



# Artikel 10

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# The Ethnic Mandailing Tradition of Courtship (*Markusip*) and Revitalization Efforts in The Formation of The Character Youth

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**Abstrak-** This paper is part of Unimed Social Anthropology research thesis that aims to: (1) describe the tradition courtship of the Mandailing Ethnic (*Markusip*); (2) to find the revitalization model of the *Markusip* tradition that has local wisdom in the effort to shape the character of adolescents today. The research uses qualitative method with ethnography approach. The research techniques include conducting indepth interviews, participant observation and life history method to informants who have been and still live the tradition of *Markusip*. Based on the results of field research found that this tradition is a tradition that is almost extinct due to technological developments and modernization so that most teenagers Mandailing no longer run this tradition. This tradition of *Markusip* is a tradition that contains the values of local wisdom that seeks to regulate youth and girl relationships by recognizing the personality of each partner without violating or violating the norms prevailing in the Mandailing customs. This tradition is also a source of life guidelines that have the function to maintain reciprocal relationships in order not to do bad deeds and maintain decency and politeness in behaving. In the performance of this tradition use the expressions of Mandailing poetry or *pantun* which is full of values of reciprocal love, respect and responsibility. Revitalization of this tradition can be done because the value and function of a lost tradition can be preserved and transformed to the young generation through documentation, conservation and education efforts.

**Keywords:** *markusip, mandailing ethnic, teenage character, local wisdom*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The development of the current lifestyle has given various impacts to the changing social life of the community. Not only the urban community but has entered rural areas in spite of the remotest, in spite of received the impact of the development of current life style. Contemporary lifestyle is already visible because of the development of information technology and the flow of globalization.

Accessible information technology and the dominance of acculturation in town areas, automatically make changes because of the accumulation of various artistic elements brought by certain indigenous groups in urbanization. Humanizing elements brought by different indigenous groups

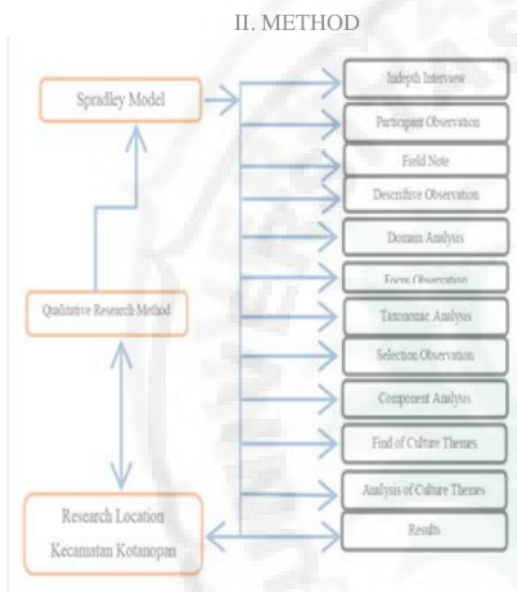
make assimilation and acculturation in town areas. Different cultures and local wisdom that have been passed down inherited (tradition) carried along and without command have been following the current development of the modernization era. This erodes the various values and cultural norms that have been inherited by the ancestors. The system of meaning, values, functions and norms is a localized characteristics and ethnic or community characteristics and ethnic or community identity in an area.

Judistira (2008) states that localized wisdom is part of a scheme of cultural level (hierarchy is not based on good and bad). Localized wisdom is the same as localized culture that complements geographical culture, and geographical culture are essential parts in the formation of national culture. In the study of this study, tradition is a folklore.

Koentjaraningrat (1990) says folklore is a collective culture that is spread and passed down from generation to generation. Folklore or tradition can be a benchmark whether or not a teenage character in interaction relationships. The relationship in question is an interaction relationship that is done in undergoing intercourse of teenagers before marriage or now called relationship dating. This relationship contains meaning, values, functions, and norms are very influential in regulating and determining the couples, relationships and kinship system that will be built by the teen, so this activity became a trend among teenagers at that time called *Markusip*.

*Markusip* is literally interpreted as a whispering activity, but in its execution is an interaction activity performed at night by teenagers of different sex at the time with a limited wall of houses made of bamboo. However, at present, adolescents in rural areas have followed the pattern of adolescents in town areas, thus naturally eroding meaning in the *Markusip* tradition, so that the norms passed on by their ancestors are increasingly unworkable. According Koentjaraningrat (2009) humanizing change is a shift, reduction, addition and development of elements in a culture. Simply put, civilizing changes are the dynamics that occur due to the clash of different cultural elements. Dating habits in public that are considered taboo began to erode and almost lost at this time. Teenagers have ignored and no longer care about the social construction that has been used as a norm by

his ancestors. Therefore, the character of adolescents today is no more in accordance with the ideal norms expected by society. Researchers want to try to revitalize the essence or essence of *Markusip* tradition through the transformation of values and norms that can be used as the formation of adolescent character.



This research used a qualitative approach with ethnography method from Spradley. The ethnographic method used by the researcher is known as "Developmental Research Sequence. According Spradley (1997:33) ethnographic method is the job of describing a culture. The main purpose is to understand the view of life from the point of view of the natives (native's point of view). So the data collected are qualitative data.

### III. DISCUSSION

*Markusip* tradition is a Mandailing local wisdom that needs to be revitalized and preserved. According to Nasution (2001) the term Mandailing is derived from the word Mandalay, to capture one of the names of cities in Burma (now Myanmar), then changed the title to Mandailing. The revitalization of the *Markusip* tradition is interpreted as how we transform *Markusip* traditions and meanings. According Sibarani (2013) revitalization and preservation it is certainly experiencing a change or transformation in accordance with the demands of the times. Local wisdom as the values and

cultural norms that can be applied in organizing communal life so that it can overcome the problem of communal life needs to be revitalized and preserved.

As a tradition that can shape adolescent character, revitalization by preserving this tradition can actually be realized although it cannot be done as it used to be. Because of the bodily factors of this tradition must have changed. Bodily factors in this tradition cannot be revitalized but the meanings, values, functions and norms contained therein can be transformed in a way of character building adolescents in the face of the times. With the recovery efforts of *Markusip* tradition is very supportive in the preservation of this tradition.

Recovery of traditions is a process of returning a tradition that is lost or extinct due to certain factor changes by juxtaposing or placing the tradition in the culture or customs that is still valid without changing the meaning and value of local wisdom contained in it. In this case the researchers see the revitalization model for preservation *Markusip* tradition can be done by way of juxtaposing or putting this tradition on the stage of traditional wedding ceremony Mandailing performance of *Markusip* tradition.

*Markusip* tradition performance is done at night, where this activity is a culture that Mandailing teenagers to know each other's personality and character. Finnegan (1992) states that performance is a communication event has dimensions in communication processes is social, cultural, and aesthetic. The show has an action model with certain *Markusip* that can be interpreted so that communication actions can be understood, communication actions exhibited, introduced with external objects, and constructed from their contextual environment.

*Markusip* implementation is usually done at night at 23.00 until the dawn of dawn. This time is a time of rest or sleeping time of the locals and the only wake of youth carrying *Markusip* and night reconnaissance while the dawn is the time to wake up the community to perform the dawn prayers in the mosque. Thus, there is a value of regularity of social values and fear of violating customary norms in carrying out this tradition. Teenagers that will carry out the *Markusip* tradition will first ask permission to the chairman of *naposonaulibulung* (young men) to be allowed *mankusipi* at once show *bagaspodoman* (home bed) the intended girl. *Markusip* tradition is an activity that can be implemented by all Mandailing Ethnic adolescents so that the identity of Mandailing culture.

This *Markusip* tradition begins with agreement on codes, symbols or cues as a sign of intertwining relationships between boys and girls so that others will not easily interfere with existing relationships and communications in the outpouring of the hearts by means of expressions of rhyme

and poetry that imply the meaning of advice and way of life. Symbols or codes are known only to teenagers who have a relationship and no other teenagers will know the symbol or code. Geertz (1992) says culture is a system of meanings and symbols arranged in the sense in which the individual can define his world, express his feelings and give his judgments a pattern of meaning transmitted historically is manifested in symbolic form.

The formation of adolescent character through this tradition is seen from the sincerity and struggle of teenagers in carrying out the tradition of *Markusip* at night just to talk without any uncooperative elements even though the cold night breeze or heavy rain does not deprive them of the spirit to meet. In contrast to the present that in the meeting, there are uncooperative elements such as mutual use, indulgence in public places not even embarrassed to do relations outside marriage. The formation of teenage characters is evident to a civilizing contestation. Civilizing contestation is defined as competition in getting the ideal adolescent criteria according to the customs prevailing in society. Not a physical treasure or beauty, but a wealth of faith and noble character.

Cultural contestation in Mandailing Ethnic is the coercion in behaving where for young woman will not pass the main road of the village when going to go, she will pass the rear ditch the house, kindly to the elderly and also skill in processing poetry and *pantun*. For teenage men is shown in the obedience of worship and the ability to perform ritual or ceremony. Under these circumstances, the teenage character will be formed according to the social construction of society.

*Markusip* tradition pattern is by way of teenage boy will come to the house of adolescent girl at night by knocking wall based on agreed code or insert an object into house as symbol, then teenage woman will reply and respond to adolescent, after which they will talk to each other until dawn. The content of the conversation is always about praying, good living purpose and giving each other advice. There is a value of responsibility and trust that is well maintained in this tradition, because the adolescent will keep his promise any risk if he has promised to youthful woman and chairman of *naposonaulibulung*. In addition, the established relationships will not be easy to be disturbed or taken over by others because there is no code or symbolic equation, so girls will not respond to young looking people coming with new codes or symbols. The value of persistence, awareness of maintaining relationships and a great belief in this symbol that should be transferred to adolescents today in order to avoid extramarital sex. In an effort to revitalize this tradition, the role of the school as a formal education institution is required by the autonomy of education to schools.

Where the performance and value of regional wisdom *Markusip* traditions can be included in localized content

subjects. It thus will increase the learner's knowledge about the value and meaning of this *Markusip* tradition. Furthermore, adolescents are expected to be able to recognize and from the character of adolescents who have noble character. The asset values of localized wisdom contained in the tradition of *Markusip* is very important to form the character of adolescents in the face of the changes and the development of the times.

With the disclosure of information and communication, if not filtered well, then result in the disappearance of cultural values that can be a source of regional wisdom. According to Lubis (2008: 40) local wisdom as identity or public identity. The state identity is the character of culture (cultural character) that can serve as the nation's character development. The value of tolerance, togetherness and responsibility will be formed along with adherence to customary, religious and moral norms, despite the swift flow of globalization that plagues adolescents.

Implementation of the ideal *Markusip* tradition cannot be completely done as before because of environmental factors, physical homes or walls are not the same. However, in order to preserve, teach and transfer the meaning of values and norms contained in *Markusip* tradition can be done by setting the performance of activities such as reply rhymes and poetry expression in the night before the implementation of traditions *lek-lekan* (night watch at traditional ceremonies). Where the content of its activity has the purpose to transfer the values in shaping the character of adolescents as well as the preservation of a tradition in Mandailing culture.

In providing teaching or knowledge to adolescents today about a tradition that in its time very exist, can be packaged in a optical work such as a short film about the tradition of *Markusip*. In a optical work narrated again about the tradition of *Markusip* almost disappeared. Thus it will transfer the values contained within the tradition. In addition to the value and meaning can be known adolescents. This tradition can also be known his performance through location settings, physical environment and performance poetry and *pantun*.

With the concept or way of recovery of tradition and visual works, it can be expected the meaning, value and function of *Markusip* tradition that almost disappeared, can be preserved and transformed to adolescents. Therefore, the values and meanings contained in *Markusip* tradition are expected to form teenage characters and can serve as a filter against cultures that are not in accordance with the environment. By using the revitalization model in the form or way of recovery concept of tradition or visual works, can form the character of young with noble character.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Essentially this *Markusip* tradition contains the meanings, values, functions and norms that shape the character of adolescents in maintaining the regularity of Mandailing Ethnic customs and cultures. Local wisdom in this tradition is an ideal character identity that is very attached to adolescents. In his day the meaning was the introduction of the personality and character of each couple before marriage and functioned so that they did not conduct relations beyond the limits of reasonableness, because Mandailing custom norms are very thick with religious values. The expression that is always delivered contains the values of life guidelines that can be filtered against modern culture.

The codes, symbols or cues in this tradition are a way of expressing the hearts and a form of courtesy, etiquette in relationships, behaving and communicating and contemporary Mandailing cultures that are ideal for shaping the character of today's adolescents.

If the *Markusip* tradition can be revitalized and preserved. It can be used as a learning to form the character of adolescents today. Based on participants' observations and indepth interviews with informants, the revitalization model of the concept of traditional recovery is the appropriate way to put forward in preserving any endangered tradition. Therefore, *Markusip* tradition can continue to be preserved and interpreted by the next generation as the formation of adolescent character and resistance to culture that is not good.

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