



ADAT AND *TAJDĪD*: THE CULTURAL DIALECTIC OF HAJI RASUL'S ISLAMIC REFORM IN MINANGKABAU

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Abstract

This article examines the dialectical relationship between Minangkabau *adat* (customary traditions) and Islamic renewal (*tajdīd*) in the thought and reformist activities of Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While historical studies have examined his role in Islamic reform, the philosophical and ethical dimensions of his engagement with Minangkabau culture warrant further analysis. This study asks how Haji Rasul negotiated existing customary traditions while articulating an Islamic reform agenda that sought religious purification without necessarily rejecting Minangkabau cultural identity. Using a qualitative, historical–philosophical approach, it interprets biographical accounts, historical studies, and relevant texts through the Sufi concepts of *takhliyah* (purification) and *tahliyah* (adornment). The analysis argues that these concepts offer an interpretive framework for understanding reform as a process of critically reassessing customary practices and cultivating ethical conduct in accordance with Islamic principles. Haji Rasul's reformism is thus understood as a selective engagement with *adat*, distinguishing practices considered compatible with Islamic teachings from those he regarded as religiously problematic. This study highlights the philosophical significance of the *adat*–*tajdīd* relationship and contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Islamic reform as a process of religious critique, ethical transformation, and cultural negotiation in Minangkabau.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji hubungan dialektis antara *adat* Minangkabau dan pembaruan Islam (*tajdīd*) dalam pemikiran dan aktivitas reformis Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) pada akhir abad ke-19 dan awal abad ke-20. Meskipun berbagai kajian historis telah membahas perannya dalam pembaruan Islam, dimensi filosofis dan etis dari keterlibatannya dengan kebudayaan Minangkabau masih perlu dikaji lebih mendalam. Penelitian ini mempertanyakan bagaimana Haji Rasul menegosiasikan tradisi *adat* yang ada sekaligus merumuskan agenda pembaruan Islam yang mengupayakan pemurnian agama tanpa harus menolak identitas kultural Minangkabau. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif-historis-filosofis, penelitian ini menafsirkan sumber biografis, kajian sejarah, dan teks-teks terkait melalui konsep tasawuf *takhliyah* (pembersihan) dan *tahliyah* (penghiasan). Analisis menunjukkan bahwa kedua konsep tersebut dapat digunakan sebagai kerangka interpretatif untuk memahami pembaruan sebagai proses peninjauan kritis terhadap praktik *adat* dan pembentukan perilaku etis berdasarkan prinsip-prinsip Islam. Reformisme Haji Rasul dengan demikian dipahami sebagai keterlibatan selektif dengan *adat*, yakni dengan membedakan praktik yang dipandang selaras dengan ajaran Islam dari praktik yang dianggap bermasalah secara keagamaan. Penelitian ini menegaskan signifikansi filosofis hubungan *adat* dan *tajdīd* serta memperkaya pemahaman tentang pembaruan Islam sebagai proses kritik keagamaan, transformasi etis, dan negosiasi kultural di Minangkabau.



INTRODUCTION

The Minangkabau, one of the largest ethnic groups in the Nusantara archipelago inhabiting the West Sumatra region, are known for possessing a unique social structure that combines a strong matrilineal system with adherence to Islamic teachings. This distinctiveness gave rise to a legendary philosophical adage of customary law: *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* (custom is founded upon religious law, and religious law is founded upon the Book of God). This expression reflects an effort to synthesize two normative systems that have historically experienced tension: the customary tradition rooted in pre-Islamic local wisdom, and the values of Islamic sharia brought by merchants and scholars from the Middle East and Gujarat since the 13th century (Steenbrink, 1993).

However, the relationship between custom and Islam in Minangkabau has not always been harmonious. The 19th century bore silent witness to ideological conflict and even physical violence between customary groups and Islamic reformists, most dramatically manifested in the Padri War (1803–1837). Following that conflict, tensions continued in the form of fierce intellectual and social debates regarding the boundaries between legitimate customary practices and *bid'ah* (forbidden innovation) in religion (Noer, 1973).

It was against this tension – filled socio-intellectual landscape that Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah better known by his title Haji Rasul emerged as one of the most influential Islamic reformist figures in Minangkabau at the turn of the 20th century. Born in Sungai Batang, Maninjau, in 1879, Haji Rasul was the father of Indonesia's great literary figure, Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah). His endeavors as a scholar, educator, and social activist left an indelible mark on the history of Islam in Indonesia (Hamka, 1982).

The central question this article seeks to answer is: how did Haji Rasul navigate, engage with, and ultimately transform the Minangkabau customary framework to construct an ethical foundation for Islamic renewal? In other words, did the reform he undertook constitute a total rejection of custom, or rather a more complex dialectical negotiation? To address this question, the article employs a qualitative-interpretive approach drawing upon primary sources including Hamka's biographical writings about his father as well as contemporary academic literature in the fields of Islamic intellectual history, cultural philosophy, and Minangkabau studies (Azra, 2004).

The academic contribution of this article lies in its effort to frame Haji Rasul's movement not merely as a historical religious phenomenon, but as an expression of a renewal ethic that can be philosophically analyzed through the framework of cultural dialectics. In doing so, this study bridges Indonesian Islamic historiography and ethical philosophy a perspective that remains relatively underexplored in the existing literature (Hadler, 2008).

Methodologically, this study proceeds in two analytical steps. First, biographical material especially Hamka's *Ayahku* is cross-checked against independent academic literature (including Noer, Azra, Hadler, and Steenbrink) in order to control for hagiographic bias, since a son's memoir of his father is naturally inclined toward eulogy rather than critical assessment; claims drawn primarily from Hamka's account are treated as established only where they are corroborated, or at least not contradicted, by these independent historiographical sources. Second, the philosophical analysis operationalizes the Sufi dialectical pairing of *takhliyah* (purification) and *tahliyah* (adornment) as an interpretive tool: textual and biographical evidence of Haji Rasul's rejection of specific adat practices is read as an instance of *takhliyah*, while evidence of his affirmation or reappropriation of adat values is read as an instance of *tahliyah*. Tracing his reformist

career through this two – fold lens allows the moments of negation and reconstruction in his ethics of renewal to be identified systematically across the primary and secondary sources, rather than asserted only at the level of general argument. This engagement is situated within an active and growing body of recent scholarship on the ongoing negotiation between adat and Islamic reform in Minangkabau, which this article extends by examining Haji Rasul's own hermeneutical practice in particular (Asniah, 2023; Asrinaldi & Yoserizal, 2020).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: MINANGKABAU AND THE DYNAMICS OF CUSTOM AND ISLAM

Minangkabau Social Structure and the Role of Custom

Minangkabau society is organized according to strict matrilineal principles, whereby lines of descent, inheritance of ancestral property, and clan (*suku*) affiliation are traced through the maternal line. This system grants women a central position within family structure and property ownership, although formal and religious leadership has traditionally rested in the hands of men. Custom (*adat*), in the Minangkabau context, is not merely a set of behavioral rules, but rather a comprehensive social cosmology encompassing inheritance law, life – transition rituals, dispute resolution procedures, and the ethics of intergenerational relationships (Noer, 1973).

The *penghulu* (customary leaders) played a crucial role in upholding and interpreting adat. They were the custodians of both oral and written traditions accumulated over centuries. Custom is differentiated into several categories: *adat nan sabana adat* (true and absolute custom), *adat nan diadatkan* (codified custom), *adat nan teradat* (culturally embedded custom), and *adat istiadat* (habitual practices). This hierarchy demonstrates that not all aspects of adat are sacred and immutable; some represent the product of historical construction and remain open to revision (Hamka, 1982; see also Abdullah, 1971).

The encounter between Minangkabau custom and Islam occurred gradually from the 13th to the 15th century, reaching its peak intensity in the 17th and 18th centuries through networks of trade and education connecting West Sumatra with the Haramayn (Mecca – Medina). Minangkabau scholars who had studied at Islamic centers of learning in the Middle East returned to their homeland carrying a reformist spirit that frequently clashed with customary practices deemed to contain elements of *shirk* (polytheism) or *bid'ah* (forbidden innovation) (Navis, 1984).

The Padri War and the Legacy of Adat-Islam Conflict

The Padri War (1803 – 1837) was the most monumental conflict reflecting the tensions between Islamic reformism and Minangkabau custom. The Padri movement, inspired by Wahhabism brought by pilgrims returning from Mecca, sought to purge religious practices of elements they considered contrary to pure Islam. They opposed gambling, tobacco use, cockfighting, and various customary rituals deemed to have animistic roots (Benda – Beckmann & Benda – Beckmann, 2011).

This conflict ultimately drew in the Dutch colonial forces, who sided with the customary faction to crush the Padri power. Although the Padri were militarily defeated, their movement left a profound intellectual imprint: it introduced a critical awareness of the limits of adat and propelled a reformulation of the relationship between custom and sharia. The adage *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* which subsequently

became a pillar of Minangkabau identity can be understood as the product of a post – Padri historical compromise that sought to integrate reformist values into the customary framework (Abdullah, 1966).

It was precisely this intellectual legacy of the Padri War that shaped the context in which Haji Rasul grew and developed his thought. He was born into a generation that inherited those tensions and was called upon to respond to them in a more refined manner not through violence, but through education, intellectual debate, and social organization (Hadler, 2008).

Haji Rasul: Educational Background and the Methods of Religious Propagation

Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah was born in 1879 in the village of Sungai Batang, Tanjung Raya District, Agam Regency. His father, Syekh Muhammad Amrullah, was a distinguished scholar who had instilled a strong tradition of Islamic learning within the family. From an early age, Haji Rasul received intensive education in the Islamic religious sciences, ranging from fiqh (jurisprudence), tawhīd (theology), and tafsīr (Qur'anic exegesis), to taṣawwuf (Sufism). (Hamka, 1982).

At a relatively young age, Haji Rasul made his first journey to Mecca to perform the Hajj and to pursue further studies at the Grand Mosque. It was there that he came into direct contact with the wave of Islamic reformist thought then sweeping the Muslim world at the close of the nineteenth century particularly the ideas of Jamaluddin al – Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida, disseminated through the journals *al-Urwat al-Wutsqa* and *al-Manar*. These ideas emphasized the importance of ijtihad (independent reasoning), criticism of blind imitation (taqlid), and the adaptation of Islam to the challenges of modernity (Steenbrink, 1993).

His experience in Mecca provided Haji Rasul with two things simultaneously: spiritual depth and intellectual sharpness. He did not merely study the norms of fiqh; he also developed a sensitivity to the condition of Muslims then facing the pressures of European colonialism. Upon returning to Minangkabau, he carried with him a spirit of renewal that he believed was a necessity of the age (Azra, 2004).

Upon his return to Minangkabau, Haji Rasul began conducting religious study circles of a critical character. He questioned deeply ingrained religious practices such as excessive grave veneration, certain forms of tahlilan (communal prayers for the deceased) that he regarded as lacking a solid basis in the Quran and authentic Hadith, and blind adherence to a particular legal school without genuine understanding. His approach was not merely destructive but constructive: he not only criticize, but also advanced theological arguments grounded in the Quran and Sunnah (Noer, 1973).

Haji Rasul was known for his precision in distinguishing between what he termed 'good adat' and 'adat that contradicts Islam.' He accepted and even appreciated adat values consonant with Islamic principles such as musyawarah (deliberation, which he viewed as a manifestation of the Islamic principle of shura), mutual cooperation (gotong – royong), and respect for elders and leaders. However, he firmly rejected practices he considered products of syncretism with pre – Islamic beliefs (Abdullah, 1971).

THE DIALECTIC OF ADAT AND TAJDĪD IN HAJI RASUL'S ETHICS OF RENEWAL

Philosophical Framework: Between Takhliyah and Tahliyah

To understand Haji Rasul's ethics of renewal philosophically, we must employ the concepts of takhliyah (purification) and tahliyah (adornment), which are widely used in

the Sufi tradition. Takhliyah refers to the process of purifying the soul from blameworthy traits, while tahliyah refers to the effort to fill the purified soul with praiseworthy qualities. Haji Rasul adapted this framework to the socio – cultural context: he did not merely reject adat (takhliyah) but also sought to refill it with authentic Islamic values (tahliyah). Perjalanan Haji Rasul ke Mekkah pada tahun 1894 dan 1927 memberi pengaruh mendalam terhadap orientasi intelektualnya (Hamka, 1982).

This dialectical approach can be understood through three interrelated moments. First, the moment of negation: Haji Rasul critically identified elements of adat deemed contrary to tawhid (monotheism) and sharia. Second, the moment of mediation: he sought to find common ground between adat values that could be preserved and Islamic principles. Third, the moment of synthesis: he formulated a new understanding of Minangkabau Muslim identity that did not pit adat and Islam against each other dichotomously but understood them as mutually complementary within a higher framework (Navis, 1984).

This dialectic differs fundamentally from the Wahhabi approach, which tends to view adat as something to be entirely abolished. Haji Rasul, by contrast, demonstrated a high degree of cultural sensitivity: he recognized that adat is not merely a collection of rules that can be arbitrarily altered but constitutes a social order governing fundamental relationships within Minangkabau society (Hadler, 2008).

The Ethics of Ijtihad as a Response to Taqlid

One of the main pillars of Haji Rasul's renewal ethics is his emphasis on ijtihad as a moral obligation for every Muslim capable of performing it. He sharply criticized the practice of taqlid unthinkingly following the opinions of earlier scholars without understanding their evidential bases. For him, taqlid was not merely an intellectual weakness but a form of betrayal of the scholarly trust inherited from the Islamic tradition (Noer, 1973).

In the Minangkabau context, this critique of taqlid carried a dual dimension. On one hand, it was directed at scholars who adhered rigidly to a particular legal school without openness to new arguments. On the other hand, it was also directed at ordinary people who followed adat practices from generation to generation without ever questioning their theological foundations. Haji Rasul demanded that every religious and adat practice be tested against the standards of the Quran and authentic Sunnah (Hamka, 1982).

It is important to note, however, that the ethics of ijtihad promoted by Haji Rasul was not unlimited ijtihad. He continued to place the Quran and Sunnah as the highest authoritative sources, and acknowledged the importance of ijma' (scholarly consensus) as guidance in matters not explicitly addressed by revealed texts. Thus, the ijtihad he advocated was a responsible ijtihad, bound to the established methodology of the Islamic sciences (Abdullah, 1966).

Adat Basandi Syarak: Haji Rasul's Cultural Hermeneutics

The adage adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah received a sharper and more operational interpretation in Haji Rasul's thought. For him, this expression was not merely a compromise slogan but a serious program of cultural hermeneutics. He proposed that every element of adat should be tested according to the standards of sharia: if the adat is consonant with sharia, it must be preserved; if it conflicts, it must be rejected; if it falls in a grey area, it must be examined in depth (Azra, 2004).

In practice, Haji Rasul distinguished between adat rooted in universal values such as justice, brotherhood, and deliberation which he viewed as manifestations of human fitra (innate nature) aligned with Islamic teachings, and adat containing elements of pre–

Islamic belief that are difficult to justify theologically. This differentiation enabled him to be inclusive toward the majority of adat traditions while remaining critical of problematic elements (Benda – Beckmann & Benda – Beckmann, 2011).

Haji Rasul's cultural hermeneutics constitutes, at its core, a project of Islamization of adat distinct from the nineteenth – century Padri version of Islamization. Whereas the Padri tended to employ a confrontational top – down approach, Haji Rasul preferred a dialogical bottom – up approach: he invited the community to collectively reflect on their adat practices in the light of Islamic teaching (Steenbrink, 1993).

INTELLECTUAL LEGACY AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Influence on the Modernist Islamic Movement in Indonesia

Haji Rasul's contribution to the development of modernist Islam in Indonesia cannot be underestimated. Through his activities at Surau Jembatan Besi and various Islamic organizations in which he participated such as Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Perti) and subsequently Muhammadiyah he succeeded in planting a spirit of renewal that influenced the subsequent generation of Minangkabau scholars (Hamka, 1982).

His most evident influence is seen in Hamka, his son, who would go on to become one of the most influential scholars and literary figures in twentieth – century Indonesia. Hamka inherited from his father a mode of thinking that was critical yet rooted in tradition, open to modernity yet without losing Islamic identity. Hamka's works from *Tafsir Al – Azhar* and *Tasauf Modern to Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* reflect the cultural dialectics introduced by Haji Rasul (Noer, 1973).

More broadly, Haji Rasul's thought contributed to the formation of the Indonesian modernist Islamic discourse, characterized by an emphasis on education, rationalism, and openness to general sciences. This discourse would become one of the main currents in Indonesian Islam, distinguishing it from more conservative Islamic traditions in other parts of the world (Navis, 1984).

The Adat-Tajdid Dialectic in the Perspective of Ethical Philosophy

From the perspective of ethical philosophy, Haji Rasul's thought can be categorized as a form of contextual ethics that rejects both abstract universalism and cultural relativism. He did not simply accept the universality claims of certain norms without considering cultural context, but neither did he fall into relativism that regards every cultural tradition as equally valid. Karya ini ditulis Hamka terinspirasi langsung dari ajaran – ajaran ayahandanya, Haji Rasul (Hamka, 1983).

His ethics can be called hermeneutical ethics, because he consistently demanded deep and contextual interpretation of religious texts and cultural traditions. For him, ethical truth is not obtained through logical deduction alone from abstract principles but through continuous dialogue among sacred texts, cultural tradition, and living social reality (Abdullah, 1971).

In the context of Islamic ethical theory, Haji Rasul's approach can be understood as a middle path between two extreme poles: on one side, traditionalism that rejects any form of renewal on the grounds of preserving the salaf (pious ancestors') heritage; on the other, modernism that disregards tradition in the name of relevance and contextualization. Haji Rasul demonstrated that authentic renewal must be dialectical taking the best from tradition while remaining open to the new (Hadler, 2008).

Relevance to Contemporary Islamic Discourse

The adat – tajdīd dialectic introduced by Haji Rasul holds surprising relevance for the challenges faced by Muslim communities worldwide today. In an era of globalization, when local identities are increasingly threatened by homogenizing global cultural currents, the model offered by Haji Rasul renewal rooted in local cultural identity provides an appealing alternative (Azra, 2004).

Particularly in Indonesia, where Islam has grown in soil rich with diverse local traditions, Haji Rasul's approach offers valuable guidance on how to negotiate between Islamic universalism and cultural particularism. This is highly relevant given the rise of various fundamentalist movements that tend to disregard the richness of local tradition in favor of imposing a uniform vision of Islam (Hamka, 1982).

Moreover, Haji Rasul's thought on the importance of *ijtihad* and rejection of blind *taqlid* becomes increasingly relevant in the context of modern democracy, which demands citizens who are active, critical, and capable of independent thought. The intellectual ethics he promoted the courage to question, honesty in seeking truth, and responsibility in expressing opinion are values that transcend the religious context and carry universal significance (Noer, 1973).

CRITICAL ANALYSIS: STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF HAJI RASUL'S THOUGHT

Although Haji Rasul's reformist thought possesses significant intellectual and ethical strengths, a comprehensive assessment must also acknowledge its limitations and internal tensions. His commitment to *tajdīd*, particularly his emphasis on *ijtihād* and the critical reassessment of established religious practices, represents an important contribution to Islamic intellectual life in Minangkabau. By encouraging Muslims to reconsider religious authority and distinguish between Islamic teachings and practices he regarded as lacking a sound theological basis, Haji Rasul challenged forms of religious conformity that, in his view, hindered the renewal of Muslim thought. Nevertheless, his reformist project also raises questions about the boundaries of intellectual freedom, the legitimacy of religious authority, and the extent to which customary knowledge can contribute to religious renewal. These questions do not necessarily invalidate his contribution; rather, they provide a basis for examining the conditions under which reform remains intellectually open, ethically accountable, and responsive to changing social realities.

One of the most significant tensions concerns the relationship between *ijtihād* and the normative boundaries established by reformist scholars themselves. While *ijtihād* implies the exercise of critical reasoning in interpreting Islamic sources, it also operates within particular theological, methodological, and interpretive commitments. This raises a fundamental philosophical question: who has the authority to determine the limits of legitimate *ijtihād*? What criteria distinguish a productive reinterpretation of religious teachings from an interpretation considered erroneous or deviant? As the broader debates surrounding Minangkabau religious reform suggest, the answers to these questions are rarely independent of the social and historical contexts in which religious authority is exercised (Navis, 1984). The issue is therefore not simply whether Haji Rasul supported or restricted *ijtihād*, but how the relationship between independent reasoning and religious normativity was negotiated in his reformist project.

This tension reveals a paradox that extends beyond Haji Rasul's thought to religious reformism more generally. Reform requires the authority to identify which beliefs, practices, and institutions should be reconsidered. Yet, when the authority of reformers becomes unquestionable, the same authority may limit the critical inquiry that reform

initially sought to encourage. In Haji Rasul's case, his influence was associated with his mastery of Islamic scholarship and the social recognition he received as a respected religious authority (Hamka, 1982). Such authority could provide the intellectual credibility necessary to challenge established practices, but it could also shape the boundaries within which competing interpretations were accepted or rejected. The critical question, therefore, is whether the reformist commitment to returning to authoritative Islamic sources also leaves sufficient room for interpretive plurality and the critical evaluation of the reformers' own positions. From this perspective, the enduring significance of Haji Rasul's *tajdīd* lies not only in its challenge to inherited religious conventions but also in the broader question of how religious authority can remain open to scrutiny without losing its normative orientation.

A second area for critical reflection concerns gender. Haji Rasul's reformism emerged within a historical context in which debates about religious authority, education, customary institutions, and social change were central to Muslim intellectual life. As with many reformist movements of the period, the principal concerns of his intellectual project appear to have centered on theological clarification, religious practice, and the reform of Muslim education. From a contemporary perspective, this emphasis invites further inquiry into the extent to which women's experiences, agency, and customary rights were incorporated into his understanding of Islamic renewal. This question is particularly relevant in Minangkabau, where the matrilineal system provides women with important positions in the transmission of lineage, inheritance, and customary identity. Women's roles in the household, the *kaum*, and the broader customary community therefore constitute a significant dimension of the social context in which Islamic reform took place.

The relationship between Islam and Minangkabau matrilineal traditions should not, however, be treated as a simple opposition between religious norms and women's customary authority. Rather, it presents a complex field of negotiation in which religious interpretations, customary rights, family structures, and changing social conditions intersect. The matrilineal system could potentially provide resources for a more context-sensitive approach to Islamic reform, particularly in discussions of women's education, participation in religious life, and social agency. Hadler's (2008) historical analysis of Islam and customary change in Minangkabau offers a useful context for examining these negotiations. Nevertheless, establishing that Haji Rasul's thought inadequately addressed women's position requires a closer examination of his writings, educational initiatives, and statements concerning women and family life. The absence of an explicit feminist framework in his work should therefore be understood as a limitation from the perspective of contemporary gender analysis, rather than as sufficient evidence that he rejected women's agency or customary rights. This distinction makes it possible to evaluate the historical limits of his reformism without imposing contemporary categories uncritically upon an earlier intellectual context.

A third limitation concerns the ecological dimension of the relationship between *adat* and *tajdīd*. Minangkabau customary traditions contain practices and institutions that are relevant to environmental relations, including communal landholding through *tanah ulayat*, customary regulation of land use, and agricultural practices shaped by local ecological conditions. These traditions can be examined as forms of collective responsibility through which communities negotiate access to natural resources, maintain social relations, and sustain livelihoods. The ecological significance of *adat* is particularly important because land and natural resources are not merely economic assets; they are also connected to collective identity, intergenerational obligations, and the continuity of

community life. Consequently, customary knowledge may offer resources for developing an Islamic environmental ethic that connects religious responsibility with local practices of environmental stewardship.

In the context of Haji Rasul's reformism, however, the ecological implications of *adat* require careful historical assessment. His emphasis on theological and ritual reform may not have developed into an explicit ecological framework comparable to contemporary environmental ethics. Yet this should not automatically be interpreted as a rejection of the environmental knowledge embedded in Minangkabau traditions. A more defensible conclusion is that the ecological dimension of his reformist thought remains an area for further investigation. Abdullah's (1966) historical study of Minangkabau Islam provides a broader context for understanding the relationship between religious reform and customary institutions, although specific claims about Haji Rasul's ecological views would require direct textual evidence. Contemporary environmental concerns thus create an opportunity to revisit the relationship between Islamic reform and *adat*, asking how customary knowledge concerning communal land, agricultural practices, and environmental responsibility might contribute to the reinterpretation of Islamic ethics under present ecological conditions.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Haji Rasul's understanding of the relationship between *adat* and *tajdīd* cannot be reduced to either a wholesale rejection of Minangkabau tradition or an uncritical accommodation to local culture. Rather, his reformist project represents a cultural dialectic through which Islamic theological commitments were negotiated in relation to the social and cultural realities of Minangkabau. By critically reassessing customary practices in light of Islamic teachings, Haji Rasul sought to reform religious life without necessarily abandoning the cultural identity within which Islam was practiced. His thought therefore provides an important perspective on Islamic reform as a process of religious reinterpretation, ethical transformation, and cultural negotiation.

Three principal findings emerge from this study. First, Haji Rasul's reformism can be understood as a form of selective cultural engagement. Rather than treating *adat* as an undifferentiated tradition, his approach distinguished between customary practices considered compatible with Islamic principles and those regarded as religiously problematic. This orientation made reform possible through the critical reassessment of tradition rather than the wholesale rejection of Minangkabau cultural identity. Second, his commitment to *tajdīd* was associated with the importance of *ijtihād* and the rejection of uncritical *taqlīd*, while remaining grounded in the normative authority of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This combination highlights the central tension in his reformist ethics: the pursuit of independent reasoning requires both interpretive responsibility and criteria for determining the boundaries of legitimate religious interpretation. Third, the relationship between *adat* and *tajdīd* illuminates the possibilities and limitations of contextual Islamic reform. Haji Rasul's intellectual legacy demonstrates how religious renewal can engage local culture while maintaining theological commitments, although the extent to which this approach accommodates interpretive plurality and diverse social experiences requires further examination.

The philosophical significance of Haji Rasul's thought lies not in offering a universally applicable formula for resolving tensions between Islam and local traditions, but in revealing the complexity of that relationship. His reformism provides a historical point of departure for examining how Muslim intellectuals negotiate the relationship between

religious authority, cultural continuity, and social change. Nevertheless, the preceding analysis also indicates areas that warrant critical reconsideration, particularly the boundaries of *ijtihad*, the implications of reformist discourse for women's social and customary positions, and the potential contribution of Minangkabau ecological knowledge to Islamic environmental ethics. These dimensions should not be treated as conclusive evidence of Haji Rasul's rejection of gender equality or ecological concerns. Rather, they identify questions that remain insufficiently explored and that may broaden contemporary interpretations of his intellectual legacy.

The relevance of Haji Rasul's thought thus extends beyond the historical context of Minangkabau, although its application to other Muslim societies requires attention to their distinct historical and cultural circumstances. His legacy invites further reflection on how Muslims can maintain fidelity to Islamic principles while critically engaging inherited traditions. Such engagement requires more than choosing between religious universalism and cultural particularism; it calls for sustained dialogue, responsible interpretation, and critical evaluation of both religious and customary authority. In this respect, the relationship between *adat* and *tajdid* remains a productive framework for understanding the intellectual creativity of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago and for examining the ethical possibilities of culturally grounded religious renewal.

Future research should investigate Haji Rasul's writings and reformist activities more systematically to clarify how his views on religious authority, women, and customary institutions developed within their historical context. Comparative studies of the relationship between Islamic reform and local traditions in other parts of Indonesia and Southeast Asia would also help identify both shared patterns and significant differences across Muslim communities. In addition, further research could explore how the ethical and interpretive questions raised by Haji Rasul's reformism relate to contemporary concerns, including gender justice, ecological responsibility, and the preservation of local knowledge. Such investigations would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of *tajdid* not as a fixed program of religious purification, but as an ongoing intellectual and ethical engagement between Islamic principles, cultural traditions, and changing social realities.

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