



Banjar Proverbs: Revealing Cultural Values of Religious Systems and Ritual Practices in Banjar Society

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Abstract

Proverbs contain cultural values and life philosophies that function as moral guidelines within a community. This study aims to describe the cultural values related to religious systems and ritual practices embedded in Banjar proverbs. The research employs a literary anthropology approach with a qualitative library research design. Data were collected through documentation techniques by examining published sources related to Banjar proverbs. The data were analyzed using a descriptive-interpretative method through stages of description, analysis, and evaluation. The findings reveal that Banjar proverbs reflect various cultural values of religious belief and practice, including: (1) preparation for life in both the worldly and the hereafter; (2) moral accountability for good and bad deeds; (3) belief that sustenance has been divinely predetermined; (4) patience and perseverance in facing life's challenges; (5) marriage practices in accordance with Islamic law, particularly after triple divorce; (6) belief in individuals who possess the ability to perceive others' inner feelings; (7) belief in certain utterances to restore a child's spirit; (8) belief in spirit possession; (9) belief that certain family members may bring misfortune to a household; (10) seeking help from others with sincerity, whether accepted or not; (11) belief in abnormal or unusual behavior as a sign of imbalance; (12) the importance of learning religious knowledge from the beginning and in sequence; (13) belief in vulnerable conditions that may attract misfortune; (14) admiration for women who possess both physical beauty and noble character; (15) moral advice against excessive worldly desires; (16) social harmony and close community relations; (17) taboos related to sitting in specific places believed to delay marriage; (18) advice for elders to maintain self-awareness; (19) encouragement for elders to act wisely; and (20) the importance of making use of opportunities wisely. Overall, Banjar proverbs serve as an important medium for transmitting religious beliefs, moral teachings, and cultural wisdom that shape the worldview and social behavior of Banjar society.

Keywords: *Culture; Banjar Proverbs; Religious System; Ritual Practices; Local Wisdom*

Introduction

Culture plays a vital role in social life and serves as a fundamental asset in the development of high-quality human resources. Essentially, culture is highly complex; therefore, scholars have continuously offered diverse definitions, interpretations, and boundaries regarding the concept of culture. In its broadest sense, culture was first defined by Tylor in 1871 (Wilson, 1996: 51, cited in Sibrani, 2004:

2) as a comprehensive whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities acquired by humans as members of society.

Sibrani (2004: 3) further states that culture is a way of knowing that individuals must possess to carry out daily life tasks, encompassing knowledge of music, literature, art, and other cultural expressions.

Culture is inseparably linked to society. One of the communities that strongly upholds cultural traditions is the Banjar ethnic group, the majority of whom reside in South Kalimantan. Previous studies related to Banjar cultural elements have been conducted by several researchers. Ahmad Mahrusin (2017), in his study entitled *Cultural Elements of Banjar Society in the Short Story Collection Mamdur, Datanglah ke Tubuh Balian: An Ethnographic Study*, analyzed cultural elements in literary works using an ethnographic approach. The findings indicate that the study focused on cultural components within literature and primarily employed ethnographic theory.

Another relevant study was conducted by Norhidayah (2016) entitled *The Religious System of Banjar Diamond Miners in the Short Story Masa Lalu di Banjarbaru by Tajuddin Noor Ganie: An Anthropological Study*. This research specifically emphasized the religious system depicted in the short story *Masa Lalu di Banjarbaru*.

In contrast, the present anthropological study focuses specifically on the cultural values of Banjar society as reflected in proverbs. Through this study, the researcher seeks to convey various forms of Banjar culture, although the scope is limited to the cultural elements contained within this research.

By studying proverbs, society can gain a deeper understanding of cultural values and social norms embedded within them. Furthermore, this study aims to contribute to the preservation of proverbs as a valuable form of cultural heritage. Proverbs represent an important cultural legacy that embodies local wisdom and functions as guidance for social life. Examining proverbs helps ensure their continuity as part of intangible cultural heritage.

In addition, proverbs play a significant role in the development of language and literature. As an integral part of linguistic and literary traditions, proverbs employ aesthetically rich language and convey profound meanings. Studying proverbs therefore contributes to the enrichment of language and literary studies. Finally, proverbs often reflect human experiences and knowledge about the world. Through the study of proverbs, researchers can enhance societal understanding of life, values, and reality.

Studies on cultural values in proverbs have also been conducted previously. Maneechukate (2017) found that Indonesian proverbs reflect the characteristics of Indonesian society, which highly upholds moral, social, and cultural values.

Method

This study employs a literary anthropology approach. Literary anthropology is a field of study that examines the relationship between literature, society, and culture. The type of research used in this study is library research. According to Ratna (2004), library research refers to a research method conducted by examining previously published texts, including books, magazines, and newspapers (as cited in Astutik, 2012: 3–4).

In addition, this study also adopts an ethnographic approach, which is a qualitative research method used to understand the culture of a particular community. Ethnographic research focuses on comprehending an entire cultural system, including values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors. Ethnographic

researchers typically live among the community being studied for a certain period in order to gain an in-depth understanding of their culture.

The research method applied in this study is descriptive-analytic. Ratna (2013: 283–284) explains that the descriptive-analytic method combines two complementary processes, namely description and analysis. This method serves as both the initial and final stage of research, characterized by interpretation. Each process of understanding must begin with describing the elements of the object under study, followed by an analysis of those elements.

Data were collected using documentation techniques. Research documentation is a data collection technique conducted by examining documents relevant to the research. These documents may take the form of written texts, images, or recorded materials. Documentation techniques can be applied in both qualitative and quantitative research.

Results and Discussion

1. Religious System and Ritual Practices

a. Cultural Practice of Preparing Provisions for Worldly Life and the Hereafter

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “*Akal diakali pikir dipikirakan*”. Makna peribahasa ini adalah *Gasan sangu hidup, dunia -ahirat, nusua dibarii Tuhan, akal wan pikiran. Akal wan pikiran musti dipakai gasan kamaslahatan sabarataan; sakira hidup bauntung, batuah, baiman. "Akal-diakali, pikir-dipikirakan", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, papadah gasan bubuhan nang anum-mau ai jua gasan nang tuha-sakira hidup kada siwah, kada maniniwah, kada tasalah. Nang anum bhanu bapikir tikas lintuhut. Disangkanya bujur, padahal luput.*

Interpretation: This proverb conveys that human beings are endowed by God with reason and intellect as provisions for life in both this world and the hereafter. Reason and thought must be used wisely for the common good so that life becomes meaningful, prosperous, and guided by faith. The Banjar proverb “*Akal diakali, pikir dipikirakan*” serves as moral advice for people of all ages, both young and old, to live cautiously and thoughtfully, avoiding recklessness and moral deviation. Young people, in particular, are advised to think carefully and maturely so that what is assumed to be right does not turn out to be a mistake.

b. Cultural Practice of Performing Good and Bad Deeds with Moral Accountability

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “*Apik-apik mamilih antah pada barasnya.*”

Makna Peribahasa Banjar ini adalah “*Apik-apik mamilih antah pada barasnya*” papadah sagan urang saalaman sakira babisa-bisa mamilih nang baik atawa nang kada baik. Bahari kala, wayah manampi baras di nyiru, pariannya, bhanu ada “*antah*”-banih hampa, puang, kadada isinya-nang musti dibuang. Artinya kurang-labih sama kaya peribahasa “*Apik-apik mamilih, kaluku tapilih bangkung*”.

Interpretation: The proverb advises individuals to be careful and wise in distinguishing between what is good and what is bad. The metaphor refers to the traditional process of winnowing rice, in which *antah*—empty or hollow grains—must be separated and discarded. Symbolically, this reflects the need to evaluate actions and choices carefully so that individuals can be morally accountable for their behavior. The meaning aligns with the warning that careless choices may lead to selecting what appears acceptable but is actually flawed or harmful.

c. Cultural Belief that Sustenance Has Been Predetermined

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “*Hulat dalam batu gin ada rajakinya.*”

Maknanya adalah “*Utuh Tipang urang jaba, lain urang badahi atawa urang bapangkat wan sabangsanya. Nang ngaran urang kadada, sakulahnya kada tinggi kada. Sahibar bisa mambaca wan manulis hurup Latin haja. Abah Utuh Tipang sudah kadada lagi. Sudah lawas mati ditimbak patir parahatan hujan, wayah bataduh di bawah rapun hambawang, wayah maambil upah marincan di pahumaan urang.*”

Interpretation: This proverb reflects the Banjar belief that sustenance (*rezeki*) is determined by God and not solely by social status, wealth, or education. The narrative of Utuh Tipang illustrates a humble individual whose life demonstrates acceptance and gratitude for divine provision. Despite limited education and economic means, sustenance continues to be available through honest labor. This cultural value emphasizes faith, sincerity, and trust in God’s will.

d. Facing Life with Patience

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Kambang kada sakaki, kumbang kada saikung, alam kada batawing.**”

Maknanya adalah “*Kambang kada sakaki, kumbang kada saikung, alam kada batawing*” saku “*basa laut*”-nya “*Bunga tak setangkai, kumbang tak seekor, dunia tak bertepi*”. Peribahasa Banjar nang satabul ni sagan bapitua: *mamadahi urang sakira sabar, tabah, tawakal, tahan apilan wayah mahadapi huhuwas hidup.*

Interpretation:

The Banjar proverb “*Kambang kada sakaki, kumbang kada saikung, alam kada batawing,*” which in Indonesian is metaphorically expressed as “*Bunga tidak setangkai, kumbang tidak seekor, dunia tidak bertepi*” (a flower without a stalk, a beetle without a tail, a world without boundaries), conveys moral advice particularly for married individuals. This proverb teaches the importance of maintaining patience, resilience, spiritual surrender (*tawakal*), and emotional endurance when facing various trials and hardships in life.

e. Marriage in Accordance with Islamic Law after Triple Divorce

This cultural practice is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Kawin bacina buta.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Cara kawin urang Banjar bahari Kala ada nang ngarannya "bacina buta". Napa maka dingarani "bacina buta"? Wallahu a'lam, tagal kadada maksud mawada urang Cina. Sabaharianan, Cina-Banjar di banua Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, akur, rakat mupakat, ruhui rahayu bakawan lawan urang Banjar. "Kawin bacina buta", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, gasan manyambat urang laki-bini nang sudah sarak talu kali, tagal imbahnya kawin pulang. Babulikan pulang!*

Interpretation:

In the past, Banjar society recognized a form of marriage referred to as “*bacina buta.*” The term does not carry any intention to demean or stereotype Chinese people. In everyday life, the relationship between Chinese and Banjar communities in Banua Banjar, South Kalimantan, has historically been harmonious, cooperative, and peaceful.

The expression “*kawin bacina buta*” is a Banjar proverb used to describe a marital practice involving a husband and wife who have undergone a triple divorce (*talak tiga*) and subsequently remarry through a specific arrangement in accordance with Islamic law in order to enable reconciliation and reunification. The practice symbolizes the possibility of restoring marital unity through religiously regulated procedures.

f. Belief in the Existence of Individuals Who Can Read Others’ Inner Feelings

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Kilat dalam banyu gin pinandu.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Tumatan burinik atawa gual di dalam banyu haja gin paunjunan nang harat kawa manangguh, tahu iwak nang bakunyung dalam banyu. "Kilat dalam banyu gin pinandu", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, gasan manyambat urang nang harat babilangan. Harat manangguh parigal wan idabul urang.*

Interpretation:

From the earliest stage, even when something is still in the form of a seed or an egg in the water, a truly intelligent person is already able to perceive and understand subtle signs; such a person can recognize the presence of fish hidden beneath the water’s surface.

The Banjar proverb “*Kilat dalam banyu gin pinandu,*” originating from South Kalimantan, is used to describe individuals who possess sharp intelligence and deep insight. Such individuals are believed to be capable of reading subtle cues, understanding others’ behavior, and discerning the intentions and desires of those around them.

g. Belief in Certain Utterances to Prevent a Child from Losing Their Spirit

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Kuuur sumangat, hilang panyakitnya.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Sakira kada kapuhuan sawanan atawa kapidaraan, lamunnya takajut urang Banjar bahari kala babacaan sagan anak, cucu atawa kamanakannya nang rahatan tagugur di ayunan, batis tabarusuk di lubak, di titian, wan sarabanya: "Kuuur sumangat, hilang panyakitnya...!" Nang lain, nang ada di higa-mahiganya, saitu-saini manyahuti: "Habis baras, ada banih karingnya..." Maksudnya, sakira nang anak kada takibar sumangatnya. Maraha baras habis, lingis, tagal banih karing ada haja di kindai, tinggal manutuk di lasung.*

Interpretation:

To prevent spiritual disturbance or illness, when Banjar people in the past experienced shock, they commonly recited specific utterances to children, grandchildren, or nephews and nieces who had fallen from a swing, slipped into a hole, stumbled on a footbridge, or experienced similar incidents. The utterance recited was:

“*Kuur sumangat, hilang panyakitnya!*”
 (“Return of spirit, may the illness disappear!”)

Others who were nearby would then respond:
 “*Habis baras, ada banih karingnya...*”
 (“Though the rice is finished, the dry seeds still remain.”)

The purpose of these utterances was to ensure that the shocked child did not lose their spirit or inner strength. Symbolically, the expression compares the child’s spirit to rice: although cooked rice may be

consumed, dry seeds remain stored in the granary and can be pounded again to produce rice. This metaphor reflects the Banjar belief that vitality and spirit can be restored through spoken words imbued with cultural and spiritual meaning.

h. Belief in the Existence of Spirit Possession

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Lamah bulu.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Urang Banjar bahari kala rakat lawan alam lingkungan wadahnya diam, baisi adat, cara wan aturan. Batang banyu, baruh, awang, handil, gunung, guntung, bukit wan hutan sapalih dianggap ada panunggunya. Urang kada wani mambarang manabang rapun kayu, kada wani mambarang lalu di wadah nang inya hanyar sakali samustawa ka situ. Lamun parahatan balalah atawa bakunjangan di hutan, urang Banjar bahari kala bapadah, baucap: "Datu, datu, ulun umpat lalu, jangan diharu biru..." "Lamah bulu" peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, sagan manyambat urang nang pamburisit-panakutan, kada pawanian, lakas dirasuki urang gaib. Sakira kada kapuhunan, sakira kada sawanan atawa kapidaraan, urang Banjar bahari kala maulah "cacak burung": mamaliti mata haji anaknya lawan janar kuning wan kapur.*

Interpretation:

In the past, Banjar people lived in close harmony with their natural environment, which was believed to possess its own customs, norms, and spiritual order. Rivers, swamps, rice fields, canals, mountains, highlands, hills, and forests were each believed to have their own spiritual guardians. As a result, people refrained from cutting trees carelessly or passing through unfamiliar places without caution.

When resting or staying overnight in the forest, Banjar people traditionally recited a respectful request such as: “*Datu, datu, ulun umpat lalu, jangan diharu biru...*” (“Ancestors, ancestors, I am only passing through, please do not disturb me.”)

The Banjar proverb “*Lamah bulu,*” from South Kalimantan, is used to describe individuals who are fearful, timid, easily frightened, and believed to be susceptible to spirit possession. To prevent spiritual disturbance or illness, Banjar people in the past also performed a ritual known as “*cacak burung,*” which involved marking the space between a child’s eyebrows with a mixture of turmeric and lime as a form of spiritual protection.

i. Belief that Certain Family Members May Bring Misfortune into the Household

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Mambawa bala ka rumah.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Siapa haja kada hakun, indah, dapat bala. Sakira kada dapat bala, bahanu urang Banjar baucap "jauhakan bala!" Nang ngaran "bala", banyak macamnya. Panyakit, ba'ah, baranjahan, kamandahan, bakalahian nang bamatan, wan sarabanya. "Mambawa bala ka rumah", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, gasan manyambat bala nang naik ka rumah. Saku mau ai laki, bini atawa anak nang baparigal nang kada-kada, nang kada sampuraka, nang maulah urang sarumahan ayungannya dapat bala. "Rumah" mau ai kada sahibar "wadah badiam", tagal mau ai jua "banua", wan sarabanya.*

Interpretation:

This proverb reflects the belief that misfortune (*bala*) may enter a household as a result of carelessness or improper behavior. In Banjar culture, *bala* encompasses various forms of calamity, including illness, floods, disasters, accidents, violent conflict, and even death. The expression “*Mambawa bala ka rumah*” is used to describe misfortune that affects a household and is believed to be caused by

inappropriate, immoral, or socially unacceptable behavior of family members, such as a husband, wife, or child.

In this context, the term “*house*” does not merely refer to a physical dwelling but also symbolizes the family unit, social environment, and homeland, along with all aspects connected to them. The proverb thus emphasizes collective responsibility, moral conduct, and awareness of the broader social consequences of individual actions.

j. Seeking Help from Others with Sincerity, Whether Accepted or Not

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Mambuung liur basi.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Takisah Utuh Tipang saparanakan. Imbah mandangani Utuh Halui batamat di sakulahan, Utuh Tipang taungut di palidangan. Kada saapa, Aluh Halui pulang nang cagaran tamat SMP. Peribahasa "Imbah satabul, satabul pulang". Imbah tamat SMP, Aluh Halui pacangan manyambung ka SMA. Utuh Halui damintu jua: imbah tamat SMA, kuliah. Samunyaan aur duit haja. Tagal, Utuh Tipang basyukur. Alhamdulillah, rajaki ananya ada haja. Pakulih bahuma wan bawarung mayu haja. Utuh Tipang basyukur anaknya Utuh Halui wan Aluh Halui kawa haja sakulah, nang kaya anak urang jua. Parigalnya apik haja jua, kada maniniwah, kada manyalaya.*

Interpretation:

This proverb conveys the cultural value of sincerity and gratitude when seeking help from others. In Banjar culture, requesting assistance is not accompanied by entitlement or compulsion; acceptance is met with gratitude, while refusal is accepted without resentment. The story of Utuh Tipang illustrates perseverance, humility, and thankfulness in pursuing education for one’s children despite economic limitations. Sustenance is believed to come from honest labor, and gratitude remains central regardless of material constraints. The proverb thus emphasizes reliance on effort, acceptance of outcomes, and spiritual contentment.

k. Belief in the Existence of Individuals Who Display Unusual Behavior

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Mambuung parangai.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Mambuung parangai peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan gasan manyambat urang nang baparigal, balalakun atawa baidabul nang kada-kada. Kada kaya nang masi, kada nang kaya biasanya. Pariannya, urang nang parigalnya ambak, timbul jadi lantih. Atawa kabalikannya, nang parigalnya lantih, timbul jadi ambak.*

Interpretation:

The Banjar proverb “*Mambuung parangai*,” from South Kalimantan, is used to describe individuals whose behavior, attitude, or conduct deviates from what is considered normal or customary. Such behavior is characterized by a sudden change in personality or disposition. For example, a person who is usually quiet may unexpectedly become aggressive and easily angered, or conversely, an individual who is typically harsh and temperamental may suddenly become gentle and calm. This belief reflects a cultural awareness of behavioral imbalance and serves as a social indicator of abnormality within the community.

l. Learning Religious Knowledge from the Beginning and in Sequence

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Mangaji matan di alip.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Mangaji matan di alipp peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, nang artinya: lamun indah "masak di lasung", mangaji jangan maalang-tanggung. Mangaji musti tumatan alipan, tumatan pamulaan. Kakanak Banjar bahari kala "mangaji duduk" kanu padatuan, kawitan, mamarina, Tuan Guru atawa kaum langgar. Urang wahini sapalih katuju nang ringkas: manyakulahakan nang anak di TPA/TK al-Qur'an haja. Hasilnya, lain jua. Kada sama.*

Interpretation:

The Banjar proverb "*Mangaji matan di alip*," from South Kalimantan, conveys the message that learning religious knowledge should not be done half-heartedly, analogous to the metaphor of "cooking in a mortar," which requires a complete and thorough process. Religious learning should begin from *alif*, the most basic level, and proceed sequentially from the beginning.

In the past, Banjar children learned religious teachings through the practice of "*mangaji duduk*," receiving instruction directly from parents, grandparents, elders, religious teachers, *tuan guru*, or mosque caretakers. In contrast, in contemporary times, some people prefer more practical approaches, such as enrolling children only in Qur'anic learning centers (TPA/TK Al-Qur'an). The outcomes, however, are considered different and not equivalent to the traditional, gradual, and comprehensive method of religious learning practiced in earlier times.

m. Belief in the Existence of Individuals Who Are Vulnerable to Misfortune

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb "**Manis dagingan.**"

Maknanya adalah: *Manis dagingan' peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, sagan manyambat urang nang siringan kapuhunan, rawan dapat bala. Anak lalakian nang imbah basunat masi ditangati kawitan wan mamarinanya turun ka tanah. Nang handak kawin, damintu jua, disambat urang "Manis dagingan". Talu hari sabaluman batatai, calun pangantin di banua Banjar ditangati, kada dibariakan balalah, kada dibariakan bakunjangan. Maksud wan tujuan bubuhan padatuan Banjar bahari kala sabujurnya baik haja. Lamunnya kakanak nang imbah atawa hanyar basunat turun ka tanah wan tajuramba, mau ai luka? Lamun calun pangantin lalakian wan bibiniannya balalah wan bakunjangan, timbul kapuhunan-dapat musibah, kana bala-dimapa bakawinan, bakarasminean?*

Interpretation:

The Banjar proverb "*Manis dagingan*," from South Kalimantan, is used to describe individuals who are considered to be in a vulnerable condition and therefore susceptible to disturbance or misfortune. Boys who have just undergone circumcision are closely supervised by their parents and grandparents to prevent them from going outside or engaging in risky activities. Similarly, individuals who are about to get married are also referred to as "*manis dagingan*."

Three days prior to the wedding ceremony, prospective brides and grooms in Banjar society are traditionally closely guarded, not allowed to leave the house, and discouraged from traveling or visiting others. The underlying intention of this practice is fundamentally protective and benevolent. Parents believe that if a child who has just been circumcised were to fall or injure himself, harm could easily occur. Likewise, if prospective brides and grooms were to travel freely, there is concern that unexpected incidents or misfortune (*bala*) might occur, potentially disrupting the wedding ceremony and its associated rituals.

n. Praising Women for Both Physical Beauty and Noble Character

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Manis mangurung madu.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Banyak peribahasa Banjar nang maambung bibinian. Bibinian Banjar nang paruna kada nang bungas rupa haja; baik lagi lamunnya taat baibadah, tahu diadat, tahu dibasa, pintar baharaguan di rumah; muntungnya kada adu-asah, kada katuju mawada urang, paasian lawan kawitan. Di peribahasa Banjar, mata bibinian nang bungas rupa disambat urang "mancararat, mancarunung, mambintang siang, nang kaya amas hanyar dituang". Muhanya, "bungas nang kaya gambar". Batisnya, "nang kaya salungsurung pudak". Dagunya, "nang kaya "kumbang bagantung". Dahinya, "nang kaya bulan sahiris". Kainingnya, "nang kaya ditulis". Patikamannya, iya, "manis mangurung madu". "Manis mangurung madu", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, sagan manyambat bibinian nang kada bungas rupa haja, tagal baik jua budi basanya. Singkat kisah: paruna, kadada kunatnya, langkap sarabanya.*

Interpretation:

Many Banjar proverbs are dedicated to praising women. In Banjar culture, the ideal woman is not defined solely by physical beauty but is more highly valued for her religious devotion, adherence to customary norms, refined speech, ability to manage household affairs, peaceful temperament, avoidance of gossip, and deep affection for her parents.

Banjar proverbs employ rich metaphors to describe feminine beauty: beautiful eyes are likened to sparkling stars in daylight or newly poured gold; the face is compared to a painting; the calves to delicate flower tendrils; the chin to a hanging beetle; the forehead to a crescent moon; and the eyebrows to carefully drawn lines. The lips and speech are described as “*manis mangurung madu,*” symbolizing sweetness that encloses honey.

The Banjar proverb “*Manis mangurung madu,*” from South Kalimantan, is used to describe women who possess not only physical attractiveness but also refined manners and noble character. In essence, the ideal woman is portrayed as complete, virtuous, and balanced in all aspects.

o. Advising Against Following Worldly Desires

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Manulusakan kahandak, kadada habisnya.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Urang Banjar katuju balulucu, tagal kada balulucu haja. Urang Banjar katuju jua Mahalabiu, katuju kisah Palui wan Sarawin nang wawayah malalain, tagal ada jua baisian "hikmah hidup". "Hikmah hidup" urang Banjar sapalihan ada di pitua, papadah wan peribahasa. Jaka "basa laut"-nya, "kearifan lokal". "Manulusakan kahandak, kadada habisnya", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, nang mamadahi urang sakira kada manuruti hawa napsu dunia haja. Urang sugih nang kada basyukur, baarti susah. Urang susah nang basyukur-bujur hidupnya peribahasa "sapamatuk sapangikih", asal awak bigas-baarti sugih. Lamunnya bahinak hingak-hingak, baimpus sabukuan awak di rumah sakit, baisi duit balanjung-lanjung gin mau ai saku baguna tahi larut.*

Interpretation:

Banjar people are fond of humor and storytelling, yet their humor is not merely for amusement. Traditional narratives such as the stories of Palui and Sarawin are entertaining but also contain profound life wisdom. Much of Banjar life philosophy is conveyed through advice, moral teachings, and proverbs, which are now commonly referred to as local wisdom.

The Banjar proverb “*Manulusakan kahandak, kadada habisnya,*” from South Kalimantan, advises individuals not to continuously follow worldly desires, as human wants are endless. A wealthy person who lacks gratitude is, in essence, living in hardship, whereas a poor person who is grateful experiences life as sufficient and meaningful.

The proverb “*sapamatuk sapangikih*” further emphasizes that even a simple life can be considered rich as long as one remains healthy and strong. Conversely, when the body is weakened by illness and confined to a hospital bed, even abundant wealth may lose its value and usefulness.

p. Maintaining Close Relations within the Community

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Nang kaya burung bubut wan kasisikat.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Burung bubut ganalnya kurang labih kaya burung halang, anaknya masi diulah urang gasan tatamba patah tulang; burung kasisikat halus haja, nang kaya pipit. Bujur awaknya kada sapala, tagal burung bubut wan burung kasisikat rakat. Di mana ada burung bubut, di situ ada jua burung kasisikat. "Nang kaya burung bubut wan kasisikat", peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, gasan manyambat urang nang rakat bakawan. Lamunnya nusia, kawan mau ai bahanu jadi musuh. Burung bubut wan kasisikat kada, rakat bakawan salawasan.*

Interpretation:

The *bubut* bird is relatively large, approximately the size of a hawk, and in the past its young were sometimes used in traditional medicine to treat broken bones. In contrast, the *kasisikat* bird is small, similar to a sparrow. Despite their clear physical differences, the *bubut* bird and the *kasisikat* bird live side by side and are consistently found together. Wherever the *bubut* bird is present, the *kasisikat* bird is also found.

The Banjar proverb “*Nang kaya burung bubut wan kasisikat,*” from South Kalimantan, is used to describe individuals who share a close and loyal friendship. While human relationships may change and friends may become enemies, the *bubut* and *kasisikat* birds symbolize enduring harmony and companionship, reflecting the cultural ideal of strong social bonds and community solidarity.

q. Belief that Sitting on the Watun Delays Marriage

This cultural belief is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Pamali duduk di watun.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Watun ngaran lantai kayu nang andaknya di atas lantai palataran, di muka lawang rumah. Di rumah adat Banjar bahari kala ada "watun sambutan" (andaknya di panampik kacil), "watun jajakan" (di panampik tengah), "panampik basar", "watun langkah" (di tawing halat), "watun juntaian" (di anjung), wan "watun sandaran" (di palidangan). "Watun" wadah gasan kajajakan batis, gasan kalaluan urang nang naik-turun-handak kaluar atawa masuk lawang rumah. Urang Banjar nang bujang bahari kala dipadahi padatuannya, pamali duduk di watun. Alahan lagi, ada pantunnya: "Hundang bajang sadang di rantang, urang bujang pantang di lawang". Bibinian Banjar nang bujang dipadahi pamali duduk di lawang. Ujar padatuan bahari kaina lambat balaki. Sagan lalakian nang bujangan, lamunnya babini kaina mau ai dilapau mintuhanya. Maksud wan tujuan urang bahari manangati nang anum duduk di muhara lawang sabujurnya sutil haja, nang duduk di lawang mangalihan urang lalu lalang!*

Interpretation:

Watun refers to a wooden platform installed above the front veranda floor, directly in front of the house entrance. In traditional Banjar houses, several types of *watun* were recognized, including *watun*

sambutan (located in the small front space), *watun jajakan* (in the middle front space), *panampik basar*, *watun langkah* (at the back wall), *watun juntaian* (on the anjung), and *watun sandaran* (in the yard).

The *watun* functions as a footrest and a passageway for people entering and leaving the house. In the past, unmarried Banjar individuals were advised by elders not to sit on the *watun*, as it was considered *pamali* (taboo). This belief is also expressed in a traditional verse:

“*Hundang bajang sedang di rantang, urang bujang pantang duduk di lawang.*”
 (“A hornbill perches on the rack; an unmarried person should not sit at the doorway.”)

Unmarried Banjar women were similarly advised not to sit at the doorway, as it was believed to delay marriage prospects. For unmarried men, sitting at the doorway was said to result in marrying a wife who frequently leaves the house without permission. However, beyond these symbolic beliefs, the underlying intention of this prohibition was to promote politeness and order, as sitting at the doorway obstructs the flow of people entering and exiting the house.

r. Advising Elderly Individuals to Maintain Self-Awareness

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Gasan urang Banjar bahari kala, hidup nusia ibarat buah nyiur: Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak; sasain banyak santannya, sasain baik dilala. Bahari kala, minyak lala kada gasan manyanga iwak haja, gasan minyak rambut wan baurut hingkat jua. "Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak", peribahasa Banjar nang bapitua sakira urang ingat diri, ingat mati. Pungkalanya: sapalih ada jua urang tuha nang parigalnya sasain mambala, tagal ada jua kakanak nang parigalnya manuha. Peribahasa "Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak" kada gasan nusia haja, gasan nang lain hingkat jua.*

Interpretation:

For Banjar people in the past, human life was likened to a coconut: some become richer in oil as they grow older; some produce abundant coconut milk; and others are suitable for making coconut oil. In earlier times, coconut oil was not only used for cooking but also for hair oil and for massaging sprains.

The Banjar proverb “*Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak*” contains moral advice urging individuals, especially the elderly, to remain self-aware and mindful of mortality. As people age, they are expected to become more mature, wiser, and more beneficial to others. However, in reality, some elderly individuals display increasingly childish behavior, while some children exhibit mature attitudes. Therefore, this proverb does not apply solely to humans but may also be extended metaphorically to other aspects of life.

s. Advising Elderly People to Act Wisely

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb “**Sasain tuha, sasain basantan.**”

Maknanya adalah: *Kurang labih sama kaya "Sasain tuha, sasain -baminyak", "Sasain tuha, sasain basantan" peribahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, gasan mamadahi urang nang mustinya kada umur haja tuha, tagal musti bijaksana. Bahanu ada urang tuhanang baparigal manganganak, ada jua urang anum nang parigalnya manuha. Tuha kada di umur, tagal di pikiran.*

Interpretation:

Similar to the proverb “*Sasain tuha, sasain baminyak*,” the Banjar proverb “*Sasain tuha, sasain basantan*,” from South Kalimantan, is used to advise that a person should not only be advanced in age but

should also demonstrate maturity and wisdom in attitude and thought. In reality, there are elderly individuals whose behavior resembles that of children, while some younger individuals display mature conduct. Thus, old age is not measured merely by years, but by one's mindset, judgment, and wisdom.

t. Making Use of Opportunities

This cultural value is reflected in the Banjar proverb **"Takaji ilmu tampulu."**

Maknanya adalah: *Di bahasa Banjar, Kalimantan Selatan, arti "mangaji" kada samata haja. Ada "mangaji ka kanan", ada "mangaji ka kiwa". Nang "mangaji ka kanan" artinya mangaji ilmu agama. Balampah, mangaji taguh, mauntal minyak bintang, mau ai ngarannya "mangaji ka kiwa". "Takaji ilmu tampulu", peribahasa Banjar nang, "basa laut"-nya, saku "aji mumpung."*

Interpretation:

In the Banjar language of South Kalimantan, the term *"mangaji"* does not have a single meaning. It is distinguished into *"mangaji ka kanan"* and *"mangaji ka kiwa."* *"Mangaji ka kanan"* refers to studying and deepening religious knowledge, whereas *"mangaji ka kiwa"* denotes engaging in leisure activities, seeking temporary pleasure, or exploiting opportunities for short-term personal gain.

The Banjar proverb *"Takaji ilmu tampulu"* conveys the idea of using knowledge or opportunities merely for momentary benefit. In contemporary Indonesian usage, this meaning is equivalent to the expression *"aji mumpung,"* which refers to taking advantage of a situation without deeper moral consideration.

Conclusion

The religious system and belief structure of Banjar society, as reflected in the collection of proverbs contained in the book *Baruh Urang Dikaruni, Baruh Saurang Taung*, encompass various cultural values. These values include: (a) preparing provisions for both worldly life and the hereafter; (b) performing good and bad deeds with moral accountability; (c) believing that sustenance has been divinely predetermined; (d) facing life with patience; (e) conducting marriage in accordance with Islamic law following a triple divorce; (f) believing in the existence of individuals who are able to perceive others' inner feelings; (g) believing in certain utterances to ensure that a child does not lose their spirit; (h) believing in spirit possession; (i) believing that certain family members may bring misfortune into the household; (j) seeking help from others with sincerity, whether accepted or not; (k) believing in the existence of individuals who display unusual behavior; (l) learning religious knowledge from the beginning and in sequence; (m) believing in the existence of individuals who are vulnerable to misfortune; (n) praising women for both physical beauty and noble character; (o) advising against following worldly desires; (p) maintaining close relations within the community; (q) believing that sitting on the *watun* may delay marriage; (r) advising elderly individuals to maintain self-awareness; (s) encouraging elders to act wisely; and (t) making use of opportunities.

Overall, Banjar proverbs function as a cultural medium for transmitting religious beliefs, moral teachings, and local wisdom that guide social behavior and shape the worldview of Banjar society.

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