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Pulut Kuning as Qur'anic Reception in the Khataman Tradition of Padang Mahondang

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ABSTRACT

The tradition of Qur'anic khataman in Muslim communities represents not only a practice of completing Qur'anic recitation but also a cultural expression through which religious values are interpreted, maintained, and transmitted. In the perspective of the Living Qur'an, the presence of the Qur'an in society can be observed through various forms of reception, including rituals, social practices, and material expressions. This study aims to analyze the tradition of yellow glutinous rice (pulut kuning) as a form of material reception of the Qur'an within the khataman tradition at Tahfidz Syahbaina House, Padang Mahondang.This research employs a qualitative approach using the Living Qur'an perspective combined with a religious materiality approach. Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving nine informants selected through purposive sampling, including tahfidz caregivers, teachers, students, parents, religious leaders, cultural figures, and community members. Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis involving transcription, coding, categorization, interpretation, and theoretical analysis.The findings reveal that pulut kuning functions not merely as a ceremonial food but as a material medium that represents respect for the Qur'an, strengthens the memory of Qur'anic memorization, and transmits religious values within the community. The texture, color, and arrangement of material elements construct symbolic meanings related to perseverance, blessing, purity, and collective responsibility in preserving Qur'anic knowledge. This study introduces the concept of material-mnemonic reception to explain how cultural objects participate in maintaining Qur'anic memory and sustaining religious values through everyday social practices. The research contributes to the expansion of Living Qur'an studies by demonstrating the role of food and material culture as important dimensions of Qur'anic reception.

INTRODUCTION

The study of the Living Qur'an explores the dynamic relationship between the Qur'an and Muslim communities through processes of reception, interpretation, and transformation into everyday practices. In this perspective, the Qur'an is not only understood as a sacred text that provides religious guidance but also as a living source of meaning that is manifested through rituals, traditions, material objects, and social actions. Therefore, Living Qur'an studies examine how Qur'anic values are received, negotiated, and embodied within specific cultural contexts rather than focusing solely on textual interpretation (Rafiq, 2021).

Recent studies on Qur'anic khataman traditions demonstrate that Qur'anic reception develops through various forms of communal religious practices. Khataman al-Qur'an is not merely a ritual of completing Qur'anic recitation but also functions as a medium for strengthening religious identity, social solidarity, and cultural continuity. Ulfah and Farid (2023) show that khataman traditions within pesantren environments involve processes of transmission and preservation of Qur'anic values through collective religious activities. Similarly, Akbar and Albustomi (2025) explain that Indonesian khataman traditions represent diverse forms of religious expression shaped by local cultural contexts. Other studies indicate that khataman practices are closely associated with social cohesion and communal gratitude, particularly through collective activities conducted after Qur'anic recitation (Manaf, 2025; Ulhaq, 2023).

However, existing studies on Qur'anic khataman have predominantly focused on ritual processes, theological meanings, educational functions, and social relationships. Food elements appearing in these traditions are generally discussed as expressions of gratitude, hospitality, or social solidarity. Although these studies acknowledge the importance of communal meals, limited attention has been given to food as a material medium that participates in producing Qur'anic meanings through sensory experiences, symbolic interpretation, and collective memory. This limitation indicates the need to examine how material forms accompanying Qur'anic traditions contribute to the construction of religious experience.

The concept of religious materiality provides an important framework for understanding the relationship between objects, sensory experiences, and religious practices. Material objects are not merely passive symbols representing

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religious ideas but can actively mediate the relationship between humans and sacred values. Recent studies on Qur'anic materiality in Indonesia demonstrate that interactions with Qur'anic objects, whether printed or digital, involve processes of meaning-making, ethical engagement, and religious experience (Supriyanto, 2024). From this perspective, material forms within Islamic traditions can be analyzed through their physical characteristics, social usage, and symbolic associations.

This perspective can also be applied to food practices within religious traditions. Food is not only consumed as a biological necessity but also functions as a cultural medium through which communities express identity, memory, gratitude, and social relationships. In several Indonesian Muslim traditions, communal food sharing after Qur'anic activities represents a form of social bonding and religious expression (Manaf, 2025; Qaf, 2023). Therefore, examining food within Living Qur'an studies allows researchers to explore how material culture becomes connected with religious meanings.

This phenomenon can be observed in the tradition of yellow glutinous rice (pulut kuning) accompanying the Qur'anic khataman ceremony at Tahfidz Syahbaya House, Padang Mahondang. In this tradition, pulut kuning is presented together with eggs, chicken, white flags, and communal arrangements after students complete Qur'anic memorization and khataman prayers. The community does not consider pulut kuning as a compulsory element of worship but rather as a cultural expression of gratitude, appreciation toward Qur'an memorizers, and a means of strengthening social relationships. Its placement after the main religious procession demonstrates the distinction between religious obligations and cultural expressions accompanying Islamic practices.

The uniqueness of this tradition lies in the relationship between the material characteristics of pulut kuning and the community's experience of Qur'anic memorization. The sticky texture of glutinous rice is interpreted as a representation of the hope that Qur'anic memorization remains firmly attached to the hearts and memories of students. The yellow color represents honor, blessing, and prosperity, while eggs and chicken symbolize continuity of life and future hopes. The white flag signifies purity and sincerity, whereas the communal arrangement reflects respect and togetherness. These elements form a symbolic system connecting material culture, tahfidz education, and collective expectations toward Qur'anic learning.

Based on the existing literature, this study identifies a research gap concerning the role of food as a material form of Qur'anic reception. Previous research has explored Qur'anic reception through textual interpretation, ritual practices, social functions, and religious traditions; however, limited studies have examined how culinary materials participate in maintaining Qur'anic memory through sensory and symbolic experiences. This article introduces the concept of material-mnemonic reception, referring to the process through which material characteristics of cultural objects—such as texture, color, form, and arrangement—function as carriers and reminders of Qur'anic values.

This article aims to analyze three aspects: (1) the position of pulut kuning within the Qur'anic khataman procession, (2) the construction of meaning surrounding its material elements, and (3) its role in negotiating the relationship between Qur'anic education, local tradition, and Malay cultural identity in Padang Mahondang. Theoretically, this study contributes to Living Qur'an scholarship by expanding the discussion from textual and ritual reception toward material and sensory reception. Empirically, this research demonstrates how Malay Muslim communities integrate Qur'anic learning, cultural heritage, and social solidarity while maintaining the distinction between religious obligations and cultural practices.

METHODS

Design and Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative method with the Living Qur'an approach to understand how the community receives, interprets, and lives the values of the Qur'an through the tradition of yellow glutinous rice in the khataman procession. This approach was chosen because the research does not focus on the normative study of the text of the Qur'an, but on how the Qur'an is present in the social and cultural practices of society.

In addition, the research uses a cultural phenomenological perspective to explore the subjective experience of the community in giving meaning to traditional material elements, such as yellow glutinous rice, eggs, chickens, halls, and white flags. Through this approach, the research seeks to understand the meanings constructed by traditional actors based on their experiences, beliefs, and social practices.

Research Locations and Informants

The research was carried out at the Tahfidz Syahbaina House, Padang Mahondang, in February 2026. The location of the research was chosen purposively because the institution still maintains the tradition of serving yellow glutinous rice in a series of Qur'anic khataman and involves elements of family, teachers, and the surrounding community.

The research informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique, which is based on their direct involvement and knowledge of the yellow glutinous rice tradition. The informants amounted to nine people consisting of tahfidz house caregivers, tahfidz teachers, students, guardians of students, religious leaders, traditional leaders, yellow glutinous rice makers, activity committees, and the surrounding community.

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The criteria for informants include: (1) having been directly involved in the implementation of the yellow glutinous rice tradition; (2) understand the process of implementing khataman; (3) knowing the symbolic meaning of traditional elements; (4) willing to provide information openly.

Data Collection Techniques

The research data was collected through three techniques, namely:

Participatory observation

Observation was carried out by participating in a series of activities of the Qur'anic khataman activities, starting from the preparation of foodstuffs, the process of making yellow glutinous rice, the preparation of traditional equipment, the implementation of khataman, to presentation to the community.

Observation aims to identify the relationship between material objects, ritual activities, and social interactions that occur during traditions.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviews were conducted with nine informants using a guideline of questions that included:

- the history of the yellow glutinous rice tradition;
- the position of yellow glutinous rice in the Khattaman procession;
- the meaning of texture, color, and supporting elements;
- the relationship between tradition and tahfidz education;
- people's views on the relationship between customs and worship.

Each interview lasts about 30–60 minutes and is conducted after obtaining the consent of the informant**.**

Research Procedure

The research procedure was conducted through several stages, starting from research preparation, determination of research location and informants, data collection, data processing, thematic analysis, theoretical interpretation, data validation, and the formulation of research findings (Figure 1).

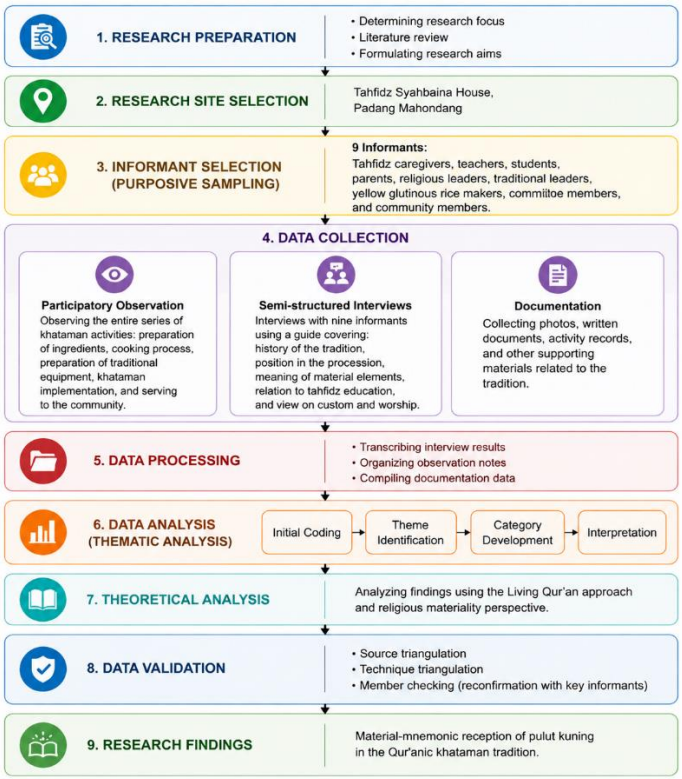


Figure 1. Research Procedure Flowchart

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out using thematic analysis through several stages. First, all interview results were transcribed and combined with observation notes. Second, the data is coded based on the themes that appear, such as:

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- rituals and reverence for the Qur'an;
- the symbol of yellow glutinous rice;
- memory and memorization maintenance;
- transmission of Qur'anic values;
- Customary and worship relations.

Third, codes that have similar meanings are grouped into analytical categories. Fourth, the category is interpreted using the perspective of Living Qur'an and material religion to explain how the tradition of yellow glutinous rice is a medium of public reception of the Qur'an.

Data Validity

The validity of the data is carried out through triangulation of sources and techniques.

Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from tahfidz house caregivers, teachers, students, families, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and the community.

The triangulation technique was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation.

In addition, the researcher reconfirmed to the main informant (member checking) to ensure that the interpretation of the research was in accordance with the community's experience.

Research Ethics

The research was carried out by paying attention to the ethical principles of social research. Before the interview process, informants are given an explanation of the purpose of the research, the use of data, and their right to grant or terminate participation.

The use of the informant's name is carried out based on consent, while personal information that is not related to the research is kept confidential.

RESULTS

Research on the tradition of yellow glutinous rice as a material reception of the Qur'an in the khataman tradition at the Tahfidz Syahbaina House, Padang Mahondang, was conducted through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and field documentation. The research data was obtained from nine informants consisting of tahfidz house caregivers, tahfidz teachers, students, religious leaders, traditional leaders, guardians of students, yellow glutinous rice makers, activity committees, and the surrounding community.

Data analysis is carried out through the process of data reduction, coding, categorization, and theme preparation. Based on the results of the analysis, three main themes were found that describe the position of yellow glutinous rice in the tradition of khataman of the Qur'an, namely:

1. Yellow glutinous rice as an expression of gratitude and respect for the Qur'an;
2. The materiality of yellow glutinous rice as a medium for remembering and maintaining the memorization of the Qur'an;
3. The tradition of yellow glutinous rice as a space for the transmission of Qur'anic values in people's lives.

The findings show that yellow glutinous rice is not positioned as part of the ritual obligation of khataman, but rather as a cultural practice that presents the values of the Qur'an through the social experience of the community.

Characteristics of Research Informants

The research informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement and knowledge of the tradition of yellow glutinous rice in the procession of the Qur'anic khataman

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

Code	Category Information	Role in Research	Information Focus
I-1	Tahfidz Syahbaina Housekeeper	Key informants	History of tradition, khataman process, position of yellow glutinous rice
I-2	Tahfidz Teacher	Key informants	The educational meaning of the Qur'an and the symbol of tradition
I-3	A Student of the Khiladi Sect	Key informants	Experience of participating in the khataman procession
I-4	Religious Figures	Key informants	The relationship between tradition and Islamic values
I-5	Malay Traditional Figures	Key informants	Meaning of Malay cultural symbols
I-6	Guardian of the Universe	Supporting informants	The meaning of tradition for the family
I-7	Yellow Glutinous Rice	Supporting	The process of making and interpreting material

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	Maker	informants	elements
I-8	Activity Committee	Supporting informants	Stages of tradition implementation
I-9	Surrounding community	Supporting informants	Social function and sustainability of tradition

Source: Research primary data (2026)

The Process of Data Reduction Towards Research Findings

The results of interviews and observations were then categorized based on themes related to the position of yellow glutinous rice in the tradition of khataman Al-Qur'an.

Table 2. Data Reduction and Theme Formation

Field Data	Initial Code	Category	Theme
Yellow glutinous rice does not determine the validity or not of khataman, but is a sign of gratitude and respect	Gratitude, respect, not obligatory worship	Relationship between customs and religion	Expressions of respect for the Qur'an
The sticky texture of glutinous rice is interpreted as a hope that memorization will remain attached	Glutinous materials, memory memorization	Symbols of religious material	Media for memorizing the Qur'an
Yellow colors, eggs, chickens, and other utensils have the meaning of prayer and hope	Cultural symbols, hopes, blessings	The Meaning of Cultural Objects	Material reception of the Qur'an
Families, teachers, community leaders, and residents helped implement the tradition	Mutual Cooperation, Social Participation	Community involvement	Transmission of Qur'ani values

Source: Results of interview analysis and research observations (2026)

Glutinous Rice as an Expression of Gratitude and Respect for the Qur'an

The results of the study show that the people of Padang Mahondang understand yellow glutinous rice as part of the cultural expression that accompanies the procession of the Qur'anic khataman This tradition is not considered as a mandatory element in the implementation of khataman, but as a form of appreciation for students who have completed the process of learning the Qur'an.

Based on an interview with the caretaker of Rumah Tahfidz Syahbaina, the existence of yellow glutinous rice does not determine the sustainability of khataman. However, this tradition is still maintained because it has the value of respect and gratitude that has been inherited in the community.

"Yellow glutinous rice is not a requirement for khataman. If there is no glutinous rice, the khataman is still finished. This tradition is a sign of gratitude to Allah and respect for the children who have learned the Qur'an."

This statement shows that the community has an understanding of the boundaries between worship practices and cultural practices. Khataman Al-Qur'an is seen as a religious activity, while yellow glutinous rice is a social symbol that rewards the achievements of students.

This view is also strengthened by the guardians of the students who see the existence of yellow glutinous rice as a form of family and community support for Qur'anic education. The presence of the community in khataman activities shows that the success of students is not only considered as a personal achievement, but also as a shared pride.

Thus, the first findings show that yellow glutinous rice serves as a medium of expression of gratitude, respect for the knowledge of the Qur'an, and social appreciation for the tahfidz education process.

The Materiality of Yellow Glutinous Rice as a Medium for Remembering and Maintaining the Memorization of the Qur'an

The findings of subsequent research show that the meaning of yellow glutinous rice does not only lie in its existence as a food in the khataman tradition, but also in the material character interpreted by the community.

One of the elements that most often appears in interviews is the sticky texture of glutinous glutinous rice. These characteristics are understood as a symbol of hope so that the memorization of the Qur'an that has been learned by students remains attached and not easily lost.

The tahfidz teacher explained:

"Glutinous rice is sticky. Hopefully, children's memorization will also remain attached and not easily lost."

The statement shows that people associate the physical experience of food with the educational value of the Qur'an. The texture of glutinous rice is a reminder medium that helps convey a moral message about the obligation to maintain memorization after the khataman process is completed.

In addition to the texture of glutinous rice, some supporting elements in the presentation of tradition also have a certain meaning based on people's experiences.

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Table 3. The Meaning of Material Elements in the Yellow Glutinous Rice Tradition

Unsur Material	Meaning Understood by the Community
Yellow glutinous rice	Hope that memorization will stick
Yellow Color	Glory and blessings
Eggs	Hope and sustainability of life
Chicken	Sustenance and goodness
Booth	Respect and togetherness
White flag	Purity and sincerity

Source: Research interview and observation data (2026)

The results of the study show that people do not view the material element as having a special power in their objects, but rather provide meaning based on social and cultural experiences that develop in the community.

Thus, yellow glutinous rice serves as a cultural reminder medium that connects the experience of learning the Qur'an with the values that want to be maintained after khataman.

The Tradition of Glutinous Rice as a Space for the Transmission of Qur'anic Values in Society

The findings of the study also show that the tradition of glutinous rice is a space for social involvement of various elements of society. The implementation of the tradition does not only involve students and families, but also the caretakers of tahfidz houses, teachers, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and the surrounding community.

Based on the results of observations, community involvement has taken place from the preparation stage to the implementation of the activity. The community helps with the preparation of ingredients, the process of making yellow glutinous rice, the preparation of equipment, and the presentation of food to the participants of the khataman.

One of the guardians explained:

"If there is a khataman, everyone helps. It's become our habit."

The statement shows that the tradition of glutinous rice has become a social practice that strengthens the relationship between the tahfidz house, family, and community.

Table 4. Forms of Social Involvement in the Yellow Glutinous Rice Tradition

Actors	Form of Engagement
Tahfidz House Nanny	Managing the implementation of activities
Tahfidz Teacher	Guiding and accompanying students
Stuttgart	Participating in the khataman procession
Parents	Providing support to students
Religious Figures	Provide religious views
Traditional figures	Maintaining the sustainability of tradition
Society	Assisting with preparation and implementation

Source: Results of observations and research interviews (2026)

The involvement of these various elements shows that Qur'anic education in society does not only take place through a formal learning process, but also through social experiences that are built together.

Thus, the tradition of yellow glutinous rice is a social space that brings together tahfidz education, local culture, and community participation in maintaining the sustainability of Qur'anic values.

Table 5. Synthesis of Key Findings

Findings	Bukti Empiris	Meaning of Findings
Yellow glutinous rice as an expression of respect for the Qur'an	Glutinous rice is not considered mandatory, but a sign of gratitude	The relationship between religion and culture
The materiality of glutinous rice as a reminder of memorization	The texture of glutinous rice is interpreted as an inherent memorization	Cultural objects as a medium of reminder of Qur'anic values
Tradition as a transmission of values	Family and community involvement in activities	Community-based Qur'an education

DISCUSSION

The study of the Living Qur'an in its development has undergone an expansion of perspective from text-focused studies toward examining how the Qur'an is present within the social life of Muslim communities. Early studies of Living Qur'an primarily emphasized reading practices, interpretation, and ritual expressions as forms of Qur'anic reception. However, recent developments demonstrate that the relationship between communities and the Qur'an also occurs through cultural practices, social experiences, embodied actions, and material expressions (Rafiq, 2021; Ahmad, 2023; Baharuddin & Sari, 2024). This indicates that the Qur'an operates not only as a textual source of religious meaning but also as a cultural force that shapes social identities and collective experiences.

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This development reflects a broader shift in understanding Qur'anic existence within society. The Qur'an is not merely approached as a text that is read and interpreted, but as a source of values that undergo processes of transformation, adaptation, and reproduction within everyday life. Previous studies have shown that local traditions, cultural symbols, and communal practices provide important spaces through which religious values are maintained and transmitted across generations (Fauziah & Hasan, 2022; Nata & Rahman, 2023). Therefore, religious traditions should not only be examined from their theological dimensions but also from their social and cultural functions.

However, most Living Qur'an studies still predominantly focus on verbal practices, recitation traditions, and ritual activities, while the role of material objects in constructing relationships between communities and Qur'anic values remains relatively underexplored. Studies of religion and material culture suggest that objects are not merely passive representations of beliefs but can actively participate in shaping religious experiences, memories, and identities (Meyer, 2022; Vásquez, 2023). Through repeated interaction, sensory engagement, and cultural interpretation, material objects become meaningful components of religious life.

In this context, this study introduces the perspective of material-mnemonic reception as an attempt to expand Living Qur'an studies through the lens of cultural materiality. This concept explains that Qur'anic reception does not only occur through textual interpretation but also through relationships between humans, objects, sensory experiences, and collective memories. Similar perspectives in material religion studies emphasize that religious meanings are often produced through interactions between bodies, objects, spaces, and social practices rather than existing only within abstract beliefs (Meyer, 2022; Hidayat, 2024). Therefore, cultural objects may function as mediators that preserve and transmit religious values within communities.

The findings of this study demonstrate that pulut kuning in the Qur'anic khataman tradition does not function merely as a ceremonial food but as a material medium through which Qur'anic values are remembered and communicated. The physical characteristics of pulut kuning, particularly its sticky texture, become connected with the community's understanding of Qur'anic memorization as something that must remain firmly attached to the hearts and lives of students. This finding strengthens previous arguments that food practices in religious contexts contain symbolic meanings related to identity, memory, gratitude, and social relationships (Fauziah & Hasan, 2022; Manaf, 2025).

The role of food as a religious medium also demonstrates that sensory experiences are important in shaping religious memory. Taste, texture, color, and presentation are not merely aesthetic elements but become channels through which communities interpret and preserve cultural meanings. Research on religious materiality emphasizes that sensory experiences allow abstract religious values to become concrete and accessible through everyday encounters with material forms (Meyer, 2022; Vásquez, 2023). In the case of pulut kuning, the material characteristics of food create a connection between Qur'anic education, cultural tradition, and collective memory.

Furthermore, this study shows that material culture contributes to the reproduction of Qur'anic values within community life. The relationship between religious values and cultural objects does not stop at symbolic representation but develops into a mechanism through which memories, hopes, and moral responsibilities are maintained. This finding expands previous Living Qur'an studies by demonstrating that Qur'anic reception may occur through material experiences that accompany religious practices.

Beyond materiality, this study also highlights the importance of local traditions as part of a community-based Qur'anic education ecosystem. Contemporary Islamic education studies emphasize that religious value formation does not only occur through formal educational institutions but also through family, community, and cultural environments where individuals experience and practice religious values collectively (Rahman & Nata, 2023; Nata & Rahman, 2023). Thus, local traditions can become informal pedagogical spaces that support the continuity of Qur'anic learning.

This perspective challenges the assumption that tradition and religious education exist in separate domains. Instead, when cultural practices are connected with Islamic educational objectives, traditions may function as meaningful spaces for strengthening religious identity and social cohesion. Qur'anic education therefore involves not only knowledge transmission but also embodied experiences through which communities collectively understand, practice, and preserve religious values.

Based on the discussion above, this study contributes to three main aspects. First, it expands Living Qur'an studies from text-centered and ritual-centered reception toward cultural material-based reception. Second, it introduces the concept of material-mnemonic reception to explain how cultural objects participate in preserving Qur'anic memory. Third, it demonstrates that local traditions can function as social and educational spaces that support the sustainability of Qur'anic values within communities.

Thus, this study confirms that the existence of the Qur'an in society cannot be understood only through recitation practices or religious rituals but also through material culture that enables Qur'anic values to be continuously produced, remembered, and inherited in everyday social life.

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CONCLUSION

The tradition of yellow glutinous rice in the procession of the Qur'an khataman at the Tahfidz Syahbaina House shows the form of material reception of the Qur'an through the cultural practices of the Malay community. This tradition is not understood as part of the obligation of worship, but as a medium of respect, strengthening of religious memory, and transmission of Qur'anic values in social life.

This study expands the study of the Living Qur'an by showing that people's relationship with the Qur'an does not only take place through texts and rituals, but also through cultural materials that function as a medium of reminder of religious values. The concept of material-mnemonic reception offered in this study suggests that cultural objects can play a role in preserving and passing on the memory of the Qur'an collectively.

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