

## **Torch War Tradition in Jepara District, Central Java (The Study of Living Quran Q.S. Al-baqarah 152)**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to understand more deeply the meaning of the torch war tradition in Tegal Sambi Village, Tahunan Subdistrict, Jepara Regency in the perspective of Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152. The method of study is a qualitative through a phenomenological approach, the data of this study are obtained from observations, interviews, documentation, journal articles, books, tafsir books, and similar literature to explain the history of the Torch War tradition. The results of this study found that the symbolic meaning of the torch war is closely related to gratitude for the gifts of Allah SWT, in the form of crops and the sea. The local community connects this tradition with the content of Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152, which shows the harmony between cultural practices and the Qur'an. In the torch war there are several symbols, the symbol of fire is interpreted as a cleanser of negative energy. The light of the torch as a symbol of illuminating the darkness with knowledge. The hard and dry coconut fronds symbolize strength and resilience. Dry banana leaves that are flammable and produce thick smoke symbolize fertility and purity. The relevance of the torch war culture with Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:152 is that the torch war reflects human efforts to get closer to Allah, be grateful for His blessings, and cleanse themselves of all impurities of the heart.*

**Keywords:** Al-Baqarah/2:152, gift, Tradition, Torch War

## INTRODUCTION

Tradition is an integral part of a society's culture, it has the potential to shape regional identity, and become social glue. In simple terms, tradition is everything that is done, believed and passed down as part of local cultural identity.<sup>1</sup> Among the traditions that exist in Indonesia is the torch war tradition in Tegal Sambi Village, Tahunan Subdistrict, Jepara Regency. Traditions are usually related to country, religion, time, culture, and so on.<sup>2</sup> The torch war tradition is an earth alms ritual that is routinely held every year on Monday *pahing* (Javanese calendar) in the month of *zulka'dah* in the Hijriyah calendar by the Jepara community. This tradition is based on the legend of Kiai Babadan and Ki Gemblong, and the culmination of a series of earth alms tradition. Earth alms itself is a form of community gratitude for the abundance of blessings and prosperity they receive. More than just culture and history, the torch war and earth alms in Tegal Sambi holds a deeper meaning, but also has a significant connection as a reception of gratitude from the community to Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152. The effort to relate the tradition of the Torch War with Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:152 is a form of contextualization in interpretation, making the meaning of the Qur'anic verse relevant to the traditions present in society.<sup>3</sup>

The torch war is a local wisdom tradition that is deeply rooted in the history and culture of the local community. This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation as a form of respect and expression of gratitude to God Almighty. The torch war ritual is an attraction for the community, not only as a cultural performance, but also as a form of gratitude and respect for the ancestors. This tradition serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining noble values and local wisdom. Traditions that contain values and norms in society are a form of culture. These values and norms are followed and obeyed by the community. In Indonesia, there are many forms of culture in the form of traditions or rituals with

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<sup>1</sup> Nor Hasan & Edi Susanto, *Relasi Agama Dan Tradisi Lokal (Studi Fenomenologis Tradisi Dhammong Di Madura)* (Surabaya: CV. Jakad Media Publishing, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Made Prasta Yostitia Pradipta, "Analisis Prosesi Tradisi Kirab Pusaka Satu Sura," *Jurnal Jempper* 1, no. 1 (2022): Hak, 49, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jempper.v1i1.191>.

<sup>3</sup> Abdul Fatah, *Al-Qur'an Dan Isu Kontemporer, Dilaketika Antara Teks Dan Realitas*. (Yogyakarta: Tonggak Media, 2023), 5–8.

religious nuances. By carrying out these traditions, people believe that they will be protected from evil spirits.<sup>4</sup>

Traditions that are passed down from generation to generation sometimes contain Qur'anic values and teachings that are practiced in the form of rituals, customs and habits. The values of the Qur'an merge and become the basis for the formation of values in people's lives and their culture. This process produces a new culture rooted in Qur'anic values, or at least an adjustment of the old culture with the addition of values based on the teachings of the Qur'an.<sup>5</sup> The concept of Living Qur'an stems from the habit of reading the Qur'an at certain times or moments, memorizing its verses, and making it a decoration of mosques and homes. This phenomenon has come to the attention of experts, including Ahmad Ubaydi and Hasbillah, who describe Living Qur'an as the practice of using and observing the Qur'an in daily activities.<sup>6</sup>

In this study the focus of the study is: How is the Jepara community's reception to the torch war tradition and what is its relevance to Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152? This study is a real manifestation of the implementation and understanding of the values of the Qur'an in the lives of Muslim communities, not just as a text that is read and memorized. This shows that the Qur'an is not only a holy book, but also a guide to life that is relevant and easily accessible to everyone.<sup>7</sup> The torch war is interpreted as a form of gratitude for God's grace because of the abundant crops and the sea by the people of Tegal Sambi Village so that it is relevant to the content of the verses of the Qur'an, for example in Q.S. Luqman / 31: 12 "Give thanks to Allah! Whoever is grateful, indeed he is grateful for himself. Whoever disbelieves (does not give thanks), verily Allah is All-Rich and All-Praised" and Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:152 ". So, remember Me, I will also remember you. Give thanks to Me

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<sup>4</sup> A Agustina, E A Ismaya, and ..., "Makna Tradisi Barikan Bagi Pendidikan Karakter Anak Desa Sedo Demak," *Jurnal Educatio FKIP ...* 7, no. 3 (2021): 1213–22, <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v7i3.1355>.

<sup>5</sup> Alvin Noor Fitriani and Wulan Septiyani, "Mengkaji Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Perang Obor Terhadap Semangat Nasionalisme, Hal, 1-12," *Jurnal Paris Langkis* 1, no. 2 (2021): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.37304/paris.v1i2.2500>.

<sup>6</sup> Ahmad Ubaydi dan Hasbillah, *Ilmu Living Qur'an-Hadis Ontologi, Dan Aksiologi* (Banten: Yayasan Wakaf Darus-Sunnah, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> Muh Ibnu Mubarak and M Rusydi, "Living Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Tingkeban (Syukuran Tujuh Bulanan Ibu Hamil) Untuk Meningkatkan Nilai Spiritual Masyarakat," *ICHES: International Conference on Humanity Education and Society LIVING* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–10.

and do not disobey Me". This study aims to examine the Jepara community's reception of the torch war tradition and its relevance to Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:152.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Prior Research

Some of the literature that has examined similar themes include:

1. Research conducted by Alvin Noor Fitrian and Wulan Septiyani. The results showed that the Torch War tradition has two fundamental values, namely divine value and cultural value.<sup>8</sup>
2. Mitatun Nuzulia and Abdul Fatah examined the Larung Sesaji tradition in Sambiroto Village, Pati, in the context of the Living Quran. Their research shows that the mixture of culture and Islam creates space for religious believers to express themselves and their culture, including the Larung Sesaji tradition which is an acculturation of culture and religion.<sup>9</sup>
3. Efa Ida Amaliyah, in her writing discusses the value of local wisdom in the tradition of torch war with the characteristics of the Islamic archipelago (*Islam Nusantara*), does not explain the verse specifically.<sup>10</sup> So this research is quite different from previous studies, the torch war tradition is observed from the Jepara community's reception and its relevance to Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152.

### 2. Qur'an and Cultural Acculturation

Acculturation is known as the fusion of two or more cultures that grow and develop together. It impacts and influences not only the activities and surroundings, but also the buildings. The existence of architecture, interior design and surrounding activities occurs as a result of interacting religious, cultural and social influences. This interaction gives each object its own identity. Social and cultural

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<sup>8</sup> Noor Fitrian and Septiyani, "Mengkaji Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Perang Obor Terhadap Semangat Nasionalisme, Hal, 1-12."

<sup>9</sup> Mitatun Nuzulia and Abdul Fatah, "Living Qur ' an : Telaah Tradisi Larung Sesaji Di Masyarakat Jawa Dalam Perspektif Al- Qur ' an," *Minaret Journal of Religious Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 55-69.

<sup>10</sup> Efa Ida Amaliyah, "Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Dalam Tradisi Perang Obor Di Tegalsambi-Jepara Sebagai Karakteristik Islam Nusantara," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 16, no. 2 (2018): Hal, 414, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v16i2.552>.

conditions become tools to explore the existence and influence of culture or religion on culture.<sup>11</sup>

Hassan Hanafi explains that tradition is the result of human creative thinking that is gradually adapted into part of civilization. Tradition not only gives uniqueness to Indonesia, but also has an impact on religious beliefs and practices in society. Interactions between individuals give birth to norms that are maintained from generation to generation, until finally forming traditions that are integrated in the social life of the community.<sup>12</sup> There is the word of Allah Swt. in QS. Al-Baqarah/2:170 as follows:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

“When it was said to them, “Follow what Allah has sent down,” they said, “No. We will follow the customs of our forefathers. We will follow the customs of our fathers.” Will they follow them even though their fathers understood nothing and were not guided?”

Ibn Katsir in his book explains that Allah says to the disbelievers of the polytheists: when they are invited to follow what Allah has revealed to His Messenger and leave the misguidance and ignorance that surrounds them, they respond with refusal. They said, “We are only following what our forefathers have inherited,” i.e. the tradition of idol worship and associating partners with Allah.<sup>13</sup>

Islam pays great attention to the traditions and formalities that exist in society, by making them one of the bases in determining Islamic law, of course with certain improvements and limitations. This principle continued to be applied by the Prophet Muhammad. His policies reflected in his sunnah show a lot of wisdom in understanding and respecting the traditions that developed among the companions and the people of his time.

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<sup>11</sup> Tessa Eka Darmayanti, *Akulturası Budaya Kompleks Masjid Agung Banten, Pertama* (Kabupaten Bandung: WIDINA MEDIA UTAMA, n.d.).

<sup>12</sup> Hassan Hanafi, *Studi Filsafat 1: Pembacaan Atas Tradisi Islam Kontemporer*, ed. N. Kailani (Pt. Lkis Printing Cemerlang., 2015).

<sup>13</sup> Ismail Bin Katsir, “Tafsir Ibnu Katsir,” in *Lebanon : Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah-Beirut* (Lebanon Beirut, 2012), 107.

The relationship between Islamic religious law (*sharia*) and societal traditions is often complex. One concept that is often a point of contention is “sunnah”. Linguistically, “sunnah” can be interpreted as a habit or path that is not necessarily in accordance with God's will. However, in a religious context, “sunnah” has a more specific meaning, namely everything that the Prophet Muhammad did or taught as an example for Muslims. This difference in understanding often raises questions about how to distinguish between good traditions and those that need to be abandoned.

عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ بَعْدِي

“Adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the khulafa' ar-Rashidin after me”.

From the hadith mentioned, we can understand that “sunnah” does not only refer to the actions of the Prophet Muhammad, but also includes the actions of his companions who are considered role models. Furthermore, the concept of “sunnah” can be associated with “*urf*” or good tradition. In a broader sense, “sunnah” can be defined as a good instruction or example followed by prophets and righteous people for generations.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. **qur'an and earth almsgiving**

The Qur'an, as a revelation of God, has a source that is different from human culture. However, it does not ignore the cultural realities of Arab society at that time. The Qur'ān pays special attention to existing traditions, while providing guidance for change. The values contained in the Qur'an become the benchmark in assessing whether a culture is good or bad. Cultures that contradict Islamic values will be rejected, while cultures that are in line will be maintained. Islamic Sharia, as the law of God, is dynamic and able to adapt to changing times, but remains rooted in the noble values set out in the Qur'an.<sup>15</sup>

As a form of gratitude for God's bounty, the tradition of earth alms has long been a part of Indonesian culture. The event, which is usually marked by an

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<sup>14</sup> Zulfikri & Az Zafi, “Tradisi Nahdlatul Ulama Dalam Prespektif Hukum Islam,” *Wahana Akademia: Jurnal Studi Islam, Journal.Walisongo.Ac.Id*, 200AD, Hal, 1-12.

<sup>15</sup> Idris Mahmudi, “ISLAM, BUDAYA GOTONG ROYONG DAN KEARIFAN LOKAL,” *JURNAL PENELITIAN IPTEKS* 2, no. 2 (2017): 138-47.

abundance of food, not only fulfills spiritual needs but also serves as a gathering place for the community. Tegal Sambi Village, Jepara, is one example of the preservation of the earth alms tradition that demonstrates the richness of the archipelago's culture.<sup>16</sup> There is the word of Allah in Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 267:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغِصُّوا فِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾

“O you who believe, give away some of what you have earned and some of what We bring forth from the earth for you. Do not choose that which is bad for you to give away, while you do not want to take it, except by straining your eyes against it. Know that Allah is the Richest, the Most Praiseworthy.”

Marwan bin Musa in his commentary highlights Allah's command to give alms and the wisdom behind it. He explains that zakat is imposed on crops as a form of gratitude to Allah for His bounty. In addition, zakat helps to cleanse wealth and encourages empathy towards others. This verse also reminds us of the temptation of Satan who tries to dissuade us from the path of goodness by instilling miserliness in us. That is, a better reward for the donation given, both in this world and in the hereafter. These rewards can be in the form of abundant sustenance, spaciousness of heart, peace of mind, peace in the grave, and a perfect reward in the Hereafter. All this is not difficult for Allah, for His bounty is vast. Satan tries to prevent us from doing good by whispering bad thoughts so that we are miserly and do not want to give zakat. In fact, Allah promises great rewards for those who give alms. Allah does not burden us with heavy commands, it is enough to spend some of the wealth we have.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Nabila Masrurroh, Abdul Rahman, and Yosafat Hermawan, “Eksistensi Sedekah Bumi Di Era Modern: Desa Wisata Plesungan Kecamatan Gondangrejo Kabupaten Karanganyar,” *Satwika : Kajian Ilmu Budaya Dan Perubahan Sosial* 5, no. 2 (2021): 268–83, <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v5i2.17209>.

<sup>17</sup> Abu Yahya Marwan bin Musa, “Tafsir Al-Qur'an Hidayatul Insan,” 2024, Hal, 139-140.

Mitaton argues that the earth alms tradition is in line with Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of being grateful for the blessings of Allah SWT, as stated in the Qur'an. Through earth alms, the community expresses gratitude for the abundant sustenance from the earth. the essence of gratitude in this context is to manifest blessings in various ways, both by speech, feelings, and actions. In Q.S. Ar-Rahman it has been mentioned 31 times "So which of God's favors do you deny?". The outline is how the Qur'an invites humans to always be grateful and explains that the attitude of reluctance to be grateful is a form of lying and denying the blessings that have been give.<sup>18</sup>

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted in Tegal Sambu Village, Jepara, using qualitative methods. This research was prepared with the aim of deeply understanding the meaning, process, and socio-cultural context of the torch war tradition. The research data was obtained through primary data collection, such as in-depth interviews and field observations, as well as secondary data in the form of literature studies. By using the theory of cultural acculturation.

Alby Anggito et al, explain that qualitative research is social knowledge that fundamentally depends on observations of humans both in their area and in their terminology.<sup>19</sup> The phenomenological approach is used in this research to study how an object, event, or situation looks from an individual's point of view. The research is conducted in the actual context, so the researcher has freedom in interpreting the observed phenomena.<sup>20</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. History of the Torch War Tradition

In Tegal Sambu Village, Tahunan Subdistrict, Jepara Regency, the community carries out an earth alms tradition called obor-oboran or torch war. The tradition has a purpose as a form of cultural preservation. In line with ancestral

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<sup>18</sup> Nuzulia and Fatah, "Living Qur ' an : Telaah Tradisi Larung Sesaji Di Masyarakat Jawa Dalam Perspektif Al- Qur ' an." Hal, 62.

<sup>19</sup> Anggito & Johan Setiawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, Pertama (Sukabumi: Jejak Publisher, 2018).

<sup>20</sup> Apollo, *Fenomenologi Dan Metode* (PT. Nas Media Indonesia, 2023).

values, villagers offer prayers of gratitude for the blessings of the earth that have provided life and sustenance for all its inhabitants.

This study aims to examine the existence of the tradition of “War of Torches in Tegal Sambi Village, Tahunan Sub-district, Jepara Regency”. This tradition has its own uniqueness compared to similar rituals in other regions. The War of Torches has been carried out for generations for about 500 years and is rooted in the story of local figures, Kiai Babadan and Kiai Gemblong. Originally, Kiai Babadan, a wealthy farmer, felt betrayed by Kiai Gemblong who was negligent in taking care of his cattle. This led to a showdown in which Kiai Babadan used a torch to attack, which Kiai Gemblong retaliated against. Surprisingly, during the clash, sick livestock became healthy again, so they stopped the conflict and considered the evil spirits and diseases to have disappeared. This event became the basis for the War of Torches as a ritual to ward off disaster. In addition to the War of Torches, this tradition also involves *Barikan*, which is a prayer procession at the tombs of community leaders in Tegal Sambi Village. Overall, this tradition is a form of gratitude for crops as well as respect for ancestral traditions.<sup>21</sup>

Torch warfare is a tradition closely related to earth alms, and only exists in Tegal Sambi Village, Tahunan Subdistrict. This tradition has the same purpose as other traditions, namely as a form of gratitude for the sustenance obtained during the year, both from the earth, land, water, plants, and sea products, considering the location of Tegal Sambi Village which is not far from the sea. This activity is in the form of thanksgiving, celebrations, and one of them is an event called “War of Torches”. The people of Tegal Sambi Village believe that the torch war is a tradition to ask Allah SWT for safety from various disasters. However, there are different views among the community regarding the meaning of this tradition. The earth alms is held once a year on Monday *Pahing* of the month of *Zulka'dah* in the Hijriyah calendar, and is generally followed by the majority of residents of Tegal Sambi Village, Tahunan District, Jepara Regency.

The tradition of torch wars has different purposes in each region, but in general, the main purpose of this tradition is as a form of expression of gratitude to God Almighty for all the blessings that have been bestowed. Torch wars are often believed to be a way to ward off all kinds of diseases, disasters, or dangers that threaten the community. Some communities believe that torch wars are a form of honoring ancestors and asking for their blessings. This tradition also serves to

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<sup>21</sup> “Wawancara Di Desa Tegal Sambi, Kecamatan Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Hari Rabu, 3 Juli 2024a,” n.d.

strengthen the sense of unity and solidarity among community members. The torch war is one of the cultural heritages that must be preserved so that it does not become extinct eroded by time.<sup>22</sup>



Fig.1 Symbolic Opening

Source: Tegal Sambi Village Government Documentation

The community's belief in the torch war tradition is very strong. They believe that this tradition has the power to protect them from various disasters. Although there are questions about the religiousness of this tradition, for the community, they still make this as one of their endeavors to ask Allah for protection. Thus, the torch war tradition has become an inseparable part of their lives.

## 2. Cultural Values of the Torch War

*Selapan* or 35 days before the implementation of the torch war, the village government and community members make a procession of *barikan*, *barikan* is a pilgrimage to the grave of the village ancestor by bringing food alms to be eaten together after the completion of the prayer event together at the grave of the village ancestor. The first pilgrimage was to the grave of Mbah Tegal or Kiai Hasan Basuki located in RT 8 RW 2, he was the person who opened the Tedal Sambi village so he was nicknamed Mbah Tegal. The next day the community carried out another *barikan* at the intersection of Tegal Sambi village because it was believed that Kiai

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<sup>22</sup> "Wawancara Di Desa Tegal Sambi, Kecamatan Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Hari Selasa, 2 Juli 2024a," n.d.

Gemblong's grave was located there, the next day at 11 pm another barikan at the mosque there was the grave of Syech Rofi'I and continued to the grave of Mbah Sugimoro, an hour after that it continued to the grave of Kiai Babadan then to the grave of Mbah Sugimanis and Mbah Tunggul Wulung then continued to the grave of Mbah Singkil and Mbah Datuk Sulaiman and Mbah Sudimoro. It is held on Monday, Thursday and Friday. On the day of the torch war, the Qur'an is read in the mosque and the village government prepares buffalo slaughter. In the morning until the afternoon there is also a shadow puppet show and the night until morning again and the implementation of the torch war is usually carried out at 08:00-10:00 after that it is continued with the shadow puppet show.<sup>23</sup>

The torch war in Tegal Sambi Village is not just an annual event, but a celebration that involves all levels of society. Each individual has an important role in the success of this tradition. Starting from planning, preparation, implementation, to post-event, the community worked together to contribute their energy and thoughts. The role of the community in the implementation of torch wars in Tegal Sambi Village is very important. Through this tradition, the community not only maintains cultural preservation, but also strengthens the sense of togetherness and solidarity between community members.



Fig.2 Torch War Procession

Source: Tegal Sambi Village Government Documentation.

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<sup>23</sup> "Wawancara Di Desa Tegal Sambi, Kecamatan Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Hari Rabu, 3 Juli 2024b," n.d.

The torch war tradition in Tegal Sambu Village is a unique blend of local, social, religious and aesthetic values. This tradition is not just entertainment, but has a deep meaning for people's lives. Understanding the values contained in this tradition will encourage people to appreciate the nation's cultural wealth and strive to preserve it for future generations.<sup>24</sup> It has several cultural values in it, which are as follows:

A. Local Wisdom

Respect for ancestors, this tradition shows a deep respect for ancestors and the belief that they have a role in people's lives. Attachment to nature, the use of natural materials such as coconut fronds and banana leaves and the performance of rituals in the open show a strong attachment to nature.<sup>25</sup>

B. Social Value

Mutual support, the preparation and implementation of the Torch War involves all villagers, thus fostering a spirit of mutual cooperation and togetherness. Order and discipline, the existence of rules and procedures in the implementation of this tradition fosters the value of order and discipline among the community. Tolerance, despite having strong cultural roots, this tradition is able to accommodate various differences, showing a spirit of tolerance between residents.<sup>26</sup>

C. Religious Value

As a form of gratitude, torch wars are often associated with gratitude for a bountiful harvest or safety. Through certain rituals, people offer prayers and wishes, asking for protection and blessings from God. This tradition also has a deep spiritual dimension, where the community seeks spiritual strength through the performance of these rituals.<sup>27</sup>

D. Aesthetic Value

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<sup>24</sup> "Wawancara Di Desa Tegal Sambu, Kecamatan Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Hari Rabu, 3 Juli 2024c," n.d.

<sup>25</sup> Valencia Tamara Wiediharto, I Nyoman Ruja, and Agus Purnomo, "Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Tradisi Suran," *Diakronika* 20, no. 1 (2020): Hal, 16-19, <https://doi.org/10.24036/diakronika/vol20-iss1/122>.

<sup>26</sup> Imam Subqi, "Nilai-Nilai Sosial-Religius Dalam Tradisi Meron Di Masyarakat Gunung Kendeng Kabupaten Pati," *Heritage* 1, no. 2 (2020): Hal, 175, <https://doi.org/10.35719/hrtg.v1i2.21>.

<sup>27</sup> Amaliyah, "Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Dalam Tradisi Perang Obor Di Tegalsambu-Jepara Sebagai Karakteristik Islam Nusantara."

Torch warfare art involves elements of art, such as music and dance, which provide visual and audial beauty. The creativity of the community is free to create various unique and interesting torch shapes.

### 3. Correlation of the Torch War with gratitude in the Qur'an

In torch wars, there are adaptations of local culture that can interact and adapt with religious teachings, especially Islam. This tradition, which is often colored by animist elements and the social dynamics of the community, has undergone a long and complex process of acculturation. One of the forms of acculturation is the addition of a pilgrimage to the graves of the village ancestors who used to only bring offerings now add prayers to pray for the ancestors. before the peak event, namely the torch war, a *barikan* event is also held at the mosque, tomb of the village ancestors by bringing alms in the form of food that will be eaten together. In addition, as a form of earth alms, there is also a procession of slaughtering buffaloes in accordance with Islamic law, the meat of which will be cooked and distributed to the community. The connection between the tradition of torch warfare as an earth alms has its relevance in Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

“So remember Me, and I will remember you. Give thanks to Me and do not disobey Me.”

The above verse implicitly teaches us about the Greatness of Allah in creating humans and the entire universe. Some important points that can be associated with the tradition of torch warfare, gratitude for God's Favors, Respect for Nature, Attachment to the Creator. Some things that need to be considered are the intention, the way of implementation and the ultimate goal of the activity. The opinions of the mufasir are as follows:

According to Teungku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy in Kitab An-Nuur, remembering Allah is not only through speech, but also through action. We are invited to read the Qur'an, dhikr, contemplate the universe, and carry out Allah's commands. Thus, we will get a good reward from Him. Be grateful for My blessings

by honoring Me in your heart and speech. Acknowledge My favors and do not waste them by using them for things that religion forbids.<sup>28</sup>

Imam Ash-Shukani elaborated that Allah's words "Therefore, remember Me, and I will remember you" is a command accompanied by a promise. That is, if a person always remembers Allah in his life, then Allah will always remember him by providing protection, mercy and goodness. This interpretation is reinforced by the view of Al-Qurtubi, a renowned scholar of tafsir, who described the verse very beautifully. He explains that Allah's promise in this verse contains a deep meaning, namely Allah's willingness to bestow mercy and forgiveness on His servants who faithfully remember Him. This shows how much Allah cares for His servants who always get closer to Him. In addition, Imam Ash-Shukani also gave an explanation regarding Allah's words "And give thanks to Me." In his interpretation, he quotes Al-Fara', who states that gratitude is a form of exchange of goodness. When a servant is grateful for Allah's favors, this will bring greater favors from Allah. Conversely, if a person denies the favor by not being grateful for it, then the favor can be lost from him as a form of consequence for the negligence. This interpretation emphasizes the importance of remembering and thanking Allah, because these two things are not only forms of worship, but also ways to get closer to Allah and maintain the continuity of His blessings in life.<sup>29</sup>

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Quraish Shihab explains that the relationship between humans and Allah is a reciprocal relationship. Allah has bestowed various valuable gifts to humans, such as life, health, sustenance, and the blessing of faith. In return for these gifts, Allah asks humans to always remember Him. This reminder is not only in the form of verbal speech, but involves all dimensions of human life, namely the heart, mind, and actions. In other words, humans are required to praise Allah through the tongue, contemplate His greatness and signs of power through the mind, and carry out His commands with concrete actions through the limbs. If people are able to do this, Allah will always be present and with them in every condition. Moreover, Allah will also bestow greater favors upon them in return for their gratitude. Conversely, if people deny Allah's blessings, are ungrateful, and neglect to remember Him, then they will receive punishment from Him. This explanation emphasizes the importance of gratitude and recognition of God's

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<sup>28</sup> Teungku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir ANNUUR*, ed. M.A. Dr. H. Nourouzzaman Shiddiqi and H. Z. Fnad Hasbi ash-Shidiiiieqy, 2nd ed. (Semarang: PT. PUSTAKA RIZKI PUTRA, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> Inam-Asy-Syaukani, *Tafsir Fathul Qadir* (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2008).

bounty as the core of man's relationship with the Creator, where gratitude is not only expressed verbally but also manifested in concrete actions and deep appreciation.<sup>30</sup>

The word *Syukur* is also found in Q.S. Ibrahim/14:7:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي  
لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾

“(Remember) when your Lord said: “If you give thanks, I will increase (blessings) upon you; but if you deny (My blessings), surely My punishment is very severe.”

In Tafsir Ath-Thabari, there is an explanation stating that a certain view is difficult to understand because there is no clear reason to support it. This is because there is no mention of the word “Taal” in the passage, nor a statement that says, “If you are grateful for your obedience to Me, then I will increase that obedience to you.” Rather, if the meaning is “If you are grateful for these favors, then Allah will increase them upon you,” then that interpretation is more logical and fits the context. Therefore, what is more appropriate to understand from this verse is that Allah will add His favors to those who are grateful, not add obedience, because obedience is not mentioned in the context of this verse. However, if the meaning of the verse is “If you are grateful and show that gratitude by obeying Me, then I will add to you factors that facilitate and help you to continue being grateful,” then this view can be accepted as a reasonable interpretation. As for the part that reads “And if you deny (My favors), then surely My punishment is very painful,” means that if a person disbelieves in Allah's blessings-that is, does not be grateful for them, defies His commands, violates His prohibitions, or commits disobedience-then Allah will inflict punishment as He has inflicted on other creatures who disbelieve in Him. In conclusion, this verse emphasizes the importance of gratitude for Allah's blessings, which will bring additional blessings, while

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<sup>30</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir AL-Mishbah (Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasihan Al-Qur'an)* (jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

disbelief in blessings will only bring punishment as a result of human negligence and disobedience.<sup>31</sup>

In the word of Allah Q.S. Luqman/31:12:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ  
لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾

“Indeed, We have indeed given wisdom to Luqman, namely, “Give thanks to Allah; whoever gives thanks, indeed he gives thanks for himself. Whoever disbelieves (does not give thanks), verily Allah is the Richest and the Most Praiseworthy.”

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah by Quraish Shihab, Surah Luqman verse 12 is explained as a description of the wisdom that Allah bestowed on Luqman, in the form of wisdom and moral lessons. Quraish Shihab states that gratitude is the awareness of Allah's blessings, which is manifested through speech, action, and the conviction of the heart to use these blessings in accordance with Allah's will. Gratitude also includes the recognition that all favors come from Allah, not merely the result of human effort. Gratitude brings benefits to the individual himself, such as the blessing of life and inner peace. Allah does not need human gratitude, because He is the Most Rich (does not need anything from His creatures) and the Most Praiseworthy (perfect without needing the praise of creatures). On the contrary, disbelief in Allah's favors, i.e. ignoring or misusing them, will only harm the perpetrator. Allah remains unaffected because He does not depend on His creatures. This verse emphasizes the importance of gratitude as an acknowledgement of God's greatness and the source of goodness in human life. Gratitude is not only in the form of words but must also be realized in concrete actions in accordance with the will of Allah. Conversely, disbelief in favors will bring bad consequences for the perpetrators themselves. This interpretation emphasizes that man's relationship with Allah must be based on full awareness of the origin of all favors, which encourages man towards a better life.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Mahmud Mursi Abdul hamid Ahmad Abdurraziq Al bakri, Muhammad Adil Muhammad, Muhammad Abdul latif Khalaf, *Tafsir Ath-Thabari*, Jilid 15 (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2007).

<sup>32</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

These verses teach the importance of remembering Allah (*dhikrullah*) and being grateful for His favors. In the context of the torch war tradition as an earth alms, there is a correlation, namely as a form of *dhikrullah* and an expression of gratitude for the crops and the sea as well as a safe village and harmonious society. This verse reminds people not to deny Allah's favors. In the torch war tradition, the symbolization of fire can be interpreted as a purifier of negative energy or an expeller of bad things. As for the symbolic meaning of the torch as a Symbol of Illumination, the torch light that illuminates the darkness symbolizes enlightenment and knowledge. This shows the importance of knowledge and understanding in life. Torch material made from dried coconut fronds, hard and dry coconut fronds symbolize strength and resilience. Dried banana leaves are flammable and produce thick smoke which symbolizes fertility and purity. The white smoke produced is believed to bring blessings. This reflects the community's efforts to maintain the blessings that Allah has given through the earth. The torch war, which is a local tradition, can be directed to be in line with Islamic values. With the right intentions, this tradition can become a form of *dhikrullah* that strengthens *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and reminds people of their obligation to be grateful and protect Allah's blessings.

## CONCLUSION

Torch war in Tegal Sambi As a valuable cultural heritage, this tradition witnesses the rich history and local wisdom of the community. The torch war itself is carried out as an earth alms or gratitude for the gifts of the creator. This tradition also contains high local wisdom, religious, social and aesthetic values. To maintain the continuity of this tradition, cooperation from various parties is needed, including the government, the community, and academics. Thus, this tradition can continue to be preserved and become an inspiration for future generations.

The torch war tradition when viewed from the perspective of Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 152 using several interpretations, namely Tafsir An-Nuur, Tafsir Fathul Qadir and Tafsir Al-Mishbah. Then there is also Q.S. Ibrahim/14: 7 in Tafsir Ath-Thabari and Q.S. Luqman/31: 12 in Tafsir Al-Mishbah also has the potential to become a medium of dhikr and gratitude to Allah SWT, as long as the intention is straight and the practice does not conflict with Islamic teachings. These three interpretations provide the basis that local culture can be combined with Islamic values, as long as the main focus is the recognition of Allah's blessings, the preservation of goodness, and the avoidance of things that are contrary to tawhid.

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