

Reception of the Qur'an on the Ayaatcontest Instagram Account: A Study Through Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge

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Abstract

With the development of social media came about new roles and practices in socio-cultural phenomena, not excluding the reception of the Qur'an. This study aims to investigate the aesthetic reception of the Ayaatcontest Instagram account through the perspective of Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge, known for the formulation of the three meanings of human behavior; objective, expressive and documentary meanings. Through netnographic research methodology, this study draws the conclusion that the meaning of the Qur'anic reception in the Ayaatcontest Instagram account is formed by the organizers and participants. The objective meaning of the organizers is identified as the social space of the United Arab Emirates, that shares a passion of preserving the art of Islamic calligraphy or khat; the expressive meaning in the form of selected verses of the Qur'an are verses related to tauhid and social verses, as well as prizes worth 12,000 UAE dirhams, and the documentary meaning as an ongoing effort to maintain the Arabian Peninsula as a 'hub' for Islamic Calligraphy. While the objective meaning of the participant's is the process of learning khat which has been carried out for a long time so that they are used to participating in khat competitions. The expressive meaning is the various styles of khat used, starting from Naskhi, Ta'liq, Tsuluts, Diwani, Kufi, and so on, and the meaning of the participant's documentary is the preservation of khat art, as well as existence and self-branding in the world of khat writing, both in social media and in the social sphere of society.

Keywords

Aesthetic Reception, Ayaatcontest, Instagram, Karl Mannheim

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Introduction

Studying the Qur'an through socio-cultural lens is inseparable from reception theory, as explained by Baidowi, arguing that Islamic societies often study the Qur'an in relation to certain interests, some of which have indirect connections with the meaning of the Qur'anic text.¹ This phenomenon resulted in the production of rich Qur'anic studies in the realm of

¹ - Ahmad Baidowi, "Resepsi Estetis Terhadap Al-Quran," *ESENSIA* 8, no. 1 (Januari 2007): 19–24, <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/42641/>.

anthropology, such as Nelson's study of the phenomenon of reading and memorizing of the Qur'an by the Muslims,² Gade's study of the tradition of reading the Qur'an in Indonesia, arguing that the tradition succeeded in shaping the discourse of Qur'anic piety among people in the '90s,³ Rasmussen on the art of the Tilawatil Qur'an phenomenon in Indonesia,⁴ and Rafiq with his study on the reception of the Qur'an of the Banjar community.⁵ The birth of social media made the reception of the Qur'an through said media became increasingly interesting to study, with reason that increase in community culture in social media, the reception of the Qur'an undeniably increases along, affirming Larsson's argument that new media will give birth to new partakers resulting in new practices.⁶

Instagram is undeniably a medium of social media that is widely used by the global community today - a popular medium whose users continue to increase from year to year. At the beginning of its presence in 2013, it was used by 110 million people and increased dramatically to 2.5 billion users in 2023 worldwide.⁷ The use of Instagram is not only limited as a means of communication, but also to disseminate religious and da'wah content, as well as recitations of the Qur'an. This shows how Instagram play an important role in the development of Qur'anic reception.⁸

An example of Qur'anic reception usually found on Instagram is its aesthetic reception, a form of acceptance of the Qur'an in terms of art and beauty, expressed in the form of Arabic calligraphy or khat, ornamental design, accompanying the recitation of the Qur'an.⁹ Qur'anic reception in the form of aesthetics go hand in hand with the main feature of Instagram; a medium for uploading photos and videos. Creative works are posted as a form of digital documentation or personal branding.¹⁰ One can simply write the word al-Qur'an on the search menu, and various Qur'anic content will appear, ranging from recitation videos, posted photos of verses of the Qur'an, complemented with graphic as works of art.¹¹

One Instagram account that accommodates the aesthetics of the Qur'an is @ayaatcontest. Since 2021, Ayaatcontest organizes Arabic calligraphy competitions every Ramadan. The competition is conducted as follows: The organizer post verses or snippets of verses of the Qur'an on Instagram stories, daily during the month of Ramadan. Participants are then to write the posted verses with calligraphic scripts and upload them into their Instagram account, with their uploads the organizers being tagged (mentioned) into. The organizer provides a total prize of 12,000 UAE Dirhams for the winners. Ayaatcontest has attracted the calligraphers' attention around the world and number of participants as well

² Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 2001).

³ Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice Learning, Emotion and The Recited Qur'an in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

⁴ Anne K. Rasmussen, *Women The Recited Qur'an and Islamic Music in Indonesia* (London: University of California Press, 2010).

⁵ Ahmad Rafiq, "The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community" (Dissertation, Philadelphia, Temple University, 2014).

⁶ Goran Larsson, *Muslim and the New Media: Historical and Contemporary Debats*. (Burlington: VT: Ashgate, 2011), 86.

⁷ Daniel Ruby, "71+ Instagram Statistics for Marketers In 2023 (Data & Trends)," *DemandSage* (blog), 6 Maret 2023, <https://www.demandsage.com/instagram-statistics/>.

⁸ Rizal Fatur Rahman Purnama, "The Aesthetic Reception Of The Quran In Instagram: Variations, Factors, and Religious Commodification," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 21, no. 2 (29 Desember 2020): 240–41, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v21i2.9528>.

⁹ Ahmad Rafiq, "Sejarah al-Qur'an: Dari Pewahyuan ke Resepsi (Sebuah Pencarian Awal Metodologis)," dalam *Sabiron Syamsuddin, ed. Islam, Tradisi dan Peradaban* (Yogyakarta: Bina Mulia Press, 2012), 153–54.

¹⁰ "Why Do People Like Instagram? | Socialnomics," 18 Maret 2020, <https://socialnomics.net/2020/03/18/why-do-people-like-instagram/>.

¹¹ Purnama, "The Aesthetic Reception Of The Quran In Instagram," 246.

as their calligraphic works posted on Instagram continues to increase, from only 68 calligraphers from 18 countries with a total of 1,025 calligraphic works in its first, into 219 calligraphers from 24 countries with a total of 3,760 works in its third organisation.¹²

Researchers are interested in examining further on the aesthetic reception of the Qur'an through the Ayaatcontest Instagram account. The research question to be answered in this study is what is the meaning of the aesthetic reception contained in the Ayaatcontest account on Instagram? To answer this question, researchers use the theory of Sociology of Knowledge identified by Karl Mannheim. Who classified the three meanings inherent in human behavior, namely objective, expressive and documentary meaning. To further elaborate, the objective meaning of an entity is found in the social context in which the activity takes place, where through this study it is identified through the context of the organizers of the Ayaatcontest and participants. Meanwhile, expressive meaning is obtained from participants of a social practice or tradition, where this study identified this meaning as an expression of the Qur'anic reception by the organizers and participants of the Ayaatcontest calligraphy competition on Instagram. Finally, documentary meaning is the implied meaning indirectly realised by everyone partaking in the competition.¹³

Studies on the reception of the Qur'an on social media was carried out by Fahrudin on the Reception of the Qur'an through a YouTube channel managed by a Muslim filmmaker titled Ghibah,¹⁴ and by Muzakky et al on the Reception of the interpretation of Surah Mujadilah through Tik-Tok.¹⁵ While a study on aesthetic reception of the Qur'an on social media was conducted by Purnama, exploring the forms and reasons for the emergence of aesthetic receptions of the Qur'an on Instagram by Indonesian users.¹⁶ Although similarities in theme are identified and addressed Purnama's research and study, the author aims to study in an area much different in terms of the subject and objective of research. We identify the subject of this study as calligraphers participated and organized the calligraphy contests. Meanwhile, the objective of this study is the meaning of the aesthetic reception carried out by these calligraphers through Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge.

Method

The researcher uses the netnography research method to study the mentioned objective, a research method that focuses on understanding cyberspace in through online interactions between social media users.¹⁷ The cyberspace in the context of this research is Instagram, with a particular emphasis on the Ayaatcontest (@ayaatcontest) account.

Primary and secondary data sources are identified and utilized in this study. Primary data sources range in the form of all literature, documents and any information released by the organisers in relation to aesthetic receptions and meanings on the Ayaatcontest account. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are in the form of observations and interviews through social media data collection method as an application of a netnographic study. Interviews were conducted online with the organizing committee and participants of the Ayaatcontest

¹² "Ayaat Contest (@ayaatcontest) • Instagram Photos and Videos," diakses 27 Mei 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/ayaatcontest/>.

¹³ Karl Mannheim, *On The Interpretation Of Weltanschauung* (London: Routledge, 1952), 333, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315005058>.

¹⁴ Fahrudin Fahrudin, "Resepsi al-Qur'an di Media Sosial (Studi Kasus Film Ghibah dalam Kanal Youtube Film Maker Muslim)," diakses 24 Mei 2023, <https://doi.org/10.21043/hermeneutik.v14i1.6890>.

¹⁵ Althaf Husein Muzakky, Faisal Haitomi, dan Maula Sari, "Resepsi Tafsir Q.S. Al-Mujadilah Di Tik-Tok Sebagai Upaya Edukasi Dan Pembelaan Hak-Hak Perempuan," *Jurnal SMART (Studi Masyarakat, Religi, Dan Tradisi)* 8, no. 1 (30 Juni 2022): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v8i1.1555>.

¹⁶ Purnama, "The Aesthetic Reception Of The Quran In Instagram."

¹⁷ Bayu Indra Pratama, *Etnografi Dunia Maya Internet* (Malang: UB Press, 2017), 97.

competition. Interviews were given to 6 contest winners of the 2023, namely 1st place winner Ibrahim Delavaran (Iran) and Fakhri Muqaddas (Indonesia); 2nd place winner Muhammad Thagi (Iran) and Rivi Pratama (Indonesia); and 3rd place winner Muhammad Hashemi (Iran) and I'anatus Shalihah (Indonesia).

All data that was obtained is then analyzed using interactive analysis techniques initiated by Miles and Huberman, where analysis starts from data collection, followed by data reduction and presentation in narrative form, and drawing conclusions to answer the research question.¹⁸

Result and Discussion

Qur'anic Reception, Instagram, and the Sociology of Knowledge: A Conceptual Relationship

Reception is an expression of acceptance. As an illustration, an object's association with the word al-Qur'an, leads to a person's reaction to the Qur'an by accepting, approving, utilizing the Qur'an, either as a text, a mushaf that has meaning which is then transcribed, or a group of words that have a certain meaning.¹⁹ According to Ahmad Rafiq, there are three forms of acceptance of the Islamic community towards the Qur'an: (1) exegesis reception, which is the acceptance of the Qur'an in the form of works that provide explanation of the content of the Qur'an. Exegesis reception can be in the form of written and oral works of interpretation, fiqh works that explain the procedures for worship based on verses of the Qur'an, and so on. (2) functionalist reception, which is the reception of the Qur'an that is functioned in life, not infrequently things that have nothing to do with the meaning of the Qur'anic text, such as surat al-Fatihah functioned as a treatment, amulet, and as motivation in life. (3) aesthetic reception, which is the acceptance of the Qur'an in the form of art, such as the Qur'an read in various tones in the art of tilawah, written in various styles of Islamic calligraphy (khat), decorations, ornaments, and so on.²⁰

Various forms of reception of the Qur'an above can be found easily in the surrounding environment, for example, the reception of exegesis in the form of women's recitation in which there are activities to study a book of interpretation, or invite an ustadz to lecture and explain the content of a verse or letter of the Qur'an, this is like what is done by the women of Majelis Ta'lim al-Ikhlas Sukawana village.²¹ Functional reception of the Qur'an can be seen from the reading of the Qur'anic verses in traditions or religious ceremonies in the community, such as the Tundan community, Bantul, reading the Qur'anic verses before the Nyadran procession to provide peace, especially for the spirits of the ancestors,²² the tradition of reading surah Yasin in the Wednesday Abeh ritual of the Gampong Lhok Pawoh community, Aceh.²³ While the form of aesthetic reception is usually in the form of artwork related to the Qur'an, for example an Arabic calligraphy artist makes works in the form of paintings of Qur'anic verses, as done by artists Sakban Yadi and Taufik

¹⁸ Matthew B Miles dan A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication, 1994), 88.

¹⁹ Rafiq, "Sejarah al-Qur'an: Dari Pewahyuan ke Resepsi (Sebuah Pencarian Awal Metodologis)," 73.

²⁰ Rafiq, 144–54.

²¹ Yani Yuliani, "Tipologi Resepsi Al-Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Pedesaan: Studi Living Qur'an Di Desa Sukawana, Majalengka," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 6, no. 02 (30 November 2021): 321–38, <https://doi.org/10.30868/at.v6i02.1657>.

²² Nurun Nisaa Baihaqi dan Aty Munshihah, "Resepsi Fungsional Al-Qur'an: Ritual Pembacaan Ayat Al-Qur'an dalam Tradisi Nyadran di Dusun Tundan Bantul Yogyakarta," *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban dan Pemikiran Islam* 6, no. 1 (23 Juni 2022): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v6i1.3207>.

²³ Makmunzir Makmunzir dkk., "Living Qur'an in Yasinan Tradition During Rabu Abeh Ritual in Gampong Lhok Pawoh, Southwest Aceh," *Mashdar: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 5, no. 1 (30 Juni 2023), <https://doi.org/10.15548/mashdar.v5i1.6206>.

Adnan Amal. Also included in the reception of the Qur'an is the art of Tilawah al-Qur'an, this is often found in the community, taught in Islamic boarding schools and formal educational institutions, to be contested in the form of musabaqah tilawah.²⁴

As the use of the internet develops, the forms of reception of the Qur'an as mentioned above are also found on social media, both on Facebook, YouTube, Tik-Tok, and Instagram. Some of the data findings that the author successfully traced to get content in the form of reception of the Qur'an, it is enough to type the hastag #alquran on the 'search' button on social media, then various expressions of citizens' acceptance of the Qur'an will appear. Especially for Instagram, when using the hastag #alquran, 4,150,058 posts related to the Qur'an appear (as of May 2023). While the accounts that emerged from the hastag included: @ngajialquran account of online and offline learning classes to read the Qur'an, @lembagakaligrafialquran account belonging to an Arabic calligraphy education institution (LEMKA) in Sukabumi, @qurantagging account of dowry and bridal decorations, @teladan_alquran account containing content explaining the verses of the Qur'an and hadith, @bayt.alquran account of pesantren specializing in studying the Qur'an after tahfidz, @musabaqah.tilawah.alquran account organizing al-Qur'an competitions in Indonesia in various branches, @soundofalquran al-Qur'an tilawah account, @tadabburcentre contains content explaining the verses of the Qur'an, @alam_alquran account containing motivational content from the verses of the Qur'an, @ayaatcontest account organizing online Arabic khat or calligraphy competitions, and various other accounts.

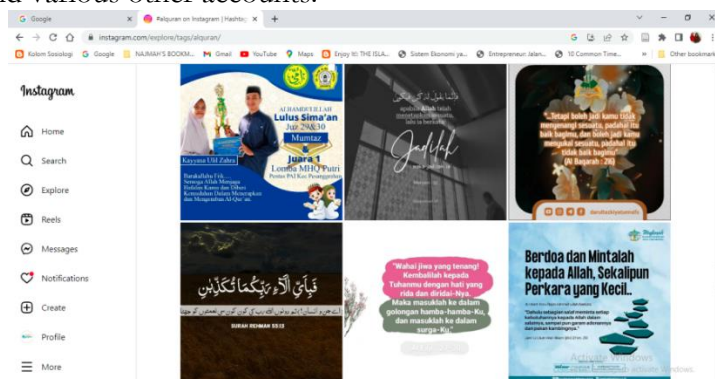


Figure 1. Some of the results of the #quran hastag search on Instagram

Note/Source: <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/alquran/> accessed on May 01, 2023.

The phenomenon of al-Qur'an reception as described above is not something that is without meaning, as Rafiq argues that reception is a community interpretation that comes from an understanding of the Qur'an.²⁵ This is then in line with the concept of sociology of knowledge initiated by Karl Mannheim, that human action is formed by two dimensions, namely behavior (behavior) and meaning (meaning). To explain a social action, we must pay attention to external behavior and the meaning of behavior. In a social action, Mannheim then categorizes social meaning into three, namely objective meaning or meaning determined by the social context, expressive meaning or meaning shown by the actor, and documentary meaning or implied meaning.²⁶ The concept of Sociology of Knowledge can then be

²⁴ Miftahul Jannah, "Musabaqah Tilawah Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia (Festivalisasi Al-Qur'an Sebagai Bentuk Resepsi Estetis)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 15, no. 2 (2 Juli 2017): 87–95, <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiu.v15i2.1291>.

²⁵ Rafiq, "Sejarah al-Qur'an: Dari Pewahyuan ke Resepsi (Sebuah Pencarian Awal Metodologis)," 73.

²⁶ Mannheim, *On The Interpretation Of Weltanschauung*, 333.

one of the alternative glasses in studying the reception of the Qur'an, through the concept of the three meanings contained in it, Sociology of Knowledge can examine the phenomenon of reception comprehensively ranging from social background, form, to the motive for doing a reception of the Qur'an.

Ayaatcontest Account Overview

Ayaatcontest is an Instagram account under the name @ayaatcontest dedicated to international digital khat competitions, managed by a for-profit Islamic art organization in Dubai, Gallery Arabesque Art Est. Dubai (Arabic Calligraphy, Islamic Art and Art Exhibitions). The account was created on April 12, 2021 in conjunction with the month of Ramadan 1442 H, as well as the first organization of the digital khat competition. Previously, in 2020 or Ramadan 1441 H on the original Instagram account of the Arabesque gallery @galleryarabesque also held a quiz on the history of Islamic khat but there was minimal interest, so the following Ramadan, a second account was created, namely @ayaatcontest specifically for the competition.

The details of this khat competition are @ayaatcontest posts a snippet of the Qur'an every day on the Instagram feed, then participants who are khattath from various countries will write the verse with various types of khat that are mastered, then post on their respective Instagram accounts by tagging @ayaatcontest and @galleryarabesque accounts. From the results of these tags, the jury will select participants with a high level of consistency (full writing for 30 days) balanced with the beauty of the work, followed by determining the winner. The winners will be announced on both Instagram accounts. On ordinary days (outside the month of Ramadan) the @ayaatcontest account does not post anything, and is active again before the month of Ramadan, as in the following 2023.



Figure 2. Arabesque Ramadan Contest announcement Ayaatcontest 2023 Instagram account Note/Source:

<https://www.instagram.com/ayaatcontest?igsh=angzdmk3dDJ2cTYy> accessed on May 01, 2023.

The Ayaatcontest participants continues to increase, at the inaugural event in 2021 or 1442 H, only 68 calligraphers or khat writers from 18 countries participated. In this inaugural celebration, 1,025 digital khat works were collected. In the second organization, there were 130 participants with a total of 2,455 works, in the third organization it reached 219 calligraphers from 24 countries with a total of 3,760 works.²⁷

²⁷ "Ayaat Contest (@ayaatcontest) • Instagram Photos and Videos."

Aesthetic Reception of Ayaatcontests' Account from the Perspective of Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge

The sociology of knowledge perspective on the Ayaatcontest Instagram account is to find out the meaning contained in the aesthetic reception carried out by the organizers and participants of the Ayaatcontest competition. The following are the results of the analysis of the three meanings are:

Objective Meaning

Objective meaning is found in the social context in which a social action takes place, because a person's thinking is always influenced by the social context in which an understanding and thought arises which will then form a new perspective and affect his understanding of meaning.²⁸

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the objective meaning of organizing the Ayaatcontest is the awareness of the Arabesque organization to introduce Islamic art to various parts of the world. This is also based on their awareness of the geographical context of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which is located in West Asia adjacent to other Islamic countries such as Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia and so on. This geographical location in the middle of the earth was considered as an opportunity to introduce the art of Islam to the inhabitants of the earth from both east and west to discover and reward persistent calligraphers. Therefore, since four years before the pandemic, they have been holding khat exhibitions every holy month of Ramadan in Dubai. During the pandemic, the exhibition switched to an online khat competition of writing down verses of the Qur'an during Ramadan.

The choice of khat art over other Islamic arts, as well as the choice of writing Qur'anic verses over other Arabic sentences, is related to the month of the event, Ramadan. Since Arabesque held a khat exhibition until it continued with the Ayaatcontest competition, the committee adhered to the principle that Ramadan is the month of the Qur'an, the month where the Qur'an was revealed, and Ramadan is the most blessed month among other hijri months. The selection of Qur'anic verses as competition material is because the Qur'an is the master book of guidance for humans, so this competition also aims as a means of reminding everyone about the content of the Qur'an.

The objective meaning of participants, social background in the form of khat education greatly influences the interest in participating in the Ayaatcontest competition, the winners in 2023 were taken 6 people or two people for each 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. 1st place came from Iran and Indonesia, 2nd place from Iran and Indonesia, and 3rd place also came from Iran and Indonesia. The six champions have studied khat for dozens to decades, and are also accustomed to participating in khat competitions. As stated by Fachry Muqaddas from Indonesia, for example, he has been studying khat since 2004 and has participated in the Ayaatcontest competition since its first organization in 2021.³¹

Participants are interested in the Ayaatcontest because it is flexible, not limited to one or two specific types of khat as in other khat competitions, participants are free to write using the type of khat they master. In addition, the competition is online and long, aka 30 consecutive days, so that participants feel that participating in the competition is a challenge for themselves in consistently working.

Expressive Meaning

Expressive meaning is the expression or meaning shown by social actors in the form of actions.³² The expressive meaning of the organizer is expressed against the

²⁸ Mannheim, *On The Interpretation Of Weltanschauung*, 43–46.

selected verses in the race. As previously described, generally the verses chosen are verses that remind human relations vertically and horizontally, such as the verse on the first day is QS. Al-Anbiyā': 107 reminds the apostolate of the Prophet Muhammad and that he is the bearer of good news to humans with the Qur'an he brought. Continuing on the second day QS. Al-Ahzāb: 47 To remind that believers will get a great virtue. On the third day QS. Al-Syūrā: 43 about whoever is patient and forgives is a good deed.

Furthermore, the organizers also wrote English translations of the verses in the hope that not only the Arabic native Islamic community can know the meaning of the selected verses, but also the global community. The organizers stated:

هناك الكثير من القيم في هذه الآيات التي نحب أن نذكر الناس بها. لذلك نحرص أيضا على ترجمة الآيات باللغة الانجليزية وليس فقط بالعربية، حتى تصل هذه المعاني ويتفكر بها الناس²⁹

The verses selected by the Arabesque committee in 2023 based on the order of the day are as follows:

Table 1. Ayaatcontest 2023 verse selection

No	Surah	Verse
1	Al-Anbiya' 107	وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ
2	Al-Ahzab 47	وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَضْلًا كَبِيرًا
3	Al-Syura 43	وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنَ عَظَمِ الْأُمُورِ
4	Al-Najm 32	فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى
5	Al-Hasyr 9	وَمَن يُؤَقِّ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ
6	Luqman 12	وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ
7	Ali 'Imran 8	رَبَّنَا لَا تُرِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ
8	Al-Furqan 67	وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا
9	Al-Sajadah 17	فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ
10	Ali 'Imran 138	هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ
11	Al-Syura 25	وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ
12	Al-Maidah 9	وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ
13	Al Mulk 12	إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ
14	Al-Furqan 63	وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا
15	Al-Mumtahanah 5	رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

²⁹ There are many values in these verses that we want to remind people of. Therefore, we are also interested in translating the verses into English, not only in Arabic, so that the meanings reach and are thought about by people. Ayaatcontest Committee, Interview, Online, April 10, 2023.

16	Al-Hasyr 19	وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ
17	Yunus 62	أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
18	Thaha 132	وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى
19	Al-Anfal 15	يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحَفًا فَلَا تُولُوهُمْ الْأَدْبَارَ
20	Al-Baqarah 155	وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
21	Al-Ra'd 39	يَمْحُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّثُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ
22	Fushshilat 53	سَرَّيْنَاهُمْ أَيْنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ
23	Ali Imran 133	وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمُوتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ
24	Fushshilat 33	وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
25	Al-Baqarah 221	وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ
26	Al-Taubah 111	إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ
27	Al-Hasyr 18	يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِإِعَادٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
		بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
28	Al-Nahl 125	أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
29	Al-Baqarah 263	قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَدَىٰ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ
30	Al-Nisa' 124	وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِثْلَ ذِكْرِ أَوْ أُثْنَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
		وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

In addition, the expressive meaning by the organizers is to give a prize that is not particularly miniscule, namely a total of 12,000 UAE Dirhams equivalent to 50 Million Rupiah to 12 winners (1st place to 3rd runner-up each two people). This is a form of appreciation to the khattath who have persevered in learning and preserving the word of Allah. The prizes did not come from any sponsors, purely from the Arabesque organization as the organizer. This is as said by the organizer:

في الدورة الأولى (سنة 2021) لم نعلن مسبقا عن قيمة الجوائز لأننا في الحقيقة لم نكن قد خططنا مسبقا لصرف هذه الجوائز. لكن حماس المشاركين ومثابرتهم (وخاصة الاندونيسيين منهم) ألهمنا أن نرصد مبلغا من المال لمنح الجوائز، وهكذا تم تخصيص مبلغ 10000 درهم إماراتي في السنة الأولى ومثله في السنة الثانية (2022)، علما ان المسابقة لا يمولها أي جهة راعية غير مؤسستنا التي يديرها ويمولها

شخص واحد هو كاتب هذه السطور³⁰

The meaning of the participants' expression is by writing the verses of the Qur'an that have been selected by the committee using various types of khat. Ibrahim Delavaran used Nasta'liq khat, Fakhri Muqaddas Naskhi khat, Muhammad Thagi used Nasta'liq khat, Rivi Pratama used Tsuluts khat, Muhammad Hashemi Ta'liq khat and T'anatus Shalihah Diwani khat.

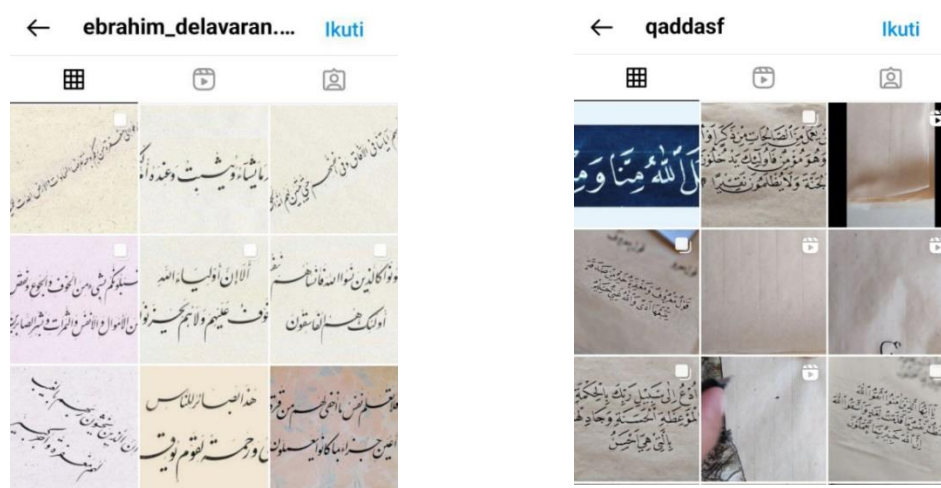


Figure 4. 1st place on behalf of Ibrahim Delavaran and Fakhri Muqadas

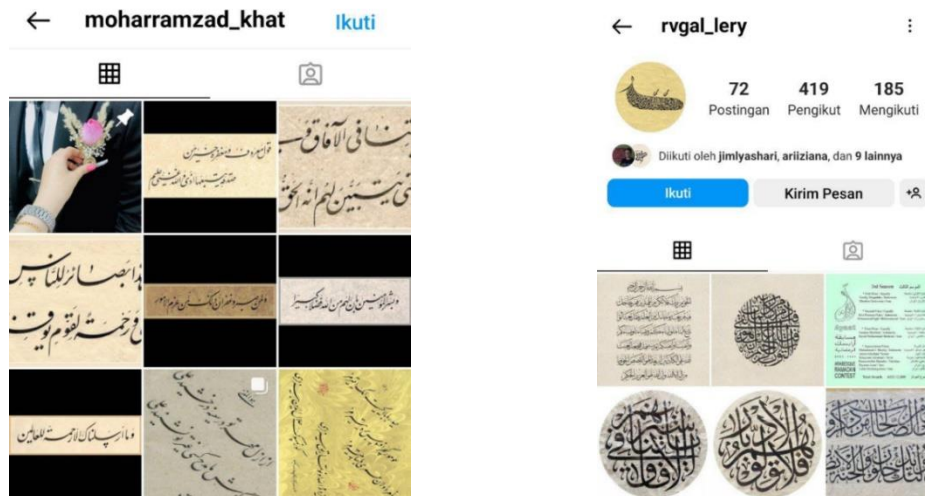


Figure 4. 2nd place on behalf of Muhammad Thagi and Rivi Pratama

³⁰ In the first session (in 2021), we did not announce the value of the prizes in advance as we did not plan to disburse the prizes. But the passion and perseverance of the participants (especially the Indonesians among them) inspired us to allocate some money to award the prizes, so a sum of 10,000 dirhams was allocated in the first year and the same amount in the second year (2022), noting that the competition was not funded by any sponsor other than our organization run and financed by someone one of whom is the author of these lines. Ayaatcontest. Interview, Online, April 10, 2023.

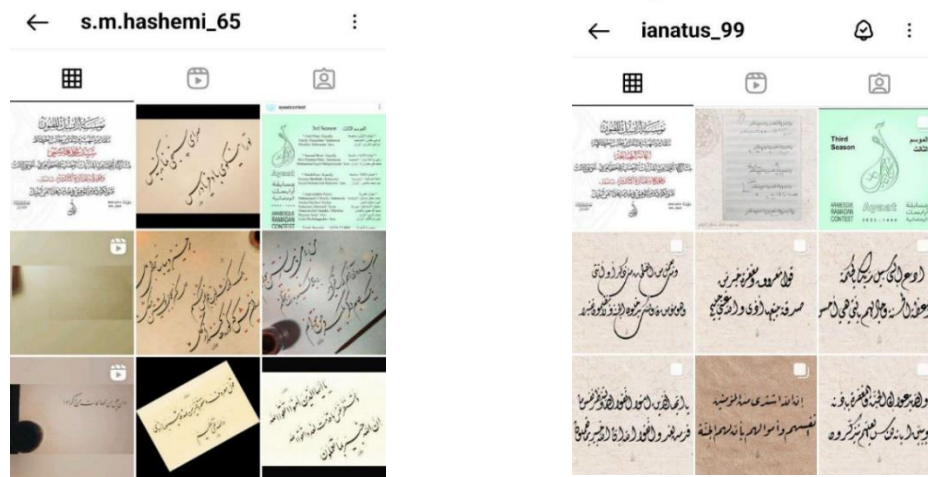


Figure 5. 3rd place on behalf of Muhammad Hashemi and I'anatus Shaliha

On the other hand, there were also participants who wrote verse translations using Roman calligraphy, which shows that Ayaatcontest is accepted by various calligraphy practitioners, not only by Arabic calligraphy or khat practitioners but also Roman calligraphy.

Documentary Meaning

Documentary meaning is a hidden meaning that is not conveyed or even its existence is not realized by the perpetrator of the action.³¹ The documentary meaning of the organizer is that there is a political aspect in the form of the existence of Jazarah Arabesque as the center of khat art pedaban, this is because khat art has spread to various parts of the world, both in Europe and Asia. Various efforts were made by the Arabesque organization ranging from khat exhibitions to online competitions with lucrative prizes to attract the attention of khat art activists around the world that the Arabian Peninsula is 'home' to khat art.

While the documentary meaning for participants is the awareness to preserve the art of khat, on the other hand it is also for branding and self-existence. Participating in the Ayaat competition with a system of uploading khat works on an Instagram account gives a branding effect that 'this account' belongs to a khattat. In addition, if the participant passes to become a champion, it will increase his existence in the world of khat writing. One of the participants who became a champion also mentioned another goal as an effort to get additional Holiday Allowance.

Conclusion

Through a netnographic analysis, this study concludes that the aesthetic reception of the Qur'an on the Instagram account Ayaatcontest unfolds through the three layers of meaning formulated by Karl Mannheim: objective, expressive, and documentary. The objective meaning reflects the socio-cultural context of the United Arab Emirates, which demonstrates a strong commitment to preserving the art of khat through digital platforms—particularly during Ramadan, the month of the Qur'an. The active collaboration between organizers and calligrapher-participants represents a form of Qur'anic reception rooted in long-standing artistic learning and institutional support. The expressive meaning appears in the selection of Qur'anic verses emphasizing spiritual and social values, as well as in the participants' varied calligraphic styles, which function as media of both aesthetic and

³¹ Mannheim, *On The Interpretation Of Weltanschauung*, 48.

interpretive expression. The documentary meaning reveals a collective awareness among organizers and participants to maintain the Arabian Peninsula as the cultural center of Islamic calligraphy while extending Qur'anic reception into the realm of social media. In essence, the phenomenon of Ayaatcontest illustrates a dynamic shift in Qur'anic reception—from traditional social settings to digital spaces—where art, faith, and culture converge within a participatory global context.

Author Contribution Statement

Nurun Najmatul Ulya contributed as the initiator, data collector, and main drafter of the manuscript. Ahmad Yasir Amrulloh contributed by providing analytical insight, analysis, and assisting in critical revision of the manuscript. Ahmad Danish Hakimi bin Shufiady contributed to validating the data and translate the manuscript. Both authors have read and approved the final version and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Statement of Interest

All authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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