

THE LIVING QUR'AN IN MARITIME CULTURE: SYMBOLISM, RITUAL, AND ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY IN THE TASELA BOATMAKING TRADITION

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Abstract

*This study explores the Nurunkeun Jampanan ritual and the Tasela boatmaking tradition in Cikawung-Ading Village, Tasikmalaya, as a manifestation of the living qur'an within Indonesia's maritime culture. It examines how Qur'anic teachings are embodied in local rituals and collective practices that sustain the spiritual and ecological harmony of coastal communities. Using a qualitative ethnographic method through interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, the research reveals three main dimensions: (1) the recitation of Surah al-Fatihah and al-Ikhlas as expressions of tauhīd and communal devotion; (2) the annual limitation of five boats symbolizing the Qur'anic concept of *mīzān* (balance) and moderation; and (3) the ritual's social function in reinforcing solidarity and environmental awareness. These findings demonstrate that Qur'anic values are actualized through living cultural expressions integrating spirituality, social ethics, and ecological responsibility. The study contributes to Qur'anic anthropology and Islamic ecology by showing how sacred texts are lived and interpreted in maritime settings. Practically, it proposes recognizing Nurunkeun Jampanan as an intangible cultural heritage with religious-ecological significance and promoting Qur'anic ecological ethics in coastal education, thus bridging Qur'anic studies, anthropology, and environmental ethics within Indonesia's coastal Islam.*

Keywords: ethnography, boat building traditions, living qur'an, Cikawung-Ading

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji ritual *Nurunkeun Jampanan* dan tradisi pembuatan perahu Tasela di Desa Cikawung-Ading, Tasikmalaya, sebagai manifestasi *living qur'an* dalam budaya maritim Indonesia. Kajian ini menelusuri bagaimana ajaran-ajaran Al-Qur'an diwujudkan dalam ritual lokal dan praktik kolektif yang menopang harmoni spiritual dan ekologis masyarakat pesisir. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif etnografi melalui wawancara, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi, penelitian ini mengungkap tiga dimensi utama: (1) pembacaan Surah al-Fatihah dan al-Ikhlas sebagai ekspresi *tauhīd* dan devosi komunal; (2) pembatasan produksi lima perahu setiap tahun yang melambangkan konsep Al-Qur'an tentang *mīzān* (keseimbangan) dan moderasi; serta (3) fungsi sosial ritual dalam memperkuat solidaritas dan kesadaran ekologis. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an diaktualisasikan melalui ekspresi budaya yang hidup, yang memadukan spiritualitas, etika sosial, dan tanggung jawab ekologis. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada bidang antropologi Al-Qur'an dan ekologi Islam dengan memperlihatkan bagaimana teks suci dihidupi dan ditafsirkan dalam konteks kemeritiman. Secara praktis, studi ini mengusulkan pengakuan *Nurunkeun Jampanan* sebagai warisan budaya takbenda bermilai religius-ekologis serta integrasi etika ekologi Qur'ani dalam pendidikan pesisir, sehingga menjembatani studi Al-Qur'an, antropologi, dan etika lingkungan dalam Islam pesisir Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: etnografi, tradisi pembuatan perahu, *living qur'an*, Cikawung-Ading



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INTRODUCTION

In the global scholarly discourse, the concept of lived religion underscores that faith and doctrine are not merely abstract systems but are embodied through everyday practices, rituals, and material expressions (Ammerman, 2016). Anthropological and theological studies demonstrate that rituals function as embodied practices in which spiritual meanings are conveyed through bodily actions, symbols, and material objects that deepen religious experience (Strathern & Stewart, 2021; Van Cappellen & Edwards, 2021). Research from diverse regions, including Latin America, further illustrates how practices such as household altars, processions, and sacred objects intertwine faith with culture and social identity (Adam, 2019; Arena & Gustavo Morello, 2022). These material and corporeal dimensions of religion also foster emotional and communal experiences that sustain social solidarity and shape collective identity, indicating that religion continuously interacts with its social context in constructing human worldview and existence (Barentsen, 2021; Boivin, 2009).

The concept of *living religion* strongly resonates with Indonesian Islam, where Qur'anic teachings are not confined to textual interpretation but are embodied in diverse social and cultural practices. Across regions such as Java, Sulawesi, Lombok, and Banyumas, Qur'anic values are integrated into local traditions through rituals, language, and symbolic expressions, reflecting a dynamic interaction between text and context. Among the Makassar, the *songkabala* tradition employs Qur'anic recitations for devotion and spiritual protection (Sohrah, Husna, Akbar, Sugirman, & Arfah, 2023), while the Sasak community of Lombok engages the Qur'an through oral and communal practices shaped by local values (M. Taufiq & Said, 2025). In Java and Banyumas, syncretic religious expressions and Qur'anic recitations as *tolak bala'* further illustrate how the Qur'an functions as a living source of meaning in everyday religious life (Ali, 2011; Sobirin, 2025; Supena, 2021).

The *living qur'an* in Indonesia reflects Islam's adaptability as a lived and communal phenomenon, shaping identity and solidarity. In Cikawung-Ading's Tasela boatmaking tradition, the recitation of Surah al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlas at the start of each Muharram embodies devotion and divine supplication, transforming scripture into collective practice. The boat serves as both a livelihood and a sacred symbol, while the annual limit of five boats signifies the Qur'anic principle of *mīzān* (balance) and the spirit of Islam's five pillars. Conducted communally, the ritual fosters unity, cultural continuity, and ecological awareness. This tradition exemplifies how the *living qur'an* operates in maritime Indonesia, merging text, symbolism, and social action to sustain spiritual identity and environmental harmony.

Studies on lived religion have evolved to emphasize religion not merely as doctrine or institutional structure but as an embodied and contextual social experience manifested in everyday life. This perspective explores how believers interpret, express, and materialize faith through daily practices, rituals, and sacred objects (Ammerman, 2016; Streib, Dinter, & Söderblom, 2008) (Bender, 2016; Van Cappellen & Edwards, 2021). Research in this field reveals that religiosity intersects with social dimensions such as gender, power, and identity, showing faith as a dynamic construct shaped by cultural contexts (Jakobsh, 2016; Katajala-Peltomaa & Toivo, 2020). Cross-regional studies show various forms of applying this concept, ranging from the phenomenology of lived religion in Latin America, which links faith with social practices (Fernández, Azcárate, Rodríguez, González, & Moreno, 2022) (Erhard & Sammet, 2019). Theological inquiries further stress understanding religion as a lived and contextual experience (Dillen, 2017; Edgardh, 2021; Weyel, 2014). Methodologically, this paradigm privileges qualitative-ethnographic inquiry while facing critiques regarding its conceptual boundaries and Western-centric bias (Reimer-Kirkham, 2009) (Goldstein, 2024).

Thus, although the theory of lived religion has made a significant contribution to understanding religion as a living practice, its application in non-Western Islamic contexts, particularly among Southeast Asian Muslim communities, remains limited. This is where research on the *living qur'an* in Indonesia can play an important role in enriching this

perspective by highlighting how the sacred text is not only read but also lived and interpreted within local cultural practices that shape the spiritual identity of Nusantara Muslims.

In Indonesia, *living qur'an* studies have grown significantly, highlighting how Muslim communities embody Qur'anic values within diverse social, cultural, and spiritual contexts. Moving beyond textual analysis, this approach examines the reception and enactment of Qur'anic teachings in everyday life. In parallel, Living Hadith scholarship explores how prophetic traditions are interpreted and practiced through local cultural frameworks (Mohd. Salleh, Hamdi Usman, Wazir, Ravi Abdullah, & Zaki Ismail, 2020; Qudsy, Abdullah, Jubba, Prasojo, & Tanadi Taufik, 2023; Salleh, Usman, Wazir, Abdullah, & Ismail, 2019). Within this broader interpretive landscape, Qur'anic translation functions not only as linguistic mediation but also as a medium of education, legal reasoning, and ideological expression shaped by socio-political contexts (Gunawan, 2022; Musaffa, 2025). Additionally, studies on Indonesian Muslim women reveal active engagement with sacred texts through study circles, pesantren, and academic spaces, underscoring forms of spiritual agency that challenge male-centred interpretive authority (Rasmussen, 2011).

Various local traditions reflect the integration of Qur'anic teachings with indigenous culture, such as *Songkabala* in Makassar, which combines prayers and Qur'anic recitations for self-protection (Sohrah et al., 2023), and the oral interpretive practices of the Sasak community in Lombok that reinforce collective engagement in textual understanding (M. Taufiq & Said, 2025). Similarly, social exegesis models like *tafsir adabī ijtimā'i* in Java exemplify efforts to connect the sacred text with communal life through accessible and pragmatic discourse (I. Taufiq & Hassan, 2016). Studies of the *living qur'an* in Indonesia further promote religious moderation and tolerance, as shown by Takdir and Sumbulah (2024) on Qur'anic tolerance practices in Madura and Mahfudz and Yuspiani (2023) in South Sulawesi, emphasizing *ummatan wasatan* as a foundation of social ethics. Contemporary theological scholarship also situates Islamic teachings as the basis of universal human values such as justice, equality, and compassion (Arifinsyah, Andy, & Damanik, 2020).

Meanwhile, anthropological and Islamic cultural studies in Indonesia that focus on maritime culture indicate that sea traditions and religious symbolism play an important role in shaping social relations and the spiritual identity of coastal communities. In the context of Southeast Asia, Andaya (2017) explains that maritime communities historically had complex belief systems, in which rituals propitiating sea spirits-maintained safety and a spiritual ecological balance between humans and nature. However, with the advent of world religions such as Islam, these practices transformed into more theistic and Qur'anic religious forms, without erasing the deeply rooted local symbolic values.

Wahab et al.'s (2018) demonstrate that decorative arts on traditional Malay boats along the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia function as carriers of ancient maritime symbols expressing belief systems, prayers for safety, and the cosmological worldview of coastal communities. Comparable symbolism appears in coastal ritual landscapes, where the liminal interaction between sea and land is sacralized as a boundary between the human realm and divine transcendence (Westerdahl, 2005). Wade (2018) further notes that classical maritime symbolism portraying ships as spiritual metaphors, rooted in Byzantine and Mediterranean traditions, continues to inform the religious expressions of contemporary maritime societies, including those in the Nusantara. In the Indonesian context, sea offerings and *pelarungan* rituals similarly embody collective gratitude and affirm a harmonious relationship between humans, God, and the marine environment.

This tradition encompasses spiritual, social, and ecological dimensions, such as in the Sea Semah of the Panglong Sea Tribe in the Riau Islands, which symbolizes prayers for safety and respect for divine power (Swastiwi, Arman, Wibisono, & Zulha, 2024), as well as the Sea Charity in Jepara and Weleri, which serves to preserve the environment while also strengthening the local maritime cultural identity (Indrahti & Andita Meirina, 2021; Ken & Mahfudz, 2021). However, existing studies largely emphasize symbolism and religious

ecology without explicitly examining how Qur'anic teachings shape the everyday practices of coastal societies. This gap is evident in the limited exploration of maritime production and economic activities, such as the Tasela boat-making tradition in Tasikmalaya, as expressions of the *living qur'an* that link Qur'anic verses with the cosmology and spirituality of sea-based communities.

A synthesis of previous studies indicates a clear research gap in understanding how the *living qur'an* is embodied within Indonesia's maritime culture. While existing *living qur'an* research has largely focused on agrarian contexts and maritime anthropology has highlighted the symbolic and ecological spirituality of coastal life, few studies have examined how Qur'anic teachings are concretely enacted in everyday maritime practices. This study addresses that gap by analyzing the Tasela boat-making tradition in Cikawung-Ading Village, where sacred texts, numerical symbolism, and collective rituals converge as lived expressions of faith and communal identity.

This study employs an interdisciplinary framework that integrates qur'anic exegesis, Islamic anthropology, and maritime cultural studies to conceptualize the *living qur'an* as an organically embedded practice within Indonesia's coastal Muslim communities. An anthropological lens is used to examine how qur'anic values are embodied in social and ritual practices, while exegetical analysis explores the interpretation of qur'anic verses within a maritime context. Focusing on the Tasela boatmaking tradition, the study interprets the ritual as a living engagement with the qur'an, reflected in the recitation of Surah al-Fatiyah and al-Ikhlas as acts of devotion, the symbolic limitation of producing five boats as an expression of *mizan* and ecological moderation, and the integration of sacred text and local symbolism in fostering communal identity and ecological consciousness.

Through this approach, the research is expected to provide a scientific contribution in two main areas: (1) in the field of Qur'anic studies, expanding the understanding of the *living qur'an* within the maritime cultural context, which demonstrates the translation of text into actions and symbols; and (2) in the field of Islamic anthropology, showing the dynamics of interaction between the sacred text, tradition, and the spiritual ecology of coastal communities as a distinctive reflection of Nusantara Islam. Thus, this research not only enriches academic discourse on the *living qur'an* but also helps preserve maritime religious traditions as living spiritual and cultural heritage within the community.

Grounded in theoretical review and identified research gaps, this study argues that the Tasela boatmaking tradition in Tasikmalaya constitutes a concrete manifestation of the *living qur'an*, in which Qur'anic teachings are embodied as socio-cultural practices shaping the spiritual rhythm of coastal life. In line with Ahimsa-Putra's concept (Putra, 2012), the *living qur'an* reflects the community's interpretation and actualization of Qur'anic meanings through ritual and social conduct, a process anthropologically understood as the "Quranization of life." This is evident in the recitation of Surah al-Fatiyah and al-Ikhlas as protective invocations at the outset of boat construction, as well as in the symbolic limitation of producing five boats annually, which signifies a cosmological balance between humans, nature, and God, resonating with Eliade's (1959) and Geertz's (1973), view of ritual as a mediator between the sacred and the profane.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative, field-based approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand social realities in depth through description, interpretation, and meaning, rather than just statistical figures (Moleong, 2019, nn. 6–7). More specifically, this study combines two approaches, namely phenomenology and ethnography. The phenomenological approach was used to examine the subjective experiences of the community in the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition, including how they interpret the recitation of verses from the Qur'an in this tradition (Creswell, 2018, n. 75).

Meanwhile, the ethnographic approach serves to explore in depth the socio-cultural context, interaction patterns, and local wisdom of the Cikawung-Ading community in preserving the sea ritual tradition that is still alive today (James P. Spradley, 1980, nn. 3–5). This research was conducted for approximately one week, from Monday to Sunday, December 23–30, 2023.

The primary data collection technique employed was in-depth interviews with selected informants. The purposive sampling technique was used to select informants with specific expertise relevant to the study, including: (1) expert boat builders (*tasela*), who possess traditional knowledge regarding the symbolism of boats in sea rituals, and (2) researchers and cultural observers from Tasikmalaya Regency who have a deep understanding of the historical and transformative aspects of these cultural rituals. In addition, snowball sampling was used to identify additional informants through referrals from initial participants, resulting in a total of seven informants being interviewed (Sugiyono, 2011, nn. 224–225). By combining these techniques, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the community's reception of Qur'anic verses within the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History and Practice of Reading Existing Al-Quran Verses in the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* Procession

Cikawung-Ading village in Tasikmalaya preserves a long-standing maritime tradition through the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual, a sacred ceremony rooted in the community's boatbuilding culture. As explained by village elder Syana Sofyana, this ritual follows strict customary rules and symbolizes the community's connection to the sea. Derived from the Sundanese words *nurunkeun* ("to lower") and *jampanan* ("boat"), the practice began in 1975 and is intertwined with the myth of Nyi Roro Kidul, the revered queen of the Southern Sea. Conducted twice a year, notably during Fishermen's Day (*pembuka laut Pamayangsari*), it features communal Qur'anic recitations and expresses the spiritual harmony between humans and the maritime realm.

The annual *Hajat Laut* procession in December represents the maritime spirituality of the Cikawung-Ading community, with *Nurunkeun Jampanan* as its core ritual. Originally involving two sacred *jampanan*, Yulia 1 and Yulia 2, associated with the legacy of the community's founding figures, these ritual objects are reserved exclusively for ceremonial use as symbols of ancestral reverence and cultural continuity. According to Syana Sofyana, the ritual underwent a significant transformation in 2001 following a regency regulation that restricted its public performance amid debates over its religious status. In response, the community adapted *Nurunkeun Jampanan* into a private nocturnal ceremony held on the eve of 1 Muharram, which continues to be preserved annually under the leadership of customary elders, reflecting the resilience of local religious identity and maritime cultural traditions (Rahayu & Imdad, 2023).

The fishermen's sea thanksgiving festival is celebrated not only at Pamayangsari Beach but also at Cimanuk Beach, as part of an ancestral heritage passed down from generation to generation. Since 1975, the fishermen have organized a customary institution known as *Rukun Nelayan*, uniting seven coastal villages: Ciheras, Cipatujah, Sindangkerta, Cikawungading, Cidadap, Mandalajaya, and Cimanuk. In particular, the ritual is held along the shores of the villages of Ciheras, Cipatujah, Sindangkerta, Cikawungading, and Cidadap. This enduring practice reflects not merely historical continuity but also its socio-cultural role in strengthening solidarity, affirming collective identity, and sustaining a harmonious relationship with the sea as the primary source of livelihood.

Based on an interview with the head of the Cikawung-Ading Fishermen's Association, Syana Sofyana, the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition serves three main purposes: preserving a cultural heritage that has existed since 1975, expressing gratitude for abundant marine harvests, and offering collective prayers for ancestors through the recitation of Yasin and

istighāthah in July. Beyond its religious significance, the ritual also holds cultural appeal that attracts visitors, encouraging the community to sustain the tradition while allowing it to adapt to contemporary contexts.

According to Mr. Andiana, a member of the Village Deliberation Agency (BPD), the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual is primarily intended as an expression of gratitude for God's blessings. On July 27, the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition is performed modestly through communal recitation of Yasin and Qur'anic study, serving as a prayer to honor the memory of the departed ancestors in Cikawung-Ading Village. In addition, offerings are symbolically presented to the sea to share sustenance with marine creatures. For the local community, the ritual carries a sacred meaning. It continues to be preserved despite external debates, reflecting the community's effort to maintain harmony and peace through a distinct cultural-religious practice.

The primary purpose of *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition, also known as the fishermen's thanksgiving ritual, is to perform acts of purification (*ruwat*) and sea offerings *larung* intended to ward off misfortune and to ensure abundant fish catches (F. Fauziah, Cahya, & Neneng Yanti, 2021, n. 35). Local leaders explain that the ritual also involves presenting offerings to the spiritual beings believed to inhabit the Southern Sea. This practice is regarded as an annual obligation, and neglecting it is thought to invite disaster. Indeed, in 2011, when the ritual was not performed, the people of Cikawung-Ading experienced a series of misfortunes, including a scarcity of fish, prolonged drought, and a significant rise in mortality among fishermen at sea (Rahayu & Imdad, 2023).

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition is performed annually through three sequential stages. It begins with the Fishermen's Day commemoration on July 27, when residents engage in Qur'anic recitations to honor deceased ancestors, a sacred practice sustained through familial transmission, including gatherings at the house of Pak Pius's widow. The second stage takes place on the evening of 1st Muharram after Maghrib and involves a private sea-offering ceremony limited to around seventy designated cultural custodians, a restriction introduced in response to earlier public performances that generated social and administrative controversy. The final stage appears as a public symbolic procession, most recently held on December 25–27, 2023, featuring a three-day communal celebration that includes a *tabligh akbar*, musical performances, and a closing ceremony attended by government officials, village leaders, and visitors. Despite these adaptations, the community continues to regard the ritual as sacred and believes that its abandonment would bring misfortune to Cikawung-Ading Village.

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual illustrates the intertwined relationship between religious devotion, cultural identity, and ecological ethics within the coastal community of Cikawung-Ading. Rooted in Sundanese cosmology—such as the reverence for Nyi Roro Kidul, and interwoven with Islamic practices through Qur'anic recitations, the ritual reflects a negotiated integration of local spirituality and Islam. This synthesis sustains religious identity while reinforcing ecological responsibility toward the sea. Performed collectively, the ritual also functions as a medium of social cohesion, as shared acts of ancestor veneration and symbolic sea offerings strengthen communal bonds and respect for maritime heritage. Moreover, the ritual's adaptive character in responding to external regulations underscores the community's resilience in preserving cultural continuity amid modern and institutional pressures.

The Ritual Procession of the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* Tradition

Prior to the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual, fishermen in Cikawung-Ading observe a week-long ban on going to sea, locally understood as a sacred act of "sea cleansing" to prevent misfortune. This prohibition, reinforced by a fatal violation in the early 2000s, has become an institutionalized *pamali* binding the coastal community. The accompanying restriction on consuming fish embodies Qur'anic ethical restraint, reflecting the principle of *mizān* (balance) by discouraging overexploitation while symbolically expressing gratitude and reaffirming a morally regulated relationship between humans and the marine environment.

In addition to the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* procession at the end of the year, the people of Cikawung-Ading also celebrate Fishermen's Day every July. However, this tradition is not expressed as a large festival, but rather through a simple recitation of the Quran held after noon until before the afternoon prayer, led by village elders. The main agenda is the recitation of Surah Yasin and a joint prayer for deceased ancestors. Meanwhile, the Jampanan procession is deliberately held at the end of the year to coincide with the holiday season, making this tradition an attraction for coastal tourists.



Figure 1 & 2.
The ceremonial launching of the Jampanan into the sea was accompanied by dancing and a parade by local residents (Source: Researcher, 2023)

This phenomenon reflects a complex dialectic between ritual functions and broader economic-cultural orientations in the social dynamics of Cikawung-Ading's coastal community. Ritual is not merely understood as a sacred religious expression. However, it has also transformed into a medium for reinforcing collective identity, preserving ancestral traditions, and serving as an instrument of culture-based local economic development. Hence, the ritual practices of this village illustrate a reciprocal relationship between spirituality and pragmatic community interests, making them both unique and highly relevant to contemporary cultural studies.

The pre-ritual fishing ban and the sacred prohibition against going to sea reflect the deep-seated spiritual ethics and communal responsibility within the Cikawung-Ading community. The practice of *pamali* reinforces the notion of cosmic order, where adherence to ritual boundaries is believed to maintain harmony between humans and the natural world. The tragic incident of an outsider disregarding this ban

serves as a poignant reminder of the consequences of violating communal codes, further solidifying the belief that rituals act as both spiritual safeguards and pragmatic protections.

Furthermore, the ceremonial launching of the Jampanan into the sea, accompanied by dance and communal processions, reflects the integration of sacred ritual and collective celebration that strengthens social cohesion. Its deliberate timing during the holiday season also indicates a strategic convergence of spiritual practice and local economic interests, as the ritual functions both as religious observance and coastal tourism attraction. This dynamic illustrates how the tradition adapts to contemporary socio-economic contexts while preserving its religious significance and communal relevance.

Media Used in the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* Ceremony

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual employs symbolic media rich in philosophical meaning, reflecting local cultural distinctiveness while maintaining continuity with broader Sundanese traditions that regard offerings as expressions of the sacred. For community elders, these

ritual objects function as sacred intermediaries that connect present practices with ancestral values and safeguard the community's spiritual well-being. Incense occupies a central position, as its natural purity, derived from resin without chemical additives, symbolizes harmony with nature, spiritual preparedness, and ethical closeness to God. Unlike alcohol-based fragrances considered environmentally harmful, incense represents a respectful engagement with the sea's spiritual realm. In the belief system of Cikawung-Ading, burning incense serves as a sacred invitation to ancestral presence, uniting material, spiritual, and ecological dimensions within a single ritual act that reinforces religious devotion and cultural identity (M. N. Fauziah, Lubis, & Ema Ema, 2021, n. 131).

Offerings such as coffee, tea, cigars, tubers, red-white rice porridge, bananas, palm sugar, seven-variety flowers, women's cosmetics, young coconuts, and young roosters and hens are symbolically interpreted as expressions of gratitude to the ancestors and the Goddess Roro Kidul for the abundance of fish. These offerings, prepared according to long-standing tradition, represent a reciprocal act for the blessings received. Ultimately, they are not only dedicated but also consumed by the community, reaffirming the reciprocal relationship between humans, ancestors, and the supernatural forces believed to safeguard the livelihood of coastal fishermen.



Figure 3.
Documentation of stage decorations to welcome the Nurunkeun Jampanan celebration (Source: Researcher, 2023).

The sea-offering ritual carries deep symbolism, centered on the buffalo head as its most sacred offering. Placed on a small banana-trunk boat and covered with white cloth, the buffalo head represents sincere sacrifice and the suppression of bestial instincts in favor of moral integrity and religious discipline. The burning of dry straw, whose smoke is believed to ward off visible and invisible malevolent forces, further reinforces this symbolism. Together, these ritual elements express a collective maritime spirituality that integrates ethical values, cosmological beliefs, and cultural continuity (Isnaeni 2020).

Interpretation of the Recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah and Al-Ikhlāṣ in the Nurunkeun Jampanan Tradition

The annual boat-building tradition, held during the month of Sura, incorporates several religious practices, including the recitation of the Qur'anic chapters al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlāṣ twice each, as well as a special prayer ritual known as *jampe-jampe*. According to an interview with Mr. Syana Sofyana, the head of the local fishermen's association, this tradition carries a sacred significance. It conveys moral messages regarding the creation of living beings on Earth, while also serving as an expression of gratitude for the daily abundance of fish catches.

In the boat-making ritual in Cikawung-Ading Village, the community traditionally recites Surah al-Fātiḥah twice during the ceremony, attended by local leaders and elder fishermen. This practice emphasizes that the sacred text is not confined to its written form but also encompasses voice, speech, and action as integral elements of sacred textuality. As Sam D. Gill emphasizes, the sacred text operates on two dimensions: the horizontal, encompassing textual data and social practice, and the vertical, focusing on interpretive, informative, and

performative aspects (Sam D. Gill, 2010, nn. 45–47).

Based on an interview with Mr. Joko Tasela, a community leader in Cikawung-Ading Village, it was revealed that the recitation of Surah al-Fātiḥah plays a significant role in the boat-making tradition. This practice is not merely a ritual routine but carries symbolic meaning as an opening act marking the commencement of the boat-making process. Furthermore, the local community believes that reciting al-Fātiḥah brings blessings and positively influences the smooth progression of all stages of the ceremony, encompassing both technical and social aspects.

Surah al-Ikhlāṣ, like Surah al-Fātiḥah, holds deep spiritual and ritual significance, particularly in Cikawung-Ading Village where its recitation during boat-building reflects the community's belief in divine oneness (*tauhid*) and frames the process as an act of devotion and self-reflection to avoid polytheism. This practice illustrates the close link between religion and local maritime life, as spiritual values provide moral foundations that sustain traditions, reinforce community cohesion, and integrate religious, technical, and social elements, affirming cultural identity and ensuring maritime activities run smoothly, highlighting the importance of analyzing these traditions through their religious, sociocultural, and historical contexts.



Figure 4.
Documentation of various offerings in *Jampanan* (Source: Researcher, 2023).

Qur'anic principle of *mīzān* (balance), emphasizing moderation and ecological awareness. Beyond its spiritual dimension, the ritual reinforces communal solidarity, preserves ancestral knowledge, and sustains cultural identity amid modernization. Framed within Ahimsa-Putra's (2012), *living qur'an* perspective, this tradition demonstrates how Qur'anic values are embodied through collective practices that integrate the sacred and the social. In this maritime context, the *living qur'an* emerges as a dialogical synthesis of revelation and lived reality, translating *tauhid*, balance, and gratitude into sustainable relations between humanity, nature, and the divine.

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition, viewed through the lens of religious symbolism by Eliade and Geertz, embodies a cosmological expression that connects the sacred and profane for the Cikawung-Ading community, where each stage of Tasela boatmaking and launching rituals carries deep symbolic meaning reflecting divine presence within human and natural order. The rituals, such as reciting Surah al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlāṣ, burning incense, and offering a buffalo head to the sea, express a belief in maintaining cosmic harmony through spiritual reverence. Sociologically, drawing on Durkheim and Putnam, the tradition fosters social integration by promoting communal solidarity, shared spiritual experiences, and trust through public Qur'anic recitations and sea-burial ceremonies, thus serving as a symbolic language that unites religious, ecological, and social aspects within Indonesia's coastal Islamic culture.

Field research reveals that the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual in Cikawung-Ading Village, Tasikmalaya, exemplifies the *living qur'an* within Indonesia's maritime culture. The recitation of Surah al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlāṣ prior to boatmaking symbolizes devotion, protection, and gratitude, while the annual restriction to five boats reflects the

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition in Cikawung-Ading represents a living expression of Qur'anic values that sustain spiritual, social, and ecological balance in the face of modernization. Grounded in the principles of *mīzān* (balance) and *wasaṭiyah* (moderation), the ritual reinforces communal identity, social solidarity, and equitable access to sustenance among fishermen, while integrating faith, culture, and ecology within an Islamic framework. In contrast to dominant Living Religion studies that largely examine Western or non-Islamic contexts (Ammerman, 2016; Bender, 2016; Katajala-Peltomaa & Toivo, 2020), this study extends the discourse by demonstrating how Qur'anic teachings are embodied in Indonesian coastal traditions.

Accordingly, *Nurunkeun Jampanan* illustrates the *living qur'an* as a dynamic constellation of collective symbols that interweaves spirituality, environmental awareness, and communal harmony.

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition reflects a theological synthesis of Qur'anic principles, particularly *tauḥīd*, *mīzān* (cosmic balance), and human ecological responsibility as *khalīfah* on earth. The recitation of Surah al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlas during the Tasela boat-making ritual affirms divine presence and seeks protection, while the annual limitation to five boats embodies Qur'anic ideals of moderation and balance between God, humans, and nature, as emphasized in Surah al-Rahmān [55]:7–9. As an expression of Islamic ecotheology, the ritual counters *fasād* (environmental destruction) and *isrāf* (excess) (Muhammad, Yaqin, Mahfud, & Alahmadi, 2024; Nur, Husin, & Yasir, 2025), framing maritime ecosystems as divine signs requiring ethical stewardship. Socio-culturally, these values are transmitted through collective recitations, symbolic offerings, and communal cooperation, fostering spiritual solidarity, gratitude, and intergenerational balance. In line with Safitri (2020) and Chaplin (2025), *Nurunkeun Jampanan* thus operates as a form of living religious education and an expression of *Islam Nusantara*, embodying localized, inclusive, and humanistic Qur'anic ethics within maritime culture.

The *Nurunkeun Jampanan* tradition encapsulates intertwined social, religious, and ecological dimensions that reinforce Islamic identity and communal solidarity within the coastal community of Cikawung-Ading. Consistent with Shukri Nordin et al. (2025) and Santalia et al. (2024), the integration of Islamic norms with local customs produces an adaptive religious identity that harmonizes faith and maritime culture in Tasikmalaya. Through collective rituals, such as Qur'anic recitation, symbolic offerings, and communal prayer, participants strengthen both their relationship with God and social cohesion, reflecting patterns also observed in Lombok's plural society (Jayadi, 2025). At the same time, the ritual articulates an Islamic ecological ethic rooted in *mīzān* (balance) and *khilāfah* (stewardship), in line with Mangunjaya (2023) and Nur et al. (Nur et al., 2025). Nevertheless, certain symbolic practices, including sea offerings and ancestral reverence, generate theological contestation, as reformist movements often frame local religiosity as *bid'ah* or superstition (Hardiyanto, Adela, & Hutasuhut, 2025; Pribadi, 2018). In contrast, the discourse of Islam Nusantara emphasizes cultural refinement rather than negation, positioning *Nurunkeun Jampanan* as a living form of Qur'anic inculcation that sustains both spiritual purification and cultural continuity in Indonesia's coastal Islam (Muhtador,



Figure 5.
The Jampanan ceremony with a buffalo head and several prepared offerings (Source: Researcher, 2023).

2024; Ubaidillah & Faiz, 2025).

Beyond its spiritual and ecological dimensions, the *Nurunkeun Jampanan* ritual fulfills an important social function by strengthening communal solidarity and shared identity. Through collective participation in Qur'anic recitations, offerings, and ritual prayers, community members are bound together by spiritual devotion and practical cooperation. These practices foster mutual support among fishermen while safeguarding ancestral traditions and cultural continuity amid modernization. As Putnam notes, shared rituals and collective activities enhance social capital by reinforcing trust, social networks, and cooperative behavior within communities (Putnam, 2000).

The research findings suggest several strategic directions to strengthen the preservation of maritime religious traditions, such as in Cikawung-Ading Village. Academically, interdisciplinary studies linking Qur'anic scholarship, cultural anthropology, and Islamic ecology are essential to deepen understanding of how divine values are embodied in coastal social practices. At the policy level, the Tasikmalaya local government could propose as an intangible cultural heritage with religious-ecological significance, aligned with the spiritual values of the Nusantara. Qur'anic principles such as *mīzān* (balance), *khilāfah* (ecological stewardship), and *syukr* (gratitude) should be integrated into community-based maritime education to nurture ecological spirituality. Moreover, local scholars and fishermen's cooperatives play vital roles in sustaining the ritual's relevance through reinterpretation, collective management, and tradition-based economic empowerment, making a model of harmony between religion, culture, and ecology.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the tradition in Cikawung-Ading Village, Tasikmalaya, represents a tangible manifestation of the *living qur'an* within Indonesia's maritime culture. Through the recitation of Surah al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlāṣ, the symbolic use of the number five in boatmaking, and ritual offerings as expressions of gratitude, the coastal community embodies Qur'anic values in concrete socio-cultural practices. This tradition demonstrates that the sacred text transcends mere verbal expression, becoming a living practice that reinforces *tauhīd*, maintains cosmic balance (*mīzān*), and strengthens communal solidarity. Academically, the research broadens the scope of *living qur'an* studies into maritime contexts through an interdisciplinary synthesis of Qur'anic studies, cultural anthropology, and Islamic ecology. The findings enrich the framework of Islam Nusantara by illustrating the creative dialogue between monotheistic principles and local wisdom grounded in Qur'anic ethics and ecological responsibility. Despite its limited field scope, future comparative studies across coastal regions are recommended to explore similar maritime *living qur'an* practices through broader hermeneutical analysis. Such efforts will strengthen *living qur'an* as both a cultural and spiritual foundation for a sustainable Islamic civilization in the Indonesian Nusantara.

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