

## RECONSTRUCTING QUR'ANIC RECEPTION TYPOLOGY IN PESANTREN: EXTENDING A. RAFIQ'S THEORY

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### Abstract

*Studies on the Living Qur'an in pesantren mostly emphasize exegetical, aesthetic, and functional aspects, with limited attention to how Qur'anic meaning emerges through lived experience. Prior research has also not examined how spiritual and socio-economic engagements with the Qur'an extend beyond Rafiq's typology. This gap underscores the need to reassess Qur'anic reception through a phenomenological lens. This research examines the dynamics of Al-Qur'an reception in pesantren by expanding A. Rafiq's typology—which includes exegesis, aesthetics, and functional—through two new categories: eternal and economic reception. The study aims to reconstruct and enrich the Living Qur'an framework through daily practices in pesantren with different characteristics. Langitan Islamic Boarding School and al-Muhibbin Jatirogo Islamic Boarding School, Tuban were selected because they represent the two main pesantren models in Indonesia: salaf and modern. Langitan is known as a historical salaf pesantren that maintains classical methods such as sorogan, bandongan, and halaqah, along with a strong emphasis on classical texts and established traditions. Meanwhile, al-Muhibbin represents a modern pesantren with a collective management system, an integrated curriculum, and programs to strengthen foreign languages. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with Edmund Husserl's phenomenological analysis. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results show that in a Husserlian phenomenological view,*

*Qur'anic reception in pesantren is seen as an intentional act of consciousness in which meaning emerges through lived experience rather than mere interaction with the text. Within this process, the Qur'an functions as a dynamic noema shaped by communal practices and pedagogical structures, generating forms such as divine blessing, spiritual nobility, legitimized authority, and economic value. These findings show that Qur'anic meaning in pesantren is shaped through embodied practice and economic engagement. Further research may examine how these dimensions interact in pesantren and wider Muslim communities amid digitalization and modern educational reforms.*

Penelitian tentang Living Qur'an di pesantren selama ini lebih banyak menekankan aspek eksegesis, estetis, dan fungsional, sementara perhatian terhadap bagaimana makna Al-Qur'an terbentuk melalui pengalaman hidup masih terbatas. Kajian sebelumnya juga belum menelaah bagaimana keterlibatan spiritual dan sosialekonomi terhadap Al-Qur'an melampaui tipologi Rafiq. Kesenjangan ini menunjukkan perlunya meninjau kembali resepsi Al-Qur'an dengan perspektif fenomenologis. Penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika resepsi Al-Qur'an di lingkungan pesantren dengan mengembangkan tipologi A. Rafiq—yang mencakup resepsi eksegetis, estetis, dan fungsional—melalui penambahan dua kategori baru, yaitu resepsi eternal dan resepsi ekonomi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah merekonstruksi dan memperkaya kerangka Living Qur'an melalui praktik keseharian di pesantren yang memiliki karakteristik berbeda. Pesantren Langitan dan Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban dipilih karena mewakili dua model utama pesantren di Indonesia, yakni salaf dan modern. Langitan dikenal sebagai pesantren salaf bersejarah yang mempertahankan metode klasik seperti sorogan, bandongan, dan halaqah, serta penekanan kuat pada kitab-kitab tradisional dan tradisi keagamaan. Sementara itu, al-Muhibbin merepresentasikan pesantren modern dengan sistem manajemen kolektif, kurikulum terpadu, dan program penguatan bahasa asing. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan analisis fenomenologi Edmund Husserl. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam pandangan fenomenologi Husserlian, resepsi Al-Qur'an di pesantren dipahami sebagai tindakan kesadaran intensional, di mana makna muncul melalui pengalaman hidup, bukan semata-mata interaksi tekstual. Dalam proses tersebut, Al-Qur'an berfungsi sebagai noema yang dinamis, dibentuk oleh praktik komunal dan struktur pedagogis, sehingga memunculkan bentuk-bentuk seperti berkah ilahi, kemuliaan spiritual, otoritas yang dilegitimasi, dan nilai ekonomi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa makna Al-Qur'an di pesantren terbentuk melalui praktik keagamaan yang dihayati secara langsung dan melalui keterlibatan ekonomi komunitas. Penelitian lanjutan perlu mengkaji lebih jauh interaksi antara dimensi ekonomi dan transendental dari resepsi Al-Qur'an di pesantren maupun masyarakat Muslim yang lebih luas, khususnya dalam konteks digitalisasi dan kebijakan pendidikan modern.

**Keywords:** *Husserlian phenomenology, Indonesian pesantren, living qur'an, qur'anic reception*

## Introduction

The reception of the Qur'an in contemporary Muslim societies has increasingly attracted scholarly attention, particularly within the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which examines how Muslims engage with the sacred text beyond formal exegesis (Rafiq, 2021). In Indonesia, pesantren serve as dynamic centers of Qur'anic reception, where religious texts are not only studied but also lived and embodied in daily practice (Annas et al., 2024). Despite this central role, studies on Qur'anic reception in pesantren remain limited and tend to focus primarily on interpretive traditions (*tafsir*), while other forms of engagement—such as aesthetic, functional, and economic aspects—have received comparatively little attention.

A. Rafiq's (2014) influential typology of Qur'anic reception—comprising interpretive, aesthetic, and functional forms—has shaped much of the subsequent research on the Living Qur'an. However, this tripartite framework does not fully capture the complexity and diversity of Qur'anic engagement across pesantren cultures. Recent studies also highlight additional dimensions, including symbolic reverence and economic instrumentality, yet these categories remain theoretically underdeveloped and underexplored empirically (Fais, 2021; Fathurrosyid et al., 2024).

Preliminary findings from ethnographic interviews with several students at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin in Tuban indicate that they interpret the verse 'Indeed, it is We who sent down the Reminder, and indeed, We will be its guardian' (Qur'an, al-Hijr: 9) as a form of human involvement in preserving the purity of the Qur'an. This interpretation extends beyond classical exegesis, which generally positions God as the sole guardian of revelation (Mukholik, 2017), emphasizing instead that humans are commanded to participate actively in safeguarding the text. Such practices reflect what this study terms "eternal reception"—a dimension of Qur'anic reception in which the act of memorization and transmission constitutes both spiritual devotion and social responsibility, ensuring the text's ongoing relevance and preservation in the communal life of the pesantren.

This perspective resonates with scholarship on Qur'anic transmission and preservation, which recognizes the interaction between divine protection and human agency, such as the collection and memorization efforts of the

Companions (Annas et al., 2024). By highlighting human participation alongside divine guardianship, this study offers a more nuanced typology that broadens existing understandings of Qur'anic reception in pesantren contexts. Rather than restricting itself to normative interpretations that view God as the sole guardian, this study underscores that human involvement is also seen as integral to the preservation process. Accordingly, some of them memorize the Qur'an not merely to earn divine reward or spiritual proximity to noble angels, but because they understand this practice as a contribution to sustaining the spiritual and social continuity of the Qur'anic tradition. This reflects a new dimension in the typology of Qur'anic reception, which this study categorizes as eternal reception.

Furthermore, fieldwork also reveals that at Pondok Pesantren Langitan, there is an open practice of selling copies of the Qur'an to both students and the wider community. Notably, the profits generated from these sales are incorporated into the pesantren's economic system and allocated specifically to improving the welfare of the *asatidz* (teachers). This practice illustrates a dimension of economic reception, in which the sacred text is positioned not only as a source of spiritual inspiration but also as an economic object managed within a framework of religious ethics. It further demonstrates how sacred values and economic pragmatism intersect in pesantren life—an aspect that remains largely overlooked in existing Qur'anic reception studies.

Pondok Pesantren Langitan hosts thousands of students from across the Indonesian archipelago and has become a primary reference for *salaf* (traditional) pesantren due to its scholarly authority in the study of *kitab kuning* (classical Arabic Islamic textbooks used in salaf pesantren). In contrast, Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin is known for its integrative approach that combines religious knowledge with modern sciences, as well as foreign language training in Arabic, English, Japanese, and Mandarin—characteristics that are typical of post-*Reformasi* modern pesantren.

Moreover, most existing studies still view pesantren as a homogeneous institution, without paying much attention to their internal diversity—particularly between traditional (*salaf*) and modern pesantren (Nihwan & Paisun, 2019). This dichotomy reflects a broader transformation in Islamic education in Indonesia, which has moved from the classical model emphasizing *kitab kuning* mastery and oral transmission through *sorogan* and *bandongan*, toward more modern systems that integrate general education, foreign language competence, and contemporary management practices (Harmathilda et al., 2024). The ways in

which these different institutional forms shape the reception of the Qur'an remain insufficiently examined in academic studies.

This study argues that it is important to synthesize multiple studies on Qur'anic reception in Indonesian pesantren contexts. Previous research highlights the diverse ways in which the Qur'an is engaged with, interpreted, and preserved in local and socio-cultural settings. For example, Baidowi and Ma'rufah (2025) discuss the localization of the Qur'an in Javanese pesantren, showing how socio-cultural interpretations shape students' understanding of texts such as *Al-Ibriz* and *Al-Iklil*. Hasan et al. (2025) examine Qur'anic reception in Javanese kris preservation traditions, highlighting how ritual and material culture participate in sustaining Qur'anic values.

Other studies further demonstrate the breadth of Qur'anic reception practices across different institutional settings. Labib and Pamungkas (2024) explore "living Qur'an" practices at Al-Muhammad Cepu Islamic Boarding School, illustrating daily enactments of memorization and teaching as forms of engagement with the sacred text. Similarly, Hamidinnor et al. (n.d.) emphasize the functional reception of Qur'anic calligraphy, where visual and spatial practices in mosques reinforce Qur'anic presence in public life, while Haryanto et al. (2024) examine how pesantren-based universities navigate between tradition and modernity—suggesting that institutional structures influence various forms of Qur'anic reception.

Building on these findings, the present study examines the dynamics of Qur'anic reception in two pesantren with contrasting characteristics in Tuban, East Java: Pondok Pesantren Langitan (traditional) and Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo (modern). By extending Rafiq's typology to include two additional categories—eternal and economic reception—this research contributes to reconstructing and expanding the theoretical framework of the *Living Qur'an*, situating it within everyday practices across diverse pesantren types. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach and Husserlian phenomenological analysis, the study analyzes how these five reception types manifest in each institution and how they are mediated by differing educational systems and cultural logics.

To further strengthen this framework, the study reintroduces and elaborates the categories of eternal and economic reception, positioning them as integral components of Qur'anic engagement grounded in empirical observation. The term "economic reception" is theoretically anchored in scholarship on the commodification and social valuation of religious practices (Akhdiat &

Marisa, 2023), ensuring that it is not misunderstood as mere fundraising or commercialization. For instance, at Pesantren Langitan, proceeds from mushaf sales supplement institutional operational needs while maintaining the Qur'an sacred value. This approach underscores the Qur'an as an active entity in social, spiritual, and economic life, drawing on anthropological and phenomenological studies that shift attention from textual meaning to lived reception practices (Esack, 2008; Ahimsa-Putra, 2012b).

Although research in the Middle East and North Africa has been extensive, studies on Qur'anic reception in Indonesia remain relatively limited despite the country's status as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation. Accordingly, this study deepens and enriches the Living Qur'an model by offering a typology of Qur'anic reception based on empirical findings from pesantren, while also demonstrating how institutional models—both salaf and modern—shape the forms and meanings of engagement with the Qur'an.

## **Method**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach within a Husserlian phenomenological framework to explore and understand the receptive experiences of *santri* (pesantren students) toward the Qur'an in their daily contexts at two different *pesantren*: Pondok Pesantren Langitan and Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban. This approach was chosen because it helps reveal the hidden meanings behind visible religious practices and captures the complexity of the consciousness and intentionality of the *santri* in responding to the sacred text.

Through phenomenology, this study emphasizes the concepts of *epoche* (the suspension of theoretical assumptions) and *eidetic reduction* (the discovery of the essence of meaning) to understand how the Qur'an is experienced socially, spiritually, and even functionally within the context of pesantren life. This approach is relevant within the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which views the text not merely as an object of interpretation but as a living entity that actively shapes and is shaped by the practices of the community.

Two pesantren were purposively selected to represent the two main institutional typologies of *pesantren* in Indonesia: the salaf pesantren (Langitan) and the modern *pesantren* (al-Muhibbin). Pondok Pesantren Langitan is known for its strong scholarly tradition in the study of *kitab kuning*, classical teaching methods (*sorogan*, *bandongan*, *halaqah*), and a Sufi orientation. Meanwhile, al-Muhibbin represents a modern approach with an integrated educational

system combining religious and general sciences, supported by foreign language training and more structured institutional management.

Informant selection was conducted using a snowball sampling technique to obtain representative and in-depth narratives until recurring patterns or data saturation emerged. The process began with key figures such as pesantren administrators, senior *ustaz*, or active alumni. Sampling continued until data saturation was reached—that is, when the narratives started to repeat and no substantively new information emerged. The study involved a total of 21 primary informants, consisting of 7 key figures—including the male caretaker, the head of the pesantren, and members of the board of teachers (*dewan asatidz*)—as well as 7 senior students and 7 junior students. Data collection remained focused on these groups until thematic repetition confirmed saturation.

Data were collected through two main techniques: semi-structured in-depth interviews that allowed open and reflective exploration of the santri's experiential meanings, and participant observation, where the researcher engaged in daily activities such as religious study sessions (*pengajian kitab*), Qur'an recitation (*tilawah*), collective *dzikir*, and other forms of religious ritual practices. This combined strategy allowed the researcher to capture both verbal expressions and embodied practices, as well as interactional patterns and the broader spiritual atmosphere within the pesantren community.

Data analysis followed the stages of the Husserlian phenomenological tradition, namely: First, *Epoche* (bracketing), in which the researcher suspended theoretical assumptions and focused on the subjective experiences of the informants. Second, *Horizontalization*, where all statements in the transcripts were treated with equal value before being thematically organized. Third, *Clustering of themes*, the process of grouping essential meanings into receptive themes: spiritual, aesthetic, functional, symbolic, and instrumental. Fourth, *Textural and structural description*, which involved detailed descriptions of how the experiences occurred (textural) and the contexts in which they were structured (structural). Finally, *the synthesis of meaning and essence*, which aimed to articulate the core of the santri's receptive experiences of the Qur'an across both *salaf* and modern pesantren contexts. To ensure data validity, the study employed source and technique triangulation by comparing the results of interviews and observations.

## Finding and Discussion

### *The Plurality of Qur'anic Reception in the Social Context of Pesantren*



These findings explicitly affirm that the reception of the Qur'an within *pesantren* settings is far from homogeneous. Rather, it is multi-layered and shaped by the socio-cultural context and epistemic orientation of each institution. Qur'anic reception is dynamic and contextual, reflecting the interdependent relationship between the sacred text and the social construction of *pesantren* as spaces for producing and negotiating religious meaning (McAuliffe, 2006; Mukholik, 2017).

At Pondok Pesantren Langitan, the economic mode of reception represents a distinctive example of how the Qur'an functions as symbolic capital that can be converted into social and economic capital, in line with Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework. Practices such as religious endowments (*wakaf*), the publication of tafsir books, paid Qur'anic study sessions, and donations associated with specific verses demonstrate that the Qur'an serves not only as a spiritual reference, but also as a source of institutional authority that facilitate networks of trust with tangible economic implications (Bourdieu, 2011).

In other words, at Langitan, there is a circulation of value between the sacred and the profane, between text and institution, between *barakah* and economic sustainability. The reception of the Qur'an is therefore not limited to normative engagement, but has evolved into an integral component of the *pesantren*'s broader sustainability ecosystem. In this context, the Qur'an operates as an instrument for maintaining and legitimizing a social system grounded in reverence for the text, religious scholars (*ulama*), and tradition.

In contrast, at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin, Qur'anic reception tends to emphasize cognitive and pedagogical transformation. Economic reception is less prominent, as al-Muhibbin's educational orientation prioritizes the integration of religious and general curricula, alongside the enhancement of soft skills such as foreign language proficiency. Here, the Qur'an is positioned primarily as a foundational source of values for shaping religious-modern agents capable of engaging competitively in a global environment.

This comparison indicates that economic reception is not entirely absent or at al-Muhibbin, but is instead constructed through different mechanisms—not through institutionalized economic structures, but through the accumulation of cultural capital in the form of strengthened Islamic competencies for participation in the modern public sphere. Thus, the contrast between Langitan and al-Muhibbin does not represent a strict dichotomy, rather, it reflects a plurality of orientations in interpreting and operationalizing the Qur'an in accordance with each *pesantren*'s institutional structure, cultural



environment, and long-term vision.

Thus, the diversity of reception practices in the two pesantren not only reflects the richness of Islamic expression but also challenges the myth that *pesantren* are static and anti-modern institutions. On the contrary, through their engagement with the Qur'an, pesantren construct adaptive religious ecosystems capable of responding to social change while maintaining the authenticity of their scholarly tradition. This underscores the need for a more transdisciplinary, contextual, and open Living Qur'an approach—one that accommodates emerging categories and analytical frameworks for understanding the dynamics of contemporary Muslim religiosity.

### *Eternal and Economic Dimensions—An Expansion of Typology*

The two new typologies emerging from this study—eternal reception and economic reception—offer fresh perspectives in the study of the Living Qur'an, particularly within the context of Indonesian *pesantren*. These findings expand the theoretical scope of Qur'anic reception, which has previously been dominated by exegetical, aesthetic, and functional emphases, by introducing spiritual-transcendent and pragmatic-economic dimensions that have not previously been mapped in a systematic manner.

Ethnographic interviews with santri at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin demonstrate that their understanding of the verse '*Inna nahnu nazzalna al-dzikra wa inna lahu lahafizun*' (Qur'an 15:9) extends beyond its normative-theological meaning that God alone safeguards the purity of revelation. The verse is interpreted instead as a call for human participation in the preservation of the sacred text, particularly through the practice of memorization. The activity of memorizing the Qur'an is viewed not merely as a path to spiritual reward or honor, but as a participatory act in maintaining the existence and continuity of the Qur'an across generations.

Within the santri's lifeworld, the term *lahafizun* (its Preserver) does not function merely as a doctrinal affirmation of divine protection. Rather, it opens itself as an invitation—a summons that both challenges and attracts human involvement, especially that of the *hafiz*, into the ongoing process of preserving the revelation. This meaning emerges not from detached intellectual reflection, but from the embodied encounter between the santri and the practice of *hifz* (memorization) within the pesantren environment (Dimas, personal communication, May 2024).

In this phenomenological horizon, the act of memorizing the Qur'an is

not experienced as a pursuit of reward external to the practice itself. Instead, it reveals itself as an existential and communal participation in maintaining the presence of the sacred text within the flow of human history. Through the disciplined embodiment of *hifz*, the santri come to experience themselves not simply as individuals striving for merit, but as agents woven into a larger, transhistorical endeavor: the preservation of revelation. In this lived experience, the meaning of *lahafizun* unfolds as an active obligation and as a continuing engagement that gives shape to the Qur'an's eternal reception.

This dimension of reception reflects an existential and functional relationship between humans and the sacred text, in which the santri are not merely recipients of revelation but cultural agents who ensure that the Qur'an remains alive within the reasoning and practice of the community. Within the Husserlian phenomenological framework, this signifies a shift from passive reception toward intentional consciousness—a mode of subjective experience in which meaning is constituted through direct engagement with the text. This intentionally is intersubjective and collectively transmitted through the pedagogical structures of the *pesantren*.

Thus, eternal reception encompasses not only belief in the metaphysical sacredness of the Qur'an but also manifests in praxis: memorizing, teaching, and safeguarding for the text as part of a shared spiritual and social responsibility. Here, the Qur'an is not merely a book to be read but a living entity continually preserved by the *pesantren* community as the custodian of divine knowledge.

In contrast, economic reception emerges explicitly at Pondok Pesantren Langitan. The findings show that the *pesantren* openly sell Qur'anic mushafs to santri and the wider community, with the proceeds allocated to supporting the welfare of the *asatidz*. This practice reflects a form of reception in which the Qur'an functions not only as a spiritual source but also as an object of economic value—one managed within the ethical boundaries of *pesantren* life.

The lifeworld of the Langitan community reveals a distinctive mode of engagement that extends beyond spiritual veneration. In their consciousness, the Qur'an presents itself both as a sacred source of religious distinction and as an object with concrete economic significance. The practice of selling mushafs is not an anomaly; it emerges as a legitimate modality through which the *pesantren* manages and presents the Qur'an within its social and economic system (Ato', personal communication, April 7, 2024).

The act of selling mushafs and using the profits to support the *asatidz*

produces a new layer of meaning: within the Langitan experience, the Qur'an reveals itself as a source of ethical funding, integrated into the pesantren's internal moral economy. Economic value here is not understood as contradictory to sacredness; rather, it is woven into the management of pesantren life through a distinctive ethical framework. This lived experience demonstrates that the meaning of the Qur'an is constituted not only through spiritual practices but also through economic practices embedded in the pesantren's everyday world.

It is important to emphasize that this practice is not commercial in a capitalist sense, but rather embodies a collective ethos and local wisdom in managing resources according to Islamic ethical values. By utilizing the Qur'an as a medium to support its internal economy, Langitan demonstrates the sacred text can function as symbolic capital—in Pierre Bourdieu's terms—in which is then converted into social and economic capital within the institutional structure of the pesantren.

This illustrates a significant intersection between sacred values and economic pragmatism, a dimension often overlooked in studies of Qur'anic reception that focus predominantly on spiritual or epistemic aspects. In this context, the Qur'an is not merely an object of reading but also a source of institutional sustainability and a mechanism for enhancing community welfare. This model provides a clear example of how pesantren harmoniously integrate revelatory values with worldly needs in a harmonious manner that does not compromise the sacredness of the text.

The inclusion of these two typologies expands the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which has thus far insufficiently captured the complexity of the relationship between text and context. Eternal reception illustrates that spirituality toward the Qur'an is not a merely passive or symbolic orientation, but an active practice embodied through collective experience and the pedagogical processes of pesantren education. Meanwhile, economic reception affirms that the sacred text also operates within the realm of value production and distribution, and that these economic dimensions can be ethically managed within traditional Islamic institutional systems.

Thus, the addition of these two typologies renders the Living Qur'an theory more inclusive and more accurately reflective of the diverse dynamics operating within contemporary pesantren. It opens space to acknowledge that the reception of the Qur'an is manifested not only in exegesis or artistic recitation, but also in spiritual participation and socio-economic innovations

rooted in the text. In this sense, the Qur'an truly lives in all dimensions of pesantren life—both in the realm of meaning and in the realm of practice.

### ***Salaf vs Modern Comparison: Nuances of Reception***

One crucial finding of this study is the fundamental variation in the patterns of Qur'an reception between traditional (*salaf*) pesantren and modern pesantren—differences that emerge not only from curriculum and pedagogical models but also from the distinct epistemological orientations and institutional structures through which each relates to the sacred text. This analysis affirms that the reception of the Qur'an is neither singular nor universal but always contextual, embedded within the social, historical, and ideological fields in which it is lived. These findings resonate with broader scholarship in global Living Qur'an studies (Muttaqin, 2021) and align with research on Indonesian pesantren, which emphasize how local educational and cultural settings shape modes of Qur'anic engagement (Labib & Pamungkas, 2024).

Pondok Pesantren Langitan, as a representation of an established and historical *salaf pesantren*, maintains a reception rooted in the legacy of *turats* or classical Islamic heritage. Learning methods such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and the study of *kitab kuning* serve as core channels for understanding the Qur'an, which is absorbed through exegesis, law, and social ethics. Reception here is textualistic and contemplative, anchoring interpretive authority in the *ulama* as inheritors of transgenerational knowledge.

Interestingly, Langitan is not merely confined to the romanticism of classical scholarship. This study found that the pesantren also cultivates an economic reception, in which the Qur'an functions as a source of inspiration and legitimacy for productive practices such as the sale of mushafs, publication of tafsir books, and the allocation of generated resources for the teacher welfare. This reflects an effort to rearticulate sacredness within a pragmatic framework—demonstrating that the preservation of Qur'anic values can operate alongside the strengthening of the *pesantren's* economy (Akhdiat & Marisa, 2023).

Thus, the reception of the Qur'an at Langitan exists within a conservative-adaptive spectrum: preserving classical scholarly authority while also creating space for the Qur'an to function as an active agent within a value-based economic system. This dynamic can be read as a form of strategic resistance—an effort by a traditional institution to navigate modern pressures without compromising its identity.

In contrast, Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin exemplifies a modern pesantren model that is more transformative and functional in its reception of the Qur'an. Here, the sacred text is not merely treated as a scholarly inheritance but as a framework of values supporting an integrative educational vision—combining religious and general sciences, together with the development of soft skills such as foreign languages, digital literacy, and organizational competencies.

Students at al-Muhibbin interpret Qur'anic verses as ethical and spiritual motivation to become productive, adaptive, and competitive individuals. This approach produces a strong functional reception—showing how the Qur'an is used to shape character, work ethic, and future orientation. Verses related to responsibility, discipline, and honesty, for example, are embedded into the pesantren's informal curriculum for student development.

The findings on eternal reception further reinforce this dimension. As discussed in the previous section, the al-Muhibbin students' understanding of Surah al-Hijr: 9 reflects an intensely personal and spiritual form of reception: memorizing the Qur'an is seen not merely as a meritorious act but as a collective human contribution to the preservation of revelation. This marks a shift from a reception pattern grounded in *ulama*-centered authority toward one rooted in community participation—a sign of a more democratic transformation in the culture of Qur'anic reception (Musthofa & Farid, 2024).

Taken together, the comparison between Langitan and al-Muhibbin reveals that the Qur'anic reception is not solely a product of scholarly tradition but also a reflection of each institution's ideological orientation and value system. Langitan, with its *salaf* character, tends to interpret the Qur'an as a means of preserving scholarly authority and sustaining tradition, whereas al-Muhibbin treats it as a tool for accelerating social and educational transformation.

This difference also reveals that models of Qur'anic reception cannot be separated from the underlying structures of power relations and the modes of knowledge production. In *salaf pesantren*, the text is interpreted through a transmissive, lineage-based mechanism of scholarly inheritance, whereas in modern pesantren, it is received within a framework of critical engagement and transformative interaction. The Qur'an, therefore, becomes a discursive field for the articulation of ideology—whether for conservation or for emancipation.

Borrowing from Foucault's framework, the action taken by Pesantren Langitan in selling copies of the Qur'an and allocating the profits for the welfare of *asatidz* can be understood as a "site of ideological articulation" where power and knowledge intersect in concrete practices. This practice

is not merely economic; it becomes a space where various forms of power and knowledge interact to shape reality. Through the act of selling *mushaf*, the Qur'an in Langitan presents itself not only as a sacred text, but also as an economic asset strategically managed to sustain institutional life. This constitutes a new form of knowledge regarding the function of the Qur'an within the pesantren context—one that is deeply interconnected with internal power structures governing resource management and institutional priorities (in this case, the welfare of religious teachers). Such a practice actualizes a reception model that can be interpreted as a form of *conservation*—preserving the pesantren's economic system through the economic value of the Qur'an—but also potentially as *emancipation*, insofar as it enables educators to focus more fully on intellectual and spiritual service (Foucault, 1999).

Furthermore, this difference also reveals how the reception of the Qur'ān both shapes and is shaped by the relational dynamics among teachers and students, institutions and communities, and traditions and innovations. Reception is not merely about how the text is read, but also about how it is linked to the institutional project of the *pesantren*: whether it is aimed at preserving identity (as in Langitan), or at promoting social and intellectual mobility (as in al-Muhibbin).

### ***Reception as Phenomenon: From Object to Noema***

In Husserl's phenomenological approach, religious experience of the Qur'an is understood as an intentional act—namely, a form of consciousness that is always directed toward something (*intentionality*). In this framework, the Qur'anic text in the pesantren context cannot be reduced to a mere material object (such as the physical *mushaf*), but is instead a *noema*—a structure of meaning constructed through the relational dynamic between the subject (*santri*) and the object of revelation (the Qur'an) as lived in their consciousness (Butler, 2016). This shift moves the analysis from the level of textual objecthood to the realm of meaning-constitution.

When *santri* memorize QS. al-Hijr:9, they are not merely repeating sounds, but entering into a noetic-noematic relation: their consciousness intentionally directs itself toward the meaning of *lahafizun* as a lived obligation rather than as fixed dogma (Lely, personal communication, July 7, 2024).

Within the framework of Husserlian phenomenology, the reception of the Qur'an in pesantren cannot be understood merely as an external or normative relationship between subject and object. Rather, reception is a

phenomenon of consciousness that is intentional in nature—namely, a *noetic* activity that actively directs awareness toward a meaning-object (*noema*). In this view, the Qur'an emerges as a horizon of meaning that is constituted through the interplay of subjective experience and the intersubjective world of the *pesantren* (Hewitson, 2014; Nugraheni et al., 2023).

Religious meanings are not inherent in the object (the Qur'an) itself, but are “brought forth” through intentional relations and the social context in which the object is understood and lived. This marks a fundamental distinction between viewing the Qur'an as a doctrinal object versus as a phenomenon of meaning. Such a perspective allows the researcher to disclose layers of lived significance—*affective, ethical, ritual, and communal*—that are not immediately visible in the written text, but which become present in the experiential world of the *santri* (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012; Schmidt, 1985).

The concept of *noema* allows us to move beyond reducing reception to mere acts of reading or memorization. *Noema* refers to the meaning presented by an object within the horizon of consciousness, and in the *pesantren* context, it manifests as “*barakah*,” “*piety*,” “*spiritual strength*,” or even “*economic value*.” Thus, meaning becomes a multilayered phenomenon that attaches itself to the *mushaf* as lived and circulated within community practice. For instance, in the practice of Qur'an manuscript sales at *Pesantren Langitan*, the *mushaf* is not merely a material artifact, but presents itself as a symbol of *barakah* that generates flows of social and economic benefit. In phenomenological terms, this represents the constitution of *noema* through a collective shared *noesis* within the *lebenswelt* (lifeworld) of the *pesantren*.

Furthermore, within the horizon of the *pesantren*, the meaning of the Qur'an is shaped through what Husserl calls *noematic constitution*—that is, how meanings are structured by consciousness based on lived experience. In this case, the spiritual experience of *santri* at al-Muhibbin, who interpret QS. al-Hijr:9 not merely as a divine promise of revelation's preservation, but as a participatory call to safeguard the Qur'an through memorization, exemplifies the constitution of *noema* born from *praxis-based noesis*. Here, the verse shifts from functioning as a normative theological claim to becoming an ethical-existential reality embodied in the daily lived experience of the memorizers.

This “*noematic constitution*” is not merely an individual act; rather, it is profoundly shaped by the intersubjective structures and the “*collective lebenswelt*” of the *pesantren*. The *noema* of *barakah* attached to the *mushaf*, or the *noema* of honor tied to Qur'anic memorization, arises from the dynamic



interaction between the subject (*santri*), the teacher (*kyai*), and the collective values embedded in the *pesantren* culture. Such intersubjective meaning-making aligns with Alfred Schutz's insight that social meanings are constituted through a shared "stock of knowledge" that members of a community continuously draw upon and reproduce (Zakiyah & Izza, 2024; Schutz, 1967).

Thus, the reception of the Qur'an in *pesantren* can no longer be understood merely as a relationship between "text" and "interpretation," but rather as a phenomenological process in which the Qur'an is constituted as *noema* within a collective consciousness shaped by social practices, daily rituals, moral economies, and pedagogical structures. This approach expands the Living Qur'an paradigm by foregrounding the lived, embodied, and intersubjective dimensions of reception—showing how the sacred text becomes continually reconstructed through human experience and intentional consciousness.

## Conclusion

Through Husserlian phenomenology, Qur'anic reception in *pesantren* is not merely an interaction between subject and text, but as a process of intentional consciousness in which meaning is actively constituted through lived experience. The Qur'an appears as *noema*—a dynamic representation of meaning shaped through collective practices, social interactions, and the pedagogical structures of the *pesantren*. This process produces various forms of *noema*, including divine blessing, spiritual nobility, legitimization of authority, and even economic resources. The case of *Pesantren Langitan*, for instance, shows how economic reception supports operational needs rather than commercialization, illustrating how sacredness and pragmatism can coexist without contradiction.

Thus, the Qur'an emerges as a lived entity within the social world of the *pesantren*, and awareness of it is sustained through ongoing intentional acts. Studying its reception illuminates the interrelations between religion, consciousness, and meaning-making in dynamic human contexts. Future research could explore how economic and eternal forms of reception interact in other *pesantren* or broader Muslim societies, including the influence of digitalization and modern educational policies. This study remains limited to two *pesantren* in East Java and relies heavily on self-reported experiences, which may be shaped by institutional norms, suggesting the need for more diverse and comparative investigations.

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