



THE ACTIVITY OF THROWING SPOKES AS PART OF THE DOWRY GIVING TRADITION IN THE SIPIROK COMMUNITY'S CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE SYSTEM

Hadiani Fitri ^{1*}

¹ Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara

*email Koresponden: hadianif973@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62567/micjo.v3i1.2016>

Abstract

Traditional marriage traditions are an important manifestation of maintaining the sustainability of local social and cultural values. One traditional practice still maintained by the Sipirok community is the *mengumpar ruji* activity as part of the dowry giving process. This activity is not only ceremonial, but also contains social, symbolic, and normative meanings that function as a mechanism for binding relationships between families. This study aims to analyze the meaning, function, and position of the *mengumpar ruji* activity in the Sipirok community's traditional marriage system. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive-analytical approach, through literature review and normative analysis of traditional practices. The results show that *mengumpar ruji* is a symbol of sincerity, responsibility, and social recognition from the man towards the woman and her family. This tradition also functions as an instrument of social legitimacy in Sipirok traditional marriage. Thus, *mengumpar ruji* has a strategic role in maintaining social harmony and the sustainability of customary law amidst the social changes of modern society.

Keywords: *Mengumpar Ruji*, Dowry, Customary Law, Traditional Marriage, Sipirok, make indonesian

Abstrak

Tradisi perkawinan adat merupakan salah satu wujud penting dalam menjaga keberlanjutan nilai-nilai sosial dan budaya lokal. Salah satu praktik adat yang masih dipertahankan oleh masyarakat Sipirok adalah kegiatan *mengumpar ruji* sebagai bagian dari proses pemberian mahar. Kegiatan ini tidak hanya bersifat seremonial, tetapi juga mengandung makna sosial, simbolik, dan normatif yang berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pengikat hubungan antara dua keluarga. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis makna, fungsi, dan kedudukan kegiatan *mengumpar ruji* dalam sistem perkawinan adat masyarakat Sipirok. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis melalui kajian literatur dan analisis normatif terhadap praktik adat yang berlaku. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *mengumpar ruji* merupakan simbol ketulusan, tanggung jawab, serta pengakuan sosial dari pihak laki-laki kepada perempuan dan keluarganya. Tradisi ini juga berfungsi sebagai instrumen legitimasi sosial dalam perkawinan adat Sipirok. Dengan demikian, *mengumpar ruji* memiliki peran strategis dalam menjaga keharmonisan sosial dan keberlanjutan hukum adat di tengah dinamika perubahan sosial masyarakat modern.

Kata kunci: *Mengumpar Ruji*, Mahar, Hukum Adat, Perkawinan Adat, Sipirok.



1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage in indigenous communities is not only seen as a bond between two individuals, but also as a social event involving the extended family and the indigenous community collectively. In this context, customary marriage serves as a means of transmitting cultural values, social norms, and customary legal systems that exist and thrive within the community (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). Therefore, the customary practices that accompany marriage play a crucial role in maintaining the identity and cultural sustainability of local communities.

In the Sipirok community, which is part of the Batak Angkola community, traditional marriages have procedures and rituals that are passed down through generations and are seen as an integral part of the Dalihan Natolu kinship system. One important element in this traditional marriage ceremony is the giving of a dowry, accompanied by the activity of "mengumpar ruji" (a traditional ceremony for the bride and groom). The dowry in traditional marriages is not merely material in value, but also has a symbolic function, binding the social ties between the two extended families united through marriage (Hadikusuma, 2003).

The act of wrapping the dowry is a traditional practice performed as part of the dowry transfer ceremony from the groom to the bride. This practice serves not only as a traditional formality but also carries symbolic value that reflects sincerity, responsibility, and respect for the dignity of women and their families. From a legal sociology perspective, this practice can be understood as part of living law, namely norms adhered to by society not because of coercion by state law, but because of the social and cultural legitimacy inherent in them (Rahardjo, 2010).

However, with the changing times and changing societal mindsets, traditional practices such as the mengumpar ruji (a traditional ceremony) face challenges in the form of shifting meanings and simplified implementation. Modernization and social mobility have also influenced how people interpret traditional traditions, potentially obscuring some of their philosophical values (Giddens, 2003). This situation demonstrates the importance of academic study of the mengumpar ruji activity to understand its position and relevance within the Sipirok community's traditional marriage system

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach. Data were obtained through a library study of relevant literature, such as books, scientific journals, and previous research on Batak Angkola marriage customs, particularly in the Sipirok region. The analysis was conducted by interpreting the social and legal meaning of the "mengumpar ruji" (spreading the vines) activity and linking it to customary law theory and legal sociology.



3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Sipirok tradition, the dowry given by the groom to the relatives of the woman he is marrying consists of two main parts. The first part is given to the bride's parents, known as "Batang Boban." The second part is given to traditional leaders and other individuals deemed necessary.

In the agreement to determine the size of the dowry to be given, an activity is carried out which is called Mangumpar Ruji, which literally calculates, in other words the delivery of the dowry has been detailed, the dowry that must be given to the woman is as follows:

1. Upa Tompas Handang, which is part of the dowry intended for the anak boru figures who function as goruk-goruk hapinis (those referred to as goruk-goruk hapinis are anak boru who function as organizers of customary protocols in a noble family environment) within the family environment.
2. Hariman Ni Na Markahanggi, namely part of the dowry which is intended to maintain the agreement between relatives who are classified as kahanggi from the father of the prospective bride.
3. Pengamai, which is part of the dowry intended for the eldest anak boru figure in the circle of close relatives of the father of the prospective bride.
4. Hundulan Ni Raja, namely part of the dowry allocated for the king's seat (throne).
5. Ni Raja Law, namely part of the dowry allocated for protective clothing for the King
6. Partitijuran Ni Raja, part of the dowry intended for the king's spit (previously there was a ging and a small gong called doal).
7. Pangdian Ni Raja, part of the dowry intended for the king's support
8. Uncover the ruji, which is the part of the dowry that is allocated for wages to open the ruji place (sticks of palm fronds for counting tools)
9. Ampar ruji or Har-har Ruji, namely part of the dowry which is intended for the person who spreads the ruji in the dowry presentation ceremony.
10. Batang Boban, which is part of the dowry specifically intended for the parents of the prospective bride and several close relatives.
11. Unjuk, namely the part of the boban stem which is intended for the older and younger brothers of the father of the prospective bride, namely the older and younger brothers.
12. Upa Tulang is a part of the boban stem which is intended for the bone or brother of the prospective bride.



13. The gray hair cover, which is the part of the boban stem that is intended for the grandmother of the prospective bride.
14. Penghudukkon Api, a part of the boban stem intended for the prospective bride's birth mother. Penghudukko Api is a traditional cloth or Bugis cloth.
15. Aupa Pororot or upa Paraban, which is a part of the boban stem which is given to the person who helped to descend or look after the prospective bride when she was still a child.
16. Nahumut in Huta, part of the dowry allocated to hatobangan figures in the village where the prospective bride lives.
17. Hotang na Opa, which is part of the wedding rice which is intended for several people who act as witnesses in handing over the dowry and also guarantors if not all of the dowry can be handed over by the man. They consist of a woman (Parboru), a Suhut and a Boru child from the men's side.
18. Pas-pas Bode, part of Hotang na Opat which is intended for those who are tasked with cleaning and tidying up the house where the dowry ceremony takes place.
19. Upah Parhobas, part of Hotang Na Na Opa which is allocated to those who are in charge of preparing various necessities for the dowry handover ceremony.
20. Jambar Tatarang, part of Hotang Na Opat which is intended for those who cook for the dowry presentation ceremony.
21. Upa Na Poso Bulung is part of Hotang Na Opai which is intended for young people who take part in work for the dowry handover ceremony.
22. Ingots (Reminders), part of the dowry given to those who attended the dowry ceremony so that they would remember everything that was done in the ceremony. The person who gave the ingots to those entitled to receive them was the king who attended the dowry ceremony.
23. Holting Ruji or bobok ruji, namely part of the dowry which is intended for the person who ties the ruji back (cuts the sticks of the counting tool) after the activity of spreading the ruji and the dowry ceremony is finished (Sipirok Nasoli: 190).

Looking at the description mentioned there are twenty-three parts that must be given to the bride, this shows that in ancient times actually a girl (girl) is a joint property, automatically she also looks at the title of her father's clan. Therefore a girl (girl) is a treasure for her family and is considered a place of outpouring of affection for her family, so there is a saying aimed at anak boru namely sihorus na lobi sitamba na hurang which means that anak boru can take all the advantages from her family and add to the shortcomings for her family. This means that between advantages and disadvantages is literally contains a power in anak boru that can weigh between strengths that are advantages or disadvantages



which if studied more deeply is a magical deficiency or "mana". Therefore, a anak boru contains a power of "mana" or magic, meaning it can add magical power or mana to her family or to the father's family.

When examining When the groom's side performs manulak sere to the woman's side after the mangumpar ruji is performed, there are some groups who have different opinions and often disputes that cause the marriage to be canceled. It is not uncommon for both parties to love each other when they are forced to take shortcuts or marlojong, although this path is very disliked by the Sipirok community because after all, people who do marlojong are considered to have violated customs and are considered undignified and make the family's dignity disappear.

The happiness and well-being of the Sipirok family can be achieved if the kinship relationships in Dalihan Natolu can be maintained as well as possible. Because these kinship relationships can be relationships that occur through blood relations or marriage relations. So, if interpreted, the meaning of the term is likened to a three-stove, namely when close together they have the same level, if something is placed on it to be cooked and can be served to be eaten. This high meaning that everything can be made into a common good if the stove can be used according to its function, namely, can be placed on it to prevent it from falling, so it must have the same position, not be lopsided. So that its function can truly run as expected, namely goodness in living life.

When the manghobar buru is used as a place of discovery for the parties in the Dalihan Natolu in determining the size of the dowry, then the people who carry out the mangumpar ruji, or the parties who receive a portion of the dowry as depicted in the mengumpar ruji, all parties in the Dalihan Natolu actually receive a share. This means that the girl who will be married is actually in each position mentioned in the Dalihan Natolu.

In the life of the Sipirok community, their activities always involve interactions with those within the Dalihan Natolu community, and this can be determined by the way they greet each other. Therefore, a person's position can be determined by the greeting they use. A Sipirok person can actually hold three roles simultaneously: a mora, a kahanggi, or an anak boru. However, these roles can be used to determine the place and time when someone can become a mora, a kahanggi, or an anak boru.

A sipirok man becomes a mora in his family or on his wife's side, becoming anak boru when dealing with his wife's brother. Or perhaps also becomes the kahanggi when dealing with other people from his own family, either from his father's or mother's side. And so on, both as a sipirok man and woman



When asked about someone's position in Dalihan natolu, it can be explained which side he is on and where he is at that time.

With the existence of several greetings, in such life activities that have been outlined that by greeting someone with certain greetings, for example tulang, bujing, those who call with this are the relatives of their mother, tulang is from the mother's side, while bujing is the brother from the father's side, uda is the term for the father's brother while bou is the father's sister. Especially for Tulang, the daughter is a pariban and is highly recommended to be taken as a wife by the brother (ego), while bou is the mother-in-law of the ego, whose son is the pariban of the ego. In the sipirok tradition, marriage with a bone or pariban is highly recommended and preferred because with a pariban marriage it is hoped that it can strengthen kinship.

This also applied in the early days of independence, when Sipirok people who had migrated outside of Sipirok were encouraged to take their bone marrows there. This was done with the hope that Sipirok customs would be preserved and maintained. However, when children born abroad found life partners with other people, changes occurred, tending to follow the patterns of the place where they lived, although some were still used, for example, in greetings.

Considering the interactions within the activities carried out when the parties in Dalihan Natolu gather to determine the size of the dowry, we can cite Parsons's view, which views the beginning of the institutionalization process. Equating Dalihan Natolu with an institution refers to a process that can be classified into:

- Actors with diverse orientations enter situations in which they must interact.
- The way the actor orients himself is a reflection of his need structure and where that need structure has been changed by the incorporation of cultural patterns.
- Through a certain interaction process, rules emerge when new actors adjust their respective orientations.
- Rules arise as a way of mutual adjustment, and limit the general patterns of culture.
- The rules govern the interactions that occur later, so that a stable state is created.

Referring to Talcott Parsons' statement, if Dalihan Natolu is described as an institution in its activities when the Mangumpar Ruji speech took place during the Mangkobar boru, then the process that occurred can be approached with the statement, namely where the parties from the Dalihan Natolu elements were in a place of deliberation so that an agreement was produced as a result of the interaction that took place.



Seeing the deliberations carried out when Mangumpar Ruji/calculation of the dowry that will be given to certain parties such as the Tulang Hundulan Ni Raja, the Pengondian Raja and so on, as there are parts that receive a portion of the dowry, is a reflection of the needs that have been determined by the customs according to the traditions of the Sipirok community.

During the interaction process, a certain atmosphere is created based on custom, where the actors generally agree on what they have determined as a decision. In other words, the parties involved, based on Dalihan natolu, have accepted its existence at that time.

The limitation of the conversation has emerged as part of a custom, where those whose positions have been determined by Dalihan Natolu during the deliberation process, position themselves according to their function, whether at that time they are in the position of anak boru, mora or kahanggi.

With the arrangement based on one's position in Dalihan Natolu, it is hoped that a person has and will or what he will do as an obligation attached to him according to his function in Dalihan Natolu. By knowing what will be done, it is hoped that occasionally the work that has been planned can run as well as possible, so that deliberation and consensus in Mangumpar Ruji can bring blessings to all involved in it, and ultimately will be given safety until he becomes a grandpa.

In the Sipirok tradition, the dowry given by the groom to the bride consists of various components, each with its own function and meaning. The distribution of the dowry reflects the social structure and kinship system of Dalihan Natolu, in which each element has a role and position recognized by custom. The Dalihan Natolu system itself is a kinship structure that regulates the relations between the mora, kahanggi, and anak boru in various traditional activities, including the wedding ceremony (Sibarani, 2012).

The act of calculating the dowry, or mangumpar ruji, is conducted in a traditional deliberation forum involving traditional stakeholders. This process demonstrates that determining the dowry is not a unilateral decision, but rather the result of a collective agreement built through social interaction. From the perspective of institutionalization theory, this type of interaction produces rules that govern the behavior of the parties and create a relatively stable social order (Parsons, 1951).

The division of the dowry into various parts, such as batang boban (a bundle of dowry), upa tulang (bone), hundulan ni raja (king's dowry), and other parts, demonstrates that daughters in Sipirok society are viewed as an important part of the social and kinship structure. This aligns with customary law, which views marriage as a binding event that establishes relationships between kinship groups, not merely individual relationships (Soepomo, 2013)



4. CONCLUSION

The act of giving dowries is an integral part of the dowry tradition in the Sipirok community's customary marriage system. This practice serves not only as a traditional ritual but also as a social and legal mechanism that binds family relationships and provides social legitimacy to marriage. The persistence of this practice demonstrates that customary law still plays a vital role as a living and effective law within society (Rahardjo, 2010)

5. REFERENCES

- Koentjaraningrat. (2009). Introduction to anthropology. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Soepomo. (2013). Chapters on customary law. Jakarta: Pradnya Paramita.
- Rahardjo, S. (2010). Law and society. Bandung: Angkasa.
- Hadikusuma, H. (2003). Customary marriage law. Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti.
- Sibarani, R. (2012). Local wisdom: The nature, role, and methods of oral tradition. Jakarta: Oral Tradition Association.
- Parsons, T. (1951). The social system. New York: Free Press.
- Giddens, A. (2003). The constitution of society. Cambridge: Polity Press.