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Haji Gantarang and Local Religious Tradition: A Comparative Analysis of the Shāfi'ī and Mālikī Madhhabs

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Abstract

This study examines *Haji Gantarang* as a local religious practice in the Selayar Islands Regency that has generated debate over its religious legitimacy from the perspective of Islamic law, particularly concerning normative hajj practices and the influence of local cultural traditions. The study aims to investigate how *Haji Gantarang* is understood from the perspectives of the Shāfi'ī and Mālikī madhhabs and how socio-cultural dynamics shape its religious legitimacy within local communities. This research employs a qualitative descriptive design, using participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis of classical fiqh literature and relevant academic sources. The data were analysed thematically through a comparative madhhab approach. The findings indicate that neither the Shāfi'ī nor the Mālikī madhhab recognises *Haji Gantarang* as a valid hajj ritual because it does not fulfil the *tawqifi* requirements governing the prescribed places and rites of hajj in the Holy Land. Nevertheless, the two madhhabs differ in their interpretative orientations. The Shāfi'ī approach tends to emphasise a normative and restrictive assessment of ritual validity, whereas the Mālikī approach provides greater contextual space through the concept of *'urf*, allowing *Haji Gantarang* to be understood as a religio-cultural expression with educational and social value, provided that it is not regarded as a substitute for the obligatory hajj. These findings demonstrate that *Haji Gantarang* occupies a symbolic and pedagogical domain, reflecting an ongoing negotiation between Islamic legal norms and local cultural adaptation in shaping the religious experiences of Muslim communities.

Keywords: *Haji Gantarang*; Local Religious Practice; Comparative Madhhab; Islamic Law; *Urf*.

Abstract

Penelitian ini mengkaji *Haji Gantarang* sebagai praktik keagamaan lokal di Kabupaten Kepulauan Selayar yang telah menimbulkan perdebatan mengenai legitimasi keagamaannya dari perspektif hukum Islam, khususnya berkaitan dengan praktik haji



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source are properly credited.

normatif dan pengaruh tradisi budaya lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana *Haji Gantarang* dipahami dari perspektif mazhab Syāfi'ī dan Mālikī serta bagaimana dinamika sosial-budaya membentuk legitimasi keagamaannya dalam masyarakat setempat. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumenter terhadap literatur fikih klasik serta sumber-sumber akademik yang relevan. Data dianalisis secara tematik melalui pendekatan komparatif antarmazhab. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa baik mazhab Syāfi'ī maupun Mālikī tidak mengakui *Haji Gantarang* sebagai ritual haji yang sah karena tidak memenuhi ketentuan *tawqifi* yang mengatur tempat dan rangkaian ibadah haji yang telah ditetapkan di Tanah Suci. Meskipun demikian, kedua mazhab memiliki perbedaan dalam orientasi interpretatifnya. Pendekatan Syāfi'ī cenderung menekankan penilaian normatif dan restriktif terhadap keabsahan ritual, sedangkan pendekatan Mālikī memberikan ruang kontekstual yang lebih besar melalui konsep *'urf*, sehingga *Haji Gantarang* dapat dipahami sebagai ekspresi religio-kultural yang memiliki nilai edukatif dan sosial, sepanjang tidak diposisikan sebagai pengganti kewajiban ibadah haji. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa *Haji Gantarang* berada dalam ranah simbolik dan pedagogis yang merefleksikan negosiasi berkelanjutan antara norma hukum Islam dan adaptasi budaya lokal dalam membentuk pengalaman keagamaan masyarakat Muslim.

Keywords: *Haji Gantarang*; Praktik keagamaan Lokal; Perbandingan Mazhab; Hukum Islam; *'Urf*.

Introduction

The religiosity of Muslim communities does not develop within a uniform social space, but rather through a complex interaction between theological norms and constantly changing local cultural constructs. In the Indonesian context, the historical process of Islamization often occurs through mechanisms of cultural adaptation that enable the integration of Islamic values with local traditions (Azra, 2005; Muzakka, 2023). This interaction gives rise to forms of religiosity that are not only normative-textual, but also symbolic and cultural, so that local rituals often serve as a medium for spiritual pedagogy and community social solidarity (Bowen, 2009; Nasir, 2019; Qudsy et al., 2023; Szombathy, 2021). This phenomenon demonstrates that local religious practices do not merely exist within a dichotomy between orthodoxy and deviation, but rather within a dynamic spectrum of religious negotiation (Nggiku et al., 2024; Asti, 2025; Ismail et al., 2026). Within this framework, the *Haji Gantarang* tradition in the Selayar Islands Regency is a concrete example of how simulations of *manasik* based on local symbolic space are practiced as a religious expression of the community.

This tradition arose from the historical conditions of limited community access to the Hajj to the Holy Land and serves as a means of religious education as well as community spiritual expression. Research on the *Haji Gantarang* shows that the practice developed as a religious tradition of the Selayar community and is associated with the sacred space of *Gantarang Lalang Bata*. According to some community beliefs, performing seven Eid al-Adha prayers in *Gantarang* has the same status as performing the Hajj to the Holy Land (Syakinah, 2022). These findings indicate the existence of a local sacred construction that is interesting to study further from the perspective of normative fiqh and community

religious experiences. Several previous studies have also positioned local religious rituals as a form of community theological awareness that reflects the internalization of religious values in cultural practices (Irawati et al., 2024). Other studies show that local Hajj rituals can be understood as a medium of religious learning that strengthens symbolic understanding of formal worship (Ibrahim & Kholis, 2024). In addition, research on the Islamization of culture confirms that the transformation of traditional practices is part of the process of adapting Islamic values in certain social contexts (Soebahar et al., 2021).

Previous academic studies have highlighted the relationship between religion and culture through various interdisciplinary perspectives. Studies in the anthropology of religion have shown that symbolic rituals serve as a medium for internalizing religious values and legitimizing community identity (Geertz, 1976; Ridwan, 2018; Maloko et al., 2024). Research on Nusantara Islam also emphasizes that the process of cultural adaptation allows for the sustainability of local traditions as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of faith and sharia (MA Abdullah, 2017; Woodhead, 2011). In the Indonesian context, several studies have revealed that local religious practices can be a means of transmitting religiosity and fostering social integration (Ashadi et al., 2026; Judijanto et al., 2024). Meanwhile, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) studies place *mahdhah* worship rituals within a strict normative framework, where the validity of worship practices is determined by their conformity to the provisions of the texts (al-Nawawī, 1985).

Socio-religious traditions continue to receive analytical space through the concept of *'urf*, which in Islamic legal studies can be a consideration in establishing laws as long as they do not conflict with sharia principles (Ibn Rushd, 2004). In the context of Nusantara fiqh, *'urf* indicates a space for dialogue between Islamic legal norms and the social realities of society (Harisudin, 2016). In fact, in the Shafi'i madhhab, *'urf* still has a certain position in issues that do not have explicit provisions in the texts, although its use has certain normative boundaries (Furqan & Syahrial, 2022).

Research on local *manasik* practices also shows that symbolic rituals are often understood as a medium for culturally based religious education, not as a substitute for formal worship (Ibrahim & Kholis, 2024). Furthermore, literature on religious syncretism indicates that the integration of elements of ancestral traditions and Islamic practices can occur adaptively and inclusively in Muslim societies (Nasir, 2019; Soebahar et al., 2021). In fact, several studies confirm that Islamization in various local communities tends to preserve cultural heritage by incorporating elements of Islamic prayer and symbolism without eliminating its traditional structure (Al Zahra', 2024; Astuti, 2018). However, most of these studies have not specifically examined local *manasik* practices through a

comparative approach between madhhabs of thought as a normative evaluation framework.

This gap in research places the research on the *Haji Gantarang* in a relevant position. Previous studies have focused more on the anthropological or historical aspects of local rituals, while comparative analysis of the religious legitimacy of these practices has not been systematically developed. This article offers a novelty by integrating classical Islamic jurisprudence approaches, particularly the Shāfi'i madhhab of thought, which emphasizes the normative validity of *mahdhah* worship, with the Mālikī perspective, which allows for customary considerations, with empirical findings regarding local religious practices. This approach is expected to demonstrate the dialectic between the normative boundaries of worship and the socio-cultural function of tradition in the reality of religiosity.

Based on this background, the main problem of this research is formulated on how the practice of *Haji Gantarang* is positioned within the comparative perspective of the Shāfi'i and Mālikī madhhabs of thought. This research starts from the hypothesis that the practice does not gain legitimacy as *mahdhah* worship within the normative framework of both madhhabs of thought, but still has a significant religious-social function as a medium for spiritual education and cultural identity of the community.

Thus, the purpose of writing this article is to critically analyze the practice of *Haji Gantarang* as a local religious phenomenon through the perspective of comparative madhhabs of thought, while also explaining its position in the dynamics of the relationship between fiqh norms, cultural construction, and social transformation of Indonesian Muslim society.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design to examine the *Haji Gantarang* as a local religious practice from a comparative perspective of the Shafi'i and Maliki madhhabs of thought in the Selayar Islands Regency. This design was chosen because it allows for an in-depth examination of socio-religious phenomena related not only to community ritual practices but also to the construction of normative legitimacy that develops in Islamic jurisprudence discourse (Ilhamsyah & Ramli, 2024; Nubowo, 2025; Pabbajah, 2021; Ramadan et al., 2026). A qualitative approach allows for a comprehensive depiction of how these traditions are practiced, understood, and negotiated in the religious life of the community (Aini, 2026; Astuti, 2018; Muzakka, 2023; Wahyudi & Umar, 2026), while also opening up the possibility of critical analysis of their conformity with the views of the madhhab (Hidayah & Abdullah, 2021; Irawati et al., 2024). Thus, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between local traditions, religious authority, and the interpretation of Islamic law in a particular socio-cultural context

(Fitriyani et al., 2024; Hermansyah, 2014; Pabbajah, 2021). Qualitative descriptive design is considered relevant because it is able to explain the complexity of the interaction between the normative dimensions of religious teachings and the reality of local community religious practices (Husain, 2025; Kasim et al., 2024; Nair et al., 2026; Qudsy et al., 2024; Ramadan et al., 2026).

Data collection was conducted through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Participatory observation was conducted by directly participating in community activities related to the implementation of the *Haji Gantarang* Tradition to gain a contextual understanding of the ritual structure, religious symbols, and the accompanying social dynamics (Bowen, 2009; Busetto et al., 2020; Kawulich, 2005; Lepcha, 2022). In-depth interviews involved religious leaders, traditional leaders, traditional practitioners, and community members who had direct experience with the practice to explore their views on the meaning of the tradition and its religious legitimacy (Ashadi et al., 2026; Busetto et al., 2020; DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019; Sugito et al., 2026). In addition, documentation studies were conducted by reviewing the Shafi'i and Maliki madhhabs of jurisprudence literature, academic works, local historical archives, and other relevant supporting documents to build a normative and historical analysis framework for the research (A. Abdullah et al., 2025; Bowen, 2009; Morgan, 2021; Rohman, 2023).

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify key patterns in the construction of traditional meaning, arguments for religious legitimacy, and points of convergence and differences in perspective between the two madhhabs of thought (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017). The analysis process included data reduction, coding, grouping thematic categories, and interpreting meaning based on the comparative framework of the madhhabs used in the study (Carter et al., 2014; Maulana et al., 2026; Noble & Heale, 2019; Riazi et al., 2023). This approach allows researchers to systematically examine the relationship between social practices, ritual symbols, and fiqh arguments, thus producing a critical understanding of the position of *Haji Gantarang* as a local religious practice that exists in a dialectic between community traditions and Islamic legal norms (Nasir, 2019; Supardin & Syatar, 2021).

Results and Discussion

Gantarang Hajj as a Local Religious Practice

The *Haji Gantarang* tradition is a local religious practice that developed in Gantarang Lalang Village, Bontoharu District, Selayar Islands Regency. This tradition is understood as a symbolic form of carrying out the Hajj rituals in local spaces, especially in the Mekka Keke area, and serves as a means of spiritual practice as well as learning the procedures of the

Hajj pilgrimage before departure to the Holy Land. Local people understand that in the past, before the formal *manasik* program was available, prospective pilgrims first performed ritual practice by circling symbolic points analogous to Hajj sites; Possi Tanah is likened to the Kaaba, *Pakkojokang* to the Black Stone, and other locations as maqams, so that this practice helps the community understand the procedures of the Hajj pilgrimage before departure (Daeng Rabasi, 2025).

The emergence of this tradition is inseparable from the transformation of local beliefs applied to the Possi Tanah practice. Before the arrival of Islam, the Gantarang Lalang Bata area was viewed as a sacred space with high spiritual value. The Possi Tanah stone is believed to be an important cosmological point in the narrative of the emergence of Tomanurung and also a marker of the community's origins. This belief encourages people to visit this area to make vows or ask for safety, while also safeguarding the stones within as part of spiritual respect (Azis, 2025). The ritual usually involves the presentation of a three-colored *songkolo* (a traditional Javanese).

The arrival of Islam brought about a shift in the orientation of meaning without severing its symbolic continuity. Previously animistic practices were gradually reinterpreted within a new religious framework, allowing custom and religion to operate interactively in community life. The public's perception of rituals connected to religion as sacred strengthened this integration process (Daeng Rabasi, 2025). This transformation then gave rise to the reinterpretation of Possi Tanah into a symbolic practice resembling the Hajj rituals.

In subsequent developments, the *Haji Gantarang* Tradition is understood to have various narratives of its origins. Some communities associate it with the authority of a local kingdom in the past, when a ruler who intended to perform the Hajj was unable to make the trip, so the area was transformed into a miniature of the Holy Land and rituals were performed there, which were then passed down to the community (Daeng Rabasi, 2025). Another perspective emphasizes the community's religious motivation to experience the spirituality of the Hajj despite not being able to actually depart; the ceremony is understood as a reminder of intention and spiritual strengthening, not as a substitute for the Hajj (Idrus, 2025). This diversity of narratives indicates that the tradition was formed through a dynamic social process, involving symbolic dimensions, pedagogical dimensions, and the religious aspirations of the community.

The selection of Gantarang Lalang Bata as the center for carrying out traditions is also rooted in the strong construction of spatial sacredness in the community's collective memory. This area is believed to be one of the initial locations for the spread of Islam in the western Selayar region, marked by the presence of an old mosque and a narrative about the first call to prayer in the area, which strengthens the religious legitimacy of the

area as a center of spiritual activity (Ramli, 2025). Belief in the sanctity of the area is also supported by the community's view that the stones in the lalang emba have high spiritual value, so that various ritual activities are carried out there (Mustari). This collective awareness makes space an important element in the construction of traditional meaning.

In practice, the Mekka Keke area serves as a symbolic representation of the spatial layout of the Hajj pilgrimage, encompassing *Possi Tanah*, *Pakkojokang*, the Awaluddin Mosque, and other points analogous to sites in the Holy Land. The emergence of this practice is understood as a response to the structural limitations of society in the past, particularly related to geographical distance and economic conditions, so that the implementation of local *manasik* becomes a means of preparation and spiritual appreciation for the Hajj pilgrimage (Andi Agus, 2025). This function emphasizes that the *Haji Gantarang* tradition has not only a symbolic dimension, but also a pedagogical one in shaping the community's religious awareness.

With social developments, advances in transportation, and the advent of formal Hajj rituals from religious institutions, the *Haji Gantarang* tradition has become increasingly rare in contemporary society. However, its existence retains significant historical, religious, and cultural significance, representing the community's adaptation to structural limitations and reflecting the long-standing dialogue between local traditions and Islamic teachings in shaping the religious experience of the local community.

The Process of Implementing the *Haji Gantarang* in the Selayar Islands

The implementation of the *Haji Gantarang* tradition in Gantarang Lalang Village provides a clear picture of how local religious practices are carried out through structured stages. Based on field observations, this ritual does not occur spontaneously, but rather through a series of processes that include pre-implementation, core implementation, and post-implementation stages. This structure of stages indicates that this tradition functions not only as a symbolic activity but also as a social mechanism that strengthens community solidarity.

First, the pre-implementation stage. The initial stage begins with determining the time through consultation with traditional and religious leaders, preparing the location through mutual cooperation, providing food as a symbol of social solidarity, and ritual decorations that create a sacred and cultural atmosphere. Furthermore, several symbols and tools are prepared as a medium for internalizing the values of the Hajj, such as ihram clothing, simulations of *tawaf*, *sa'i*, stoning the devil, and *tawaf* farewell, as well as supporting equipment such as hajj sticks, stones, location-marking flags, loudspeakers, and mini-*ihram* clothing for children. All preparations are carried out collectively and not suddenly, through deliberation and division of tasks that reflect cooperation and the

arrangement of intentions before entering the core of the ritual (Daeng Rabasi, 2025). The atmosphere of togetherness in the past even made the preparation phase a space for social reconciliation, where communities helped each other and strengthened village ties (Ibrahim, 2025).

Second, the core implementation. The stages of the Hajj tradition in Gantarang Lalang Bata are centered in the Makka Keke area, which is understood by the community as a symbolic space representing the implementation of Hajj rituals. Participants gather wearing white clothing resembling ihram, then follow a series of rituals that begin with the recitation of the holy verses of the Qur'an and guidance from traditional and religious leaders. The core procession is a simulation of Hajj rituals, including the intention to enter ihram, *talbiyah*, *wukuf*, symbolic throwing of the devils, *tawaf* around Possi Tanah, and *sa'i*, which is understood as spiritual practice before performing the actual Hajj (Muh. Sayuti Alam, 2025; Azis, 2025). The implementation takes place in an open space with the participation of local and outside communities because Makka Keke has long been considered the center of the *Possi Tanah* ritual and symbolic *manasik* (Aswar Badulu, 2025).

The ritual symbolism is supported by the existence of the main sites in the area, namely *Possi Tanah*, *Pakkojokang*, and *Ta'ra Lisak Bangkeng* which are interpreted as representations of sacred spaces in Mecca. *Possi Tanah* is analogous to the Kaaba and becomes the center of symbolic *tawaf* (Azis, 2025), *Pakkojokang* is positioned as an analogy of the Black Stone which is believed to have certain blessings (Bahar, 2025; Asrullah, 2025), while *Ta'ra Lisak Bangkeng* understands the representation as Maqam Ibrahim as well as the historical traces of local Islamic preaching (Andi Agus, 2025).

Third, post-implementation. After the Hajj tradition in Gantarang Lalang Bata is completed, the community performs a farewell prayer followed by a farewell greeting as a symbol of respect and hope for blessings after the ritual. This activity is followed by a communal prayer and, on some occasions, a thanksgiving meal, which serves as a space for spiritual reflection and strengthening social solidarity. This is reflected in the community's experience that after the Hajj rituals are completed, they gather to pray and eat together as an expression of gratitude and a means of instilling ritual values and understanding in the younger generation and newcomers (Ibu Hago, 2025). These post-ritual practices demonstrate the contribution of tradition in strengthening social ties, increasing spiritual awareness, and broadening the community's understanding of the Hajj.

However, the intensity of the *Haji Gantarang* rituals has changed due to socio-religious developments. Increased access to education, religious information, and formal government guidance programs have meant that local traditions are no longer seen as essential. This reflects a cultural transformation in which local religious practices adapt to

a more institutionalized system of worship guidance (Muh. Sayuti Alam, 2025). Nevertheless, Gantarang remains perceived as a sacred space in the collective consciousness of the community, reflected in the growing narrative of belief that performing seven consecutive Eid al-Adha prayers at Gantarang Lalang Bata has a reward equivalent to the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. Repeated Eid al-Adha prayers are believed to possess certain blessings, without being understood as a substitute for the Hajj (Ramli, 2025; Aswar Badulu, 2025).

Thus, the dynamics of this tradition demonstrate the process of transformation of meaning from a locally based simulation of *manasik* to a symbol of religious-cultural identity, which reflects adaptation to modernization as well as ongoing negotiations between normative Islam and local cultural heritage that remains alive in the social structure of society.

Haji Gantarang from the Perspective of the Shafi'i and Maliki Madhhabs

In classical Islamic jurisprudence, the Hajj is positioned as a *mahdhah* worship that is *tauqīfī* in nature, namely the form, procedures, and space of its implementation are determined normatively by the text of the sharia. The al-Shāfi'i school of thought asserts that the validity of the Hajj worship depends not only on the intention and implementation of the pillars, but also on the established ritual space, such as wukuf at Arafah, tawaf at the Kaaba, and sa'i between Safa and Marwah. Performing rituals outside of these spaces does not have legal consequences as a valid Hajj worship (al-Nawawī, 1985; Al-Shafi'i, n.d.)

The normative character of the Shāfi'i madhhab places the authority of evidence and methodological consistency as the basis for establishing law, so that the provisions of worship remain within the clear boundaries of sharia (Imran, 2022). In the context of the *Haji Gantarang*, this perspective emphasizes that local symbolic practices cannot be considered valid Hajj merely because of similarities in ritual form or societal acceptance. The flexibility of fiqh in dealing with practical issues, such as performing the Hajj without a mahram, remains based on normative provisions and considerations of social conditions and security (Dedi & Yunarti, 2023). Thus, the *Haji Gantarang* can be understood as an educational and cultural practice, but does not change the basic provisions and validity of the Hajj according to the Shāfi'i madhhab.

The normative boundaries of the Hajj pilgrimage are also evident in local religious practices in South Sulawesi. Research on the *Akkattere* ritual in the *Ammatoa* community shows that the integration of Islamic elements into local pilgrimage practices reflects a dialectical relationship between Islamic law and local traditions. However, these practices remain subject to normative limits, particularly when local symbolism or meanings are potentially positioned as alternatives to performing worship or pilgrimages to the Holy

Land ([Misbahuddin et al., 2023](#)). These findings provide a comparative context for the study of the *Haji Gantarang*, demonstrating that the adaptation of Islamic elements within local traditions can occur culturally, but still requires a distinction between the symbolic function of a tradition and the ritual validity prescribed by sharia.

The findings indicate that the Gantarang community in Lalang Bata generally has a theological awareness that aligns with this view. Informants emphasized that the Hajj tradition in the region is understood as a symbolic exercise, not a substitute for the Hajj. This awareness indicates an internalization of the conceptual boundary between normative worship and local cultural practices. In the context of traditional dynamics, this position is important because it explains why the *Haji Gantarang* practice can persist without causing significant theological conflict in the community's religious life. The tradition serves as a means of spiritual and social education, rather than a formal religious ritual ([Irawati et al., 2024](#); [Widjaja et al., 2023](#)).

From the perspective of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, the existence of local traditions can be analyzed through the concept of '*urf*', namely customs that develop and are accepted in community life. '*Urf*' has received attention in various schools of Islamic jurisprudence, although the level of acceptance and how it is used varies. The Maliki school provides relatively broad space for considering '*urf*' in determining law, including when community customs are taken into account in understanding issues that do not conflict with sharia principles. Meanwhile, the Shāfi'i madhhab also accepts '*urf*' as long as it does not conflict with authoritative sharia texts or evidence ([Wandi, 2018](#)).

Fauzi emphasized that '*urf*' is dynamic and elastic following social changes, but remains within the methodological limits of Islamic law so that not every custom can have legal consequences ([Fauzi, 2024](#)). This perspective is relevant in understanding the *Haji Gantarang*, because the change in the function of tradition from a symbolic practice of *manasik* to an expression of religious-cultural identity shows a transformation of the meaning of '*urf*'. In line with that, Fanani explains that the Mālikī madhhab provides space for customs in social matters, but still limits their use so as not to conflict with normative provisions. Thus, '*urf*' can explain the continuity and function of the *Haji Gantarang* culture, but cannot change the normative provisions of the Hajj as a *maḥḍah* worship ([Fanani, 2014](#)).

'*Urf*' framework provides analytical space for understanding the *Haji Gantarang* as a socio-religious practice with a cultural function without necessarily categorizing it as a hajj in the Islamic jurisprudence sense. In the context of the Gantarang community, the symbolism of space and the stages of the rituals can be understood as a form of '*urf*' or cultural practices that acquire religious meaning through historical and social processes. However, acceptance of this tradition remains limited by the principle that '*urf*' cannot change the basic provisions of worship that have been established by the Shari'a ([Wandi,](#)

2018). Thus, the existence of Possi Tanah as a symbol of the Kaaba, *Pakkojokang* as a symbol of the Black Stone, as well as the symbolic implementation of tawaf and sa'i do not change the position of the Holy Land as a normative space for the implementation of the Hajj pilgrimage (Sahabudin & Surur, 2018).

A comparison of the Shāfi'i and Mālikī madhhabs of thought reveals both common ground and differences in interpreting the *Haji Gantarang*. Normatively, both madhhabs of thought do not consider local traditions to be a substitute for the Hajj prescribed by Sharia. The difference lies in the analytical scope of the social and cultural functions of tradition. The Shāfi'i approach places a strong emphasis on the conformity of religious practices to texts and normative provisions, while the Mālikī approach allows greater scope for consideration of 'urf as long as it does not conflict with Sharia principles (Furqan & Syahril, 2022). Therefore, the Gantarang Hajj can be accepted as a socio-cultural and pedagogical phenomenon, but it cannot attain the status of a valid Hajj solely based on societal acceptance of the tradition.

This phenomenon can be interpreted through the perspective of cultural syncretism in the process of local Islamization. Syncretism is evident in community practices that maintain ancestral heritage but adapt it to align with Islamic values, thus making it religiously acceptable. In a number of cultural practices in the Selayar region, for example, traditional elements are maintained while Islamic prayers and symbols are integrated into rituals, demonstrating that religion serves to nourish culture, not completely replace it (Al Zahra', 2024; Aluede & Ikhidero, 2024; Nasir, 2019). A similar pattern can be seen in the practice of *Haji Gantarang*, where the symbolism of Hajj rituals is presented alongside local interpretations of sacred space. The inclusive and adaptive process of Islamization allows local traditions to survive as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of faith (A. Abdullah et al., 2025; Rohman, 2023). Thus, the existence of traditions not only reflects cultural adaptation, but also shows a mechanism of negotiation between religious orthodoxy and local community identity.

On the other hand, the Maliki school of thought provides a more contextual perspective through its recognition of 'urf as one of the considerations in the socio-religious practices of society (Harisudin, 2016; Wandi, 2018). Ibn Rushd explains that community customs can be accommodated as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of sharia and do not claim the position of obligatory worship (Ibn Rushd, 2004). This principle provides an analytical basis for understanding *Haji Gantarang* as a form of culture-based religious pedagogy. *Al-Mudawwanah* also emphasizes that social practices that develop in society can be maintained as long as they do not change the provisions of *mahdhah* worship (Said, n.d.).

This approach is relevant to the historical dynamics of the *Haji Gantarang* tradition, which in its early phase served as a learning tool for communities with limited access to the Holy Land. In this context, spatial symbolism, such as Makka Keke or the use of ihram clothing, can be understood as forms of religious adaptation to implement the values of patience, sacrifice, and equality. Thus, the tradition's existence is not merely seen as a deviation, but as a strategic cultural tool for disseminating religious knowledge at the local level (Hidayat, 2021; Nurnazli, 2017; Rosele & Ali, 2019).

However, modern social dynamics have brought significant changes to the position of this tradition. Increased access to formal religious education, intensified guidance for Hajj rituals by state institutions, and the development of public fiqh literacy have caused the pedagogical function of tradition to shift (Jubba et al., 2018; Nisa, 2018; Slama, 2017). From al-Shāfi'ī's perspective, this change can be understood as a strengthening of society's normative orientation towards text-based worship practices and formal authority. Meanwhile, from a Mālikī perspective, this transformation indicates a change in the structure of 'urf in which the customs of old religious communities are renegotiated due to the emergence of new sources of authority in the transmission of religious knowledge (Maimun, 2017; Marinsah et al., 2025).

Although the intensity of symbolic rituals has decreased, the sacred dimension of the Gantarang space remains in the community's collective consciousness. This phenomenon demonstrates that the dynamics of tradition do not always result in the disappearance of practices, but rather in a transformation of meaning. In this context, tradition no longer functions as a means of simulating worship, but as a symbol of the community's spiritual identity and history. This demonstrates the continuity of cultural meaning despite changes in the forms of practice.

To clarify the similarities and differences between the Shāfi'ī and Mālikī madhhabs in assessing the *Haji Gantarang* tradition, the following table summarizes the comparison from normative, ritual, socio-cultural, and pedagogical perspectives.

Table 1. Comparison of *Haji Gantarang* from the Perspectives of the Shāfi'ī and Mālikī Madhhabs

Aspect of Comparison	Shāfi'ī Madhhab	Mālikī Madhhab
Status of <i>Haji Gantarang</i>	Not recognized as a valid performance of Hajj because it does not fulfill the normative requirements of Hajj.	Not recognized as a substitute for or fulfillment of obligatory Hajj, but may be understood as a religious-cultural practice.
Basis of Assessment	Based on the tauqīfī principle governing <i>mahdhah</i> worship, particularly regarding the	Considers the principle of 'urf as long as local customs do not contradict the fundamental principles of

	prescribed place, time, and procedures.	Shari'ah or alter the provisions of <i>mahdhah</i> worship.
Ritual Space of Hajj	The place of performance is an essential element of Hajj. Wuqūf is performed at Arafah, ṭawāf around the Ka'bah, and sa'i between Ṣafā and Marwah.	The normative requirements concerning the ritual spaces of Hajj remain binding, while local spaces may serve symbolic, social, and educational functions.
Position of the Gantarang Ritual	Regarded as a simulation or religious activity rather than a Hajj ritual with legal consequences as a valid Hajj.	May be understood as a religio-cultural and pedagogical expression as long as it is not regarded as a substitute for Hajj.
View of 'Urf/Custom	'Urf may be considered in certain matters, but it remains subject to normative limitations and cannot alter the provisions of <i>mahdhah</i> worship.	'Urf provides a more contextual framework for understanding socio-religious practices as long as they do not contradict Shari'ah.
Educational Function	May be accepted as a means of learning and understanding the Hajj rituals, but it does not constitute the worship of Hajj itself.	More open to understanding the practice as a form of religious education that conveys the values and stages of Hajj.
Socio-Cultural Function	Primarily understood as a social and cultural activity that must not be equated with the actual Hajj.	May be understood as part of religious identity, social solidarity, and local cultural expression.
Local Symbols and Spaces	Possi Tanah, Pakkojokang, and Ta'ra Lisak Bangkeng cannot replace the ritual spaces of Hajj prescribed by Islamic law.	Local symbols and spaces may be understood as cultural representations and pedagogical media, provided that they are not regarded as substitutes for the prescribed Hajj sites.
Theological Limitation	The tradition must not be regarded as a valid Hajj or as a substitute for the obligatory Hajj.	The tradition must not be claimed as a substitute for the obligatory Hajj.
Approach	Normative-restrictive, emphasizing Shari'ah requirements and the integrity of Hajj worship.	Contextual-accommodative, emphasizing the socio-cultural function of the tradition through the concept of 'urf.
Conclusion	Gantarang Hajj falls outside the legal legitimacy of Hajj and is more appropriately understood as a socio-educational activity.	Gantarang Hajj falls outside the legitimacy of <i>mahdhah</i> Hajj but may be understood as a religio-cultural expression with educational and social value.

Source: Authors interpretation

The comparison demonstrates that the fundamental difference between the two madhhabs does not concern the validity of *Haji Gantarang* as an obligatory Hajj ritual, which neither madhhab recognizes, but rather concerns how its socio-cultural and pedagogical functions are interpreted. The Shāfi'i madhhab emphasizes the normative boundaries of Hajj worship, whereas the Mālikī madhhab provides greater contextual space for understanding the tradition through the concept of 'urf. Thus, *Haji Gantarang* may retain its educational and cultural significance without being positioned as a substitute for the obligatory Hajj.

Thus, the interaction of the perspectives of the Shāfi'i and Mālikī madhhabs in the dynamics of reading the *Haji Gantarang* presents two complementary layers of analysis. The Shāfi'i approach emphasizes the normative boundaries that maintain the purity of the Hajj as a sharia practice, while the Mālikī approach allows for an understanding of the socio-cultural function of tradition as part of the adaptation of a religious society. In the context of social change, the continuity of the *Haji Gantarang* tradition cannot be seen as a linear process, but rather as a continuous transformation influenced by the interaction between fiqh norms, institutional authority, and local cultural constructions.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the practice of *Haji Gantarang* as a local symbolic ritual does not gain legitimacy as *mahdhah* worship in the comparative perspective of the al-Shāfi'i and Mālikī madhhabs, thus confirming the research hypothesis. The al-Shāfi'i madhhab firmly places the validity of the Hajj on full submission to the provisions of *tauqīfī* regarding space, time, and pillars of worship, so that ritual simulations outside the Holy Land are positioned solely as social activities without any legal implications for worship. Meanwhile, the Mālikī madhhab demonstrates a more contextual level of analytical accommodation through the concept of 'urf, by opening up space for understanding the tradition as a religious-cultural expression that has pedagogical and social value as long as it does not claim the status of obligatory worship. This comparison shows that the difference between the two is not in determining the validity of the Hajj, which is both rejected, but in how to read the socio-cultural function of tradition in the religious life of society. Thus, *Haji Gantarang* can be understood as a symbolic practice that has educational significance and community identity, but is outside the domain of ritual legitimacy of normative fiqh. Based on these findings, further research is suggested to expand the comparative study by involving other madhhabs of thought or the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach, as well as developing interdisciplinary analysis to enrich understanding of the position of local traditions in the dialectic between Islamic legal orthodoxy and the cultural dynamics of contemporary Muslim society.

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