

The Recitation of Surah Al-Fath in the *Ngeropok* Tradition as a Living Qur'an Practice in Banten

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Abstract: This study examines the communal recitation of Surah Al-Fath within the *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul, Serang, as a form of *Living Qur'an* practice deeply rooted in the religious and cultural fabric of Banten's Muslim community. Held during the Maulid al-Nabi celebration, the *ngeropok* ritual merges devotional worship with a symbolic tribute to the legacy of the Banten Sultanate. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, this research draws on participatory observation, in-depth interviews with religious figures and community members, and documentation of cultural artifacts. Thematic analysis, guided by the Miles and Huberman framework. Findings indicate that the recitation of Surah Al-Fath serves not only as a spiritual practice but also as a *tafsir praksis*—a lived interpretation of the Qur'an that reinforces collective memory, social cohesion, and local Islamic identity. Despite adaptations in the digital era, such as evolving modes of communication and charitable giving, the tradition retains its core values of gratitude, unity, and spiritual reverence. This study underscores how local Islamic traditions like *ngeropok* embody dynamic expressions of sacred texts, continually reinterpreted in response to contemporary cultural and social contexts.

Keywords: *Living Qur'an, Surah Al-Fath, Ngeropok tradition, Banten*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji praktik pembacaan kolektif Surah Al-Fath dalam tradisi *ngeropok* di Desa Kepandean Kidul, Serang, sebagai bentuk *Living Qur'an* yang tertanam dalam kehidupan religius dan budaya masyarakat Muslim Banten. Ritual *ngeropok* yang dilaksanakan dalam rangka peringatan Maulid Nabi tidak hanya merepresentasikan ibadah spiritual, tetapi juga menjadi penghormatan simbolik terhadap warisan Islam Kesultanan Banten. Dengan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui observasi partisipatoris, wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh agama dan masyarakat, serta dokumentasi budaya. Analisis tematik dilakukan dengan merujuk pada model Miles dan Huberman. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pembacaan Surah Al-Fath berfungsi sebagai bentuk *tafsir praksis*—penafsiran hidup terhadap Al-Qur'an yang memperkuat memori kolektif, solidaritas sosial, dan identitas keislaman lokal. Meski mengalami berbagai adaptasi di era digital, seperti perubahan dalam komunikasi dan praktik sedekah, nilai-nilai utama seperti syukur, kebersamaan, dan keberkahan tetap lestari. Studi ini menegaskan bahwa tradisi Islam lokal seperti *ngeropok* merupakan ekspresi dinamis dari teks-teks suci yang terus dimaknai ulang seiring dengan perkembangan sosial dan budaya masyarakat Muslim kontemporer.

Kata kunci: *Living Qur'an, Surat Al-Fath, tradisi ngeropok, Banten*

Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelagic nation renowned for its cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity. Within this rich tapestry, Islam has developed in harmony with local traditions, giving rise to distinctive and meaningful religious practices. This phenomenon is often described as the Islamization of culture, referring to the integration of Islamic teachings into the pre-existing socio-cultural systems of local communities.¹ One region that exemplifies this harmonious fusion between Islam and local culture is Banten. Historically known not only as a hub of trade and power during the era of the Sultanate, Banten is also recognized as a center of Islamic culture deeply rooted in its society.

Various expressions of Islamic culture are still preserved in Banten today, including the *ngeropok* Maulid tradition, *rampak bedug*, *yalail*, *dog-dog lonjor*, *ubrug*, and *debus* performances.² The *ngeropok* tradition, which is the focus of this study, is part of the *Panjang Mulud* celebration—an annual commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday during the month of Rabi' al-Awwal. In Serang City, this celebration takes on a unique form distinct from those in other regions such as *Panjang Jimat* in Cirebon,³ *Khanduri* and *Dhikr* in Aceh,⁴ *Endhog-Endoghan* in Banyuwangi, or *Bungo Lado* in Padang Pariangan.⁵

What makes the *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul Village unique is the collective recitation of Surah Al-Fath as part of a series of *dhikr* and supplications. This particular surah is selected not only for its canonical status in the Qur'an but for its symbolic significance as a representation of victory, which the community associates with the golden era of the Banten Sultanate under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.⁶ Historical accounts note that Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651–1683 CE) was one of Banten's most prominent rulers, expanding the region's political, economic, and religious influence across the

¹ Taufiqur Ramadhana et al., "Studi Tentang Kebudayaan Islam Di Indonesia," *IMTIYAZ: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 7, no. 2 (October 21, 2023): 207–21, <https://doi.org/10.46773/imtiyaz.v7i2.880>.

² Hasani Ahmad Said, "Islam Dan Budaya Di Banten: Menelisik Tradisi Debus Dan Maulid," *KALAM* 10, no. 1 (February 23, 2017): 109, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v10i1.338>.

³ Cintani Septin Syabina, "Sejarah Panjang Jimat Pada Malam Maulid Nabi Di Kota Cirebon," *Konferensi Nasional Mahasiswa Sejarah Peradaban Islam* 1 (October 11, 2024): 670–86, <https://proceedings.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/konmaspi/article/view/2597>.

⁴ Sehat Ihsan Shadiqin and Siti Ikramatoun, "MAWLID CELEBRATION IN ACEH: Culture, Religious Expression, and Political Medium," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 46, no. 1 (July 1, 2022): 122, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v46i1.919>.

⁵ Mutia Shandy et al., "Makna Tradisi Bungo Lado Dalam Perayaan Maulid Nabi Muhammad SAW," *Journal of Education, Cultural and Politics* 3, no. 2 (August 9, 2023): 286–94, <https://doi.org/10.24036/jecco.v3i2.131>.

⁶ Saepul Anwar, "Berdirinya Kerajaan Banten," November 26, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/k2fjv>.

Sunda Strait.⁷ In this context, the recitation of Surah Al-Fath functions as both a tribute to resistance against Dutch colonialism and an affirmation of Islamic identity and local glory.

Previous studies have examined the social and cultural dimensions of the *Panjang Mulud* tradition in Banten.⁸ For instance, Sahabudin et al.,⁹ viewed it as a form of community-based tourism; Marfu and Fauzan¹⁰ explored its socio-religious aspects; and Rosid¹¹ documented the artistic expressions that accompany the celebration. However, these studies have not specifically addressed the Qur'anic recitation dimension of the tradition, particularly the choice and symbolic interpretation of specific surahs. In fact, the ritualistic recitation of selected surahs in religious celebrations carries profound theological and symbolic meaning, reflecting the relationship between divine revelation and the collective experience of the community.

Within the framework of Living Qur'an studies, this phenomenon deserves closer academic attention. The Living Qur'an perspective conceptually asserts that the meanings of sacred verses are not formed exclusively within the academic domain of tafsīr but are also lived out through social practices, cultural rituals, and everyday narratives.¹⁰ In this context, the recitation of Surah Al-Fath during the *ngeropok* tradition can be interpreted as a form of *tafsīr praksis*—a lived interpretation expressed not through written commentary but through actions, symbols, and collectively inherited values.

The *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul thus represents a significant form of the Living Qur'an, illustrating how sacred texts are not merely recited in individual rituals but are collectively and historically imbued with meaning, serving as a source of social cohesion. Surah Al-Fath, with its literal meaning of “victory,” is interpreted as a symbol

⁷ Abdul Rosid, “Panjang Mulud Sebagai Budaya Dan Kesenian Tradisi Islam Di Kota Serang-Banten,” *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Kramat Jati* 4, no. 2 (December 26, 2023): 33–44, <https://doi.org/10.55943/JIPMUKJT.V4I2.102>.

⁸ Abdul Malik and Liza Diniarizky, “Panjang Mulud Tradition Zs A Medium of Social Communication,” *Al-Balagh: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 8, no. 1 (June 26, 2023): 73–104, <https://doi.org/10.22515/albalagh.v8i1.6120>; Sardjana Orba Manullang et al., “Celebration of The Mawlid of Prophet Muhammad SAW: Ritual and Share Islam Value in Indonesian,” *Fikri: Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya* 6, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 36–49, <https://doi.org/10.25217/JF.V6I1.1324>.

⁹ Arfah Sahabudin et al., “Budaya Panjang Mulud Sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Perkotaan Berbasis Masyarakat Di Kota Serang,” *Journal of Indonesian History* 8, no. 2 (2019): 169–76, <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/jih/article/view/36017>.

¹⁰ Siti Marfu'ah and M Inu Fauzan, “Panjang Mulud Dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Banten (Study Kasus Perayaan Maulid Nabi Dalam Perspektif Islam),” *Jurnal Cahaya Mandalika* 3, no. 3 (December 30, 2022): 931–42, <https://doi.org/10.36312/JCM.V3I3.1513>.

¹¹ Rosid, “Panjang Mulud Sebagai Budaya Dan Kesenian Tradisi Islam Di Kota Serang-Banten.”

of blessing, sustenance, inner peace, and spiritual strength in the face of life's challenges. This communal recitation forms part of a localized spirituality that is deeply performative, enabling the community to experience Islamic values as a living presence within their social environment. Moreover, the tradition continues to undergo transformation in the modern era, including changes in how offerings are prepared, how information is disseminated, and how donations are collected—now often facilitated through digital platforms such as WhatsApp and mobile payment systems.¹² The community of Kepandean Kidul does not merely preserve tradition; it actively adapts it to contemporary realities while safeguarding the core spiritual and social meanings embedded in its religious practice.

Given this background, the present study aims to examine the practice of Surah Al-Fath recitation within the *ngeropok* Maulid tradition in Kepandean Kidul Village, Serang, Banten, through the lens of the Living Qur'an. The study focuses particularly on the spiritual dimension, socio-cultural functions, and the processes of transformation and continuity in the face of modernity and technological development. To address the objectives of this study, a qualitative approach was employed using a case study method, which was selected for its ability to portray religious and social practices within a specific and in-depth context. The research site was purposively chosen in Kepandean Kidul Village, Serang City, Banten, given its consistent observance of the *ngeropok* Maulid tradition that incorporates the recitation of Surah Al-Fath as an integral ritual component.

Data collection techniques included participatory observation, whereby the researcher was directly involved in all stages of the tradition—from preparation and execution to post-celebration—to observe social interactions, ritual symbolism, and the spiritual ambiance accompanying the recitation of Surah Al-Fath. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight key informants, consisting of religious leaders, local *ustadz*, village elders, and active community participants. The informants were selected using a snowball sampling technique. Interviews focused on uncovering the theological meanings of Surah Al-Fath, local historical narratives, and their perceptions regarding the tradition's transformation and sustainability. Documentation was obtained

¹² Nofia Natasari, "Standarisasi Perayaan Tradisi Maulid Nabi Di Masyarakat Banten (Analisis Budaya Paul Du Gay)," *Nofia Natasari*, January 1, 2017, https://www.academia.edu/41748418/STANDARISASI_PERAYAAN_TRADISI_MAULID_NABI_DI_MASYARAKAT_BANTEN_Analisis_Sirkuit_Budaya_Paul_Du_Gay_.

through photographs, videos, prayer texts, village archives, and cultural artifacts, which also served to support the triangulation of data. Thematic analysis was conducted following the Miles and Huberman model, which involves data reduction, presentation in narrative form and informant quotations, and layered conclusion-drawing.¹³

Discussion

Ngeropok Tradition and the Legacy of the Banten Sultanate

The *ngeropok* tradition practiced by the people of Kepandean Kidul Village in Serang City is far more than a ceremonial commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. It is a vivid expression of local Islamic culture rooted in the historical legacy of the Banten Sultanate. This tradition demonstrates how scripturally based religious practices—such as the recitation of Surah Al-Fath—are collectively embodied through cultural performances rich in spiritual, symbolic, and historical meaning. Within the Living Qur'an perspective, such practices represent a contextual and transgenerational actualization of the Qur'an in everyday communal life.¹⁴

The historical roots of this tradition can be traced back to the reign of Sultan Abdul Kadir Kanari, one of the early rulers of the Banten Sultanate who held a strong religious vision. He dispatched a delegation of palace dignitaries—including Lebe Panji, Wangsa Raja, Tisna Jaya, and Pangeran Pekik—to Mecca to deepen their religious knowledge and seek spiritual guidance from the heartland of Islamic civilization. The delegation brought with them Banten's prized spices as diplomatic gifts. Upon their return, they were welcomed with full royal honors, including cannon salutes, gamelan performances, and the hoisting of flags from Mecca.¹⁵ This event not only marked the success of the mission but also affirmed Banten's status as a respected and sovereign Islamic kingdom.

The formal establishment of the Sultanate occurred during the reign of Sultan Abdul Mafakhir, on 12 Rabi' al-Awwal 1044 AH (October 7, 1634 CE), coinciding with the Prophet Muhammad's birthday.¹⁶ This historical convergence laid the foundation for

¹³ Matthew B Miles and A Michael Huberman, "Analisis Data Kualitatif" (Jakarta: UI press, 2014).

¹⁴ Abdullah. Saeed, *The Qur'an : An Introduction* (Routledge, 2008).

¹⁵ Arif Noor Dhaiman and Wirahadi Wirahadi, "Jejak Relasi Kekhalifahan Islam Di Tatar Sunda," *Civilization Research: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (July 7, 2023): 119–41, <https://doi.org/10.61630/crjis.v2i2.22>.

¹⁶ A Prasetyo, "Raja Sufi Dari Kesultanan Banten: Sultan Abul Mafakhir Mahmud Abdul Kadir (1596-1651 M)," *Repository.Uinjkt.Ac.Id* (Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2019), [https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/50472%0Ahttps://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/50472/1/AGUS PRASETYO-FAH.pdf](https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/50472%0Ahttps://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/50472/1/AGUS%20PRASETYO-FAH.pdf).

the institutionalization of the *Maulid* celebration as both a religious and state ritual. Local manuscripts such as *Pupuh Asmarandana* and *Pupuh Dandanggula* record royal edicts commanding ceremonial processions every *Maulid* month.¹⁷ These practices formed the basis for the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, which, in Kepandean Kidul, evolved into what is now uniquely known as *ngeropok*.

During the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa—grandson of Sultan Abdul Mafakhir—the tradition gained even greater prominence. Sultan Ageng is renowned for combining Islamic missionary zeal with political strategy.¹⁸ He used the *Maulid* celebration as a key moment to foster bonds between the palace and the people, reinforce Islamic identity, and assert resistance against Dutch colonialism. The event included the recitation of thematically selected surahs from the Qur'an, most notably Surah Al-Fath, whose meaning of “victory” resonated deeply with the spirit of local Islamic revivalism.¹⁹

This historical memory remains embedded in the collective consciousness of the Kepandean Kidul community. The recitation of Surah Al-Fath in the *ngeropok* tradition is perceived as a tribute to past Islamic glory and a means of invoking collective hope for spiritual and social well-being. As articulated by several informants, the surah is seen as a symbol of victory and deliverance—values associated with patience, optimism, and liberation from hardship. This interpretation is intimately connected to the narrative of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, remembered as a noble leader who stood firm against foreign domination and fought for the sovereignty of the Muslim ummah.

Thus, *ngeropok* is not merely a cultural relic but a consciously maintained religious practice that revives and reclaims the grandeur of local Islamic narratives. Surah Al-Fath, in this context, becomes a grounded text (*nass al-mumarsah*)—a scriptural reference that binds together history, identity, and spirituality. Amid waves of modernization and globalization, the tradition also functions as a symbolic form of resistance, preserving the legacy of Islamic values transmitted from generation to

¹⁷ BantenNews, “Asal Mula Tradisi Panjang Mulud Di Banten,” BantenNews, 2022, <https://www.bantennews.co.id/asal-mula-tradisi-panjang-mulud-di-banten/>; Irvan Setiawan, “Panjang Mulud, Tradisi Menyambut Hari Besar Islam Pada Masyarakat Banten,” Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan, 2021, <https://kebudayaan.kemdikbud.go.id/bpnbjabar/panjang-mulud-tradisi-menyambut-hari-besar-islam-pada-masyarakat-banten/>.

¹⁸ Tri Murti, “Perjuangan Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa Dalam Mempertahankan Kesultanan Banten (1651-1692)” (UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2008), [https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/2323/1/BAB I,V.pdf](https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/2323/1/BAB%20I%20V.pdf).

¹⁹ Anwar, “Berdirinya Kerajaan Banten.”

generation. This demonstrates that sacred texts can be transformed into historically situated social actions, offering both meaning and well-being when practiced within a living cultural framework.

Ritual Implementation and the Recitation of Surah Al-Fath in Kepandean Kidul

The *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul Village is observed annually during the month of Rabi' al-Awwal as part of the Maulid al-Nabi celebration. Over time, it has become an integral component of the local community's religious and cultural identity. This tradition does not merely involve symbolic ritual acts; it also creates a vibrant social space that reinforces values such as communal cooperation (*gotong royong*), social care, and collective spiritual expression. The sequence of activities begins with creative preparations by residents, followed by a festive procession, communal *dhikr*, Qur'anic recitations—including Surah Al-Fath—and concludes with the distribution of alms and shared meals. On the day before the main event, villagers prepare elaborately decorated offerings for the *panjang mulud*, crafting unique ornaments such as miniature houses, boats, and animals, which are adorned with household necessities like rice, sugar, cooking oil, eggs, and instant noodles. These decorative items are paraded around the village in a symbolic procession that celebrates joy, generosity, and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad.

The parade starts in the morning and is accompanied by the beating of large frame drums known locally as *terbang gede*.²⁰ The organizing committee collects the offerings house by house, bringing them to the mosque courtyard—the central site of the celebration. Once the procession concludes, the community gathers at the mosque for a collective *dhikr* and Qur'anic recitation session. The series begins with *al-Fātiḥah* recitations dedicated to the Prophet, his companions, scholars, and righteous people, followed by Surahs *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Falaq*, *an-Nās*, selected verses from *al-Baqarah*, and the traditional *rawi* of the Maulid. At the core of the ritual lies the collective recitation of Surah Al-Fath, led by the local *ustadz* and concluded with supplications for divine blessings, forgiveness, and spiritual serenity.²¹ According to Ustadz Mursyid, a senior religious figure in the village, the selection of Surah Al-Fath is not arbitrary. It reflects a

²⁰ Faisal Nugraha, "Kesenian Terbang Gede Dalam Tradisi Ngarak Panjang Mulud Di Masyarakat Banten," *Jurnal Budaya Etnika* 2 No. 1, no. 1 (2018): 15–20, <https://doi.org/10.26742/BE.V2I1.1150>.

²¹ Al-Barzanji, Jafar ibn Hasan ibn Muhammad. *Rawi Maulid*. T.T: Maktabah Al-Madinah, 1763, 65; see also Interview with Ustadz Mursyid, February 3, 2025.

deep symbolic connection to the historical triumphs of Islam during the Banten Sultanate era. For the community, the recitation elicits a sense of awe and heartfelt gratitude, serving as a sacred moment to seek divine aid and ease in daily life.

After the *du 'ā'* and *dhikr*, the ritual culminates in the distribution of basic goods (*sembako*) to all attendees. The organizing committee ensures a fair and orderly process, with each person receiving a plastic bag filled with staple food items. This activity is more than an act of charity; it is viewed as an emulation of the Prophet Muhammad's generosity and a way to enhance local food security and social solidarity. The event concludes with a communal feast prepared the night before by local women, creating an atmosphere of warmth and togetherness. Through this series of acts, the *ngeropok* tradition seamlessly integrates worship with social and cultural dimensions. The recitation of Surah Al-Fath becomes the ritual and spiritual centerpiece, not only strengthening the bond between the community and God but also fostering deeper interpersonal connections among villagers. Within the framework of the Living Qur'an, this ritual demonstrates how the sacred text is not confined to verbal expression but is embodied and enacted in lived traditions rooted in collective memory, social cohesion, and reverence for local Islamic history.

Transformation and Continuity of the Ngeropok Tradition in the Modern Era

The *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul Village serves as a quintessential example of a religious-cultural practice that has endured through dynamic adaptation to changing times.²² Rather than signaling a loss of meaning, these transformations reflect the community's cultural strategy in responding to the complexities of modern socio-economic life, as well as to technological advancements. This phenomenon aligns with what Anthony Giddens refers to as the reflexivity of tradition—a conscious process through which societies maintain inherited values while adjusting them to contemporary conditions.²³

One of the most visible changes pertains to the form of charitable giving (*sedekah*). In earlier times, community members would prepare and bring homemade

²² Eka N. Mualimah, Andoyo Sastromiharjo, and Vismaia S. Damaianti, "Kasepuhan Banten Kidul: Exploring Local Wisdom Through Reading Culture," 2025, 102–11, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-317-7_12; Mibtadin et al., "Nahdatul Ulama, Religious Traditions, and Rural Communities: Narrative of Shifting Religious Traditions of the People of Bangunrejo Kidul Village, East Java," *Journal of Hunan University Natural Sciences* 49, no. 9 (September 30, 2022): 232–41, <https://doi.org/10.55463/issn.1674-2974.49.9.27>.

²³ A Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford University Press, 1991).

dishes to the mosque, demonstrating active participation and shared effort. Today, this form of giving has evolved into the distribution of packaged basic necessities (*sembako*), which is more practical and efficient. According to Ibu Rohilah, a respected elder in the village, this change reflects contemporary lifestyles that demand speed and convenience. “Everything is instant now, but that doesn’t mean we’re less sincere. In fact, it’s more organized, and everything can be distributed fairly,” she remarked.²⁴ Her statement suggests that the values of sincerity and community care remain intact despite the shift in form.

Digital technology has also reshaped communication and coordination patterns. Social media platforms, WhatsApp groups, and mobile payment systems have replaced traditional oral and door-to-door interactions. “In the past, we knocked on every door. Now we just send a message or a link,” explained Bapak Syauqon Hasbi, one of the event coordinators.²⁵ This shift illustrates how technology has not displaced community values but instead has enhanced the efficiency and inclusiveness of participation.

Nevertheless, not all changes are perceived positively. Some elderly residents express a sense of loss over the more intimate, communal atmosphere of earlier celebrations. “When we were kids, Maulid nights were warm because everyone cooked together. Now it feels quieter—you just transfer money and show up on the day,” lamented Ustadz Mursyid.²⁶ This reflection points to a tension between modern efficiency and the richness of traditional social interactions. Therefore, the continuity of the tradition must not only be measured by the preservation of form but also by the revitalization of the social values that accompany it.

From the perspective of the Living Qur’an, the recitation of Surah Al-Fath continues to serve as a spiritual anchor that connects generations. The surah is understood in trans-temporal terms—as a commemoration of past victories (the Banten Sultanate), as a call for moral triumphs in daily life, and as a source of hope for spiritual resilience in an increasingly competitive and materialistic era. In the collective recitation, villagers reaffirm their spiritual connection to their heritage while reimagining themselves as a modern Muslim community united in faith and purpose.

²⁴ Interview with Ibu Rohilah

²⁵ Interview with Bapak Syauqon Hasbi

²⁶ Interview with Ustadz Mursyid

The sustainability of the *ngeropok* tradition rests on three key pillars: first, its structural flexibility, which allows its form to evolve with the times; second, its core values, which are transmitted both narratively and in practice; and third, intergenerational participation, which ensures the continuity of cultural transmission. This tradition is not merely a relic of the past but a living discourse about the future—about how Islamic values such as gratitude, generosity, and fellowship are instilled in forms that resonate with digital-era sensibilities. In this way, *ngeropok* successfully bridges continuity and change. It stands as a model for how local Muslim communities in Indonesia can enact the principle of *tajdīd al-ma'nā*—the renewal of meaning—without disavowing the essence of their tradition. As long as foundational values such as *barakah* (blessing), spiritual victory, and social solidarity remain at the heart of the practice, technological and procedural changes will only serve to reinforce its place in the vibrant and enduring tapestry of Nusantara Islam.

Conclusion

The *ngeropok* tradition in Kepandean Kidul Village, Serang City, represents a distinctive form of local Islamic cultural expression that reflects the dynamic interplay between sacred text, history, and religious social practice. This study found that the collective recitation of Surah Al-Fath is not merely a ceremonial component of the Maulid celebration, but a powerful symbol of spiritual blessing, collective triumph, and commemoration of the Banten Sultanate's historical legacy. Through this tradition, the values of the Qur'an are actualized in performative, reflective, and historically embedded forms. Within the framework of the Living Qur'an, the recitation of Surah Al-Fath emerges as a lived engagement with revelation—one that is not abstract or academic, but rooted in tradition, communal solidarity, and the remembrance of Islamic heritage.

The findings further indicate that while technical aspects of the tradition have evolved—such as in forms of almsgiving, communication, and documentation—the core values of charity, social bonding, and reverence for the Prophet remain intact. These transformations suggest that *ngeropok* is a resilient and adaptive cultural-religious institution. Its continuity is supported by three foundational pillars: its form flexibility, its value transmission, and intergenerational involvement. As such, the tradition embodies not just cultural memory but a forward-looking vision for how Islamic values can be embedded in modern contexts without eroding their theological or spiritual essence.

The principal contribution of this study lies in its affirmation that Living Qur'an practices are not confined to institutional religious settings like pesantren or study circles, but are vibrantly sustained within the cultural lives of ordinary communities who engage with the Qur'an through local tradition. This also strengthens the claim that Surah Al-Fath is interpreted not only through formal exegesis (*tafsīr*) but through community-based *tafsīr praksis*, characterized by reflection, emotion, and historical consciousness. Future studies are encouraged to further examine how the meanings of Qur'anic verses are transformed across different regions of the archipelago, especially within the diverse landscape of Nusantara Islam. Special attention should be paid to youth perspectives, to assess how spiritual and cultural values can be creatively and transformatively preserved in a digital age.

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