

Intertextual Adaptation of the Story of the Prophet Joseph in Mocoan Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi

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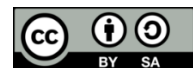
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ABSTRACT

The story of the Prophet Yusuf in the Qur'an (QS. Surat Yusuf) has been transformed into a sacred text of Lontar Yusup culture among the people of the Osing tribe, Banyuwangi. This research aims to unravel the process of negotiation and cultural adaptation using an intertextual literary criticism approach. Through the descriptive qualitative method, QS. Yusuf's letter is positioned as a hypogram and Yusup's Lontar manuscript as a transformation text. The results of the study show that local copyists do not just carry out literal translations, but practice cultural transposition through three main mechanisms: narrative expansion that domesticates the geographical setting into agrarian cosmology and the ethics of the archipelago palace; modification of characterization from a pure prophetic figure to an ideal knight figure who walks the path of Sufism; as well as theological contextualization through the practice of performing the ritual of mocking the night before. In conclusion, the intertextual relationship in this tradition is not a syncretism that reduces the purity of the value of monotheism, but a form of civilizational negotiation and a harmonious cultural da'wah strategy. These findings confirm that sacred texts can be earthed as functional moral guides without having to uproot the roots of indigenous peoples' sociocultural identities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an, especially Surah Yusuf, is not only believed to be a revelation containing the teachings of monotheism and history but has also become a source of extensive literary inspiration in the Islamic world [1]. In the archipelago, the reception of the story of the Prophet Joseph is transformed beyond the boundaries of pure religious texts into sacred

products of local culture. One of the most prominent forms of cultural adaptation is the tradition of Mocoan Lontar Yusup which is maintained and preserved by the Osing tribe community in Banyuwangi Regency [2]. The text of Lontar Yusup is generally written using pegon letters and is composed in the metrum macapat, making it a unique hybridity between Islamic texts and Javanese-Osing cultural wisdom [3].

Several previous studies have examined the existence of Lontar Yusup from various scientific perspectives. Philological and codicological studies have been carried out to edit, translate, and physically maintain the ancient manuscript so that its message can be understood by today's generation [4]. In addition, anthropological approaches are also often used to analyze the social functions and performative meanings of mocoan rituals that consistently accompany the life cycle of indigenous peoples, such as in marriage ceremonies and circumcision [5]. There is also a religious survey that highlights the aspects of Sufism and moral ethics implied in the verses of the song [6].

Although previous studies have provided a solid foundation, the existing literature tends to treat Lontar Yusup as an independent manuscript entity or more focused on its ritual practices. There is still an academic *gap* regarding how the dialectic of the text is directly between the main sources, namely the Qur'an (QS. Surat Yusuf), with its derivative text (Lontar Yusup). The process of metamorphosis of the sacred text, which has a Middle Eastern setting, into an epic with agrarian nuances typical of the archipelago, has not been widely dissected structurally or conceptually [7].

Therefore, this study aims to unravel and analyze the intertextual adaptation of Yusuf's story in the manuscript of Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi by positioning QS. The letter of Joseph as a hypogram (basic text) and Lontar Yusup as a transformation text. The approach proposed in this research is the theory of intertextuality, which is based on the principle that a text is not born from emptiness, but rather is a mosaic of quotations and the results of absorption from previous texts [8]. The analysis is focused on narrative expansion patterns, characterization modifications, and story setting adjustments.

This research is a textual proof related to the strategy of cultural negotiation carried out by local authors who copy lontar. This research provides a new contribution and value to the discourse of Islamic studies, especially in showing that the contact between

the values of the Qur'an and the local traditions of Banyuwangi does not produce overlapping syncretism but rather gives birth to an intelligent harmony and cultural adaptation without stripping away the essence of *tawhid* [9].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 First Literature

A comprehensive study of the text and context of Lontar Yusup as a material object has been conducted by Indiarti (Indiarti, 2020: 45). In the literature in the form of a book, a transliteration of pegon letters and a complete translation of the ancient Banyuwangi manuscript are presented. More than just a language translation, this study presents the position of lontar as a living literacy heritage (living text). The author describes in detail how the manuscript is not just read but is expressed in communal rituals that function as an instrument of social cohesion and guardian of the spirituality of the community, especially sacred practices that are consistently and authentically still preserved in Kemiren Village. This literature is very vital in this study because it is an authoritative foundation to understand the form of the linguistic structure of the manuscript and its cultural function before the text is confronted dialogically with the verses of the Qur'an.

2.2 Second Literature

About the framework of analysis and formal objects, an intertextual review of the narrative of the Prophet Joseph has been elaborated in depth by Purnama (Purnama, 2021). This study focuses on dissecting the story of Joseph in the Qur'an and in the Bible by borrowing the lens of Julia Kristeva's intertextuality, where the text is seen as a mosaic of quotations. The article unpacks how the Qur'an responds, selects, and transforms the historical memory that lived in ancient Middle Eastern societies into a construction of a revelation text that is full of the value of monotheism in the Qur'an and full of the

value of authority in the Bible. Although it does not examine the local traditions of the archipelago, this literature makes a very important epistemological contribution. The way binary opposition analysis and meaning transposition applied in the literature works will be adapted as the main scalpel to analyze the text modification strategies of QS. Letter of Joseph into the Banyuwangi macapat verses.

2.3 Third Literature

The third literature highlights the content of Islamic values resulting from the cultural adaptation process, as explored by Prasetya and his research team (Prasetya dkk., 2024). Through its online publication, the study dissects the process of internalizing the values of character education and religious ethos in Mocoan Lontar Yusup. Their findings conclusively prove that the lontar text did not experience a reduction in Islamic teachings due to its contact with local culture. On the contrary, the lontar converts the essential messages of the Qur'an, such as patience, moral integrity, and surrender to God, into the cultural idioms of the agrarian community of the Osing tribe to be more grounded. This study strengthens the research hypothesis that the intertextual transformation that occurs is not a form of deviant syncretism, but a very intelligent method of contextualizing cultural da'wah.

3. METHODS

This descriptive qualitative research uses an intertextual literary criticism approach to analyze the form of text adaptation between QS. Yusuf's Letter as a hypogram and Yusup's Lontar text as a transformation text [10]. Field data collection was carried out in Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi Regency, through observation of mocoan rituals, in-depth interviews with traditional leaders and mocoan cultivators who were selected using *purposive sampling techniques*, and comparative documentation studies between texts [4]. The researcher acts as the main instrument

supported by secondary instruments in the form of interview guides and observation sheets to dig up emic data. The collected data is then analyzed using an interactive analysis model that includes condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing so that it is integrated with heuristic and hermeneutic readings to identify patterns of narrative expansion, characterization modification, and ideological acculturation [11].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on a qualitative analysis that prioritizes heuristic and hermeneutic readings, this study dissects the intertextual relationships between QS. Yusuf's letter as the basic text (hypogram) and the Lontar Yusup manuscript in Pegon script from Banyuwangi as the transformation text. The results of the study show that the author/copyist of the lontar manuscript does not only carry out the process of literal translation (*literlijk*) from Arabic to Javanese-Osing but practices a complex cultural work [12]. This transformation includes the transposition of linguistic structures [13], the expansion of narratives based on local cosmology, characterization modifications, and theological contextualization that gives birth to cultural ritual performances.

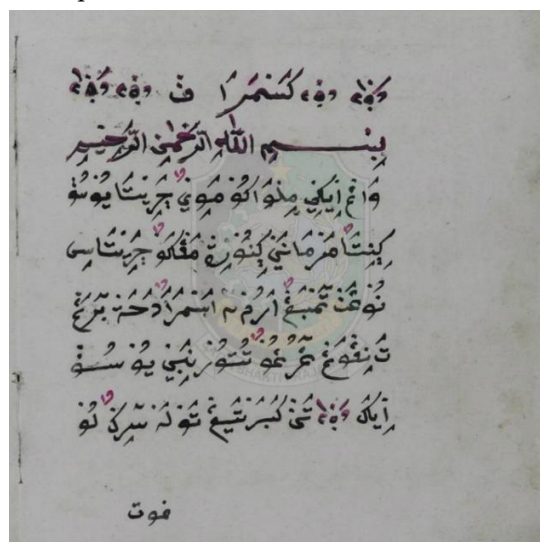


Figure 1. Manuscript of Lontar Yusup

4.1 Transposition of Linguistic Structure and Literary Aesthetics

The fundamental finding of this process of intertextuality is the extreme transposition (transfer of form) from the lyrical prose of divine revelation into the traditional poetry of the archipelago. QS. Surat Yusuf is delivered in Arabic which has a high-level *balaghah* (rhetoric) [14] structure with a rhythmic *fawashil* (rhyme at the end of the verse)[15], specially designed for the purpose of recitation. Theologically, this structure is *tauqifi* (standard from God) [16] and is believed to have miracles (*I'jaz al-Qur'an*)[17].

However, when this text was adopted into Lontar Yusup, it was bound by the medium of the Arabic-Pegon script and was subject to the literary conventions of *tembang macapat*. Texts must adhere to strict Javanese metrum rules, *guru lagu* (the fall of vowels at the end of a line) If it is in the name of the Lontar Yusup *dangdingdung* [3]. To meet the aesthetic demands of this *macapat* (as in the *pupuh* of *Kasmaran*, *Pangkur*, *Durma*, and *Sinom*), the copyist of the manuscript is required to conduct linguistic negotiations. They insert the beautiful particles of the ancient Javanese language with *pegon* characters, reduce some of the details of the original text, or change the syntactic arrangement to make it fit in the plot.

This transposition is the first step of the process of "domestication" of the text. Domestication is a conscious attempt to pull distant (foreign) texts into the orbit of local readers' understanding. Through the medium of *macapat*, the agrarian people of Banyuwangi who in the past did not have direct access to Arabic, can enjoy and absorb the essence of the teachings of monotheism using the aesthetic framework that they live daily.

4.2 Narrative Expansion and Cosmological Background Expansion

According to the intertextuality framework, transformation texts have the authority to respond, rebel, or expand

their hypogram text. QS. Surah Yusuf presents the narrative very efficiently, focusing on the theological essence, and often discarding details of space and time that are considered irrelevant to the message of monotheism. This is drastically different from Lontar Yusup, which carried out a massive narrative expansion to include the collective memory and cultural landscape of the palace and agrarian archipelago into the interweaving of the story.

One of the strong intertextual pieces of evidence is seen in the fragment of Joseph's dream (QS. Joseph [12]: 4). In the Qur'an, this verse reads: "O my father, I have indeed dreamed of seeing eleven stars, the sun, and the moon; I saw them all bowing down to me." In the treasures of classical commentaries, such as Ibn Kathir's *Tafsir Al-'Azhim*, this verse is explained straightforwardly that the eleven stars represent Joseph's brothers, while the sun and moon represent his father and mother (or aunt) who would later submit to his honor in Egypt [18]. Quraish Shihab's contemporary interpretation of *Al-Misbah* also emphasizes that the appearance of these celestial bodies is a symbolism of a pure prophetic vision that hints at the theological future of the child [19].

However, in the script of Lontar Yusup, the event of the descent of this dream is expanded into a very long and dramatic scene. The spiritual moment is described as triggering a macrocosm response that resembles the description of the *kara* in the performance of Javanese puppet puppets. The universe is described as vibrating, the wind blowing strongly, and bright light piercing the horizon, signaling the birth of a knight or great figure who will change the order of the world [4]. Ancient Egyptian cosmology was composed in such a way as to become the landscape of the archipelago's kingdom. The term "Al-Aziz" (ruler of Egypt) was transformed into a representation of a feudal king complete

with depictions of squares, keputren (the king's daughter's garden), *pendopo*, and rows of courtiers with very strict court manners.

Another example of expansion occurred in the incident of Joseph's dumping into the well (QS. Yusuf [12]: 15). The Qur'an briefly mentions that Allah revealed to Joseph in the well so that he would not be sad. The book of tafseer explains that this revelation was conveyed through Archangel Gabriel to strengthen his heart (*tatsbit*) [18]. In Lontar Yusup in the pupuh of Kasmaran III, this moment is composed into a long dialogue scene between Yusuf and a Canaanite merchant named Malik and his caravan entourage. The dialogue uses the Old Javanese language (*krama inggil* and *ngoko*) with the adjustment of the names of people and places with the local language such as caravan becoming *pelah*, and Yusuf becoming Yusup, reflecting the spiritual hierarchy and manners upheld by the Javanese-Osing people [4]. This narrative expansion proves that local authors used the historical framework of the Qur'an as a forum to inject the value system, feudal ethics, and cosmology of the archipelago.

4.3 Modification of His Characterization in the Dialectic of Prophethood and Knighthood (Satria Pinandhita)

The results of the next findings focus on hypogrammatization strategies or shifting the viewpoint of characterization. In the landscape of Islamic theology and the reading of the Book of Tafsir, Joseph is represented as the ideal embodiment of an apostle who is preserved from sin (*ma'shum*). His good looks are part of the divine test, and his salvation from pure immorality rests on the protection (*inayah*) of Allah.

This is clearly seen in the fragment of Zulaikha temptation (QS. Joseph (12:23-24). The Qur'an states: "*And the woman (Zulaikha) in whose house Joseph lived tempted Joseph to submit himself (to him)... Indeed, Joseph would have intended (to do that) with the woman if he had not seen the sign (of) his*

Lord (burhan)." According to Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, the word *burhan* (a sign from God) is interpreted as the appearance of the figure of his father (Jacob) who bites his finger, or an angel who rebukes him, as a direct intervention from heaven so that the prophet does not fall into humiliation [20]. The focus of the Qur'an and the book of tafsir is on the monotheism and intervention of Allah, not on the human efforts of Joseph alone.

Instead, Lontar Yusup modified this prophetic representation and married it to the concept of Satria Pinandhita (a knight who was also a priest/hermit) in Javanese cultural philosophy. Although the status of the prophet is still pinned, the character of Yusuf is more highlighted as a magical young man who master's a high level of Sufism. His rejection of Zulaikha's temptation in the lontar is dramatized using the pupuh of Kasmaran and Pangkur. The text of Lontar describes Yusuf's inner turmoil in restraining lust (*nafs ammarah*) through the practice of tirakat and asceticism (*zuhud*) typical of the teachings of the local order.

In this local narrative, Joseph is described as winning the inner battle because of his noble practices, the nature of andhap asor (humility), and *nrimo ing pandum* (existential surrender). Zulaikha herself is not only positioned as an antagonist, but as a representation of maya (worldly illusions/women's thrones) which is a mandatory obstacle for a *salik* (spiritual path) to achieve enlightenment (*ma'rifat*). This modification was very effective for the psychology of the local people because they saw Joseph not only as a holy figure far away in the sky, but as a cultural example whose inner struggle could be imitated by ordinary humans.

4.4 Theological Contextualization in the Acculturation of the Function and Performance of the "Mocoan" Ritual

Intertextual analysis cannot ignore the social context in which the text is lived. QS. Surah Yusuf is read by Muslims as a practice of recitation, contemplated its

meaning (*tadabbur*), and often recited in prayer. The pragmatic value of reading it is to get the reward of pure worship (*ubudiyah*).

However, in Kemiren Village, the Lontar Yusup manuscript underwent a pragmatic shift in function. This literary text is sacred and read through a communal ritual known as Mocoan. The reading of the manuscript is carried out overnight by the *moco* singers (special macapat singers) at sacred moments of the life cycle (rites of passage), such as the night before the wedding, circumcision, or the village salvation ceremony (village clean) [9].

In this context, the lontar text functions as a "performative" text. The macapat verses that tell the suffering of Joseph in the well, the slander of prison, and his glory as a ruler, are believed by the community to have magical-religious powers. Chanting this story is a form of *tafa'ul* (good hope) so that the bride-to-be or the circumcised child will be given fortitude and a happy ending (*husnul khatimah*) like the journey of the Prophet Yusuf's life. In addition, the resonance of the sound of the macapat song in the *Mocoan ritual* is believed to function as a repulsion to expel negative energy from the village. This is where an extraordinary acculturation occurs: the essential monotheistic message of the Qur'an is maintained, but the "container" and way to access the blessings of the text uses the epistemological framework of animism-dynamism typical of the archipelago that has been Islamized.

4.5 Critical Discussion and Comparison with Previous Findings

The authors compile, evaluate, and compare the above empirical findings with the results of previous research to map the novelty and significance of this study in the landscape of philological discourse and sociology of religion.

First, regarding the position of manuscripts in society, the findings of this research confirm a comprehensive study

conducted by Indiarti in his book Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi [4]. Indiarti emphasized that the lontar is the life of the preservation of the identity of the Osing tribe. However, if Indiarti's research relies on the analysis of anthropological coditology and sociology, this research makes a new analytical contribution by proving that the existential power of the lontar comes from the "authority of the hypogram text" (the Qur'an). The people of Osing revered the lontar beyond ordinary literary works exclusively because they were aware that the foundation of the text was the word of God. It is intertextuality that gives the "sacred spirit" to the cultural text.

Second, within the scope of the study of the Qur'an, Purnama [1] has previously applied Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality to see how the Qur'an transformed ancient Arabian myths and history into sacred revelations. This research takes the opposite position (downstream). This study proves that the text of revelation that is already sacred and pure can reabsorb the memory of local culture without damaging the essence of the faith. The expansion of narrative and characterization modification in Lontar Yusup is not a deviation of sacred texts (plagiarism), but a hermeneutical necessity (cultural interpreter).

Third, the findings regarding the modification of the character of Yusuf as Satria Pinandhita provide a critical evaluation of the literature written by Prasetya [6] which focuses on the value of character education. Promise, claiming that the value of patience and honesty [21] is inherent in the text of Lontar. However, through intertextual comparison and interpretation analysis in this research, it is revealed that the values of character education are not purely the invention of local culture, but the result of direct derivation from the concept of moral character in the Qur'an which is intelligently wrapped in the idiom of Javanese ethics.

Overall, this discussion boils down to one big conclusion: Lontar Yusup is the pinnacle representation of what is called cultural bargaining. The consistency of the analysis from the beginning of the article to this discussion shows that the author of Lontar does not allow Islamic values to forcibly subjugate local culture, nor does he allow local culture to pollute the purity of monotheism. They took a harmonious middle path. Islam is injected into the inner recesses of the Banyuwangi community culturally and aesthetically, not through rigid dogmatism of fiqh law. Through intertextuality, Mocoan Lontar Yusup succeeds in bridging the heavenly revelation (sky) with the historical and sociological reality of the agrarian society of the archipelago (earth), making it a masterpiece of timeless da'wah literacy.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on an intertextual analysis of the relationship between QS. Yusuf's letter and the manuscript of Lontar Yusup Banyuwangi, it can be concluded that the adaptation of the story is a representation of the genius of cultural bargaining that goes beyond the limits of literal translation. This transformation process is realized through the transposition of the form from Arabic lyrical prose into tembang macapat, the expansion of the narrative that humanizes the cosmological background of the Middle East into the landscape of the archipelago palace, and the modification of the characterization of the figure of Joseph from purely an apostle to a figure of *Satria pinandhita* who takes the path of local Sufism. Furthermore, sacred texts that

normatively function as a means of recitation are contextualized into performative texts in the communal ritual of mocoan as a medium of tafa'ul and rejection of reinforcements for the Osing tribe community. This entire dialectic proves that the intertextuality in Lontar Yusup is not a form of syncretism that degrades the purity of the Qur'an's monotheism, but a very harmonious cultural da'wah strategy. The essence of Islamic teachings has been successfully earthed aesthetically without uprooting the roots of the sociological identity of agrarian society, so that this text continues to be lived as a moral guideline and guardian of spiritual cohesion across generations.

In line with these conclusions, this study recommends several strategic steps for the development of academic discourse and cultural preservation. For the next researcher, it is highly recommended to expand the scope of study through an ethnomusicological approach to dissect the melodic structure (*cengkok*) of the chanting of the macapat or conduct comparative philological research with the manuscripts of the story of Yusuf from other archipelago territories to trace the variations in acculturation. Practically and institutionally, local governments, traditional leaders, and educational institutions in Banyuwangi are urged to not just position the *Mocoan tradition* as a tourism attraction. Concrete steps are needed to integrate the values of moral exemplarity, self-mastery, and religious moderation from this text into the local content education curriculum, so that the young generation always has a solid ethical foothold in responding to global cultural disruption.

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