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Be-langea Healing Ritual: Living Qur'an among the Rejang Community of Bengkulu, Indonesia

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Abstract

Studies on the living Qur'an have predominantly focused on recitation practices, amulets, and *ruqyah* within mainstream Muslim communities, while largely overlooking the ways in which Qur'anic verses are integrated into indigenous healing systems through material objects, spatial rituals, and local cosmologies among peripheral ethnic communities. This article addresses that gap by examining *be-langea*, a traditional healing ritual practiced by the Rejang community in Dusun Sawah, Bengkulu, Indonesia, in which water and lime (*jeruk nipis*) function as the principal therapeutic media through which Qur'anic verses are materially activated and spatially mediated. Employing a qualitative research design that combines ethnographic fieldwork with phenomenological analysis, the study draws on data collected through in-depth interviews with five key informants: two traditional healers, two patients, and one community leader, as well as participatory observation conducted over a period of more than one month. Guided by Rafiq's informative–performative framework, the findings make three principal theoretical contributions. First, *be-langea* demonstrates a process of Qur'anic materialization in which the sacred text is transferred into physical substances and enacted through bodily gestures and domestic spaces, thereby extending its performative function beyond verbal recitation. Second, the informative and performative dimensions operate as mutually constitutive rather than sequential mechanisms. Third, the *dukun* functions as a cultural broker who actively negotiates Islamic legitimacy for indigenous healing practices amid ongoing reformist pressures. By foregrounding the material and spatial dimensions of Qur'anic engagement, this study advances living Qur'an scholarship through a framework that illuminates how Muslim communities enact and embody sacred texts across the full spectrum of their cultural resources.

Keywords: Living Qur'an, *Be-Langea*, Rejang Community, Therapeutic Media, Performative Function, Material Religion

Abstrak

Kajian-kajian tentang Living Qur'an selama ini lebih banyak berfokus pada praktik pembacaan Al-Qur'an, penggunaan jimat, dan ruqyah dalam komunitas Muslim arus utama, sementara cara-cara ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an diintegrasikan ke dalam sistem pengobatan tradisional melalui objek material, ritual spasial, dan kosmologi lokal pada komunitas etnis periferal masih relatif terabaikan. Artikel ini berupaya mengisi kesenjangan tersebut dengan mengkaji be-langea*, sebuah ritual pengobatan tradisional yang dipraktikkan oleh masyarakat Rejang di Dusun Sawah, Bengkulu, Indonesia. Dalam ritual ini, air dan jeruk nipis berfungsi sebagai media terapeutik utama yang menjadi sarana materialisasi dan mediasi spasial ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif yang memadukan kerja lapangan etnografis dengan analisis fenomenologis. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap lima informan*

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kunci yang terdiri atas dua orang dukun, dua pasien, dan satu tokoh masyarakat, serta observasi partisipatif yang dilakukan selama lebih dari satu bulan. Dengan menggunakan kerangka informatif–performatif yang dikembangkan oleh Rafiq, penelitian ini menghasilkan tiga kontribusi teoretis utama. Pertama, praktik be-langea *menunjukkan adanya proses materialisasi Al-Qur'an, yaitu ketika teks suci ditransformasikan ke dalam substansi fisik dan diwujudkan melalui gerakan tubuh serta ruang domestik, sehingga fungsi performatifnya melampaui sekadar pembacaan verbal. Kedua, dimensi informatif dan performatif tidak beroperasi secara berurutan, melainkan saling membentuk dan mengonstruksi satu sama lain sebagai mekanisme yang tidak terpisahkan. Ketiga, dukun berperan sebagai perantara budaya (*cultural broker*) yang secara aktif menegosiasikan legitimasi Islam bagi praktik pengobatan tradisional di tengah tekanan reformisme Islam yang terus berkembang Dengan menyoroti dimensi material dan spasial dalam keterlibatan masyarakat terhadap Al-Qur'an, penelitian ini memperkaya khazanah studi Living Qur'an melalui sebuah kerangka yang menjelaskan bagaimana komunitas Muslim mengaktualisasikan, menghayati, dan mewujudkan teks suci dalam seluruh spektrum sumber daya budaya yang mereka miliki.*

Kata Kunci: *Living Qur'an, Be-Langea, Masyarakat Rejang, Media Terapeutik, Fungsi Performatif, Agama Material*

A. Introduction

The intersection of sacred texts and local healing traditions has long occupied a central place in the anthropology of Islam, particularly in societies where Qur'anic authority is negotiated through culturally embedded practices.[1] The concept of the living Qur'an, as developed by Rafiq,[2] provides a productive analytical lens that moves beyond textual interpretation to examine how Qur'anic verses are actively lived, practiced, and embodied in diverse social settings. Previous studies have richly documented this phenomenon through recitation practices, amulet use, *ruqyah* therapy, and ritual performances in mainstream Muslim communities across Indonesia and the broader Muslim world.[3] However, a significant gap remains: little scholarly attention has been directed toward how Qur'anic verses are integrated into indigenous healing systems through material objects, spatial rituals, and local cosmologies particularly among peripheral ethnic communities whose practices operate at the intersection of pre-Islamic tradition and Islamic normativity. The *be-langea* healing tradition of the Rejang people of Bengkulu represents precisely this understudied terrain.

Existing literature on Islam and local culture in Indonesia has been largely dominated by studies of Javanese, Acehnese, Madurese, and Minangkabau communities,[4]

[1] L. F. Brakel, 'Islam and Local Traditions: Syncretic Ideas and Practices', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 32.92 (2004), pp. 5–20 (p. 7), doi:10.1080/1363981042000263435.

[2] Ahmad Rafiq, 'The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community' (unpublished Dissertation, The Temple University Graduate Board, 2014), p. 14 <https://www.proquest.com/openview/7df531fb80433c7a19b1c55d7e2e866b/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

[3] Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Quran in Indonesia* (University of Hawaii Press, 2004), p. 32. See, Anne K. Rasmussen, 'The Qur'an in Indonesian Daily Life: The Public Project of Musical Oratory', *Ethnomusicology*, 45.1 (2001), p. 30, doi:10.2307/852633. See, Amira El-Zein, *Islam, Arabs, and Intelligent World of the Jinn* (Syracuse University Press, 2009), p. 112 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1j5d836> [accessed 1 December 2025].

[4] Mark Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2010), p. 15. Lihat, John R. Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society* (Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 10. See, Mutawali Mutawali, 'MODERATE ISLAM IN LOMBOK: The Dialectic

leaving the Rejang one of Sumatra's oldest indigenous ethnic groups significantly underrepresented in Islamic studies scholarship. Studies engaging with Sumatran local Islam tend to focus on textual or normative dimensions rather than on the embodied, material, and spatial dimensions of Qur'anic practice.[5] Furthermore, while scholars such as Tambiah (1990),[6] Stoller (1995),[7] and Mitchell (2018)[8] have theorized the ritual efficacy of sacred language and material objects, the specific mechanisms by which Qur'anic verses are materially embedded in healing media such as water and lime and spatially enacted through bodily and domestic ritual remain theoretically underdeveloped in living Qur'an studies. This article addresses these gaps by demonstrating that *be-langea* extends the performative dimension of Rafiq's living Qur'an theory beyond verbal utterance into the realm of material religion and spatial ritual.

This study examines *be-langea* a traditional healing ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu in which water and lime (*jeruk nipis*) serve as the primary therapeutic media through which Qur'anic verses are materially activated and spatially distributed. Dusun Sawah was selected as the research site because it represents one of the few remaining communities in Bengkulu where *be-langea* continues to be actively practiced in its relatively intact traditional form. The ritual integrates local Rejang mantras, Islamic Qur'anic recitation, and the symbolic use of natural objects into a unified healing system, reflecting a creative negotiation between indigenous cosmology and Islamic legitimacy.[9] Three research questions guide this study: (1) How are Qur'anic verses integrated into the *be-langea* healing ritual through material objects, bodily practices, and spatial arrangements? (2) How do the informative and performative functions of Qur'anic verses operate and interact with local cosmological knowledge? (3) How does *be-langea* negotiate between local Rejang tradition and Islamic religious legitimacy as lived experience?

This research employs a qualitative approach combining ethnographic and phenomenological frameworks. Fieldwork was conducted over more than one month in Dusun Sawah, involving five key informants selected through purposive sampling: two traditional healers (*dukun*), two patients, and one community leader (*tokoh masyarakat*), following the ethnographic principles of Spradley and Atkinson.[10] The phenomenological dimension drew on van Manen's framework for exploring lived experience,[11] with particular attention to the subjective perceptions of healers and patients regarding the

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between Islam and Local Culture', *JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAM*, 10.2 (2016), pp. 309–34 (p. 312), doi:10.15642/JIIS.2016.10.2.309-334.

[5] Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (University of Hawaii Press, 2001), p. 203. See, R. Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negotiating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 78.

[6] Stanley J. Tambiah, *Magic, Science and Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[7] Paul Stoller, *Embodying Colonial Memories: Spirit Possession, Power, and the Hauka in West Africa* (Psychology Press, 1995).

[8] Jon P. Mitchell, 'Religion and Embodiment', in *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2018), pp. 1–8, doi:10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea1791.

[9] Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse*, p. 45. See, Aida Hidayah and Fitriana Firdausi, 'REDEFINING THE MEANING OF ASY-SYIFA' IN THE QUR'AN AS QUR'ANIC HEALING IN PHYSICAL AILMENTS', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 22.1 (2021), pp. 255–77 (p. 260), doi:10.14421/qh.2021.2201-12.

[10] James P. Spradley, *Participant Observation* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980), p. 59. See, Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 3rd edn (Routledge, 2007), p. 21, doi:10.4324/9780203944769.

[11] Max van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy* (Routledge, 2016), p. 38.

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presence and efficacy of Qur'anic verses during the healing process. Data analysis proceeded through open coding, axial coding, and thematic interpretation guided by Rafiq's framework,[12] with validity ensured through triangulation across interview data, observational records, and community testimony, as well as member-checking with key informants.[13]

This article makes a threefold contribution to living Qur'an studies. First, it introduces the concept of Qur'anic materialization the process by which sacred text is transferred into physical objects, enacted through bodily gesture, and distributed across domestic space as an extension of Rafiq's performative function theory. Second, it brings the Rejang community into the scholarly conversation on Islam and local culture in Indonesia, filling an important ethnographic gap in the literature.[14] Third, by combining ethnography and phenomenology, this study captures not only the structural dimensions of *be-langea* as a cultural practice, but also the subjective religious experiences of its practitioners and patients dimensions that have been largely absent from existing living Qur'an scholarship. All research participants provided informed oral consent prior to their involvement, and participant confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process in accordance with ethical standards for qualitative research involving traditional practitioners and patients.[15]

B. Results and Discussion

Living Qur'an: From Informative Function to Performative Function

The study of the living Qur'an represents a critical departure from text-centered approaches in Qur'anic scholarship, redirecting analytical attention toward how sacred verses are enacted, embodied, and socially lived across diverse Muslim communities.[16] This conceptual reorientation challenges the longstanding dominance of classical *tafsir* studies and opens space for examining the Qur'an not merely as a revealed scripture to be interpreted, but as a living presence that operates through ritual action, material objects, and communal practice.[17] Scholars working within this framework have demonstrated that Muslim communities across Indonesia and beyond do not simply read the Qur'an they wear it, apply it to the body, inscribe it on objects, and deploy it as a therapeutic agent in healing rituals.[18] The *be-langea* tradition of the Rejang community constitutes precisely this kind of living engagement with the Qur'an, wherein sacred verses are materially activated through water and lime as therapeutic media, making it a theoretically significant case for advancing living Qur'an studies.

Within Rafiq's theoretical framework, the informative function represents the first analytical layer, operating when Qur'anic verses are understood as a source of knowledge, legitimacy, and belief that frames how practitioners and patients interpret illness and

[12] Ahmad Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an: Its Text and Practice in the Function of the Scripture', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 22.2 (2021), pp. 469–84, doi:10.14421/qh.2021.2202-10.

[13] Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (SAGE, 1985), p. 314.

[14] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (SAGE, 2014), p. 57. See, Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*, p. 205.

[15] Creswell, *Research Design*, p. 57.

[16] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', pp. 471–474. See, Akhmad Aidil Fitra, 'Living Qur'an in the Practice of Ideu Sapo: An Ethnographic Study in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong', *Firman: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an*, 1.1 (2025), pp. 50–61.

[17] Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice*, p. 18.

[18] Rasmussen, 'The Qur'an in Indonesian Daily Life', p. 35. See, Andre Indrawan, Salsabil Salsabil, and Muhammad Fikrul Islami, 'Musicological Analysis of the Recitation of Surah Al-Fatiha in the Musically-Performed Congregational Worship', *Rast Musicology Journal*, 11.2 (2023), pp. 171–96, doi:10.12975/rastmd.20231121.

healing.[19] This function is not merely cognitive but deeply epistemological it structures the entire worldview through which the Rejang community understands the etiology of disease, the nature of spiritual disturbance, and the mechanism of cure. In the context of *be-langea*, Pak Solihin articulated this understanding when he stated that *"al-qur'an ade ba ubet untuk penyakit nak awak gen penyakit nak atie"* (The Qur'an is a cure for physical ailments and spiritual ailments) a statement that reveals how Qur'anic authority is internalized as a framework of medical and spiritual knowledge rather than merely cited as religious obligation.[20] This local epistemology resonates with Rahman's argument that the Qur'an's therapeutic dimension is not a peripheral folk belief but an integral component of Islamic theological tradition,[21] this suggests that healing verses serve as a cosmological map that guides believers toward divine grace in moments when they feel vulnerable.

The performative function, by contrast, operates at the level of ritual action it emerges when Qur'anic verses are not merely understood but executed as speech acts that produce tangible social and spiritual consequences.[22] This distinction is theoretically crucial: where the informative function shapes *how people think* about illness, the performative function shapes *what people do* in response to it, transforming recitation into a form of intervention that acts upon bodies, objects, and spaces simultaneously. In *be-langea*, Pak Amran confirmed this when he explained that verses are recited not as devotional reading but as a core operational component of the healing process, inseparable from the physical manipulation of lime and water.[23] This indicates that, within the Islamic healing tradition across various cultural contexts, the recitation of the Qur'an functions as a "sacred text brought to life," in which the boundary between text and action dissolves during the performance of the ritual.

What makes *be-langea* theoretically significant is not simply that it exhibits both functions, but that it reveals how the two functions are mutually constitutive rather than sequential the informative function provides the epistemological authority that makes the performative function ritually efficacious, while the performative function continuously reaffirms and reproduces the informative framework through embodied experience.[24] This dynamic is not unique to the Rejang but reflects a broader pattern in Indonesian Islam wherein sacred knowledge and ritual action are inseparable.[25] However, Be-langea develops this framework in a distinctive direction by embodying the performativity of the Qur'an through natural objects such as chalk, water, and domestic spaces, demonstrating that the performative scope of the living Qur'an extends beyond verbal utterances and manifests as "material mediation of the sacred," wherein physical substances become carriers of divine power. This conceptual expansion constitutes the primary theoretical contribution of this study to the field of the living Qur'an.

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[19] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', p. 475.

[20] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[21] Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an: Second Edition* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 22.

[22] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', p. 475. See, John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 20–25.

[23] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

[24] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', pp. 471–474. See, Junita Junita and Akhmad Aidil Fitra, 'Motivation to Memorise the Qur'an at DFISQA Tahfizh House: Living Qur'an Studies', *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 8.4 (2025), pp. 394–405, doi:10.31943/afkarjournal.v8i4.1839.

[25] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, p. 88. See, Farida Nur 'Afifah and Akhmad Aidil Fitra, 'Revitalising Sesajen: The Role of Ritual Offerings in Yogyakarta Palace Ceremonies Amid Globalisation', *Indigenous Southeast Asian and Ethnic Studies*, 2.1 (2026), pp. 39–68, doi:10.32678/iseaes.v2i1.52.

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Be-langea as a Healing System: Ritual Structure, Material Objects, and Spatial

Be-langea constitutes a holistic healing system among the Rejang people of Dusun Sawah that integrates natural elements, ritual performance, and sacred recitation into a unified therapeutic framework that simultaneously addresses the body, the spirit, domestic space, and social relations.[26] Unlike biomedical approaches that locate disease exclusively within the individual body, *be-langea* operates on the cosmological understanding that illness inhabits multiple registers at once the physical self, the spiritual dimension, the relational networks of the patient, and the domestic environment a framework that resonates with Koentjaraningrat's observation that Indonesian traditional healing systems are always rooted in the symbolism of nature and local cosmology.[27] This understanding aligns with Supriyanto and Zaman's finding in their study of living Qur'an practices in rural Central Java that Qur'anic healing is never purely verbal but operates through material, spatial, and communal dimensions that extend far beyond the moment of recitation.[28] What distinguishes *be-langea* from comparable Indonesian healing traditions is its specific use of lime (*jeruk nipis*) and water as primary therapeutic media through which Qur'anic power is materially transferred and spatially enacted a mechanism that demands careful ethnographic and theoretical attention. This article argues that *be-langea* represents a sophisticated healing architecture in which the living Qur'an operates through materialization, embodiment, and spatial distribution rather than through textual recitation alone.

The ritual begins with a diagnostic encounter in which the *dukun* listens attentively to the patient's complaints and assesses the nature of the disorder whether physical, spiritual, or both. During fieldwork observation, this initial stage was conducted in an intimate domestic setting, typically in the front room of the *dukun*'s home, with the patient seated facing the practitioner in a posture that immediately established the relational and social dimensions of the healing transaction.[29] Pak Solihin explained the symbolic significance of the number of limes the patient must bring: *"tun gik lak bubet biaso ne min pat, lemo, atau tojoak lai lemeu nipis"* (Patients usually bring four, five, or seven limes before the healing process begins) numbers that carry cosmological weight in Rejang tradition and signal both the severity and the nature of the affliction.[30] This numerical symbolism is not arbitrary but reflects an embedded cosmological logic through which quantitative choices encode qualitative relationships between the human, natural, and supernatural worlds a pattern also documented by Omar et al in their study of *ruqyah* treatment effectiveness in Malaysia, where the structural conditions of ritual, including preparatory acts and symbolic materials, were found to be as significant to therapeutic outcomes as the recitation itself.[31] This diagnostic stage reveals that *be-langea* is not simply a medical consultation but a social ritual that positions the *dukun* as a mediating

[26] Interview with Rifa'i, Community Leader of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[27] Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar ilmu antropologi* (Rineka Cipta, 2002), p. 78.

[28] Supriyanto and Akhmad Roja Badrus Zaman, *Living Quran in the Context of Rural Communities: A Study on the Miracle of the Quran in Gentasari, Kroya, Cilacap*, published online 19 July 2023, p. 201, doi:10.1163/22321969-20230132.

[29] Observations, November 11, 2025.

[30] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[31] Muhammad Omar, 'Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of "Ruqyah" Treatment among Muslim Community in Malaysia', *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, published online 14 April 2024, p. 205, doi:10.1080/19349637.2024.2338839.

authority between the patient's experienced suffering and the cosmological framework through which that suffering is rendered meaningful and treatable.

The central performative sequence of *be-langea* begins with the recitation of a local Rejang mantra that establishes the spiritual identity and agency of the lime as a healing instrument. Amran recited the mantra as follows: "*aku tau asal mulo kau dari limau kastu jibril, mikail, israfil, kau tumbu tumbuh didalam ketungka, limau ku iris tigo iris, seiris jago tigo, seiris jago sipat empat, seiris penyakit silang balak, skian penyakit, aku ucap lailahaillah*".[32] The linguistic structure of this mantra is analytically rich and demands critical interpretation beyond mere documentation: it opens with an assertion of cosmological knowledge *"aku tau asal mulo kau"* (I know your origin"), invokes three archangels as spiritual guarantors, issues a series of symbolic commands enacted through the slicing of lime, and closes with the *shahada* thereby anchoring an indigenous Rejang cosmological narrative within an explicitly Islamic theological frame. This rhetorical movement from local assertion to Islamic proclamation is not incidental but constitutes the fundamental mechanism through which the *dukun* negotiates religious authority, reflecting what Bowen terms the "discursive integration" of local and scriptural Islam.[33] Following the mantra, the *dukun* recites Surah Al-Fatihah, verse Al-Anbiya:69, verse Al-Isra:82, and the concluding verses of Al-Baqarah a deliberate selection that Amran confirmed is chosen because these specific verses carry the valences of cooling, protection, and divine healing.[34]

The materialization of Qur'anic power reaches its most visually striking dimension when the *dukun* inscribes the name of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad on the skin of the lime an act that Solihin described as *"temimioa berkah gen temano lemeu ne bik idup"* (bringing blessings and marking the orange as a consecrated object).[35] During observation, this inscription was performed with deliberate slowness and visible concentration, the *dukun*'s lips moving silently as he wrote a gestural performance that communicated sacred intentionality to the watching patient, whose expression shifted perceptibly from anxiety to calm as the ritual progressed, illustrating what Hidayah and Firdausi describe as the psycho-spiritual dimension of Qur'anic healing in which the patient's emotional state is actively transformed through witnessing ritual enactment.[36] The inscribed lime is then immersed in water, transforming the liquid into a medium charged with divine agency through the convergence of sacred inscription, Qur'anic recitation, and material contact.[37] The spatial distribution of this charged water is equally significant: the patient uses it to rub the face and hair, then sprinkles it at the front door, beside the sleeping area, and at the back of the house a spatial sequence that maps the body and domestic space as a unified field requiring simultaneous purification, confirming Koentjaraningrat's observation that Nusantara healing traditions regard the home as an integral extension of the patient's spiritual condition.[38]

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[32] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

[33] Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse*, p. 10.

[34] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025. see, Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice*, p. 89.

[35] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[36] Hidayah and Firdausi, 'REDEFINING THE MEANING OF ASY-SYIFA' IN THE QUR'AN AS QUR'ANIC HEALING IN PHYSICAL AILMENTS', p. 262.

[37] Stoller, *Embodying Colonial Memories*, pp. 60–70.

[38] Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar ilmu antropologi*, p. 83.

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The patient's experience of *be-langea* reveals the relational and psychosocial dimensions of its therapeutic efficacy in ways that resist reduction to either pure spiritual causation or mere placebo effect. Nando reflected: "*Belangea yo menyembuhkan nien, tapi tergantung api gik mlie ubet ne*" (Be-langea is very healing, but it depends on who administers the medicine) locating therapeutic efficacy not in the ritual formula alone but in the social authority and spiritual credibility of the practitioner.[39] This observation resonates directly with Tambiah's argument that ritual efficacy is always partially constituted by the social position and performative credibility of the ritual actor,[40] a point that Omar et al. confirm in their contemporary study of *ruqyah*, finding that practitioner authority and patient trust are among the strongest predictors of perceived healing outcomes.[41] Halik offered a complementary perspective that foregrounds the specifically Qur'anic dimension: *"keyakinan keme lei karno gik nebaco o ayat Qur'an, gik keme anggab do o ubet kete penyakit"* (His faith grew stronger because what he was reading were verses from the Quran, which are considered a cure for all ailments).[42] What is analytically significant here is that patient belief is not generic religious faith but is structured by a specific Qur'anic theological framework the Qur'an as *syifa* which simultaneously provides cognitive justification, affective reinforcement, and social legitimation for the healing experience, demonstrating that *be-langea* functions not merely as a medical practice but as a system of meaning through which the Rejang community continuously reproduces its cosmological order and Islamic identity.

The Informative Function of Qur'anic Verses: Local Epistemology and Theological Knowledge

The informative function of Qur'anic verses in *be-langea* operates at a level that exceeds simple doctrinal belief it constitutes a local epistemological system through which the Rejang community constructs, legitimizes, and transmits knowledge about the nature of illness, the sources of spiritual disturbance, and the proper mechanisms of healing.[43] This function is not merely a cognitive acceptance of Qur'anic authority but a deeply internalized framework that shapes how practitioners and patients perceive, narrate, and respond to experiences of bodily and spiritual suffering. Pak Solihin articulated this epistemological foundation with clarity during fieldwork, stating without hesitation that *"qur'an ade ba ubet awak ngen ubet atie"* (The Qur'an is a cure for physical ailments and spiritual ailments) a statement that reveals how the Qur'anic concept of *syifa* has been internalized not as abstract theology but as operative knowledge that directly informs clinical judgment and therapeutic action.[44] This local understanding resonates with Rahman's argument that the Qur'an's healing dimension is integral to its theological architecture,[45] not peripheral folk belief a position further supported by Hidayah and Firdausi, who demonstrate through their analysis of *syifa* verses that Qur'anic healing knowledge has been systematically reinterpreted by Muslim communities across Indonesia

[39] Interview with Nando, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.
[40] Tambiah, *Magic, Science and Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, p. 80.
[41] Muhammad Omar, 'Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of "Ruqyah" Treatment among Muslim Community in Malaysia', p. 210.
[42] Interview with Halik, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.
[43] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', pp. 474–475.
[44] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.
[45] Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, p. 22.

to address a wide spectrum of physical and psychological conditions.[46] Critically, what this reveals is not simply that the Rejang believe in Qur'anic healing, but that they have developed a coherent epistemological structure a local Islamic medical ontology through which Qur'anic authority is operationalized as practical knowledge in everyday therapeutic contexts.

A particularly revealing dimension of this local epistemology emerged during fieldwork when Pak Solihin explained that certain diseases in *be-langea* are understood to originate from *"genangeu jin gen smat"* (disturbances caused by jinn or demons) demonic interference a etiological framework that integrates Qur'anic demonology with indigenous Rejang cosmological categories.[47] This explanatory framework is not simply a survival of pre-Islamic animism but represents an active process of Qur'anic conceptual localization, wherein Islamic theological categories are deployed to make sense of illness experiences that fall outside the explanatory reach of biomedicine.[48] What is analytically important here is the mechanism of translation: the Rejang do not merely adopt Qur'anic categories wholesale but reinterpret them through the lens of their indigenous cosmological experience, producing a hybrid epistemological framework that is simultaneously Islamic and distinctly Rejang. Takdir and Sumbulah, in their Scopus-indexed study of living Qur'an practices in Madura, document a structurally similar process wherein Qur'anic verses are selectively appropriated and reinterpreted to validate local cultural practices a dynamic they describe as "epistemological vernacularization" that empowers local communities to claim Islamic authority without surrendering cultural specificity.[49] This process, while productive and creative, also generates a subtle but important theological tension: the extent to which the Rejang framework of *jin*-caused illness and its cure through lime and water is considered legitimate by orthodox Islamic standards remains a point of negotiation rather than settled consensus, a tension that will be explored more fully in the following section.

The informative function also operates through the *dukun*'s deliberate selection of specific Qur'anic verses whose semantic content is understood to carry direct therapeutic relevance. Amran explained his understanding of the verses used in *be-langea* as a form of *"hope in Allah"* and a means of *" appeal to Allah"* supplicating Allah to grant healing, a framing that positions the selected verses not merely as ritual formulas but as vehicles of intentional theological communication between the human supplicant and the divine healer.[50] The selection of Al-Anbiya: 69 in which Allah commands fire to be *"cool and safe"* for Ibrahim is particularly significant: the *dukun* applies this verse not through abstract analogical reasoning but through a direct semantic transfer, understanding the divine cooling command as directly operative when recited over water and lime in the context of illness characterized by spiritual "heat" or disturbance. This form of semantic-therapeutic reasoning reflects what Supriyanto and Zaman identify in their study of rural Qur'anic practice in Central Java as "functional hermeneutics" a locally developed

[46] Hidayah and Firdausi, 'REDEFINING THE MEANING OF ASY-SYIFA' IN THE QUR'AN AS QUR'ANIC HEALING IN PHYSICAL AILMENTS', p. 258.

[47] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[48] Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse*, p. 45. see, Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation Of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973), p. 101.

[49] Mohammad Takdir and Umi Sumbulah, 'Understanding and Practice of Religious Tolerance: A Study of the Living Qur'an in Madura, Indonesia', *Ulumuna*, 28.1 (2024), pp. 257–80, doi:10.20414/ujis.v28i1.759.

[50] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

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interpretive practice in which verse meaning is extracted and redirected toward concrete therapeutic ends without formal engagement with classical *tafsir* tradition.[51] This is not interpretive naivety but a sophisticated form of practical theology that demonstrates the Rejang community's active agency in constructing Qur'anic meaning from the ground up, through lived experience rather than scholarly mediation.

From the patient's phenomenological perspective, the informative function of Qur'anic verses operates through a process of belief consolidation that transforms theological knowledge into embodied therapeutic experience. Halik described his conviction in strikingly epistemological terms: *"pengubetan yo pengaruh lut mubetpenyakit kareno gi nebaco ne ade ba qur'an gik pacak mubet kete penyakit"* (This treatment is highly effective in curing illnesses because it involves reciting verses from the Qur'an, which serve as a cure for all ailments).[52] What is analytically significant in this statement is not the expression of faith per se but the specific epistemic structure it reveals: the patient's confidence in the treatment's efficacy is not based on empirical observation alone but is grounded in theological information the Qur'an *is* medicine because the Qur'an *says* it is medicine creating a self-reinforcing epistemological circuit in which theological knowledge produces therapeutic expectation, which in turn shapes physiological and psychological experience.[53] This dynamic resonates with Omar et al.'s finding in their quantitative study of *ruqyah* effectiveness that patient belief in the divine source of healing rather than in the specific ritual procedure was the most significant predictor of perceived recovery, suggesting that the informative function's primary therapeutic mechanism operates through the construction of what Berger calls a "sacred canopy" of meaning that renders suffering intelligible and recovery possible.[54] In *be-langea*, this sacred canopy is not imported wholesale from classical Islamic tradition but is locally constructed through the creative integration of Qur'anic theological knowledge with Rejang cosmological experience a process that both enriches and complicates the community's relationship with Islamic orthodoxy.

The Performative Function of Qur'anic Verses: Materialization, Bodily Enactment, and Spatial Distribution

The performative function of Qur'anic verses in *be-langea* operates through a three-layered mechanism that distinguishes this practice from other forms of Islamic healing: verbal recitation, material inscription, and spatial enactment work simultaneously to produce what this article terms "Qur'anic materialization" a process by which the sacred text is transferred from the domain of language into the domain of physical substance, bodily gesture, and domestic space.[55] This concept of materialization extends Rafiq's performative function theory beyond its original verbal-action framework, arguing that in *be-langea*, the Qur'an's performative reach does not terminate at the moment of recitation but continues to operate through the charged water and inscribed lime long after the *dukun* has fallen silent. Pak Amran described the moment of recitation with striking clarity: *"That verse is recited as a central part of the healing process"* confirming that verses are not

[51] Supriyanto and Zaman, *Living Quran in the Context of Rural Communities*, p. 207.
[52] Interview with Halik, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.
[53] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1990), p. 24.
[54] Muhammad Omar, 'Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of "Ruqyah" Treatment among Muslim Community in Malaysia', p. 208.
[55] Rafiq, 'The Living Qur'an', p. 475. See, Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, pp. 20–25.

read for devotional purposes but are deployed as the operational core of a therapeutic.[56] Critically, this understanding challenges any interpretation of *be-langea* as merely symbolic or psychologically suggestive: for the Rejang community, the performative effect of Qur'anic recitation is ontologically real it transforms the physical properties of water and lime in ways that produce measurable therapeutic consequences, a claim that contemporary research on Qur'anic recitation and health outcomes has begun to engage, with Che Wan Mohd Rozali et al. demonstrating in their systematic review that Qur'anic recitation produces statistically significant reductions in anxiety and physiological stress markers among Muslim patients,[57] lending partial empirical support to the community's conviction that recited verses produce real effects on the body.

The materialization process reaches its most analytically significant moment when the *dukun* physically inscribes the names of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad on the surface of the lime an act that Solihin described as *"bringing blessings and designating the orange as a 'activated' medium*.[58] During observation, this inscription was performed with deliberate, concentrated slowness, the *dukun*'s lips moving silently in prayer as the writing proceeded, while the patient watched with visible attention a dynamic that transformed the act of writing into a shared ritual event rather than a private technical procedure.[59] What is theoretically significant here is the transition from recitation to inscription: the Qur'anic performative is no longer merely spoken but is literally written onto the material world, producing what Woodward recognizes in his study of Javanese Islam as the "calligraphic mediation of divine power" the practice of inscribing sacred names on physical objects to transfer divine agency into material form.[60] The inscribed lime is then immersed in water, completing the materialization process: the charged object dissolves its sacred properties into the liquid medium, transforming water from a natural substance into a vehicle of Qur'anic healing energy.[61] This sequential process recitation, inscription, immersion constitutes a structured material-performative chain in which each stage amplifies and extends the therapeutic reach of the Qur'anic text into new physical registers, a pattern that Labibah recognize in their Scopus-indexed study of living Qur'an among pesantren women as characteristic of how Muslim communities in Indonesia translate textual authority into embodied and material practice.[62]

The spatial distribution of the charged water reveals a further dimension of Qur'anic performativity that has been largely overlooked in existing living Qur'an scholarship: the extension of sacred healing into domestic architecture and social space. The patient uses the lime-infused water to rub the face and hair bodily acts of purification then sprinkles it at the front door, beside the sleeping area, and at the back of the house, tracing a spatial sequence that systematically covers the primary zones of human vulnerability and social interaction within the Rejang domestic environment.[63] This spatial enactment is not

[56] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

[57] Wan Nor Atikah Che Wan Mohd Rozali and others, 'The Impact of Listening to, Reciting, or Memorizing the Quran on Physical and Mental Health of Muslims: Evidence From Systematic Review', *International Journal of Public Health*, 67 (2022), p. 1604998 (p. 5), doi:10.3389/ijph.2022.1604998.

[58] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[59] Observations, November 11, 2025.

[60] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, p. 88.

[61] Stoller, *Embodying Colonial Memories*, pp. 60–70.

[62] Umniyatul Labibah, Imam Taufiq, and Moh Yasir Alimi, 'Living Qur'an of Pesantren Women: A Manifestation of QS. An-Nisa 34 in A Woman Leadership Role of Nyai Munjidah Wahab', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 23.1 (2022), pp. 89–110 (p. 95), doi:10.14421/qh.2022.2301-05.

[63] Observations, November 11, 2025.

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incidental but reflects a sophisticated cosmological understanding in which disease is understood to inhabit not only the individual body but also the social and physical spaces through which the patient moves and dwells an understanding that Koentjaraningrat documents as characteristic of Nusantara healing traditions that regard the home as an integral extension of the patient's spiritual condition.[64] From the perspective of performativity theory, this spatial distribution constitutes what could be described as a "ritual of territorial consecration" the systematic application of Qur'anic healing energy to the boundaries and interior spaces of domestic life that extends the performative function of the sacred text into the architecture of everyday existence. However, it is important to note a critical tension here: from the perspective of orthodox Islamic jurisprudence, the application of Qur'anic power through material objects and spatial distribution rather than through formal prayer and supplication occupies a contested theological space, raising questions about the boundaries between legitimate Qur'anic healing (*ruqyah shar'iyyah*) and practices that some Islamic scholars would classify as approaching *bid'ah* (religious innovation) or even *sihr* (sorcery), a tension that the Rejang community navigates pragmatically rather than theologically resolves.

The patient's embodied experience of the performative function reveals dimensions of its therapeutic efficacy that exceed purely spiritual causation and engage the psychological and social registers of healing simultaneously. Nando's testimony *"This method is very effective, but it depends on who prescribes it"* is analytically significant not for its affirmation of healing but for its qualification,[65] efficacy is contingent on the *dukun*'s authority, suggesting that the performative power of Qur'anic verses is not self-executing but is mediated through the social credibility and spiritual standing of the ritual practitioner.[66] Halik's complementary perspective foregrounds the Qur'anic dimension: *"His faith grew stronger because what he was reading were verses from the Quran, which are considered a cure for all ailments"* a statement that reveals how the informative and performative functions converge at the level of patient experience, where theological knowledge about Qur'anic healing generates the affective conditions under which the performative function can operate most effectively. This convergence is supported by Che Wan Mohd Rozali et al.'s systematic review finding that the beneficial effects of Qur'anic recitation on health outcomes were consistently stronger among participants who held explicit theological beliefs about the healing power of the Qur'an, suggesting that the informative function belief in Qur'anic *syifa* is not merely a precondition but an active amplifier of the performative function's therapeutic efficacy.[67] Taken together, these patient testimonies demonstrate that in *be-langea*, the performative function of Qur'anic verses operates not as a unidirectional transfer of divine power from text to body, but as a relational, socially embedded, and materially distributed process in which sacred text, practitioner authority, patient belief, physical substance, and domestic space are all simultaneously activated as co-constitutive elements of a unified healing event.

[64] Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar ilmu antropologi*, p. 83.

[65] Interview with Nando, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[66] Tambiah, *Magic, Science and Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, p. 80.

[67] Che Wan Mohd Rozali and others, 'The Impact of Listening to, Reciting, or Memorizing the Quran on Physical and Mental Health of Muslims', p. 7.

Negotiating Tradition and Islamic Legitimacy: Harmony, Tension, and the Role of the Dukun

The relationship between local Rejang tradition and Islamic legitimacy in *be-langea* is not one of seamless harmony but of active, ongoing negotiation a dynamic process in which cultural and religious authorities are continuously contested, constructed, and reproduced through the ritual itself.[68] This negotiation is most visible in the structural architecture of the ritual: the mantra precedes the Qur'anic recitation, suggesting that indigenous cosmological authority must first be invoked before Islamic theological authority can be fully engaged a sequencing that reveals the unresolved tension between the two systems rather than their uncritical fusion. When Amran described the use of Qur'anic verses and local mantras as *"bentuk mencocokan adat magia qur'an"* (*efforts to harmonize customs or culture with the Qur'an*),[69] he was not simply describing a harmonious integration but articulating a deliberate strategy of cultural legitimation a conscious effort to anchor indigenous practice within an Islamic framework that can withstand potential orthodox scrutiny. This strategy is consistent with what Fuadi et al identify in their Scopus-indexed study of religious moderation in Indonesia as the practice of "Islamic indigenization" (*pribumisasi Islam*), whereby local communities selectively incorporate Islamic vocabulary and authority structures to validate cultural practices without fully surrendering their indigenous character.[70] Critically, however, this process of legitimation does not resolve the underlying theological tension it manages it, producing a ritual that functions as a pragmatic settlement between competing religious and cultural authorities rather than a genuinely integrated synthesis.

The theological tension at the heart of *be-langea* becomes most apparent when the practice is examined from the perspective of orthodox Islamic jurisprudence. The inscription of Allah's name and the Prophet's name on a lime, the ritual charging of water through material contact with a consecrated object, and the invocation of supernatural forces through pre-Islamic Rejang mantra all occupy contested theological terrain within Islam practices that some *ulama* would classify as approaching *bid'ah* (blameworthy innovation) or even *sihr* (sorcery), while others within the tradition of *adat*-sensitive Indonesian Islam would defend them as legitimate cultural expressions of *ruqyah* principles.[71] During fieldwork, this tension was not entirely invisible: the community leader (*tokoh masyarakat*) interviewed expressed a measured ambivalence about *be-langea*, acknowledging its deep cultural roots while noting that "*Some people may question whether this approach is in line with religious teachings"* acknowledging that some community members question whether the practice aligns with religious guidance.[72] This internal community ambivalence is ethnographically significant because it reveals that the apparent harmony of *be-langea* is not a settled social fact but an ongoing achievement one that requires continuous cultural work to maintain against the encroachment of more scripturalist Islamic orientations, a dynamic that Gede Agung et al document in their Scopus-indexed study of local wisdom and interfaith harmony in Indonesia, finding that

[68] Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse*, p. 45. See, Mutawali, 'MODERATE ISLAM IN LOMBOK', p. 312.

[69] Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

[70] Moh Ashif Fuadi and others, 'Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia', *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 19.1 (2024), pp. 47–59 (p. 52), doi:10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.4.

[71] Geertz, *The Interpretation Of Cultures*, p. 101. Lihat, Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, p. 88.

[72] Observations, November 11, 2025.

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the sustainability of tradition-based religious practices depends critically on their capacity to continuously reaffirm their Islamic credentials in response to reformist pressures.[73]

The *dukun* serves as the primary agent through whom this negotiation is carried out, occupying a structurally ambiguous position that is simultaneously central and precarious within the community's religious landscape. Pak Solihin and Pak Amran both presented themselves not as practitioners of indigenous magic but as Muslim healers whose practice is grounded in Qur'anic authority "*The Qur'an is a cure for physical ailments and spiritual ailments"* a self-representation that strategically foregrounds the Islamic dimension of *be-langea* while backgrounding its pre-Islamic cosmological roots.[74] This self-presentation is not simply personal conviction but a socially necessary positioning: the *dukun*'s authority depends on being recognized as an Islamic practitioner rather than an animist shaman, particularly in a context where conservative Islamic movements increasingly challenge the legitimacy of traditional healing practices across Indonesia.[75] According to Geertz,[76] ritual figures in traditional societies function as "cultural brokers" who mediate between competing value systems and in *be-langea*, the *dukun* performs precisely this brokerage function, translating indigenous Rejang cosmological knowledge into an Islamic idiom that is legible and acceptable to a community that is simultaneously committed to both its ancestral traditions and its Islamic identity. The fragility of this brokerage is revealed in Nando's observation that efficacy depends on *"Who gave the medicine"* a statement that inadvertently discloses that the *dukun*'s authority is not intrinsic to the ritual but is socially constituted and therefore socially vulnerable.[77]

From the perspective of the community as a whole, the negotiation between tradition and Islamic legitimacy in *be-langea* produces what can be described as a "practical theology of healing" an informal but coherent religious framework that prioritizes therapeutic efficacy and communal identity over doctrinal consistency. Patients like Halik and Nando do not engage in formal theological deliberation about the orthodoxy of *be-langea*; instead, they operate within a collective framework of meaning in which the Qur'an's healing power is taken as self-evident and the integration of local tradition is understood as culturally enriching rather than religiously contaminating.[78] This pragmatic orientation is supported by Gede Agung et al.'s finding that Indonesian Muslim communities maintain religious harmony not through theological uniformity but through shared commitment to local wisdom as a form of social capital that transcends doctrinal difference.[79] However, this harmony is historically contingent rather than structurally guaranteed: the spread of Salafi-influenced Islamic reform movements in Bengkulu and Sumatra more broadly poses an ongoing challenge to the legitimacy of *be-langea* and similar hybrid healing practices, as reformist discourse increasingly frames such practices

[73] Dewa Agung Gede Agung and others, 'Local Wisdom as a Model of Interfaith Communication in Creating Religious Harmony in Indonesia', *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 9 (2024), p. 100827, doi:10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.100827.

[74] Interview with Solihin, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[75] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, p. 88. See, Fuadi and others, 'Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia', p. 55.

[76] Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 101.

[77] Nando, interview Interview with Nando, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.

[78] Interview with Halik, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025. See, Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, p. 24.

[79] Agung and others, 'Local Wisdom as a Model of Interfaith Communication in Creating Religious Harmony in Indonesia', p. 8.

as incompatible with orthodox Islamic monotheism.[80] The survival of *be-langea* as a living practice therefore depends not only on its therapeutic efficacy but on its continued capacity to construct and maintain what Berger calls "a believable world" a cosmological framework in which Qur'anic healing,[81] Rejang tradition, and Islamic identity can coexist without requiring their practitioners to choose definitively between them.

C. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the be-langea healing ritual of the Rejang community in Dusun Sawah, Bengkulu, constitutes a theoretically significant case of the living Qur'an that extends Rafiq's informative-performative framework in three important directions. First, it introduces the concept of Qur'anic materialization the process by which sacred verses are transferred into physical substances, enacted through bodily gesture, and distributed across domestic space thereby expanding the performative function of the living Qur'an beyond verbal utterance into the domain of material religion and spatial practice. Second, it reveals that the informative and performative functions are not sequential but mutually constitutive: the informative framework of syifa provides the epistemological authority that makes performative efficacy possible, while embodied ritual experience continuously reproduces and reinforces that framework. Third, and critically, it demonstrates that the relationship between Qur'anic authority and local Rejang cosmology in be-langea is not one of seamless harmonization but of active, pragmatic negotiation a dynamic in which the dukun functions as a cultural broker who continuously constructs Islamic legitimacy for indigenous practice in response to both community expectation and reformist pressure. These three contributions collectively advance living Qur'an studies by moving beyond recitation-centered analyses toward a more materially and spatially attentive framework for understanding how Muslim communities across Indonesia and the wider Muslim world enact sacred text through the full range of their cultural resources.

Methodologically, this study demonstrates the value of combining ethnographic thick description with phenomenological analysis in living Qur'an research an approach that captures not only the structural dimensions of ritual practice but also the subjective religious experiences of healers and patients that give the ritual its social and therapeutic meaning. The findings carry significant implications for broader conversations about Islam and local culture in Indonesia: they suggest that hybrid healing practices such as be-langea are not relics of pre-Islamic syncretism but active sites of Islamic meaning-making through which peripheral ethnic communities like the Rejang negotiate their place within the Indonesian Muslim landscape. Three directions for future research emerge from this study: first, comparative studies of be-langea with analogous healing traditions in other Sumatran ethnic communities would illuminate the regional patterns of Qur'anic materialization across the island; second, longitudinal research tracking how be-langea responds to the growing influence of Salafi-oriented Islamic reform in Bengkulu would contribute to understanding the conditions under which hybrid Islamic practices survive or transform under orthodoxizing pressure; third, studies that apply material religion frameworks more systematically to living Qur'an practices across Southeast Asia would open productive new theoretical territory at the intersection of Islamic studies, medical anthropology, and the anthropology of religion.

[80] Mutawali, 'MODERATE ISLAM IN LOMBOK', p. 320. Lihat, Takdir and Sumbulah, 'Understanding and Practice of Religious Tolerance', p. 270.

[81] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, p. 24.

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Interviews

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Interview with Amran, Traditional Healer (*Dukun*) of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.

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Interview with Halik, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 12, 2025.
Interview with Nando, Patient of Be-langea Healing Ritual in Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.
Interview with Rifa'i, Community Leader of Dusun Sawah, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, on November 11, 2025.