

# THE ACCULTURATION OF KABA IN RANDAI UDA DAN DARA 2022

*PEMBUDAYAAN MIGRASI KABA DALAM TEATER RANDAI UDA DAN DARA 2022*

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## ABSTRACT

*Randai* is one of the traditional Minangkabau cultures originated from West Sumatra, Indonesia. Characterised by drama, *kaba*, dance, song and silat. Thus, *Randai* refers to Minangkabau custom and cultural heritage. Therefore, *kaba* can be found in the form of stories, songs, rituals, mythologies, and folklores of these communities. Even with the increasing population of the Minangkabau Diaspora, especially in Negeri Sembilan since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, *randai* remains as Minangkabau heritage culture. Hence has adapted some of Malay stories, songs, rituals, mythologies, and folklore of Negeri Sembilan community that has similarities with the story in West Sumatra. The novelty of this paper is to explore the acculturation of *kaba* in *Randai* performance, defined as Minangkabau culture, which researchers have not widely studied. The study of acculturation in *Minangkabau Kaba* has never been published. It is a qualitative approach via content analysis. Rest on the notion of *kaba* which is defined as a story. The research draws on the concept of acculturation of the story of *Uda dan Dara* by Usman Awang in *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022* performance. The result highlights *Uda dan Dara* as *kaba* to a certain extent can be seen as a manifestation of a creative adaptation through the concept of acculturation. Thus, functions as a new set of meaning to *Randai*.

**Keywords:** *Randai; Kaba; acculturation; Uda dan Dara; Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*

## ABSTRAK

Randai adalah salah satu budaya tradisional Minangkabau yang berasal dari Sumatera Barat, Indonesia. Bercirikan drama, kaba, tarian, lagu dan silat. Justeru itu, randai merujuk kepada adat dan warisan budaya Minangkabau. Maka, kaba boleh didapati dalam bentuk cerita, lagu, ritual, mitologi, dan cerita rakyat masyarakat ini. Walaupun dengan pertambahan penduduk diaspora Minangkabau khususnya di Negeri Sembilan sejak awal abad ke-19, Randai kekal sebagai budaya warisan Minangkabau. Melalui migrasi, pembudayaan berlaku melalui proses adaptasi beberapa cerita Melayu, lagu, ritual, mitologi, dan cerita rakyat Negeri Sembilan yang mempunyai persamaan dengan cerita di Sumatera Barat. Fokus kertas kerja ini adalah untuk meneroka pembudayaan kaba dalam persembahan Randai, yang ditakrifkan sebagai budaya Minangkabau, yang belum dikaji secara meluas oleh penyelidik. Kajian pembudayaan kaba randai Minangkabau adalah pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis kandungan. Berpegang pada pengertian kaba yang ditakrifkan sebagai cerita. Kajian ini menggunakan konsep pembudayaan kaba teater Randai melalui cerita *Uda dan Dara* oleh Usman Awang dalam persembahan *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*. Hasilnya *Uda dan Dara* sebagai kaba dilihat sebagai manifestasi adaptasi kreatif melalui konsep pembudayaan migrasi. Oleh itu, berfungsi sebagai satu set makna baru kepada kaba teater Randai Minangkabau.

**Kata kunci:** Randai; Kaba; pembudayaan; Uda dan Dara; Randai Uda dan Dara 2022

## Introduction

*Randai* is acknowledged as a folk theatre of the Minangkabau community. Originated from Minangkabau of West Sumatra. Even with the increasing population of the Minangkabau diaspora, especially in Negeri Sembilan since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, *randai* performance remains as Minangkabau heritage culture. Hence, has adapted some of the story songs, rituals, mythologies, and folklore of Negeri Sembilan Malay community, but to a certain extent, has similarities with the story in West Sumatra. *Randai* remains a culture of immigrants from Minangkabau (West Sumatra) and continues to develop into the Malay population of Malaysia (Indrayuda & Mohd Effendi Samsuddin, 2021, p. 334). Thus, *randai* is considered as a significant custom and cultural heritage of the Minangkabau community as mentioned by Arsih et al. (2019, p. 129):

“*Randai* is one of the arts originating from Minang (West Sumatra). *Randai* is the only traditional art that is done collectively because it is built by elements of drama, *Kaba* (stories), dances, songs and silat”.

(Arsih et al., 2019, p. 219)

This is a qualitative approach study which emphasises on content analysis method. Rest on the notion of *randai* Minangkabau *kaba*. This research draws on the acculturation concept of *Uda dan Dara* by Usman Awang as the content of the story presented in *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022* performance directed by Norzizi Zulkafli. *Kaba* identified as a story, according to Yazen (2017), is a traditional oral literature, which signifies the concept of folklore or folktale. On the same note, Norfrahadi et al. (2022, p. 270), defined *kaba* as “classified folklore passed down from generation to generation which belongs to the community, not individual”. Thus, *kaba* is considered as a traditional oral literature characterised by folklore or folktale which belongs to a certain community. In this paper, *kaba* refer to the Minangkabau community and is defined as *kaba* Minangkabau or the folklore of the Minangkabau. Having said that, *Randai Uda dan Dara* performance, directed by Norzizi Zulkafli, staged in July 2022 by the College of Creative Arts, UiTM upholds the *Uda dan Dara* story by Dato’ Usman Awang, which is not considered as the Minangkabau *kaba*. Hence, the selection of *Uda dan Dara* story contributes to this study research gap. Rests on the notion of acculturation of Minangkabau *kaba*. Thus, this research will explore the process of acculturation of *Uda dan Dara* into the Minangkabau *kaba*.

## Literature Review

### *Randai*

*Randai* is a folk theatre originated from the Minangkabau community of West Sumatra. It is passed down from one generation to another. It is characterised by a story which is termed as *kaba*, dialogue and acting, *dendang* (*gurindam*) and *galombang*. *Randai* shows are done by a circle or called *Garak malingka*. *Malingka* means circular, meaning that all activities are carried out in a circle (Asih et al., 2019, p. 1237). This circle is a symbol that contains philosophical meaning about unity, openness, and integration between humans and the cosmos circle or plot (Forshee in Asih et al., 2019, p. 1237).

For Primadesi (in Indrayuda and Mohd Effendi Samsuddin, 2021), *randai* that serves as a cultural identity to the Minangkabau community, capable of constructing the culture values through *randai* performance characters and characteristics. Hence, *randai* as a concept of mechanism for cultural identity production system, to this extent embodies the characteristic of historical values and local wisdom of the traditional. This element presented through the stories of legends and folklore fabricates in the *randai* performance. Thus, it contributes a significant cultural identity of Minangkabau to others and to the community members.

According to Emovwado in Oyeleke et al. (2017, p. 156), *randai* is a traditional theatre of Minangkabau, West Sumatra. [...] stories are based on Minangkabau legends and folklore. On the same note, Tan (2017, p. 55) mentioned that:

“Randai is a traditional dance and theatrical form of the Minangkabau people. It incorporates dance movements, singing, instrumental music, story and acting. The randai is identified with Minangkabau communities throughout Indonesia and Malaysia”.

(Tan, 2017, p. 55)

*Randai* mentioned by Samad Kechot (in Indrayuda & Mohd Effendi Samsuddin, 2021), the folk theatre in Negeri Sembilan is a form of *randai* performance originating from the Minangkabau of West Sumatra. Thus, *randai* participates in the process of migration along with the migration of its population outside Minangkabau, West Sumatra (Indrayuda & Mohd Effendi Samsuddin, 2021).

Consequently, the diaspora of Minangkabau signified by the people of Minangkabau who immigrated and settled in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, carried and progressed this theatre from West Sumatra to Peninsular Malaysia. That being the case, *randai* as a Minangkabau heritage and culture undergo the process of acculturation through the process of migration. During this process, the concept of adapt and adjust occurred. Accordingly, it fabricates a new set of cultures in these immigrant communities.

### ***Randai's Kaba***

*Kaba* is a general term, defined as a story. Thus, the concept of the story of *kaba* is characterised by folklore or folktale which is passed down through the oral system. *Koba* or *Kaba* refers to folk literature from the past that has become the heritage culture of a presented society. On a similar note, *kaba* refers to an understanding of oral literature in the genre of stories.

‘*Kaba* is a form of literary work that developed in the Minangkabau community through the oral system. *Kaba* contains a lot of philosophy of life, about customs, relationships: advice and issues of social life of the Minangkabau people in general [...]. [...] *Kaba* is classified as folklore passed down from generation to generation which belongs to the community, not individual. The author of *kaba* is generally anonymous, *kaba* serves as entertainment, consolation, some are in the form of epics such as *Kaba Cindua Mato* and *Kaba Anggun Nan Tongga*’.

(Norfrahadi et al., 2021, p. 268-271)

In other words, *kaba* for *randai* or Minangkabau *kaba* rest on folklore that is characterised by folktales rests on myths and legends of Minangkabau which has no author. Djamaris (in Yazan, 2017) divided *kaba* into two categories. The first category is termed as the old *kaba* which refer to oral literature such as *Kaba Cindua Mato*, *Kaba Si Untuang Sudah*, *Kaba Magek Manandin*, *Kaba Malin Deman dengan Puteri Bongsu*, *Kaba Rambun Pameran* and *Kaba Si Umbuik Mudo*. The second category is termed as a new *kaba*, which refer to print literature such as *Kaba Rang Mudo Selendang Dunia*, *Kaba Si Rambun Julua*, *Kaba Siti Fatimah*, *Kaba Karatau Medang di Hulu* and *Kaba Siti Jamilah dengan Tuanku Lareh Simawang*.

The story presented in old *kaba* dan new *kaba* does portray a set of different themes and genres. Junus (in Desmaliza et al., 2013), stated that old *kaba* tells a story of ancient time. The stories presented regards to the power and political struggle of the palace and the princess with supernatural strength. Unlike the new *kaba*, where the stories are presented with regards to the heroic journey of a young man, between the era of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Started as a poor and powerless character

and ended with a happy ending. With his success, gained a rich and happy life. As a conclusion, *randai's kaba* in this paper is defined as Minangkabau *kaba*. Which refers to the story of folktale of Minangkabau. To this extent, *kaba* as a traditional Minangkabau literary work reflects the social and cultural reality of the Minangkabau community.

### **Acculturation**

Acculturation deals with the process of culture change between the migrant and the receiving society. Acculturation is the study of cultural contact and change between the migrant culture system and the culture system of the receiving society. It is the process of cultural shift. Acculturation is an anthropology phenomenon originally defined by anthropologies Redfield (Sam & Ward, in Bender & Adams, 2021, p. 21), acculturation as,

“Those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups”.

(Sam & Ward, in Bender & Adams, 2021, p. 21)

On the similar note, Safdar and colleagues (2013) (in O’Doherty & Hodgetts, 2019) introduced a slightly the same definition of acculturation process but with minor modification to those phenomena which result when groups of individuals with different cultures come into contact, with subsequent changes in the original patterns of either or both groups, or in behavioural or psychological change in individuals from either or both groups. The Social Science Research Council (1954, p. 974) (in Berry, 2017), defined acculturation as:

‘Culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural system. Acculturation change may be the consequence of direct cultural transmission: it may be derived from non-cultural cause such as ecological or demographic modification induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed as with internal adjustments following upon the acceptance of alien traits or patterns: or it may be a reactive adaptation of traditional modes of life’.

(The Social Science Research Council, 1954, p. 974)

With reference to Redfield, the definition embodies both group and individual levels. Thus, at group level, the process fabricates contextual characteristics such as cultural values of the groups. In addition, the Social Science Research Council definition inserted new features, such as the process of changes consequence by indirect circumstances such as “ecological or demographic modification”.

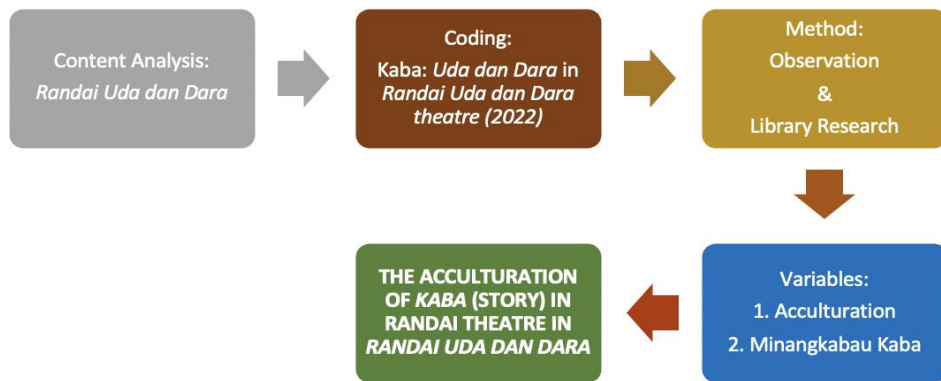
## Methodologies

This research is a qualitative approach study, emphasising on content analysis method. Rests on the notion of *randai* Minangkabau *kaba*. This research draws on the acculturation concept of *Uda dan Dara* by Usman Awang into the notion of Minangkabau *kaba* as the content of story presented in *Randai Uda dan Dara* 2022 performance.

### Figure 1

A Qualitative Approaches – Content Analysis Research Design:

*The Acculturation of Kaba (Story) In Randai Theatre in Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*



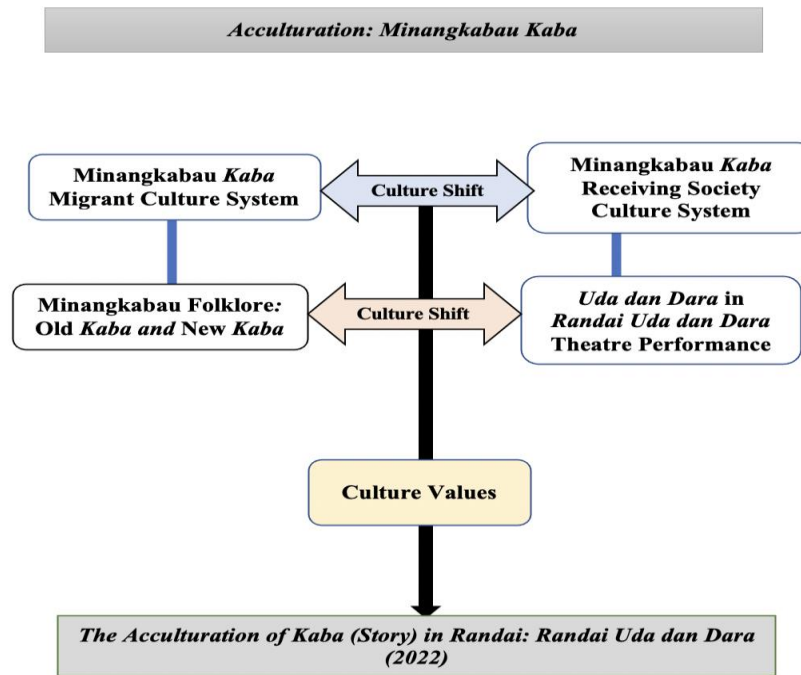
The research code focuses on *kaba* of *Randai Uda dan Dara* theatre performance directed by Norzizi Zulkafli in 2022. Which rests on the story of *Uda dan Dara* by Usman Awang. Through the method of observation of *Randai Uda dan Dara* theatre performance and library research of significant literature reviews such as, *Randai* dan Minangkabau *kaba*, the selected coding will be measured and discussed through two variables. The first variable concerns with the concept of acculturation and the second variable deals with the notion of Minangkabau *kaba*.

## Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework draws on the notion of acculturation which is defined as cultural shift. Deals with the process of cultural change between the migrant and the receiving society. Hence, it is a shift of culture through the process of change between the migrant culture system and the culture system of the receiving society.

### Figure 2

*Theoretical Framework: The Acculturation of Kaba (Story) In Randai Theatre in Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*



As mentioned by Redfield (Sam & Ward, in Michael Bender and Byron G. Adams, 2021: 17), and *The Social Science Research Council* (1954, p. 974) (in Berry, 2017), the concept of acculturation is the process that fabricates contextual characteristics such as cultural values of the groups. Thus, the process of changes consequence by indirect circumstances such as “ecological or demographic modification”. Having said that, this research will only focus on culture shifts with regards to cultural values.

Furthermore, Minangkabau *kaba* refers to the folklore of the Minangkabau. Characterised by Minangkabau folktale rests within the myths and legends from the Minangkabau of West Sumatera. As such, *kaba* as a traditional Minangkabau literary work either the old *kaba* or a new *kaba* reflects the social and cultural reality of the Minangkabau community from the West of Sumatera or the Minangkabau diaspora settled in Malaysia.

Minangkabau *kaba* migrant culture system in this research refers to the heritage and culture of Minangkabau folklore which undergo the process of evolution through the progress of migration, thus referring to the Minangkabau diaspora. Hence, Minangkabau *kaba* of diaspora culture system, develops, circulates, and diffuses within the new environment. Through this process of evolution, a set of Minangkabau *kaba* diasporic then fabricated, but justifies with the original characteristics of Minangkabau *kaba* from the homeland in West Sumatera. The receiving society culture system in this research signifies to the director of *Randai Uda dan Dara* theatre performance in 2022 directed by Norzizi Zulkafli. Through her directing adapted from a theatre play of *Uda dan Dara* written by Usman Awang into *randai’s kaba* notion.

### Synopsis of *Uda dan Dara* in *Randai Uda dan Dara (2022)*

*Uda dan Dara*, a theatre play adapted in *Randai Uda dan Dara* directed by Dr. Norzizi Zulkafli in 2022, is a love story of a young couple from rural Minangkabau village. A tragic love story of a young man from a poor family who is frustrated and angry due to the harsh rejection of his marriage proposal by his lover’s family. The main reason for this rejection is because he comes from a poor family. Thus, his status quo does not qualify him to be the son-in-law of the richest and the most powerful family in that village. Still the family set a condition if he really wants to marry their only daughter. He must

come up with a certain amount of money within a certain period. Viewing this reason, the young man leaves the village to fulfil this term. During his leave, the villagers, and his family were brutally suppressed by his lover’s family and kins. Also, the young man’s lover is forced to marry her cousin, who comes from the same level of status quo - a rich family. The story ends with the death of the young man who comes home during the peak of the suppression struggle and fight between the villagers and the cruel rich family.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1**

*Culture Shift (Acculturation) of Culture Values in Minangkabau Kaba: Between the Migrant Culture System and The Receiving Society Culture.*

Acculturation: Culture Shift	Minangkabau Kaba Migrant Culture System	Minangkabau Kaba Receiving Society Culture System
Concept of Kaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Kaba and New Kaba by an anonymous author.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Uda dan Dara</i> by 1983 Malaysian National Laureate, Dato Usman Awang.</li> <li>• <i>Uda dan Dara</i>, a modern poem published 1954 titled <i>Gadis Kuburan</i>, later adapted as a short story titled <i>Uda dan Dara</i>.</li> </ul>
Culture Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minangkabau folklore characterised by myths and legends.</li> <li>• Defined and characterised by: Minangkabau community culture and wisdom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Uda dan Dara</i> characterised by Malay social political culture.</li> <li>• Defined and characterised by: Author thought - emphasis on the concept of ‘<i>padi kunca</i>’: An oppression practised in rural Malay society.</li> </ul>

### Culture Shift

*Uda dan Dara* upholds the tragic love story which arises from the conflict of different status quo. Adapted from a famous work written by 1983, Malaysian National Laureate, Dato Usman Awang, originated from a poem titled *Gadis Kuburan* (1954). Later adapted by him into the form of a short story entitled *Uda dan Dara*. Then adapted into a stage play. Acculturation of *kaba* in *randai* theatre for this study is defined as a culture shift. Draws on the process of culture change and assimilation between the Minangkabau migrants and the receiving society. Minangkabau migrant refers to the Minangkabau diaspora who embraced Minangkabau’s *randai* performance culture heritage originated from Minangkabau of West Sumatra. Adapted and assimilated stories, songs, rituals, mythologies, and folklores of the Malay community, but to an extent, has similarities with the story in the West Sumatra.

On the other hand, the receiving society is signified by Norzizi Zulkafli, the director of *Randai Uda dan Dara* theatre performance in 2022. Which at this note, the director signified as an outsider to both Minangkabau society, either to the origin of West Sumatra or to the diaspora in Malaysia. Thus, her adaptation of *Uda dan Dara*, written by Usman Awang into the concept of *kaba* in *randai*



performance in 2022, upholds the acculturation process which fabricates a new meaning of *kaba* in *randai* as Minangkabau culture heritage.

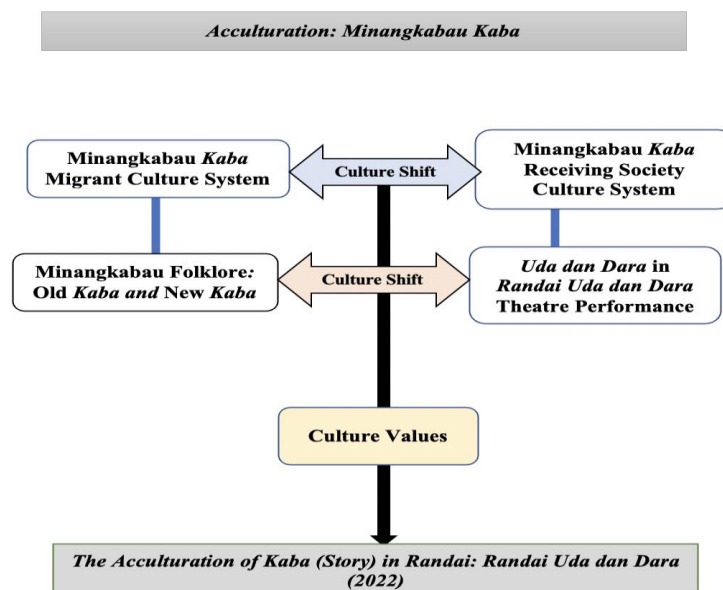
On this note, *Uda dan Dara* by Usman Awang, directed by Norzizi embraced the notion of culture shift from the existing *kaba* practiced or performed in *randai* theatre. To a set of new characteristics of *kaba* found in Minangkabau diaspora heritage culture. On this point, it contradicted the concept and characteristics of *kaba* as folklore characterised by Minangkabau folktale that rests within the myths and legends of these community. Thus, function as a medium of transmitted traditional culture by the Minangkabau diaspora society, among their community and to their future generations. But *Uda dan Dara* in *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*, serves as a new set of *kaba* derived from the process of acculturation or culture shift between Minangkabau migrant and the receiving society upholds by the director. Who comes from the non-community either the origin Minangkabau or Minangkabau diaspora.

### Culture Values

Refers to Figure 2 and Table 1, through the process of acculturation which defines as culture shift between Minangkabau's *kaba* of the migrant or diaspora culture system to Minangkabau's *kaba* of the receiving society culture system signifies by the director of *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*, a certain culture values fabricated.

**Figure 3**

*Theoretical Framework: The Acculturation of Kaba (Story) In Randai Theatre in Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*



***Minangkabau Folklore to Malaysian Malay Oppression in The Rural***

*Kaba* embraced by Minangkabau diaspora centred richly on Minangkabau folktale. Exclusively defines by their myths and legends. Characterised by Minangkabau society culture and wisdom. Having said that, interestingly, *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*, focuses on traditional Malaysian Malay social political culture. Exclusively rest on the concept of “padi kunca”. Uphold the social political culture oppression system of class in Malay village. Practised among the rural Malay society.

**Figure 4**

*Randai Uda dan Dara 2022: The circle or garak Malingka*



*Padi kunca* is a traditional Malay agreement system. Refers to the concept of money lending between the poor who signifies the farmers and the rich, or between the villagers and the shopkeepers. In this studies, *padi kunca* system refers to, between the poor who signifies the farmers and the rich. Accordingly, this new set of *kaba* refers clearly to the Malaysian Malay local wisdom and culture.

**Figure 5:**

*Randai Uda dan Dara 2022: The circle or garak malingka*



Even so, *Uda dan Dara* which serves as the notion of *kaba* in this *randai* theatre performance, validates Minangkabau culture through other *randai* characteristics. Such as the circle or *garak malingka*, *galombang*, rhythm patterns of *randai* music, songs or *dendang* and Minangkabau traditional costume.

**Figure 6**

*Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*



Validates Minangkabau culture through other *randai* characteristics: The circle formation or *garak malingka* and Minangkabau traditional costume.

**Figure 7**

*Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*: Singers and musicians performed songs or *dendang*.



Consequently, the assimilation process occurs during the process of acculturation in *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*, fashioned a new set and meaning of *kaba* in *randai* theatre performance as Minangkabau culture and heritage. Given to this characteristic and discussion, this new set of culture values of *kaba* sits neither as old *kaba* (original from West Sumatra), nor it fits the new *kaba* define through the existing research.

**Figure 8**

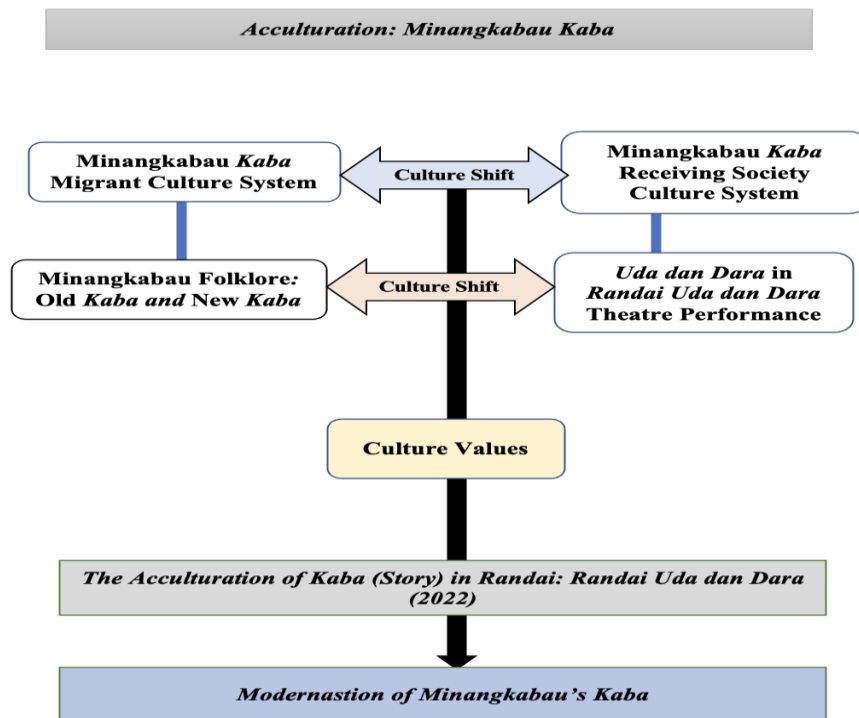
*Randai Uda dan Dara 2022: The outlook and formation of randai theatre performance.*



Interestingly, the acculturation defines by the process of culture shifts in this discussion, contributes to a concept modernisation of randai's *kaba*. Which refers to culture shift and assimilation of *Uda dan Dara* written by Usman Awang as 'modern' *kaba* in the traditional *randai* theatre performance, which signifies as Minangkabau culture and heritage.

**Figure 9**

Finding: *The Acculturation of Kaba (Story) In Randai Theatre in Randai Uda dan Dara 2022*



## Conclusion

Minangkabau *kaba* acculturation through the process of culture shift between the Minangkabau migrant or diaspora culture system, and the receiving society in *Randai Uda dan Dara* theatre performance 2022, signifies a process of assimilation that contributes to a concept of modernisation of *randai*. Having said that, *Randai Uda dan Dara 2022* still validates as Minangkabau traditional culture and heritage as a whole and completed notion of *randai* theatre performance. Through it significant and distinguish attributes, such as *galombang*, rhythm patterns, *randai* music, songs or *dendang* and costume.

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