

## Exploring Islamic Values in a Bataknese Song “Onang-Onang”: A Semantics Analysis

Dinda Suciana Rambe<sup>1</sup>, Romadhonna Siregar<sup>2</sup>, Rabiyyatul  
Adawiyah Harahap<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: <sup>1</sup>sucianarambe090919@gmail.com,

<sup>2</sup>omadhonnasrg@gmail.com, <sup>3</sup>rabiyyatuladawiyahhrp@gmail.com

### Abstract

*"Onang-onang" is a song that was part of key pagan rituals in the cultural practices of the Angkola and Mandailing tribes, practices which once conflicted with Islam. Despite this historical background, it is intriguing to learn that this song, to some extent, shares values rooted in Islam. Using semantic analysis, this research aims to explore how Islamic values are reflected in "Onang-onang." This qualitative study, conducted through detailed descriptive content analysis, examines how Islamic principles are incorporated into the song. The research found that the Islamic values embodied within "Onang-onang" can be classified into four categories: (1) divinity, through prayers and praise to God; (2) compassion, through parent-child relations; (3) wisdom, through expressions of gratitude; and (4) social solidarity. The lyrics also contain explicit Islamic expressions, such as bismillah and alhamdulillah. Furthermore, it is conveyed that figures such as Bolon, mora, kahanggi, anak boru, raja panusunan, raja torbing blok, naposo nauli bulung, and namora pule would have a blessed future if they were willing to learn from previous experiences.*

**Keywords:** Onang-Onang; Bataknese; Islamic Values; Semantics Analysis

## Introduction

*Tor tor* is a Bataknese dance performed harmoniously with traditional musical instruments, including *gondang*, flute, and *ogung*. Lexically, the word *tor tor* means movement, and it is taken from the verb *manortor* (dance).<sup>1</sup> This dance is very popular among the Batak tribes, including the Angkola and Mandailing tribes, who once opposed the spread of Islam in Barus Tapanuli, as it has greatly influenced Batak culture in South Tapanuli.<sup>2</sup> For people in South Tapanuli, *manortor* is not only about beautiful movement, with particular characteristics and meanings, but also about the philosophy of life and symbolic traditional rituals. Thus, it becomes enjoyable for both its audience and performer.

A series of traditional rituals can be found in *the horja godang* (big party), a traditional gathering of the people of South Tapanuli. This party is often accompanied by *margondang* (performing arts with musical instruments), *manortor* (dance), and *mar onang onang* (opening song to *tor tor* dance).<sup>3</sup> The inclusion of *onang-onang* in *margondang* is essential, as this song contains words of joy that celebrate life, but it also embodies a very sacred meaning. It also contains praise or flattery to the panopticon, hoping to get good things in life, such as glory, good luck, solidarity, and enthusiasm, and educational values for the young generation to always adhere to religious teachings.

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<sup>1</sup>Deni Eva Masida Dalimunthe, "Tor-Tor Pada Upacara Adat Perkawinan Masyarakat Tapanuli Selatan (Deni Eva Masida Dalimunthe)," *Gesture: Jurnal Seni Tari* 1, no. 1 (June 27, 2012), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Amin, "Internalisasi Nilai Hadis Dalam Adat Budaya Perkawinan Batak Angkola Tapanuli Selatan Sumatera Utara" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2023), p. 6-7.

<sup>3</sup> Rosmilan Pulungan and Adrial Falahi, "Tujuan Pelaksanaan Pesta Horja Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Mandailing," *Bahastra: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia* 3, no. 1 (September 30, 2018), P. 85.

“*Onang-onang*” has been studied from a diverse range of perspectives. Daulay et.al. (2013) analyzed educational values in this song within the *Angkola* communities. The values include religiosity, through believing in God Almighty, obeying God’s commands, avoiding God’s prohibitions, and being grateful. It also encompasses discipline through resilience and tenacity, as well as compassion, honesty, and responsibility.<sup>4</sup> Their study aimed to integrate these educational values into the high school curriculum, particularly in Islamic schools in the area. Moreover, Amri & Putri (2022) discussed the values of divinity, humanity, and kinship through the sound of “*Onang-Onang*” in the *Manortor* tradition. They elaborated on the significance of parental affection for children and in-laws, harmonious life, and family relationships. It is represented through the divinity of God Almighty. They also explored the characteristics of *Angkola* identity and their aesthetic values.<sup>5</sup>

Nasution (2018) studied the local wisdom embedded in “*Onang-onang*” among the Mandailing community using a pragmatic approach. She found that the text sung by *paronang-onang* has an opening meaning, an explanation of the intention of the wedding ceremony, advice, background story *sihabolonan suhut* and bride and groom, compliments. These texts have local wisdom values such as divine values, cooperation values sincerity to work, harmony values, and aesthetic values. The values contained in this text must be maintained because it is positively charged in determining the attitude of life and maintaining the

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<sup>4</sup> Ismail Rahmad Daulay, Hasanuddin Ws, and Ngusman Abdul Manaf, “Nilai-Nilai Edukatif Dalam Lirik Nyanyian Onang-Onang Pada Acara Pernikahan Suku Batak Angkola Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan Provinsi Sumatera Utara,” *Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pembelajaran* 1, no. 3 (October 1, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Yusni Khairul Amri and Dian Marisha Putri, “Meaning the Values of Onang-Onang Voice at The Manortor Tradition,” *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* 5, no. 3 (2022).

balance of this heterogeneity.<sup>6</sup> In a similar vein, Pulungan (2020) studied “*Onang-onang*” in Mandailing using linguistics and cultural analysis. He found that this song can be viewed as a poem sung during the Mandailing traditional wedding ceremony which is potentially applied in the learning of Indonesian language and literature. The lyrics are sung by *paronang-onang* (singers) when the *suhut* (party owner), *namora pule* (bride), *boru putra*, *mora*, and *kahanggi* (nobles) dance. His study echoed the previous research by Nasution about the local wisdom, but it focused more on the language or the linguistic composition.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, using Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of Habitus, Simamora & Madina (2023) examined the Islamic legal values in the marriage of the Angkola Batak Community, as expressed through the “*Onang-Onang*”. They found that this song is an expression of the heart's longing for the mother (parents) and her lover. Additionally, it is also used in celebratory situations, such as traditional ceremonies, and conveys religious values through the procession. They found that tradition cannot be separated from the role of parents, family, and relatives in educating the younger generation about attitudes and behaviors that align with Islamic teachings, as mentioned in Surah Luqman, Verse 17.<sup>8</sup>

Unlike the previous studies, this research will focus on how

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<sup>6</sup> Khairina Nasution, “Onang-Onang in Mandailing Culture and Its Local Wisdom: A Pragmatic Study,” *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 23, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>7</sup> Dedi Zulkarnain Pulungan, “Linguistic Composition and Cultural Characteristics of Mandailing Onang-Onang;” in *Proceedings of the 4th Sriwijaya University Learning and Education International Conference (SULE-IC 2020)* (4th Sriwijaya University Learning and Education International Conference (SULE-IC 2020), Palembang, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> Padlan Padil Simamora and Dinda Diffia Madina, “Islamic Legal Values In the Angkola Batak Community Marriage Onang-Onang Danace Tradition Sumatera, Indonesia,” *Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Hukum Islam Mahkamah* 8, no. 2 (2023).

Islamic values are aesthetically incorporated into “*Onang-onang*” used in the *Manortor* tradition. To find out the meaning and relationship between the two by interpreting the original *onang-onang* lyrics and then examining how the meaning of the lyrics has a relationship with Islamic values. Because, based on previous research, there has been no research that analyzes the relationship between Islamic values and the aesthetics of *onang-onang* lyrics. The urgency of this research is to determine that the *onang-onang* lyrics used in the *manortor* tradition in *Batak Angkola* and *Batak Mandailing* are not just lyrics of *onang-onang* singing, but also convey messages. This research is expected to enrich knowledge about *onang-onang* lyrics in modern culture, as it analyzes *onang-onang* lyrics associated with Islamic values that have not been explored before.

## **Method**

This study employs a qualitative research design centered on content analysis. The primary data source is the lyrical text of the song "*Onang-Onang*," strengthened by secondary sources from relevant scholarly journals and books. The methodology is grounded in library research, involving the systematic collection, review, and compilation of pertinent materials such as books, theses, and articles. Data analysis integrates a dual approach: first, an ethnographic approach is applied to interpret the lyrics through the living cultural practice of *manortor* within the *Batak Angkola* and *Batak Mandailing* communities, seeking to harmonize the textual meaning with Islamic values, supported by interdisciplinary perspectives. Subsequently, a semantic approach is utilized to uncover and explicate the layered meanings embedded within the lyrics. The findings are then systematically organized and presented in an explanatory and descriptive manner to ensure clarity and to directly address the principal research questions.

## Result and Discussion

### “*Onang-Onang*” Lyrics and Its Meaning

“*Onang-onang*,” also known as “*ende-ende*,” is a song in the *tor-tor* art.<sup>9</sup> It cannot be interpreted literally, but some sources say that the origin of the word *onang* is *inang*, which means mother. According to Mandailing folklore, “*Onang-onang*” originated from the songs of wandering people facing hardship. Overcome with longing for home but lacking the means to return, they would express these heartsick yearning through these improvised verses. The lyrics in “*Onang-onang*” are in the Mandailing language and have been adjusted to reflect the social status of the dancers (*tor-tor* dancers), but the melody remains the same. It expresses advice, prayer, and hope.<sup>10</sup>

“*Onang-onang*” in traditional ceremonies is an expression of unbearable longing in the heart, reflecting on the struggles of life and difficult times past. It serves to comfort children, in-laws, guests, and even those who are ill-tempered or upset. It is usually used in the context of marriage rituals, where, it gives advice or messages of life to individuals who are getting married. It can also be used as a form of parental advice to their children, and typically, it may only be performed by individuals of higher spiritual or social standing.<sup>11</sup>

The lyrics of “*Onang-onang*” vary with each *tor-tor* dance.

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<sup>9</sup> Syafriyana Ritonga, Elly Prihasti Wuriyani, and Rosmawaty Harahap, “Pemertahanan Nilai Kekeberatan Melalui Tradisi Merendeng-Endeng Pamingke Labuhanbatu Utara,” *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia (Sasindo)* 11, no. 1 (2022), P.2.

<sup>10</sup> Daulay, Ws, and Manaf, “Nilai-Nilai Edukatif Dalam Lirik Nyanyian Onang-Onang Pada Acara Pernikahan Suku Batak Angkola Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan Provinsi Sumatera Utara.”P. 150.

<sup>11</sup> Mastika Sari Harahap, “An Analysis Of Semantic On Onang-Onang Of Angkola-Mandailing Wedding Ceremony,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan [JIMEDU]* 1, no. 2 (November 2, 2021), P.5.

The *paronang-onang* composes the lyrics spontaneously and in poetic form; therefore, before singing, they must know the purpose of the ceremony. The background of the subject is studied one-on-one because each person has a different background, but the opening and closing verses remain the same. The difference lies in the core content of the song, which is tailored to the specific tor-tor dancer.<sup>12</sup>

The opening text serves as an introduction that explains the reason or purpose of the ceremony. Every *onang-onang* is always sung with the opening “*ile onang... boti baya onang*”<sup>13</sup> For example:

*“Ile onang baya onang* (Ile onang baya onang)  
*Bismillah Tapuka ma le tajolo mulai on* (Bismillah let's open this first)  
*Alhamdulillah di parabisanon* (Alhamdulillah at the end)  
*Dipaogo-pago mada mangucap raso syukur on*  
(strengthened to express gratitude)  
*Tu Tuhan ta ale nauli na basa i* (to the Most Merciful God)  
*Tu nadua baya si namanjungjungon* (who has given health to two in this care)  
*Nda asok ma jolo le fikiri ada* (slowly we think)  
*Ulang nda maruba nian ale luai on* (should not change anything)  
*Sian najolo indu nda sannari on* (from then to now)  
*Santabi nda jolo sappulu on* (Sorry in advance ten times sorry)  
*Sappulu noli marsatabi on* (Ten times apologize)

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<sup>12</sup> Niki Adian Nita, Syeilendra Syeilendra, And Syahrel Syahrel, “Bentuk Penyajian Gondang Dua Dan Onang-Onang (Ende-Ende) Dalam Mengiringi Tor-Tor Pada Upacara Perkawinan Adat Di Silaping Kecamatan Ranah Batahan Kabupaten Pasaman Barat,” *Jurnal Sendratasik* 3, No. 2 (March 1, 2014), P.4.

<sup>13</sup> Roswita Silalahi, Ely Hayati Nasution, and Anna Leli Harahap, “Onang-Onang: Angkola Mandailing Oral Tradition (Viewed from Culture, Local Wisdom and Education Perspectives)” (2nd International Conference on Social and Political Development (ICOSOP 2017), Atlantis Press, 2017), P. 115–119.

*Tu jolo na dua tulu on* (Forward two three (all relatives present))  
*Lobi nda tarsangapi on* (Especially to the respected future)  
*Ois nda taronong ale baya onang*". (*Ois nda taronong ale baya onang*)

The meaning of the opening conveys that, in general, the first stanza of the lyrics of *onang-onang* contains content with the theme of an introduction, which includes gratitude for the implementation of the event. Apart from that, it is also a notification to the relatives who are present that the event is about to start or that the *Onang-Onang (gondang)* performance is about to begin. Through the host, the party will convey an apology and respect to the *mora, harajaon, hatobangon*, traditional king, king of *panusunan*, and all the relatives present, in case there is any confusion or mistake in the *gondang* performance and the execution of the ceremony.

Inner closing text of *onang-onang* generally has the same meaning, as the closing text *onang-onang* is as follows;

*"Ile onang baya onang* (Ile onang baya onang)  
*Satahi hamu saoloan* (unanimous and unanimous)  
*Salumpat saindegean* (and one step and one step)  
*Pas songon siali sampangul* (like a sprig of tamarind)  
*Rap tu ginjang rap tu toru* (if up equals up)  
*Muda madabu rap madabu* (if you fall once fall)  
*Muda marbustak rap marbustak* (if muddy and muddy)  
*Ois nda taroanag ale baya onang*" (I don't know what to say, why don't you)

The closing text of "*onang-onang*" signifies that the *tor-tor* will soon end. The meaning contained in this closure lies in the sung poetry of the *paronang-onang*, which offers advice and prayers for living a better, peaceful life. It emphasizes the importance of working together in harmony and in line with shared goals, acting unanimously. When we fall or become covered in

mud, we must be prepared to get back up and face challenges with a new soul and a healthy mind, by following the guidance of our parents, relatives, and kings.

The text is full of deep meaning especially when the *tor-tor* is performed by the *Suhut bolon* (the event holder). An example is<sup>14</sup>; "*Pasonang amang on roha on, tasorahkon sude tu God on, so salamat marmo-on on, napalalu niat najar on, taradokkon sinuan budas on, anso repeat on manjadi ngot-ngot ipon sangatungkol i bagasan ngadal tondi matogu*". (My son, please calm your heart. We leave everything to God. Let the first one be safe. Convey the intention and vow to my son, so that there will be no more toothache or molar pain, [so that] cold flowers brought to Batangtoru [may be] safe, spirited, and strong). The meaning conveyed in these lyrics is that, as a parent, the *Suhut bolon* will fulfill his vows and nurture affection for his son. Now, his responsibility has been fulfilled, though not visible to the senses, it can be understood. This reflects the ideal successfully performed by the groom's parents, long held in the heart and now realized; "*Malos dingin- dingin on, obanon tu batangtoru on, horas do matondi munyu madingi, asa pir tondi matogu on*". This forms a rhyme from the *paronang-onang* inviting those present to encourage the bride and groom by saying, "*horas tondi madingin pir tondi matogu*" for their souls to return to their bodies. In the view of Mandailing society, humans consist of three parts: the body, the soul (spirit), and the *tondi*. The *tondi*, in this case, is a strength, energy, or spiritual essence that maintains spiritual and physical calm, keeping individuals balanced, sturdy, and in harmony with life.

The text of *onang-onang* differs when the *tor-tor* is

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<sup>14</sup> Dalimunthe, "Tor-Tor Pada Upacara Adat Perkawinan Masyarakat Tapanuli Selatan (Deni Eva Masida Dalimunthe).", P.6.

performed by the *kahanggi* (one clan). An example is,<sup>15</sup> “*Salaklak sa singkoru on, na sasanggar sora ria on, na sabaruon saboruon, na sasarada sabaruon on*” (Who joins the bark with the tasbih [which has a tight knot], who becomes the foundation, who has both sons and daughters, we are like a mother). The hidden meaning is that the *kahanggi* are as significant as the bridegroom, acting as brothers and sisters. They form a close unit and must willingly help and take responsibility for the event, cooperating to see it through to completion and realizing the *Suhut's* wishes.

Next, the text when the *manortor* (the dancer) is the *anak boru*, a man married to the daughter of the event holder.<sup>16</sup> An example of an *onang-onang* text when the *anakboru* performs the *tor-tor* is<sup>17</sup> “*di ginjang jadi bungkolan on, di toru manjadi sinit on, tu suhut sihabolonan on, si porcan na borat on, si jinjing na, ringan on, panyambungtangan naponjoton, parmata mata ni honas on, na dao pamandangan on, na mamboto sude di bagas godang on*” (Above, they are the pillar; below, they are the support, for the temple expert, they are the heavy bearer yet light-handed, the short-armed yet capable, the intelligent and knowledgeable one who knows all within this house). The meaning here is praise for the *anak boru*, who is tasked with overseeing the event. Therefore, everyone should maintain good relations with the *anak boru*, who is also seen as wise, forward-thinking, and fully aware of their surroundings.

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<sup>15</sup> Diana Riski Sapitri Siregar et al., “Upacara Margondang Dan Tortor Batak Angkola Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Pendidikan Islam,” *Mumtaz: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 1 (December 28, 2022), P.9.

<sup>16</sup> Basyral Hamidy Harahap and Hotman M Siahaan, *Orientasi Nilai-Nilai Budaya Batak: Suatu Pendekatan Perilaku Batak Toba Dan Angkola Dan Mandailing* (Jakarta: Willem Iskandar, 1987), P. 47-48.

<sup>17</sup> Abbas Pulungan and Ahmad Bulyan Nasution, *Dalihan na tolu: peran dalam proses interaksi antara nilai-nilai adat dengan Islam pada masyarakat Mandailing dan Angkola Tapanuli Selatan*, Cetakan pertama (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2018), P. 88.

After the *anak boru*, the next to manortor is the king of *panusunan*. When the king of *panusunan* prepares to dance, customary betel is first offered to him (*nisurdu dohot burangir nitiktik*), accompanied by the old *gordang* and without *onang-onang*. Once the king of *panusunan* arrives at the *galanggang panorotoran*, the *ulos tonun patani* is presented. When the king of the *panusunan* was the *manortor*, the one who overtook him was *Suhut*. The *Namora* and *natoras* from the village carry out the *horja*. The *tor-tor* of the king of *panusunan* is called the old *tor-tor*, meaning the king of the *manortor* as an expression of his affection and generosity at the event. The text says:

“O ... *banua ni Raja Panusunan Bulung na sakti on do, Dung manortor Raja Panusunan Bulung on, Parsadaan ni marga Hasibuan I, Mulaima diurus tano Huristaki, Napoda poda di Aek Barumun on, Anggo utatap di hapadean I, Tarlobi da Sutan si paingot on, Hamu ma marga Hasibuan I, Botul mada juguk di bagas godangi, Adong taporan ni pudun Barumun, Adong taporan ni naulion*”

Trans. O King who has opened the district this, the king's tor-tors, the Hasibuan Marga association, who initially took care of the Huristak area, who advised Aek Barumun, if you look at the kindness, especially at the sutan who reminded, you are the Hasibuan clan, who sit in the traditional Batak house, there is an expansion to Barumun, there is a good expansion.

The lyric above expresses gratitude to the customary king who first opened and expanded the area, specifically the king of the *Hasibuan* clan in *Huristak*. Furthermore, the text also expresses gratitude to King *Panusunan Bulung*, of the *Hasibuan* lineage in the *Huristak* area, for his presence at the *horja godang* event and asks for prayers to ensure the event proceeds smoothly.

During this event, there are *tor-tor* performances by King *Balok Torbing*, the king who traveled from neighboring villages to

attend the *horja godang*. For example, the lyric for the *tor-tor* of King *Torbing Balok* states:

*“Ois ale baya onang, santabi sapulu noli marsantabi,  
diaraja na dao dot nadonok, habang siorkor na songgop  
di ayu ara, on mada Raja namanortor, tor-tor ni raja-  
raja”*

Trans. Hi, Onang-onang, I'm sorry ten times I'm sorry, in the king who is far away and the king who is near, fly the siorkor bird that perched on a big tree, this is the king who manortor, tor-tor for Kings.

The lyric above expresses a religious value in the phrase "*santabi sapulu noli marsantabi*," which is used before offering an apology, as encouraged by religious teachings, regardless of whether a wrong has been committed. Forgiveness is highly recommended in social life because forgiving the mistakes of others can be difficult to practice. Thus, mutual forgiveness is considered a virtuous act, as humans are not free from mistakes.<sup>18</sup>

*Tor-tor naposo nauli bulung* are a *tor-tor* performed by young people during a *horja godang* event such as a wedding. Here, '*naposo*' refers to teenage boys in *Mandailing* society, while '*nauli*' is the term for teenage girls. In the context of a *Horja Godang*, this *tor-tor* can be performed as part of welcoming honored guests who are in attendance. The lyric states:

*Onang-onang tor- tor naposo nauli bulung is “ole onang,  
parjolo mada udokon horason On male baya iba nai tor  
di nauli bulung naposo bulung on, haholongan mada nisi  
matobangon, namartor baya di jolo galanggangon,  
sonang tondi dohot badan muyu on, sada bintang mada  
sada bulanon, samo ginjang baya samo badannon, hamu*

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<sup>18</sup> Selti Astria Mandalahi, “Makna Gerak Tari Tor-Tor Dalam Perkawinan Batak Toba Di Desa Silalahi, Kecamatan Silahisabungan, Kabupaten Dairi, Provinsi Sumatera Utara | Jurnal Paradigma : Journal of Sociology Research and Education,” accessed August 15, 2023, P. 48.

*do da inang amang namarnortoron hami sude marjob norohaon, rokkap hamu inang martanggung jawabon, seret do da marjobnirohaon di haroroan ini nantulang muyuon, ole onang tar onang au le onang, Madung godang da inang atcimunon, burju inang da nasikolaon, namanuntut ilmu napodaon, sodapot da inang nadicita-citamon, sanon dohot ginjang niarii, amu do da inang harapon, harapon dohot ama rap dohot inaon, akke inang amu do generasi penerus on, harapan nisi hatobangon,, ile onang taronang au le baya onang”*

Trans. Hey man, the first thing i said *horas*. Here is the *tor-tor nauli bulung*, with enduring spirit and the favorite of the parents, dancing at the front of the arena, joyful in heart and healthy in body. You are like one star in the sky, your presence graces this space. To you, young men and women who dance: we are all delighted to join you. Your children’s cooperation and responsibility bring us joy. You are the great cucumber kids, the good students who seek knowledge and guidance, so that you may succeed in your aspirations, from now until old age. For you are the hope of your father and mother; you are the next generation, the pride and future of your parents.

The *onang-onang* conveys a message of goodness to the youth, who are seen as successors to the family, society, and nation, and who embody the great hopes of their parents. Furthermore, the *onang-onang* performed during *tor-tor naposo nauli bulung* contains well-wishes, praise, advice, and prayers for young men and women, encouraging them to lead better lives by avoiding wrongdoing and pursuing goodness through education, social engagement, and family responsibility. Additionally, the *tor-tor naposo nauli bulung* serves to welcome honored guests.

*Tor-Tor Namora Pule* (the bridal *tor tor*) is a dance performed by the bride and groom in front of both sets of parents and the groom’s extended family. It serves as an expression of respect and apology from the couple to customary leaders, religious figures, family members, and the wider community who

have contributed to the success of the wedding ceremony.<sup>19</sup>

The content of the onang-onang for namora pule is as follows:

*"Di partor-tor ma male boru namorai songoni muse si anak na di raja- raja i bila ananda baya dicita-citaoni bila ananda dibaga-bagai Sambilan bulan ko da di kandungani Doppak menek ni pematangon nadi dejang-dejang baya di abingi nadi anggun ko di bue-bue i muda tangis ko di tonga borngini Inatta le marbue jolo buei le baya sanga didihit rongit on i tasinggot le nono ni mata i di amatta dohot di inatta I Marumur ko da onom bulani di oban doho anggit u jae julu I namanjalaki baya da ngolu-ngoluon burju doho baya nasikolai dapot baya ijazah tanda lulus si ulang amang pajalajelu hamu sahata ma hamu saoloan dohot alak parumaen salumpat hamu saindege saonok di ngolu ngolu Pancur di malintang Batang bargot dibola dua Ulang kamu marsirang-sirang Rumbuk-rumbuk kamu na dua"*

Trans. Tor-tor, dear child, proud daughter: for nine months you were in the womb. When you were small, you were carried and rocked. If you cried in the middle of the night, your mother would come swaying to soothe you. If a mosquito bit you, your father and mother would wake with tired eyes. At six months old, you were taken everywhere by those working hard to provide. It is good for you to go to school, so you may earn a diploma. Do not let one child live downstream and another upstream; let your words be united. Follow your spouse, step together and stand together, for as long as life continues. Shine like the radiance in Malintang; may the trunk of the Anau tree be supported by two. Do not quarrel; be good to one another.

The meaning conveyed in the lyrics of this onang-onang is parental advice from the groom's side. It begins by recalling the

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<sup>19</sup> Sahrudin Pohan, "Margondang Pada Masyarakat Padang Lawas (Studi Kasus Desa Gunung Malintang)," *Jurnal Education And Development* 9, no. 3 (August 3, 2021), P 559.

hardships endured by parents and child, from pregnancy and early care, through schooling, to working hard for a living, narrating the journey from birth to success. The lyrics aim to fortify the hearts of the bride and groom, offering guidance for married life so they may mature and take responsibility for their family.<sup>20</sup> The underlying lesson is twofold: first, to understand the life history and struggles of the parents and the child's own journey; second, to instill humility and a willingness to work hard for their new family. The central message urges the couple to heed and follow the counsel given: to avoid quarrels that could divide the family, to prevent separation by acting in unity and mutual agreement, and to cooperate wholeheartedly so that the family may live in harmony now and in the future.

### **The Harmonization of Islamic Values and the Aesthetics of *Onang-Onang***

Some scholars argue that Islam first entered the archipelago through the coastal regions of Sumatra, specifically in Barus, located in Central Tapanuli on Sumatra island.<sup>21</sup> Geographically, this area neighbored the Angkola, a Batak ethnic group, while the Mandailing Batak inhabited Mandailing Natal Regency, which borders West Sumatra. Historical records indicate that Barus served as a starting point for Islamic civilization in the archipelago as early as the 7th century AD, functioning as a center of Islamic society for over 1,400 years. It was widely known among traders from Europe, the Middle East, India, and China. High demand for spices such as camphor, benzoin incense, and pepper among

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<sup>20</sup> Linda Efrina Nasution, "The Realization Of Speech Function In Onang – Onang: How And Why? | Nasution | Anglo-Saxon: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris," February 25, 2020, P. 114.

<sup>21</sup> Indra Harahap et al., "Rekonstruksi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Dan Peradaban Islam Di Titik Nol Barus," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 5 (September 20, 2022), P. 2366.

Muslim traders made Barus a significant hub in the Islamic trading network.

The arrival of Islam contributed to a model of societal diversity while upholding traditional Angkola values passed down through generations. At the same time, the community adopted religion as a sacred way of life. The influence of Islam is also evident in the cultural landscape, as seen in *Salumpat Saindege* (Angkola Earth), which marks a new phase in the social life of the community. Throughout this historical journey, custom and religion began to interact and influence each other, with each shaping the other. One logical consequence of this cultural encounter was intense interaction, leading to a blending and mutual absorption of religious values into custom, and vice versa.<sup>22</sup>

The harmony between Islam and Angkola Batak custom is widely recognized. T.M. Hasbi Ash Shiddieqy and Hazarini share the same opinion regarding the relationship between Islamic law and customary law.<sup>23</sup> Customary law and Islamic law are symmetrical (harmonious) as long as customary law does not conflict with Islamic principles.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Lukito notes in his thesis that this is not a confrontation but a dialogical and harmonious relationship. The two legal systems complement one another, Islamic law acknowledges the effectiveness of local customary law within its legislative framework, while customary law accepts Islamic law as the highest expression of indigenous

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<sup>22</sup> Ahmat Gunawan Pasaribu, Ahmad Qorib, and Kasron Muchsin, "Masjid Sri Alam Dunia Dan Hubungannya Dengan Penyebaran Islam Di Sipirok, Tapanuli Selatan," *Warisan: Journal of History and Cultural Heritage* 2, no. 2 (September 25, 2021), P. 56.

<sup>23</sup> Agus Moh Najib, *Pengembangan Metodologi Fikih Indonesia Dan Kontribusinya Bagi Pembentukan Hukum Nasional* (DEPAG, 2017), P. 192.

<sup>24</sup> Sayuti Thalib, "Hubungan Hukum Adat Dengan Hukum Islam," *Jurnal/Al-Jamiah/Al-Jamiah No. 9 Th. XIII-1975/*, June 27, 2008, P. 29.

legal tradition.

The role of customary law is significant because it can serve as a bridge between Islamic law and social reality. After all, customary law itself emerges from the ongoing interactions between communities.<sup>25</sup> One logical consequence of the encounter between these two cultural systems is the occurrence of intense interaction, which fosters a process of integration and mutual absorption, where religious values and norms are incorporated into custom, and custom, in turn, is influenced by religion. One cultural tradition still commonly observed in Mandailing Batak traditional ceremonies is *Mar onang-onang* within *horja godang*, which also reflects the process of Islamic acculturation as embodied in “*Onang-onang*.”

Based on the analysis of the lyrics of “*Onang-onang*,” this research found that the song conveys distinct values. The first is divinity. “*Onang-onang*” contains an opening section, an explanation of the ceremony's purpose, a background narrative, a narrator, expressions of praise, advice, and prayers that emphasize virtuous life values and spirituality.<sup>26</sup> In the opening, it states:

*"bismillah jolo mada dijolo muloon, alhamdulillah do baya di parabisanon, dipagogo mada mangucap raso syukur on, tu Tuhan ta ale nauli na basa i, nama lehen mada kesehatanon tu na dua baya si namajungjunon."*

The text includes the invocation "*Bismillah*" at the beginning and the expression "*Alhamdulillah*" at the end, conveying gratitude to the Most Merciful and Gracious God for

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<sup>25</sup> Ratno Lukito, *Tradisi Hukum Indonesia*, vol. Vol. 1 (Cianjur: the institute for migrant rights press, 2012), P. 62-68.

<sup>26</sup> Nurhakimah, “Pesan Komunikasi Islam Dalam Syair Seni Tarian Tor-Tor Pada Pernikahan Adat Mandailing Di Kabupaten Mandailing Natal” (skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara Medan, 2018), P. 7.

bestowing health upon two individuals under His care. Gratitude, in this sense, is the heartfelt acknowledgment of the blessings Allah SWT has granted. This acknowledgment may be expressed verbally through praise, affirmed inwardly, and manifested in actions that align with the will of Allah SWT. Muslims are called to remain humble in all circumstances, continually seeking wisdom, as reflected in Surah Aḍ-Ḍuḥā [93]:11.

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ

Trans. And for the favors of your Lord, then you should mention them (with gratitude).

Another example is the phrase "*suhut bolon*," which translates as "*tasorahkon sude tu Tuhan on*" (we leave it all to God), conveying a sense of submission to Allah SWT, regardless of the circumstances. In Islam, this attitude is commonly referred to as *tawakkal*, meaning to place one's complete trust in Allah SWT concerning all affairs, as He governs everything, as affirmed in Surah At-Taubah [9]:51.

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ  
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Trans. Say (Prophet Muhammad), "Nothing will befall us except what God has decreed for us. He is our Protector, and only in God should the believers put their trust.

The phrase "*napalalu niat najar on*" (to make a vow) also reflects divinity. In Islam, taking a vow is permissible, but it must be accompanied by a commitment to fulfill it. Such a vow should be directed toward a virtuous purpose that aligns with God's command and must not involve disobedience to Him. As stated in Surah Al-Insān [76]:7.

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا

Trans. They fulfill their vows, but are afraid of the day when the punishment will spread everywhere.

The second value highlighted in “Onang-onang” is affection, as it conveys love between parents and children. The lyrics state:

*“bila ananda baya dicita-citaoni bila ananda dibagabagai sambilan bulan ko da di kandungani doppelak menek ni pamatangon nadi dejang-dejang baya di abingi nadi anggung ko di bue-bue i muda tangis ko di tonga borngini Inatta le marbue jolo buei le baya sanga didihit rongit on”*

It aims to illustrate the depth of care and affection parents have for their children. The moral lesson conveyed is that children are called to honor and serve their parents, given the profound sacrifices parents make. A mother carries her child for nine months, faces the risks of childbirth, and devotes herself to daily care. She willingly stays awake to watch her child sleep, worries over a mosquito’s bite, and rises each night to respond to cries, breastfeeding and changing diapers. A mother’s sacrifice and hardship are enduring; her extraordinary love becomes an ideal that the younger generation strives to emulate in the future.<sup>27</sup> In the Quran, it is stated in Surah Luqman [31]:14,

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

Trans. And We command man (to do good) to his two parents; his mother had conceived him in a growing weakness and weaned him in two years. Be grateful to me, and to your two parents; only to me will you come back.

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<sup>27</sup> Dr Zubaedi M.Pd M. Ag, *Desain Pendidikan Karakter* (Prenada Media, 2015), P. 74.

Another value conveyed by “*Onang-onang*” is social solidarity. Harmony is a state in which all groups coexist, care for one another, assist each other, and practice mutual tolerance, thereby fostering social solidarity. This solidarity embodies an emotional and moral connection forged in individual and group relationships, promoting mutual trust, shared goals and aspirations, loyalty to the group, and a sense of collective purpose.<sup>28</sup> The forms and expressions of social solidarity within society are diverse and include, among others, cooperation and a strong sense of social connectedness. This is prominently reflected in *horja godang*, an event where cooperation is highly valued by the community to ensure its successful execution. This is evident when the *Suhut* (the host of the event) calls upon relatives to help organize the occasion, as expressed in the following chant:

*"di ginjang jadi bungkolan on, di toru manjadi sinit on, tu suhut sihabolonan on, si porcan na borat on, si jinjing na, ringan on, panyambung tangan naponjoton, parmata mata ni honas on, na dao pamandangan on, na mamboto sude di bagas godang on."*

This request is addressed to *anak boru* during the event, which aligns with what is stated in the Quran, Surah Al-Mā'idah [5]:2.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

Trans. And help each other in (doing) virtue and piety, and do not help each other in committing sins and transgressions. And fear God, verily God is severe in punishment.

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<sup>28</sup> Irena Andina Nst and Teddy Permadi, *Seminar Internasional Riksa Bahasa: Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Syair Nyanyian Onang-Onang Pada Pertunjukan Gordang Sambilan* (Bandung: Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia, 2018), P. 559.

Cooperation yields outcomes that can be enjoyed collectively and provides benefits felt by all who participate. This is evident in *Horja Godang*, which involves not only the *Dalihan Natolu* present at the ceremony but also the *Naposo Nauli Bulung* and *Raja Torbing Balok*.<sup>29</sup> Harmony is achieved when the *paronang-onang* (the speaker or poet) acts as a connector or mediator. They convey the request of the *suhut* (the host) to the *naposo nauli bulung* (the esteemed youth), encouraging the entire community to engage wholeheartedly in launching the event. This dynamic is reflected in the lyrics.

*“Samo ginjang baya samo badannon, hamu do da inang  
amang namarnortoron hami sude marjob norohaon,  
rokkap hamu inang martanggung jawabon, seret do da  
marjob nirohaon di haroroan ini nantulang muyun.”*

In general, *gotong royong* and cooperation share the same essence. Mutual cooperation involves helping one another, while cooperation refers to an agreement between parties to carry out a shared activity. This is reflected in the hadith narrated by Muttafaq 'alaih, which states:

الْمُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْبُنْيَانِ يَشُدُّبَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا (ثُمَّ سَبَّكَ بَيْنَ  
أَصَابِعِهِ)

Trans. A believer to another believer is like a building mutually reinforcing one another. (Then the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, closed his fingers together (HR. Mutafaq'alaih)

Moreover, “*Onang-onang*” contains moral values related to goodness and virtue, which serve as the foundation of human life. As previously mentioned, these values include gratitude, an

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<sup>29</sup> Dony Bagus Bramantyo and Fuzi Lestari, “Bentuk Solidaritas Sosial Kelompok Pedagang Warung Apung Desa Wisata Krakitan Kecamatan Bayat Kabupaten Klaten,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi*, 2021, P. 18-19.

acknowledgment of the blessings bestowed by God, demonstrated through submission to Him.<sup>30</sup> It also includes maintaining hope and expectation. In “*Onang-onang*,” the lyrics state:

*“Burju inang da nasikolaon, namanuntut ilmu napodaon,  
sodapot da inang nadicita-citamon, sanon dohot ginjang  
niarii, amu do da inang harapon, harapon dohot ama rap  
dohot inaon, akke inang amu do generasi penerus on,  
harapan nisi hatobangon,, ile onang taronang au le baya  
onang”*

Trans. Students study to acquire knowledge and wisdom so that they *may* achieve their aspirations throughout their lives. They are both the hope and the investment of their parents, entrusted with becoming the next generation. The hope of parents.

The lyrics above encourage children to be diligent and wise in seeking guidance. Their primary aim is to achieve success according to their aspirations, thereby attaining a better life in the future.

It is important for students to be actively engaged in learning and receptive to advice from those with greater experience. This will help prepare them well to realize their dreams and goals. The lyrics also emphasize the responsibility of the younger generation as the hope of their parents and society. Therefore, it is hoped that they will make the most of educational opportunities and use them as a means to contribute positively to social and economic development. This aligns with Islamic teachings that instruct Muslims to continuously seek knowledge, as emphasized in Surah al-Kahf [18]:66.

قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِي مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا

Trans. Musa said to Khidhr: "Can I follow you so that you

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<sup>30</sup> “Model Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Keluarga - Amirulloh Syarbini - Google Buku,” accessed August 15, 2023, P. 70.

teach me the true knowledge among the sciences that have been taught to you?

Lastly, prayer is also prominent in “*Onang-onang*.” It says,

*“hupang doon ho baya nikku di Tuhan i, ulang be jolo le halanganna i, angke madung ro do parumaen on, parumaen baya siakkaan on, ison au mandoaon on anso lolot hita jolo le mangolu i, disiono japar pangidoan i, onma bolas pangidoan nami”*

Trans. I ask you to God, so that there will be no obstacles because this daughter-in-law has come, the son-in-law of this eldest son. Here I pray for him so that we can live longer in this happy house. This is the request that we pray for.

The excerpt above emphasizes the importance of prayer to seek God’s blessings for a smooth and successful marriage. In Islam, the prayer found in the *onang-onang* text asks God to remove obstacles, grant ease and flow to the ceremony, as well as a prayer for Allah SWT to grant goodness and happiness.<sup>31</sup> This aligns with the guidance provided in Surah al-Kahf [18]:10.

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ  
لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا

Trans. (Remember) when the young men sought refuge in the cave, and they prayed: "O our Lord, grant us mercy from Your side and perfect for us straight guidance in our affairs .

Also, in Ar-Rūm [30]:21, it says,

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ

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<sup>31</sup> Nasution, “Onang-Onang in Mandailing Culture and Its Local Wisdom.”P.52.

بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Trans. And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind, so that you are inclined and feel at ease with them, and he will make love and affection between you. Indeed, in such a thing, there is a sign for the people who think.

### Conclusion

Despite its origins in pagan tradition, “*Onang-onang*” has evolved to incorporate Islamic values, including; divinity, expressed through gratitude and surrender to Allah SWT, compassion, conveyed through parental love, social solidarity, emphasizing cooperation, and wisdom, reflected in praise, hope, and prayers for a better future. Performed as part of the *tor-tor* dance in Batak culture, the song’s poetic lyrics underscore not only the spiritual relationship between humanity and God but also the communal bonds among people. It enriches and strengthens the cultural and religious identity of Muslim Batak communities, contributing to the preservation of their heritage in an era increasingly shaped by globalization.

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