



# Cultural Threads of Faith: Analyzing Yasinan Practices in Mary Pat Fisher's Living Religion

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the concept of Living Religion through the Yasinan tradition, a religious activity that plays a significant role in the lives of Muslim communities, particularly in Indonesia. Using the theoretical framework presented in Mary Pat Fisher's book, *Living Religion*, this study explores how Yasinan functions as a dynamic expression of Islamic culture, reflecting the interaction between religious teachings, social practices, and local cultural adaptations. The Yasinan ritual, which involves the recitation of Surah Yasin as an act of worship, has become an integral part of many Muslim communities' lives, fostering spiritual solidarity and cultural continuity. The research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis and utilizes library research to gather relevant sources from various forms of literature and digital resources. Through an analysis of the ritual's role in strengthening social bonds and preserving Islamic teachings, the study demonstrates how religious practices like Yasinan evolve within cultural contexts and remain relevant and meaningful in contemporary society. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how living religious practices play a vital role in social structures and offers insights into the relationship between religion and culture within modern Islamic communities.

**Keywords:** Islamic culture; Muslim community; Qur'anic recitation; religious practices; social gathering.

## 1. Introduction

Islam, as one of the world's major religions, is not only practiced through ritual acts of worship but also deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of the communities that follow it (Warraich & Kokab, 2023). Across the globe, Islamic traditions manifest in various ways, often reflecting local cultural values, social norms, and historical developments (Osim & Eteng, 2021). One such practice in Indonesia that holds particular cultural significance is the Yasinan, a communal activity centered around the recitation of Surah Yasin from the Qur'an. This practice is commonly carried out within Muslim communities, both in family settings and larger social gatherings, and is deeply woven into the social and religious life of Indonesian Muslims (Songidan et al., 2021).

While Yasinan is not explicitly mentioned in the Islamic holy texts, it has evolved into an integral part of the spiritual and social landscape of Indonesia (Seise, 2021). The recitation of Surah Yasin together is not just a form of prayer, but also a means of fostering social cohesion and religious solidarity (Maharani, 2021). According to Supriatna and Nugraha (2020), Yasinan has become a cultural norm that transcends mere ritualistic practice, acting as a community-building tool that strengthens bonds between individuals (Supriatna & Nugraha, 2020). It embodies the collective nature of Islamic worship, where social and spiritual elements converge in a shared activity.

In the international context, communal religious practices like Yasinan have parallels across various cultures within the Muslim world (Yazid et al., 2024). For instance, similar communal

practices, such as the recitation of specific Qur'anic verses or supplications, are found in countries such as Egypt, Turkey, and Malaysia. These practices, while culturally specific, share a common thread of reinforcing communal ties and fostering a sense of belonging within the Islamic faith. They provide a window into how religion, despite its universal roots, manifests differently across diverse cultural settings, adapting to local customs and societal needs (Saputra, 2019).

In this light, Yasinan can be understood through the lens of living religion, a concept explored by Mary Pat Fisher in her book *Living Religions* (1924). Fisher emphasizes that religion is not confined solely to the doctrines written in sacred texts but is also a lived experience that continuously evolves in response to cultural and social contexts. She presents religion as a dynamic force, where faith and tradition intersect with the realities of daily life (Fisher, 1924). This perspective is crucial in understanding Yasinan, as it frames the practice as part of a living tradition that evolves with the needs and social fabric of the community.

Fisher's exploration of the concept of living religion challenges the conventional understanding of religious practices as static or fixed. Instead, she argues that these practices adapt to and reflect the ever-changing realities of social and cultural life (J. Fisher, 2011). In this context, Yasinan is not merely a ritual performed for spiritual benefit but a cultural practice that reflects the ongoing negotiation between religious teachings and the lived experiences of Indonesian Muslims. It represents the intersection of Islamic beliefs and the local social structure, embodying the integration of faith with everyday social life.

As a communal practice, Yasinan plays a significant role in the socio-religious identity of Indonesian Muslims. It serves as a platform for social interaction, where people from different walks of life come together to perform a religious duty (Khamami, 2022). Through Yasinan, the bonds of kinship and community are reinforced, creating a shared sense of religious responsibility and solidarity (Kholiq et al., 2022). In this way, Yasinan represents the dynamic nature of religion in Indonesia, adapting to the needs of the community while maintaining its roots in Islamic tradition.

Additionally, Yasinan activities are often closely tied to moments of communal need, such as during periods of mourning or celebrations. The practice of reading Surah Yasin is often seen as a way to seek blessings, offer prayers for the deceased, or commemorate significant events in the Muslim calendar (Sagir & Hasan, 2021). The flexibility of the practice allows it to remain relevant in various contexts, making it an enduring part of Indonesian Muslim culture. The adaptability of Yasinan, much like other forms of Islamic cultural practices, highlights the capacity of religion to evolve and maintain its relevance in a rapidly changing world.

At the global level, the phenomenon of living religion is not unique to Islam in Indonesia. Fisher's work encourages a broader understanding of how religion functions within diverse cultures. In many parts of the world, religious practices evolve to meet the needs of the community, reflecting local customs, historical contexts, and social dynamics (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017). For example, in Western countries, religious practices may focus on personal spirituality or individual devotion, whereas in Islamic societies, communal practices like Yasinan serve to reinforce collective religious and social identity (Salam, 2024).

Through a comparative lens, one can observe that practices similar to Yasinan exist across various religious traditions (Priyatmono & Anwar, 2024). In Christianity, for instance, communal prayer or scripture readings such as Bible study groups serve to strengthen the bonds between believers, fostering a sense of unity and shared faith. Similarly, in Hinduism, rituals performed in community settings, such as the recitation of mantras or participation in puja, reflect the intertwining of religious practice with social cohesion. This common thread of religious expression as a means of social integration is a reminder of the universal role religion plays in shaping community life across cultures (Jamil, 2024).

In the Indonesian context, Yasinan reflects not only the spiritual dimension of Islam but also its social and cultural dimensions (Fuadi et al., 2024). It is a practice that integrates religious

beliefs with the lived experiences of individuals and communities. The communal nature of Yasinan emphasizes the importance of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual support, principles that are deeply ingrained in Islamic teachings. As such, Yasinan transcends its status as a ritual, emerging as a significant cultural event that reflects the social fabric of Indonesian Muslim communities (Arifin et al., 2024).

Through an analysis of Mary Pat Fisher's *Living Religions*, the practice of Yasinan can be seen as a living tradition that embodies the ongoing interaction between religion and culture (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). It illustrates the adaptability of religious practices, highlighting how faith can be expressed in ways that resonate with local cultural values while maintaining its universal principles. Yasinan is not only a ritual but also a cultural phenomenon that reinforces the social fabric of Indonesian Muslim communities, offering a rich example of how religion continues to shape, and be shaped by, the dynamic realities of global and local contexts. By examining this practice through the lens of living religion, we gain deeper insight into the ways in which Islamic culture is both grounded in tradition and responsive to the evolving needs of its community.

## 2. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative methodology to explore Yasinan's activities as part of Islamic culture in Indonesia, with the perspective of living religion put forward by Mary Pat Fisher in her book *Living Religions*. This approach was chosen because this research aims to understand religious phenomena in a broader social context, where religion lives and interacts with the culture, traditions, and social values of society (Sugiyono, 2013). With a qualitative approach, this research allows the author to explore the experiences, perspectives, and interpretations provided by community members involved in Yasinan's activities. The main focus of this research is on the social and cultural meanings resulting from the practice of Yasinan, as well as how it reflects the concept of living religion. This study uses case studies as a method to explore in depth Yasinan's activities in several Muslim communities in Indonesia. (Rianto, 2020) The case study was chosen because it provides space for researchers to analyze religious phenomena in a specific context, in this case, the Yasinan tradition that is rooted in Islamic teachings but adapted in local culture. This research will focus on some communities or groups that actively carry out Yasinan rituals, such as in Islamic boarding schools, mosques, or villages that maintain this tradition. At this stage, researchers will interpret the data that has been analyzed in the framework of living religion according to Mary Pat Fisher. This interpretation will include an explanation of how Yasinan is not only a religious ritual, but also a part of social culture that helps to reinforce the identity of the Muslim community. The discussion will show how the practice of Yasinan serves as a means to connect individuals with religious teachings, while also strengthening social and cultural ties within society.

## 3. Research Results

### 3.4. Living Religion According to Mary Pat Fisher

In her book of *Living Religions*, Mary Pat Fisher invites readers to explore religion from a more inclusive, dynamic, and contextual perspective. She argues that religion should not merely be seen as a rigid system of beliefs or theological doctrines, but as a living phenomenon that evolves and intertwines with the daily lives of its practitioners. The concept of "living religion" that Fisher introduces refers to the way religion interacts with culture, history, and the social contexts in which it is practiced, and how religious practices are continuously adapted by individuals and communities in diverse situations (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b).

For Fisher, living religion is not confined to sacred texts or formal teachings; it is a vibrant force that manifests in the everyday lives of believers through rituals, actions, and social practices (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). Religion, in this sense, is something that continually changes and evolves according to the needs of society, the place, and the time. This concept is especially relevant in the modern era of globalization, where religion is influenced not only by ancient texts and traditions

but also by cross-cultural exchanges, technological advancements, and shifting social landscapes (Susila & Risvan, 2022).

Fisher stresses the importance of understanding religion as something "living," as this perspective enables us to see its role in a broader context—not just as a personal belief system but as a powerful social and cultural force that shapes the identity of communities. One crucial point in Fisher's understanding of living religion is how religious practices can vary significantly between communities, even if they follow the same religion (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). Local culture, history, and external influences play an essential role in shaping how people practice their faith. For example, in Islam, while all Muslims follow the same teachings, the way they celebrate religious holidays or perform specific rituals can differ greatly depending on local customs, cultural traditions, and historical contexts (Goshu & Ridwan, 2024).

In this light, living religion challenges us to see religion not only in formal spaces of worship but also as an integral part of everyday life—manifested in moral actions, social celebrations, and diverse cultural expressions. Religion, therefore, is not something isolated from daily life but an active force within it (Ben-Lulu, 2021). Fisher encourages readers to explore not just the doctrines of religion but to observe how these teachings are embodied in the lived experiences of believers, through practices that reflect spiritual, social, and cultural values in society (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b).

In a globalized world, the living religion concept becomes even more relevant as religion must adapt to new challenges posed by rapid technological advancements, mass migration, and intensified cultural interactions. Globalization has created a space for greater religious pluralism, where people of different faiths now interact more than ever before (Reuter, 2012). This environment provides opportunities for interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding. However, it also presents significant challenges, such as the rise of religious radicalization, interfaith conflicts, and the erosion of religious values, which are sometimes seen as too conservative or traditional in the face of modernity (Ibarra, 2021).

Religion, as living religion emphasizes, is often the driving force for social change. Historically, religious movements have sparked transformations in societies—whether through social justice movements, civil rights struggles, or calls for equality (Roulet & Bothello, 2023). For instance, Christianity played a critical role in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, where religious values of love, justice, and peace became the foundation for advocating racial equality (Hiebert, 2022). Similarly, in Islam, various reformist movements have called for a return to the core teachings of Islam while seeking to adapt to the challenges of modern life and globalization (Anshori et al., 2021).

The concept of living religion also highlights the role of religion in fostering social cohesion. Despite the rapid changes brought about by globalization, religion remains a central force in maintaining community bonds. In societies where traditional cultural identities are being eroded, religion can provide a sense of continuity and belonging (Hiebert, 2022). This is particularly evident in diasporic communities, where immigrants maintain their religious practices as a way of preserving their identity in a foreign land (Chui et al., 2023).

Moreover, in the globalized world, religion's influence extends beyond local contexts to the international stage. Religious leaders, communities, and organizations often advocate for issues of global importance, such as poverty alleviation, human rights, environmental protection, and peacebuilding (Haynes, 2020). For instance, the Pope's encyclical *Laudato Si'* on climate change has become a key document calling for action against environmental degradation, emphasizing the role of religious communities in preserving the Earth as a shared home. This demonstrates how religion, as an evolving force, can address global challenges, using the ethical frameworks of faith to promote social good (Craig, 2021).

However, religion's role in a globalized world is not without tension. While it serves as a bridge between diverse cultural and religious traditions, it can also fuel conflict, particularly when different interpretations of religious teachings clash (Elamin, 2024). In the age of global communication,

religious differences are often amplified, and interreligious tensions can spill over into violence or social unrest. This highlights the double-edged nature of religion in the modern world—it can be a source of unity and social change but also a potential source of division and strife (Lertvorapreecha & Swindell, 2024).

The challenge, therefore, is for religion to navigate these complexities while remaining relevant. Living religion shows that religion is not something that exists in isolation from societal changes but is an active force that interacts with, and responds to, the world around it. This perspective invites us to think of religion as not just a set of beliefs but a transformative power that shapes both the personal and social realms (Nwafor et al., 2024).

Mary Pat Fisher's concept of living religion offers a comprehensive framework for understanding religion as a dynamic and evolving entity. In the context of globalization, living religion allows us to see how religion adapts to changing circumstances while maintaining its relevance in addressing contemporary issues. Religion is a powerful tool for shaping identity, fostering social change, and promoting dialogue across cultural boundaries. It is, as Fisher illustrates, a vital force in the modern world, one that continues to shape the social, political, and cultural landscape of the 21st century (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

Fisher's analysis reminds us that religion is not just about tradition or dogma; it is about how it is lived, practiced, and experienced in the complexities of the globalized world. As such, living religion is not merely an academic concept—it is a call to engage with religion in ways that acknowledge its active role in shaping the world we live in today (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

### **3.5. Islamic Culture According to Mary Pat Fisher: A Dynamic and Evolving Tradition**

In *Living Religions*, Mary Pat Fisher provides a comprehensive framework for understanding Islamic culture, shedding light on its complex and evolving nature. While she does not offer a singular definition of Islamic culture, she offers an in-depth exploration of how religion and culture interact, emphasizing how Islamic teachings are expressed through social practices, customs, art, and architecture. This intersection of religious principles and cultural expression forms the foundation of what we understand as Islamic culture today (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

For Fisher, Islamic culture is not static; it is shaped by both theological teachings and the socio-political and historical contexts in which Muslim communities exist. While the core tenets of Islam remain consistent, the way these teachings are practiced and lived out varies greatly across different regions (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). This diversity within Islamic culture illustrates how local customs, traditions, and historical experiences influence religious practices, creating a vibrant and multifaceted global culture (Supriadi et al., 2021). Thus, understanding Islamic culture requires an appreciation of both its universal aspects and the specific local adaptations that emerge over time.

One of the key themes in Fisher's work is the seamless integration of religion into all aspects of daily life. Unlike religious traditions that compartmentalize spirituality into distinct rituals or sacred spaces, Islam weaves its teachings into every facet of existence. Fisher highlights how Islamic culture extends beyond the rituals of prayer (*salat*), fasting (*sawm*), and charity (*zakat*) to shape the broader social, political, economic, and cultural lives of its followers. Islam, in this sense, is not confined to the mosque or the sacred text but extends into everyday interactions, how individuals manage their families, engage with the political system, and express themselves through art, music, and literature (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

This integration is further evidenced by the presence of Islamic legal systems, such as Sharia, which offer a comprehensive framework for personal conduct, social justice, and community welfare (Suasti et al., 2018). Fisher illustrates how Islamic culture offers guidance not only on matters of personal piety but also on issues of governance, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. Thus, Islamic culture is not merely about religious observance; it is a holistic way of life that connects deeply to how Muslims interact with one another and with the world at large (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

At the same time, Fisher points out the regional and cultural variations that exist within Islam. While the foundational teachings of Islam remain the same across the globe, the cultural expressions of these teachings can differ significantly. Fisher stresses that Islamic culture is not homogenous; rather, it is influenced by the historical, social, and political contexts of the regions in which it is practiced (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). For instance, the way Islam is practiced in Indonesia differs from its practice in the Middle East, not only in terms of religious rituals but also in language, art, architecture, food, and social customs. These differences reflect the rich diversity of Muslim communities around the world and illustrate how Islamic culture is shaped by the interaction of faith and local traditions (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

The importance of ritual and tradition in Islamic culture is another critical element that Fisher explores (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). Islamic rituals, such as daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and the giving of alms, serve both spiritual and social functions. They are moments of spiritual reflection and personal growth, but they also foster a sense of community and solidarity among Muslims (Surbakti et al., 2024). Fisher highlights how events like Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, in addition to their religious significance, become occasions for socializing, strengthening bonds, and reinforcing collective identity. These rituals play an essential role in preserving traditions, passing them on to future generations, and ensuring the continuity of cultural practices (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

In today's globalized world, Fisher emphasizes that Islamic culture is not static; rather, it is constantly adapting to new social, political, and technological realities. This adaptability allows Islamic culture to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world (Koehrsen, 2021). Fisher argues that while the core teachings of Islam have remained unchanged, the way they are understood and practiced has evolved to meet the challenges posed by modernity and globalization (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). As Muslims face new challenges related to technology, interfaith dialogue, and global political dynamics, Islamic culture continues to evolve, finding ways to integrate new ideas and practices while staying true to its religious roots (Al-Faruqi, 2012).

The influence of globalization on Islamic culture is a theme Fisher addresses extensively. Globalization has brought about new opportunities for the exchange of ideas, but it has also presented challenges, particularly in terms of cultural homogenization and the tension between local traditions and global influences. Islamic culture, however, has shown resilience in maintaining its unique identity while also participating in global cultural exchanges (Ashraf & Nazir, 2023). Fisher notes how, in the digital age, Islamic teachings and practices are now more accessible than ever, with online platforms providing new avenues for learning and community engagement. This global access allows Muslims to remain connected to their faith while navigating the complexities of modern life (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

Moreover, Fisher argues that Islamic culture's global reach is not confined to Muslim-majority countries. The migration of Muslims to various parts of the world has led to the diffusion of Islamic culture into new regions, influencing and being influenced by other cultural traditions (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). In cities like London, New York, and Jakarta, Muslim communities have established vibrant cultural hubs that reflect the fusion of Islamic teachings with local customs (Fadeli, 2024). This cultural exchange has enriched the global cultural landscape, making Islamic culture an integral part of global conversations on identity, diversity, and multiculturalism.

Mary Pat Fisher's *Living Religions* offers a nuanced and multifaceted view of Islamic culture, highlighting its dynamic and evolving nature. Through her analysis, we see that Islamic culture is not a monolithic entity but a living tradition that is constantly adapting to the changing realities of the world. It is both deeply rooted in religious teachings and shaped by local cultural practices, creating a rich tapestry of religious and cultural expression. As Fisher demonstrates, Islamic culture continues to be a significant and influential force in the global cultural and political spheres, contributing to a more interconnected and diverse world (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c).

Fisher's work encourages us to move beyond simplistic understandings of Islamic culture and instead appreciate its complexity, adaptability, and global impact. It is a culture that thrives on the intersection of religion, history, and social context, making it a vital component of the broader global narrative (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017c). By recognizing the diversity within Islamic culture, we can better understand how it both shapes and is shaped by the forces of globalization, contributing to the ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity in the contemporary world.

### 3.6. Various Traditions of Yasin Recitation

The recitation of Surah Yasin on Friday nights is one of the most deeply ingrained traditions in the Muslim communities across Indonesia. This ritual has become a widely practiced cultural and religious activity, signifying the profound spiritual connection Muslims maintain with the Qur'an (Hasriani, 2022). A prominent example of this practice is found in the Al-Mizan Mosque in Kendari, where the congregation gathers every Thursday night after the Maghrib prayer to recite Yasin. The activity has become more than just a religious ritual; it is an embodiment of the community's deep respect for the Qur'an and a manifestation of solidarity, helping foster a strong sense of unity and brotherhood among its members. This tradition of Yasin recitation is a vital aspect of community life in many Indonesian cities, especially in Kendari, where the ritual brings together people from various walks of life (Khoiruddin et al., 2023).

The practice at the Al-Mizan Mosque reflects the role of Islamic teachings in forming a close-knit community that sees the recitation as a source of divine blessings, comfort, and spiritual fulfillment. Not only is it a religious activity, but it is also seen as a form of community-building, creating bonds of kinship and shared devotion. The Yasin recitation at this mosque serves as an example of how a local community, through shared religious practices, enhances the social fabric by fostering stronger interpersonal relationships, establishing a collective sense of belonging, and enriching the spiritual life of its members. In this way, Yasin recitation at Al-Mizan Mosque exemplifies Islam as both a spiritual guide and a catalyst for social cohesion (Ikhwanuddin et al., 2022).

From a broader perspective, the Yasin recitation can be seen as part of a wider religious and cultural phenomenon known as the "living Qur'an," where the verses of the holy book are actively integrated into the life of the community (Suroyo et al., 2023). The specific method of reciting Surah Yasin in a group setting, particularly on Thursday nights, reflects a locally adapted understanding of the sacred text, making it accessible and meaningful for the community. Through this practice, the local Muslim population experiences the Quran's teachings in a direct, communal way that nurtures not only individual spirituality but also strengthens collective bonds within the society (Syafiq et al., 2023).

One of the key objectives of the Yasin recitation is the belief in its capacity to bring about blessings from Allah and to promote peace within the community. According to Yusril and Imelda Wahyuni (2023), the mosque's initiative in establishing this regular activity aims to enliven the mosque, encourage social interactions, and most importantly, generate a sense of closeness among community members (Wahyuni, 2023). This interpretation aligns with the broader notion of Islam as a religion of mercy and peace, which encourages individuals to unite in worship and strengthen relationships with one another (Hasibuan, 2023).

Similarly, in Baosan Lor, a village located in East Java, the Yasin recitation tradition plays a pivotal role in cultivating *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood). This tradition demonstrates how religious activities, such as Yasin recitation, serve as both a spiritual act and a tool for strengthening community ties. The people of Baosan Lor, as social beings, engage in communal rituals not only to fulfill their religious duties but also to foster mutual understanding, empathy, and social harmony among themselves. This process is crucial for establishing a society based on mutual care and support, a principle deeply rooted in the Islamic concept of brotherhood (Setiani, 2022).

The act of reciting Yasin in Baosan Lor has become a regular practice that transcends the ritual itself. It is seen as a medium through which individuals can develop a deep sense of compassion and responsibility towards one another, ensuring that the bonds of brotherhood and solidarity are maintained within the community (Setiani, 2022). As Khusna et al. (2023) explain, the tradition strengthens social cohesion and enables the people to connect on a deeper level (Khusna & Wathon, 2023). This tradition not only brings people together spiritually, but it also fosters a sense of collective responsibility, making each individual feel more accountable for the welfare of the community.

The recitation of Yasin in Indonesia, as in other parts of the Muslim world, also embodies a blend of local culture and Islamic tradition (Supriadi et al., 2021). Over time, the Yasin recitation has evolved from a practice steeped in pre-Islamic cultural rituals into a distinctly Islamic tradition. Initially, in many parts of Indonesia, local communities would perform ritualistic prayers to honor ancestral spirits. With the advent of Islam, these practices were transformed into the recitation of Surah Yasin, a practice that carries both spiritual and cultural significance. Sagir and Hasan (2021) assert that this shift marks a cultural transformation where traditional local beliefs and Islamic practices merge, creating a new cultural norm that is both religious and socially beneficial (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

In modern Indonesia, the recitation of Surah Yasin has become so ingrained in local culture that it is considered an essential part of the social and spiritual life of Muslims. In many Indonesian households and villages, the Yasin recitation forms an integral part of religious gatherings and is considered a way to receive divine mercy (Mansor et al., 2024). This is an example of how Islamic practices adapt to and become intertwined with local customs, enriching the cultural fabric of the nation. By continuing to practice the Yasin recitation in a communal context, the Indonesian Muslim community preserves its connection to both the teachings of Islam and its cultural heritage (Ulum & Amalia, 2024).

Furthermore, the role of Yasin recitation in Malaysia also adds an interesting dimension to this tradition, showing its widespread influence across the Muslim world. In Malaysia, the recitation of Surah Yasin on Friday nights has long been a customary practice. While the practice is widespread, it has also become a subject of debate, particularly concerning its origin and the authenticity of the hadiths associated with its benefits (Sulaiman et al., 2022). Ahmad Mursyid Azhar and Muhammad Syahrul Abd Rahman (2024) conducted research on the hadiths related to the benefits of reciting Surah Yasin on Friday nights, revealing that although some hadiths associated with this practice are weak (*ḍa'īf*), the recitation itself is not forbidden. It is still considered permissible because of the general virtues attributed to the recitation of the Qur'an (Azhar & Abd Rahman, 2024).

The debate surrounding the authenticity of the hadiths highlights the complexity of Islamic practices and their evolution over time. Despite the controversies surrounding the specific benefits of reciting Surah Yasin on Friday nights, the practice remains an integral part of Malaysian Muslim culture. This phenomenon demonstrates the flexibility of Islamic teachings in accommodating local customs while maintaining a broader sense of religious piety and devotion. In Malaysia, as in Indonesia, the Yasin recitation serves not only as a spiritual practice but also as a cultural tradition that promotes unity and peace among the Muslim community (Widodo & Maduerawae, 2023).

The tradition of Yasin recitation in both Indonesia and Malaysia illustrates the multifaceted role of religious practices in shaping social and cultural identities. Far from being a mere ritual, Yasin recitation embodies the intersection of religion, culture, and community, reinforcing the bonds that hold society together. It also highlights the way in which Islamic practices have evolved and adapted to local contexts, transforming over time to meet the spiritual and social needs of the community. Whether in Kendari, Baosan Lor, or Malaysia, the act of reciting Surah Yasin brings people together in faith, fostering a sense of collective responsibility and brotherhood that transcends individual differences (Anggraeni et al., 2023).



By observing the ways in which Yasin recitation has been integrated into the cultural fabric of various societies, we see how religious practices can be a powerful force for social cohesion. They are not merely acts of individual devotion but also serve as tools for strengthening community ties, promoting social harmony, and cultivating a sense of belonging among diverse groups. The tradition of Yasin recitation, thus, stands as a testament to the enduring relevance of Islamic teachings in the contemporary world, illustrating their ability to unite and inspire communities in the pursuit of peace, solidarity, and shared spiritual fulfillment (Masturin, 2024).

### 3.7. Yasinan as an Islamic Cultural Practice

In the vast realm of Islamic culture, Yasinan—the communal ritual of reciting Surah Yasin from the Qur'an—stands as a compelling example of a "living religion." This concept, as articulated by Mary Pat Fisher in her seminal work *Living Religions*, emphasizes that religion is not just confined to sacred texts or formal rituals. Instead, it thrives and manifests through the everyday actions, customs, and social interactions of a community (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). Yasinan, as part of the Islamic tradition in Indonesia, offers a unique lens to understand how religious beliefs and practices blend with local customs, forming a dynamic and evolving tradition (Sagir & Hasan, 2021). This practice exemplifies how religious life is deeply intertwined with the cultural fabric of society, adapting to and evolving within its specific context.

At its core, Yasinan involves the recitation of Surah Yasin, one of the chapters in the Qur'an, often performed during important religious events such as tahlilan (a gathering for communal prayers), memorial services, or as part of funeral rites to honor the deceased. The Surah, known for its spiritual significance, is believed to bring comfort to the soul of the departed. Although the Qur'an does not explicitly command the recitation of Surah Yasin in these specific settings, the practice has become an ingrained part of the religious and social life of Indonesian Muslims. The widespread adoption of this ritual, despite its lack of direct Qur'anic command, highlights the adaptability of religious practices to local customs and the way Islam becomes personalized within different cultural environments (Supriadi et al., 2021).

Fisher's interpretation of religion as a living practice challenges the notion that religious rituals and beliefs are rigid or fixed. She argues that religion functions dynamically within societies, shaping and being shaped by social relationships and cultural contexts (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). In the case of Yasinan, this ritual serves not only as a means of spiritual elevation but also as a social tool that strengthens communal ties. Yasinan is often conducted in familial settings, either within homes or mosques, where it fosters a sense of togetherness. It serves as a platform for members of the community to gather, share in spiritual reflection, and reinforce their social connections. The practice of Yasinan, especially during times of mourning, offers a poignant example of how religious rituals are not solely focused on the individual but are deeply embedded within the social and cultural practices of the community (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

Moreover, Yasinan plays a significant role in reinforcing social solidarity, particularly within extended families and neighborhoods. In Indonesia, where communal values and a sense of togetherness are highly regarded, the Yasinan ritual provides an avenue for individuals to come together and show support for the grieving family. Whether it takes place in private homes or public spaces such as mosques, Yasinan fosters a shared sense of empathy, where the act of prayer becomes a collective experience that binds people together. The ritual's significance extends beyond the spiritual realm, helping to strengthen social bonds and create a supportive environment for the bereaved (Supriadi et al., 2021).

Following Fisher's perspective on living religion, Yasinan can also be seen as a symbol of how religion adapts to its cultural surroundings (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). While the practice of reciting Surah Yasin is not universally observed in the same manner across all Muslim communities, in Indonesia, it has become a cornerstone of religious and social life. This localized adaptation demonstrates how religious traditions can evolve to meet the specific needs of a community, making

religious practice accessible and meaningful to the people within their unique cultural context. The widespread acceptance of Yasinan in Indonesia also illustrates how Islam has integrated local traditions, customs, and values, creating a ritual that resonates deeply with Indonesian Muslims (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

Another crucial aspect of Yasinan is its role in facilitating the internalization of Islamic values within the community. Islam, like many other religions, emphasizes the importance of remembrance of God (dhikr) and communal worship. Through the practice of Yasinan, these core values become deeply embedded in the social life of the community (Supriadi et al., 2021). The recitation of Surah Yasin is not simply an individual act of piety; it is a communal act that reinforces the collective identity of the Muslim community. The ritual, by involving family members, friends, and neighbors, reflects the importance of maintaining strong social ties and supporting one another through shared religious practices (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

Despite its simplicity, Yasinan is an embodiment of how religion functions in everyday life, reflecting both the spiritual aspirations and social realities of the community. Through the act of reciting the Surah, participants engage in a form of collective spirituality that transcends the boundaries of individual worship. The gathering for Yasinan, often marked by an atmosphere of unity and peace, serves as a reminder of the shared bonds that connect individuals within the broader social network. In this way, Yasinan becomes a vehicle through which the collective identity of the Muslim community is preserved, while also providing a space for the spiritual growth and emotional support of individuals (Supriadi et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Yasinan can be viewed as a form of cultural expression that reinforces the local identity of the Muslim community. Fisher emphasizes that religion is not merely a doctrinal belief system but also a form of cultural expression that helps shape the identity of a group (Fisher & Rinehart, 2017b). In the case of Yasinan, the ritual is deeply intertwined with local culture and traditions, demonstrating how Islamic practices can serve as a bridge between religious beliefs and cultural customs. The act of coming together to perform Yasinan in a local setting, be it in a home, mosque, or community hall, serves as a cultural marker that ties the community to its religious roots while simultaneously celebrating local customs and social norms (Supriadi et al., 2021).

For many Indonesian Muslims, Yasinan is more than just a religious duty—it is a cultural tradition that reflects their values, beliefs, and social commitments. It symbolizes the ways in which Islam has adapted to Indonesian culture, allowing local traditions to flourish while remaining faithful to the core principles of the religion. Yasinan not only fosters spiritual growth but also strengthens the social fabric of the community, reinforcing solidarity, empathy, and mutual support among its members. In this way, the practice of Yasinan embodies the idea of "living religion," as described by Fisher, where religious beliefs and practices are not confined to abstract doctrines or rituals but are integrated into the everyday lives of believers (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

Yasinan is a vivid example of how Islam, as a living religion, interacts with local culture and evolves to meet the needs of its followers. Through its practice, Muslims in Indonesia are able to create a dynamic and meaningful expression of their faith, while also reinforcing the social bonds that hold their communities together. The ritual of Yasinan not only serves as a means of remembering the deceased but also provides a platform for communal interaction, social cohesion, and spiritual growth. By understanding Yasinan through the lens of Fisher's concept of living religion, we can appreciate how religious practices transcend the confines of ritual, becoming an integral part of the social and cultural fabric of the community. This practice exemplifies the ongoing evolution of religious traditions, ensuring that they remain relevant, meaningful, and impactful in the lives of those who observe them (Sagir & Hasan, 2021).

#### **4. Conclusion**

In this paper, we have analyzed how the Yasinan ritual becomes an integral part of Islamic culture, using the approach presented by Mary Pat Fisher in her book *Living Religion*. The Yasinan tradition, which involves the recitation of Surah Yasin, plays a significant role in strengthening both

the social and spiritual bonds within the Muslim community. This tradition serves not only as an act of worship but also as a means of connecting community members, offering expressions of gratitude, collective prayer, and honoring the deceased. Through Fisher's framework, it is evident that Yasinan is not merely viewed as a religious activity but as a cultural practice that integrates social and spiritual values. This ritual highlights how Islam can adapt to local socio-cultural contexts, creating a shared understanding that merges religious teachings with the local cultural identity. Overall, Yasinan exemplifies the concept of "living religion," where religion is not simply accepted in theory or doctrine but is translated into daily life, becoming a dynamic part of cultural identity that continues to evolve. This paper provides a deeper understanding of how culture and religion interact in the lives of Muslim communities and illustrates how religious practices can have a broader social impact.

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