



The Tradition of Reading Fragments of QS. Al-Baqarah/2:127 in the Breakthrough Procession: Living Qur'an Study in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency

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Abstract

The Qur'an is not only understood as a text that is read and studied, but is also present in various socio-religious practices of the Muslim community. One form of reception is the tradition of reading QS quotes. al-Baqarah/2:127 at the *groundbreaking procession* in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency. This study aims to describe the implementation of the tradition of reading the verse and analyze the meaning and response of the community to the practice that develops in the midst of their socio-religious life. This research uses a qualitative approach within the framework of the study of Living Qur'an. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques. The results of the study show that the tradition of reading QS. al-Baqarah/2:127 was held as part of a *series of groundbreaking processions* that began with an explanation of the history of the activity, followed by the recitation of verses related to the construction of the Kaaba by Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail, and ended with a joint prayer. For the community, the reading of the verse not only functions as a religious legitimacy for development activities, but is also interpreted as a form of self-approach to Allah, an expression of gratitude, a symbol of hope for blessings, and a medium for strengthening spiritual and collective values in society. These findings show that the Qur'an functions dynamically in the social life of the community through the ongoing process of reception and actualization of meaning.

INTRODUCTION

The Koran is a holy book that receives great attention from Muslims. As the word of Allah, the Qur'an has an internal power that is trusted and cannot be imitated or matched. Because of this, the Al-Qur'an became the greatest miracle of the Prophet Muhammad, as Munzir (2012: 32) said in his book *Introduction to Al-Qur'an Study Theory and Approaches*. As time goes by, the study of the Al-Qur'an has experienced the development of areas of study, from text studies to socio-cultural studies, which are then often referred to as the living Qur'an. Living Qur'an begins with the phenomenon of the Qur'an in people's everyday lives, in other words the Qur'an in everyday life, namely the real meaning and function of the Qur'an that is understood and experienced by Muslim communities. The phenomenon of society's connection with the Qur'an, for example, includes social phenomena related to reading the Qur'an, the writing down of certain sections of the Qur'an, the fragmentation of Qur'anic verses, which are then used by the community for wirid, healing, prayers, and so on. This phenomenon occurs in certain Muslim communities but not in others. (Mansur, 2007: 6-7) The phenomenon of the living Qur'an is a form of social response of a particular community or society in accepting the presence of the Qur'an (Azizah, thesis, 2016: 2). In this regard, an example of a form of community interaction with the Qur'an is Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 at the groundbreaking ceremony or the laying of the first stone in a construction project practiced by KH. Dimyati Rais in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency.

This tradition is often carried out every time KH. Dimyati Rais attends the opening of a construction project, whether it is a religious study group, a school, an Islamic boarding school, or a resident's house. During the procession, an excerpt from Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 was read, which was the prayer of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail when building the Kaaba (Mahmudah, 2020: 149-150). The reading of verses was carried out in congregation 41 times along with the groundbreaking procession led directly by KH. Dimyati Rais. According to KH. Dimyati Rais, the use of this verse is a form of tafa'ul or following in the footsteps of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail when building the Kaaba. Through the wasilah verse, it is hoped that the buildings erected will provide benefits, be visited by many people and also be useful for the life of the community, nation and state. Before the verse is read, the tawasul is first recited which is given to teachers and predecessors as a form of respect and a request for blessings.

Throughout the author's research, several studies have been found examining the phenomenon of the living Quran in various religious practices in society. Ridhoul Wahidi discusses the forms of the living Quran and living hadith in the Indragiri Hilir community of Riau (Wahidi, 2013). Muhammad Ali

examines the concepts of manuscript study, living Quran, and living hadith as approaches to the study of the Quran and Hadith (Ali, 2015). A study by Heddy Shri-Ahimsa Putra explains the living Quran as a socio-cultural phenomenon explained through an anthropological perspective (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012). Meanwhile, several other studies have focused more on the practice of reciting specific verses or surahs within religious traditions, such as Rochmah Nur Azizah's research on the tradition of reciting surahs Al-Fatihah and Al-Baqarah at the 'Aisyiah Ponorogo Islamic Boarding School (PPTQ) (Azizah, 2016), Ahmad Zainal Musthofa's research on the tradition of reciting selected surahs at the Manba'ul Hikam Islamic Boarding School in Sidoarjo (Musthofa, 2015), and Eva Handayani's research on the mujahadah tradition of reciting Qur'anic verses at the Subuussalam Islamic Boarding School in Demak (Handayani, 2019).

These various studies demonstrate that numerous studies of the living Qur'an have focused on the practice of Qur'anic recitation, its meaning, function, and public reception of the verses. However, none of the aforementioned studies have addressed the tradition of reciting verse 127 of Surah Al-Baqarah, which was performed during the groundbreaking ceremony. Furthermore, no research has been found that specifically examines the practice of implementing this tradition and the public's response to it. The existence of the tradition of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 at the groundbreaking procession demonstrates how the Quran lives and functions in society through inherited and preserved religious practices. The tradition of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 at the groundbreaking procession is one form of public reception of the Quran that is interesting to examine from a Living Qur'an perspective. This study focuses on answering two questions: (1) how is the practice of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 at the groundbreaking procession in Kaliwungu District, Kendal, and (2) how does the public respond to the tradition of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 at the groundbreaking procession? Based on this background, this study aims to describe the practice of the tradition of reciting excerpts from the Qur'an verse 127 at the groundbreaking procession in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency.

METHOD

This research is a field study using a qualitative approach and descriptive-analytical methods (Herdiansyah, 2019: 9). The research was conducted to understand the practice of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 of the Quran during the groundbreaking ceremony in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, and the community's response to this tradition from a living Quran perspective. The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through interviews with the pioneers and successors of the tradition, namely Agus Alamudin DR, KH. Ali Nuruddin, Ustadz Shodiqun and Sholahudin,

as well as several community members involved in the tradition. Secondary data were obtained from activity documentation, photographs of the groundbreaking ceremony, and various specific sources related to the research object.

Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation (Nazir, 1999: 211). Data observation was conducted by directly observing the practice of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 during the groundbreaking ceremony. Interviews were used to obtain information regarding the background, implementation, and enforcement of traditions. Documentation served as supporting data to strengthen the results of observations and interviews. The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive-explanatory analysis, describing the traditional practices studied and explaining the factors underlying their implementation and the goals pursued by the practitioners. (Anggato and Stiawan, 2018:110)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Indicators of Spiritual Death

The tradition of reciting verse 127 of Surah Al-Baqarah during the groundbreaking ceremony in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, was pioneered by KH. Dimiyati Rois, the caretaker of the Al-Fadlu wal Fadhilah Islamic Boarding School and an influential religious figure in the region. According to interviews with several informants, such as KH. Ali Nuruddin and Sholahudin, this tradition has long been practiced at various foundation stone-laying ceremonies for various buildings, including Islamic boarding schools, religious study groups, educational institutions, and other social buildings. (Interview, June 12, 2023). Over time, the tradition has evolved and become a widely recognized custom among the Kaliwungu community.

According to KH. Dimiyati Rois, the use of verse 127 of Surah Al-Baqarah is based on the story of the Prophet Ibrahim and his son Ismail during the construction of the Kaaba. The recitation of this verse is understood as a form of tafa'ul and taburuk (reflection) in response to the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim, who asked for the acceptance of the ongoing construction project. Therefore, the community believes that reciting this verse can be a means of obtaining blessings, facilitating construction, and bringing widespread benefits to the community. After the death of KH. Dimiyati Rois, this tradition was preserved by the family, students, and community of Kaliwungu, and continues to be part of the religious practice accompanying the groundbreaking ceremony. Ali Nurudin (Interview, June 12, 2023)

The Tradition of Reciting an Excerpt from Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 127, of the Quran at Groundbreaking Ceremonies for Construction

The tradition of reciting an excerpt from Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 127, at groundbreaking ceremonies is a religious tradition that developed in Kaliwungu

District, Kendal Regency, pioneered by KH. Dimyati Rois. This tradition is carried out during the laying of the first stone for various construction projects. According to several informants, the tradition began when KH. Dimyati Rois built the Al-Fadlu wal Fadhilah Islamic Boarding School and recited the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim contained in Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 127. Since then, the recitation of this verse has continued and been passed down to students and the community, becoming a widely known tradition in Kaliwungu. Ali Nurudin (Interview, June 12, 2023).

The excerpt from Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 127, recited in this tradition is

...رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Our Lord, accept our good deeds. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

According to KH. Dimyati Rois, this verse is a prayer recited by the Prophets Abraham and Ismail when building the Kaaba. Therefore, its recitation is intended as a form of tafa'ul and tabarruk, namely, learning lessons and seeking blessings from the Kaaba's construction. The community believes that by reciting this prayer, the construction will be blessed, facilitated, and beneficial for the community. Ali Nurudin (Interview, June 12, 2023)

The tradition begins with the istighosah mussabiat (religious prayer) followed by residents and the community in attendance. After the istighosah is completed, a greeting and welcome are given, explaining the history and meaning of the recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127. This is followed by a tawasul (religious prayer) to teachers and predecessors, followed by a collective recitation of the verse 41 times. The recitation of verses coincides with the laying of the first stone, usually led by several pre-appointed community leaders. The ceremony then concludes with a prayer and closing greetings. This tradition continues to be practiced, not only in Kaliwungu but also throughout the region, through the students and disciples of KH. Dimyati Rois Sholihun (Interview, July 17, 2023).

From a living Quran perspective, this tradition demonstrates a functional reception of Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 127, which is not only understood as a text to be read to gain rewards, but also presented in social practice as a medium for prayer, hope, and requests for blessings in development. Thus, the Quran not only functions as a religious text but also lives and plays a role in shaping the religious cultural practices of society. The research results indicate that the tradition of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 127, during the groundbreaking ceremony is not based on any specific evidence that mandates the recitation of this verse during the laying of the first stone for a building. KH. Ali Nuruddin,

an informant and the caretaker of the Jabal Nur Islamic Boarding School, added that one of the foundations is the Prophet's hadith, which means "the primary prayers are those taken from the Quran."

Community Response to the Tradition of Reciting Verses from the Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah 127, at the Groundbreaking Ceremony

In general, the tradition of reciting Surah Al-Baqarah 127 from the Quran during the groundbreaking ceremony by residents of Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, is a good deed that will be rewarded. Based on the researcher's observations, there are several meanings in the community's response to the tradition of reciting verses from the Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah 127, at the groundbreaking ceremony held by residents of Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency. This is consistent with the data presented by the researcher with several sources, including KH. Ali Nuridin, the caretaker of the Jabal Nur Islamic Boarding School in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, as the first source; Ustadz Shodiqun, a senior alumnus of KH. Dimyati Rois, as the second source; and Solahudin, a student of KH. Dimyati Rois, as the third source.

Some of the community's responses to the tradition of reciting verses from Surah Al-Baqarah 127 of the Quran during the groundbreaking ceremony include a way of approaching God, a form of gratitude, a symbol of the Quran, and a hope for blessings from Allah SWT. Based on interviews with informants, the Kaliwungu community interprets this tradition as a way of approaching God Almighty. This tradition was pioneered by KH. Dimyati Rois, who made it a habit to recite the verse 41 times during the groundbreaking ceremony. The verse recited is a prayer by Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail when building the Kaaba. According to KH. Ali Nuruddin, the use of this verse has made this tradition develop as a symbol of the Quran that has become a culture within the community. The recitation of Prophet Ibrahim's prayer is believed to carry strong spiritual value because it is related to the construction of the Kaaba as a symbol of the center of Islamic worship (Ali Nuruddin, Interview, June 12, 2022). Thus, the community views reciting this prayer when starting construction as a form of emulating the Prophet Abraham and as a manifestation of devotion to Allah SWT.

A similar view was expressed by Solahudin, who explained that this tradition is based on the concept of tafa'ul, which means following in the footsteps of Prophet Abraham in activities that share a similar context, namely building a building. By emulating the actions of the prophets, the community believes they are carrying out acts of worship and drawing closer to Allah SWT (Solahudin, Interview, July 17, 2022). This finding aligns with Muhammad Yusuf's theory of the Living Qur'an, which states that one form of Muslim reception of the Qur'an is to use certain verses as wirid (recitation) to be recited

a specific number of times to attain good fortune and glory. The recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 41 times in this tradition is a concrete example of this reception (Yusuf Muhammad, 2007). The social conditions of Kaliwungu District as a "city of Islamic students" also influence the continuation of this tradition. The numerous Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and strong religious culture foster a close relationship with Islamic values. This religious social environment also supports the community's acceptance of the tradition of reciting Quranic verses as part of daily life. Therefore, the community views this tradition as a means of drawing closer to God, expressing gratitude, and strengthening the message of the Quran in social life.

Furthermore, the recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 127 is also interpreted as a means to obtain blessings. Solahudin explained that the purpose of reciting this verse is to seek blessings through the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim when building the Kaaba. This belief stems from the belief that prayers offered by a prophet have virtue and can be a means of asking for goodness from Allah SWT. (Solahudin, Interview, July 17, 2022). KH. Ali Nuruddin emphasized that this verse is believed to possess great blessings. One form of blessing often experienced by the community is the ease and smoothness of the construction process. According to them, buildings that begin with the recitation of this verse tend to be completed more quickly and provide significant benefits to the community after they are used. (Ali Nuruddin, Interview, June 12, 2022).

The meaning of this blessing is inseparable from the community's understanding of the concept of barakah. In general, barakah is understood as the increase in goodness and benefits bestowed by Allah SWT on humanity. From a Qur'anic perspective, blessings are associated with the presence of goodness, tranquility, security, and usefulness originating from God (Atiq bin Ghoits, 1993:69). Therefore, people not only hope that buildings will stand well but also hope that they will bring lasting benefits to the social and religious life of the community. The interpretation of blessings is the most dominant response in this tradition. People believe that the recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 127, is not merely ceremonial, but also contains a spiritual endeavor to bring God's help and blessings to every construction process.

The tradition of reciting verses from Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 127, at the groundbreaking ceremony for a construction project in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, also aligns with the division of the living Quran according to the book by Prof. Abdul Muttaqim (2015: 42-43) *Revisiting the Study of the Qur'an: Ideas, Issues and Current Trends*, he divides the study of the reception of the Qur'an into three types, namely exegetical reception, aesthetic reception, and functional reception. In this case, the tradition of reciting excerpts from the

Qur'anic verse of Surah Al-Baqarah 127 at the groundbreaking procession of development in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency is part of the study of the living Qur'an, namely functional reception, where the Qur'an as a book is appointed to humans to be used for certain purposes.

Furthermore, the tradition of reciting excerpts of the Qur'anic verses of Surah Al-Baqarah 127 at the groundbreaking procession of development in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency is also in accordance with the opinion of Muhammad Yusuf (2007: 5-7), he emphasized that the response of Muslims is very large towards the Qur'an from generation to generation and various religious groups at all ages and ethnic levels. One of the clearly visible phenomena is that certain verses are used as *wirid* in certain numbers to obtain glory or luck by performing *riyadhoh*. Meanwhile, the review of the research object that the researcher obtained, in addition to the Kaliwungu District area is a city of *santri* which contains dozens of Islamic boarding schools. The tradition of reciting excerpts of the Qur'anic verses of Surah Al-Baqarah 127 at the groundbreaking procession, this tradition was pioneered by KH. Dimyati Rois who is the founder of Islamic boarding schools, charismatic clerics and *mustasyar* PBNU. Where the stability in religious knowledge is not doubted by the Kaliwungu community in particular, then driven sociologically the majority of the Kaliwungu sub-district community are Islamic boarding school students so that the community's response to this tradition is nothing other than a form of hope for blessings from Allah SWT, even the ordinary people of the Kaliwungu sub-district area also just join in with the hope for blessings from Allah SWT.

CONCLUSIONS

This research shows that the tradition of reciting verse 127 of Surah Al-Baqarah during the groundbreaking ceremony in Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, is a form of Living Quran practice that is alive and well in the community. This tradition was pioneered by KH. Dimyati Rois during the construction of the Al-Fadhlu wal Fadhilah Islamic Boarding School and has since been consistently practiced by the community and his students in various regions. The ceremony, which begins with the laying of the first stone, involves reciting an excerpt from the prayer of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail in verse 127 of Surah Al-Baqarah, as a form of tafa'ul (reflection), or imitation of Prophet Ibrahim when building the Kaaba. Through the recitation of this verse, the community hopes that the construction will be easy, successful, and blessed by Allah SWT.

The community's response to this tradition has tended to be positive, demonstrating the strong connection between the Quran and the socio-religious life of the Kaliwungu community. The community interprets this tradition in two main aspects. First, as a form of self-approach to Allah SWT, an expression of gratitude as well as a symbol of the Qur'an that continues to be preserved in community life. Second, as a means of obtaining blessings (barakah) from Allah SWT through the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim which is believed to have spiritual value and blessings for the development carried out. This finding shows that QS. Al-Baqarah verse 127 is not only understood textually, but also functions in social practice as a medium for prayer, hope and the search for blessings, thus reflecting the form of functional reception of the Qur'an in the Living Qur'an study.

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