



Living Qur'an Approach in the Tradition of Zikir Wirdul Lathif in Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang: Dynamics, Meanings, and Receptions in Contemporary Islamic Contexts

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Dates: Received: 12 December 2024, Revised: 21 February 2025, Accepted: 21 March 2025, Published: 27 March 2025

Abstract

This study analyzes the practice of Wirdul Lathif dhikr at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang through the *Living Qur'an* approach developed by Ahmad Rafiq. This approach highlights how the Qur'an is brought to life through social practices, spiritual experiences, and pragmatic functions within Muslim communities. The findings reveal that the reception of the Qur'an in the practice of Wirdul Lathif manifests in three primary forms: exegetical reception, where students interpret specific verses in the context of spiritual protection; aesthetic reception, which emphasizes emotional experiences and discipline through dhikr; and functional reception, where the Qur'an is used as a means to enhance knowledge comprehension and facilitate prayer fulfillment. However, this study also identifies several limitations in the *Living Qur'an* methodology, particularly its lack of exploration of religious authority in shaping the interpretation of the Qur'an and its minimal engagement with the epistemology of classical exegesis. This approach tends to assume that Qur'anic reception in society is always harmonious, without considering individual experiential variations and the complexities of social dynamics. As an improvement, this study recommends integrating a critical perspective on religious authority, along with the application of hermeneutical analysis and classical exegesis, to clarify the epistemological foundation of text reception. Thus, *Living Qur'an* studies can offer a more comprehensive understanding of how the sacred text is brought to life, interpreted, and practiced within the context of contemporary Islam.

Contribution: This study contributes by critically examining the limitations of the *Living Qur'an* approach, highlighting the role of religious authority, variations in individual experiences, and the importance of hermeneutical analysis in understanding Qur'anic reception in contemporary Islamic contexts.

Keywords: *Living Qur'an*, Wirdul Lathif, Qur'anic reception, religious authority, contemporary Islam.

Abstract

Penelitian ini menganalisis praktik zikir Wirdul Lathif di Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang melalui pendekatan *Living Qur'an* yang dikembangkan oleh Ahmad Rafiq. Pendekatan ini menyoroti bagaimana Al-Qur'an dihidupkan dalam praktik sosial, pengalaman spiritual, dan fungsi pragmatis dalam komunitas Muslim. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resepsi Al-Qur'an dalam praktik Wirdul Lathif mencerminkan tiga bentuk utama: resepsi eksegesis, di mana santriwati menafsirkan ayat-ayat tertentu dalam konteks perlindungan spiritual; resepsi estetis, yang menekankan pengalaman emosional dan kedisiplinan melalui zikir; serta resepsi fungsional, di mana Al-Qur'an digunakan sebagai sarana untuk meningkatkan pemahaman ilmu dan memperlancar doa. Namun, penelitian ini juga menemukan beberapa keterbatasan dalam metode *Living Qur'an*, terutama dalam kurangnya eksplorasi terhadap otoritas keagamaan dalam membentuk pemaknaan Al-Qur'an serta minimnya analisis terhadap epistemologi tafsir klasik. Pendekatan ini cenderung mengasumsikan





bahwa resepsi Al-Qur'an dalam masyarakat selalu harmonis tanpa mempertimbangkan variasi pengalaman individu dan dinamika sosial yang lebih kompleks. Sebagai upaya perbaikan, penelitian ini merekomendasikan integrasi perspektif kritis terhadap otoritas keagamaan serta penggunaan analisis hermeneutik untuk memperjelas dasar epistemologis resepsi teks. Dengan demikian, kajian tentang *Living Qur'an* dapat memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang bagaimana teks suci dihidupkan, dipahami, dan diamalkan dalam konteks keislaman kontemporer.

Kontribusi: Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam mengkritisi keterbatasan pendekatan *Living Qur'an* dengan menyoroti peran otoritas keagamaan, variasi pengalaman individu, serta pentingnya analisis hermeneutik dalam memahami resepsi Al-Qur'an dalam konteks keislaman kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: *Living Qur'an, Wirdul Lathif, resepsi Al-Qur'an, otoritas keagamaan, keislaman kontemporer.*

Introduction

The Qur'an does not only function as a holy book that is read and memorized, but is also lived out in various religious practices in Muslim communities.¹ One manifestation of the interaction between sacred text and social practice is the Wirdul Lathif dhikr tradition, which is widely practiced in pesantren as part of spiritual discipline and self-protection. In Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, this practice has become part of the lives of santriwati, with various forms of reception of the Qur'an reflected in their meanings, emotional experiences, and pragmatic functions. This phenomenon reflects how the Qur'an is not just a normative text, but also an entity that continues to transform according to the needs and experiences of the community that practices it.

In academic studies, this phenomenon has been studied within the framework of the *Living Qur'an*, an approach that highlights how the Qur'an is not only understood textually but also practiced in various forms of social and cultural practices.² This approach was first developed in Indonesian academic studies, particularly through Ahmad Rafiq, who proposed that the Qur'ān should be understood as a living text in the practices of its community, whether through exegetical, aesthetic or functional receptions. This concept is rooted in broader academic discussions on the nature of scripture as a relational and dynamic entity, as proposed by Sam D. Gill in his analysis of the informative and performative functions of scripture. In Gill's perspective, scripture not only contains messages to be understood, but also functions as a guide to life that is interpreted and lived out in various forms of practice.³

¹ Rudolph T. Ware, *The Walking Qur'an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa* (UNC Press Books, 2014); Helen N. Boyle, *Quranic Schools: Agents of Preservation and Change* (Routledge, 2004); Anna M. Gade, "Recitation," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2017), 577-90, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118964873.ch38>.

² Ahmad Rafiq, "The Living Qur'an: Its Text and Practice in the Function of the Scripture," *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 22, no. 2 (July 30, 2021): 469–84, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2021.2202-10>.

³ Sam D. Gill, "Non-Literate Tradition and Holy Books," in Frederick M. Denny and Rodney L. Taylor (eds.) *The Holy Book in Comparative Perspective*, 1993.





Furthermore, Anna M. Gade in her study of Islam in Indonesia emphasizes that the reception of the Qur'an in Muslim communities is often based not only on textual understanding, but also on ritual and performative experiences. Gade points out that practices such as Qur'ānic recitation in certain contexts, including dhikr and wirid, are not only spiritual expressions, but also forms of religious transmission that strengthen community identity.⁴ In another context, Rudolf T. Ware in his study of Islamic practices in West Africa also highlights that the Qur'ān is understood not only as a book to be interpreted, but also as a source of blessings to be recited, listened to, and even written in various forms of sacred objects.⁵

Boyle adds that scriptural receptions are often shaped by the interaction between religious authorities and their communities.⁶ This is relevant in the practice of Wirdul Lathif, where pesantren authorities play an important role in shaping the way santriwati understand and practice dhikr. However, one of the criticisms of the *Living Qur'an* approach is its tendency to see reception practices as harmonious and natural, without considering the tensions that may occur between individual meanings, religious authorities, and broader Islamic discourse.⁷

One of the *living* practices and receptions of the *Qur'an* is the recitation of Zikir Wirdul Lathif. Zikir Wirdul Lathif is a dhikr compiled by Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad. This dhikr can be practiced to approach Allah Swt, ask Allah Swt to grant all desires, calm the heart, and to expel the jinn with all its disturbances.⁸ The Dhikr of Wirdul Lathif is very popular among santri and has even evolved into a habit that is routinized to read it. Habib Abdullah also strengthens this dhikr with prayers in the Prophet Muhammad's hadith and Qur'anic verses such as Qs. Al-Ikhlās verses 1-4, Qs.

⁴ Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Quran in Indonesia* (University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

⁵ Ware, *The Walking Qur'an*.

⁶ Helen N. Boyle, "Memorization and Learning in Islamic Schools," *Comparative Education Review* 50, no. 3 (August 2006): 478–95, <https://doi.org/10.1086/504819>.

⁷ Ibnu Hajar Ansori et al., "Meaning Construction in Ancak Tradition: A Study of Living Qur'an," *QOF* 7, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 301–16, <https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v7i2.1446>; Umniyatul Labibah, Imam Taufiq, and Moh Yasir Alimi, "Living Qur'an of Pesantren Women: A Manifestation of QS. An-Nisa 34 in A Woman Leadership Role of Nyai Munjidah Wahab," *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 23, no. 1 (January 31, 2022): 89–110, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2022.2301-05>; Ahmad Mustofa, "The Living QS. Saba': 13 among Javanese Moslem Sculptors," *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 26, no. 1 (March 2, 2025): 31–52, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v26i1.5723>; Nurul Himatil 'Ula and Senata Adi Prasetya, "Performative Analysis of Rajah Sheikh Subakir in Tawing Village, Trenggalek Perspective of Living Qur'an," *Journal of Qur'anic Sciences and Hadith Studies* 21, no. 2 (July 29, 2020): 313–30, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2020.2102-04>.

⁸ Said Maskur and Shabri Saleh Anwar, *Wirdul Lathief Al-Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Al-Haddad*, (Pekan Baru: Qudwah Press, 2019), pp. IV.





Al-Falaq verses 1-5, Qs. An-Nas verses 1-6, Qs. Al-Mu'minun verses 97-98, and verses 115-118, Qs. Ar-Rum verses 17-19, Qs. Al-Hasyr 21-24, and Qs. As-Saffat verses 79-81.⁹

Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is a non-formal educational institution that practices the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition. Madras Raudhatuzzahro makes the practice of dhikr *Wirdul Lathif* a compulsory activity for female students which is carried out in the afternoon before entering Asr time.¹⁰ Zikr *Wirdul Lathif* has become a tradition that has long been practiced before the establishment of Madras Raudhatuzzahro. One of the regions whose people have always routinized the tradition of Dhikr *Wirdul Lathif* is Tarim, Hadramaut, Yemen. The people of Tarim have been taught from generation to generation to recite the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*.¹¹ Islamic boarding schools that routinize the recitation of the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* are Darul Mustofa and Daruz Zahro Islamic Boarding Schools in Yemen. Darul Mustofa and Daruz Zahro Islamic Boarding Schools are boarding schools led by Habib Umar bin Hafidz, both of which have a sanad of recitation of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr to the compiler of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr, Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad. One of the students of his wife (Hubabah Ummu Salim) who studied at his boarding school, Ustazah Thalhah Amiroh bin Nauval Jindan, was the teacher of one of the teachers and caretakers of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, Ustazah Nur Afifah Syahab. It is through her that the female students at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang have routinized the recitation of the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* until now.¹²

The uniqueness of the tradition of reading the remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* carried out by the congregation of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is when reading surah al-Hasyr verses 21-24 which when reading these verses, the perpetrators of the *Wirdul Lathif* remembrance tradition put their right hands on their heads while reading surah al-Hasyr verses 21-24. Putting the right hand on the head by reading the surah can be the cause of healing all diseases, one of which is headache medicine.¹³ The uniqueness of the tradition is the motivation to carry out in-depth research. By digging up information about the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition, starting from the process of

⁹ Al-Habib Umar bin Muhammad bin Salim bin Hafidz, *Al-Khulasah Madad Nabawi*, (Surabaya: Darul Mukhtar, 2006), pp. 49-50.

¹⁰ Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 06, 2023.

¹¹ Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 06, 2023.

¹² Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 06, 2023.

¹³ Muhammad Hisham Wahid, *The Efficacy of the End of Surah Al-Hasyr: Medicine for Dizziness or Headache*, accessed from <https://tafsiralquran.id/khasiat-akhir-surah-alhasyr-obat-pusing-atau-sakit-kepala/> on July 26, 2023.





implementing the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr so that it becomes a dhikr tradition to the santriwati's reception of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang.

Taking into account the data and academic debates above, this research aims to examine the reception of the Qur'an in the practice of Wirdul Lathif in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang using the *Living Qur'an* approach, while criticizing its limitations. Specifically, this study will highlight how the role of religious authority in shaping the reception of the Qur'an among santriwati, as well as how individual experiences and social dynamics influence the practice. By integrating hermeneutic and classical tafsir perspectives, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the Qur'ān is brought to life in contemporary Islamic contexts as well as how the *Living Qur'ān* method can be further developed to be more relevant in the study of Qur'ānic receptions in various Muslim communities.

This research is a living Qur'an research and *field* research with a qualitative approach supported by Ahmad Rafiq's Qur'anic reception theory. Al-Qur'an reception theory is a study in which there is acceptance and response by the reader to the Qur'anic verse.¹⁴ The reception can be in the form of a Muslim's response and response in interpreting the Qur'an, how to appreciate the Qur'anic verses, and the implementation of a teaching derived from the Qur'an. The research subjects used in this study were female students and teachers of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. In collecting data, the author used two kinds of data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data consists of the leadership of Raudhatuzzahro Madras, teachers and santriwati of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang. Secondary data used are books, journals, and archival documents that support this research.¹⁵

In the data collection method, interviews, observation, and documentation are used. In the interview, a question and answer process was carried out with the perpetrators of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition. In observing, direct observation was made of the activities in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. As well as documenting by collecting and copying existing data at

¹⁴ Ahmad Rafiq, *The History of the Qur'an from Revelation to Reception in Syahiron Syamsudin (ed.), Islam Tradition Civilization*, (Yogyakarta: Bina Mulia Press, 2012), p. 37.

¹⁵ Anna M. Ortiz, "The Qualitative Interview," in *Research in the College Context*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2015); Carl Auerbach and Louise B. Silverstein, *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* (NYU Press, 2003).





Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang such as the sanad of *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr recitation and about the profile of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang.¹⁶

In analyzing the data, there are three stages: data reduction, data *display*, and conclusion drawing. In data reduction by selecting the main things and explaining the data that focuses on providing an overview of the tradition of reciting the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. Then the process of *displaying* data, in this stage an interpretation of the data obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation of the tradition of reciting the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. The last process is drawing conclusions on the answers to the problem formulation. In this process, conclusions are presented from the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation so that it becomes the answer to the problem formulation.

History of Zikr *Wirdul Lathif* in Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang

The application of living Qur'an is generally a common thing that is applied by Islamic religious education institutions. Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is an educational institution that applies the living Qur'an with the recitation of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr before the Asr prayer. Zikir *Wirdul Lathif* is a dhikr compiled by Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad. This dhikr contains recitations of prayers sourced from the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad Saw and verses of the Qur'an consisting of Qs. Al-Ikhlâs verses 1-4, Qs. Al-Falaq verses 1-5, Qs. An-Nas verses 1-6, Qs. Al-Mu'minun verses 97-98 and verses 115-118, Qs. Ar-Rum verses 17-19, Qs. Al-Hasyr verses 21-24, and Qs. Ash-Shaffat verses 79-81.¹⁷ Madras Raudhatuzzahro applies the tradition of reciting the remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* as a compulsory activity of santriwati before performing the Asr prayer so that santriwati recognize the recitation of dhikr which is usually read by pious people sourced from the Prophet Muhammad Saw and dhikr *Wirdul Lathif* has its own special features and extraordinary benefits for those who practice it.¹⁸

¹⁶ John W. Creswell et al, "Qualitative Research Designs: Selection and Implementation," *The Counseling Psychologist* 35, no. 2 (March 1, 2007): 236-64, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006287390>; Douglas Ezzy, *Qualitative Analysis* (London: Routledge, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315015484>.

¹⁷ Al-Habib Umar bin Muhammad bin Salim bin Hafidz, *Al-Khulashah Madad Nabawi*, (Surabaya: Darul Mukhtar, 2006), pp.49-50.

¹⁸ Interview with Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.





The *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition was first implemented by Madras Raudhatuzzahro female students in 2013. The tradition of remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* was taught directly by Ustazah Nur Afifah Syahab, who was also taught by her teacher, Ustazah Talhah Amiroh bin Nauval Jindan, who was a santriwati of Daruz Zahro, Yemen who studied with Hubabah Ummu Salim and Habib Umar bin Hafidz. Daruz Zahro is one of the female pesantren founded and cared for directly by Habib Umar bin Hafidz. It was through him that the students practiced the recitation of the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*.

As for the sanad of reading the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* Habib Umar bin Hafidz, he got it from his teacher, Habib Abdul Qodir bin Ahmad Assegaf, Habib Abdullah bin Umar Assyatiri. Then he got it from his teacher, Habib Ali bin Muhammad Alhabsyi (*Simtuddurar*). Habib Ali bin Muhammad Alhabsyi he got from his teacher Habib Abdurrahman Almasyhur (*Sahibul Fatawa*). Habib Abdurrahman Almasyhur he got from his teacher, Habib Abdullah bin Husein bin Thohir. Habib Abdullah bin Husein bin Thohir he got from his teacher Habib Umar bin Seggaf Assegaf. Habib Umar bin Seggaf Assegaf he got from his teacher Habib Hamid bin Umar Ba'alawy. Habib Hamid bin Umar Ba'alawy he got from his teacher, Habib Ahmad bin Zein Alhabsyi and Habib Ahmad bin Zein Alhabsyi got the sanad of reading from his teacher, Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad (*Sahibur Ratib*).¹⁹ As for the background of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, there are four aspects that influence the tradition, namely:

First, the intention and desire of the teachers in bertarbiyah in the way of Allah SWT and Rasulullah Saw. From the results of research related to things that influence the tradition of reciting the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* in Madras Raudhatuzzahro, it shows that there is an intention and desire from the teachers to produce generations of women to become Muslim women who have good morals, character, and have insight into religious knowledge in living life.

Second, the environment. The aspect that influences the process of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition is the environment. Because the location of Madras Raudhazzahro is in Sungai Bayas 10 Ilir Palembang. The 10 Ilir area is famous for its Arab community traditions and religious activities. This area also has many descendants of the Prophet Muhammad Saw (*ahlul bait*) who live in that place. The teachers of Madras Raudhatuzzahro are mostly *sharifah* (descendants of the Prophet). Some of them have the surname Syahab such as Ustazah Nur Afifah, Ustazah Syahri Banun. Some are

¹⁹ Written documentation of Sanad Zikir *Wirdul Lathif* al-Habib Umar bin Muhammad bin Salim bin Hafidz, Quoted on September 03, 2023...





surnamed Assegaf like Ustazah Zahrah, surnamed bin Sheikh Abu Bakar bin Salim like Ustazah Yasmin, and other ustazahs. In addition, the community there has been accustomed to Islamic traditions, because it has become a habit from ancestors until now these activities are still ongoing. This can be proven by the tradition of *kubra* pilgrimage, *haul of habaib* and alim ulama, maulid *arba'in*, many places of knowledge and dhikr assemblies.²⁰

Third, diplomas and inheritance from teachers. Ijazah is a sign of permission from a teacher to his student to narrate or practice something learned or obtained from his teacher. Ijazah is the process of giving the recitation of certain dhikr and wirid to someone by saying *ajaztukum* (I give you the ijazah) then answered with *qabiltu* (I accept the ijazah).²¹ The same is the case with the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. At first the activity of reciting the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* was introduced by the leader and teacher of Madras Raudhatuzzahro itself, namely Ustazah Nur Afifah Syahab, who also received a diploma from her teacher, Ustazah Thalhah Amiroh bin Nauval Jindan, who is an alumnus of Ponpes Daruhattuz Zahro. is an alumnus of Ponpes Daruz Zahro Tarim so that he received a certificate from his teacher Habib Umar bin Hafidz, which has been explained previously that Habib Umar bin Hafidz received a certificate from his teacher who reached his sanad to Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad.²²

Fourth, getting a message from the teacher, Habib Umar bin Hafidz, that no matter how lazy people are, they should not leave the recitation of the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*.²³

The tradition of *Wirdul Lathif's* remembrance is maintained until now because of the externalization process of inheritance and teaching by Habib Abdullah to his students who then experienced objectivation by establishing the educational institution Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang which teaches the remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* both in text, sanad, mandatory activities of Madras Raudhatuzzahro which are followed by santriwati Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang so that it is internalized by santriwati by reciting and practicing the remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif*.

The Wirdul Lathif dhikr tradition contributes to the practice of the Qur'an in everyday life. This can be proven by the formation of a disciplined santriwati character, because with this zikr, santriwati

²⁰ Mardeli, "Local Islamic Culture in Al-Munawwar Village Palembang," Intizar, Journal of Raden Fatah Palembang, vol. 23, no. 2, 2017, pp. 281-282.

²¹ Solehudin, "KH Asep Mukarram's Prayer Epistemology," Syifa al-Qulub, Journal of Sufistic Psychotherapy Studies, vol. 2, no. 1, 2017, p. 20. 20.

²² Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.

²³ Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.





who initially prayed were not on time. Became on time because of the recitation of the remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* before prayer.²⁴

The Practice of Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* in Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang

The recitation of Zikr *Wirdul Lathif* at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is carried out every Wednesday before performing the Asr prayer in congregation by the students of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang. The recitation of the dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* was attended by 113 female students consisting of *raudha*, one, two, three, four, and *zahro* classes and followed by teachers who taught on that Wednesday.²⁵

When the practice of Dhikr *Wirdul Lathif* begins, all santri are ready to wear attributes to perform the Asr prayer such as wearing mukenah, using siwak, carrying a guidebook for reading dhikr and wirid, and santri are expected to be in a state of ablution considering that after the recitation of Dhikr *Wirdul Lathif*, the Asr prayer will immediately be held in congregation. During the recitation of the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*, the santri sit on the prayer mat and form five rows of prayer rows facing the Qibla.

The implementation of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr is led by santri who usually read dhikr and wirid. When the santri have gathered in the prayer place by forming neat safes, the recitation of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr begins. The reading of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr begins with reading surah al-ikhlas, al-Falaq and an-Nas, each of which is read 3 times by starting with reading basmalah at the beginning of each surah, then continued with reading Qs. Al-Mu'minin verses 97-98 and verses 115-118, Qs. Ar-Rum verses 17-19, Qs. Al-Hasyr verses 21-24, and Qs. Ash-Shaffat verse 79- 81. On the recitation of Qs. Al-Hasyr verses 21-24 in Madras Raudhatuzzahro has its own characteristics. Female students read Qs. Al-Hasyr verses 21-24 by placing the right hand on the head. Its virtue is as ash-Syifa from various kinds of diseases, especially headaches.²⁶

In *Tafsir Dar al-Mantsur* (v.8/h.121), when Imam As-Suyuti discusses the end of surah al-Hasr, he quotes some narrations about its specialty, namely: It was narrated by Dailami from Ibn Mas'ud and 'Ali that the verse *Lau anzalnaa hadzal qur'anaa alaa jabalin...* until the end of surah al-Hasr is a cure

²⁴ Interview with Afifah Rahmasari, Santriwati Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, March 31, 2024.

²⁵ Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.

²⁶ Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.





for headaches.²⁷ And continued with the recitation of other dhikr such as the dhikr of prayer and the dhikr of *salawat*.²⁸ To support the process of *Wirdul Lathif*'s dhikr practice in Madras Raudhatuzzahro, there are facilities and infrastructure used for the smooth process of *Wirdul Lathif*'s dhikr practice, including: a guidebook for dhikr and wirid '*Adduratul Qhaliah*'. As well as the microphone and *sound system* used to lead the recitation of the dhikr.²⁹

The recitation of dhikr and wirid must have ethics. The ethics of reciting dhikr and wirid are: *First*, the person reciting the dhikr, the clothes, and the place where the dhikr is recited should be clean and pure. *Second*, the person who is reciting dhikr should have good qualities. *Third*, using miswak before reciting dhikr. *Fourth*, reciting dhikr in a sitting position and facing the qibla. *Fifth*, reciting dhikr should be present in the heart, understanding the meaning of the recitation of dhikr and contemplating it. *Sixth*, reciting with no haste because of the pursuit of the number of recitations of dhikr and such. *Seventh*, it is sufficient to listen to oneself unless reading it in congregation.³⁰

With these ethics to ensure that the students of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang read the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* with good ethics, there is one student who is devoted to seeing who reads the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif* and who does not read the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*. If there is one santriwati who does not read the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*, the name of the santriwati will be recorded and then given a warning by the teacher so that the santriwati does not repeat the mistake. As for one of the causes that usually the name of the santriwati is recorded, namely chatting with her friend and not following the recitation of the Dhikr of *Wirdul Lathif*. If there are santriwati who do not bring a guidebook for reading dhikr and wirid, the santriwati is reprimanded and given a punishment for reading dhikr and wirid while standing. With some of these rules, the author can conclude that in addition to the teaching and learning process the santri are also educated to have a disciplined character and prioritize adab over knowledge.³¹ With the hope of forming a female character who always remembers Allah SWT and getting blessings from the recitation of the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr itself.

²⁷ Muhammad Hisham Wahid, The Efficacy of the End of Surah Al-Hasyr: Medicine for Dizziness or Headache, accessed from <https://tafsiralquran.id/khasiat-akhir-surah-alhasyr-obat-pusing-atau-sakit-kepala/> on August 21, 2023.

²⁸ Al-Habib Umar bin Muhammad bin Salim bin Hafidz, *Al-Khulashah Madad Nabawi*, (Surabaya: Darul Mukhtar, 2006), pp. 49-50.

²⁹ Interview with Fitriah Alkaf, Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang Teacher on August 16, 2023.

³⁰ Abdul Hafidz and Rusydi, "The Concept of Dhikr and Prayer in the Perspective of the Qur'an," *Islamic Akademika, Journal of Education & Islamic Studies*, vol. 06, no. 01, 2019, pp. 67.

³¹ Interview with Fitriah Alkaf, Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang Teacher on August 16, 2023.





Because the blessing of the recitation of the *Dhikr of Wirdul Lathif* is believed to greatly affect those who read it, it is not visible but can be felt.³²

Social Environment in the Tradition of *Dhikr Wirdul Lathif* in Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang

Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is a non-formal educational institution located in the Ba'alawi Building, precisely on Jalan Ali Gathmir, Lorong Sei Bayas, 10 Ilir, Palembang, South Sumatra. At first, Madras Raudhatuzzahro had the name Daruz Zahro which was located on Jalan Dr. M. Isa Lorong Jaya Kuto Batu Palembang and teaching and learning hours began after Maghrib until after Isha under the leadership of Ustazah Yasmin. Over time, Madras Daruz Zahro progressed with the increase in the number of female students and fear of bad things happening because of night learning hours, so in 2013, Madras was moved during the day, precisely in the Ba'alawi building. Therefore, Madras Daruz Zahro was moved to the Ba'alawi Building 10 Ilir Palembang. When the location was moved the name of Madras Daruz Zahro was changed to Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang and led directly by Ustazah Nur Afifah Syahab.³³

The purpose of establishing Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang is to produce santriwati to become Muslim women who have morals and insight into religious knowledge in carrying out life activities.³⁴ While the purpose of the practice of *Dhikr Wirdul Lathif* is to introduce the santri to the recitation of dhikr commonly read by pious people sourced from the Prophet Muhammad Saw. In addition, the practice of remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* is implemented so that it becomes a rule set by Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang so that santriwati have a bond with Allah SWT and make protection for santriwati especially in this day and age which is already with fitnah.³⁵

The social environment in the tradition of remembrance of *Wirdul Lathif* in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang forms social relationships between santriwati with teachers and fellow santriwati. Among the social relationships formed between teachers and santriwati are: santriwati

³²Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.

³³ Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 14, 2023.

³⁴ Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 14, 2023.

³⁵ Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.





respect the teachers, santriwati greet the teachers when they meet, santriwati behave politely to the teachers, santriwati are always silent and listen to the explanation of the teachers when they are studying, santriwati do not look away without a clear purpose especially when the teacher is talking to them, santriwati practice the knowledge they have gained, and santriwati teach the knowledge they have gained to others.³⁶

The social environment in the *Wirdul Lathif* dhikr tradition at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang also forms social relationships between santriwati and santriwati. Among the social relationships formed are: Helping social interaction well between santriwati, respecting older friends, loving younger friends, respecting differences in friends, strengthening friendship relationships, strengthening ukhuwah islamiah, the emergence of helping nature between santriwati.³⁷

Santriwati's Reception of the *Wirdul Lathif Zikir* Tradition at Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang

The *Living Qur'an* approach developed by Ahmad Rafiq provides a relevant analytical framework in understanding the reception of the Qur'an in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, particularly in the context of Wirdul Lathif's dhikr practice. In his research, Rafiq emphasizes that the Qur'ān does not only function as a normative text that must be understood through tafsir, but also as a living entity through social practices, spiritual experiences, and cultural adaptations within the Muslim community.³⁸ Therefore, the reception of the Qur'an in the practice of Wirdul Lathif can be studied through the three forms of reception identified by Rafiq, namely exegesis reception, aesthetic reception, and functional reception.

1. Exegesis Reception: The Qur'ān as a Source of Meaning and Interpretation

The exegesis reception in the tradition of Wirdul Lathif in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang reflects how santriwati understand the meaning of the Qur'an which is the basis for the practice of dhikr. The verses in Wirdul Lathif, such as surah al-Falaq, surah an-Nas, and surah al-Mukminun verses 97-98, are interpreted as prayers for protection from the disturbance of spirits and negative energy. This interpretation shows that the reception of the Qur'an in this community is not just reading or memorizing, but also internalizing its meaning in everyday life.³⁹

³⁶ Interview with Syahri Banun Syahab, a teacher at Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang on April 4, 2024.

³⁷ Interview with Nadia Alawiyah, Santriwati Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang on April 4, 2024.

³⁸ Rafiq, "The Living Qur'an."

³⁹ Ahmad Rafiq, "The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non Arabic Speaking Community" (Dissertation, The Temple University Graduate Board, 2014), <https://scholarshare.temple.edu/handle/20.500.12613/3439>.





In Rafiq's study, the concept of *Living Qur'an* emphasizes that human interaction with the Qur'an is not one-way, but relational. That is, santriwati not only read the Qur'anic verses passively, but also interpret and understand their meaning in the context of their lives. In the case of Wirdul Lathif, this exegesis reception can be linked to the informative function of the Qur'ān as described by Rafiq, where the sacred text is not simply understood literally, but also interpreted to meet the spiritual and social needs of the community.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the interpretation of Wirdul Lathif as a form of obedience to Allah shows how santriwati interpret verses such as Qs. al-Ahzab verses 41-42 in the context of worship practices. In Rafiq's perspective, this shows how the Qur'anic text can be a source of motivation for certain religious actions, reflecting how the Qur'ān's informative function develops into a performative function in daily life.

2. Aesthetic Reception: Spiritual Experience and Psychological Transformation

The aesthetic reception in the practice of Wirdul Lathif shows how the Qur'an is brought to life through personal and emotional experiences. Based on interviews with santriwati, this dhikr provides inner calm, relieves anxiety, and acts as a moral filter that helps them avoid sinning. In this case, the aesthetic experience of the Qur'ān is not only the beauty of the sound or rhythm of the recitation, but also the psychological and spiritual effects felt by the individual.

According to Rafiq, *Living Qur'an* does not only discuss how the Qur'anic text is interpreted, but also how this text functions in the daily experiences of individuals and communities.⁴¹ In this context, Wirdul Lathif becomes more than just a ritual reading; it becomes part of the construction of the santriwati's religious identity. This practice not only forms a vertical relationship between the individual and God, but also builds self-discipline and spiritual habits that continue even outside the madrasah environment.

It is important to note that this aesthetic experience has a pragmatic dimension in the lives of santriwati. For example, some santriwati stated that they became more disciplined in performing worship after routinely participating in the Wirdul Lathif dhikr. This is in line with Rafiq's concept of how the "living" Qur'an can function as an agent of transformation in the lives of individuals and

⁴⁰ Munirah Munirah, "Memorizing the Qur'an as Banjarese Bride-Price (A Study of Living Quran and Hadith)," *Ulumuna* 21, no. 2 (29 December 2017): 278-97, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujs.v21i2.319>; Rafiq, "The Living Qur'an."

⁴¹ Rafiq, "The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia."





communities.⁴² In this analysis, the practice of Wirdul Lathif is not only a religious expression, but also a mechanism for internalizing values rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an.

3. Functional Reception: The Qur'an as a Tool to Meet Needs

Functional reception in the practice of Wirdul Lathif shows how the Qur'an is received not only as a source of meaning or spiritual experience, but also as a tool to achieve certain practical goals. In interviews with female students, Wirdul Lathif was recognized as having benefits in improving understanding of knowledge, strengthening memorization, and as a medium for tawasul so that prayers are answered more quickly.

In Rafiq's study, the performative function of the Qur'an is seen in how this text is actively used in various social contexts. Wirdul Lathif, in this case, is not only seen as a religious ritual, but also as part of the academic and spiritual strategies of santriwati in achieving their goals. The use of dhikr as a tool to facilitate memorization or learning reflects how the sacred text is adapted according to the needs of the community, without necessarily going through the rigid route of textual interpretation.⁴³

In addition, the practice of tawasul performed through Wirdul Lathif reflects how the Qur'ān's performative function can be a means of negotiating individuals' hopes and desires with their social and spiritual realities. In Rafiq's perspective, this form of reception shows that the Qur'ān is not just a static text, but also an agent that interacts with humans in various life contexts.

A Critique of the Living Quran Approach

The *Living Qur'an* approach developed by Ahmad Rafiq provides a comprehensive framework in understanding how the Qur'anic text functions in the daily lives of Muslim communities. By emphasizing aspects of reception, transmission, and transformation, this approach successfully illustrates how the Qur'an functions not only as a normative text but also as a social phenomenon that continues to develop in various forms of religious practice. However, when applied to the data regarding the practice of Wirdul Lathif in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang, some weaknesses in this approach can be identified.

One of the main limitations of the *Living Qur'an* approach is the lack of exploration of aspects of authority and authenticity in reception-based religious practices. In the case of Wirdul Lathif, santri

⁴² Rafiq, "The Living Qur'an"; Ahmad Rafiq, *Living Qur'an: texts, practices, and ideals in the performance of the Qur'an* (Published in cooperation with the Association of Qur'anic & Tafsir Sciences ..., 2022).

⁴³ Ahmad Rafiq, "The Tradition of Qur'anic Reception in Indonesia," Retrieved from Sarbini damai website: sarbinidamai.blogspot.com, 2018.





understand and practice this dhikr as part of their spiritual obligations, which are indirectly shaped by the system of authority in the pesantren. However, Rafiq's approach does not explicitly discuss how religious authority-whether in the form of kiai, ustaz, or classical texts-influences the form and meaning of the receptions that occur. For example, is the reception of exegesis carried out by santriwati related to their independent understanding of the text, or is it more influenced by the teaching of their teachers? In this context, *Living Qur'an* does not highlight how hierarchies of authority can shape the way Muslim communities understand and practice the Qur'an.⁴⁴

Another weakness is the tendency of this approach to emphasize the pragmatic and performative aspects of the Qur'an in social life without digging deeper into the epistemological complexity behind the meaning of the text. In the context of Wirdul Lathif, santriwati not only accept the Qur'anic text literally, but also relate it to the concept of protection, inner peace, and discipline. However, the *Living Qur'an* approach tends to assume that all forms of Qur'anic reception are the result of social and cultural interactions, without further questioning how the text itself can provide limitations in interpretation. For example, the concept of protection in Wirdul Lathif can be traced to the traditions of tafsir and hadith, but Rafiq's approach does not explicitly link this reception to the epistemology of classical tafsir or to how early scholars understood the function of dhikr in Islam.

Moreover, while the *Living Qur'an* approach is very rich in documenting how a sacred text interacts with its community, it has limitations in analyzing how such receptions may change or be contested within the community itself. Data from Madras Raudhatuzzahro shows that Wirdul Lathif is not only practiced, but also has different impacts on each individual. Some santri feel a sense of calmness, while others attribute the practice to self-discipline or spiritual protection.⁴⁵ However, Rafiq's approach leaves little room to analyze how these differences in experience can lead to variations in reception within the same community. It also does little to address the possibility of

⁴⁴ Muhamad Ali, "Manuscript Studies and Living Qur'an and Living Hadith Studies," *JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES* 4, no. 2 (December 20, 2015): 147-67, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v4i2.2391>; Nadirsyah Hosen, "Challenging Traditional Islamic Authority: The Impact of Social Media in Indonesia," *Proceedings of International Conference on Da'wa and Communication* 1, no. 1 (November 5, 2019): 84-100, <https://doi.org/10.15642/icondac.v1i1.280>; Ahmad Jamil and Naswan Abdo Khaled, "The Genealogy of Authoritative Transmission of Sanad Al-Qur'an in Java Islamic Boarding Schools," *Kalimah: Journal of Religious Studies and Islamic Thought* 20, no. 2 (October 7, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v20i2.8332>.

⁴⁵ David Scott and Charles Hirschkind, *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford University Press, 2006).





resistance or different interpretations of certain practices within the community, whereas in the social reality of religion, differences of opinion regarding a practice often occur.⁴⁶

A final weakness that can be noted is the tendency of this approach to assume that Qur'ānic reception is harmonious and unproblematic. In practice, how individuals or communities receive and interpret the Qur'ān is often influenced by wider social, political and economic factors.⁴⁷ In the case of Wirdul Lathif, for example, the practice may have a deeper gender dimension-do women have a different experience than men in practicing dhikr? Are there certain social aspects that make santriwati feel the need to internalize dhikr as a form of discipline or protection? The *Living Qur'an* approach tends to ignore these factors, which can be important elements in understanding how the Qur'an truly "lives" in different contexts.⁴⁸

Thus, while Ahmad Rafiq's approach in *Living Qur'an* offers valuable insights in understanding Qur'anic reception in everyday life, it still has some limitations. The lack of exploration of religious authority, the lack of epistemological analysis of the text, the lack of attention to variations and differences in receptions within communities, and the tendency to assume that receptions are always harmonious are some aspects that could be further developed. To enrich the study of Qur'ānic reception, this approach could be expanded to include critical perspectives on hierarchies of authority, the complexity of interpretation, and the social dynamics that shape the interaction between people and scripture.

Conclusion

An analysis of the practice of Wirdul Lathif in Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang through a *Living Qur'an* perspective shows that the reception of the Qur'an in this community is dynamic, reflecting the relationship between sacred texts and social practices. In exegesis reception, santriwati interpret certain verses in the context of spiritual protection and obedience to God. In aesthetic reception, emotional experiences such as calmness and discipline are formed through the practice of dhikr. Meanwhile, in functional reception, the Qur'an is not only a recitation of worship but also used

⁴⁶ Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (JHU Press, 1993).

⁴⁷ Johanna Pink, "Tradition, Authority and Innovation in Contemporary Sunnī tafsīr: Towards a Typology of Qur'an Commentaries from the Arab World, Indonesia and Turkey," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 12, no. 1-2 (October 1, 2010): 56–82, <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2010.0105>.

⁴⁸ Muhammad Luthfi Dhulkifli, "To What Extent Can the Diversity of Qur'anic Tafsir Be Described as 'Traditions of Reason,'" *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 24, no. 1 (January 31, 2023): 79–96, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v24i1.4303>.





to improve understanding of knowledge and facilitate prayer. The *Living Qur'an* approach developed by Ahmad Rafiq provides a broad insight into how the sacred text functions in everyday life. However, this method has limitations, such as the lack of exploration of the role of religious authorities in shaping the meaning of the Qur'an and tends to ignore the epistemological aspects of classical tafsir. In addition, this approach has not fully captured the variation of individual experiences within the same community and tends to assume that Qur'ānic receptions are always harmonious without considering more complex social dynamics. As an improvement, *Living Qur'an* studies can be developed by integrating critical perspectives on the hierarchy of religious authorities as well as hermeneutic approaches and classical tafsir to clarify the epistemological basis of text reception. Thus, this study not only illustrates how the Qur'an is lived in society but also how social, political and scientific factors play a role in shaping religious meanings and practices in Muslim communities.

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Interview with Nur Afifah Syahab, Leader and Teacher of Raudhatuzzahro Madras Palembang on August 15, 2023.

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Interview with Syahri Banun Syahab, Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang Teacher on April 4, 2024.

Interview with Syarifah Dalila, Santriwati Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang on March 31, 2024.

Interview with Yasmin, Deputy Leader and Teacher of Madras Raudhatuzzahro Palembang on August 06, 2023 and August 14, 2023.



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