

TABUIK RITUAL IN PARIAMAN: ISLAMIC ACCULTURATION AND LOCAL CULTURE THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF AL-'URF



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Abstract

This study examines the acculturation between Islamic values and Minangkabau local culture in the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman through the perspective of al-'urf in usul al-fiqh. Historically rooted in the Shia tradition, the Tabuik ritual has undergone transformation along three dimensions, namely theological, social-functional, and symbolic, since the nineteenth century, developing into a cultural identity of the Sunni community in Pariaman. Theologically, its grounding in martyrdom has been reframed as a moral commemoration of resistance to injustice. Socially, a minority sectarian practice has developed into a community-wide tradition emphasizing solidarity, mutual cooperation, and gotong royong. Symbolically, the replica of Husain's tomb has been reconstituted as an icon of communal identity. This study employs a narrative literature review with a qualitative approach to analyze the elements of the Tabuik ritual based on the classification of urf sahih and urf fasid and assess the legitimacy of its practices under Islamic law. The findings indicate that the social dimensions of the ritual, including communal solidarity, mutual cooperation, and collective identity, can be categorized as urf sahih because they support the objectives of maqasid al-shariah. Conversely, practices involving beliefs in material blessings or supernatural powers with ritual objects tend to fall within urf fasid because they may conflict with the principle of tawhid. The discourse between puritan and cultural groups reflects tensions over Tabuik. This study contributes to understanding the flexibility of Islamic law in accommodating cultural diversity through selective and normative evaluation.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji akulturasi antara nilai-nilai Islam dan budaya lokal Minangkabau dalam ritual Tabuik di Pariaman melalui perspektif al-'urf dalam usul al-fiqh. Berakar secara historis dalam tradisi Syiah, ritual Tabuik telah mengalami transformasi dalam tiga dimensi, yaitu teologis, sosial-fungsional, dan simbolik, sejak abad ke-19, hingga berkembang menjadi identitas budaya masyarakat Sunni di Pariaman. Secara teologis, landasannya pada konsep kemartiran telah direkonstruksi sebagai peringatan moral tentang perlawanan terhadap ketidakadilan. Secara sosial, praktik kelompok sektarian minoritas berkembang menjadi tradisi yang diterima oleh seluruh masyarakat dengan menekankan solidaritas, kerja sama, dan gotong royong. Secara simbolik, replika makam Husain direkonstruksi sebagai ikon identitas komunal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode tinjauan literatur naratif dengan pendekatan kualitatif untuk menganalisis unsur-unsur ritual Tabuik berdasarkan klasifikasi urf sahih dan urf fasid serta menilai legitimasi praktik-praktiknya dalam hukum Islam. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa dimensi sosial ritual, termasuk solidaritas komunal, kerja sama, dan identitas kolektif, dapat dikategorikan sebagai urf sahih karena mendukung tujuan maqasid al-shariah. Sebaliknya, praktik yang melibatkan keyakinan terhadap keberkahan material atau kekuatan supernatural yang dikaitkan dengan benda-benda ritual cenderung termasuk dalam urf fasid karena dapat bertentangan dengan prinsip tauhid. Wacana antara kelompok puritan dan kelompok kultural mencerminkan ketegangan dalam menyikapi Tabuik. Penelitian ini



berkontribusi pada pemahaman mengenai fleksibilitas hukum Islam dalam mengakomodasi keragaman budaya melalui evaluasi yang selektif dan normatif.

INTRODUCTION

The acculturation between Islam and local cultures is a historical phenomenon that is inseparable from the process of the spread and development of Islam in various regions of the world, including the Indonesian archipelago. Islam did not arrive in a social vacuum, but rather interacted with traditions, symbols, and cultural structures that were already deeply rooted in the lives of the people. This interaction gave rise to a complex process of mutual transformation, in which Islamic values underwent adaptation, reinterpretation, and institutionalization within the framework of local culture. In anthropological and cultural sociological studies, this process is understood as acculturation, namely cultural change that arises as a result of intensive and continuous contact between two cultural systems without completely eliminating their original identities, as expressed by Redfield et al. (1936)¹ and Berry (1997)².

In the Indonesian context, the acculturation of Islam and local culture has produced a variety of unique religious expressions, ranging from ritual practices and performing arts to socio-religious traditions. One important example of this phenomenon is the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman, West Sumatra. Historically, Tabuik has its roots in the tradition of commemorating 'Āshūra' in the Shī'ah community, which remembers the death of Ḥusain bin 'Alī in Karbala'.³ This tradition was introduced to the west coast of Sumatra in the 19th century by Indian Sepoy soldiers during the colonial period. However, over time, Tabuik underwent significant transformations when it interacted with the Minangkabau community, which was predominantly Sunni. As a result, Tabuik is no longer practiced as a Shia theological ritual, but has developed into a local cultural tradition that represents social solidarity, communal identity, and a symbol of resistance against injustice.⁴

From the perspective of acculturation and cultural transformation theory, the changes in Tabuik can be understood as a selective and gradual process. Ritual elements that are considered relevant to social values and local identity are retained, while theological meanings that have the potential to cause sectarian tensions are reinterpreted or reduced. This process is in line with the view that acculturation is not passive, but involves active mechanisms of selection, reinterpretation of meaning, and institutionalization within social structures. In the modern context, according to Berry (1997)⁵ and Koentjaraningrat (2009)⁶, this process can also lead to cultural commodification. Thus, Tabuik does not merely survive as a remnant of past traditions, but continues to undergo transformation in line with changes in the social, economic, and political context of Pariaman society.

¹ Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J Herskovits, "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 38, no. 1 (1936): 149–52.

² John W Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," *Applied Psychology* 46, no. 1 (1997): 5–34.

³ Ediwar Ediwar and Indra Sastra Andar, "Tabuik: The Myth and Ontological Culture of Husein Ibn Ali's Death in Aesthetical Packaging in Pariaman Minangkabau – Indonesia," *Psychology and Education Journal* 57, no. 8 (2020): 436–55.

⁴ Yunisa Ramadhani and Zainal Azwar, "Budaya Tabuik Pariaman : Perkumpulan Antara Adat Dan Agama" 3, no. 4 (2025): 5419–27.

⁵ Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation."

⁶ Koentjaraningrat Koentjaraningrat, "Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi, Edisi Revisi PT," *Rineka Cipta: Jakarta* 144 (2009).

However, this kind of cultural transformation not only raises sociological issues, but also normative problems from the perspective of Islamic law. In the treasury of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, the relationship between Islam and customs is explained through the concept of *al-ʿurf*. *Al-ʿurf* is understood as a custom that is widely accepted and practiced by society, which can be used as legal consideration as long as it does not contradict *naṣṣ* and the principles of *sharīʿah*. The classical *uṣūl al-fiqh* scholars, namely *al-Suyūṭī* (2013)⁷ and *Ibn Nujaym* (1992)⁸, distinguish *al-ʿurf* into two main categories, namely *ʿurf ṣaḥīḥ*, which is a custom that is in line with the objectives of *sharīʿah* and brings *maṣlaḥah*, and *ʿurf faṣid*, which is a custom that contradicts *ʿaqīdah*, *sharʿī naṣṣ*, or brings *mafsadah*.

In a more in-depth framework, *Al-Muwafaqat fī Uṣūl al-Sharīʿah* by *al-Shaṭībī* asserts that customs that are consistently applied and bring public benefit can be considered in the establishment of law as long as they do not contradict *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*. This view is reinforced by *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah* in *Iʿlamu al-Muwaqqiʿin ʿan Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn*, which states that changes in fatwa and legal judgments can occur in line with changes in time, place, social conditions, and customs.⁹ Thus, Islamic law has an internal mechanism that allows for dynamic interaction with cultural realities without losing its normative foundation.

In the context of the Tabuik ritual, the concept of *al-ʿurf* becomes highly relevant for assessing the legitimacy of cultural practices that have undergone a transformation in meaning. On the one hand, Tabuik has a strong social dimension, such as mutual cooperation, communal solidarity, and the strengthening of the collective identity of the Pariaman community. This dimension has the potential to be categorized as *ʿurf ṣaḥīḥ* because it is in line with the values of *maṣlaḥah* and the general objectives of *sharīʿah*.¹⁰ On the other hand, there are certain practices that some people believe have material blessings or certain symbolic powers, such as the belief that ritual artifacts bring good luck. Such practices have the potential to lead to deviations from the *ʿaqīdah* and can therefore be categorized as *ʿurf faṣid*.

Previous studies show that the Tabuik Pariaman tradition has been widely studied from historical, religious ritual, and local cultural perspectives. *Riya Wahyuni*¹¹, views Hoyak Tabuik as an intangible cultural heritage that represents the values of solidarity, cooperation, and religious-cultural relations. In the global context, the framework of religious moderation has become an important focus in understanding the role of religion and culture in creating social harmony. Studies on the concept of *Belum Ruhui Rahayu* in Central Kalimantan demonstrate that the integration of religious and cultural values contributes significantly to the achievement of peaceful coexistence through inclusivity, unconditional love, and openness to differences¹². A bibliometric analysis of religious

⁷ Imam *Al-Suyuti*, *Al-Ashbah Wa Al-Nazair Fi Qawa'id Wa Furu'Fiqh Al-Shafi'iyah* (Dar Al-Hadith, 2013).

⁸ *Ibn Nujaym*, "Al-Ashbah Wa-L-Naza'ir 'alḥad Madhhab Abi Ḥanīfah Al-Nu'man" (Dar al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1992).

⁹ *Rizal Darwis*, "Pemikiran Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyah Terhadap Paradigma Perubahan Hukum," *Adzkiya: Jurnal Hukum Dan Ekonomi Syariah* 5, no. 1 (2017): 67–86.

¹⁰ *Abu Ishaq Al-Shatibi*, *Al-Muwafaqat Fi Usul Al-Shariah* (Al-Maktabah Al-Tawfikia, 2003).

¹¹ *Riya Wahyuni*, "Tabuik: Warisan Budaya Takbenda Dari Pariaman" 1, no. 1 (2025): 69–76.

¹² *Baderiah Baderiah and Ahmad Munawir*, "Harmonizing Local Wisdom with Islamic Values," *International Journal of Asian Education* 5, no. 1 (2024): 63–75, <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v5i1.374>.

moderation research in Indonesia during the period 2020–2024 identifies that religious moderation is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct integrating socio–religious, cultural, and practical implementation dimensions, emphasizing the important role of education in promoting moderation as well as the interaction between moderation and local cultural values as a strategy against radicalism.¹³ The acculturative dialogue model that connects the religious dimension, local wisdom, and power structures has proven effective as a strategy for minimizing violent behavior in the name of religion in Indonesia.¹⁴ The harmonization of local wisdom with Islamic values not only enriches religious practice, but also shapes a strong and inclusive cultural identity in the context of character education.¹⁵

The assessment of religious and spiritual dimensions across diverse cultural populations requires careful attention to cultural specificity and inclusivity. Recent methodological developments in cross–cultural religious research have emphasized the importance of linguistic translation consistency, item specificity, and cultural sensitivity in measuring religious phenomena across different national and religious contexts¹⁶. These methodological considerations are essential for ensuring the validity and reliability of comparative research on religious practices and beliefs in multicultural settings.

The role of religious and cultural education in resolving radicalism conflicts in the Sibolga community demonstrates that educational elements build student character and create tolerance among religious communities, while cultural elements function as controllers of social differences through binding customary norms.¹⁷ An anthropological perspective on the acculturation of Islamic law and local culture in the marriage customs of the Buol community reveals that the acculturation process occurs through various mechanisms including political power, trade, education, *da'wah*, arts, marriage, and migration, with forms of acculturation encompassing substitution, syncretism, addition, and deculturation.¹⁸ Cultural transformation in the context of religious moderation in Indonesia and Malaysia demonstrates the important role of Islamic manuscripts as intellectual heritage that functions not only as a source of Islamic teachings but also as a dynamic instrument that facilitates the contextual adaptation of Islamic values within local cultural diversity.¹⁹

Based on this gap, this study places the theories of acculturation and cultural transformation, as well as the concept of al–'urf in uşul al–fiqh, as two complementary grand theories. The theory of acculturation is used to explain the mechanisms of change

¹³ Sonny Eli Zaluch, "Conceptual Reconstruction of Religious Moderation in the Indonesian Context Based on Previous Research: Bibliometric Analysis," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 11, no. November 2024 (2025): 101552, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101552>.

¹⁴ Muhaemin Latif, "Environmental Theology and Its Relevance to Islamic Law: Perception of Makassar Muslim Scholars, Indonesia" 7, no. 3 (2023): 1734–56.

¹⁵ Inaya Rakhmani, "What's the Matter?: The Meaning of Halal Culture for Indonesian Muslims," *Asian Journal of Communication* 34, no. 3 (2024): 319–32.

¹⁶ Kathryn A Johnson et al., "Assessing Religion and Spirituality in a Cross – Cultural Sample : Development of Religion and Spirituality Items for the Global Flourishing Study," *Religion, Brain & Behavior* 14, no. 4 (2024): 345–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2023.2217245>.

¹⁷ Latif, "Environmental Theology and Its Relevance to Islamic Law: Perception of Makassar Muslim Scholars, Indonesia."

¹⁸ Habtamu Mekonnen, Zemenu Bires, and Kassegn Berhanu, "Practices and Challenges of Cultural Heritage Conservation in Historical and Religious Heritage Sites : Evidence from North Shoa Zone , Amhara," *Heritage Science*, 2022, 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40494-022-00802-6>.

¹⁹ Bhinneka Tungga Ika, "The Theology of Islamic Moderation Education in Singkawang , Indonesia : The City of Tolerance," 2021, 1–10.

and negotiation of the meaning of the Tabuik ritual in the socio – cultural context of the Pariaman community, while al – 'urf serves as a normative framework for assessing the shar'ī legitimacy of ritual elements that have undergone transformation. With this approach, Tabuik is understood not merely as a static cultural tradition or religious practice, but as the result of a dynamic interaction between Islamic values, Minangkabau customs, and social changes in society.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative literature review method that focuses on the study of acculturation between Islam and the local Minangkabau culture in the context of the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman through the perspective of the concept of al – 'urf in uşūl al – fiqh. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a deep understanding of complex, contextual, and meaningful socio – religious phenomena, particularly in the relationship between normative Islamic norms and cultural practices of the community.²⁰

The narrative literature review method was used to examine and synthesize various scientific sources that were conceptually and interpretatively relevant without following strict systematic procedures as in a systematic review. This approach is commonly used in humanities and Islamic studies because it emphasizes thematic, argumentative, and historical analysis of the development of ideas and academic debates.²¹

The research data sources consist of primary and secondary literature, including indexed scientific journal articles, academic books on Islamic fiqh, uşūl al – fiqh, and Minangkabau culture, as well as documents and scientific studies discussing the Tabuik ritual. The literature is prioritized on publications from 2015 to 2025 in order to maintain the relevance of the analysis, while still referring to fundamental classical works of uşūl al – fiqh as a conceptual basis. The inclusion criteria cover literature discussing the concept of al – 'urf in Islamic law, the acculturation of Islam and local culture in Indonesia, as well as studies that specifically examine Tabuik Pariaman.

Data collection was conducted through literature searches on Google Scholar and the Garuda Portal as the main databases, as well as utilizing international open sources such as the Directory of Open Access Journals to obtain scientific articles relevant to the study of the acculturation of Islam and local culture. The selection of these databases was based on their relevance to the study of Islamic law and local culture in Indonesia, as well as their ability to provide nationally and internationally accessible scientific literature. The keywords used include "Islamic acculturation," "al – 'urf in fiqh," "Tabuik Pariaman," and "religious ritual transformation." In addition, the snowballing technique was applied by tracing the bibliography of the main sources to identify and obtain additional relevant literature that was not found in the initial database search. It is important to clarify that this snowballing technique, in the context of this library research, refers to a bibliographic chaining method – a systematic approach of following citation trails within already – identified academic texts – rather than snowball sampling as used in field – based qualitative research involving human subjects. This method is widely recognized as

²⁰ John W Creswell and Cheryl N Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (Sage publications, 2016).

²¹ Hannah Snyder, "Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines," *Journal of Business Research* 104, no. August (2019): 333 – 39, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>.

appropriate and effective in narrative literature reviews to ensure comprehensiveness and depth of source coverage.²²

Data analysis was conducted through thematic and interpretive content analysis. The data obtained was classified into main themes covering the concept of al – 'urf in uşul al – fiqh, the history and transformation of the Tabuik ritual, forms of Islamic acculturation and local culture, shar'ī legitimacy of ritual practices, and the dynamics of discourse between puritan and cultural groups. This approach allows for the identification of patterns of meaning, normative argument construction, and discourse trends in the analyzed literature.²³

To strengthen the validity of the findings, source triangulation was carried out by comparing literature from several complementary disciplines, namely usul al – fiqh and Islamic law as a normative framework for assessing the legitimacy of practices, anthropology and the sociology of culture as a framework for explaining the mechanisms of acculturation and transformation, and history and local – cultural studies as a source of contextual data on the Tabuik ritual. This cross – disciplinary comparison allows each finding to be examined from normative, sociological, and historical perspectives simultaneously, so that the interpretation does not rest on a single viewpoint. The interpretation of the analysis uses a hermeneutic approach to understand the meaning of the Tabuik ritual in the context of the encounter between Islamic teachings and local traditions. The credibility of the research is maintained through transparency of the analysis procedures, the precision and accuracy of citations, and the cross – disciplinary source triangulation described above.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Historical Transformation of the Tabuik Ritual: From Shiite Theological Dimensions to Minangkabau Cultural Identity

A historical exploration of the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman reveals a process of transformation in meaning that has taken place from the mid – 19th century to the contemporary era. The ritual, which was originally an expression of grief by the Shi'ah community over the tragedy of Karbala', underwent significant changes when it interacted with the socio – cultural reality of the coastal communities of western Sumatra, who were predominantly Sunni Muslims. Historically, the Tabuik celebration has its roots in the 'Ashura' ritual in the Persian Shi'ah tradition, which serves as a medium for remembrance and collective expression of the death of Ḥusain bin 'Alī and his family in 61 AH.²⁴ In this tradition, the 'Āshūra' ritual is not only liturgical in nature, but also contains strong symbolic and performative dimensions in building the collective memory of the Shi'a community.²⁵

The introduction of the Tabuik tradition to Pariaman is linked to the arrival of Sepoy soldiers from India in the 19th century, who brought the practice of commemorating

²² Lawrence A Machi and Brenda T McEvoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success* (Corwin Press, 2009).

²³ K Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (SAGE Publications, 2018).

²⁴ Asril Asril, "Perayaan Tabuik Dan Tabot: Jejak Ritual Keagamaan Islam Syiah Di Pesisir Barat Sumatra," *Panggung* 23, no. 3 (2013): 298297.

²⁵ Kamran Scot Aghaie, *The Martyrs of Karbala: Shi'i Symbols and Rituals in Modern Iran* (University of Washington Press, 2004).

Ashura to the western coast of Sumatra.²⁶ In its early stages, this ritual still represented a relatively intact Shia religious practice. However, when interacting with the Minangkabau community, which predominantly adhered to Sunnī Islam and had an established customary system, the Tabuik ritual underwent a gradual process of adaptation and reinterpretation. This process reflects a common pattern in the encounter between Islam and local cultures, whereby religious practices originating from outside the local community undergo adjustments in order to be socially and culturally acceptable.²⁷

The transformation of the Tabuik ritual did not occur linearly, but rather through continuous negotiation between Sunni Islamic orthodoxy and ritual practices rooted in Shia tradition. In this context, the orientation of Tabuik gradually shifted from a sectarian theological expression to a more inclusive expression of local culture. This shift is evident in the change in the symbolic meaning of ritual elements, particularly the replica of the tomb of Husayn ibn Ali. While in Shia tradition this element has a sacred meaning directly related to the doctrine of martyrdom, in the context of Pariaman society its meaning has been reinterpreted as a symbol of the moral struggle against universal tyranny and injustice.²⁸ This reinterpretation allows the Tabuik ritual to be accepted by the Sunni community without having to adopt Shia theological aspects that are considered problematic.

In addition to symbolic reinterpretation, the integration of Minangkabau customary elements such as mutual cooperation, village deliberation, and kinship—based social structures strengthens the local character of the Tabuik ritual. This integration between custom and religion is in line with the pattern of relations between custom and Islam in Minangkabau society, where custom functions as a framework for social praxis, while Islam is the source of normative legitimacy.²⁹ Within this framework, Tabuik is no longer understood solely as a ritual commemorating the tragedy of Karbala', but as a space for expressing the cultural identity and social solidarity of the Pariaman community.

In the contemporary era, the Tabuik ritual has undergone further transformation in line with the dynamics of modernization and cultural preservation policies. The designation of Tabuik as an intangible cultural heritage by local and national governments places this ritual in the context of cultural preservation and tourism development. A number of studies show that tourism—based preservation policies encourage a shift in the function of rituals from a medium of spiritual reflection to a public—oriented cultural performance.³⁰ In the context of Pariaman, Tabuik not only functions as a historical and cultural symbol, but also as an instrument for strengthening regional identity.

However, the commodification of the Tabuik ritual presents a paradox. On the one hand, tourism contributes to the sustainability of traditions and increases the participation of the younger generation. On the other hand, the orientation of the festival has the potential to encourage a process of desacralization, in which the reflective meaning of the Karbala tragedy and the values of sacrifice are increasingly reduced. This concern is also

²⁶ Azyumardi Azra, "Syiah Di Indonesia: Antara Mitos Dan Realitas," *Jurnal Ulumul Qur'an*, no. 4 (1995).

²⁷ Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Poznan Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities* 48 (1996): 381–406.

²⁸ Wahyuni, "Tabuik: Warisan Budaya Takbenda Dari Pariaman."

²⁹ Taufik Abdullah, *Adat and Islam: An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau* (Cornell University Press; Southeast Asia Program Publications at Cornell University, 1956).

³⁰ Ahmad Raihan et al., "Eksistensi Budaya Tabuik Di Kalangan Generasi Milenial Di Kota Pariaman," *Jurnal Ilmiah Langue and Parole* 7, no. 1 (December 3, 2023): 45–51, <https://doi.org/10.36057/jilp.v7i1.616>.

reflected in academic discourse and the views of local figures who assess that Tabuik risks being understood solely as a cultural spectacle, rather than as a medium for the internalization of moral and historical values.³¹

The Transformation of the Tabuik Ritual: Definition, Causes, and Mechanisms

Before proceeding to the historical and normative analysis, it is essential to define precisely what is meant by *transformation* in the context of this study, given that transformation constitutes the central variable upon which the entire 'urf analysis rests. Transformation, as employed here, refers to the process by which the theological meaning, ritual form, social function, and symbolic significance of the Tabuik practice underwent systematic and sustained changes — from its origins as a Shī'ah commemorative rite into what is now recognized as a Sunnī-oriented cultural identity in Pariaman. This transformation is neither superficial nor incidental; it represents a fundamental restructuring of how the ritual is understood, performed, and legitimized within the community.

Three primary dimensions of transformation can be identified in this process. *First*, a *theological transformation*: the Tabuik ritual was originally grounded in the Shī'ah doctrine of martyrdom and the veneration of Ḥusain ibn 'Alī as a sacred religious figure. Over time, this doctrinal grounding was gradually stripped away. The ritual ceased to function as a liturgical expression of Shī'ah grief (*ta'ziyah*) and was reinterpreted as a universal moral symbol — a commemoration of the struggle against oppression and injustice — values that are fully compatible with mainstream Sunnī Islamic teaching. *Second*, a *social-functional transformation*: the ritual's function shifted from a sectarian religious practice performed by a minority community to a community-wide cultural celebration that reinforces social solidarity, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and collective identity across all segments of Pariaman society, regardless of their theological orientation. *Third*, a *symbolic transformation*: the physical objects associated with Tabuik — particularly the large tower-like structure itself — underwent a change in symbolic meaning. What was once a replica of Husayn's tomb carrying sacred Shī'ah significance became a cultural icon representing the strength, resilience, and shared identity of the Pariaman community.

Several interconnected factors caused this transformation. *First*, the *demographic factor*: the Sepoy soldiers who introduced the Tabuik tradition to Pariaman in the nineteenth century were a small minority within a predominantly Sunnī Minangkabau society. The survival of the ritual therefore depended on its adaptation to the dominant cultural and religious environment. *Second*, the *normative pressure of Sunnī orthodoxy*: Minangkabau society, shaped by the deeply embedded philosophy of "*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*" — custom is based on *sharī'ah*, and *sharī'ah* is based on the Qur'an — exerted constant normative pressure on any practice perceived as theologically deviant from the Sunnī mainstream. Shī'ah elements in the Tabuik ritual were therefore gradually suppressed or reinterpreted to conform to Sunnī norms. *Third*, the *active role of local adat leaders and ulama*: community leaders and Islamic scholars (*ulama*) played an active and deliberate role in negotiating the boundaries of the ritual, selectively retaining its social dimensions while discouraging its theologically problematic elements. Their intervention was crucial in legitimizing the reformed version of Tabuik within the Islamic framework accepted by the community. *Fourth*, the *political and*

³¹ Ibid.

economic context of modernity: in the contemporary era, the designation of Tabuik as an intangible cultural heritage by local and national governments, and its incorporation into regional tourism programs, has further accelerated its transformation from a religious rite into a cultural festival, prioritizing its social and economic function over its theological origins.

The mechanism through which this transformation occurred was gradual, non – linear, and deeply negotiated over generations. It followed what ³², describes as the *integration* mode of acculturation — wherein elements of the minority cultural practice are selectively retained and adapted rather than fully assimilated or rejected — combined with ³³, framework of cultural contact that produces selective internalization of new elements while maintaining core identity structures. Crucially, this transformation was not imposed from outside but emerged organically from within the social dynamics of Pariaman society, driven by the community's sustained need to reconcile its inherited cultural practice with its dominant religious identity. It is precisely because this transformation has been so thorough — reshaping the theological, social, and symbolic dimensions of the ritual simultaneously — that the *'urf* framework becomes both necessary and applicable as an analytical tool. Only after establishing *what* has changed, *how* it changed, and *why* it changed, can a rigorous assessment be made as to whether the resulting practice qualifies as *'urf ṣaḥīḥ* or *'urf fāsid* under the principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*.

The Concept of Urf in Ushul Fiqh as a Framework for Legitimizing Cultural Acculturation Practices

Understanding the concept of urf or custom within the framework of usul fiqh is essential for analyzing the legitimacy of the acculturation of Islam with local cultures, as manifested in the Tabuik ritual. In both classical and contemporary usul al–fiqh literature, urf is defined as something that has been known and practiced repeatedly by the community, thereby becoming a deeply rooted custom in their lives, both in words and deeds. Ushul fiqh scholars distinguish urf into two main categories based on its conformity with the principles of sharia, namely urf shahih, which does not contradict the nash and maqasid of sharia and can therefore be accepted and used as a basis for determining the law, and urf fasid, which contradicts the provisions of sharia and must therefore be rejected and cannot be used as a basis for the law.³⁴ The application of the concept of urf in the context of local cultural practices requires caution and in–depth analysis to ensure that the traditions preserved do not contain elements that could undermine faith or violate fundamental principles in Islam. The contextualization of Islamic law through the urf approach provides flexibility for Muslims to maintain their cultural identity without having to abandon religious teachings, as seen in various religious practices in Muslim minority communities that have successfully integrated Islamic values with long – established local traditions.³⁵

In the context of the acculturation of Islamic law with customary law in the archipelago, the principle of urf has played a crucial role in shaping distinctive and diverse patterns of Islamic practice in various regions of Indonesia. The Minangkabau people, for

³² Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation."

³³ Koentjaraningrat, "Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi, Edisi Revisi PT."

³⁴ Nujaym, "Al – Ashbah Wa – L – Naẓa'ir 'al6 Madhhab Abī Ḥanīfah Al – Nu'man."

³⁵ Natha Nia, Rebecca Isabella, and Muhamad Romdoni, "Akulturasi Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Adat Dalam Perkawinan Adat Di Minangkabau," *Pikukuh : Jurnal Hukum Dan Kearifan Lokal* 2, no. 1 (2025): 29 – 45, <https://jurnal.untirta.ac.id/index.php/pikukuh/article/view/29384>.

example, have developed the philosophy of "Adat basandi Syarak, Syarak basandi Kitabullah" (custom is based on Sharia, Sharia is based on the Book of Allah), which explicitly acknowledges that customs must be based on Sharia teachings, while Sharia itself is based on the Quran and Hadith. This principle reflects the Minangkabau people's awareness that the customary practices they have inherited from their ancestors need to be aligned with Islamic values so as not to conflict with their religious beliefs. In its implementation, this principle allows for constructive dialogue between the ulama as guardians of religious orthodoxy and the adat leaders as heirs to tradition, where both work together to ensure that social practices in society can accommodate both the demands of Sharia and the need to preserve cultural identity.³⁶ This kind of acculturation does not mean a haphazard mixing of Islamic teachings with pre-Islamic traditions, but rather a selective process in which elements of local culture that are in line with Islamic values are preserved and even strengthened, while those that are contradictory are gradually modified or abandoned.

The application of the concept of *urf* in analyzing the Tabuik ritual requires a careful examination of each element of the ritual to determine whether the practice can be categorized as *urf shahih* or *urf fasid*. Several elements in the Tabuik ritual that can be identified as *urf shahih* include aspects related to strengthening social solidarity, preserving collective memory of the values of heroism and sacrifice, and practices of mutual cooperation in the preparation and implementation of rituals that are in line with the spirit of *ta'awun* or mutual assistance in Islam. The social dimension of the Tabuik ritual, which strengthens communal ties between various community groups in Pariaman, encourages collective participation in community activities, and creates spaces for healthy social interaction, can be seen as a manifestation of *maqasid syariah* in the aspect of *hifzh al-nasl* or preservation of descendants and communities. However, there are also certain elements in the Tabuik ritual that require critical evaluation from the perspective of *urf*, particularly practices that have the potential to lead to *shirk* or beliefs that deviate from *tawhid*. The belief among some people that pieces of Tabuik that have been paraded can be used as amulets or bring material blessings such as increased sales, as indicated by several Pariaman scholars, is an example of a practice that can be categorized as *urf fasid* because it contains elements that can damage the purity of faith.³⁷ This phenomenon shows that the process of acculturation does not always produce an ideal synthesis, but sometimes also gives rise to syncretic practices that are problematic from the perspective of Islamic orthodoxy.

The pattern of Islamic-cultural synthesis observed in Tabuik resonates with documented cases of acculturation across diverse Indonesian Muslim communities. Anthropological studies have identified similar processes in various regional contexts, where Islamic law and local traditions merge through mechanisms of substitution, syncretism, and selective adaptation.³⁸ The Tabuik case demonstrates an additional dimension beyond typical Islam-indigenous culture interaction: the transformation of a sectarian Shi'i practice into a Sunnī cultural expression. This represents not merely

³⁶ Bayu Arif Mahendra, Asmawi, and Muhamad Arief Al Hakim, "CONTEXTUALIZATION OF ISLAMIC LAW FOR LOCAL MUSLIM MINORITIES," *Sahaja* 4, no. 1 (March 13, 2025): 369–83, <https://doi.org/10.61159/sahaja.v4i1.391>.

³⁷ Wahyuni, "Tabuik: Warisan Budaya Takbenda Dari Pariaman."

³⁸ Isabella Jeniva and Maidiantius Tanyid, "Social Sciences & Humanities Open The Framework of Religious Moderation: A Socio-Theological Study on the Role of Religion and Culture from Indonesia ' S Perspective," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 11, no. December 2024 (2025): 101271, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.101271>.

acculturation between Islam and pre – Islamic tradition, but a complex process of inter – Islamic adaptation whereby ritual forms associated with one theological tradition become reinterpreted within another theological framework.

The application of urf analysis to the Tabuik ritual reveals the selective nature of Islamic legal accommodation to cultural practices. Islamic law does not necessarily reject local traditions solely because they originate outside established religious practices. Instead, their acceptance depends on their content, social function, and compatibility with fundamental Islamic principles. The social dimensions of Tabuik, particularly communal cooperation, collective identity, mutual assistance, and social cohesion, correspond to the criteria of valid custom and can therefore be categorized as urf sahih. These elements generate social benefits and strengthen relationships within the community without directly contradicting Islamic principles. The communal character of the ritual also demonstrates how cultural traditions can become mechanisms for maintaining social solidarity and transmitting moral values across generations. However, practices involving beliefs in material blessings, supernatural powers, or special efficacy associated with ritual objects raise theological and legal concerns. Such beliefs may potentially conflict with the principle of tawhid and therefore fall within the category of urf fasid when they involve attribution of independent supernatural power to objects or ritual symbols. This distinction demonstrates that Islamic legal accommodation does not imply unconditional acceptance of every cultural element but requires a process of normative evaluation.

From a maqasid perspective, the Tabuik ritual can serve several higher objectives of Islamic law when practiced within appropriate theological and ethical boundaries. Its contribution to communal harmony, social solidarity, cooperation, and intergenerational cultural transmission supports social continuity and the preservation of communal life. Although the concept of hifz al – nasl is more precisely associated with the preservation of lineage and family, the broader social functions of Tabuik can also be understood through the objectives of preserving social order and collective welfare. Meanwhile, the moral lessons associated with the Karbala narrative can contribute to hifz al – din by emphasizing sacrifice, justice, courage, loyalty, and resistance to oppression. These values can be interpreted as ethical teachings that remain relevant to contemporary Muslim communities regardless of the ritual's historical transformation. Studies of comparable local traditions indicate that customary practices may contribute to maqasid objectives when they promote gratitude, social cohesion, moral responsibility, and collective well – being. Consequently, the primary consideration is not necessarily whether the external form of a tradition originates from orthodox Islamic practice, but whether its contemporary meaning and social consequences serve legitimate Islamic purposes. The Tabuik tradition can therefore be preserved as a cultural expression provided that elements conflicting with tawhid are distinguished from its beneficial social and ethical dimensions.

The role of religious moderation in contextualizing the Tabuik phenomenon reflects broader Indonesian approaches to managing religious diversity and cultural plurality. The theology of Islamic moderation emphasizes tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and appreciation of cultural differences as essential components of authentic Islamic practice in pluralistic societies³⁹. This theological orientation provides religious justification for accommodating cultural practices that, while not explicitly prescribed in classical Islamic texts, contribute to social harmony and community cohesion. The rise of urban Islamic movements that engage with popular culture and social media demonstrates

³⁹ Muhammad D Dasopang et al., "The Role of Religious and Cultural Education as a Resolution of Radicalism Conflict in Sibolga Community," 2019, 1 – 7.

contemporary Muslim youth's ability to negotiate between religious authenticity and cultural modernity ⁴⁰, suggesting that acculturation processes continue to evolve in response to changing social conditions.

Environmental and social contexts also influence how Islamic principles are interpreted and applied to local practices. Recent scholarship has explored how Islamic legal scholars in Indonesia integrate environmental theology with customary practices, demonstrating that Islamic law possesses capacity to address contemporary challenges through creative reinterpretation of classical principles ⁴¹. Similarly, the meaning of Islamic cultural practices evolves as Muslim communities navigate between traditional understandings and modern social contexts, with religious authenticity increasingly defined through cultural relevance rather than mere historical continuity ⁴². These developments suggest that the legitimacy of acculturated practices like Tabuik depends not only on their conformity to classical legal categories but also on their continued capacity to serve meaningful purposes within contemporary Muslim communities.

The Discourse Dynamics between Puritan and Cultural Groups in Negotiating the Legitimacy of Rituals

The existence of the Tabuik ritual in the predominantly Muslim community of Pariaman has given rise to a complex discourse between various groups with different religious orientations. Puritan groups, which emphasize the purification of Islamic practices from elements considered heretical or lacking a basis in the Quran and Hadith, tend to view the Tabuik ritual with criticism and even rejection. For this group, commemorating the events of Karbala in the form of rituals containing complex symbolic elements and practices never performed by the Prophet Muhammad SAW is considered an innovation in religion that must be avoided. The theological argument used by puritan groups is based on hadiths that emphasize that every heresy is misguided and every misguidance will lead its perpetrator to hell, so they urge that the Tabuik ritual be stopped or at least returned to a simpler form of commemoration that does not contain excessive ritual elements. The puritanical group's criticism also targets aspects of the Tabuik ritual that are considered to contain elements of shirk, such as the practice of asking for blessings from a replica of Hussein's tomb or believing that participation in the ritual can bring material fortune, which is seen as a form of ta'alluq or attachment of the heart to other than Allah that can damage the purity of tawhid.

On the other hand, cultural groups that prioritize the preservation of cultural heritage and appreciate the diversity of Islamic expression have a different perspective on the Tabuik ritual. For this group, the Tabuik ritual is an integral part of the cultural identity of the Pariaman community, which has been passed down for more than a century and a half and has undergone such a process of Islamization that it can no longer be equated with the Ashura ritual in the Shiite context. The argument put forward by the cultural group emphasizes that the Tabuik ritual in the Pariaman context has undergone a

⁴⁰ M Samsul Hady et al., "Cultural Transformation : Religious Moderation from Manuscripts Heritage to Living Tradition in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Cogent Education* 12, no. 1 (2025): —, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2556891>.

⁴¹ F Aidulsyah, "The Rise of Urban Salafism in Indonesia: The Social – Media and Pop Culture of New Indonesian Islamic Youth," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 51, no. 4 (2023): 252–59, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajss.2023.07.003>.

⁴² Magnu Boström, "Social Relations and Everyday Consumption Rituals : Barriers or Prerequisites for Sustainability Transformation ?" 6, no. August (2021): 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2021.723464>.

significant transformation in meaning, whereby Shiite theological elements have been reduced and replaced by universal moral values in line with Sunni Islamic teachings, such as respect for the Prophet's family, appreciation for the struggle against injustice, and the strengthening of social solidarity in society. The cultural group also argues that Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin* (a blessing for the universe) has the flexibility to accommodate local cultural practices as long as they do not conflict with the fundamental principles of religion, as exemplified by the approach of the saints who successfully spread Islam in the archipelago through acculturative methods without forcing the total elimination of deeply rooted local traditions.⁴³ This perspective is in line with the concept of Islam Nusantara, which recognizes the diversity of Islamic expressions as a source of richness rather than deviation, where the contextualization of Islamic teachings with local culture is seen as a necessity in the process of peaceful and inclusive *da'wah*.

Negotiations between these two groups take place through various formal and informal forums, involving scholars, traditional leaders, local governments, and the wider community. In the context of Gorontalo society, for example, the interaction between customary law and Islamic law has resulted in a pattern of acculturation that allows both systems to operate harmoniously with a clear division of domains, where aspects of *mahdhah* worship strictly follow sharia provisions while aspects of *muamalah* and social practices have room to accommodate local customary values.⁴⁴ This pattern can serve as a model for managing tensions between puritanical and cultural groups in Pariaman, where compromise has been achieved by preserving the essence of the spiritual values of the commemoration of the Karbala tragedy while modifying the form of the ritual so that it does not contain elements that are problematic from an ideological point of view. Several attempts to reform the Tabuik ritual have been made by community leaders and local scholars, such as eliminating practices that are too similar to Shia rituals, which can cause misunderstandings, strengthening the moral education dimension in the ritual procession, and integrating religious lectures that emphasize Sunni Islamic values into the Tabuik event series. However, these reform efforts often face resistance from some members of the community who feel that these changes will diminish the authenticity and uniqueness of the Tabuik ritual as a cultural heritage that has been deeply rooted for dozens of generations.

Implications of the Tabuik Study on Understanding Islamic Acculturation and Local Culture in Indonesia

The case study of the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman provides valuable insights into the complexity of the acculturation process between Islam and local culture in Indonesia and its implications for the formation of the Islamic identity of the community. The phenomenon of acculturation as manifested in the Tabuik ritual shows that the encounter between Islamic teachings and local traditions does not always result in smooth integration, but often involves a long, tense, and ongoing process of negotiation from generation to generation. This dynamic reflects the fact that Islam as a universal religion must continue to engage in dialogue with diverse cultural realities in various parts of the world, and in the process of dialogue, various forms of Islamic expression emerge that are different but still within the corridor of the fundamental values of Islamic teachings. The

⁴³ Muhammad Alqadri Burga, "Kajian Kritis Tentang Akulturasi Islam Dan Budaya Lokal" 5, no. 1 (2019): 1 – 20.

⁴⁴ Cultural D A Wah and Grigory Baron, "The Legacy of Islam Nusantara in Local Traditions: Between Acculturation and Cultural *Da'wah*" 1, no. 1 (2025): 20 – 32.

experience of the Pariaman community in managing the tension between their religious and cultural identities through the Tabuik ritual can be a valuable lesson for other Muslim communities in Indonesia facing similar challenges in their efforts to preserve their cultural heritage amid the pressures of modernization and the increasingly strong tide of Islamic purification.

From a broader perspective, the phenomenon of the acculturation of Islam and local cultures in Indonesia has produced three main Islamic orientations that compete with each other for religious interpretive authority, namely traditionalist Islam, which accommodates local cultural practices; modern Islam, which seeks to reform Islamic practices to be more in line with textual teachings, and puritanical Islam, which rejects all forms of innovation in religion and urges the purification of Islamic practices from elements of local culture.⁴⁵ These three orientations each have different social bases, theological arguments, and da'wah strategies, creating a very plural and dynamic Islamic landscape in Indonesia. In the context of the Tabuik ritual, these three orientations can be clearly identified, with traditionalist groups tending to accept this ritual as part of legitimate cultural heritage, modernist groups seeking to reform the ritual to bring it more in line with mainstream Islamic teachings, and puritanical groups rejecting the ritual altogether and urging its discontinuation. The competition and dialogue between these three orientations not only impact the practice of the Tabuik ritual itself, but also influence the broader Islamic discourse in Indonesia on how Muslims should respond to local cultural heritage that existed before the arrival of Islam or that developed through a process of acculturation.

The practical implications of this study point to the importance of developing a clear methodological framework for assessing local cultural practices from an Islamic legal perspective, particularly through the *urf* approach, which allows for flexibility without compromising fundamental religious principles. The experiences of various Muslim communities in Indonesia in integrating Islam with local culture show that the most successful approach is one that is inclusive, dialogical, and transformative, where Islamic teachings are not imposed to completely eradicate local traditions but rather gradually transform the meaning and practice of these traditions to be in line with Islamic values. In the context of globalization and modernization, which bring new challenges to the preservation of cultural heritage, this acculturative approach is becoming increasingly relevant because it allows communities to maintain their cultural identity while adhering to their religious beliefs. The study of the Tabuik ritual also underlines the importance of the role of the younger generation in preserving traditions, where their involvement is key to the sustainability of cultural practices amid rapid social change and shifting values in contemporary society. Therefore, efforts to preserve cultural heritage such as the Tabuik ritual need to be accompanied by comprehensive educational programs to ensure that the younger generation not only inherits the form of the ritual but also understands the philosophical and spiritual values contained within it, so that they can become critical and creative heirs who are able to adapt traditions to the context of the times without losing their essence.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Tabuik ritual in Pariaman represents a complex process of acculturation between Islamic teachings and local Minangkabau cultural traditions that developed since the nineteenth century. The transformation of Tabuik from a religious

⁴⁵ Burga, "Kajian Kritis Tentang Akulturasi Islam Dan Budaya Lokal."

practice rooted in Shia tradition into a cultural identity of the Sunni community in Pariaman demonstrates an ongoing negotiation between religious norms, communal identity, and the need to preserve cultural heritage. Rather than remaining a static religious practice, Tabuik has undergone significant transformation through social interaction, cultural adaptation, and reinterpretation by the local community. This transformation illustrates how Islamic traditions can interact with indigenous cultural practices without necessarily eliminating their distinctive local characteristics. Through the perspective of *al-urf* in *usul al-fiqh*, this study confirms that cultural practices cannot be accepted in their entirety without normative evaluation. The acceptance of a tradition requires consideration of its meanings, functions, and consequences within the framework of Islamic legal principles. Thus, the continuity of Tabuik demonstrates that cultural preservation and Islamic legal considerations can coexist when cultural elements are critically evaluated according to established normative principles.

The application of the categorization of *urf sahih* and *urf fasid* shows that the social dimensions of the Tabuik ritual, particularly those that strengthen communal solidarity, mutual cooperation, social cohesion, and the internalization of values such as sacrifice and justice, can be accepted as *urf sahih* because they are consistent with the objectives of sharia and *maqasid al-shariah*. These dimensions contribute positively to community life and reinforce social relationships without contradicting fundamental Islamic principles. Conversely, practices that associate ritual artifacts with beliefs in material blessings, supernatural powers, or independent spiritual efficacy have no legitimacy in Islamic law and may be categorized as *urf fasid* because they have the potential to contradict the principle of *tawhid*. The continuing debate between puritan and cultural groups regarding Tabuik also reflects the plurality of Islamic orientations in Indonesia and the tensions involved in responding to modernity and globalization. These findings confirm that *al-urf* provides a relevant analytical framework for understanding the flexibility of Islamic law in accommodating cultural diversity while maintaining clear normative boundaries. Accordingly, the preservation of Tabuik can remain compatible with Islamic values when its cultural and social dimensions are maintained while elements that conflict with sharia principles are critically reconsidered.

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DECLARATIONS

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Author 1 (Kumaidi) and Author 2 (Rahmad Hidayat) contributed to the study's conceptualization and design, theoretical framing, the search and selection of the literature, data analysis and interpretation, and led the drafting of the manuscript. Author 3 (Hardiansyah Padli) and Author 4 (Jamilus) contributed to the substantive and critical revision of the manuscript. Author 5 (Arna Saskia) contributed to the collection and curation of literature sources and to the alignment of citations and references. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and take full responsibility for its content.

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial or non – financial interests that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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