

## From Counsel to the Aisle: The Practice of *Markobar* within the Framework of 'Urf and the Ideal Concept of Marriage in Mandailing

Halum Musthafa<sup>1</sup>, Zainal Azwar<sup>2</sup>, Azizah Mardiyah<sup>3</sup>, Marzuki Hafiz Alhamdani Hasibuan<sup>4</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Pengembangan Ilmu Al-Qur'an Sumbar, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Al-Ahghaff University Hadramaut Yaman

\*Corresponding Author: [nasutionhm81@gmail.com](mailto:nasutionhm81@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the *markobar* tradition in *walimatul 'ursy* (wedding banquet) ceremonies within the Mandailing community, as well as to analyze this practice from the perspective of Islamic law ('urf) and its contribution to the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* (tranquil, loving, and compassionate) family. The *markobar* tradition is an oral cultural heritage rich in local, religious, and moral values passed down through generations. The main focus of this research is to understand how *markobar* is practiced, to analyze the cultural and religious values it contains, and to explore the role this tradition plays in supporting the formation of a harmonious and loving Islamic family in accordance with Islamic law. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews and documentation of Mandailing customary literature and Islamic legal references. The data were analyzed using a content analysis approach to identify key themes related to the implementation of *markobar* and the foundations of 'urf that support it. The findings show that *markobar* falls under the category of 'urf *ṣaḥīḥ*, which refers to community customs that do not contradict Islamic principles. This tradition plays a significant role in imparting

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marital advice and strengthening the value of togetherness within the household, thereby contributing to the formation of a *samawa* (sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah) family. The study recommends reinforcing the preservation of the *markobar* tradition as part of the harmonization between local culture and Islamic law and encourages greater involvement of the younger generation in sustaining traditions that support the development of sustainable Islamic families.

**Keywords:** Markobar Tradition; Wedding Banquet or Marriage Feast; ‘Urf in Islamic Law; A Tranquil Loving and Compassionate Family; Cultural and Religious Values

**Abstract:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tradisi markobar dalam acara walimatul ‘ursy pada komunitas Mandailing, serta menelaah praktik tersebut dari perspektif hukum Islam (‘urf) dan kontribusinya dalam pembentukan keluarga sakinah mawaddah warahmah. Tradisi markobar merupakan warisan budaya lisan yang sarat dengan nilai-nilai lokal, religius, dan moral yang diwariskan secara turun-temurun. Fokus utama penelitian ini adalah memahami bagaimana markobar dijalankan, menelaah nilai budaya dan keagamaan yang terkandung di dalamnya, serta mengeksplorasi peran tradisi ini dalam mendukung pembentukan keluarga Islami yang harmonis dan penuh kasih sayang sesuai syariat Islam. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam serta dokumentasi terhadap literatur adat Mandailing dan referensi hukum Islam. Data dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan analisis isi untuk mengidentifikasi tema-tema utama terkait pelaksanaan markobar dan dasar-dasar ‘urf yang mendukungnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa markobar termasuk dalam kategori ‘urf sah, yaitu kebiasaan masyarakat yang tidak bertentangan dengan syariat Islam. Tradisi ini memainkan peran penting dalam menanamkan nasihat pernikahan dan memperkuat nilai kebersamaan dalam rumah tangga sehingga terbentuknya keluarga samawa. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan pelestarian tradisi markobar sebagai bagian dari harmonisasi antara budaya lokal dan hukum Islam, serta mendorong keterlibatan generasi muda dalam mempertahankan tradisi yang mendukung terbentuknya keluarga Islami yang berkelanjutan

**Keywords:** Tradisi Markobar; Walimatul ‘Ursy; ‘Urf Dalam Hukum Islam; Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah; Nilai Budaya dan Religius

## Introduction

Islam encourages the formation of the family as a sacred social and spiritual institution. It calls upon humanity to live within the framework of family life, as the family represents a microcosm of a stable existence and serves to fulfill

the innate human needs and desires. In Islam, the family is a place where divine and human values grow, aligning with the ultimate goal of establishing a household based on Islamic principles namely, *sakinah* (tranquility and peace)<sup>1</sup>, *Mawaddah* (affection) and *rahmah* (compassion). When these three concepts are achieved, a harmonious and happy household based on Allah's sharia will be more easily attained<sup>2</sup>. The concept of *sakinah* entails inner peace and tranquility within family life. This state can be achieved when a husband and wife diligently follow Allah's commandments, respect one another, and practice mutual tolerance. *Mawaddah* derives from the root word *wadda* (وَدَّ), which signifies deep love expressed through tangible actions a true and enduring love that lasts a lifetime<sup>3</sup>. Meanwhile, *rahmah* encompasses the meaning of mercy and compassion, which drives an individual to make sacrifices for their spouse, fosters a sense of security, and encourages the avoidance of anything that may harm the marital relationship. This aligns closely with the concept of family resilience<sup>4</sup>. These three elements represent noble goals in building a household and are in harmony with the spiritual values of Islam.

The paradigm of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* (samawa) family is not only normative within Islamic teachings but also has a legal foundation in national law. In Indonesia, there are two officially recognized family law systems. The first is Law Number 1 of 1974 on Marriage, which applies to all Indonesian citizens. The second is the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi

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<sup>1</sup> Nur Lailatul Musyafaah et al., "Tetap Sakinah Di Tengah Pandemi: Usaha Korban Pemutusan Hubungan Kerja Di Dusun Rejodadi Desa Campurejo Kecamatan Panceng Kabupaten Gresik," *AlAhwal: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 14, no. 1 (2021): 40-56, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2021.14104>.

<sup>2</sup> Diflizar and Kaliandra Saputra Pulungan, "Pandangan Suku Mandailing Terhadap Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah Menurut Prespektif Hukum Keluarga Di Desa Pematang Tebih Kecamatan Ujung Batu Rokan Hulu," *Jurnal Hukumah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 144-63.

<sup>3</sup> Masri, "Konsep Keluarga Harmonis Dalam Bingkai Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah," *Jurnal Tahqiq: Jurnal Ilmiah Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 18, no. 1 (2024): 109-23, <https://doi.org/10.61393/tahqiq.v18i1.219>.

<sup>4</sup> Tiara Rismayanti, Danu Aris Setiyanto, and Muhammad Auzai, "Long-Distance Relationship Family Resilience Strategy and Its Relevance to the Development of Islamic Family Law in Indonesia," *JIL: Journal of Islamic Law* 3, no. 2 (2022): 132-58, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v3i2.842>.

Hukum Islam or KHI) of 1991, which specifically governs family law matters for Muslims<sup>5</sup>. All aspects related to marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance are legally regulated to ensure that families receive protection in accordance with the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law), which include the preservation of life, intellect, religion, lineage, and property<sup>6</sup>. As Muslims, maintaining harmony within the family is of great importance. Ideally, the household should be a place that fosters peace and tranquility, while also serving as a space to resolve various issues. Therefore, both husband and wife must fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities to realize a harmonious family life. This aligns with the provisions of the Indonesian Marriage Law Number 1 of 1974, Article 30, which emphasizes that both husband and wife share the obligation to preserve the household as the foundation of social life<sup>7</sup>.

Urf is an important component of Islamic law, referring to the customary practices of a community that are widely accepted and not in conflict with the principles of sharia. From the perspective of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, 'urf is considered a secondary source of law that can serve as a legal basis in the absence of explicit evidence from the Qur'an or Hadith. This theory emphasizes that beneficial customs which do not contradict scriptural texts (*naṣṣ*) may be used as legal references, particularly in matters of *mu'āmalah* (social transactions) and communal affairs, as affirmed in the legal maxim: *al-'ādah muḥakkamah* (custom is authoritative in law)<sup>8</sup>. Thus, 'urf reflects the flexibility of Islamic law,

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<sup>5</sup> Alfritri, "Protecting Women from Domestic Violence: Islam, Family Law, and the State in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal For Islamic Studies* 27, no. 2 (2020): 273–304, <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v27i2.9408>.

<sup>6</sup> Sifa Mulya Nurani and M.Muhsin, "Paradigma Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Wa Rahmah Dan Relasinya Dengan Tingkat Perceraian Serta Pertumbuhan Penduduk Di Indonesia," *Legitima: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 4, no. 1 (2021): 14–31, <https://doi.org/10.33367/legitima.v4i1.1860>.

<sup>7</sup> Asman, "Dampak Negatif Judi Online Terhadap Keharmonisan Rumah Tangga Perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam," *Ahlika: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 1, no. 1 (2024): 11–35.

<sup>8</sup> Fauzi, "'Urf and Its Role in The Development of Fiqh: Comparative Study of Family Law Between Egypt and Indonesia," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 7, no. 1 (2024): 346–71, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v7i1.23968>.

indicating that legal rulings may adapt over time and across different contexts, as long as they remain guided by the same textual foundations<sup>9</sup>.

The Mandailing ethnic group adheres to a social system and structure inherited from their ancestors. The Mandailing social structure is based on a patrilineal lineage system, which consists of three main elements known as *dalihan na tolu*<sup>10</sup>. In the context of local culture, the Mandailing ethnic group possesses a rich heritage of traditions passed down through generations, one of which is *markobar*. This tradition is practiced during both joyful and sorrowful occasions; however, this study specifically focuses on its role in *walimat al-‘urs* (wedding ceremonies), particularly in the practices of *mangalehen mangan* and *ajar poda*. *Markobar* refers to formal speeches delivered during Mandailing customary ceremonies, including weddings, conducted in turns by the involved parties. These speeches contain advice for the bride and groom, as well as reflections on cultural values rich in social and spiritual meaning<sup>11</sup>. As a cultural practice, *markobar* falls under the category of *‘urf* (custom or tradition), which in Islam is classified into several types based on its subject matter, scope, and legal validity<sup>12</sup>. Tradition is often defined as a framework of customary practices shaped by social facts that develop within a particular community group<sup>13</sup>.

The social fact underlying this study is that although the tradition of *markobar* is deeply embedded in the lives of the Mandailing people, who are predominantly Muslim, there is still a lack of in-depth research on the

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<sup>9</sup> Ali Abubakar, “The Chance on Islamic Family Law Study in Indonesia,” *Petita: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Syariah* 4, no. 1 (2019): 93–106, <https://doi.org/10.22373/petita.v4i1.13>.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Mukri Aji et al., “Weakening Tradition: The Shifting in Same-Clan Marriage Prohibition in Mandailing Batak,” *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 2 (2021): 379–94, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v21i2.23729>.

<sup>11</sup> Laila Hadri Nasution and Araf Aliwijaya, “Strategi Preservasi Digital Tradisi Lisan Makkobar Dalam Upacara Perkawinan Adat Mandailing (Studi Kasus Di Kota Padangsidempuan),” *Forum Perpustakaan Digital Indonesia*, no. c (2023)

<sup>12</sup> Nurmu’izzatin Zaharatul Parhi and Muh Rizwan Azzahidi, “Pendekatan ‘Urf Dalam Studi Islam (Adat Nyongkolan Pada Suku Sasak Dalam Studi Islam),” *Manazhim: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 4, no. 2 (2022): 517–31.

<sup>13</sup> Ah Fajruddin Fatwa and Marliyah, “When Rules And Tradition Collide A Human Rights Perspective on Legal Policy Denial on Islamic Javanese Marriage Ethnomathematical Norms,” *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 18, no. 2 (2024): 579–606, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2024.18.2.579-606>.

integration of this tradition with the concept of *'urf*, particularly in examining its influence on the formation of an Islamic family. This research is crucial because *markobar*, as part of Mandailing tradition practiced by a predominantly Muslim population, needs to be reexamined through the lens of Islamic law—specifically through the *'urf* approach and its role in fostering a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* family.

Previous studies have shown that oral traditions such as *Markobar* contain noble values that contribute to character education for the younger generation. As noted by Yunarni Siregar et al. (2021), *Markobar* encompasses religious, social, and moral values that can be integrated into local wisdom-based learning, although interest in the tradition has been declining<sup>14</sup>. Dedisyah Putra (2020) asserts that *Markobar* is not merely a means of conveying customary practices but also reflects the *Dalihan Na Tolu* social system and the values of family resilience, although it needs to be aligned with the principles of Islamic teachings<sup>15</sup>. The study by Mawaddah et al. (2021) highlights the role of the family as a fundamental institution in instilling the values of *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*, with the support of BP4 (Advisory Board for Marriage Preservation) in guiding prospective spouses, reflecting a synergy between religion and culture<sup>16</sup>. Aisyah Kartini and Zainal Azwar (2022) refers to *Mangan Maradat* as a *ṣaḥīḥ* *'urf* (legitimate custom) that embodies beneficial values, as it serves to convey marital advice in accordance with Islamic principles<sup>17</sup>. Meanwhile, Laila Hadri Nasution and Araf Aliwijaya (2023) emphasize the importance of

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<sup>14</sup> Yunarni Siregar, Novi Anoegrajekti, and Siti Gomo Attas, "Markobar Oral Tradition as Local Wisdom of the Mandailing Community," in *International Conference Of Nusantara Cultural Studies: Nusantara Manuscripts As a Humanities Documents* (Surakarta: Department Of Cultural Studies Postgraduated Program Sebelas Maret University, 2021), 192–98.

<sup>15</sup> Dedisyah Putra, "Tradisi Markobar Dalam Pernikahan Adat Mandailing Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam," *El-Ahli: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 1, no. 2 (2020): 18–34, <https://doi.org/10.56874/el-ahli.v1i2.311>.

<sup>16</sup> Sholahuddin Ashani, Mawaddah, Maraimbang, "Peranan Badan Penasihat Pembinaan Dan Pelestarian Perkawinan (BP4) Dalam Membentuk Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah Pada Masyarakat Kecamatan Panyabungan Selatan," *Cybernetics: Journal Educational Research and Social Studies* 2, no. 4 (2021): 54–65, <https://doi.org/10.51178/cjers.v2i4.309>.

<sup>17</sup> Aisyah Kartini and Zainal Azwar, "Tradisi Mangan Maradat Dalam Acara Walimatul 'Ursy Perspektif 'Urf: Studi Kasus Di Pasaman Barat," *Sangaji: Jurnal Pemikiran Syariah Dan Hukum* 8, no. 1 (2024): 123–36, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52266/sangaji.v8i1.2916>.

*Makkobar* as a sacred and educational element in Mandailing traditional wedding ceremonies, which can now be preserved through digital strategies for cultural preservation<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, the study by Khairul Fahmi Harahap et al. (2021) on *weton* in Javanese tradition reveals differing community perspectives regarding the relevance of customary practices in the context of Islam. *Weton* is considered a *ṣaḥīḥ* *ʿurf* (valid custom) as long as it does not contain elements of *shirk* (polytheism), but it becomes a *fāsid* *ʿurf* (invalid custom) if it is believed to ward off misfortune<sup>19</sup>. Overall, these studies demonstrate that oral traditions and local customs still hold an important place in shaping the character and socio-religious values of society, as long as they are contextually integrated with Islamic teachings and the needs of the times.

The research gap in previous studies presents an opportunity to reexamine the *markobar* tradition within the framework of Islamic law, in order to understand how this tradition can support the formation of a harmonious Islamic family. A qualitative approach is employed to explore the meaning and cultural context of *markobar* and its relationship to the development of a *samawa* (*sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*) family. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap and provide a comprehensive analysis of how *markobar*, as a form of *ʿurf*, can contribute to the establishment of a harmonious Islamic household.

This study aims to examine the implementation process of the *markobar* tradition in *walīmat al-ʿurs* ceremonies, to review this practice from the perspective of *ʿurf*, and to analyze its role in the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* family. The central hypothesis or main argument to be tested is that *markobar* is a form of *ṣaḥīḥ* *ʿurf* (legitimate custom) that carries positive values for the establishment of an Islamic household, as long as it does not contradict Islamic law. Accordingly, this paper focuses on the integration

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<sup>18</sup> Laila Hadri Nasution and Araf Aliwijaya, "Strategi Preservasi Digital Tradisi Lisan Makkobar Dalam Upacara Perkawinan Adat Mandailing (Studi Kasus Di Kota Padangsidimpuan)," *Forum Perpustakaan Digital Indonesia*, no. c (2023)

<sup>19</sup> Khairul Fahmi Harahap, Amar Adly, and Watni Marpaung, "Perhitungan Weton Sebagai Penentu Hari Pernikahan Dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Jawa Kabupaten Deli Serdang: Ditinjau Dalam Perspektif 'Urf Dan Sosiologi Hukum," *Al-Mashlahah: Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 9, no. 02 (2021): 293–318, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30868/am.v9i02.1597>.

of valid local culture with Islamic values in shaping a stable and harmonious family, while also contributing to the strengthening of religious and contextually relevant local values. The research questions addressed in this study are: How is the *markobar* tradition carried out?, What is the role of the *markobar* tradition in the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* family? And How is the *markobar* tradition viewed from the perspective of *'urf*?

The research method employed in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, aimed at exploring the meaning and cultural context of the *markobar* tradition within *walīmat al-'urs* ceremonies and its relationship to the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* (samawa) family from the perspective of Islamic law. The study was conducted within the Mandailing ethnic community that practices the *markobar* tradition. The research subjects included traditional figures such as members of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, customary leaders (*Hatobangon*), the bride and groom's families, and community members involved in the execution of the tradition.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using content analysis with an inductive approach to identify key themes related to the implementation of the tradition, the values of *'urf*, and their role in the formation of a harmonious Islamic family. To ensure data validity, the study applied data source triangulation and theoretical triangulation, as well as member checking with key informants to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. Additionally, the research adhered to ethical standards by maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities, obtaining prior consent for data collection, and respecting the customs and values of the Mandailing community. Through this methodology, the study aims to provide a deep and comprehensive understanding of the *markobar* tradition from the perspective of Islamic law and its contribution to the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* family

### **The Implementation Process of Markobar**

Traditions that live within a community reflect the cultural capacity of society to preserve its ideal values, even amidst rapid changes. The resilience of local traditions is also evident in their ability to adapt, even when faced with global

pressures<sup>20</sup>. The existence of oral tradition in the *markobar* customary ceremony is supported by the rapid development of oral discourse as a means of communication, leading to structured and orderly interactions within the context of traditional language use. This aligns with Sibarani's (2012) view, as cited in Sandi (2023), that the accepted development of oral traditions represents one of the cultural strengths that drives and underpins the sustainability of customary oral practices<sup>21</sup>.

Markobar can be carried out in various traditional ceremonies of the Mandailing tribe. The implementation of Markobar itself is taken care of by Dalian na Tolu. Through them the event implementation scheme is organized and executed. Therefore, in every implementation of Mandailing tribal traditional ceremonies including Markobar, the concept of Dalian na Tolu should be understood first. After that, only the implementation of Markobar is carried out. The first is *suhut* whose function is to express the main problem that will be carried out in the event. Second, *kahanggi* whose function is to provide reinforcement for the intentions and desires of the *suhut*. Third, *anak boru* whose function is to provide full support for the *suhut*'s request. Fourth, *Mora* whose function is to give permission and joy for the *suhut*'s request. Fifth, *Hatobangon* whose function is to emphasize and clarify the *suhut*'s request and provide a review of the *mora*'s answer. Sixth, to summarize, approve and revise the customary density hearing. Seventh, *Harajaon* whose function is to summarize and promulgate the decision of the customary density meeting. These positions will play their roles when the Markobar traditional ceremony is held. One thing to note is that Dalian na Tolu has a permanent and sustainable role. However, the people who become Dalian na Tolu may change<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> M. Tahir Maloko et al., "Sompa Tanah in Makassar Bugis Customary Marriages: Legal, Religious, and Cultural Perspectives," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 12, no. 3 (2024): 1213–36, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v12i3.1309>.

<sup>21</sup> Deka Maita Sandi and Sanira Harahap, "Tradisi Lisan Masyarakat Angkola Dalam Upacara Adat Markobar Pabagas Boru Di Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan," *Jurnal Tarombo Pendidikan Sejarah IPTS* 4, no. 2 (2023): 1–5.

<sup>22</sup> Nuriza Dora et al., "Tradisi Markobar Sebagai Identitas Dan Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Batak Mandailing," *Tips: Jurnal Riset, Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Sosial* 2, no. 2 (2024): 110–21.

In a marriage according to Mandailing custom, which adheres to the patriarchal system, paternity in the form of *nasab* refers to the relationship between father and son<sup>23</sup>. A girl who is about to enter the stage of marriage means she will leave her family and transition to the family of her future husband. Therefore, before the bride departs, her parents and relatives gather to share a meal with her, known as *mangan pamunan* (farewell meal), also referred to as *mambutongi mangan*<sup>24</sup>. At the beginning of this meal-giving ceremony, the bride-to-be invites her childhood friends to join in the meal together. As a farewell meal, it is not only meant to signify a physical separation but also marks her transition from girlhood and full dependence on her family to the beginning of building her own household<sup>25</sup>.

In accordance with the times, this mangalehen mangan event is not only attended by family but also includes elements of *dalihan na tolu* and *harajaon* similar to what is served at *pangupa*. It's just that usually the food served is goat, chicken or fish that has been cooked perfectly, the head, liver and a pair of legs, the top must still be visible in shape which is placed on a *tampi* covered with the tip of a banana leaf, complete with rice, eggs, shrimp, fish, yam (cassava) leaves and salt, so the mangalehen mangan ceremony is almost the same as *mangupa*. The difference between this mangalehen mangan ceremony and the *mangupa* ceremony is that the food served must be completely eaten until full. That is why the mangalehen mangan ceremony is also called *mambutongi mangan* which means eating as full as possible. It is an honor for those who are fed that happily all *dalihan na tolu* and *harajaon* relatives participate in giving their blessing for their departure for marriage. In the mangalehen mangan ceremony in addition to praying for safety, the most emphasized is the advice

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<sup>23</sup> Zainal Azwar et al., "Child Filiation and Its Implications on Maintenance and Inheritance Rights: A Comparative Study of Regulations and Judicial Practices in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Turkey," *JIL: Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (2024): 62-85, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v5i1.2326>.

<sup>24</sup> Lisca Anggina Nst and Irwan, "Tradisi Mangompa Manuk Dalam Pesta Adat Pernikahan Masyarakat Mandailing Natal Perspektif Urf," *UNES Law Review* 6, no. 1 (2023): 3133-46.

<sup>25</sup> Susi Novi Handayani Hasibuan, Elly Prihasti Wuriyani, and Rosmawaty Harahap, "Tradisi Lisan Adat Mandailing Kajian Semiotik Makkobar," *Journal of Educational and Language Research* 8721, no. 1986 (2022): 1477-86.

and knowledge of how she must run her household ark, how she must uphold the dignity of her family, parents and relatives, as well as to maintain the dignity of her husband's parents and relatives and continue to pray and fear Allah SWT<sup>26</sup>.

In detail, the main points of advice conveyed to the bride during the mangalehen mangan event are first, leaving parents, meeting the husband's parents must be treated equally. Secondly, if her behavior is not good then the whole family is ashamed. Tubu unte tubu dohot durina If someone is born in a good environment, they must show a good attitude. Third, learn the customs (manners) of the husband's family to be clever in taking the hearts of the in-laws and the husband's family<sup>27</sup>. *Pantun hangoluan* (a rhyme about life), *teas hamatean* (arrogance leads to death), "*mata guru*" (the eyes as teachers), "*roha siseon*" (the conscience as guidance): if one knows how to carry themselves wisely, they will be safe; but if driven by bad intentions, their safety will be in danger. What is seen can serve as an example whether it is good or bad depends on the conscience.

Fourth, as husband and wife, you must be of one mind and heart. *Sapangambe sapanali* (one swing of the hand, one line of sight), *songon siala sampagul* (like a sampagul cart), *rap tu ginjang rap tu toru* (together when rising, together when falling), *pala malamun saulak lalu* (if ripe, it only takes one pass). Fifth, *marbada ulang margotos* (quarrel without harboring grudges), *martangkang ulang marsigasaan* (argue without hurting), *bada mangoban rosu* (quarrels bring closeness), *ulang mangalangkahi bondul na opat* (never cross the four boundaries), *panggantung parapi ulang magotap* (do not let the hearth hanger break). The meaning of these pieces of advice is that conflicts within a household should not be heard outside and should not last long to the point of separation. Husband and wife must reflect on themselves. Quarreling is normal, but it

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<sup>26</sup> Sulaiman Sihombing and Zulhamri, "Adat Markobar Dalam Psikologi Pranikah Sulaiman," *Lentera Ilmu: Jurnal Kependidikan, Riset Dan Teoritis* 1, no. 2 (2024): 18–30.

<sup>27</sup> Rizka Indah Fadhila Harahap and Hasnun Jauhari Ritonga, "Nilai-Nilai Markobar Dalam Pernikahan Adat Mandailing Dan Keterkaitannya Dengan Bimbingan Konseling Islami," *Ganaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora* 7, no. 2 (2024): 224–36, <https://doi.org/10.37329/ganaya.v7i2.3202>.

should lead to greater closeness. Moreover, husband and wife must not violate the *patik* (highest source of law), *uhum* (rules of law enforcement), *ugari* (additional customary rules), and *hapantunon* (manners and etiquette)

Sixth, *Bahat isabur sabi anso bahat salongon* (sow many seeds so that you may harvest abundantly). This means: do as much good as possible in order to receive many rewards in return. Seventh, life will eventually end in death; therefore, do not forget to observe the Five Pillars of Islam and other Islamic teachings. Eighth, *Nada tola marandang sere, angkon marandang jolma do. Ulang bile roha dihalak na pogos, halak na pogos pe adong do gunana* (do not build a golden fence, build a fence of people. Do not look down upon the powerless even they have their worth). This means: do not judge people based on wealth, but look at their character. Even the poor have value in certain situations. Help is not only material it can also be in the form of non-material support or assistance through effort. Ninth, *Pantis marhula dongan, pala marlomo-lomo, malo martinara* (be friendly, loving, and caring but also frugal). *Ulang bele-bele markatimbang lupa mangusa* (don't get too carried away with leisure and extravagance, forgetting tomorrow). One must remember the future of their family and children. These pieces of advice were given by all the speakers, consisting of the mother, maternal grandmother, father, paternal grandfather, *kahanggi* (clan relatives), *anak boru* (wife-givers), *mora* (wife-takers), and concluded by the *raja* (village elder/chief). In delivering advice, it is forbidden to repeat what has already been said by others.

After the *Mangan Panomuan* (shared meal), the next event is *Pabuat Boru* and other customary ceremonies, continuing up to the next *Markobar* session, which is the *Ajar Poda* ceremony. *Ajar Poda* is the event where advice is given to the newlywed couple. This ceremony takes place after the *Mangupa* ritual. The *Ajar Poda* is delivered by the *Hatobangon* (customary elder or traditional leader). The common phrases or expressions used during *Ajar Poda* are as follows<sup>28</sup>: *Santabi sapulu tu sude koum sisolkot di barisan ni Dalihan Na Tolu muloi ti ngon kahanggi, anak boru satorusna tu barisan ni harajaon na juguk di pantar paradaton on. Marsyukur hita tu tuhan ta na gumorga langit na tumompa tano na dung mangalehen*

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<sup>28</sup> Interview, Rudianto Lubis as a Traditional Leader in Mandailing Natal, February 10, 2025

*kesempatan dohot hatorkisan dihita sude marlugut hita dison di bagas ni siriaon.* (Excuse me to all the close relatives in the *dalihan na tolu* as well as to the *kahanggi*, *anak boru* and so on to the line of kings sitting on the floor of this assembly. We are grateful to the God who created the sky and occupied the land who has given us all the opportunity and health so that we can gather in this traditional marriage house).

The time has come to offer words of advice, or *ajar poda*, to our beloved *Pardomuan* and *Rumondang Bulan*. Therefore, these words are specifically addressed to the two of them. The structure of Mandailing customary law is based on the concept of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, which means the existence of three societal groups that hold important roles and serve as the pillars of traditional society. These groups consist of the *kahanggi* (clan relatives), *anak boru* (wife-givers), and *mora* (wife-takers). The roles of these groups are interchangeable, depending on the context and situation, and must always be in harmony, balance, and mutual respect. At one time, a person may take the role of *mora*, but in another circumstance, they may take the role of *anak boru*. This is why Mandailing people are known for their adaptability when needed. These three groups form a system that is interconnected, interdependent, and mutually supportive. The mechanism guiding this relationship is: “*sangap marmora*” (honoring the *mora*), “*rosu markahanggi*” (affection with *kahanggi*), and “*laok maranak boru*” (loving the *anak boru*). The *mora* is the group held in the highest esteem. In the traditional language, it is said: “*dijujung do ituanna, didegedege tilakona*” meaning their virtues are uplifted, while their flaws are stepped over (ignored or forgiven).

On the other hand, along with their right to be respected, one must also show affection to the *anak boru*. While the *anak boru* may be given tasks, instructions must be delivered with *laok* that is, with gentle and courteous language. If spoken to harshly, they may resist. Toward the *kahanggi*, one must also be tactful and wise. Some even refer to the *kahanggi* as *dongan marbada* (friends who can also be rivals in conflict), so careful consideration is needed when dealing with them. All three elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* are present here today, united by *holong dohot domu* a love and warmth that comes from

the depths of the heart. This bond is what unites us in the kinship system of Dalihan Na Tolu. You, our dear children, have undergone the *upa* ceremony so that the soul may be closely tied to the body. The purpose of this *pangupa* ritual is to strengthen the *tondi* (soul/spirit). *Horas tondi madingin, pir tondi matogu* may your soul be at peace, may it be strengthened. May God guide you toward a long and fulfilling life. Our hope is that you become people of blessing, honor, and dignity.

The *pangupa* is a form of reading, yet it is not an ordinary reading; it is a sacred text known as *Surat Tumbaga Holing na Sora Sasa* a life-guiding scripture that can never be erased. In customary terms, a 'surat' (letter or text) refers to the reading of a schoolchild, whereas the *Surat Tumbaga Holing* is the reading of one with a noble soul. What is inscribed in a virtuous heart can only be understood by those who themselves possess noble character. Always remember the wisdom conveyed by the *datu* in the *pangupa* ceremony.

After explaining the legal structure, the discussion proceeds to the interpretation of the ceremonial meaning that was embodied during the wedding event. This is followed by the delivery of advice, the content of which includes the following: First, strive to do good deeds frequently, as this will lead to better outcomes in the future; cultivate the ability to interact wisely within society. Second, in times of hardship or misfortune, one is obligated to be present; however, for festive occasions, attendance is not required unless formally invited, although one should still offer prayers and well wishes. Third, uphold manners, compassion, mutual respect, and continue to practice religious and customary obligations so that family life does not become a source of misfortune. Fourth, avoid materialism; mutual respect must prevail, whether toward the wealthy or the poor, as all human beings are interdependent. Fifth, maintain active social engagement with the community, for everyone especially the newlyweds is regarded as individuals of dignity and honor. Remain united so that any arising issue may be resolved swiftly and harmoniously. Sixth, remain vigilant, as marriage is a life challenge that must be faced with constant awareness. One must be prepared to endure trials, praise, and temptation, as well as be steadfast in the face of criticism, insults, or even threats that may arise.

Seventh, always have the courage to uphold the truth, regardless of the consequences.

### **The Role of the Markobar Tradition in Shaping a Harmonious, Loving, and Compassionate Family (Sakinah, Mawaddah, and Warahmah)**

A marriage founded on love (*mawaddah*) and compassion (*rahmah*) between husband and wife has the potential to give rise to a *sakinah* (serene and peaceful) family. The establishment of such a family does not solely depend on the husband's role, but also on the quality of his righteous character. Likewise, the presence of a pious and virtuous wife plays a vital role in ensuring that this noble objective of household life can be fully realized<sup>29</sup>. Harmony within a *sakinah* family is closely linked to the presence of *rahmah*, or compassion, that exists between the husband, wife, and children. In Islamic teachings, compassion is not synonymous with indulgence. Rather, it is more accurately understood as the ability to uphold rights and responsibilities in a fair and proportional manner<sup>30</sup>. Within the family context, this attitude is reflected in the appreciation of a spouse's virtues through obedience, as well as the willingness to engage in *islāh* constructive reconciliation through wise and thoughtful means when mistakes occur. The mutual effort to complement one another in fulfilling responsibilities, to uphold each family member's rights, and to cultivate mutual understanding lies at the heart of the concept of *islāh*, especially in times of unexpected challenges. A forgiving nature serves as a fundamental basis for preserving such harmony<sup>31</sup>.

The implementation of Markobar in Mandailing customs encompasses a series of advice rich in meaning, particularly in shaping a *sakinah*, *mawaddah*,

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<sup>29</sup> Berlia Sukmawati and Mu'ammam Khadafi, "Family Achievements That Are Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 1, no. 2 (2022): 243, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v1i2.6212>.

<sup>30</sup> Mahmudin, "Implementasi Pembekalan Pranikah Dalam Membentuk Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Wa Rahmah," *Millah: Journal Of Religious Studies* 15, no. 2 (2016): 299-318, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol15.iss2.art6>.

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad Fauzan and Hadi Amroni, "The Concept Of Sakinah Family In The Contemporary Muslim Generation," *Al'Adalah* 17, no. 1 (2020): 51-70, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v17i1.6458>.

and *warahmah* household. The first piece of advice conveyed is that a wife must be prepared to leave her own parents and treat her husband's parents equally. This reflects the principles of independence and fairness within the household, in accordance with Islamic teachings that encourage spouses to live in equality and mutual respect. This counsel also emphasizes that the wife's behavior will bring either honor or dishonor to the extended family, thus it is important to maintain good character and demonstrate commendable conduct as a form of social and familial responsibility. Furthermore, newlyweds are advised to learn the customs of the husband's family and to skillfully win the hearts of the in-laws. This highlights the importance of social adaptation and respect towards the spouse's family as part of efforts to create harmony. Advice such as *pantun hangoluan*, *teas hamatean*, *mata guru*, and *roha siseon* teach that one must be wise in comporting oneself, as what is seen and experienced in life will become a guide, dependent on one's conscience. In Islam, this principle is strongly emphasized through teachings that promote *ihsan* (excellence), uphold social ethics, and regard conscience and morality as the compass of life.

The subsequent advice emphasizes the importance of unity of heart within marriage. Expressions such as *seia sekata* and *rap tu ginjang rap tu toru* illustrate the spirit of togetherness in both joy and sorrow, which closely aligns with the principle of *mawaddah* in Islam. Additionally, couples are reminded not to exaggerate conflicts. While disputes in the household are common, they must not lead to division. Islam teaches that conflicts should be resolved wisely and discreetly, without spreading them beyond the home, thus preserving the family's honor. In the *ajar poda* counsel, customary leaders stress the importance of performing as many good deeds as possible to receive greater blessings. Newlyweds are also reminded to avoid materialism and to continue respecting the poor, recognizing that every individual has inherent value and potential. This advice instills principles of equality and sincerity in social relationships, which are crucial for establishing a *warahmah* (compassionate) family. Moreover, married life must be approached with caution and awareness of the challenges, trials, and temptations that may arise at any time. Mental and spiritual preparedness serve as foundational pillars for building family resilience.

The entire series of advice within the Markobar tradition, grounded in the *Dalihan Na Tolu* system, reflects a profound social order and moral values. The relationship among *mora*, *kahanggi*, and *anak boru*, founded on love and mutual understanding, represents a tangible manifestation of collective spirit in maintaining family harmony. Within the context of a *sakinah* family, this structure helps couples not only to live together in unity but also to uphold and protect customary and religious values. Thus, these pieces of advice serve not only as tradition but also as life guidelines that integrate Islamic principles in building a *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *warahmah* household. The Markobar tradition in Mandailing Natal is a pre-wedding ceremony aimed at providing the bride and groom with an understanding of family life. This tradition includes conveying important messages regarding the roles of husband and wife, their rights and obligations, as well as ways to address potential problems that may arise within household life.

To strengthen the data, the author also conducted interviews with several community members involved in the implementation of the Markobar tradition.

According to Z. Nasution, the Markobar ceremony is primarily conducted to provide the bride and groom with an understanding of married life. During the procession, the prospective husband and wife receive guidance on their responsibilities, roles, and the values they must uphold after establishing a family. This tradition is believed to serve as a moral and social foundation for the couple in navigating married life. However, he also noted that some couples do not hold wedding celebrations, and consequently, the Markobar ceremony is not performed. According to his observations, several of these couples subsequently encountered various household problems, many of which ultimately resulted in divorce. This indicates that Markobar is not merely a customary ritual but holds an educational and preventive function in maintaining family harmony within the Mandailing community<sup>32</sup>.

Batubara revealed that through the Markobar ceremony, he gained a deeper understanding of family life. Prior to marriage, he often felt anxious and

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<sup>32</sup> Interview, Zulhan Nasution as a Traditional Leader in Mandailing Natal, February 23, 2025.

confused, particularly about how to manage relationships with his spouse, children, and even in-laws. His initial view of marriage was quite simplistic—that the wife’s duty was to manage the household, while the husband worked to provide for the family’s needs such as children’s school fees and other household expenses. However, after participating in the wedding series, especially the Markobar session, his perspective changed. He acknowledged that the most impactful aspect was the advice delivered during the ceremony. There, he was taught about the bittersweet realities of married life, the division of duties and responsibilities between husband and wife, each partner’s rights and obligations, as well as how to foster good relationships within the community. He expressed gratitude that, until now, all these messages remain firmly in his memory and serve as guiding principles in managing his household<sup>33</sup>

Khoiruddin conveyed that the Markobar ceremony provided significant benefits in his life. Before marriage, he felt uncertain about household life and often experienced confusion and anxiety regarding his future after starting a family. He also lacked a clear understanding of how to build a harmonious household. After participating in the Markobar procession, he gained many valuable lessons. He learned about the formation of a *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *warahmah* family concepts he had not fully understood before. The advice and values received during the event have now become guiding principles in his family life. When facing various household challenges, Khoiruddin consistently strives to apply the teachings from Markobar. Thanks to this, he is grateful that every problem in his family can be resolved well without escalating into prolonged conflict<sup>34</sup>

The Markobar ceremony, as an integral part of the traditional wedding procession in Mandailing culture, plays a strategic role in providing newlywed couples with a deep understanding of the dynamics of family life. Based on interviews with Z. Nasution, this activity is designed to offer guidance and advice relevant to the duties, responsibilities, and challenges that couples will

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<sup>33</sup> Interview, Kasanuddin Batubara as a Bride Who Has Participated in Markobar Activities, March 16, 2025

<sup>34</sup> Interview, Khoiruddin as a Bride Who Has Participated in Markobar Activities, March 16, 2025

face after marriage. He emphasized that couples who do not participate in the Markobar ceremony especially those who do not hold customary wedding celebrations—often encounter difficulties in establishing a harmonious household, with many cases culminating in divorce. This indicates that Markobar is not merely a customary ritual but an educational platform with strategic value in fostering family resilience.

Testimonies from Batubara further reinforce the importance of Markobar as a learning medium for prospective brides and grooms. Before marriage, he admitted to being overwhelmed by anxiety and uncertainty regarding how to fulfill his role as a husband, particularly in managing relationships with his spouse, children, and in-laws. His prior understanding of family was very limited, confined mainly to the traditional division of roles, with the husband as the breadwinner and the wife as the homemaker. However, after participating in Markobar, his understanding became broader and deeper. He gained insights into the realities of family life, including emotional challenges, the division of rights and responsibilities, and social roles within the community. This experience provided him with valuable preparation to approach married life with greater wisdom and awareness.

The three informants demonstrated that Markobar functions as an important social transition platform, preparing newlywed couples mentally, emotionally, and socially to enter a new phase of life. Through this activity, noble values rooted in custom and religion are transmitted, forming the foundation of a strong family based on love and harmony. Markobar reflects local wisdom that integrates moral, spiritual, and social teachings, while also serving as a culturally based premarital education. The Markobar ceremony holds significant relevance in preserving tradition and strengthening the family institution. The knowledge and values conveyed meet the needs of young couples facing household challenges. Maintaining family harmony is not an easy task. Husbands and wives need adequate and morally appropriate knowledge, as well as mental readiness to face various challenges. A collective awareness emerges that marriage is the beginning of great responsibility, not merely a symbolic celebration. The preservation and optimization of this practice should

be continuously encouraged as part of meaningful family education rooted in local cultural values.

The importance of the Markobar tradition in forming a *sakinah, mawaddah, warahmah* family can be seen from its impact on couples' ability to resolve conflicts. Maintaining family harmony is not an easy task. Husbands and wives need adequate and morally appropriate knowledge, as well as mental readiness to face various challenges. Many couples may feel prepared but still fail to establish a *sakinah, mawaddah, warahmah* family, resulting in disharmony. However, how couples handle these challenges greatly determines family harmony. As expressed by Mr. Khoiruddin, he feels capable of resolving problems in his family effectively because he applies the teachings learned from Markobar. This demonstrates that the Markobar tradition not only imparts theoretical knowledge but also practical skills in managing the dynamics of family life. The Markobar tradition plays a significant role in shaping a *sakinah, mawaddah, warahmah* family. It provides newlywed couples with a deep understanding of the importance of communication, cooperation, and mutual respect in building a household. Markobar is not merely a customary event but also an essential life education that guarantees the happiness and sustainability of marriage. Through this tradition, couples are better prepared to face household challenges and to form families filled with love, peace, and harmony.

### **An 'Urf Perspective on the *Markobar* Tradition**

Etymologically, the term 'urf is synonymous with 'adah (custom or habit) or carries a similar meaning, as expressed in the phrase *al-'urf wa al-'adah bi ma'nâ wâhid* (custom and habit share one meaning)<sup>35</sup>. The term 'urf has a broad range of meanings, including that which is good, widely known, and recommended<sup>36</sup>. In this context, 'urf refers to a general meaning that may vary depending on the phrase structure and the context of the discussion. In other words, 'urf encompasses various meanings, one of which is something regarded as good in

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<sup>35</sup> Sofyan A.P. Kau et al., "Gorontalo Tradition of Molobunga Yiliyala: Cultural and Islamic Law Perspectives," *QIIS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 2 (2023): 427-66, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v11i2.19482>.

<sup>36</sup> Afidah Wahyuni and Harisah, "Konsep Al-Urf Dalam Perkembangan Society 5.0 Perspektif Fikih Kontemporer," *Ulumuna: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 9, no. 1 (2023): 66-84.

terms of customs or practices, and its meaning can change according to the place and prevailing habits. According to Islamic jurisprudence scholars, 'urf is defined as an activity commonly practiced by people in daily life, based on sound reasoning and in accordance with characteristics that bring peace of mind. Thus, 'urf is something recognized and accepted by society as a tradition or custom, which includes certain expressions, actions, or prohibitions, often referred to as *adat* (customary law). In the terminology of Sharia, there is no difference in meaning between 'urf and *adat*. The term 'urf also appears in the Qur'an in the form of the word *ma'ruf*, which means virtue or good deeds<sup>37</sup>

In Islamic legal methodology (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*), customary law (*al-'urf*) does not stand as an independent source of law but is closely linked to the principle of *maslahah* (public interest). As long as it does not conflict with Islamic values, customs deeply rooted in society may serve as a legal basis. Thus, *al-'urf* can carry binding legal authority within certain communities. This reflects the flexibility of Islamic law to adapt and recognize customary norms as part of legitimate legal provisions<sup>38</sup>

'Urf is divided into two categories based on its object: *al-'urf al-lafzī* (verbal custom) and *al-'urf al-'amalī* (practical custom). In terms of its scope, 'urf is further classified into *al-'urf al-'ām* (general custom) and *al-'urf al-khāṣṣ* (specific custom)<sup>39</sup>. In addition, based on its validity according to Islamic law, 'urf is classified into *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* (valid custom) and *al-'urf al-fāsid* (invalid or corrupt custom)<sup>40</sup>. From the perspective of its nature, 'urf is divided into two

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<sup>37</sup> Fadiyah Kamilatul Husna and Syabbul Bachri, "Pemahaman Istri Cerai Mati Dalam Penerapan Ihdad Perspektif 'Urf," *Sakina: Journal of Family Studies* 7, no. 2 (2023): 287–99, <https://doi.org/10.18860/jfs.v7i2.3627>.

<sup>38</sup> Wardah Nuroniyah and Bani Syarif Maula, "Muslim Women Adhering To Minangkabau's Bajapuik Tradition in Cirebon, West Java: Compromizing a Gendered Culture in Islamic Law," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 22, no. 2 (2022): 135–53, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijtihad.v22i2.135-154>.

<sup>39</sup> Hamda Sulfinadia et al., "Implementation of Aqiqah in the Bulan Maulid in Nagari Padang Laweh West Sumatra Perspective 'Urf," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 8, no. 2 (2023): 465–84, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v8i2.6800>.

<sup>40</sup> M. Gunawan Ismail Sholeh, "Tradisi Sorong Serah Dalam Prosesi Perkawinan Masyarakat Adat Sasak: Sebuah Tinjauan 'Urf," *Al-Qisthu: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Hukum* 21, no. 1 (2023): 32–41, <https://doi.org/10.32694/qst.v21i1.2198>.

categories. First, ‘urf qawli refers to verbal custom. An example is the word *walad*, which linguistically means “child” and includes both male and female children. However, in everyday usage, the term commonly refers only to a male child. Second, ‘urf ‘amalī refers to customary practices or actions. For instance, in some communities, buying and selling transactions are often conducted without the formal utterance of *ṣīghah* (offer and acceptance/ *ijab qabul*). Although, according to Islamic law, *ijab qabul* is one of the pillars of a valid sale contract, this practice is permitted because it has become widely accepted and does not lead to harmful consequences<sup>41</sup>.

‘Urf can be classified into two types based on the scope of its applicability: ‘urf ‘ām (general custom) and ‘urf khāṣṣ (specific custom)<sup>42</sup>. ‘Urf ‘Ām (general custom) refers to customs or practices that are widely accepted across an entire country and apply to all levels of society. For example, in car sales transactions, it is customary for the buyer to receive standard accessories such as a jack, spare tire, pliers, and wrench—without additional charges or a separate agreement. Another example in everyday life is the general policy on free baggage allowance in air travel, which is commonly set at 20 kilograms. Additionally, the use of public bathing facilities at a fixed rate, regardless of the amount of water used or the duration of usage, also falls under this category. ‘Urf Khāṣṣ (specific custom), on the other hand, refers to customs that are only practiced within a particular region or community. For instance, in certain trading practices, there may be an unwritten rule that goods with specific types of defects can be exchanged, while others may not be eligible for return. Another example is customary agreements regarding the duration of warranty or repair periods for particular items<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Azni Azni et al., “Tinjauan Kehujahan ‘Urf Terhadap Ijab Qabul Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam,” *Al-Fikru: Jurnal Ilmiah* 16, no. 1 (2022): 69–81, <https://doi.org/10.51672/alfikru.v16i1.83>.

<sup>42</sup> Darnela Putri, “Konsep ‘Urf Sebagai Sumber Hukum Dalam Islam,” *ElMashlahah* 10, no. 2 (2020): 14–25, <https://doi.org/10.23971/maslahah.v10i2.1911>.

<sup>43</sup> Wahyu Syarvina, Sudirman Suparmin, and Tuti Anggraini, “Aplikasi ‘Urf Dalam Ekonomi Islam,” *AT-TIJARAH: Jurnal Penelitian Keuangan Dan Perbankan Syariah* 4, no. 1 (2022): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.52490/attijarah.v4i1.285>.

Based on its conformity with Islamic law, ‘urf is classified into two types: ‘urf *ṣaḥīḥ* (valid custom) and ‘urf *fāsid* (invalid or corrupt custom)<sup>44</sup>. ‘Urf *Ṣaḥīḥ* (valid custom) refers to customs that are widely recognized by society and do not contradict Islamic law. These practices neither violate prohibitions nor neglect obligatory duties. An example is the practice of engagement prior to the marriage contract (*akad nikah*), which is generally accepted in society as a good custom and does not conflict with the Sharia. Another example is the use of *istisna’* contracts in commercial transactions, which are commonly practiced and considered permissible. ‘Urf *Fāsid* (invalid or corrupt custom), on the other hand, refers to customs that are known only among certain groups and are in contradiction with Islamic law. These practices involve actions that are prohibited or the neglect of mandatory obligations. For example, the custom of making offerings at places or statues regarded as sacred. Such practices are not accepted in Islam because they contradict the principle of *tawḥīd* (monotheism) and Islamic legal rulings, and they also have the potential to corrupt local traditions<sup>45</sup>.

The legal basis for ‘urf as a valid source of argument (*ḥujjah*) has been established by scholars of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* in the legal maxim: “Custom (*‘ādah*) may serve as a basis for legal judgment.” This principle indicates that ‘urf or customary practice can be recognized as a source of law when there is no detailed explanation provided in the textual sources (*naṣṣ*). ‘Urf is acceptable provided it meets certain conditions. The first condition is that the custom must have *maṣlaḥah* value meaning it brings benefit to the community and prevents harm or corruption. The second condition is that the custom must be widespread and commonly practiced among the people within a specific community or

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<sup>44</sup> Taufiqurrahman, “Nembot Penganu Sebagai Kearifan Lokal Suku Paser Perspektif ‘Urf,” *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar’iah* 10, no. 1 (2018): 40-48, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v10i1.6606>.

<sup>45</sup> Ulfa Daryanti and St Nurjannah, “Analisis ‘Urf Terhadap Tradisi Janur Kuning Dalam Adat Pernikahan Jawa Di Kabupaten Luwu Timur,” *Shautuna: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Perbandingan Mazhab Dan Hukum* 2, no. 1 (2021): 250-64, <https://doi.org/10.24252/shautuna.v2i1.16220>.

environment<sup>46</sup>. Third, the ‘urf must have been established prior to the legal case in question, and no subsequent custom has emerged to replace it. Fourth, the ‘urf must not contradict any existing *shar‘ī* evidence. Fifth, there must be no specific legal ruling regarding the issue in either the Qur’an or the Sunnah. Sixth, the application of the custom must not lead to the neglect of explicit *sharī‘ah* texts, nor should it result in harm (*mafsadah*), undue hardship, or difficulty<sup>47</sup>.

The Markobar tradition is an essential component of the traditional wedding ceremony in the Mandailing community. Its primary function is to serve as a medium for conveying advice, hopes, and moral messages to newlywed couples. This tradition is considered sacred and contains noble values that have been passed down through generations. From the perspective of Islamic law, the Markobar tradition can be analyzed through the concept of ‘urf (customary practice). ‘Urf refers to customs or practices accepted by a local community, provided they do not conflict with the principles of Islamic law (*Sharī‘ah*). If a custom does not violate Islamic rulings and promotes *maṣlahah* (benefit), it may be accepted as part of Islamic law and is classified as ‘urf *ṣaḥīḥ* (valid custom). Conversely, if the custom contradicts Islamic law, it is deemed ‘urf *fāsid* (invalid custom)<sup>48</sup>. Furthermore, tradition may be transformed, abandoned, or manifested in new ways when traditional adaptations come into conflict with superior contemporary realities and well-established principles and immutable doctrines, particularly through intellectual exploration<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> Zainal Azwar et al., “Dynamics Encounter of Tradition and Religion in the Wedding Parade (Baarak Bako) in Solok City West Sumatra,” *Mazahib: Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 22, no. 2 (2023): 399–430, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v22i2.5517>.

<sup>47</sup> Tomi Adam Gegana and Abdul Qodir Zaelani, “Pandangan Urf Terhadap Tradisi Mitu Dalam Pesta Pernikahan Adat Batak,” *ElIzdiwaj: Indonesian Journal of Civil and Islamic Family Law* 3, no. 1 (2022): 18–32, <https://doi.org/10.24042/el-izdiwaj.v3i1.12495>.

<sup>48</sup> Afrinald Rizhan, “Kedudukan Al-‘Adah Dan Al-‘Urf Sebagai Sumber Hukum Islam,” *Jurnal Gagasan Hukum* 6, no. 01 (2024): 77–93, <https://doi.org/10.31849/jgh.v6i01.19526>.

<sup>49</sup> Armyun Hasibuan, Miswari Miswari, and Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution, “Religious and Cultural Demarcation: The Mysticism Dimension in the Pajonjong Bagas Tradition By the Batak Angkola Muslim Community,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 24, no. 2 (2024): 283, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i2.19585>.

Markobar serves several important functions: sacred, traditional, attractive, and artistic. Its sacred function is evident in the delivery of advice that encourages good deeds and the avoidance of wrongdoing. The traditional function is reflected in the preservation of customs that have become part of the community's cultural practices. The attractive function relates to the ceremony's ability to draw attention and unite members of the community. Meanwhile, the artistic function is expressed through the beauty of the speech and the ceremonial procedures involved in the performance of Markobar<sup>50</sup>.

When examined through the conditions of 'urf, several key aspects of the Markobar tradition can be identified. First, the tradition carries significant social benefits, binding both families and strengthening the relationship between the bride and groom by clarifying their rights, duties, and responsibilities. It also contributes to maintaining social cohesion within the community. Second, Markobar has become a widely accepted custom among the Mandailing people, not limited to a specific group. Third, the tradition has long existed and was practiced prior to the establishment of formal legal regulations on the matter. Fourth, in principle, the tradition does not contradict Islamic law, as there is no specific *naşş* (textual evidence) that prohibits the practice of giving advice during marriage ceremonies. Fifth, in the absence of any explicit provision in the Qur'an or Hadith regarding a specific method for delivering marital advice, this tradition can be accepted as valid 'urf. Sixth, the tradition does not cause hardship or harm; on the contrary, it fosters stronger familial ties and reinforces social harmony.

Based on its object, 'urf is divided into two categories: 'urf al-lafzī (customary usage in speech) and 'urf al-'amalī (customary practice in actions)<sup>51</sup>. 'Urf al-lafzī refers to the customary use of certain words or expressions whose meanings are collectively understood within a society. In the context of the Markobar tradition, this is evident in customary terms such as ajar poda

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<sup>50</sup> Putra, "Tradisi Markobar Dalam Pernikahan Adat Mandailing Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam."

<sup>51</sup> Fitra Rizal, "Penerapan 'Urf Sebagai Metode Dan Sumber Hukum Ekonomi Islam," *AL-MANHAJ: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 1, no. 2 (2019): 155–76, <https://doi.org/10.37680/almanhaj.v1i2.167>.

(advice), pangupa (prayer or blessing), as well as various traditional expressions or verses (pantun) used throughout the ceremony, all of which are well understood by the Mandailing community. Meanwhile, 'urf al-'amalī refers to customary practices or actions that are carried out over generations. The Markobar tradition clearly falls into this category, as it involves a series of ritual practices such as the farewell meal (mangan pamunan or mambutongi mangan), the delivery of advice, and the performance of traditional rituals governed by the Dalihan Na Tolu kinship system. All of these actions have become part of the collective cultural habit of the Mandailing people.

In terms of its scope, 'urf is classified into two types: 'urf 'ām (general custom) and 'urf khāṣṣ (specific custom). 'Urf 'ām refers to customs that are widely practiced across various regions and accepted by the general public. However, the Markobar tradition does not fall under this category; rather, it is an example of 'urf khāṣṣ, as its practice is limited to the Mandailing community. This custom is local in nature and is not found throughout Indonesia, thus representing an exclusive cultural characteristic of the Mandailing ethnic group. Therefore, Markobar constitutes a 'urf khāṣṣ that is deeply rooted in the social and cultural life of the community, particularly in the context of traditional ceremonies such as marriage.

From the perspective of its validity according to Islamic law, 'urf is categorized into 'urf ṣaḥīḥ (valid custom) and 'urf fāsid (invalid or corrupt custom). 'Urf ṣaḥīḥ refers to a customary practice that does not contradict Islamic teachings, does not involve any sinful elements (*ma'ṣiyah*), and does not nullify any religious obligations<sup>52</sup>. The Markobar tradition falls under the category of 'urf ṣaḥīḥ (valid custom) because it contains moral advice, religious teachings, and positive social values. There is no element of *shirk* (associating partners with God), sinful behavior (*ma'ṣiyah*), or violation of Islamic law in its implementation. On the contrary, this tradition emphasizes respect for parents, preservation of family dignity, and adherence to Islamic values such as prayer (*ṣalāh*) and the pillars of Islam. Furthermore, Markobar promotes social benefit

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<sup>52</sup> Anwar Sadat et al., "Determination of Auspicious Days in Wedding Traditions in Mandar, West Sulawesi: Perspective of Islamic Law," *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1422-46, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhc.v7i3.17864>.

(*maṣlahah*) by strengthening social ties (*silaturrahmi*) and reinforcing community structure. In contrast, ‘urf *fāsid* refers to customs that contradict Islamic law, such as making offerings to entities other than Allah or engaging in traditions that abolish religious obligations. Since the substance and practice of Markobar contain none of these elements, it cannot be categorized as ‘urf *fāsid*.

In the author's view, preserving tradition with good intentions (*niyyah*) and in a manner that does not contradict Islamic law is permissible, as long as it does not harm the ‘*aqīdah* (creed) of Muslims. This position is grounded in the legal maxim: “The original ruling of all things is permissibility” (*al-aṣl fī al-ashyā’ al-ibāḥah*). This principle implies that everything is allowed, even in the absence of a specific command, provided that there is no explicit prohibition<sup>53</sup>. Thus, the analysis of ‘urf in relation to the Markobar tradition within Mandailing wedding customs demonstrates that this practice contains positive values and does not conflict with Islamic law. Therefore, the Mandailing community should continue to preserve and uphold the Markobar tradition while taking into account the universal values embedded in Islamic teachings. This ensures that local customs not only maintain cultural identity but also remain aligned with the principles of the *Sharī’ah*. With proper understanding and implementation, Markobar can continue to serve as an effective medium for moral and social education, strengthening family bonds and promoting harmony within the community.

## Conclusion

The Markobar tradition within the *walimatul ‘ursy* ceremony constitutes a valid form of ‘urf that embodies positive values aligned with Islamic law. The implementation of Markobar, which involves customary leaders and the families of the bride and groom, plays a significant role in imparting advice and instilling Mandailing cultural values that support the formation of a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* (harmonious, loving, and compassionate) family. This tradition reinforces the integration between local culture and Islamic teachings,

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<sup>53</sup> Sitta Nur Karimah, “Praktek Babilangan Pada Tradisi Basasuluh Suku Banjar Prespektif Urf,” *Jurnal Justisia : Jurnal Ilmu Hukum, Perundang-Undangan Dan Pranata Sosial* 7, no. 2 (2022): 346, <https://doi.org/10.22373/justisia.v7i2.15114>.

thereby contributing to the establishment of a harmonious Islamic household founded on love and compassion in accordance with *sharī'ah*. As such, Markobar serves as an effective medium for promoting family stability and blessings.

The limitations of this study lie in its scope, which is focused primarily on the Mandailing community and emphasizes the integration of the Markobar tradition in *walimatul 'ursy* with Islamic legal values and local culture. This narrow focus does not encompass the socio-economic dimensions that may also be affected by the practice of Markobar, nor does it include cross-regional or inter-ethnic comparisons with similar traditions. Furthermore, the involvement and perceptions of the younger generation regarding the continuity of this tradition have not been explored in depth, despite their crucial role in preserving cultural and religious values within the context of an Islamic family.

Therefore, future research is recommended to examine comprehensively the social and economic impacts of Markobar, and to conduct comparative studies with similar traditions in other cultural communities to gain a broader understanding of its social and religious functions. Further studies should also emphasize the analysis of youth perceptions, participation, and contributions in maintaining the Markobar tradition, in order to ensure the sustainability of cultural and Islamic values in building a harmonious family in accordance with the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

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### Interviews

- Interview with Rudianto Lubis, a Traditional Leader in Mandailing Natal, February 10, 2025.
- Interview with Kasanuddin Batubara, a Former Bridegroom Who Participated in the *Markobar* Ceremony, March 16, 2025.
- Interview with Khoiruddin, a Former Bridegroom Who Participated in the *Markobar* Ceremony, March 16, 2025.
- Interview with Zulhan Nasution, a Traditional Leader in Mandailing Natal, February 23, 2025.