

The Living Qur'an in the Domestic Sphere: The Transformation of the Function of Qur'anic Amulets in Minority Muslim Communities in Bali

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Abstract. This study examines the transformation of the function of Qur'anic amulets from a means of personal protection to a symbol of domestic spirituality in the Muslim minority community in Pemuteran, Bali. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach and a functional reception theory framework, this study traces how verses from the Qur'an—particularly verses on protection—are written on white cloth and placed on new buildings as a means of divine protection. Data was collected through field observations, documentation of amulet artifacts, and in-depth interviews with religious leaders, amulet writers, homeowners, and local communities. The results show that this practice is not merely a continuation of mystical traditions, but a dynamic manifestation of the Living Qur'an, in which the sacred text interacts with local cultural values, spatial symbolism, and communal identity. The shift in the function of amulets from individual protection to domestic protection reflects changes in spiritual, social, and cultural needs within Muslim communities living in predominantly Hindu environments. This practice also serves as a means of cultural negotiation that allows the community to maintain their Islamic identity while adapting to local Balinese traditions. This study contributes to the development of Living Qur'an studies by emphasizing how the holy text works in the domestic sphere and how Qur'anic symbols play a role in the negotiation of minority identity, spatial security, and cultural sustainability in a multicultural context.

Keywords: Functional Reception; Living Qur'an; Muslim Minorities; Qur'anic Amulets.

Introduction

The Qur'an is not only read as a sacred text but also interacts with the everyday lives of the community.¹ In the study of the *Living Qur'an*, there are three forms of reception of the Qur'an, known as reception:² first, exegetical reception (hermeneutics), where the Qur'an is understood as an Arabic text with linguistic meaning; second, aesthetic reception, which regards the Qur'an as a text of aesthetic value; and third, functional reception, where the Qur'an is positioned as a scripture used for specific

¹Faris Maulana Akbar, "Ragam Ekspresi dan Interaksi Manusia dengan Al-Qur'an (Dari Tekstualis, Kontekstualis, Hingga Praktis)," *REVELATIA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 3, no. 1 (2022): 47–65, <https://doi.org/10.19105/revelatia.v3i1.5799>.

²Yani Yuliani, "Tipologi Resepsi Al-Qur'an dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Pedesaan: Studi Living Qur'an di Desa Sukawana, Majalengka," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 6, no. 2 (2021): 321–38, <https://doi.org/10.30868/at.v6i02.1657>; Rifqatul Husna and Fitri Ayu, "Living Qur'an Study on the Local Wisdom of the Pesantren Community Regarding the Rokot Sabe Tradition," *Santri: Journal of Pesantren and Fiqh Sosial* 4, no. 2 (2023): 163–76, <https://doi.org/10.35878/santri.v4i2.964>.

purposes,³ such as amulets or talismans, either for personal use or for protecting valuable possessions.⁴ Thus, the Qur'an is not understood as a holy book that functions as a guide and guideline for human life through the reading and interpretation of its texts, but is perceived as a text that contains supernatural powers.⁵

In Bali, a predominantly Hindu region, there exists an intriguing phenomenon that has been rarely explored: the use of Qur'anic amulets placed on new buildings within the Muslim minority community. These amulets are made of white cloth with selected Qur'anic verses chosen specifically for protection, safety, and repelling misfortune. This practice illustrates how the Muslim community in Bali integrates the Qur'an with local cultural values within their spiritual context.⁶

However, while numerous studies have discussed the function of Qur'anic amulets in various communities, very few have explored the use of Qur'anic amulets in the context of new homes or buildings in Bali, where Islam is a minority religion. This research aims to fill this gap by delving deeper into how specific Qur'anic verses are used as spiritual symbols to protect homes in the Muslim minority community in Bali. The primary focus of this study is to understand the meaning and reasons behind the use of specific verses on white cloth as amulets and how the local community in Bali perceives this practice as part of their cultural identity.⁷

There have been several previous studies discussing the writing of Quranic verses on white cloth to be used as amulets to protect the owner's property and person. One such study is by Rufaidah Utami, entitled "*Penggunaan Ayat Al-Quran Sebagai Rajah Pagar Rumah (Studi Living Qur'an di Desa Kotaraya Barat Kabupaten Parigi Moutong)*".⁸ Utami's study focuses on the spiritual and magical functions of using Qur'anic verses as protective talismans, with a phenomenological approach to the practices of the community. Furthermore, research conducted by Muhammad Ihdanil Aulia, et al., entitled "*Ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang Dijadikan Jimat: Jimat Qur'ani dalam Perspektif Masyarakat Desa Sungai, Tanjung Jabung Timur*".⁹ In this study, Aulia emphasizes the belief of Muslim residents in Sungai Tawar Village regarding the use of Qur'an verses as spiritual protection tools. Finally, research conducted by Rudi Widiyanto entitled "*Fenomena Jimat Ayat Al-Qur'an Dalam Masyarakat Baru, Tapanuli Tengah*".¹⁰ In this study, Widiyanto et al. focus more on the study of religious anthropology that touches on mystical aspects and local belief practices.

The above studies show that although the object of study is the same, namely Qur'anic verses used as amulets, the meaning can be very different depending on the context of the community and the research approach used. This study has new value and its own appeal because it raises the

³Aminah Fitriyani, "Resepsi Fungsional Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Ngunjungan Di Desa Karangkendal." (diploma, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, 2021), 6, <http://web.syekhnrjati.ac.id>.

⁴Nurun Nisaa Baihaqi and Aty Munshihah, "Resepsi Fungsional Al-Qur'an: Ritual Pembacaan Ayat Al-Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Nyadran Di Dusun Tundan Bantul Yogyakarta," *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban Dan Pemikiran Islam* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v6i1.3207>.

⁵Anwar Mujahidin, "Analisis Simbolik Penggunaan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Sebagai Jimat Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Ponorogo," *Kalam* 10, no. 1 (2016): 45, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v10i1.159>.

⁶Wawancara Bapak Ach Syafi'ie. November 8, 2025

⁷Muhammad Ma'aliyah Umur, "Resepsi fungsional surat Yasin dan Al-Waq'iah: Studi Living Qur'an di Pondok Pesantren Miftahul Huda Singosari Malang" (undergraduate, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2024), 25, <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/64060/>.

⁸Rufaidah Utami, "Penggunaan Ayat Alquran Sebagai Rajah Pagar Rumah (Studi Living Qur'an Di Desa Kotaraya Barat Kabupaten Parigi Moutong)" (diploma, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu, 2023), <https://repository.uindatokarama.ac.id/id/eprint/2536/>.

⁹Muhammad Ihdanil Aulia et al., "Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Yang Dijadikan Jimat: Jimat Qur'ani Dalam Perspektif Masyarakat Desa Sungai, Tanjung Jabung Timur," *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2023): 377–86, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v3i2.26669>.

¹⁰Rudi Widiyanto, "Fenomena Jimat Ayat Al-Qur'an Dalam Masyarakat Baru, Tapanuli Tengah," *An-Natiq Jurnal Kajian Islam Interdisipliner* 4, no. 2 (2024): 238–50.

phenomenon of writing Qur'anic verses on white cloth on new buildings in Bali, which is predominantly Hindu, a tradition that has rarely been studied in previous research. This practice reflects a unique form of functional reception of the Qur'an in a Muslim minority society, where the holy verses function as symbols of the Qur'an and blessings.¹¹ This study not only enriches the study of the living Qur'an, but also contributes to understanding how the Qur'an lives and interacts in diverse local cultural contexts.

This study aims to investigate in depth the practice of writing verses from the Qur'an on white cloth that is attached to new buildings in Bali. The purpose of this study is to explore the meaning and reasons for the use of certain verses written on white cloth, as well as to understand how the community perceives the use of Qur'anic amulets in protecting the safety of their homes. Based on the background and literature review, several questions are raised in this study. First, to explore the background and reasons behind the use of certain verses from the Qur'an on white cloth as amulets in new buildings in Bali. Second, to examine how the community perceives the use of Qur'anic amulets in protecting the security of their homes. With these questions, it is hoped that this study will produce findings that are in line with the predetermined objectives.

In this study, the author uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. This study also uses the living Qur'an framework to see how the sacred text is interpreted and practiced in the context of local culture. This type of research is field research, conducted by collecting information directly from primary sources at the location being studied, which is called primary data. This data was obtained from original sources, namely respondents or informants related to the research variables. Primary data consisted of observations, interviews, and documentation.¹² The data gathered from informants and respondents in this study included community leaders, amulet writers, religious leaders, building owners, and the surrounding community to explore their reasons, meanings, and views regarding the practice of writing these verses through interviews. Furthermore, data was obtained through observation, namely direct observation of buildings that use white cloth with verses from the Qur'an written on them. In addition, documentation was also carried out, which is a data collection technique in the form of written or image data sources,¹³ including photos of white cloth, the verses used, and other field notes. To obtain complete interview results, the interviews had to be recorded. The completeness of the data can be deepened by using other techniques, such as participant observation, document tracing, and others.¹⁴ Next is to check the validity of the data through source triangulation by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure data accuracy. And finally, draw conclusions to obtain findings and determine the next research steps.

As a social framework, this study is reinforced by the phenomenological method, which is the study of knowledge derived from consciousness, or the way of understanding an object or event by consciously experiencing it.¹⁵ The phenomenological method was chosen because it is able to explore individual experiences and consciousness in depth,¹⁶ so that researchers can understand the meaning

¹¹Muhammad Helmi Anshori et al., "Resepsi Fungsional Al-Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Keagamaan Lokal: Studi Atas Tradisi Roah Kemalik Pada Masyarakat Rembiga, Nusa Tenggara Barat," *Al-Qudwah: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 3, no. 1 (2025): 75–92, <https://doi.org/10.24014/alqudwah.v3i1.29784>.

¹²Undari Sulung and Mohamad Muspawi, "Memahami Sumber Data Penelitian: Primer, Sekunder, Dan Tersier," *EDU RESEARCH* 5, no. 3 (2024): 112, <https://doi.org/10.47827/jer.v5i3.238>.

¹³Indra Sutrisno Abidin and Devi Siti Hamzah Marpaung, "Observasi Penanganan Dan Pengurangan Sampah Di Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang," *JUSTITIA: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Humaniora* 8, no. 4 (2021): 875.

¹⁴Arief Nuryana et al., "Pengantar Metode Penelitian Kepada Suatu Pengertian Yang Mendalam Mengenai Konsep Fenomenologi," *Ensains Journal* 2, no. 1 (2019): 22, <https://doi.org/10.31848/ensains.v2i1.148>.

¹⁵Nuryana et al., "Pengantar Metode Penelitian Kepada Suatu Pengertian Yang Mendalam Mengenai Konsep Fenomenologi," 20.

¹⁶Sayuti Hamdani, "Impelementasi Metode Fenomenologi Dalam Penelitian Pendidikan Islam," *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Isu-Isu Sosial* 22, no. 1 (2024): 63–75, <https://doi.org/10.37216/tadib.v22i1.1560>.

that emerges from the writing practice based on the perspective of the perpetrator. The combination of functional reception theory and the phenomenological method makes this research more comprehensive, as it not only highlights the social function of the Qur'anic text but also reveals the spiritual and symbolic experiences of the society behind it. Therefore, the application of the phenomenological method helps to describe the dynamics of the tradition of writing Qur'anic verses on white cloth as a form of living Qur'an that continues to live, function, and be meaningful in the cultural context of Balinese society.

Discussion

Structure of Qur'anic Amulets in Pemuteran, Bali

Based on field observations, the Qur'anic amulets in Pemuteran, Bali, have a specific visual and symbolic structure that is systematically designed, following a pattern inherited through generations. The basic structure consists of a circular design, often resembling a small *mandala*, filled with various elements including Arabic letters, numbers, and Qur'anic verses. Each element within the amulet has a distinct symbolic meaning, contributing to its spiritual and protective function:¹⁷

1. White Cloth: The use of white cloth as the medium for writing Qur'anic verses symbolizes purity and sanctity. White is a culturally significant color in Bali, often associated with cleanliness and spiritual balance. The cloth serves as a sacred canvas, enhancing the amulet's potency.
2. Position: The amulet is placed at the highest point of the building, specifically at the intersection of support beams, a vital structural element. This placement signifies spiritual protection over the entire household, ensuring that divine protection is granted from above, safeguarding the home from all directions.
3. Qur'anic Verses: The verses written on the amulet are chosen for their protective qualities, particularly verses from the Qur'an that emphasize safeguarding and divine protection. These verses are believed to carry spiritual power, ensuring the safety and well-being of the residents and the house itself.
4. Circular/Mandala Pattern: The choice of a circular or mandala-like structure is particularly significant. In Balinese culture, the mandala represents wholeness, unity, and the cosmos. It is often used to symbolize balance and harmony, concepts central to both Balinese spirituality and the broader Hindu tradition. The circle in the Qur'anic amulet serves not only as a symbol of spiritual completeness but also as a boundary that protects the space within it. This incorporation of local symbolism enhances the amulet's cultural relevance, aligning Islamic spiritual practices with Balinese traditional beliefs.

This structure reflects a dynamic fusion of Islamic and Balinese cultural elements, demonstrating how Qur'anic amulets serve not just as religious objects but as symbols of negotiation between religious identity and local tradition. The integration of these elements into the amulet's design provides a deeper understanding of its role in the daily life of the community.

This combination of text and symbols forms the distinctive identity of the amulet while reflecting the local understanding of sacred functions in everyday life, as shown in the following image:

¹⁷ The results of this symbolic mapping are summarized from the results of an interview with Mr. Ach Syaf'ie, on November 14, 2025.

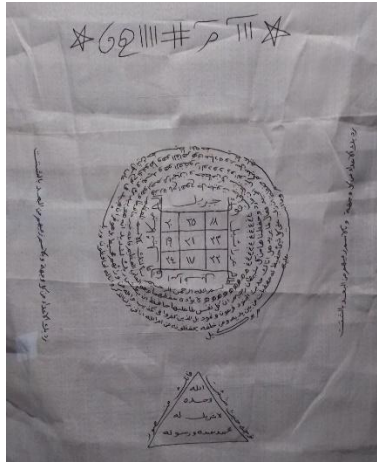


Figure 1. Qur'anic amulet written on white cloth in the Pemuteran Geroggak area of Bali

Figure 1 above shows a ritual artifact in the form of an amulet written on a piece of white cloth. The structure of the amulet in the picture consists of a combination of graphic elements including geometric arrangements, rows of numbers, special symbols, and verses from the Qur'an that are arranged systematically. The arrangement of these elements indicates that the writing process follows certain patterns and rules that are well-known in the practice of amulet making, where each shape, number, and writing has its own function and symbolic value.

The verses from the Qur'an written on the white cloth consist of 12 verses, as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Verses from the Qur'an Written on White Cloth

No	Verse	Text of the Verse
1	Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 255	وَلَا يَتُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ
2	Q.S. Yusuf [12]: 64	فَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ حَافِظًا وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ
3	Q.S. Al-Shaffat [37]: 7	وَحِفْظًا مِّنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ مَّارِدٍ
4	Q.S. Al-Hijr [15]: 17	وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَّجِيمٍ
5	Q.S. Al-Tariq [86]: 4	إِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ
6	Q.S. Al-Buruj [85]: 12-22	إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ الْعُفُورُ الْوُدُودُ ﴿١٤﴾ ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ﴿١٧﴾ فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١٨﴾ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ ﴿٢١﴾ فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

7	Q.S. Al-An'am [6]: 61	وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً
8	Q.S. Hud [11]: 58	إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيظٌ
9	Q.S. Al-Ra'd [13]: 11	لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ
10	Q.S. Al-Hijr [15]: 9	إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَفِظُونَ
11	Q.S. Saba' [34]: 21	وَرَبُّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيظٌ
12	Q.S. Al-Syura [42]: 6	اللَّهُ حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ

The verses of the Qur'an listed in the Qur'anic amulet in Table 1 above are a collection of *hifdz* verses, which are verses traditionally considered to have the function of protecting, guarding, and strengthening the spirituality of their users. These verses were chosen because they are believed to contain a request for protection from Allah SWT from various threats, physical disturbances, and unwanted incidents.

In the religious context of society, *hifdz* verses such as Ayat Kursi are often used in amulets as symbols of faith and trust in divine assistance.¹⁸ The existence of these verses not only serves as sacred writing, but also as a spiritual symbol that connects the wearer with the protective power of Allah SWT.¹⁹ Thus, amulets are not considered magical objects, but rather a means of seeking security, peace, and metaphysical help. These verses are treated with the utmost respect, reflecting the community's belief that the words of Allah SWT possess spiritual power that always accompanies and protects individuals in various circumstances.

After the Qur'anic amulet above is completed, it is then placed and installed on a new building or newly constructed house, on the Arabic side, as shown in the image below:



Figure 2. Position of the Qur'anic Amulet When Installed on the Roof of a New Building/House

¹⁸Anwar Mujahidin, "Analisis Simbolik Penggunaan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Sebagai Jimat Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Ponorogo," *KALAM* 10, no. 1 (2017): 43, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v10i1.159>.

¹⁹Khilmi Ady et al., "Nilai Spiritualitas Dalam Seni Kaligrafi Ayat Kursi: Studi Living Qur'an," *Jurnal Alwatzikhoebillah: Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Ekonomi, Humaniora* 10, no. 2 (2024): 481–89, <https://doi.org/10.37567/alwatzikhoebillah.v10i2.3049>.

As shown in Figure 2 above, the Qur'anic amulet (shown in the blue box in the image) is installed on a structural element of the new building, at the top of the roof frame. The Qur'anic amulet is placed at the meeting point of the support beams, which is structurally a vital area in supporting the entire structure. Placement in this strategic position indicates the community's belief that the top of the building serves as a symbolic space that requires spiritual protection.²⁰ This practice reflects the integration of local beliefs with modern construction processes, in which the Qur'anic amulet is positioned as a medium of non-material protection that is believed to maintain stability, safety, and energy balance in the building. This phenomenon also confirms the transformation of the function of amulets from individual protection artifacts to ritual elements inherent in house construction, thus revealing the ongoing dynamics of cultural adaptation in society.²¹

History and Practice of Writing Qur'anic Verses as Amulets in Bali

Historically, the tradition of writing Qur'anic amulets on white cloth in Bali has a long history and is closely related to the spread of Islam in the archipelago. This tradition is not merely a ritual, but also reflects the community's belief in the spiritual power and protection that can be provided by these sacred readings.²² When Islamic teachings entered and interacted with the local culture, a process of integration between Islamic values and pre-existing traditional beliefs took place. Communities that were previously familiar with objects believed to have powers or signs of protection began to associate these with elements of Islam, particularly through the use of verses from the Holy Qur'an. This is where the practice of writing amulets emerged, combining old beliefs about symbolic powers with the majesty of Allah's words as the main source of protection and salvation.

Initially, amulets served as a means of protection for individuals in general. Amulets are anything believed to possess power and are also believed to be heirlooms with magical powers that can help solve various problems in life. Meanwhile, Qur'anic amulets are amulets that use verses from the Qur'an and *the names* of Allah in their creation and composition, and their meaning is clear when written or recited.²³ People carry amulets when traveling, keep them on their bodies, or place them in certain locations to protect themselves from illness, danger, and disturbances from supernatural beings.²⁴ With the development of religious understanding and changes in the social context, the meaning and function of amulets began to undergo a transformation. From being personal items, they came to be used more specifically as protectors for homes or buildings. This change in function also reflects a shift in the spiritual orientation of society from personal protection to collective protection that emphasizes the safety of the family and the harmony of the living environment.

In its early stages, the amulet was known as a personal defense tool related to individual needs, such as safety while traveling, protection from supernatural disturbances, and the fulfillment of personal spiritual needs. The amulet was considered a means of directly accompanying its user, so its orientation was toward individual protection rather than collective interests or the home environment.

²⁰ Interview with Mr. Ach Syaff'ie, November 7, 2025

²¹Muhammad Daffa, "Signifikansi Nilai-Nilai Filosofis Dalam Tradisi Panjang Jimat Di Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon Terhadap Masyarakat Modern," *Jurnal Lafinus* 1, no. 1 (2024): 94–123, <https://doi.org/10.22146/lafinus.v1i1.11261>.

²²Revi Nayla Putri et al., "Mengungkap Dampak Positif Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Terhadap Mental Dan Emosional Anak," *Proceeding Conference on Da'wab and Communication Studies* 3 (December 2024): 84, <https://doi.org/10.61994/cdcs.v3i1.196>.

²³Nurullah Nurullah and Ari Handasa, "Penggunaan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Sebagai Jimat," *TAFSE: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2020): 83, <https://doi.org/10.22373/tafse.v5i2.9082>.

²⁴Muhammad Zainul Hasan, "Resepsi Al-Qur'an Sebagai Medium Penyembuhan Dalam Tradisi Bejampi Di Lombok," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 21, no. 1 (2020): 133–52, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2020.2101-07>.

Critically, this phenomenon can also be viewed as a form of adaptation by a minority religion in a predominantly Hindu context. In Bali, where the majority of the population practices Hinduism, the Muslim minority community has had to negotiate local values in order to preserve their religious identity.²⁵ The practice of Qur'anic amulets in Bali, with the incorporation of local symbols such as the use of white cloth and circular patterns, is a clear example of how Islamic elements are adapted to fit local cultural practices. The integration of Islamic symbols like Qur'anic verses with Balinese traditional symbolism, such as mandalas, strengthens the spiritual meaning of the amulets within the local cultural context.

This process of adaptation reflects the flexibility of Islamic culture, which not only preserves religious principles but can also be accepted and reinterpreted according to the spiritual needs of the local community.²⁶ The use of Qur'anic amulets as symbols of home protection exemplifies how Islam interacts with local traditions, creating a space where religious identity can be maintained while also adapting to the surrounding cultural environment.

Field observations show that the writing of Qur'anic amulets for household purposes in Pemuteran, Bali, began to develop about eighteen years ago, which marked the beginning of a real change in function.²⁷ With social shifts, developments in beliefs, and increased public attention to home security, this practice then expanded in meaning. Amulets, which were once merely for personal use, are now seen as a means of protection for the home and family members.²⁸ This change is inseparable from the shift in the mindset of the Pemuteran Bali community, which increasingly views home security as a crucial factor in daily life, especially when facing social uncertainty and changes in lifestyle.

This expansion of function also reflects a process of reinterpreting religious symbols to keep them relevant to the needs of the times. The practice of writing amulets is now not limited to traditional methods, but has adapted in terms of writing style, composition, and placement within the home. This phenomenon confirms that spiritual traditions are not static, but rather dynamic and ready to adapt to changes in social context. The transformation of amulets from objects of individual protection to amulets for the home demonstrates a living, flexible cultural continuity that is capable of reinterpreting religious symbols as a way to address anxieties and new needs in modern society.²⁹

In the cultural context of society, a house is not only seen as a place of shelter, but also as a spiritual space that represents balance, tranquility, and blessings.³⁰ Therefore, it is considered necessary to protect the house from bad influences, both visible and invisible. Amulets are then used as symbols to protect the house, as well as a medium for prayer that is expected to bring safety to its inhabitants. In practice, amulets are made in a sacred manner. A Qur'anic amulet writer or spiritual figure writes holy verses on clean white cloth in a state of purity from impurity, facing the qibla and not leaning on anything, including their hands. And every time they write anything, whether symbols or letters, they

²⁵ Fajri Zulia Ramdhani, *Religious Expression of Young Muslim Women's Identity amid Diversity in Bali*, 20, no. 2 (2025): 189–218, <https://doi.org/10.21580%25252Fsa.v20i2.28370>.

²⁶ Arif Saefudin et al., "History, Cultural Shifts, and Adaptation in Social Change: An Ethnographic Study in the Aboge Islamic Community," *Journal of Innovation in Educational and Cultural Research* 4, no. 2 (2023): 303–10, <https://doi.org/10.46843/jiecr.v4i2.596>.

²⁷ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 14, 2025

²⁸ Safira Malia Hayati et al., "Al-Qur'an Dan Praktik Penggunaan Jimat Dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Kecamatan Kampa," *An-Nida'* 45, no. 1 (2021): 46, <https://doi.org/10.24014/an-nida.v45i1.16531>.

²⁹ Agung Zainal Muttakin Raden et al., "Kaligrafi Arab Pada Jimat Dalam Perspektif Seni, Magi, Dan Religi," *CaLLs (Journal of Culture, Arts, Literature, and Linguistics)* 5, no. 1 (2019): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.30872/calls.v5i1.1717>.

³⁰ Ni Ketut Agusintadewi, "Hakekat Paon Sebagai Wujud Dimensi Spiritual Hunian Tradisional Bali Aga Di Bali Tengah," *Prosiding Seminar Peng-Konteks-an Arsitektur Nusantara*, March 24, 2018, A042–49, <https://doi.org/10.32315/sem.2.a042>.

must begin with *the basmalab*. After completion, the Qur'anic amulet is hung or tied to the highest part of the building structure, namely the roof.³¹

Table 2. Elements and Symbolic Meanings in the Qur'anic Amulet

No	Element	Symbolic Meaning	Cultural and Spiritual Function
1	Placement at the highest part of the building	Symbolizes a noble position, providing comprehensive protection from top to bottom	As a symbol of protection and warding off danger that shelters all residents of the house
2	White cloth	Base color; symbolizing purity, cleanliness, and self-purification	Becoming a sacred medium worthy of the verses of the Qur'an and a spiritual symbol
3	Verses of the Qur'an	Representing high spiritual power, blessings, and divine protection	Providing religious legitimacy and forming the core of the amulet's power

From Table 2 above, it can be explained that the placement and writing of Qur'anic amulets are not without meaning. The highest part of the building is seen as a point of protection that protects the entire house from top to bottom. The choice of white cloth as a medium for writing has a deep symbolic meaning, namely that the white color of the cloth used is considered a basic color that symbolizes purity.³² The writing on the amulet consists of certain verses that are believed to have high spiritual meaning, accompanied by several symbols or signs that serve as markers of the owner's identity as well as spiritual reinforcement.³³ Belief in amulets containing verses from the Qur'an, in this case, not only functions as a physical object, but also as a cultural symbol preserved by the community.³⁴ Thus, the tradition of writing amulets on white cloth not only functions as a religious practice or belief, but also as a form of cultural expression that is alive and dynamic.

Motivation for Placing Amulets in New Building Structures in Bali

The use of Qur'anic amulets among the Balinese people is part of a fairly complex cultural and religious practice. It reflects how people interact between spiritual beliefs, social structures, and the cultural values they live by in their daily lives. The use of amulets is not only a symbol of religious belief, but also a form of cultural expression that shows how communities interpret and apply spiritual values in their social and cultural contexts.³⁵ This tradition is not only understood as a mystical activity, but also adapts Islamic teachings to their own cultural context, creating a unique system that is relevant to local needs and values. The motivation of the community in using amulets can be seen from several factors: religious, social, and cultural, namely:

1. Religious Factors

The use of Qur'anic amulets is based on the belief that the verses of the Qur'an, prayers, or words of remembrance have spiritual powers that can provide protection and safety. Balinese people view amulets not as magical objects, but as *a means* or intermediary to seek help from Allah. This

³¹ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 7, 2025

³²I. Gede Wahyu Simrana et al., "Makna Bentuk dan Aksara Rerajahan," *Jurnal Bali Membangun Bali* 4, no. 2 (2023): 108, <https://doi.org/10.51172/jbmb.v4i2.273>.

³³ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 7, 2025

³⁴Revi Nayla Putri et al., "Mengungkap Dampak Positif Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Terhadap Mental Dan Emosional Anak," *Proceeding Conference on Da'wah and Communication Studies* 3 (December 2024): 86, <https://doi.org/10.61994/cdcs.v3i1.196>.

³⁵Affiat Mijil Candra Smara et al., "Tradisi Ritual Penjamasan Jimat Di Desa Kalisalak, Kabupaten Banyumas (Tafsir Atas Simbol Dan Makna)," *Jurnal Budaya Etnika* 8, no. 1 (2024): 45, <https://doi.org/10.26742/jbe.v8i1.1647>.

understanding shows a form of religious reception that is alive, where sacred texts are not only read or memorized, but also presented functionally in everyday life.³⁶

Qur'anic amulets are made by individuals with religious authority, such as ustadz, kiai, or spiritual leaders who are considered to have deep religious knowledge. The process is carried out with great solemnity, namely in a state of purity, accompanied by intentions of worship and the recitation of certain prayers.³⁷ White cloth is chosen as the medium for writing because it symbolizes purity and sincerity of intention, while the verses or prayers written on it are believed to bring blessings and protection from Allah. Amulets exist across various traditions, religions, and cultures, reflecting the human need to connect with supernatural powers in order to face the uncertainties and challenges of life.³⁸

Religious views on amulets are also subject to differences in interpretation. The ruling on amulets in Islam is that if the use of amulets is believed to be without the will of Allah, then this is considered major shirk, and if the amulet is only a means and has no power of its own, then it falls under minor shirk. Some amulets originate from the Qur'an, but some scholars permit their use while others do not, because the general argument regarding amulets does not consider the source of an amulet.³⁹ This debate shows an interesting dialectic between normative religious teachings and the religious expressions of society. In this context, the religious motivation behind the use of amulets represents the way in which communities interpret and balance Islamic spiritual values with deeply rooted local traditions, including those of the Balinese community.

The practice of using objects with special powers also shows how communities try to harmonize religious beliefs with the desire for security and balance in life. These objects are considered symbols of devotion and hope to the Creator, where every word and phrase written on them has a deep spiritual meaning. In daily activities, these objects become part of an expression of faith that is manifested in the form of tangible objects believed to bring peace of mind. This phenomenon shows that the community does not only focus on the physical aspects of religion, but also highlights the spiritual dimension that is rich in meaning. Through these objects, the community finds a way to integrate Islamic teachings with ancestral traditions without abandoning the values of monotheism. The use of these objects is a manifestation of the spiritual demands of humans who always seek closeness to God through religious tools and symbols that are considered sacred.

2. Social Factors

Socially, amulets serve as a means of binding solidarity and a symbol of social identity within a community.⁴⁰ According to Emile Durkheim, solidarity is a relationship between individuals based on morals, religion, beliefs, traditions, or customs that are considered by society.⁴¹ Belief in amulets forms a social network based on shared values. This practice is not only about self-protection, but also about recognition and participation in the same social system. When someone has an amulet from a

³⁶Ahmad Zainal Abidin et al., "Amulet of Quranic Verses in East Javanese Rural: Unraveling Mystical Theology and Living Quran," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 12, no. 6 (2023): 396, <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2023-0177>.

³⁷ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November

³⁸Samsurizal Samsurizal and Iftekar Mohammad Sadi, "Azimat Dalam Perspektif Sosial-Budaya, Agama, Dan Spiritual Peradaban Manusia," SSRN Scholarly Paper no. 5482846 (Social Science Research Network, June 14, 2025), 35, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5482846>.

³⁹ Hesti Wulan Pratamy, "Semiotic Analysis of Amulets in the Thugun Mandi (thesis, Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau 2022), 24, <https://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/60391/>.

⁴⁰Noftaul Hikma, "Solidaritas Sosial Dalam Tradisi Ngelepot Napai Di Pekon Way Kerap," *Socio Religia* 6, no. 1 (2025): 24–40, <https://doi.org/10.24042/wntb7y09>.

⁴¹Cintani Septi Syabina, "Sejarah Panjang Jimat Pada Malam Maulid Nabi Di Kota Cirebon," *Konferensi Nasional Mahasiswa Sejarah Peradaban Islam* 1 (October 2024): 676.

respected religious figure or traditional elder, it symbolizes social attachment, respect, and spiritual legitimacy from that community.

In addition to serving as a symbol of protection, amulets also strengthen the social structure because they are a medium of interaction between spiritual leaders and the general public. The process of giving amulets is often accompanied by advice, prayers, and moral teachings that reinforce the values of togetherness and belief in spiritual powers. In some communities, amulets even become a symbol of social status, with those who have certain amulets considered to have a special relationship with spiritual leaders or ancestors.⁴² This social motivation reflects how amulets play a role in maintaining social harmony and strengthening a sense of togetherness in communities that still uphold spiritual traditions.

In addition to serving as protection and having deep meaning, amulets also play a significant role in maintaining social balance and preserving traditions amid changing times. In the context of traditional societies, amulets are not only regarded as sacred objects, but also as a medium of symbolic communication that connects the relationship between humans, ancestors, and divine powers.⁴³ Through this practice, the community reaffirms their cultural identity while strengthening their sense of ownership of their ancestral heritage. The use of amulets is a way to preserve the collective values that have long united the community in moral and spiritual bonds.

Amulets serve as a form of social expression that demonstrates the continuity of the values of cooperation and interdependence among community members. When a person receives an amulet from a religious leader or traditional figure, this act not only reflects a belief in spiritual power, but also demonstrates the social closeness between the giver and the recipient. This relationship contains symbolic values of trust, respect, and social hierarchy that are continuously maintained within the community structure. Amulets also serve as a tool for internalizing ethical and moral values through religious messages conveyed during the giving process.

The existence of amulets in modern society reflects the capacity of traditions to adapt while retaining their core meaning.⁴⁴ Despite advances in education and technology, belief in amulets persists because they fulfill spiritual and emotional needs that cannot be met by rationality alone. Amulets are not merely historical relics, but also a reflection of how society negotiates modernity and spirituality, maintaining their social identity amid the currents of cultural and temporal change.

3. Cultural Motivation

The use of Qur'anic amulets is a form of cultural expression that reflects how Balinese people interpret and bring religious teachings to life in their daily lives. This tradition not only demonstrates the relationship between humans and God, but also represents a valuable heritage that must be diligently preserved.⁴⁵ In many communities, the practice of making and using amulets is passed down from generation to generation and has become part of the local knowledge system that contains symbolic values and life philosophies, and Bali is no exception.

⁴²Fatonah Fatonah, "Pemaknaan Jimat Sebagai Simbol Religi Bagi Mahasiswa Jepang," *Jurnal Komunikasi Global* 7, no. 1 (2018): 53–67, <https://doi.org/10.24815/jkg.v7i1.10500>.

⁴³Silviana Nur Azizah, "Makna Komunikasi Nonverbal Dalam Tradisi Upacara Panjang Jimat Di Keraton Kasepuhan" (Universitas Islam Negeri Siber Syekh Nurjati, 2025).

⁴⁴Munira and Muhammad Anil Alwi, "Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Jawa Terhadap Tradisi Penggunaan Jimat Suwok Pada Bayi Dalam Konsep Moderasi Beragama," *Mubeza* 14, no. 1 (2024): 34–39, <https://doi.org/10.54604/mbz.v14i1.344>.

⁴⁵Ardi Afriansyah et al., "The 'Panjang Jimat' Tradition of Kasepuhan Cirebon in Strengthening National Identity," *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 5, no. 2 (2024): 120, <https://doi.org/10.23917/sosial.v5i2.5746>.

White cloth as a medium for writing Qur'anic amulets is generally identified with purity, sincerity, and cleansing from all kinds of impurities, both physical and spiritual.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the writing of Hijaiyah letters, Arabic numbers, or certain geometric symbols represents spiritual balance and order. The ritual process of making Qur'anic amulets is also often associated with certain times that are considered sacred, such as Friday nights, the month of Ramadan, or major religious holidays. However, in Bali, there are no specific time requirements that must be followed by amulet writers. The writing process does not depend on a specific day, date, or phase of time that is usually considered to have spiritual power. The writer of the Qur'anic amulet does it when they feel ready, calm, and in the right state of mind. In other words, there are no fixed or traditionally inherited rules regarding time, because what is more important is the writer's readiness and devotion when carrying out the writing process.⁴⁷ All of this indicates that the practice of using Qur'anic amulets is not merely a *magical* activity, but also a form of preserving cultural values rooted in the religious worldview of society.

Qur'anic amulets, which are a form of mystical magical artifacts, have an authenticity that visually gives a magical and sacred impression.⁴⁸ The holy verses are not only read in the context of ritual worship, but are also presented in physical form, which is believed to have spiritual and protective powers. This phenomenon shows that the Balinese people bring the Qur'an to life in their daily lives, not only as a text, but as a real religious experience.

Cultural motivation shows that the practice of using Qur'anic amulets is the result of a process of acculturation between Islamic teachings and local traditions. Amulets become a symbolic means of reinforcing cultural identity while maintaining the spiritual continuity of the community. They serve as a space where religion, culture, and spiritual experiences meet and shape a unique religious reality.

This tradition serves as a bridge that unites the beliefs of the Balinese people with religious values, reflecting cultural harmony and spirituality in their daily lives.⁴⁹ Qur'anic amulets are not only understood as a means of self-protection, but also as a symbol of faith, cultural expression, and a means of maintaining social cohesion. From a phenomenological perspective, Qur'anic amulets are a manifestation of the religious experiences of a community that interprets and applies religious teachings according to their needs and life contexts. Therefore, research on amulets cannot be separated from an understanding of the value systems, traditions, and symbolic meanings that live and evolve within a community.

Balinese Society's Reception of the Installation of Qur'anic Amulets on New Building Structures

The community's reception of the writing of Qur'anic verses as amulets shows a form of acceptance that is not only religious but also cultural, spiritual, and social.⁵⁰ In a society that still strongly holds traditional and religious values, writing sacred verses on white cloth, paper, or other media is considered proof of faith manifested in the form of a symbol of protection. The belief in the potential of the verses of the Qur'an stems from the understanding that every word of God holds supernatural powers that can provide protection, peace, and safety from threats.⁵¹ Through this acceptance, the community has made the Qur'an more than just a text to be read in formal worship

⁴⁶ Mohammad Faizin, "The Acculturation of Islamic Values and the Symbolic 2025, 66.

⁴⁷ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 11, 2025

⁴⁸ Akbar Warisqianto, "Eksistensi Artefak Kebudayaan Mistik Magis Dalam Penciptaan Seni Instalasi" (masters, Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, 2023), 19, <https://lib.isi.ac.id>.

⁴⁹ Febri Ferdiansah et al., "Tradisi Pengalungan Jimat Kalung Benang Pada Bayi Di Desa Pangkalan Kecamatan Sobang (kajian Living Hadis)," *Jurnal Kajian Agama dan Multikulturalisme Indonesia*, 2024, 5.

⁵⁰ Muhammad Amin and Muhammad Arfah Nurhayat, "Resepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Al-Quran: Pengantar Menuju Metode Living Quran," *Jurnal Ilmu Agama: Mengkaji Doktrin, Pemikiran, Dan Fenomena Agama* 21, no. 2 (2020): 290–303, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jia.v21i2.7423>.

⁵¹ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 9, 2025

activities, but an important element in everyday life that appears in symbolic and magical forms. The placement of sacred verses on Qur'anic amulets is interpreted as a manifestation of belief in the power of Allah SWT, expressed in symbols that can be seen and felt. The practice of making and using amulets involving verses from the Qur'an and Islamic teachings in society, which has been passed down from generation to generation, is part of the community's perception or understanding of the Qur'an and Islamic teachings.⁵²

In traditional societies, the practice of writing amulets with verses from the Qur'an has become part of a sacred hereditary tradition. Usually, the writing is done by people who are considered to have a high level of religious or spiritual knowledge, such as religious leaders, ustadz, or amulet writers. They write the holy verses in a state of purity, with certain manners such as performing wudu', reciting *the basmalah*, and using clean media such as white cloth. This action is not done carelessly, but with procedures that are believed to be able to maintain the sacredness of the writing. The Balinese people's reception of this process shows their high respect for the Qur'an, which is considered not only a source of law and morality, but also a source of protection from all forms of disturbance, both visible and invisible.⁵³

The writing of Qur'anic verses on amulets is not only interpreted spiritually, but also as a form of cultural expression that combines local elements with Islamic teachings. The various forms of amulets, which are written in circles, squares, or certain geometric patterns, demonstrate the creativity and beauty of the community's reception of the sacred text. Arabic writing, numbers, certain letters, or symbols that are only understood by the maker. In practice, amulets are often arranged in complex symbolic patterns, even believed to contain thousands of coded messages.⁵⁴ For the community, the beauty of these shapes and patterns is not only an aesthetic aspect, but also has magical and religious functions. In the Balinese context, this reception shows that the Balinese community understands the Qur'an not only through speech or reading, but also through visuals and symbols. The holy verses become something that is alive, moving, and functioning in a real way in their social and spiritual lives.

The community's reception of the writing of Qur'anic verses as amulets also reflects a form of adaptation to Islamic values in the local context. When Islam arrived and interacted with the local culture, the community did not immediately abandon their old beliefs in sacred objects, but rather Islamized them by adding elements from the Qur'an. Amulets that were previously based on local symbols were then Islamized by incorporating sacred verses, making them a form of fusion that was socially and religiously accepted. For the community, including Bali, this was not considered deviant, because the intended meaning remained the same, namely protection and safety derived from the power of Allah. This is what is referred to as the functional reception of the community accepting and responding to the Qur'an, whether through acceptance, response, utilization, or use of the text, mushaf, or even certain phrases from the Qur'an.⁵⁵

The public's reception of amulets containing verses from the Qur'an also has a strong psychological dimension. People feel calmer, safer, and more protected when they have or hang amulets containing sacred verses. This sense of security does not only come from the physical object,

⁵²Revky Oktavian Sakti et al., "Penerapan Kajian Semiotika Budaya Dengan Muatan Al-Qur'an (Simbolisme Dalam Wafaq Memuat Al-Qur'an Bagi Masyarakat Muslim; Struktur, Makna Dan Ideologi)," *Journal of Scientech Research and Development* 5, no. 1 (2023): 373, <https://doi.org/10.56670/jsrd.v5i1.144>.

⁵³ Interview with Mr. Ach Syaff'ie, November 9, 2025

⁵⁴Ade Griyarmanto Hakim, "Penggunaan Ayat Suci Al-Qur'an Sebagai Rajah pada Masyarakat Desa Muara Tupuh Kecamatan Laung Tuhup Kalimantan Tengah," *JISMA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Manajemen, dan Akuntansi* 3, no. 5 (2025): 1508.

⁵⁵Sholihan Sholihan and Ria Puspitasari, "Resepsi Alquran Santri Pondok Pesantren MBI Mambaul Falah Bawean," *AR ROSYAD: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Sosial Humaniora* 3, no. 1 (2024): 79, <https://doi.org/10.55148/arrosyad.v3i1.1440>.

but also from the spiritual belief that they are under Allah's protection through His words.⁵⁶ This shows how faith and emotional needs are combined in a symbolic form that is easily accepted. Qur'anic amulets become a kind of representation of prayers and hopes, as well as an intermediary between humans and God in a form that can be felt in a tangible way. The public's reception of Qur'anic amulets shows that the religious dimension is not only present in the form of ritual worship, but that people also believe in the blessings of prayers that become their guardians or protectors in the form of amulets.⁵⁷

In addition to its individual function, the community's reception of the writing of Qur'anic verses as amulets also has social value that strengthens relationships between residents. In certain traditions, the writing and placement of Quranic amulets is done together, for example when building a new house, opening a business, or holding a traditional ceremony. This activity is often accompanied by reciting prayers, blessings, or joint activities that strengthen a sense of togetherness and collective faith. The Qur'anic amulet becomes a symbol of collective prayer, as well as a sign that the building or individual is under God's protection. However, in the placement of Qur'anic amulets in this study, there were no ritual ceremonies.⁵⁸ Sacred texts are not only accepted theologically, but also interpreted according to the social, cultural, and spiritual needs of the community. In this case, the writing of verses from the Qur'an on Qur'anic amulets is proof that the Qur'an is alive in society, interacting with reality and becoming part of a functional belief system. This reception confirms that the community has the creative ability to interpret and present sacred verses in their living space without losing their religious essence.

The Balinese community's reception of the writing of Qur'anic verses as amulets is not merely a traditional phenomenon, but also reflects the continuity of the relationship between text, culture, and faith. This practice shows that the Quran is not only present in the mushaf and worship, but also in symbolic forms that serve to maintain the spiritual balance of society. Through this reception, the Balinese people affirm their belief that every verse of the Qur'an carries power, blessings, and protection, making it worthy of being present in various aspects of life. The writing of sacred verses on amulets is a tangible manifestation of how the text of revelation is accepted, internalized, and interpreted in a living way by the people, as part of humanity's effort to always be close to God and seek peace under the protection of His words.

Conclusion

The practice of making amulets in Bali, which has been going on for almost twenty years, shows a way of religious acceptance that combines local traditions with the spiritual meaning of verses from the Qur'an as *hifdz* verses that are believed to have a protective function. The Balinese people not only view the holy verses (the Qur'an) as normative texts, but also actualize them as symbols that are considered to bridge protection from God and fulfill a sense of security, both for oneself and within the home environment. The change in the function of amulets from individual protection to building protection reflects socio-religious changes that continue to adapt to the needs and cultural structures of the Pemuteran Gerogak community in Bali.

This study is limited to the relationship between Qur'anic amulets (which contain verses from the Qur'an) and their reception by the Balinese community. Therefore, as further research, there is a

⁵⁶ Interview with Mr. Ach Syaff'ie, November 7, 2025

⁵⁷Yuliani Rahmah, "Omamori dalam Kepercayaan Masyarakat Jepang," *KIRYOKU* 3, no. 2 (2019): 95, <https://doi.org/10.14710/kiryoku.v3i2.92-99>.

⁵⁸ Interview with Mr. Ach Syafi'ie, November 20, 2025

need for further studies that explore variations in amulet texts through philological analysis, examine shifts in practices between generations from an anthropological perspective, and deepen the study of the reception of the Qur'an to understand how religious and local cultural authorities influence the community's interpretation of sacred texts in physical form. These approaches are expected to broaden our understanding of religious dynamics and cultural changes occurring within society.

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