

## Juridical Analysis of the Tradition of Consuming Tritis from the Perspective of the MUI Fatwa of North Sumatra Province Number 5 of 2011 Regarding the Law on Tritis and Law Number 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance (Case Study of the Muslim Community in Karo from 2011 to 2022)

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**Abstract:** The Law on Consuming Tritis from the Perspective of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) of North Sumatra Province No. 5 of 2011 Concerning the Law on Tritis and Law No. 33 of 2014 of the Republic of Indonesia Regarding Halal Product Assurance (Case Study of the Muslim Karo Community from 2011-2022) This journal explores the traditions of the Muslim Karo community in consuming tritis in relation to the implementation of the MUI North Sumatra Province Fatwa No. 5 of 2011, which discusses the legal status of consuming tritis. Tritis, a traditional food derived from undigested cow food processed with certain spices, holds significant cultural meaning for the Muslim Karo community. This study aims to explain the practice of consuming tritis in the Karo region and how these practices align with the religious guidelines provided by the MUI fatwa and Law Number 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance. Using an empirical juridical research approach and case study methodology, this research includes observations, interviews, and document studies. Through qualitative data analysis and deductive reasoning, this study examines the consumption habits of the Muslim Karo community and evaluates them based on the fatwa's provisions. The findings show that the tradition of consuming tritis is deeply embedded in Karo culture, influenced by long-held beliefs about the health benefits of tritis and the ease of obtaining its ingredients. However, the legal status of consuming tritis, as outlined by the MUI Fatwa No. 5 of 2011, states that the practice is haram because it derives from animal materials prohibited under Islamic law. The implementation of this fatwa has been inadequate due to a lack of religious knowledge, insufficient fatwa socialization, and deeply rooted cultural factors.

**Keywords:** Consumption of Tritis, MUI Fatwa, Halal Product Assurance Law, Muslim Karo Community.

## **1. Introduction**

Islam, as a religion that brings mercy to the entire universe, plays a crucial role in regulating human life to fulfill all needs, including in the aspect of consumption. Consumption in Islam is not merely about fulfilling material needs; it is also Allah's call to humanity to fulfill their role as stewards on Earth. In Islamic teachings, all human actions, including consumption, must comply with Sharia law. This Sharia law is documented in the Quran and Hadith, which are the main sources of guidance for Muslims. The Quran serves as the primary guide that regulates many aspects of life, including the ethics of consumption, such as the prohibition of consuming forbidden or doubtful foods. Additionally, Hadith, which contains the teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), also provides guidance on consumption. The Hadith offers additional insights into how a Muslim should behave in managing their consumption, such as sharing food with the less fortunate.

Besides the Quran and Hadith, Islam also recognizes other sources that are consistent with Sharia principles as guides in consumption. This shows the flexibility of Islam in facing changes in times and cultures, but always with the principle of fulfilling the role as stewards on Earth with full responsibility and awareness of the afterlife. Thus, Islam provides comprehensive guidance in regulating consumption so that humans can live according to Allah's will and bring mercy to the entire universe. The food consumed has a very significant impact on the individual who eats it. In Islam's view, food is not just fuel for the body but also has important spiritual and moral dimensions. Good and halal food not only ensures physical health but also shapes a pure soul. When someone consumes halal food, they obey Allah's command, which strengthens their spiritual bond with the Creator. Conversely, haram food, which violates Sharia provisions, can negatively affect the individual's soul and body. This is considered a step towards the misguidance offered by Satan.

The concept of consumption has two different perspectives in economics and Islam. In economics, consumption is defined as human activities in utilizing and spending goods and services to meet various needs to sustain life. In this context, consumption often focuses on fulfilling diverse wants and needs, which can boost the economic growth of a society. However, in Islam's view, consumption has a broader dimension. Consumption is not just about fulfilling personal desires; it is also a means of worshipping Allah (SWT). In Islam, every action, including consumption, can be considered worship if done with the right intention and according to Sharia principles. Good consumption in Islam should be directed towards the benefit of both this world and the hereafter, following the Sharia rules that govern what can and cannot be consumed. Thus, consumption in Islam is not just for material satisfaction but also as a form of devotion to Allah and an effort to achieve greater well-being, both in this world and the hereafter.

Tritis, or known as pagit-pagit, involves more than just a culinary process; it is a deep cultural heritage for the Karo tribe in North Sumatra, Indonesia. As a traditional dish, Tritis reflects uniqueness and complexity in every stage of its preparation. The grass taken from the cow's stomach, or *si peduaken/pagit-pagit* in the Karo language, becomes the main ingredient chosen carefully, following the underlying biological perspective. The importance of selecting grass from the cow's stomach lies not only in culinary wisdom but also in deep biological understanding. The digestive process in the cow's reticulum and rumen allows the grass to remain rich in valuable nutrients and enzymes. Thus, Tritis not only creates a unique taste but also brings valuable nutritional heritage. Tritis, as an integral part of the Karo tribe's traditional ceremonies, permeates important moments such as *merdang merdem*, wedding celebrations, and the inauguration of a new house. The involvement of Tritis in these rituals proves its cultural continuity and its important role in celebrating life. The spices used in processing Tritis, such as *cingkam*, ginger, lemongrass, *cekala*, torch ginger, shallots, garlic, turmeric, galangal, lime, and candlenut, not only add strong distinctive flavors but also depict the richness of local spices and culinary wisdom passed down through generations. The processing of Tritis, which takes a minimum of 3 to 6 hours, reflects dedication and skill in every step. Starting from the stage of boiling grass from the cow's stomach, filtering the boiling water, to adding the unique spices, each phase requires attention and care to produce a perfect dish. Thus, Tritis is not only considered food but also a profound symbol of local wisdom, traditional celebration, and expertise in the art of food processing passed down from generation to generation among the Karo tribe.

Food consumed in Islam must not only provide physical benefits but also be free from any form of harm and prohibition. Food is considered haram if it can endanger human health, such as food containing toxins, impure substances, or other harmful elements. Therefore, the selection of food to be consumed is a careful action. This shows the importance of maintaining physical and spiritual health as an important aspect of consumption practices in Islam. With this very holistic approach, Islam promotes consumption policies that align with moral, ethical, and welfare principles, making consumption an essential aspect of living a balanced and harmonious life according to religious teachings. Allah (SWT) says:

Meaning: "And allows them all good things and prohibits them from all evil" (Al-A'raf verse 157)

Meaning: In His words ".....and He allows them all good things and prohibits them from all evil...", Allah SWT made "thayyib" a quality of all things allowed in general, distinguishing it from what is forbidden, and made "khabaits" a quality of all things forbidden, distinguishing it from what is allowed. The meaning of "khabaits" here is everything considered impure (disgusting) by custom ('urf).

In reality, Muslim communities in Karo Regency still consume Tritis as food in various traditional celebrations, such as work year (annual festival), workwork (wedding party), and in various other events. Regarding the implementation of fatwas on the law of Tritis, there are at least several strong reasons researchers want to study it. First, one of the main ingredients of Tritis is abomasum, which is the feed of ruminant animals (ruminants), such as cows, buffalo, and goats, that have been chemically digested in the stomach, namely in the abomasum after passing through the rumen, reticulum, and omasum. In short, Tritis is the stomach contents of cows, goats, buffalo, and others that have not yet become feces and are used as food by the local community. Then, why is it still consumed by the Muslim community of Karo? Second, there is no research on the aspect of Islamic law regarding Tritis. Third, it is to disseminate the fatwa regarding the law of Tritis. The paper addresses three key problem formulations regarding the consumption of tritis within the Muslim community of Karo Regency. Firstly, it delves into the practice itself, examining how tritis is consumed in this particular community. Secondly, it investigates the various factors that influence the consumption of tritis among the Muslim population of Karo Regency. Lastly, it explores the implementation of MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 in North Sumatra Province concerning tritis, alongside the halal product assurance law According to Article 17 Paragraph (3) and Article 18 Paragraph (1) of Law No. 33 of 2014, materials derived from animals are essentially halal, except for those prohibited according to Sharia, which include:

- 1) carrion;
- 2) blood;
- 3) pigs; and/or
- 4) animals slaughtered not in accordance with Sharia.

In addition, materials derived from animals that are prohibited, aside from those mentioned above, are determined by the minister based on the MUI fatwa., within the Muslim community of Karo.

## **2. Method**

The author conducted this research using steps that make the study more systematic, accurate, and provide a good analysis of the subject. This research is an empirical juridical study using field research methods, employing a descriptive-analytical approach to describe and analyze issues by combining primary and secondary legal materials obtained from the field and analyzed through document studies. In terms of processing and elaborating legal materials, this research is qualitative in nature, fundamentally observing and interviewing the Muslim Karo community who consume tritis. The researcher uses a sociological approach to understand the sociological characteristics of the community and a living case study approach to observe practices occurring within the Muslim Karo community regarding tritis consumption. The research location is in Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province. The legal materials used consist of primary legal materials obtained from the MUI Fatwa of North Sumatra Province No. 5 of 2011, the Halal Product Assurance Law, and interviewees at the research locations, secondary legal materials that explain the primary legal materials such as law books, religious texts, literature, and scientific journals, as well as tertiary legal materials like non-legal journals relevant to the research topic and internet sources. The procedure for collecting legal materials uses instruments such as observation, interviews, and document studies related to the research topic. Data analysis is conducted qualitatively using a deductive method, drawing specific conclusions from

general issues by examining the MUI Fatwa and concluding the practice of consuming tritis.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The Karo people, as part of the Indonesian nation, are among the ethnic groups with a highly developed culture. This is evident from the comprehensive cultural elements of the Karo. According to Sarjani Tarigan, there are at least seven elements that support Karo culture. First, the social structure of Karo society is bound within a system known as *merga silima*, *Tutur siwaluh Rakut Sitelu*. Second, the Karo script and language are quite rich. Third, the living equipment is quite complete, such as *kudin*, *tendang*, *ukat*, *kerpe*, *busan-busan*, *cuan*, *kiskis*, *capah*, *sampo*, *sangketen*, and so on. Fourth, spiritual guidance or beliefs and their implementation practices such as *ngaleng tendi*, *perumah begu*, *persilihi*, *erpanjang kulau*, *tawar*, *kunung*, *sembur*, and others. Fifth, Karo musical instruments that vary according to their purposes, such as *gendang*, *sarune*, *gendang gunung*, *penganak*, *belobat*, *sordam*, *kulcapi*, *ketteng-ketteng*, and others. Sixth, the variety of traditional attire for both men and women, with different styles depending on the type of celebration, such as weddings (*guro-guro aron*), funerals (*kemalangan*), and other ceremonies like *ngelandekken galuh*. Seventh, determining the day to go to the fields to plant rice.

Out of the seven elements of Karo culture, four are particularly distinctive and serve as the identity of the Karo people themselves. These four identities are *merga* (clan), language, arts, and customs. In the context of the fourth point, "tawar" falls under spiritual discussions because historically, the Karo people would request medicine or tawar from a *guru sibaso* (shaman).

#### 3.1 The Practice of Consuming Tritis among the Muslim Community in Karo Regency

Based on interviews between the researcher and various sources related to the practice of consuming and making tritis in the Muslim community of Karo Regency, the following insights were gathered:

**Traditional Consumption Practice:** Tritis is a liquid squeezed from the stomach of a cow and processed with Karo-specific spices. The Karo Muslim community has long consumed tritis as part of their tradition and traditional medicine.

**Spices and Cooking Techniques:** The process of cooking tritis involves the use of various spices such as *cingkem*, *cinnamon*, *turmeric*, *kincong*, and *cemopokak*. The cooking technique involves heating the tritis liquid along with spices, cassava leaves, and cow's feet, and removing the foam to reduce the strong aroma.

**Influence of MUI Fatwa:** The MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 from North Sumatra Province regarding the prohibition of tritis in the Karo Muslim community has not been fully implemented. Many people still consume tritis due to longstanding traditions and habits.

Similarly, as stated by Kak Dian Sembiring, Ibu Juliani Br Sitepu also mentioned that the practice of consuming tritis in the Karo community is an ingrained tradition and plays an important role in their culture. Tritis, made from cow's stomach squeezed like coconut milk, is often served at various traditional Karo events such as work parties, weddings, funerals, *ngembah belo selambar*, and annual festivals. Tritis is served as a

distinctive side dish, providing a rich and unique flavor to complement the main dishes at these events.

Although tritis is a traditional dish that is favored and considered a part of the Karo cultural identity, there are challenges in implementing the MUI fatwa that prohibits tritis. The low level of religious knowledge and strong ties to tradition make the Karo community likely to continue consuming tritis. However, with the socialization efforts by MUI and community leaders, awareness of the fatwa is gradually increasing.

Overall, the practice of consuming tritis in the Karo community reflects the strong cultural and traditional values. While the transition towards consumption more in line with religious fatwas may take time, the dialogue between tradition and religion is important in ensuring the overall well-being of the community.

### **3.2 Factors Influencing the Muslim Community in Karo Regency to Consume Tritis**

#### **a. Cultural and Traditional Factors:**

Another source, Mr. Datang Surbakti, who is the head of the adat (customary) council, mentioned that the Karo Muslim community still consumes tritis at various traditional events, such as weddings, adat funerals (simate mate), and annual Karo community festivals. Tritis is considered an important part of Karo culture and tradition and is often served as a sign of respect to guests and participants. Despite the existence of MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 regarding the prohibition of tritis, many Karo people still consume it due to cultural and traditional reasons. However, there is a gradual change in the community as they begin to consider the MUI fatwa, indicating increasing awareness about the prohibition of tritis from a religious perspective.

#### **b. Low Religious Literacy:**

Conversations with Mr. Samadin Tarigan, Chairman of MUI Karo Regency, revealed that the Karo Muslim community still faces several obstacles in implementing the MUI Sumut fatwa. Contributing factors include the strong Karo culture and customs that are often prioritized over religious regulations, low religious literacy among Karo Muslims, lack of socialization and education about the MUI fatwa, and economic barriers that compel the community to maintain traditional lifestyles, including in terms of food and drink. MUI Sumut collaborates with local community and religious leaders to enhance public understanding of the MUI fatwa and provides easily understandable educational materials. Mr. Samadin suggests that Karo Muslims actively seek knowledge about religious laws to make more informed decisions.

#### **c. Affordability and Accessibility:**

The community prefers using natural remedies for treating illnesses as they are believed to have more benefits and fewer side effects compared to chemical-based medicines, which are perceived to have more side effects. Additionally, chemical-based medications are expensive, requiring significant expenditure for modern treatments. The importance of traditional Karo medicine is evident in its daily use. Karo people typically keep various types of traditional medicines at home as a precaution for illness. They strongly believe that

traditional medicine can maintain health, boost immunity, and cure various diseases. This sentiment is echoed by Gobang Milala, an expert in making tritis, who mentioned that tritis has been made by his family for generations, and he is the sixth generation in this lineage. Here is a summary of the ingredients and process of making tritis:

**Ingredients:**

- Fresh cow's stomach
- Various spices such as cingkem, cinnamon, turmeric, and kincong
- Cassava leaves
- Cow's feet
- Milk (to reduce the strong aroma)

**Process:**

- a. Select fresh cow's stomach and clean it.
- b. Squeeze the cow's stomach to extract the tritis liquid.
- c. Process the tritis liquid with various spices, including cingkem, cinnamon, turmeric, and kincong, to give it a distinct flavor.
- d. Mix the tritis liquid with cassava leaves and cow's feet.
- e. During cooking, the foam that forms must be removed to avoid a strong aroma.
- f. Add milk to help reduce the strong aroma.
- g. The cooking process usually takes several hours, depending on the quantity made. The longer the cooking process, the better the quality of the tritis.

Additionally, Mr. Gobang mentioned that tritis can treat various ailments such as gastritis, loss of appetite, and stomach pain, making it easily and affordably accessible to the community.

### **3.3 Implementation of MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 and the Halal Product Assurance Law in North Sumatra Province Regarding Tritis in the Karo Muslim Community**

The law regarding halal product guarantees is stipulated in Law No. 33 of 2014. According to Article 17 Paragraph (3) and Article 18 Paragraph (1) of this law, animal-derived materials are generally considered halal, except for those explicitly prohibited under Sharia law, which include carrion, blood, pigs, and animals not slaughtered in accordance with Sharia. Additionally, any other prohibited animal-derived materials are determined by the minister based on MUI fatwas.

Interviews between the researcher and the Chairman of the MUI Regency, Mr. Samadin Tarigan, reveal that implementing MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 and the Halal Product Assurance Law in North Sumatra Province, particularly regarding the prohibition of tritis in the Karo Muslim community, faces several challenges. The primary challenge is the limited religious knowledge among the Karo community, especially regarding Sharia laws related to halal food and drinks. Strong local customs and culture in the Karo region lead the community to uphold traditions, including the consumption of tritis as traditional medicine, despite the issuance of the MUI fatwa and the Halal Product Assurance Law.

The lack of socialization and education about the MUI fatwa further complicates its implementation.

The Regency MUI has attempted to disseminate information through lectures, religious events, and collaboration with local customary and religious leaders; however, reaching rural communities remains a significant hurdle. The Karo Muslim community responds variably to these efforts, with some accepting and beginning to change their habits while others remain hesitant. Significant changes require time and patience. Implementing the MUI fatwa regarding tritis in the Karo Muslim community faces challenges related to religious knowledge, customs, and socialization. Nonetheless, sustained efforts by the Regency MUI to improve socialization and religious education offer hope for better community understanding and adherence to the fatwas, thereby ensuring the maintenance of halal practices and purity of life.

#### **4. Conclusion**

From the description above, this research has reached its conclusion and recommendations. The following are the conclusions and recommendations of the study:

##### **1. Practice of Consuming Tritis in the Muslim Community of Karo Regency**

The practice of consuming tritis in the Muslim community of Karo Regency is related to local customs and culture that have been deeply ingrained. Tritis is often prepared with traditional spices and served in various traditional events such as weddings, community gatherings, and other traditional ceremonies.

##### **2. Factors Influencing the Consumption of Tritis by the Muslim Community of Karo Regency**

The main factor causing the Muslim community of Karo Regency to consume tritis is the strong influence of Karo customs and culture, including the tradition of traditional medicine involving tritis. Lack of religious knowledge and understanding among the community regarding the prohibition of tritis also contributes to this practice.

##### **3. Implementation of MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 in North Sumatra Province Regarding Tritis in the Muslim Community of Karo Regency**

The implementation of MUI Fatwa Number 5 of 2011 and Law Number 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance faces challenges related to low religious knowledge, strong local customs and culture, and insufficient socialization about the fatwa. The community tends to follow tradition and customs rather than religious decrees, even though the MUI has made efforts to increase socialization through lectures and collaboration with community and religious leaders.



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