

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE *BEUT DARÔH* AND *KENDURI KHATAM* TRADITIONS IN URBAN COMMUNITY OF BANDA ACEH CITY

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the issue of religious traditions in Aceh from the perspective of understanding and interpreting *Quran*, specifically focusing on the *beut darôh* tradition, culminating in the ceremony of *kenduri khatam*. This indigenous ritual has been practiced for a long time in Aceh culture and is exclusively celebrated during the month of Ramadan. Moreover, the main objective of the *beut darôh* is to enliven the night during Ramadan after the *tarawih* prayer in every mosque and *meunasah* (Muslim house of worship), often in rural communities. This ritual reaches its peak at the end of Ramadan with the commemoration of *kenduri khatam*, an inclusive ritual engaging the entire community. Specifically, Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh were the primary areas where this practice evolved and changed. This study commenced with the question, "Why have the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khatam* traditions developed in Aceh urban community?", adopting qualitative method and incorporating grounded study. The results showed that the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khatam* traditions were integral parts of Aceh religious identity and culture. The *beut darôh* was not merely a custom of collective *Quran* reading but also an educational space for *Quran* learning. Aceh community considered *kenduri khatam* as an expression of gratitude, comprising both social interactions and religious customs in local traditions. In addition, the *beut darôh* tradition was initially prevalent in Aceh rural communities, and gradually expanded in urban communities, even though there were practical distinctions in this tradition.

Keywords: *Al-Quran; Beut Darôh; Kenduri Khatam; Local Culture; Urban Community.*

A. Introduction

According to historical records of Islam Nusantara, Aceh was not only the territory but also the primary entry point for the initial arrival of Islam. Azra stated that Islam was directly introduced by the preachers who taught its principles (Azra, 1999). The development of Islam in Aceh comprised a process of acculturation and integration of values from local traditions and earlier beliefs (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Animism). This phenomenon was referred to as the work of traditional Islamic groups (Marcus Mietzner & Burhanuddin Muhtadi, 2020). Numerous symbols in Aceh still retain traces of previous religions, evidenced by the toponyms of several communities in Aceh Besar associated with Hinduism and Buddhism (Indrapuri, Indrapatra, and Indrapurwa). Furthermore, relics of ancient structures, such as stone constructions, believed to have been temples, can still be found, repurposed and transformed into mosques. Some historians and archaeologists speculated that these sites had imprints of Hindu and Buddhist heritage. Over time, the impact of earlier beliefs permeated Aceh customs and rituals, specifically in *kenduri*, evolving as a type of circle-of-life ceremony significantly influenced by local traditions before being integrated into the customs and culture of community.

Aceh *petitih* (*hadih madja*) described the close relationship between local customs and religion, indicating that Islam and traditions, as cultural entities, are akin to a robust and distinct character. Referencing the *petitih*, *adat bak poteu Meureuhom*, *hukom bak Syiah Kuala*, the evolution of Islam in Aceh has consistently impacted the power structure in the area. Both elements manifest the intricate connection between politics and religion, specifically between authorities and ulama (A. Ismail, 2009). Islam has also significantly influenced the landscape of religious education in Aceh, shaping its identity. For Aceh community, primary religious education includes studying the holy *Quran* from an early age. The inability of a family member to read *Quran* is considered a taboo and social disgrace.

One way Aceh community expresses the reverence for *Quran* is by reciting and showcasing the ability to read throughout Ramadan, specifically at night. Approximately all Aceh mosques (known as *meunasah*), particularly in rural areas, engage in *Quran* recitations broadcast through loudspeakers until midnight. This practice, known as *Meudarôh* or the *Beut Darôh*, originates from the Arabic term *tadarrus*. The *beut darôh* typically starts after the *Tarawih* prayer and continues until before dawn. However, the tradition has significant meaning among Aceh community, serving as an identity to illuminate the nights of Ramadan. Respecting tradition means culminating it with *kenduri* celebration known as *khanduri khatam darôh*.

According to the book "*Runtuhnya Gampong di Aceh*" (The Collapse of Gampong in Aceh), *kenduri* festivities and ceremonies in Aceh community cannot be understood as ordinary rites. Each *kenduri* has a specific meaning and is deeply ingrained as a value in all facets of Aceh community. As a cultural tradition, every religious action commences and concludes with *kenduri*, a fundamental necessity in all aspects of life, from birth to death (Afadlal, 2008). The ritual also extends to the *beut darôh* tradition, which culminates in *kenduri khatam darôh* (the closure of *tadarus*) as a sign of reverence for the Muslim holy book showed during Ramadan.

The ritual was originally practiced in only Aceh communities and villages. However, the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khatam Darôh* traditions gradually disseminated and influenced urban communities, including Banda Aceh City. The application of the *beut darôh* in urban communities differs from the rural tradition. For instance, *Quran* recitation over loudspeakers is restricted until before dawn. Only groups proficient in *Quran* reading, following accurate *tajwid* (*Quran* reading rules), are permitted to recite

over loudspeakers. This restriction does not apply in rural community, where those capable of reading *Quran* can participate in the *beut darôh*.

According to the previous description, this study focused on understanding the significance of *meudaroeh* and *kenduri khatam Quran* traditions in the context of urban life in Aceh. The objective was to observe and explain the evolution of *meudaroeh* tradition from rural to urban communities in Banda Aceh City. The primary research questions are: " why is the *beut darôh* tradition changing in Aceh urban community, and what is the form of this shift in community?"

Several normative studies on *Quran*, recognizing its sacred status in Islamic communities, have been conducted in Aceh, similar to other Muslim areas. The efforts to study and transcribe *Quran* have persisted for a long time, specifically since Islam significantly influenced civilization during the reign of the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam. The enormous handwritten *Quran* copies (manuscripts) and the presence of the earliest Malay interpretation in Southeast Asia, *Turjumanul Mustafid*, authored by Shaykh Abdurrauf as-Singkily, demonstrated this condition (Azra, 1994; Fairusy, 2014).

Exploration of *Quran* in Aceh are visible through various historical studies, such as philology through *Quran* manuscripts and a series of Aceh historical documents detailing the existence of Islam as an integral part of Aceh identity. Several historical sources describe how Islam and the tradition of *Quran* study reached Aceh. Several academics have investigated local traditions, particularly those related to the circle of life and *kenduri*, emphasizing the sanctity of *Quran* in Aceh community (B. Ismail, 2019; Said, 1981; Snouck Hurgronje, 1985). However, studies on cultural shift in understanding *Quran* tradition remain significantly limited.

Investigations were made on local culture and traditions in Aceh, particularly exploring the significant influence of Islam and the incorporation of Islamic identity. Badruzzaman Ismail, an eminent figure in Aceh tradition and a chronicler of customary practices, specifically investigated customs and culture, portraying Islam as an integral facet of Aceh cultural essence and a fundamental element in the evolution of civilization. Islam has an impact on almost every aspect of Aceh life, particularly the circle of life (Badruzzaman Ismail & et al, 2018; B. Ismail, 2019). Similar to *Piil Pesenggiri* in Lampung, described by Basyar, Islam has become a "...reflection and representation of the ethics and characteristics of the Lampung indigenous people." (Basyar et al., 2020a).

The reference for the holy book, *Al-Quran*, in Aceh is accompanied by other sacred cultural traditions, such as *kenduri*, which have remarkable value for Aceh community. In this current study, the significance of *Al-Quran* would be examined as an integral component associated with Aceh traditions *kenduri*. This cultural phenomenon is evident at the culmination of the Ramadan ritual of *Quran* recitation. *Kenduri*, well-known for its functions in Aceh culture, serves to foster social interaction and solidarity, including the practice of the *beut darôh*, concluding with *kenduri khatam daroeh*. Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist developed a concept distinguished into two parts, namely *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. *Gesellschaft* refers to community, while *Gemeinschaft* is related to the idea of a group or association. *Gemeinschaft*, according to Tonnies, is a value-oriented, aspirational, role-playing, and occasionally habitual state regulating social dynamics. In this concept, the urge to relate originates from in the individual and is based on similarities in desires and conducts. This shared likeness reinforces social ties and is further solidified by emotional relationships and interactions among individuals. Meanwhile, *Gesellschaft* denotes relationships among community members characterized by weaker ties. It can also apply to individuals who are unfamiliar with

each other, their values, standards, and attitudes that may lead to inappropriate behavior (Martono, 2012).

In line with the explanation above, *gemeinschaft* appears more suitable for describing the phenomena of the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khatam Quran* in contemporary Aceh community, particularly among Aceh community residing in both urban and rural areas. These locales often uphold the *beut darôh* tradition and *kenduri khataman* due to strong social solidarity, ethical values, equitable work relationships, and social interactions rooted in culture and local wisdom. Meanwhile, the second concept was considered more applicable to social situations in urban (city) societies.

Regarding urban community, insights from the experiences of Campago Guguak Bulek Nagari in West Sumatra revealed the efforts to safeguard an economy rooted in local community traditions amidst the influence of the global market. Despite the acceptance of external elements, the preservation of local culture was prioritized (Helfi et al., 2021). Similarly, *kenduri khatam Quran* is exceptional as a part of Aceh local wisdom that has endured through time. This indicates a strong relationship between religion and local culture, as interpreted by community, demonstrating a process of acculturation, where Islam collaborates with local culture to create a heritage upheld collectively. As previously mentioned, the integration of Islam and local culture in social activities can be akin to two inseparable sides of a coin, denoting complementary roles (duality).

In the book "*Islam and Local Culture*", Lebba Kadorre Pongsibanne stated that a rule can be implemented when it correlated with existing customary law without contradiction. According to this reception theory, community readily embraces religion when the teachings harmonize with the culture of community. Conversely, religious tenets that conflict with community culture tend to be rejected (Pongsibanne, 2017).

The culture of community can be significantly influenced by the practiced religion. The accommodation of a religion helps shape the cultural framework of community. These changes can be fundamental (assimilation) or might only affect certain aspects (acculturation) (Pongsibanne, 2017). This context can be observed within Aceh *khataman al-Quran* tradition.

Several studies addressed social and religious culture related to the completion (*khataman*) of *Quran* from local perspectives and cultural contexts across various Indonesian sites. These studies were published in journals, books, articles, and other scientific works. For instance, Wirdanengsi explored the *Enculturation of Cultural Values in the Family of Mandoa Khatam Al-Quran Tradition within the Balai Gurah Community, West Sumatra*. Another study, published by the same author, explored the *Meaning and Traditions in the Series of Children Khatam Quran Traditions in Nagari Balai Gurah, West Sumatra*. Despite revolving around similar notion, the methods of the books slightly differed.

The study by Lebba Kadore Pongsibanne, "Islam and Local Culture: An Anthropological Study," examined the acculturation of Islamic culture and religion. The studies could be limited by the exclusion of certain relevant literature. However, no study has specifically explored the topic of *Kenduri Khatam Quran: Study of Local Wisdom of Aceh People Respecting and Understanding the Al-Quran*. The existence of such investigations could potentially cover a different geographical area.

Page 253 of the book *Serambi Mekah yang Berubah*, written by Arskal Salim et al., discussed *kenduri* of Death in South Kluet Aceh, while the significance of *kenduri* of death in Kluet community was examined. The book specifically drew parallels in the discussion on *kenduri*. According to Geertz, *kenduri* can be identified as one of the syncretic rituals in Muslim community, where local Hindu-based culture adds nuances to Islamic teachings (Salim & Sila, 2010).

Various sources depicting the diverse traditions and civilizations existing in Indonesia were incorporated to facilitate the comprehension of the *beut darôh*. One of the references is the book, *The Tradition and Culture of Nusantara*, written by Sumanto Al-Qutuby and Izak Y.M Lattu, which discusses the distinctions and similarities between traditions and cultures (Al Qurtuby & Lettu, 2019).

The authors also referred to a book by Alfian in 1977 titled "Socio-Cultural Aspects of Aceh Community." Based on a comprehensive study conducted across various residential areas in Aceh using grounded study, this book explored the socio-cultural dynamics, particularly among rural populations. It also incorporated diverse anthropological viewpoints, serving as a foundational framework for comprehensive scientific study (Alfian, 1977).

References were drawn from Anastasia Pudjutriherwanti et al., *Cultural Studies from Cultural Structuralism to Modern Orientalism*, investigating the structure of culture as a civilization, cultural aspects, and contemporary complexities (Pudjutriherwanti et al., 2019). This study examined the existence of the *beut darôh* in the context of contemporary urban community in terms of lifestyle behaviors.

B. Methods

This study adopted a descriptive and analytical method, as well as grounded study. Grounded study, according to Abdurrahman in the book "Study on Religion: Problems and Thoughts," is qualitative method that facilitates investigation without being confined to or demanding validation of a theory proposed by experts (Sumardi & Dkk, 1982). Qualitative method typically indicates individual perspectives, experiences, and construction of life meanings. Consequently, participants are considered subjects (emic) to be explored as source of knowledge (Creswell, 2010).

Qualitative method was adopted and data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews. Visual data were captured by documenting photos, which would be presented in this report. Prior to the field study, several literacy works on the concept of consensus and the culture of the group under investigation were reviewed. According to Strauss and Corbin, a grounded theory is developed inductively from an investigation of the phenomena represented (Anselm & Juliet, 2005). This theory was discovered, compiled, and tentatively validated through systematic data collection and analysis relevant to the phenomena. Consequently, data collection, analysis, and theory development were interlinked. The initial objective was not the validation of theory, but the comprehension of the subject of study and relevant objects to the field.

Abdurrahman identified a strategy known as constant comparison in grounded study, where experts attempted to construct categories and field concepts based on the realities observed during analytical development. Consequently, this method did not necessitate random sampling guidelines, typically used in quantitative structural study, as there could be numerous analytical adaptations in the field.

The data collection process commenced with observation, aiming to comprehend the phenomenon of the *khataman Quran* tradition, a primary focus of this study. According to Jorgensen "...direct observation is the primary method of gathering information" (Jorgensen, 1989). Interviews were subsequently conducted, either in an unstandardized manner or with a predefined structure (focused interview). This effort aimed to gather data, information, and perspectives about the Singkel families. The study experts resided in community for several months to investigate the genuine situation, ensuring study consistency, specifically regarding the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khatam*.

The study experts were outsiders and new to community under investigation. Therefore, the initial step entailed identifying key informants. In qualitative study, informants serve as primary sources of knowledge. Spradley outlined two criteria for selecting essential informants: 1) locals with a deep understanding and significant experience, and 2) locals capable of analyzing and interpreting based on folk theory (local concepts) (Spradley, 1997). In this context, key informants refer to community leaders in the study setting.

Literature review was an integral aspect of this study in the data collection phase. The culture of the study area was examined prior to engaging in fieldwork and exploring community activities. Through a comprehensive literature review, a better insight could be gained into local culture and the significance of family for the residents on the border of Aceh area. A historical method, in line with the perspective of Koentowijoyo, was also adopted, advocating for occasional integration of history sciences with other interdisciplinary fields (Kuntowijoyo, 1994).

The significance of historical sources lies in sorting usable data and determining its representation in written form, adopting a method to historical writing that is neither speculative nor fictional. Writing history necessitates method and study to reconstruct scientific data, ensuring it remains rooted in reality rather than evolving into myth or merely storytelling.

The last step comprised data analysis using qualitative method to address research questions. Data analysis required careful consideration, foresight, and discretion. Data gathering and analysis often occur simultaneously in qualitative study as cited by Mariam 1998, Marshall and Rossman 1989 (Creswell, 2010a). The process of data analysis commenced from the inception of the study, demanding astuteness, creativity, and sensitivity in the selection and extraction of relevant data.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

The Tradition of the *Beut Darôh* and *Kenduri Khatam Al-Quran* in Aceh Community

Education and *Quran* understanding among Aceh community commenced from childhood (Sufi et al., 2019). The integration of Islamic religious education for young Aceh community aimed to instill discipline for future adherence to Islamic norms. The stringent nature of Islamic education in Aceh was evident in parental efforts to impart religious understanding from an early age. When parents lack time, religious teachers are entrusted with helping children understand *Quran* and Islamic teachings. Religious education was no longer considered an alternative to regular schooling, but a necessity. This trend spurred the proliferation of Islamic religious education institutions in Aceh, such as *dayah* (Islamic boarding schools). Before the prevalence of *dayah*, *meunasah* was the primary site for religious education.

The advent of the Ramadan month was crucial for reinforcing Islamic religious education in Aceh. Ramadan had a special place in the hearts of Aceh community, being the most anticipated and sacred month. Specific customs, like *meudaroeh*, were exclusively observed during this period. Following the *Tarawih* prayer, virtually all mosques and *meunasah* in Aceh engaged in the tradition of group *Quran* recitations in the evenings, until the end of Ramadan. Loudspeakers were typically used, creating echoing effects between mosques and *meunasahs*. Restrictions were imposed on loudspeaker usage following a *fatwa* issued by various ulama in Aceh, thereby limiting time for microphone use and affecting the *meudaroeh* tradition, as it might disturb those resting. While this was previously conducted until Sahur, it currently ends at midnight

(0.00 WIB).

The *beut darôh* tradition, a long-standing practice in Aceh, comprises group *Quran* recitations. This tradition includes men, particularly those who have reached a decent age (*baligh*) in Islam, considered capable of independent living and bound by Islamic law. At a rural *meunasah* in Banda Aceh City, several youths were seen participating alongside elders, taking turns reciting *Quran* verses in the same circle. Abdullah, a 60-year-old participant described the engagement in the *beut darôh* tradition since childhood during Indonesian independence, and narrated how the tradition persists during the month of Ramadan.

There are social demands in the *beut darôh* tradition, manifesting as collective care, where community takes turns providing food to the participants who willingly stay up all night at *meunasahs* and mosques. This gesture expresses religious support to enliven Ramadan nights through *Quran* recitations in these places. Each night, the owner of a coffee shop in Banda Aceh City claimed to have received requests to deliver coffee and cakes to the participants, describing it as a local community order. Consequently, the *beut darôh* is sustained through communal values and donations from both rural and urban communities in Banda Aceh City.

Not all participants attending mosque and *meunasah* during the implementation of the *beut darôh* read the holy *Quran*. Some young participants simply loved spending time with friends and gathered during Ramadan nights. For instance, when twenty teenagers frequented the *meunasah* nightly, only half actively participated, while the rest preferred to rest. Although unusual, this scenario was considered normal by the *Beut Darôh* participants, as the presence of friends not engaged in *Quran* recitation helped enliven the atmosphere and alleviate boredom.

Asnawi Zainun (57), Chair of Aceh Traditional Council of Aceh Besar District, described the implementation of the *beut darôh* based on teenage experiences. Zainun also explained that *meudaroeh* originates from the Arabic word *tadarus*, meaning "to study." Therefore, community congregated at the *meunasah* and the mosque during those times with the aim of *Quran* study. However, this tradition has evolved into a unique local custom. In the past, the *meudaroeh* served as a test for newlyweds who had relocated to the bride village, with the escort of community youth, to demonstrate *Quran* reading ability. Failure to pass this test could result in satirical expressions (full of metaphors), demonstrating the social and religious shortcomings. Using metaphor as a form of social punishment has become a tradition in Aceh (Jarjani Usman & Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf, 2020).

According to Asnawi Zainun, the *beut darôh* is only held during Ramadan, and is simply referred to as *meudaroeh* outside Ramadan. Therefore, the term *beut darôh* is significant in certain contexts due to its association with Ramadan in Aceh, where *Quran* readings occur only at night in the *meunasah* and mosque until dawn. From a broader perspective, the *beut darôh* can be referred to as religious moderation that adapts as a strategy to reinforce Islamic values (Muhammad Candra Syahputra & Idrus Ruslan, 2021).

Hamli Yunus (55 years old) has been practicing the *beut darôh* for many years in Banda Aceh urban community. Hamli is also a well-known *Quran* reciter, holding special regard for the holy book, and has performed internationally. Particularly in Aceh culture, community is not offended by late-night *Quran* recitations. However, Hamli abides by the fatwa of ulama in Aceh, prohibiting the use of loudspeakers until *sahur*. It is also essential to respect the rights of others who want to rest without being disturbed by loudspeaker sound. The restriction on loudspeaker usage generally applies only in Banda Aceh urban community, while it continues until *sahur* in rural areas.

Faizal Ardiansyah (58), a religious teacher in Banda Aceh urban community demonstrated the unique attributes of *Quran*, which is readily accepted by the Muslim population due to the touching theological and spiritual messages. This serves as an educational medium, specifically in cultural spaces (Asep Supriatna et al., 2022; Basyar et al., 2020b). Faizal Ardiansyah believed that the *beut darôh* participants often experienced psychological comfort, interpreting this phenomenon as a miraculous quality inherent in *Quran*. This holy book has also maintained originality since its revelation, with no changes, and is highly prioritized in Aceh, a predominantly Muslim community, in the *beut darôh* tradition.

The *beut darôh* has undergone frequent transformations. According to various Aceh social study experts, the prolonged conflict in Aceh has led to significant changes for community, including the diminishing role of *meunasah*, which was the primary hub for the *beut darôh* practice (Mujib et al., 2014). *Meunasah* served as a center for religious and social activities for all Aceh community, constituting the centuries-old *beut darôh* tradition and the *dayah*, "a unique traditional Islamic boarding school in Aceh" (Usman et al., 2021). Since the political conflict in Aceh, the *beut darôh* tradition has been inactive, a state that has persisted for approximately three decades.

This tense political situation significantly affected the implementation of Aceh local traditions, including the *beut darôh*. One impact was the decline in the function of *meunasah*, previously crucial for nurturing the younger generation in Islamic religious education and *Quran* reading. According to some Aceh traditional leaders, *meunasah* was crucial for Islamic education development. The term *meunasah* draws from the Arabic word, *madrasah* (a place of learning), serving as a centre for education, particularly for the development of *Quran* through the *beut darôh* tradition.

2. Discussion

The Transformation of the *Meudaroeh* Tradition in Aceh Urban Community

The melodious recitation of *Quran* holy verses resonated at 23:05 WIB across the courtyard of the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque and in community, serving as a source of pride for Aceh community. A group of selected male *Quran* readers had just completed their recitation inside the Dutch mosque, activities documented in a photograph. During break, the reciters discussed the differing implementation of the *beut darôh* in Aceh cities and villages. The *beut darôh* group leader, Hamli Yunus (50), showed the significant disparities in implementing this local tradition between urban and rural areas. In urban settings, the *beut darôh* is meticulously organized, starting with the careful selection of reciters who should adhere strictly to the *Tajwid* rules. Conversely, in villages, the tradition is often considered as simply reviving the nights of Ramadan. Some disregard the *Tajwid* rules and recite *Quran* without proper rhythm, with younger generations often lacking the ability to recite correctly. In cities like Banda Aceh, *Al-Quran* study groups are rapidly growing, elevating the enthusiasm for the *beut darôh* nights. Participants have showcased exceptional *Quran* recitation skills. Hamli Yunus, who frequently travels around Aceh for *Quran* recitations, observed numerous mistakes in pronunciation and *tajwid* among reciters.

As a seasoned *Quran* reciter at the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque (MRB), particularly in urban communities like Banda Aceh, Hamli acknowledged that the *beut darôh* is Aceh religious tradition that incorporates *Quran* and the sacred month of Ramadan. However, a series of transformations were identified in this tradition, specifically in urban community of Banda Aceh, reflecting the pace of societal changes in urban areas. The use of loudspeakers is a significant distinction between rural villages

and urban communities where loudspeakers are restricted until midnight. Furthermore, participants in urban mosques are selected based on the ability to recite the holy book, requiring authorization to participate in the *beut darôh*.

Banda Aceh implementation of the *beut darôh* differs from other districts in Aceh, particularly in specific mosques. Mosque administrators deliberately select individuals capable of *Quran* recitation during Ramadan nights (*beut darôh*). Prominent mosques, like Baiturrahman Grand and Harun Geuchik Leumiek (HGL), consistently observe the *Beut Darôh*, and serve as Banda Aceh icons. Historical significance of the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque makes it a source of pride for Aceh community, having witnessed the struggle against Dutch colonial rule. HGL Mosque, which has garnered attention of Aceh community in the last two years due to distinctive architecture built by an Aceh gold businessman. The elegant design reminiscent of Middle Eastern mosques has turned it into a sought-after religious destination, with many couples desiring to begin their married life in this mosque. *Al-Quran* recitation is a popular activity at HGL Mosque, hosting not only the *beut darôh* but also massive recitations (*Haflah*) featuring national reciters.

Participants in the *beut darôh* at these urban mosques, emblematic of Banda Aceh, are meticulously selected by mosque management. According to an administrator from HGL Mosque, the selection process is highly competitive. In contrast to the *beut darôh* tradition in rural villages, those engaging in the *beut darôh* are compensated by the mosque management. There has been a significant transformation of this tradition in urban community, where the *beut darôh* is no longer defined as a local tradition of voluntary *Quran* reading, as seen in rural Aceh. It is perceived as a profession for a select group who have mastered the art of *Quran* recitation, thereby remaining a profession in Aceh, often sought for various events and activities.

kenduri khataman at Banda Aceh urban mosque also presents a distinct perspective. For instance, at HGL Mosque, the committee organizes *Quran* memorization event by inviting external reciters to enrich *khataman* night. The reciters perform *Quran* verses accompanied by melodic recitations on the final night, an event open to the public and free of charge. In the context of Aceh urban community, this form of *khataman* with a *haflah* (commemoration) represents a transformation in the *beut darôh* tradition. The occurrence was unprecedented in *khataman* tradition, particularly in rural settings. The *meudaroeh* tradition usually concludes with *kenduri khataman* followed by a communal fast-breaking attended by the surrounding village community.

Kenduri khatam is still implemented based on voluntary values and principles in rural areas, with community support, such as providing donations and food for those who collectively break fast. Even though it is located adjacent to Banda Aceh as urban area, Lampermai, still adheres to traditional principles. Most *beut darôh* participants often perform the traditional *kenduri khataman* at the meunasah. The organizing committee acknowledges that this activity is voluntary and applies to all sites engaged in the celebration.

The cultural context of local community, which differs from community in the village, influences the transformation of the *beut darôh* tradition in Aceh urban community. Although there is a structural role contributing to this transformation through the fatwa of Aceh religious leader (Ulama), who issued a decree that carrying out the *beut darôh* tradition using loudspeakers until before dawn is forbidden because it is disruptive to the comfort of community, the influence of this fatwa only applies to urban communities. Many participants in non-urban areas often disregard this fatwa, and consistently engage until *Sahur*. According to some participants, the significance of the time limit was simply a matter of setting the loudspeaker, rather than limiting the

tradition of reading *Quran* in a time frame. As a result, the *beut darôh* tradition cannot be constrained or hindered by fiqh reasons, as it has evolved into community tradition.

Interpreting the Meaning of the *Beut Darôh* and *Kenduri Khatam* Traditions in Aceh Urban Community.

The *beut darôh* tradition, observed during Ramadan nights and culminating with *kenduri khataman*, is a local practice deeply rooted in Aceh community. This custom is carried out in almost every *meunasah* and mosque in Aceh. The peak of the tradition is marked by the celebration of *kenduri khatam Quran*. Community traditionally prepares a cow or buffalo cooked in a large pot (Aceh style; beulangoeng sauce), serving as a culinary hallmark in significant cultural rituals.

Khataman al-Quran is celebrated during the day when awaiting *iftar*, while the *beut darôh* takes place at night. Typically held at the end of Ramadan, *kenduri khatam* includes breaking the fast collectively and inviting the neighboring community. In Aceh Besar, an urban suburb of Banda Aceh, both events are particularly vibrant, representing a key aspect of local community identity. The organizing committee typically distributes coupons for the curry sauce to regulate its distribution, a dish prepared collectively.

Each family uses these coupons to obtain curry prepared by the committee at the *meunasah* or mosque. Announcements made over loudspeakers instruct villagers to bring their food containers for the curry following the *dhuhur* prayer. Subsequently, community arrive, coupons in hand, lining up containers near the large cauldron where the curry is being prepared. The committee subsequently fills these containers with curry sauce, which community takes home.

Individuals who select to donate *iftar* snacks return to the *meunasah* and mosque later in the day, with an *iftar* package comprising Aceh dishes. Invitations often extend from neighboring villages, enlivening the atmosphere in the *meunasah* of village hosting *kenduri khataman*. Newlyweds residing in these villages are expected to bring special, separate dishes to share at the *meunasah* and mosque.

Aceh community considers the *beut darôh* and *kenduri khataman* as sacred religious identities. This cultural event transcends the celebration of local heritage traditions, as it also symbolizes social integration. It reflects the sanctity of *Quran* and *kenduri khataman*, the two most referred elements in Aceh community, observed during Ramadan. *Khataman* tradition is always passed down across generations, revered for incorporating three sacred elements (the holy book, *kenduri*, and the month of Ramadan). However, this study identified variations and distinctions in the implementation of the *Beut Darôh* and *kenduri khatam* among Aceh rural and urban communities.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the *beut darôh*, a local tradition integrating Islamic teachings with local norms, was deeply ingrained in Aceh community, significantly influencing urban communities. Like other major traditions in Aceh, this event was ritually concluded with *kenduri khataman*, a gesture of reverence directly related to the revelation of *Al-Quran* during Ramadan. This tradition had transcended villages to urban communities, particularly Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar, the focal points of this study. *Kenduri khataman* was observed at the close of Ramadan across villages in these urbanized areas.

The *beut darôh* transcended a mere symbol of Muslims honoring *Quran* during Ramadan. It indicated reverence for the holy book and the month of Ramadan as a historical tradition for Aceh community. Urban community residing in Banda Aceh perceived the *beut darôh* as an educational space, specifically for *Quran* education.

It was also a crucial platform for *Quran* reciters in Banda Aceh, a ritual predominantly associated with males due to historical hegemony. The presence of men in the *meunasah* room had long been entrenched, initially intended to assess the religious aptitude of an Aceh man relocating post-marriage to a village, specifically in *Quran* recitation ability.

The *beut darôh* as a tradition had experienced transformations, particularly in urban settings. The changes included the prohibition of midnight use of loudspeakers, which could be disruptive to the sleep of community. Traditional ulama closely monitored the *beut darôh*, issuing fatwas to regulate the practice of preventing disturbances.

Urban community in Banda Aceh had introduced shifts in the *beut darôh* contrary to rural implementation following traditional patterns. This included selecting participants based on *Quran* recitation proficiency, compensating participants, and imposing restrictions on loudspeaker usage. In villages, community, irrespective of *Quran* reading abilities or recitation skills, could participate in the *beut darôh*, supported by collective contributions. A transformation evident in the *beut darôh* tradition, particularly during *Quran khataman* celebration, including several mosques in Banda Aceh urban community. To conclude the *meudaroeh* tradition, these mosques not only conducted *kenduri* but also invited external reciters to perform *haflah*, open to the general public.

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F. Author Contributions Statement

This study was carried out by a collaborative team, with Muhajir Al-Fairusy contributing to the inception of the study idea and drafting the background as well as method. M. Ikhwan assisted in collecting field data and writing preliminary studies, while Darlis Azis contributed to composing certain sections of the literature reviews. At the conclusion of the study, Muhajir Al-Fairusy, M. Ikhwan, Muji Mulia, and Darlis Azis collaborated in data analysis and drawing of comprehensive conclusions.

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