become living traditions—in this case, referred to as Islamic practices. In some places, Islamic practices originate from how Muslim communities demonstrate their religiosity in public spaces. According to Hutagalung¹ and McWilliam² they have become part of life cycle rituals (rites of passage) and serve as identity markers. In Indonesian Muslim communities, religious practices or rituals exhibit diverse variants and patterns due to the supporters' ability to adapt to blended external cultures, forming a distinctive local culture. There is also contestation over Islamic practices, which makes them dynamic, involving various actors and agents of Islamization. In the Bimanese Muslim community of eastern Indonesia, for example, Islamic practices are characterized by a struggle between accommodation and resistance, hybridity and purity, tension and cohesion, resulting in a dynamic and diverse array within Islamic practices.³

Reading the Qur'an among Muslim communities is part of a personal religious practice that begins from an early age. Once a child can recite the Qur'an and even memorize it, it is seen as a significant event in the Muslim community and is celebrated by the family, teachers, and the community.⁴ The child who is the subject of this event becomes an important member of society.⁵ This configuration of Islamic practices provides the context for the development of the practice of *Khataman al-Qur'an* (hereinafter referred to as *Khataman*), which involves completing the reading of the Qur'an. In Indonesian

¹ Stella Aleida Hutagalung, "Muslim–Christian Relations in Kupang: Negotiating Space and Maintaining Peace," *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 17, no. 5 (2016): 439–459.

² Andrew McWilliam, "Being Muslim in Eastern Indonesia: Contemporary Patterns of Islamic Practice," in *Mosques and Imams: Everyday Islam in Eastern Indonesia*, ed. Kathryn M. Robinson (Singapore: NUS Press, 2020), 219–242.

³ Muhammad Adlin Sila, "In Pursuit of Promoting Moderate Indonesian Islam to the World: Understanding the Diversity of Islamic Practices in Bima, Sumbawa Island," in *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Social and Political Sciences (ICSPS 2017)*, eds. Sharyn Graham Davies, Dzuriyatun Toyibah and Ahmad Alfajri (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Atlantis Press, 2017), 253–256.

⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008).

⁵ Dirk Cornelis Mulder, "The Ritual of the Recitation of the Qur'an," *NTT Journal for Theology and the Study of Religion* 37, no. 3 (1983): 247–252.

Muslim communities in general, *Khataman* is performed as a religious ritual, while in Bima it has particularly developed in a way that follows the dynamics of society. In the past, when Islamization took place under the sultanate's banner, the recitation of the Qur'an had a long sequence, starting from the teaching of the Qur'an in the teacher's house or in mosques or *langgar* (small mosque), on the occasion of *selamatan* (community feasts), ceremonies, the *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an/MTQ* (Qur'an recitation competition), and the *Khataman* event itself.

Today, as can be observed, some of these sequences are missing from the social scene. One rarely hears the sounds of children and adults reciting the Qur'an after the Maghrib prayer while waiting for the Isha prayer. Likewise, people no longer hear the boisterous sound of people reciting the Qur'an in the mosque waiting for the Friday sermon or the sound of reciting the Qur'an during *ngaji rowa* (reciting the Qur'an following death) following a death. However, at the same time, there are new changes in the way people interact with the Qur'an. For example, the teaching of the Qur'an in the teacher's house has been replaced by the institution of *Taman Pendidikan al-Qur'an or TPQ* (Qur'anic Education Centre). In contrast, the *ngaji rowa* has been replaced by the practice of *haflah* (reciting the Qur'an simultaneously in a group). In addition, there are also *Rumah al-Qur'an* (the house of the Qur'an) with *tafsidz* (memorizing Qur'an programs) and the practices of public tests and graduations for children who have reached a certain reading stage (usually 30 *juz'*/sections of the Qur'an), replacing *Khataman*. This shift implies a dynamic in Islamic practices within Muslim societies, including how people interact with the Qur'an through *Khataman*. In the Bimanese Muslim community, the shift occurs at levels of implementation, function, and meaning. In its implementation, *Khataman* today tends to be carried out as an insertion into other rituals,⁶ in contrast to the past when it was carried out as an independent ritual separates from others.

This study covers Islamic practices relating to the Qur'an, especially *Khataman*, within the Bimanese Muslim community in both Bima City and Bima Regency. These two administrative regions in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, are unified by a common culture or identi-

⁶ Syukri Abubakar, "Tradisi Khataman al-Qur'an di NdanonaE," *Alamtara.co*, July 3, 2020, <https://alamtara.co/author/syukri-abubakar/page/3/> (accessed November 20, 2022).

ty since they were both formerly part of the Bima Sultanate from the 17th to 20th centuries. Living under the banner of the former Bima Sultanate, the Bimanese Muslim community bears the identity of a Muslim society that distinctively practices Islam,⁷ and is even considered fanatical,⁸ although it also retains syncretic pre-Islamic practices.⁹ This study examines contemporary developments and includes a historical review to explore the dynamics of past religious practices, considered a milestone in contemporary cultural dynamics. The main question is how the Bimanese Muslims negotiate their religious practices through *Khataman* with the demands of modernity. This study focuses on the form, function, and meaning of the *Khataman* practice in the context of the struggle between Islam and modernity in Bima society.

Research on Islamic practices within Indonesian Muslim communities has been conducted by scholars, for example, on Islamic practices in Cirebon by Muhammin,¹⁰ mediatization of religion by Setianto,¹¹ a practice of Indonesian Islamic moderation by Hariyanto¹² most recent research on Islamic practices, authority, and institutions among eastern Indonesian communities was conducted by anthropological scholars working on a project entitled 'Being Muslim in Eastern Indonesia' under the Department of Anthropology at the Australian National University. The results of their work are published in a book entitled *Mosques and Imams: Everyday Islam in Eastern Indonesia* published by the National University of Singapore Press in 2020. The book describes the diverse of Islamic practices in several parts of

⁷ Christopher Read Hitchcock, "The Role of Contrast in Causal and Explanatory Claims," *Synthese* 107 (1996): 395-419.

⁸ James L. Peacock, *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

⁹ Michael Prager, "Abandoning the 'Garden of Magic' Islamic Modernism and Contested Spirit Assertions in Bima," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 38, no. 110 (2010): 9-25.

¹⁰ Abdul Ghoffir Muhammin, *The Islamic Traditions of Cirebon: Ibadat and Adat among Javanese Muslims: Ibadat and Adat Among Javanese Muslims* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006).

¹¹ Widodo Agus Setianto, "The Cross-Generations Response of Indonesian Muslims to Ideological Issues in Online Media," *Jurnal Komunikasi Indonesia* 10, no. 2 (2012): 117-129.

¹² Erie Hariyanto, "The Settlement of Sharia Banking Dispute Based on Legal Culture as a Practice of Indonesian Islamic Moderation," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 14, no. 2 (2019): 301-316.

eastern Indonesia, in the context of Muslim communities as both majority and minority. Local religious authorities and mosque *imams* play a role in negotiating Islam with the local culture to the extent that Islam becomes an identity. One of the book's chapters on Bima, entitled “*Lebe* and Sultan: Serving the Mosque and Sustaining Royal Authority” by Muhammad Adlin Sila,¹³ discusses the role of the *imam* as part of the authority that has agency in the vernacularization of Islam in Bima. Sila's study in this book is part of his ethnographic work at the Department of Anthropology at the Australian National University, which discusses Islam's historical dimensions and social context in Bima today in greater detail.¹⁴

Khataman practices in Indonesia generally and in Bima specifically are understudied, except for limited mentions in studies on the process of Islamization. Asiba¹⁵ discusses the *Khataman* carried out by bridal couples in Mandar, South Sulawesi, which originated from communal practices that demonstrate the reception of certain communities or groups to the Qur'an. Purwanto¹⁶ presents an interpretation of *Khataman* in *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) Sunan Pandanaran Yogyakarta, describing the variety and motives behind *Khataman* in the Islamic boarding school environment, beyond its main function as a marker of completing the reading of all parts of the Qur'an, and also as a confirmation of Islamic tradition. Abubakar's observation of the *Khataman* ritual in a Bima village shows that this practice of ritualizing the Qur'an still exists in Muslim societies.¹⁷ Hilful Fudhul¹⁸ shows that the Qur'anic culture in Bima developed in line with the Islamization process which was carried out in two waves: firstly, by a

¹³ Muhammad Adlin Sila, “Lebe and Sultan: Serving the Mosque and Sustaining Royal Authority,” in *Mosques and Imams: Everyday Islam in Eastern Indonesia*, ed. Kathryn M. Robinson (Singapore: NUS Press, 2020), 24-43.

¹⁴ Muhammad Adlin Sila, “Being Muslims in Bima of Sumbawa, Indonesia: Practice, Politics and Cultural Diversity” (Ph.D Thesis--The Australian National University, 2014).

¹⁵ Asiba, “Nilai Dakwah pada Acara Mappatamma Al-Qur'an di Desa Amola Kecamatan Binuang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar” (Undergraduate Thesis--UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2018), <https://repository.uin-alauddin.ac.id/8740/1/ASIBA.pdf> (accessed November 27, 2022).

¹⁶ Tinggal Purwanto, “Tafsir Atas Budaya Khatm Al-Qur'ān Di Pondok Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran Yogyakarta,” *Ilmu Ushuluddin* 7, no. 12 (2020): 171-184.

¹⁷ Abubakar, “Tradisi Khataman Al-Qur'an di NdanonaE.”

¹⁸ Hilful Fudhul Sirajuddin Jaffar, *Jaringan Ulama dan Islamisasi Indonesia Timur* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2020).

network of Sunan's disciples, including Datuk Ri Bandang, and secondly by a network of Hadhrami scholars that continued into the sultanate period. Although limited, these studies nonetheless show that the practice of *Khataman* is quite widespread and dynamic among Muslim communities in Indonesia, revealing the complexity of religiosity among Indonesian Muslim communities.

This study uses the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, which argues that cultural practices are constructed by layers called habitus, capital, and field,¹⁹ and require agents or actors.²⁰ Habitus is a product of behavior that arises from various human life experiences, the accumulation of the results of human habits and adaptations, which are deeply rooted and form a character, forming a structure that underlies practices and representations.²¹ Habitus does not stand alone; it underlies the field, a network of relations between objective positions in the social order apart from individual consciousness. The field occupies the social space, which refers to the overall conception of the social world. Meanwhile, practice is a product of the relationship between habitus and field, both historical products resulted individual and collective practices.²² While habitus exists in actors' minds, the field exists outside their minds. Actors are equipped with internalized schemes or patterns to perceive, understand, realize, and assess the social world. It is through these patterns that actors produce and perpetuate their actions.

This theory also emphasizes the importance of time which mean habitus that exists at a certain time is the result of the creation of collective life that has taken place over a relatively long historical period; therefore, it is a product of history.²³ The habits of a particular individual or society are acquired through their life experiences and have a certain function in the history of the social world in which they occur. Habitus can persist for a long time and change because it can be transferred from one field to another. In this context, transformation in socio-cultural practices is possible in response to historical needs

¹⁹ Bagus Takwin, *Akar-Akar Ideologi: Pengantar Kajian Konsep Ideologi dari Plato hingga Bourdieu* (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2003).

²⁰ Chris Barker, "The Sage Dictionary of Cultural Studies" (London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004).

²¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990).

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

and challenges. In another sense, habitus is a ‘sense of one’s place,’ which is a person’s perception of their place or position concerning others in the social structure in which they live, and that perception affects their actions and interactions.²⁴ Therefore, no socio-cultural practice is born in a ‘vacuum’ without any context or spirit of its era.

Focusing on the meaning of certain actions and experiences of the community that have a basis in subjective structures, this study uses a post-positivist paradigm that sees reality as being formed by subjective experience. Within this paradigm, the foundation of this study is derived from phenomenological methods²⁵ to describe the basic elements of a practice or tradition, to examine what lies behind the implementation of the tradition, and how the tradition is carried out. Primary data consists of narratives and descriptions of the tradition of reciting the Qur'an and *Khataman* based on observation, interviews, and document collection. The data collection was conducted through ethnographic and semiotic examination of symbolic texts. However, both approaches have limitations, ethnography tends to rely on direct observation, which can lead to bias and difficulties in generalization, while semiotics may be too focused on sign analysis, which can get caught up in the subjectivity of interpretation or not capture the broader social context. To gain a more holistic analysis and understanding, these two approaches can often complement each other, with other approaches such as discourse analysis or social hermeneutics approaches.

By this theoretical framework and methodological issue, we can ask a question can the *Khataman* be seen as represent a transformation in community religiosity, especially illustrating the dynamics of understanding and practicing Islam in the face of modernity in the Bimanese Muslim community? This question is an interesting subject of study for two reasons: firstly, the Islamic practices has indeed undergone such development and dynamism, and secondly, the tradition provides a way for Muslim communities to face and navigate modernity or the complexities of contemporary life.

²⁴ Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby, *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (London: Routledge, 2005).

²⁵ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2014).

The Formation, Opposition, and Shifting of *Khataman*

The Qur'an is being understood by the Bimanese as a divine revelation, the voice of God to listen to. Those who can read and complete the reading of the Qur'an attain a high position both spiritual and societal. Therefore, the community will underestimate those who ignore the Qur'an, as a Bimanese poem says: "*Au di ru'u dou ma daloa karo'a, doho ta awa ngena jangko di iwa*" (What is the fate of a person who is unable to recite the Qur'an, left to sit below waiting for blessings from friends). The spirit of the Qur'an is contested with the *dali* (one of the Bimanese poems) song performed in the *qasida rebana* (tambourine) competition at the MTQ event. Moreover, *Khataman* is an important practice in Bimanese life. It is part of their life cycle ritual, in addition to circumcision and marriage, held for children or adolescents before marriage or at the same time as circumcision.²⁶ *Khataman* for children among Bimanese is a parental obligation that must be fulfilled before they are married.

Reciting or learning the Qur'an is part of community agency, meaning the community has the initiative to mobilize self-resources for family education. In the past, children experienced the process of learning the Qur'an through the practice of *Ngge'e Nuru*, a kind of *nyantri* (learning) at the teacher's house, while serving the teacher. There are two forms of *Ngge'e Nuru* in Bima culture: *Ngge'e Nuru* at the house of prospective fathers-in-law and *Ngge'e Nuru* at the teacher's house. *Ngge'e Nuru* at the prospective in-laws' house aims to get to know the prospective son-in-law more closely. On the other hand, the prospective son-in-law gets to know the family of the prospective companion better. Therefore, he must show a polite attitude, behavior, and speech in front of the prospective in-laws. It is not allowed to show otherwise because it can damage or break the engagement that has been made. During *Ngge'e Nuru*, the prospective son-in-law must assist the prospective father-in-law in caring for and working on rice fields, gardens, and livestock.²⁷ *Ngge'e Nuru* at the teacher's house, on the other hand, aims to deepen religious knowledge, especially the Qur'an and the yellow book (*Ngaji Kitab*, a Bimanese practice of *pesantren*). Young people from villages come to study at teacher's house,

²⁶ Suprapto, *Dialektika Islam dan Budaya Nusantara: Dari Negosiasi, Adaptasi Hingga Komodifikasi* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2020).

²⁷ Interview with Alan Malingi, an expert on Bimanese culture, in Bima, May 1, 2022.

stayed, and learned the Qur'an at there while serving the teacher. Thus, the expression of Bima parents, “*ka ulu nemba guru ampo nemba Ruma*,” means to serve first at the teacher's house to get religious knowledge and blessings afterward, only then knowing the correct way to worship God.

Parents are very concerned about their children's Qur'anic education. They competed to take their children to the teacher's house. However, nowadays, according to Alan Malingi, parents no longer take their children to the *Guru Ngaji* (Qur'an recitation teacher) because their life orientation is more on the economy, so children's education to recite the Qur'an is no longer a priority. The Western education system challenged the Quran's teaching, which emphasized economic aspects.²⁸ Now, children's education, including the teaching of the Qur'an, is left to institutions outside the family, especially formal education institutions (schools, boarding schools, madrassas) and informal institutions (TPQ and *Majlis Taklim*/Islamic study groups). In turn, the implementation of *Khataman* also experienced a shift in terms of implementers. If in the past it was done by individuals or families, now *Khataman* is carried out by educational institutions such as *pesantrens* and schools (both primary and secondary conventional and Islamic schools) and by government institutions from the village/family to the district/city level.

In the past, parents in the Bimanese Muslim felt humiliated and embarrassed if their children could not read the Qur'an, and children also felt insecure when they could not recite the Qur'an. This is reflected in the expression in Bima's song, “*au ndi ru'u dou ma daloa kar'o'a, doho ta awa ngena jangko iwa*” (what a pity those who cannot recite the Qur'an, sitting below waiting for blessings from friends who can recite). Therefore, parents take their children to the *Guru Ngaji*—to be taught to read the Qur'an. To *Guru Ngaji*, parents pledge to hand over their child under the guidance of the teacher accompanied by baggage in the form of *oha mina* (sticky rice), bananas, *ilo peta* (oil lamp), and a pillow as a base for putting the Qur'an down. Recitation activities are usually carried out between Maghrib and Isha so that the noisy sounds of reciting the Qur'an can be heard from the teacher's house.

Learning tools were still manual, relying on *Guru Ngaji* as the sole source. In the 1970s, methods such as *Iqra'*, *al-Barqi*, *Qirā'atī*, and *Tartil* did not yet exist, so teachers used traditional ways of memoriz-

²⁸ Mulder, “The Ritual of the Recitation of the Qur'an.”

ing and reading verses several lines in sequence. The children were told to memorize several verses before being introduced to the *Hijā'iyah* letters and then guided on how to correctly read and pronounce them (*makharīj al-burūf*). When these children became proficient in reading the Qur'an properly, a Qur'an memorization parade was held. They will be invited to sit at the top of the house to recite verses from the Qur'an, while children who cannot read the Qur'an sit on chairs downstairs to listen to their reading of the Qur'an. Parents were proud of their children who were able to read the Qur'an. To inform the public that their child was able to read the Qur'an, as well as an expression of gratitude, a *Khataman* event was held. Over time, this activity was carried out continuously until it became a tradition/culture to this day.

Although the *Khataman* has become a commonly practiced ritual, it is not immediately accepted by all of the Bimanese. Some people oppose it, arguing that this ritual is considered a wasteful practice. Rejection also came from puritanic groups opposing *bid'ah* (heresy) and local traditions, which is part of the dynamic relation between groups that adhere to different religious traditions within society. One informant gave an example of this rejection within his own extended family. His father came from the socio-religious organization (Ormas), namely Persatuan Islam (Persis), while his mother was from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). When one of the family members dies, the family has to hold a ritual of *Ngaji Made* (reciting the Qur'an for the deceased). The implementation of *Ngaji Made* became a long debate among the family members as to whether it should be carried out because it had elements of heresy in it. This disagreement ended with an emphasis on *Ngaji Karo'a*, which coincided with the post-death moment, so this tradition was still followed. This group argues that *Ngaji Made* is just a term to remember death, but it aims to accommodate the tradition of reading the Qur'an and is good for adults, children, and teenagers to be involved in. The implementation of *Ngaji Karo'a* at this moment is combined with *Khataman*, which is intended as a reward for the deceased. This is usually carried out regularly for up to seven days by regularly reciting the Qur'an following *juz'* by *juz'*; it can also be completed within a day by dividing one *juz'* one person, in Bima is called *Ngaji Karimpo* (reciting the Qur'an together with each part).

However, *Khataman* has experienced a shift from community initiation and self-help to government determination. If in the past *Khataman* was only the community who organized it, now the government plays a role in organizing it. For example, during the Zainul Arifin administration (2000-2005), the Bima Regency government had a mainstreaming program, 'Membumikan al-Qur'an' (Grounding the Qur'an). One of its implementations is providing incentives to *Guru Ngajis* who teach at TPQs throughout the Bima Regency area, honoring them for their service in producing children who are fluent in reciting the Qur'an. To prove fluency and mark the completion of this stage of the Qur'an education, the government holds *Khataman* celebrations, even held twice a year. The government's presence in this tradition adds to the excitement and encourages enthusiasm for community involvement in refining the Qur'an. However, *Khataman* activities initiated by the government, on the other hand, tend to make people passive, waiting for activities organized by the government, weakening the community's initiative and self-reliance built over time.

Another shift occurred in the participation of the village community, as they have transitioned from actively participating and acting in *haflah* events to just spectators or listeners. If in the past, *haflah* activities, which included *Khataman*, involved people in the village as active participants, now most *haflah* only involve local people as spectators. Participants who recite the Qur'an on stage are participants from other villages or from groups of professional Qur'an readers who are deliberately present to enliven the event, and the event owner has to spend a certain budget for this. These shifts illustrate that society and the government tend to judge the success of cultivating the Qur'an based on the indicator of the number of people who participate in the *Khataman* event, not the number of people who are good at reading and practicing the preachings of the Qur'an. Due to such quantitative tendencies, TPQs have also grown in society, most of which are instantaneous and fictitious, created to absorb the government's budget.

It can be said that the formation of the *Khataman* has a cultural basis or habitus in Bourdieu's terms, which 'forces' individual Muslims or community to practice the *Khataman* and maintain it. The habitus base is multi-layered starting from communal views on the ethics of reading the Qur'an, the existence of learning culture such as

Ngge'e Nuru, and life cycle rituals that involve reading the Qur'an in it. Indeed, there are other aspects such as changes in social institutions and government involvement. Educational institutions changes and the presence of the strong commitment of the government in the Islamic values can basically be seen as a strong modality among the Bimanese Muslim. This social capital encouraged the community to develop religious practices in such a way that the practice of *Khataman* is dynamic and has various functions and meanings.

Forms, Functions, and Social Dimensions of *Khataman*

Khataman in Bima is generally carried out to celebrate the completion of someone's obligation to recite the full 30 chapters of the Qur'an. Those inaugurated are usually children or teenagers aged 10 to 18 years. In Adlin Sila's notes,²⁹ the *Khataman* is held simultaneously with other celebrations, such as circumcision or the *Ruwah* prayer for death. *Khataman* is carried out individually or in groups and organized independently by interested community members. This celebration begins with a public test process, where the children who will be recited are first tested by a *Guru Ngaji* or someone who is considered with authority in matters of the Qur'an. This process is also attended by a limited number of audiences, who have the turn to correct if something is wrong in the reading. This process provides strong motivation and enthusiasm for the children who will be celebrated. Mistakes made by the child in reciting the Qur'an will embarrass the parents who asked the child to immediately repeat learning the Qur'an, returning to the teacher to recite the Qur'an until they can read it fluently. On the other hand, if the child shows his reciting skills, the parents will be very proud. Passing the test is the most important stage in a child's life, marking whether he can become a pious Muslim then a religious authority or a prayer leader (*imām*) in the mosque.

The *Khataman* celebration process begins with preparations called *tampu'u rawi* (preliminary), including *mbolo weki* (family meetings) and *mbolo kampo* (villagers' meetings), and then the main event called *fu'u rawi* (main event). The main event, which usually occurs in the afternoon, begins with the recital of hadrah accompanied by a tambourine, accompanying the celebrated children to depart from *Guru*

²⁹ Muhammad Adlin Sila, *Being Muslim in Indonesia: Religiosity, Politics and Cultural Diversity in Bima* (Leiden University Press, 2021).

Ngaji's house to the *Khataman* event venue, usually the child's parents' house. Whereas in other places, *Khataman* is usually held in mosques or *mushollas* (small mosque),³⁰ in Bima the *Khataman* takes place in the homes of stude. This event is a spectacle and excitement for the villagers. When *Khataman* is held, usually in the evening, *Guru Ngaji* accompanies parents/guardians sitting on the stage to listen to the reading of the shorter *sūrah* (chapter of the Qur'an), starting with *Sūrah al-Takāthur* and ending with the beginning of *Sūrah al-Baqarah*. This procession ended with the elo rawi (closing) by the so-called *Doa Rasu* (Praying for the Prophet) led by a religious leader. The *Khataman* processions, procedures, and series of events and rituals differ from one place to another or from one person/family to another. Sometimes, all processes are carried out during the day or at night. Events held by the government or schools usually occur during the day, with a series of adapted general ceremonial procedures.

Beyond the procession and its variations, *Khataman* is such a socio-cultural process for internalizing the Qur'an and obtaining the blessing for sharpening spirituality and becoming a pious Muslim. Purwanto³¹ stated that *Khataman* functions as a vehicle for instilling the habit of reading the Qur'an, both *bi al-nazari* (looking at the text) and *bi al-hifzī* (memorizing) or *bi al-ghaybī* (without looking at the text). Another motive is to show appreciation for the child's efforts in completing the reading of the Quran to a good standard. The practice of *Khataman* in Bima shows that the Qur'an remains embedded in the reader's heart, always read repeatedly even though it has been completed so that it is fluent and memorized. Furthermore, intrinsically, *Khataman* originates from religious awareness of loving the Qur'an. For its adherents, *Khataman* is considered one of Allah's most beloved practices, which is equated with fighting in Allah's path (*jihād fi sabil Allah*) and it is rewarded such as obtaining war booty (*ghanimah*) which can be enjoyed together.³² *Khataman* is also considered a form of gratitude for achieving or fulfilling a purpose or ideal that was planned and fought for. Views like this shape the habitus of the

³⁰ Septi Marlisa and Rufzan Zulkarnain, "Informal Learning System Pada Kegiatan Khataman Al-Quran di Mushola Bengkulu," *Journal of Lifelong Learning* 5, no. 1 (2022): 71-80.

³¹ Purwanto, "Tafsir atas Budaya Khatm Al-Qur'ān di Pondok Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran Yogyakarta."

³² Interview with Afandi Ibrahim, Bima, April 30, 2022.

Qur'an in the Bimanese Muslims so that this tradition continues to be practiced with various variations and changes.

Over time, its adherents have understood *Khataman* in various ways. Apart from intrinsic motives, extrinsic motives contribute to its formation and resilience among the Bimanese Muslims. Among these external factors are demands from the family, school, *Guru Ngaji*, and policies taken by the government, which often drive the implementation of this culture. These factors are manifested in many ways. First, they express pride for parents who have taken the trouble to direct their children to deepen their understanding of the Quran. At the same time, parents need a vehicle to ward off people's gossip that their children are unable to read the Qur'an or that they cannot educate their children as proper Muslims. Second, the encouragement to participate in enlivening the spread of Islam in Muslim communities that are experiencing an Islamic identity crisis, minimizing illiteracy of the Qur'an, and setting an example for other children to want to recite the Qur'an. Third, there is a need for a vehicle to strengthen emotional ties and friendships between *Guru Ngajis*, parents, students, and the community. Fourth, with the *Khataman* activities, which have become a communal awareness, educational institutions and the government are encouraged to use these activities to promote their institutions.

Considering the previously mentioned factors, it is clear that *Khataman* is more than just a religious publication. While it remains committed to its core mission of promoting Islam and fostering religious awareness, it also has social, economic, and political dimensions. For instance, *Khataman*'s potential as a mass communication tool is significant, as it can be used by various stakeholders, including the government, which needs effective ways to engage with the community. In this way, *Khataman* becomes a form of communication itself. Furthermore, for individuals with aspirations, *Khataman*'s activities can serve as a platform for social class negotiations or as a means of socio-political advancement.

Changing Qur'anic Practices: From Individual to Social Obligation

The Bimanese community is deeply rooted in Islamic traditions, consistently integrating religious practices into daily life. This includes significant life events such as weddings, circumcisions, and the *Khata-*

man ceremony. For the Bimanese, the observance of *Khataman* is not merely a tradition but a vital expression of their religious commitment and a public declaration of their children's proficiency in reciting the Qur'an; this proficiency is a marker of piety and good Muslim identity. Mastery of the Qur'an is seen as a means for the family to enhance their social standing and be recognized as esteemed Muslim community members. In the contrary, failure to demonstrate this can lead to negative social repercussions as the child and the parents may become the subject of unfavorable gossip.

During the 1970s to 1990s, the Bima region experienced growth and development, deeply influenced by the intrinsic religious nature of its inhabitants; their devotion to religious principles was notably fervent (fanatic). A key manifestation of this devoutness was the widespread practice of *tana'o ngaji* (learning to recite the Qur'an) under the guidance of *Guru Ngajis* in each village. The narrative of Abubakar Aziz,³³ a respected religious figure from Roka in the Bima Regency, exemplifies the path to becoming a devout Muslim closely connected to the Qur'an. In the 1940s, at the age of eight and while in the second grade at the *Sekolah Rakyat/SR* (People's School), Abubakar was already familiar with the Qur'anic script, aided by the curriculum's use of the Malay Arabic script. After six years at SR he pursued further education at the Madrasah Darul Ulum for four years, which was later adjusted to three years. The educational system shifted in 1961 when the government transitioned SR to Elementary School and *Sekolah Rakyat Islam/SRI* (Islamic People's School) to *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah/MI* (Islamic Elementary School), introducing a six-year Islamic education requirement. This change also led to the phasing out of the Malay-Arabic script in schools into Latin's script. Upon mastering all 30 chapters of the Qur'an and achieving fluency in its recitation, Abubakar's accomplishment was celebrated in a *Khataman* ceremony, where a *Guru Ngaji* supported him.

Until the 1970s, the villages in Bima were often referred to as Qur'anic villages, a testament to the pervasive practice of Qur'an recitation that resonated from house to house throughout every corner of the village. This vibrant soundscape was largely due to the widespread presence of *Guru Ngajis*, who were readily available in nearly every part of the village. It was common for every ten households to be served by two *Guru Ngajis*, with each teacher guiding between five to

³³ Interview with Abubakar Aziz, Bima, April 28, 2022.

ten students. Typically, a *Guru Ngaji* was either a close family member or an individual renowned within the community for their proficiency in reciting the Qur'an. The primary period for Qur'anic study occurred between the Maghrib and Isha prayers, during which the animated voices of children reciting the Qur'an filled the air. However, the role of *Guru Ngajis* extended beyond mere recitation; they also imparted lessons on religious practices and 'aqidah-morals, including prayer, the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam, and the attributes of Allah and His Messenger. Notably, *Guru Ngajis'* educational background varied widely. While some had attained higher levels of formal education and completed elementary or middle school, others had not. Despite this, their expertise in teaching the Qur'an was undisputed.

Nuruddin,³⁴ a burgeoning religious leader from Campa Village, shares his experience of learning the Qur'an. Initially, his father introduced him and his siblings to the *Hija'iyah* letters using the *Muqaddam* book during the post-Maghrib prayer sessions. Seated before their father, who also served as their first teacher, Nuruddin and his siblings absorbed the lessons, observing and listening to the pronounced letters. Given their father's commitments as a teacher and a school principal, the children were later enrolled with a local *Guru Ngaji*, where they joined other children in a lively and enthusiastic learning environment. The first visit to the *Guru Ngaji*'s house was a formal affair; their parents, adopting a respectful posture, sat cross-legged before the *Guru Ngaji* to discuss their children's education. Despite *Guru Ngaji*'s lack of formal education, he was highly esteemed. The parents brought gifts of clothing (*sarong*), sugar, and coffee as tokens of respect and articulated their hope that their children would learn the Qur'an under his guidance. They expressed their wishes with a heartfelt plea for their children to be blessed with the ability to read the Qur'an. The *Guru Ngaji* welcomed the parents' request with a solemn promise, invoking the blessings of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad to guide his teaching and help the children become proficient in the Qur'an. Some expressions used are "Santabe ta gurnue, mai kai ndai kasoku labo anadoho mu ake ne'e to'i kau mai tanao ngaji ro siri barea ndai kasu mu, simpa na ana doho mu ake ndadi to'i na dou ma loa kar'o'a" (Dear Teacher, our intention here with these children is to ask them to learn the Qur'an and receive blessings from you, hoping

³⁴ Interview with Nuruddin, Bima, April 30, 2022.

these children will become people who can read the Qur'an). The *Guru Ngaji* then accepted the intention of the parents' arrival with the *aqad*: “*Kai bareka ndai Ruma Allah Ta'ala ro kai bareka ndai Anangguru Nabi Muhammad bunesi ntika anadoho ra mai oto ta ke, ka weha ao ro tei ku ba ndai ku di mandadi anamori ma tana'o karo'a*” (With the blessing of Allah and His majesty the Prophet Muhammad, as for the children who are being delivered, I will accept and teach them to become students of the Qur'an).

The *aqad* (derived from Arabic word: 'aqd), a formal agreement between the parents and the *Guru Ngaji*, signifies the transfer of educational guardianship, entrusting the *Guru Ngaji* with the responsibility to impart Qur'anic knowledge to the children. 'Once the *aqad* was concluded, the *Guru Ngaji* anointed our heads, offering a special prayer for us, and we commenced our Qur'anic studies under his tutelage, in the presence of our parents,' recounts Nuruddin. In the following days, he and his siblings regularly attended the Qur'an learning sessions. Their father would insist that the *Guru Ngaji* discipline them if they failed to attend. This was not an act of harshness but rather a measure of the father's commitment to their education, ensuring that they would develop the discipline necessary to become diligent students.

Engaging with the Qur'anic tradition from a young age is a widespread custom among the Bimanese. Abidin,³⁵ born in 1956 in Roi Village, Bima Regency, and later served as a civil servant at the Religious Court, shares insights from his childhood that mirror this tradition. Before elementary school, children are introduced to the Qur'an by their parents, who typically begin teaching them after the Maghrib prayer. The initial approach to learning involves memorization, as the children are not yet familiar with the *Hijā'iyah* script. This method starts with *Sūrah al-Fātihah* and the initial verses of *Sūrah al-Baqarah*. Abidin recounts that this was his parents' method with him, requiring him to gradually memorize the Quran through repeated recitation. He notes that the verses he memorized during those early years have stayed with him.

When parents cannot read the Qur'an themselves or have no chance to teach it, they turn into *Guru Ngaji* for their children to be taught. As part of a traditional ritual, before introducing their children to the *Guru Ngaji*, parents prepare *oba mina* (sticky rice) topped with

³⁵ Interview with Abidin, Bima, April 28, 2022.

karaba (roasted rice) and accompanied by *kalo* (banana). This offering, known as *soji*, is presented to the *Guru Ngaji* as a ceremonial gesture for 'opening' the Qur'an. Following a prayer, the child is encouraged to consume *sakapore oba mina* (a handful of sticky rice) and *sadompo kalo* (a piece of banana), a symbolic act intended to 'open' their throat. This practice is believed to facilitate the child's ability to recite the Qur'an more smoothly and enhance comprehension. The *Guru Ngaji*, along with the parents and other children present, also eats the sticky rice and banana, sharing in this meaningful tradition.

Abidin's journey in learning the Qur'an took place at *Guru Ngaji*'s home until he reached the third grade of elementary school, around 10. Despite not having mastered all 30 chapters of the Qur'an, he participated in the *Khataman* ceremony, with the primary achievement being his familiarity with the *Hijā'iyah* (Arabic letters) and proficiency in Qur'anic recitation. In addition to home-based instruction, children also received guidance in Qur'anic recitation from religious teachers at school, particularly from grades 1 to 3. The completion of *Khataman* typically occurs in the third grade, by which time students are expected to know the *Hijā'iyah* letters and be able to read the Qur'an fluently.

Recently, the development of education and interaction with the Qur'an among the Biman community has completely changed, following social and cultural changes. the perception of being able to read the Qur'an has changed, it is no longer a moral standard for being a good Muslim. the mode of learning the Qur'an has also changed from learning from the Koran teacher with all his ethos to learning in modern institutions such as TPQ or Rumah al-Qur'an. Likewise, the practice of *Khataman* has shifted from individual to social, meaning that it is considered a social obligation (*fardh kifayah*) rather than an individual obligation (*fardh 'ayn*). Therefore, nowadays, the Qur'an recitation and *Khataman* tend to become celebrations or festivals, reflecting the strong dimension of modernity in religious practice.

Khataman: Field of Cultural and Social Change

The *Khataman* ceremony transcends its basic role as a form of religious communication, extending beyond the boundaries of its inherent sanctity to influence social practices. It has evolved into a platform for contestation, a space where the interpretation of esteemed values and the social standing of its proponents are actively negotiat-

ed. Consequently, this religious observance, intertwined with societal customs, intersects with the spirituality of the middle class and the widespread dissemination of Islamic beliefs and practices.

Middle-Class Spirituality

In the context of Bima, a region witnessing a surge in religious fervor among its Muslim population, both in urban locales and certain rural areas, there exists a pronounced need for a medium through which individuals can express their faith in communal settings. The *Khataman* ceremony emerges as a significant means to meet this demand, embracing both spiritual and societal dimensions. From a religious perspective, *Khataman* offers a platform for the deep appreciation and further enrichment of Islamic beliefs by facilitating engagement with the teachings of the Qur'an. On the social front, it plays a crucial role in promoting socialization, fostering social cohesion, and establishing shared norms that underpin communal life.

The active participation of the Muslim middle class in the *Khataman* ceremonies within Bima is undeniable, to the extent that it has evolved into a social imperative. 'Middle class' is defined in the sense proposed by Ariel Hariyanto, referring to individuals who possess significant social resources, such as networks and means of production, which empower them to assume a leading role within society.³⁶ In the context of Bimanese Muslim society, this middle class undergoes social mobilization, in part facilitated by socio-religious practices that elevate their status to socio-religious leaders. Consequently, they engage with the Qur'an with great zeal, often *fa istabiq al-khayrat* (competing in goodness) in their interactions with the sacred text. They act as the driving force behind the perpetuation of the *Khataman* tradition in Muslim communities, often serving as sponsors or primary supporters of these ceremonies, whether within their families or through various institutions or organizations. In comparison, *Khataman* in the Muslim community of Pulogadung East Jakarta, for example, has a meaning as self-actualization and building social networks and relationships, beyond its basic function as a spiritual interaction with the Qur'an.³⁷ In essence, *Khataman* has become a platform for

³⁶ Rubaidi, *Kelas Menengah dan Gerakan Islamisme di Indonesia* (Malang: Intrans Publishing, 2021).

³⁷ Moh. Syarifudin, "Tradisi Khataman Al-Quran dalam Shalat Tarawih di Masyarakat Perkotaan Studi Living Quran pada Jamaah Masjid Al-Mawardiyyah Pisangan

social mobility towards religious leadership and a means for the middle class to project their social and religious identity.

Furthermore, embedded within this phenomenon is a clear depiction of the burgeoning spirituality in urban settings. This growth is not an isolated occurrence but rather intersects with various factors, among which the practice of *Khataman* stands out. Specifically, at the Pesantren Assidiqiyah, the *Khataman* ceremony is imbued with a profound sense of spiritualism, notably through the *hadrah*, a Sufistic performance, alongside lectures and prayers that resonate with Sufistic themes. While not exclusively a Sufi practice, *Khataman* has undeniably become a conduit for disseminating Sufistic principles within the community. During the religious lectures at such events, the Qur'an is portrayed as a sacred scripture and a source of extraordinary mystical experiences encountered by the Prophet Muhammad. Also, the teachings encapsulated within the Qur'an are highlighted for their rich Sufistic values, reinforcing the ceremony's role in fostering spiritual growth.

Undoubtedly, one of the primary motivations for Bimanese Muslims engaging in *Khataman* is the intrinsic desire for divine blessings from the Qur'an to enrich their lives. Performing *Khataman* allows individuals to publicly affirm their dedication to Islam, thereby conferring a sense of piety upon them. An informant elaborated that the motivation to manifest or showcase religious consciousness in public spaces is, in fact, a reflection of living out religious teachings. “The Qur'an itself encourages the demonstration of one's Muslim identity to others,” the informant remarked, referencing the Qur'anic verse “*Ishhadū bi annā muslimūn*” (Āli 'Imrān [3]: 64) which translates to ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’

Massification of Islam

The Qur'an has been foundational in developing Bimanese Muslim identity from the early stages of Islamization until the 1970s. Following this period, the community encountered a ‘crisis’ in its relationship with the Qur'an, which lasted for several decades. However,

Timur Pologadung Jakarta Timur” (Master Thesis--Institut Ilmu al-Qur'an [IIQ] Jakarta), <http://repository.iiq.ac.id//handle/123456789/203> (accessed December 2, 2024).

the reverence for the Qur'an in Bima society has been rekindled, manifesting in new ways. Whereas the previous golden age was characterized by the dominance of *Guru Ngajis*, village-based centers for Qur'anic teaching, and a network of reciters, the current revival is marked by the proliferation of Qur'an houses and an increase in Qur'anic events such as TPQ graduations, *Haflah*, *Tahfidz*, and *Khataaman*. The following events recorded through local mass media reports indicate the return of passion for the Qur'an in Bima society:

Table 1. Event of Qur'anic Festivals and Celebrations

Time	Activity	Goal
November 10, 2016 ³⁸	A significant gathering took place in the courtyard of the Bima Regent's office, where 1,114 male and female students from TPQ representing 18 sub-districts within the Bima Regency convened for a Mass <i>Khataman</i> event.	Collaborating with various community elements, the regional government is dedicated to nurturing a generation grounded in Qur'anic principles. The Mass <i>Khataman</i> event is a key initiative within the government's priority activities to fulfill the <i>Bima RAMAH</i> mission. This mission seeks to establish governance and a societal ethos that places a high value on religious principles as delineated in the Qur'an grounding program.
April 10, 2019 ³⁹	A mass prayer event hosted in the courtyard of the Bima Mayor's Office saw the participation of 1,000 individuals from 23 elementary schools across Bima City. These participants were involved in <i>tabsin</i>	The <i>Khataman</i> ceremony, augmented with <i>dhikr</i> (remembrance of God) and prayer, was conducted in celebration of the 17 th anniversary of the City of Bima.

³⁸ Kahaba.Net, "Wujudkan Generasi Qur'ani, 1.114 Santri Ikuti Khataman," *Kahaba.net*, November 12, 2016, <https://kahaba.net/wujudkan-generasi-qurani-1-114-santri-ikuti-khataman> (accessed July 15, 2023).

³⁹ Bagian Protokol dan Komunikasi Pimpinan, "Ribuan Siswa Khataman Al-Qur'an Peringati HUT Kota Bima ke-17," *Portal Pemerintah Kota Bima*, April 10, 2019, <https://portal.bimakota.go.id/web/detail-berita/181/ribuan-siswa-khataman-alqur%E2%80%99an-peringati-hut-kota-bima-ke17> (accessed July 15, 2023).

	(Qur'anic recitation improvement) and Qur'anic recitations. The event was organized by the <i>Badan Amil Zakat Nasional/BAZNAS</i> (National Amil Zakat Agency) of Bima City in partnership with the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Al-Quran (STIQ) Bima and various other Islamic educational institutions. The attendees included 650 students from state elementary schools, 120 from 5 madrasas, 120 from 5 Pesantren, and 110 from 4 state high schools within Bima City. A select group of 50 students and <i>santri</i> (Islamic boarding school students) performed the <i>Khataman</i> ceremony on stage, representing all those in attendance.	
December 13, 2019 ⁴⁰	In the courtyard of the Bima Regent's office, a collective session of prayers and <i>dhikir</i> at the regency level was held to pray for the successful conduct of the simultaneous <i>Pemilihan Kepala Desa/Pilkades</i> (Village Head Election). This spiritual gathering was coupled with a mass <i>Khataman</i> involving 1,500 female students from TPQs across Bima Regency.	As a form of implementing our collective obligation to fortify each generation so that it grows and develops into a strong generation capable of facing future challenges.
21 October 2020 ⁴¹	The Uswatun Hasanah Taklim Council organized a dedicated mass prayer event for mothers at the Paruga Nae Convention Hall in Bima City, which 500	Building initiation of Al-Qur'an education among families, especially for mothers, before sending their children to TPQs.

⁴⁰ Sahrul, "Doa, Dzikir dan Khataman Alquran, Bupati Bima: Pendidikan Agama Sangat Penting," *LakeyNews.Com*, December 13, 2019, <https://lakeynews.com/2019/12/13/doa-dzikir-dan-khataman-alquran-bupati-bima-pendidikan-agama-sangat-penting/> (accessed July 14, 2023).

⁴¹ Bagian Protokol dan Komunikasi Pimpinan, "Sekda Kota Bima Hadiri Khataman Massal Al-Qur'an," *Portal Pemerintah Kota Bima*, October 21, 2020, <https://portal.bimakota.go.id/web/detail-berita/845/sekda-kota-bima-hadiri-khataman-massal-alqur%E2%80%99an> (accessed July 13, 2023).

participants attended.		
April 30, 2021 ⁴²	SMK Negeri 1 Kota Bima organized a <i>Khataman</i> event titled 'Momentum to Form a Millennial Generation with Qur'anic Faith.'	The activity is an integral component of the <i>Imtaq Ramadhan</i> program, designed to foster enhanced levels of faith and piety among students. Additionally, it aims to deepen their understanding of religious teachings, ultimately contributing to positive changes in their behavior.
April 28, 2022 ⁴³	A mass prayer service attended by 25 parents was held at the al-Muhajirin Mosque, Panggi Village, Mpunda District, Bima City, with the theme 'Building Literacy, Fostering Love for the Qur'an.'	This particular <i>Khataman</i> ceremony is distinguished by its inclusion of the recitation of short verses, as is common in typical <i>khataman</i> events, and the reading of longer passages from the Qur'an.
June 4, 2022 ⁴⁴	SDN 05 Rabangodu Utara in Kota Bima hosted a graduation ceremony for its sixth-grade students, adopting a format combining <i>Khataman</i> and graduation elements. The event was attended by 89 individuals and was held in the school's courtyard.	The objective is to establish this practice as a tradition, representing a collective endeavor to nurture a golden generation guided by the principles of Pancasila (a Pancasila golden generation).
29 July 2022 ⁴⁵	Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP) Ta-	The objective is to direct the academic community

⁴² Reportase Bima, "Pemkab Bima Safari Ramadhan di Tambora dan Sanggar," *Reportase Bima*, January 5, 2021, <https://www.reportasebima.com/2021/05/pemkab-bima-safari-ramadhan-di-tambora.html> (accessed July 15, 2023).

⁴³ Wartabumigora.com, "Safari Ramadhan, Gelar Khataman Al-Quran Massal di Masjid Kelurahan Panggi, Ini Pesan Sekda Kota Bima," *Wartabumigora*, April 28, 2022, <https://www.wartabumigora.id/2022/04/safari-ramadhan-gelar-khataman-al-quran.html> (accessed July 14, 2023).

⁴⁴ Fajarmediabima.com, "SDN 05 Rabangodu Utara Kota Bima Gelar Khataman Al-Qur'an, dan Wisuda Kelas VI," *Fajarmedia*, June 4, 2022, <https://www.fajarmedia-bima.com/2022/06/sdn-05-rabangodu-utara-kota-bima-gelar.html> (accessed July 13, 2023).

⁴⁵ Admin, "50 Dosen dan Pegawai STKIP Tamsis Bima Khatam Alquran," *Suara Beradab*, July 30, 2022, <https://suaraberadab.com/2022/07/30/50-dosen-dan-pegawai-stkip-tamsis-bima-khatam-alquran/> (accessed July 15, 2023).

man Siswa in Bima consistently organizes the Friday Blessing program, underscoring its dedication to fostering a culture of civility and character development. Fifty lecturers and staff members attended a *Khataman* ceremony at the al-Barokah Sudirman Mosque within the STKIP Taman Siswa-Bima campus.

The practice of *Khataman* is projected to continue to increase in 2022, with a growing number of educational institutions, local government bodies, *majlis taklim*, and grassroots initiatives participating. These activities are united by a shared commitment to instilling the values of the Qur'an within the community. Both the municipal government of Bima City and the regional government of Bima Regency demonstrate a keen awareness of the importance of embedding Qur'anic principles. This is evidenced by their active participation in events organized by the community and educational institutions and through the implementation of government-funded programs and policies that support this objective. The collaborative efforts reflect a collective aspiration to integrate Qur'anic teachings into the fabric of society.

The active engagement of the government has played a significant role in the widespread adoption of *Khataman*. The discourse surrounding its implementation, which emphasizes themes such as embedding Qur'anic teachings, strengthening familial bonds, and cultivating a Qur'an-centric generation, indicates the broader trend toward the massification of Islam. For the Bimanese, the massification of Islam into societal norms is not a novel phenomenon, given its deep-seated roots that date back to the sultanate era through extensive social and political processes. Nonetheless, it is a crucial issue that, in recent times, there has been a societal shift towards modernization, which is often perceived as a threat to the Bimanese identity as a Muslim community. Within this context, the role of *Khataman* in the massification of Islam takes on added significance, serving as a means to reaffirm and reinforce Islamic values amidst contemporary changes.

Conclusion

The practice of *Khataman* among Bimanese Muslims has recently diversified, taking on various forms and expressions. Some are celebrated independently by the community with vibrant festivities or through more modest observances, while others are organized by educational entities, majlis taklim, TPQ, pesantren, and governmental bodies. For the Bimanese Muslim community, *Khataman* holds significant meaning amidst contemporary societal shifts. The collective engagement of society in *Khataman* practices symbolizes a communal effort and consciousness toward fostering a religiously devout community anchored in Qur'anic teachings. This reflects a habitus that has navigated through the ebbs and flows of social history and the currents of modernization, now witnessing a resurgence in the commitment to embedding Qur'anic values. Moreover, Qur'anic-related social practices, including *Khataman*, are deeply entwined with the processes of constructing both religious and social identities within the Muslim community. For Bimanese Muslims, *Khataman* serves as an arena for navigating the challenges of modernity, marked by societal transformations and evolving roles of religious institutions. This tradition offers a platform for public self-expression, with its widespread adoption symbolizing a collective assertion of the community's enduring commitment to preserving their religious and cultural identity. The findings of this study illustrate the dynamics of Islamic practice in Muslim communities in eastern Indonesia, providing an understanding that responses to modernity and globalization take diverse forms and tend to make cultural practices a field for negotiation. This study finding enriches the theory of practice developed by Bourdieu which configures Indonesian religious communities. The study of *Khataman* at the local level not only provides insights into how Muslim communities interact with the sacred text of the Qur'an, but also opens up perspective for broader discourse covering theological, social, educational and cultural aspects. In a wider context, it can encourage discussions on how religion and religious traditions adapt to changing times, as well as how communities can maintain a balance between the preservation of traditions and the development of modernity.

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