

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Qur'an is holy book that always keep authenticity by Allah until dooms day comes. Everyone could have different assessment to the Scripture, but there is no different opinion among Muslims about the Qur'an. Indeed, Orientalist who have objective perspective assessed that there is no difference between the Qur'an that read by Muslims in this time and which Muhammad delivered fifteen centuries ago.¹

By the originality of its *nazam* and *uslub*, people will not have ability to make something like the Qur'an thought they cooperate in each other.² It proves more clearly the miracle of Qur'an.³ Thus, it is fair if the Qur'an, which literally means "the best text", is the best

¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membaca Sirah Nabi Muhammad SAW, Dalam Sorotan al-Qur'an dan Hadits-Hadits Shahih*, (Tangerang: Penerbit Lentera Hati, 2010), P. 3

² A. Luthfi Hamidi, *Semantik al-Qur'an Dalam Perspektif Toshihiko Izutsu*, (Yogyakarta: Grafindo Litera Media, 2010), P. 171

³ As to miracle of Qur'an, the scholars—from Syi'ah, Mu'tazilah, and Asy'ariah—have different perspectives. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Sayyar al-Nazam and the first thinker generation of Mu'tazilah, supported by al-Murtada from Syi'ah and Ibnu Hazam al-Zahiri, prefer to more emphasize that the miracle of Qur'an is on its contents, not on its language style. While al-Baqilani and Asy'ariah people like Abdul Jabbar, al-Jurjani, and Abu Hasyim al-Juba'i, prefer to see that, the miracle of Qur'an is on the contents of text (*al-I'jazu fi dakhili al-Nas*); they do not see to the dimension of its originality and the different form of *nazam* and *uslub*, but more on its *fasahah*. However, they are still in different opinion, such as in conversion, *i'rob*, and its position. Refer to, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Mafhum an-Nass: Dirasat fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Markaz as-Saqafi al-'Arabi, 1994), P. 175-176

name chosen by Allah, because there is no any text that can compare with the Qur'an since people knew the culture of reading and writing 5000 years ago. In "Wawasan al-Qur'an"⁴, Quraish Shihab describes the Qur'an such as a jewel that spout the different light up to the point of views.

By the name of authenticity and the purpose to keep it, Qur'an was revealed to illiterate (*ummiy*) prophet.⁵ In this case, most people consider the meaning of illiterate (*ummiy*) as uneducated one (disability to read and write). Then, there will be three questions: *The first* is that statement true? *The second*, does the messenger that trusted by Allah is an uneducated (no ability to read and write)? *The third*, is the purpose of Qur'an's revelation to uneducated prophet only to keep the authenticity? Those are the starting points of the writer's curiosity in facing and interpreting the word "*ummiy*" of Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon him.

By those questions above, the writer observes the definition of *ummiy* that attached to Prophet Muhammad. It still becomes something debatable among Muslim scholars. Some of them said that Prophet Muhammad is truly uneducated in order to keep the authenticity of revelation (al-Qur'an) given by Allah. The others said that the meaning of *ummiy* here is less ability of Muhammad in case of reading and writing, not truly uneducated. It is strengthened by the definition of *ummiy* in Arabic that means someone who has

⁴ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan al-Qur'an, Tafsir Tematik atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat*, (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 2007), P. 3

⁵ Abd. al-Hayy al-Farmawi, *Metode Tafsir Mawdu'iy*, (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 1996), P. 78

less ability in reading and writing.⁶ In this case, there an expert said that the measure of uneducated is a disability to use computer, not disability in reading and writing.⁷

Yet, it does not mean that parents who cannot use computer is stupid and uneducated, because their time is different from ours. Therefore, the word *ummiy* needs to be re-interpreted, because it is actually wrong if we analyze the life years of Prophet Muhammad with the measure of his time. Starting from those reasons above, the writer wants to find out the truly meaning and philosophy of *ummiy* of Rasulullah PBUH., Based on the Qur'an. Does *ummiy* truly mean disability in reading and writing or has other meaning? What wisdom that hidden in the illiteracy of Muhammad. Therefore, the writer will focus on the meaning of *ummiy* that purposed to Prophet Muhammad.

After passing through some steps of searching, there are several verses in the Qur'an that explain *ummiy*, but not all of them talk about *ummiy* that purposed to illiteracy of Muhammad.⁸ Beside

⁶ Ibrahim Anis dkk., *al-Mu'jam al-Wasith*, Jilid.I, (Mesir: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1392 H/1972 M), P. 27. Dan Abd al-Rauf al-Mishri, *Mu'jam al-Qur'an*, Jilid I, (Qairo: Hijazi, 1367 H/1948 M), P. 86

⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membaca sirah Nabi Muhammad SAW, Dalam Sorotan al-Qur'an dan Hadits-Hadits Shahih*, (Tangerang: Penerbit Lentera Hati, 2010), P. 15

⁸ In book "Tafsir al-Misbah" Quraish Shihab stated that: "the word *ummiy* is from word *umm*/mother that means someone who has no skill in reading and writing. As if his condition either from knowledge side or reading and writing is like with his mother condition who cannot read and write." Moreover, still according to *mufassirin*, that the word *ummiy* is from word *ummah* that means the society before revealing Qur'an may be in illiteracy

of Muhammad's illiteracy, those verses also refer to Jews people and Christian's; they who never received and learnt a holy book (*al-Kitab*) and who never had a prophet and messenger.⁹ Truly, there is still a distortion of understanding in case of Prophet's illiteracy. Most people in society have an assumption that Prophet Muhammad is an uneducated or illiterate person. Most Muslims argue that prophet is truly illiterate one, while the others deny it. They think each other that they have stronger arguments than the others do.

If we see from history side, at the early time prophet was an illiterate. However, by his perfection as a messenger of Allah, it is impossible to say that Muhammad is an illiterate.¹⁰ First reason said that the illiteracy of prophet has a purpose to keep the authenticity of the Qur'an as Muslims' holy book that is not created by people. It is supported by own prophet's acknowledgement that said "*ma ana bi qari'in*" (I cannot read) when he received the first revelation in cave hiro'. Moreover, Prophet Muhammad never did any activity in case of writing revelation or creating poem. Many interpreters refer to this argument. In the writer's view, it sounds mystical and

condition. But, Quraish Shihab strengthened that Rasulullah was definitely in illiteracy condition (*ummiy*). See, M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, vol: 4 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 1992), P. 228

⁹ See QS. al-Baqarah (2): 78. QS. ali Imran (3): 20. QS. ali Imran (3): 75. QS. al-Jumu'ah (62): 2. These verses explicitly explain the meaning of *ummiy*—with clear redaction "*ummiy*". But, there is also a verse that implicitly explains the illiteracy of Prophet PBUH, and it is in QS. al-Ankabut (29): 48.

¹⁰ Agus Mushtofa, *Metamorfosis Sang Nabi*, (Surabaya: Padma press, 2008), P. 161

irrational. As if prophet is, a strange person created to has no ability in writing and reading just because of revelation.¹¹

Secondly, the illiteracy of prophet is not in so far his life, but it is just in the beginning when he was not being a messenger yet. Thus, this argument said that Prophet Muhammad is not an illiteracy one, but he is clever has ability in reading and writing. The reason is that in Jahiliyah era, Arabian society had been able in writing and reading. It is proven by the event of sticking poem on the wall of Ka'bah (*mu'allaqah*).¹² It shows that the Arabian have known about writing and had ability to read it. However, having ability is just for few people of honor Arabian families, including Prophet Muhammad. Further, he was a merchant who should be able to read and write.

Furthermore, he ever sold Siti Khadijah's commodities. By remembering that Khadijah is a smart and noble woman in Mecca. So it is impossible for her giving the merchant to an illiterate person.¹³ By the reasons above, the illiteracy of prophet, still become a problem and debatable. There are many references that strengthen and weaken the argument of illiteracy. Beside of Qur'an verses, there is some hadith talking about illiteracy thought the text does not mention the word *ummiy* directly.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 162

¹² Wargadinata, Wildana. Fitriyani, Laily. *Sastra Arab dan Lintas Budaya* (Malang: UIN Malang Press, 2008), P. 7

¹³ Syekh Ahmad Bin Hajar, *Sejarah Baca Tulis, sifat ummiy (tidak tahu baca tulis) pada Nabi Muhammad SAW* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Iqra', 2001), P. 6

Syekh al-Maqdisi totally denied the argument that Prophet Muhammad is an illiterate. He said that scholars have been wrong in interpreting the word *ummiy* in the Qur'an. Al-Maqdisi cannot accept that argument. "*How can an illiterate succeed leading and well teaching God's percept if he has no knowledge and science?*"¹⁴ According to al-Maqdisi, the scholars' mistake is because of wrong definition in own word *ummiy*. They literal define *ummiy* so that the interpretation is textual such the way it is. The word *ummiy* will be more appropriate when interpreted as Arabian people except Jews and Christians, because these two consider other people an illiterate. It is the appropriate interpretation of *ummiy*. By interpreting *ummiy* as non-Jews and Christians, personality of prophet as *uswatun hasanah* will not be lost.¹⁵

Muhammad Syahrur¹⁶ strengthens the argument by asking in what aspect the illiteracy of Prophet? Is the Prophet illiterate person? Here, author's makes an analogy, Syahrur were an illiterate in maritime case, though he was an engineer in civil engineering. Thus, it were common if Syahrur did not know anything about maritime, because it was not his ability. It is same with the Prophet did. What case was his illiteracy? Moreover, authors know that the Prophet PBUH. Was an illiterate one, because he was not Jew or

¹⁴ Syekh al-Maqdisi, "*Nabi Muhammad Buta Huruf atau Genius; Mengungkap Misteri "Keummian" Rasulullah* (Jakarta: Nun Publisher, 2007), P. 59

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, P. 30

¹⁶ Muhammad Syahrur, *Prinsip dan Dasar Hermeneutika al-Qur'an Kontemporer*. (Yogyakarta: Elsaq press, 2004), P. 182

Christian. He was also an illiterate in case of the holy book of Jew and of Christian, because his knowledge was not more than what he got from revelation after being a Prophet and Messenger. Thus, it is wrong if the meaning of *ummiy* is that Prophet Muhammad was the one who could not read and write.¹⁷

There is another fact that when the Prophet led the administration system in Madinah, he relied on writing ability.¹⁸ Rasulullah also often sent letter with other leader around, such as to Najasyi, King of Habasyah, Heraklius, King of Roma, and Khosrow, King of Persia. Based on those facts, we do not need to debate the illiteracy of Prophet Muhammad anymore. In author's opinion, the controversy of Rasulullah's illiteracy has done. It means that it will always be circulating in a question whether the prophet an illiterate or not.¹⁹ Thus, there is no something new to discuss in case of word *ummiy* in the Qur'an. There is no other discussion of *ummiy* except the controversy between "yes" and "not". This is main goal or thing of authors to give new perspective of *ummiy*, so that it will not be circulating in debatable things.

Based on those phenomenons, an author has been inspired to discuss about verses of *ummiy* in the Qur'an. It will not be in case of the illiteracy, but in case kind of knowledge that had been bequeathed by Muhammad, in other word, it is the Prophet' style in

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, P. 183

¹⁸ Syaikh Shafiyurrahman Al-Mubarakfuri, *Sirah Nabawiyah*, (Jakarta Timur: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2008), P. 405-416

¹⁹ Agus Mushtofa, *Metamorfosis Sang Nabi*. (Surabaya: Padma press, 2008), P. 170

getting knowledge. Why? Because there are some verses discussing about *ummiy* that still consist of interesting secret meaning to re-discuss in more detail. Here, authors gives some verses considering not all verses of *ummiy* in the Qur'an refer to Muhammad. That is the reason why it is interesting to discuss. It is such as a verse in Surah al-A'raf (7): 157

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Those who follow the Apostle-Prophet, the *Ummiy*, whom they find written down with them in the Taurat and the Bibel (who) enjoins them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them; so (as for) those who believe in him and honor him and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these it is that are the successful”

Surah al-A'raf (7) : 158

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَأَمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

“Say: O people! surely I am the Apostle of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth there is no god but He; He brings to life and causes to die therefore believe in Allah and His apostle, the *ummiy* Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may walk in the right way”

Surah Ali Imran (3) : 20

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ
 أَأَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

“So if they argue with you, say, “I have submitted myself to Allah [in Islam], and [so have] those who follow me.” And say to those who were given the Scripture and [to] the unlearned, “Have you submitted yourselves?” And if they submit [in Islam], they are rightly guided; but if they turn away - then upon you is only the [duty of] notification. And Allah is seeing of [His] servants”.

If we understand it more detail, it is interesting that after mentioning the word *ummiy* (such as in the word: الْأُمِّيِّينَ or الْأُمِّيِّ) Qur'an talks about faithful and direction like in قَائِمُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ بِاللَّهِ. Implicitly, there is a certain meaning that intended by Qur'an, not illiteracy but about knowledge, such style that granted by Muhammad.

After mentioning the word *ummiy*, Qur'an used to talk about faith²⁰ and such kind of direction.²¹ What is the secret purpose of

²⁰ From the verse explained above, in al-Qur'an the word *ummiy* is given to people who have no faith, whereas the faithful are mentioned with *al-mu'minun*. See: Athaillah., *Sejarah al-Qur'an Verifikasi tentang Otentisitas al-Qur'an*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010), P. 97

²¹ According to Sufism research, guidance (*hidayah*) and faith (*iman*) are source of knowledge, because it comes from Allah The Most Truthful and The Most Knowledgeable. Truth is object of knowledge, and both are light. It is the opposite of darkness, guiltiness, and stupidity. The light (*nur*) is one, but it is manifested in different intensity to all creations: various guidance levels are exuded from the truth, and various faith levels are sprayed from knowledge. So, the interpreters (*mufassirin*) said, “God guidance in the heart of the faith is

this phenomenon? As we recently know, many Muslims determine a religion rigidly. They interpret Qur'an just taken for granted without reinterpreting those words of God (Qur'an). Consequently, Qur'an is like a dead book and no need to interpret. I hope that through comparative method as a mean of analysis, authors can understand more meaning of the words after *ummiy* that related to term of faithful and direction. With the result that the mystery of prophet's illiteracy up till now—between yes and not—can be solved.

Based on this background and several reasons above, at a glance, authors just can identify that kind of knowledge given by Muhammad is a closed knowledge (read: *hudhuri science, kasyf, syuhudi* or *laduni*).²² This knowledge is such out of rational that suddenly comes from Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful. Here, considering Muhammad is not like common human, his closeness to The Creator is in most perfect point. Therefore, it is

like pure oil that still has its shiny before the fire touch, and when the fire touch, the shiny becomes more and more. That is the heart of the faith: it acts based on guidance until the knowledge comes. See, Martin Lings, *Muhammad Kisah Hidup Berdasarkan Sumber Klasik*, (Jakarta: PT. Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2011), P. 618-619.

²² *Ilmu Hudhuri* or usually called *ilmu Laduni*, is a knowledge comes from Allah swt that given to human. *Ilmu Laduni* is absolutely determined and undergirded by spiritual experience that Allah specially gives to His lovely people. According to Amatullah Amstrong, *ilmu laduni* is God's gift that related to knowledge given to Khidir (caused by his observance). This knowledge is got through Allah's presence, not through research, thinking, or mediation. His presence is caused by taste (*dzauq*) and uncovering (*kasyf*). See, Amatullah Amstrong, *Sufi Terminology (al-Qomus al-Sufi) The Mystical Language of Islam Book four*, (t.t: Published by A.S Noordeen, 1995), P. 117

proper, if his knowledge is directly coming from Allah without doing any necessary study like others. It is not impossible for a prophet like Muhammad.

Cleverness of prophet in getting knowledge cannot be compared with common people. He received percept (*shari'at*) without reading any special books, neither experience nor teaching. Hence, there is a statement, all cleverness that given by Allah to common people up until now is like grain of sand compared with Muhammad's.²³ Argument that said prophet is an illiterate, no ability to read and write could be possibly that closed knowledge given by Muhammad; *hudhuri science, laduni* and *kasyf*. In other side, argument said prophet can read and write, but it is just a gift of Allah. By considering that Muhammad is a teacher of interpretation, it can be concluded that not all people has ability to get the message of God unless the one pointed as messenger who possibly cannot receive the suddenly revelation. It is like what happened to Muhammad when he received the first revelation, al-Alaq 1-5. The prophet was not ready yet at that time, so that he answered Jibril with *ma ana bi qari'* (I cannot read).²⁴

²³ Al-Yahsubi, Qodi Iyad Ibn Musa, *Keagungan Kekasih Allah Muhammad Saw.*, terj. Ghufron A. Masadi. (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), P. 358

²⁴ From the answer of Prophet does not mean that Rasulullah cannot read anymore, but it is caused by his clumsy when he met Jibril. It is similar like if we were asked to go, then we answered *ma ana bidzaahib*. It does not directly mean that we cannot go because of disablement, but it may be lazy. This also happened to Rasulullah. So, it does not mean that Prophet definitely cannot read what had been given by Jibril. Dr. Ir. Muhammad Syahrur, *Prinsip*

Moreover, that prophet's answer *ma ana bi qaari'* on Jibril question was an expression of shocked.²⁵ It could be, because Muhammad was frightened out with Jibril's arrival, so that he could not read anything. In psychology, thing is not weird anymore, because of he is much shocked. This argument can be explained by several hadith that talk about prophet's condition after getting revelation from Jibril.²⁶ A hadith said that, Ya'la ever told to 'Umar about his will to see Muhammad while he received revelation. In another time, 'Umar called him to see Prophet Muhammad whose reddish face, hard gasp and back to normal immediately.²⁷

While other argument said that ability of prophet in reading arose when he received revelation for the first time. It said that, when Jibril came to him in cave Hira', Jibril brought a piece of writing then he said to Muhammad, "read!". Then after giving answer for three times with "I cannot read", finally that writing was read by him behalf on God's name. After that the angel Jibril went away with leaving that sticky writing in prophet's heart

Based on that transmission, it can be considered that Prophet Muhammad had been able to read the writing of revelation when it

dan Dasar Hermeneutika al-Qur'an Kontemporer, (Yogyakarta: Elsaq Press, 2004), P. 184

²⁵ According to Toshihiko Izutsu, process of revelation acceptance by Prophet PBUH is not like possessed or crazy man (*majnun*), and not like shepherd (*kaahin*), because in this process, there is a verbal communication among three actors; Allah delegated an angel (Jibril) in order to deliver revelation to Prophet Muhammad. See, Izutsu, *God and Man*, P. 168-169

²⁶ In book of M.M Al-A'zami, *Sejarah Teks Al-Qur'an dari Wahyu sampai Komplikasi*, (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2005), P. 49

²⁷ Muslim, *Sahih, Manasik*, P. 6

sent down. So, his illiteracy has been in his own self before the revelation sent down.²⁸ Talking about revelation, Qur'an itself is the source of science (logos) that consists of religion aspect and macrocosmic (universe). In this case, it is similar with *hudhuri* science or essence science (*hakekat*). Therefore, there is indivisible relation between either human and nature or human and religion. However, precisely sensible instinct of human can read and understand the meaning of phenomenon. Hence, in essence science (*hudhuri*) gives more roles to human instinct or intuition. In view, that intuition is human ability to directly get knowledge without doing observation or reasoning.²⁹

Based on that background, reasoning and several problems above, the concept of illiteracy can continuously develop, not static. Moreover, if the plan of this research could have result to join the prophet's illiteracy to be something not sensory that is knowledge given by prophet related to case of cover opening (*kasyf*). Therefore, this prophet's illiteracy is not talked only in real illiteracy or not. For explanation above, there is a strong indication that revelation knowledge (*kasyf*) which Muhammad bequeathed could be got by pious people or they who have close relation to Allah. Hence, there is a chance for us to have it.

Method of the revelation knowledge (*mukasyafah*) that Prophet Muhammad taught need to apply in Muslim teaching

²⁸ Moenawar Kholil, *Kelengkapan Tarikh Nabi Muhammad*, (Depok: Gema Insani, 2001) P. 154

²⁹ Jurnal Teologia, *Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Ushuluddin*, (Volume 20, Nomor, 2009), P. 166

learning process, the way how to get it. Because the knowledge that Muhammad method got is directly stirred by Allah. Moreover, the revelation knowledge (*mukasyafah*) is knowledge that pious people bequeathed as prophets, messenger, and *auliya*'.³⁰ Therefore, as human study by that method, they would get unstoppable science and knowledge. They get the knowledge from God who revealed to them wide knowledge. The knowledge would improve their faith. In addition, it would increase their awareness to apply it in all activities with great struggle, wise thought, good—wise attitude, and nice appearance.³¹

Finally, interpretation of verses *ummiy* in the Qur'an can be observed through secret express of word *ummiy*. That mentioned root word of faith (*iman*) and guidance (*huda*) that direct to self-unity with God (*wahdat al-wujud*). Therefore, it will have great interest if an author goes on next part to observe deeply the Qur'anic verses by the study of comparative analysis (*muqarin*).

B. Research Question

What is the meaning of *ummiy* in the Qur'an?

C. Aim of Research

To know the meaning of the word *ummiy* in the Qur'an.

³⁰ Hamdani Bakran Adz-Dzakiey, *Psikologi Kenabian, Prophetic Psychology, Menghidupkan Potensi dan Kepribadian Kenabian dalam diri*, (Yogyakarta: Fajar Media Press, 2010), P. 512

³¹ *Ibid.*, 513

D. Significant of Research

1. In academic field, it will add to insight of *ummiy* concept in the Qur'an that uncensored science.
2. Through this research, perception of prophet's illiteracy will be solved. That is not about illiterate case, but something about wisdom science, *hudhuri, kasyf*.
3. The result of this research is expected to contribute to thoughts that are useful thoughts to develop treasures of Islamic studies, primarily for Ushuluddin (Theology Faculty), in Tafsir- Hadith Studies Department, and to be referred for further research in the same topic.

E. Prior of Research

Before deciding to choose and do this research, the researcher has examined some previous researches that have same topic, but their focuses are different. Those researches are below:

The First is **Psikologi Kenabian, Prophetic Psychology, Menghidupkan Potensi dan Kepribadian Kenabian dalam diri, by Hamdani Bakran Adz-Dzakiy**. Relating to Prophet's illiteracy, there is a process to get science that Muhammad bequeathed. This book has explained the process or prophetic psychology perspective, especially for science transfer process, that can be learnt by society. Hence, common people can follow the way to get science from God, though he was called as *nabiyul ummiy*.

The Second is **Metamorfosis Sang Nabi**, by **Agus Mushtofa**. This book firstly stimulates authors to have research about *ummiy*. The book explains metamorphose of Prophet Muhammad, who was illiterate at first, and by perfectness as the last Prophet, his gradually cleverness could affect surrounding people. It is not only in case of reading, but also in politic, trade business, and leadership, etc. Then, the writer of the book identify that the illiteracy of Prophet divided into several steps, starting before and after being a Prophet. That is why it is interesting to talk about the prophet's illiteracy, besides if it related to Qur'an.

The Third is **Sejarah Baca Tulis, Sifat Ummiy (Tidak Tahu Baca Tulis) Pada Nabi Muhammad SAW**, by **Syekh Ahmad Bin Hajar**. This book is a writer expression of discomfort for hearing statement that Rasulullah is one who can read and write. Therefore, the writer stated that he definitely denied the argument; Prophet Muhammad can read and write (not illiterate one). He also gave some reason from Qur'an, Hadith, and history of Prophet and history of reading and writing. It must be interesting if there is contradictory argument about the Prophet's illiteracy.

The Fourth is **Nabi Muhammad Buta Huruf atau Genius; Mengungkap Misteri "Keummian" Rasulullah**, by **Syekh al-Maqdisi**. This book consists of more information about *ummiy*. Syekh al-Maqdisi detailed explored the Prophet's illiteracy, either on Qur'an, hadith, or on their history (*asbab al-nuzul/asbab al-wurud*). Most of his arguments denied the illiteracy of Prophet that means Muhammad is the one who cannot read and write. It is

really interesting to discuss it, the illiteracy of Prophet in Syekh al-Maqdisi perspective, because he interpreted the text, either Qur'an or hadith, not only based on the meaning, but also based on sociology, anthropology, and psychology of Prophet.

F. Theoretical Frame Work

In this research, the researcher will focus on *ummiy* in the Qur'anic perspective. Considering the writer's research to explore in case of the illiteracy of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, here in order to get a good result, authors will only focus on research of Qur'an verses that explain the illiteracy for Muhammad. It is purposed to get detailed information about the way of knowledge transformation that Rasulullah bequeathed to his people.

Because of all this time, it is still debatable among scholars about *ummiy*, like Syekh al-Maqdisi who totally denied the argument that Prophet Muhammad is an illiterate. He said that scholars have been wrong in interpreting the word *ummiy* in Qur'an. Al-Maqdisi cannot accept the argument. *"How can an illiterate succeed leading and well teaching God's percept if he has no knowledge and science?"*³²

The other scholar, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Hajar is steadfast in his argument that the Prophet was really *ummiy* to maintain the

³² Syekh Al-Maqdisi, *"Nabi Muhammad Buta Huruf atau Genius; Mengungkap Misteri "Keummian" Rasulullah*, (Jakarta: Nun Publisher, 2007), P. 59

purity (the authenticity of the Qur'an), and it is a book that is always maintained as the word of God chapter Al-Hijr (15: 9).

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Verily We: it is we who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'an) and surely, we will Guard it (from corruption).

Thus, God guarantees the authenticity of the Qur'an, the guarantees that are given on the basis of His Omnipotence and Omniscience, and the blessings of the efforts made by its creatures, especially human beings. With the guarantee of the verse above, every Muslim believes that what is read and listened as the Qur'an does not differ at all with what has been read by the Prophet.³³ With the difference views above, then researcher will melt them through comparative approach of verses of the Qur'an and how are the views of the mufassir on the verses of *ummiy*.

In this case, author wants to search or dig the meaning by using the comparative method (*muqaranah*) approach. Comparative method (*muqaranah*) is an interpretation method which learn a group of Qur'an verses about a topic by comparing between verse and verse, verse and hadith, either the content or the word, also among the opinion of scholars by considering the different aspect of compared object.³⁴

³³ Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an, Fungsi dan Peran Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*, (Bandung; Mizan, 2009), P. 27

³⁴ Zahri Idradh al-Ahmad, *Dirasat fi at-Tafsir al-Maudhu'i li Al-Qur'an al-Karim*, (Riyadh: Mathabi al-Farazdaq at-Tijariyah, 1405), P. 20

Through this method, it is expected that there is common ground on the meaning behind the Prophet Saw's illiteracy except the debate and about maintain the originality of the Qur'an because at that time the Arabs is also famous as *ummiy* nation.

G. Methodology of Research

1. Type of Data

This research is kind of library research with qualitative method. Authors writes, edits, classifies, redraws, and serves data.³⁵ The data is taken from various writing source. The source can be a book, article, journal, and documentation material, etc. The data will be collected to analyze the research in getting down the case Prophet's illiteracy in the Qur'an.

Moreover, the qualitative data will be source or reference to help authors for serving it in comparative frames (comparative method).

2. The Source of Data

a. Primary data

To know further both comprehensive information and understanding about the research that authors did two sources of data will be used; primary and secondary.³⁶ Primary data source means all data come out of Qur'an; all verses that especially talk about the illiteracy. Besides that, the other sources

³⁵ Hadari Nawawi, *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial*, (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada, 1991), P. 30

³⁶ Moh. Ali, *Penelitian Kependidikan, Prosedur dan Strategi*, (Bandung: Angkasa, 1987), P. 42

regarded as primary sources are books of tafsir which are representative to support this research. Those books of tafsir are as follow: Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Adhim by Ibn Katsir (774 H), Tafsir Fi Zhilalil Quran by Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), and Tafsir al-Mishbah by Muhammad Quraissy Syihab,

b. Secondary data

The secondary data of this research is taken from many literatures of books, journals, papers and websites which distinctly discuss about *ummiy*. And secondary data is all discourses that can help researching the illiteracy of Prophet Muhammad, and all relevant opinions and books to support it.

Moreover, the researcher uses al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li alfadh al- Qur'an al-Karim to find the verses of Qur'an. Oxfort Learner's Pocket Dictionary, Cambridge, Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Dictionary of The Holy Qur'an are utilized to know the lexical meaning of words.

3. Collecting Data Method

Since this research is bibliographical research, books, websites, journals, and papers that have relationship to the topic support the collecting data. In this research, the researcher explores several previous findings and researches done by the experts who have discussed the same topic.

Those previous researches have function as raw data. Based on the data, it is necessary to look for outlines, fundamental structures and basic principles in detail and to ignore

the irrelevant data.³⁷ The data which have been collected by the researcher is utilized and synchronized with the topic based on inductive method.³⁸

4. Analyzing Data Method

Once the data is collected, the data is analyzed by the following methods:

a. Interpretative method

This method is used to explore the contents of the book, more precisely reveal the meaning presented. The method is an important role in the search for the meaning explicitly and implicitly, and relating it to the things that are logically related to theoretical ethics and transcendental.³⁹

b. Comparative method (*Muqaran*)

Comparative method is to compare the text (*nash*) verses of the Qur'an that have similarities or editorial similarities in the same case or different text that in the same case. In addition, it also compares explicit contradiction between verses of the Qur'an and Hadith with the opinions of the mufassir in interpretation to the Qur'an.⁴⁰

Through this method, it will be more comprehensive picture regarding the background of an interpretation and can be used as a

³⁷ Anton Bekker & Ahmad Kharis Zubair, *Metode Penelitian Filsafat*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990), P.125

³⁸ Inductive method is based on particular fact and concrete evidence then from the fact and the evidence are concluded as a generalization. See Sutrisno Hadi, *Metodologi Research*, (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset, 1995), P. 42

³⁹ Noeng Muhajir, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Yogyakarta: Bayu Indra Grafika, 1996), P. 65

⁴⁰ Nasirudin Baidan, *Metodologi Penafsiran Al-Qur'an*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1998), P. 65

comparison and lessons learned in developing the interpretation of the Qur'an in the next period.⁴¹ To initiate a first method of data analysis of comparative study Dra. Aswarni Sujud says, "A comparative study will be able to determine the similarities and differences of the objects, people, work of procedures about the ideas of the person or group criticism".⁴²

This is similar to Van Dallen's opinion stating that comparative research is a study of comparing two or three events by looking at its causes. Direction of the use of this method is how *ummiy* interpretation by comparing the opinions of the commentators in the Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Fi Zhilalil Quran and Tafsir al-Misbah, so we get a conclusion that is enough from the viewpoint of their respective interpretations of the commentators in relation to interpreting *ummiy* paragraph.

While the interpretive procedures with comparative methods can be reached through the following steps:

1. Collecting the verses that have similarities and resemblance editorial.
2. Examining the cases related to the verse.
3. Interpretation⁴³

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, P. 146

⁴² Suhartini Ari Kunto, *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1998), P. 247-248

⁴³ Abudin Nata, *Metodologi Studi Islam*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2000), P. 173

H. Systematical of Writing

To get easy understanding for this mini thesis, authors systematically arranged as following:

The first chapter, introduction, authors described the contents and problem limitations in general. I hope that it will make easy to understand the thought of main problem. This chapter consists of background (reason to choose the topic), research question, aim of research, significant of research, prior of research, theoretical framework, method of research, and systematical writing.

The second chapter explains general observation or consideration of meaning *ummiy* based on definition until history of *ummiy* in Arabic nation.

The third chapter explains mufassir opinion of *ummiy* in the Qur'an, revelation cause of the verses, and explanation of comparative analysis theory (*muqaranah*).

The fourth chapter analyzes the verses *ummiy* in the Qur'an by comparative approach (*muqaranah*).

The fifth chapter is closing. In this chapter, the writer will present result from the explanations of the previous chapters that have been elaborated in the research and show the implications for social and personal.

