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***Merantau* in The Ethnic Tradition of Minangkabau:
Local Custom without Sharia Basis?**

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Abstract: Customary practice in Minangkabau is based on sharia, and sharia is based on the Qur'an (as provisioned in the proverb *Adat Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah*-ABS/SBK). As a customary practice, is *merantau* in the Minangkabau tradition based on sharia? This article explains the relationship between custom and sharia in Minangkabau's *merantau* tradition. This study is a qualitative research with in-depth interview data collection techniques and literature study. In-depth interviews were conducted with four distinct individuals representing customary figures and religious figures of West Sumatra. The study found that *merantau* in the Minangkabau tradition emerged out of the matrilineal customary *system* that has been in place long before Islam was introduced to the Minangkabau community. As a custom, several aspects of *merantau* in the *Minang* culture contradict Islamic sharia. This indicates that the relationship between custom and sharia is not hierarchical as stipulated in the ABS/SBK model. The study results may have implications on new relations between customary law, sharia, culture, and religion.

Keywords: *Merantau*, custom, Minangkabau, matrilineal, sharia.

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Abstrak: Adat di Minangkabau didasarkan pada syariah, dan syariah didasarkan pada Al-Qur'an (sebagaimana diatur dalam pepatah Adat Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah-ABS/SBK). Sebagai praktik adat, apakah merantau dalam tradisi Minangkabau berdasarkan syariah? Artikel ini menjelaskan hubungan antara adat dan syariah dalam tradisi merantau Minangkabau. Kajian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data wawancara mendalam dan studi literatur. Wawancara mendalam dilakukan kepada empat individu berbeda yang mewakili tokoh adat dan tokoh agama Sumatera Barat. Kajian ini menemukan bahwa merantau dalam tradisi Minangkabau muncul dari sistem adat matrilineal yang telah ada jauh sebelum Islam masuk ke masyarakat Minangkabau. Sebagai adat, beberapa aspek merantau dalam budaya Minang bertentangan dengan syariat Islam. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa hubungan antara adat dan syariah tidak bersifat hierarkis sebagaimana diatur dalam ABS/SBK. Hasil kajian tersebut dapat berimplikasi pada relasi baru antara hukum adat, syariah, budaya dan agama.

Kata Kunci: Merantau, adat, minangkabau, matrilineal, syariah.

Introduction

Merantau is the act of moving from one place of residence to another carried out by an individual or group of individuals permanently or temporarily within a certain distance. According to this definition, *merantau* strongly correlates with issues of time and place. In terms of place, *merantau* refers to moving from one's homeland or place of birth to another location outside of their homeland. A person's homeland or birthplace serves as an essential concept in the act of *merantau*. The concept of birthplace is often attributed to one's village or kampung, hence the term *kampung halaman* (homeland). Accordingly, *merantau* has always been associated with migration, which is the movement of people either from rural to urban areas, or from urban to rural areas. However, the most important concept in migration is not the relationship between the villages and the cities or vice versa. The core concept of migration is movement, be it by humans,¹ or animals.²

Various studies on migration have provided numerous explanations regarding the causal factors for people to migrate. As a result, the term migration

¹ Hugh Dingle and V. Alistair Drake. What is Migration? *BioScience*, 57, No. (2), 2007, p. 113-127. Also see: Christiane Harzig, Dirk Hoerder and Donna R Gabaccia. *What is Migration History?*, Cambridge, Malden: Polity, 2014. Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

² Edward J Taylor. *Differential Migration, Networks, Information and Risk*. Cambridge: Migration and Development Program, Harvard University, 1984. Also see: Graeme Hugo. *Migration and Climate Change*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd, 2013. <http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

may also be confusing when movement is based on the rural and urban concept, wherein someone born in the city who subsequently moved to a village would similarly be considered as engaging in an act of *merantau*. This is why *merantau* is a very unique concept and it cannot be easily defined as migration or transmigration as mentioned by Hugo (1981)³ or Naim (2012)⁴ when analyzing the *merantau* culture in Minangkabau.

In addition to place, *merantau* also correlates with time. In this regard, *merantau* is an act of moving away from one's homeland or birthplace within a certain period of time. *Merantau* indicates that the individual engaging in the said act would return to their homeland or birthplace, regardless of it being in the village or city. Goldscheider (1973)⁵ considers *merantau* as a migration process in which the migrating individual returns to their place of origin to subsequently live most of their life in their homeland. Nevertheless, there are *perantau* (a person or people who engage in the act of *merantau*) who do not return to their place of origin, which is similar to Italians who migrated to the United States and do not return. Based on this perspective, *merantau* can be considered as a unique concept as it is distinct from migration or transmigration that refers to permanently moving one's place of residence.

In terms of time and space, *merantau* is unique and different from migration. The distinction is indicated by the fact that *merantau* is a cultural concept. And as a cultural concept, *merantau* surpasses the boundaries of time and space. *Merantau* contains sublime cultural values that are revered and preserved as the pride of Minangkabau community's traditional code of conduct. Accordingly, *merantau* in this regard is considered as tradition instead of migration. One of the ethnic communities with strong *merantau* tradition in Indonesia is the Minangkabau ethnic group in West Sumatera.

According to Munoz (2016)⁶ the *merantau* tradition of Minangkabau has been in place since the 7th century when Minangkabau traders left their homeland to sell gold in Jambi and became involved in founding the Malay Kingdom. Meanwhile, Naim (2012)⁷ explains that *merantau* dates back to the 13th century when Minangkabau people began leaving their hometown heading to the west

³ Graeme Hugo, *Population Mobility in West Java*, Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1981.

⁴ Mochtar Naim, *Merantau, Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau*, Jakarta: Rajawali, 2012.

⁵ Calvin Goldscheider, *Population, Modernization, and Social Structure*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973.

⁶ Paul Michel Munoz, *Early Kingdoms of the Indonesian Archipelago and the Malay Peninsula*, Singapore, Editions Didier Millet, 2016.

⁷ Naim. *Merantau, Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau....* Also see: Noel B. Salazar. *The (Im) Mobility of Merantau as a Sociocultural Practice in Indonesia*. In Nataša Gregorič Bon; Jaka Repič Moving Places: Relations, Return and Belonging, New York: Berghahn, 2016.

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coast of the island of Sumatera from Meulaboh to Bengkulu to trade spices under the reign of the Aceh Sultanate. Subsequently, in the 15th century the Minangkabau *perantau* even stayed in Negeri Sembilan under the Malacca Sultanate. When the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511, numerous Minangkabau *perantau* moved to South Sulawesi. They supported the Gowa Sultanate as traders, ulemas, and administrators.⁸ This explains that *merantau* to the Minangkabau community is a tradition that has existed long before the advent of Islam in Minangkabau's cultural system.

As a tradition, *merantau* refers to several teachings contained in *petata petitih*, which are proverbs recognized as Malay literature. Literary pieces in *petata petitih* may contain advices, views, guidelines for better life, and guidance for social relations in the community. Traditional Minangkabau folks often make use of *petata petitih* when giving their descendants advices. These proverbs are very concise, condensed, and attached appropriately with words containing elements of life values and lessons. Every proverb consists of two or more stanzas. According to Kurniasih, Rahman and Sari (2017),⁹ there are a number of *petata petitih* used as customary basis for *merantau* such as follows:

Karatau madang di Ulu, babuah babungo balun,

Marantau Bujang dahulu, di kampung paguno balun.

[Karatau grows upstream forth, fruits flowers have yet appeared,
O child do first wander forth, at home remains of no use still]

Kalau pandai bakain panjang, labiah pado kain saruang

Kalau pandai bainduak samang, labiah pado bainduak kanduang

[When putting on a long cloth better than a sarong (is akin to)

When mutual care with a landlady is better than having a mother]

Jan disangko murah batimbakau, maracik maampai pulo

Jan disangko murah pai marantau, basakik marasai pulo.

[Don't consider it easy making tobacco, blending then drying

Don't consider it easy leaving *merantau*, there's pain and also suffering]

The custom in Minangkabau is considered to be based on sharia due to the fact that Minangnese adhere to the principle of *Adak Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah* (ABS/SBK), which means custom is based on sharia, and sharia is based on the Qur'an. According to Ramayulis (2011)¹⁰, ABS/SBK is the

⁸ Abdurrahman, *Kedatangan orang Melayu di Makassar*. In H.D. Magemba, *Kenallah Sulawesi Selatan*, Jakarta: TimunMas, 1956.

⁹ Ulfa Kurniasih., et.al., "The Meaning of Merantau (Wandering) In Petatah-Petitih (Proverb) of Minangkabau," *Journal of Higher Education & Research Society: A Refereed International* 1, No. (2), 2017, p. 528-537.

¹⁰ Ramayulis, "Traktat Marapalam "Adat Basandi Syara'- Syara' Basandi Kitabullah" (Diktum Karamat Konsensus Pemuka Adat dengan Pemuka Agama dalam Memadukan Adat dan Islam di Minangkabau – Sumatera Barat," *Teologia* 5, No. (1), 2011.
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apex of contiguity, clash, adjustment, and fusion between customary Minangkabau practices that have existed since the time of their earliest ancestors and Islam that was introduced later. This proverb is the manifestation of a consensus made during the era when Islamic sharia had penetrated into Minangkabau culture in West Sumatera. The consensus was reached between ulemas during the religious purification movement who were also known as the Padri Group and customary figures who were known as *Ninik Mamak*. The monumental event is known as the “Marapalam Treaty”, as it took place in the Marapalam Hill of Tanah Datar Regency, West Sumatera in the 19th century.¹¹ ABS/SBK serves as a moderate middle ground agreed upon by religious and customary figures in order to preserve Minangkabau culture and its customary code of conducts so that it can exist side by side with Islamic sharia.¹²

As a tradition that has existed even long before Islamic sharia was introduced to the people of Minangkabau, is *merantau* based on sharia? This very question is the problem addressed in the research. Accordingly, this study is of utmost importance as it aims to prove whether *merantau* as a Minangkabau tradition is based on sharia or otherwise. This article assumes that there are certain elements in *merantau* as a traditional practice in Minangkabau that are not based on sharia. This further implies the article’s attempt to prove that not all customary practices in Minangkabau are based on sharia as agreed upon in the consensus of ABS/BSK between ulemas as religious figures and *ninik mamak* as customary figures. Therefore, this study is of utmost significance as it may have implications in new relations between customary law and sharia law, or between religion and culture.

This study is a qualitative research with in-depth interview data collection techniques and literature study. This field study was conducted in order to seek and find a new understanding of the relations between custom and sharia in the Minangkabau culture in West Sumatera. Research data were obtained by conducting in-depth interviews with four informants who were selected representing Minangkabau customary and religious figures. Two of the customary figures interviewed were M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, General Chairperson of the West Sumatra Association of Minangkabau *Adat* Councils (*Lembaga Kerapatan Adat Alam Minangkabau Sumatera Barat – LKAAM*) and Irsal Very Datuk Lelo Sampono, Chairperson of LKAAM in Batu Sangkar, West Sumatera.

¹¹ Mursal, Amiur Nuruddin and Saparuddin Siregar, “Strengthening the Role of the Local Wisdom Tungku Tigo Sajarangan as a Basis for the Development of Sharia Microfinance Institutions (Study at Sharia Microfinance Institutions in West Sumatra),” *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 22, No. (8), 2017, p. 50-55.

¹² Jeffrey Hadler. *Sengketa Tiada Putus: Matriarkat, Reformisme Agama, dan Kolonialisme di Minangkabau*, Jakarta: Freedom Institute, 2010.

As for the religious figures interviewed, they were Buya Gusrizal Gazahar, General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas West Sumatera Region, and Ustad Zulkifli Zakaria, a prominent religious figure in West Sumatera from Padang Pariaman, a regency where Islam initially developed in West Sumatera.

Life is an Act of *Merantau*: *Merantau* into the World, *Merantau* in the World

Philosophically speaking, *merantau* in the Minangkabau culture can initially be defined as a sojourn or stopover. Such understanding emerged since, essentially, the birth of the Minangkabau people into this world is considered as an act of *merantau*. According to M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, all humans basically engaged in an act of *merantau* into this transient world. Based on such perspective, there are several types of *merantau* in the Minangkabau culture.

The people of Minangkabau has a philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah*. Syara is the Islamic sharia that relies on the Qur'an and Hadith. In the *kitabullah* (Qur'an) there are teachings specifying that humans leave to go *merantau* into this world. This is the initial concept of *merantau*. All human beings engage in an act of *merantau* into this world. However, having arrived in this world, there are still other phases of *merantau*. Hence, it is a tradition in Minangkabau that there are various types of *merantau*. First, *merantau di ujuang baduak*, which is *merantau* that is still within the confines of a similar cultural scope. *Merantau* to work, leaving in the morning and returning at night. Second, *merantau pipih*, which is *merantau* by taking the family along. Third, *merantau cino*, which is *merantau* without returning to one's homeland. Fourth, *merantau the world*, which serves as a philosophy. Life is like *merantau*, it is but temporary as we will return to the other world.¹³

The philosophy that humans are born into the world being analogous to the act of *merantau* as they will return to the other world is associated with three things in concert: custom, sharia, and the Qur'an. Philosophically speaking, *merantau* is a customary practice in which Qur'an based sharia applies. The philosophical perspective of life in this world as an act of *merantau* is similar to the philosophical content of the adage *urip mung mampir ngombe* (life is merely to drop by for a drink) found in the Javanese culture. The saying "*Urip iku mung mampir ngombe*" demonstrates that the world as a reality is simply a place to

¹³ Interview with M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, General Chairperson of the West Sumatra Association of Minangkabau *Adat* Councils, (LKAAM), February 17, 2020. <http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

stopover.¹⁴ Despite their similarity, both concepts actually have differing fundamental value. The saying “*Urip iku mung mampir ngombe*” considers the world merely as a temporary stopover without requiring individuals to experience sadness or happiness first. Whether it is worldly suffering or happiness, people should be prepared to live life in modesty. The proverb requires people to live modestly as life is prearranged and predetermined, humans need only lead the life given and accept the good and the bad.

However, in the *merantau* culture of Minangkabau, despite the fact that life in this world is transitory, those engaging in the act of *merantau* in this world should be prepared to strive for righteousness, usefulness, and honor. This is why in leading their life of *merantau* in this world all Minang *perantau* will at least bring along some bare necessities from their homeland. According to M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, before leaving for *merantau* every Minang *perantau* should have ten necessities as essential competencies. These ten necessary competencies emerged from the totality of the Minangkabau culture.

In the Minangkabau tradition, there are 10 fundamental competencies that an individual should have before going *merantau*. If these 10 basic competencies were not maintained, that Minang individual would be incapable of *merantau*. These fundamental competencies are reciting the Qur’an (*mengaji*), martial arts (*bersilat*), eloquence in speech (*berkola*), carpentry (*bertukang*), trade (*berdagang*), sewing (*menjahit*), cooking (*memasak*), gardening (*berkebun*), farming (*berladang*). In practice, the 10 basic competencies are distributed among men and women.¹⁵

Out of the ten basic competencies that a Minangkabau *perantau* should have, there are three most pronounced in the profile. These three competencies are a combination of skills and reasoning. They include competence in trade, reciting the Qur’an, and eloquence in speech (in logic, reasoning, diplomacy, or debate). A *perantau* of Minangkabau origin may have trading skills, but intelligence is required to become an internationally successful businessperson. A *perantau* of Minangkabau origin may have skills in reciting the Qur’an, but intelligence is necessary to become an internationally acclaimed prominent *ulema*. As is the case with eloquence in speech, a *perantau* of Minangkabau origin may have the skills to engage in a debate or diplomacy, but intelligence is vital to become an internationally accomplished diplomat.

¹⁴ Casmini and Fauzan Anwar Sandiah, “Urip Iku Mung Mampir Ngombe”; Konsep Kebahagiaan Masyarakat Miskin Pesisir Yogyakarta di Era Industrialisasi,” *Jurnal Psikologi* 46, No. 3, (2019), p. 226 – 240.

¹⁵Interview with M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, General Chairperson of the West Sumatra Association of Minangkabau *Adat* Councils, (LKAAM), February 17, 2020. <http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

Competencies in carpentry and trading have helped Minang *perantau* to become traders or entrepreneurs throughout all continents such as Europe, Middle East, and Australia.¹⁶ These Minangkabau *perantau* hailed from the highlands of West Sumatera and have long resided in other parts of the world.¹⁷ Given their competencies in carpentry and trading, in the 19th century, most of Minangkabau *perantau* went to Kuala Lumpur and Deli in East Sumatera to become traders, sellers, or craftsperson.¹⁸ Their competency in trading is considered as the earliest and longest standing competence that Minang *perantau* have. This is due to Minangkabau's fertile natural environment encouraging the people of Minangkabau to go *merantau* by way of trading and distributing the crops they yield. Additionally, in some remote areas of Minangkabau, there are reserves of raw geological materials particularly gold, copper, tin, zinc, mercury, and iron.¹⁹ Furthermore, according to Munoz (2006),²⁰ Minangkabau *perantau*'s trading competence has been recognized since the 7th century when Minangkabau traders left their hometown to sell gold in Jambi.

Meanwhile, Minangkabau *perantau*'s competency in reciting the Qur'an (studying Islam) began when Islam arrived and developed in Ulakan, Pariaman in the 16th century propagated by Buya Burhanuddin who had just returned from learning about Islam in Aceh.²¹ Subsequently, there were three Minangkabau religious figures, namely Haji Miskin, Haji Piobang, and Haji Sumanik who returned from their hajj pilgrimage in Mecca. The return of these three religious figures from their pilgrimage was later known to have brought about the Islamic reform in West Sumatera through the Padri war.²² Since then, several Muslim intellectuals of Minangkabau descent went to Mecca and Cairo, like Ahmad Khatib, Tahir Jalaluddin, Abdul Karim Amrullah, and Muhammad Jamil Jambek.

¹⁶ Rizabuana Ismail Sismudjito and Darul Amin Abdul Munaf, "The Rise and Tide of the Minangkabau Traditional Trading in Kuala Lumpur: A Preliminary Research," *Indonesia Journal of Geography* 47, No.1, (2015), p. 69-76. Also see: Primajati Candra Hastuti., et.al., "The Minang Entrepreneur Characteristic," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 211, (2015), p. 819-826.

¹⁷ Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784-1847*, London: Curzon Press, 1987.

¹⁸ Mochtar Naim. *Merantau, Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau....*

¹⁹ Bemmelen van Reimout Williem, *The Geology of Indonesia*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970.

²⁰ Paul Michel Munoz. *Early Kingdoms of the.....*

²¹ Philippus Samuel van Ronkel, *Het Heiligdom te Oelakan*, Dutch: Tijdschrift Voor Indische Taal, Land en Volkenkunde, 1914.

²² Jeanne Cuisinier. "La Guerre des Padri (1803-1838-1845)." *Archives de Sociologie des Religions. Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* 4, No. 7, (1959), p. 70-88. Also see: Christine Dobbin, "Economic Change in Minangkabau as a Factor in the Rise of the Padri Movement, 1784-1830," *Indonesia* 23, (1977), p. 1-21. Abd A'la, "The Genealogy of Muslim Radicalism in Indonesia: A Study of the Roots and Characteristics of the Padri Movement," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 02, No.02 (2008), p. 267-299.

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In Mecca, Ahmad Khatib held the position as Imam of the Shafi'i school of law in a mosque famously known as Haram Mosque. As for Djanan Thaib, he founded Jemaah al-Chairiyah in 1923 and lead *Seruan al-Azhar* magazine along with Ilyas Yakoub and Mahmud Junus in Cairo.²³

As for basic competency in speech eloquence (in logic, reasoning, diplomacy, or debate), it has resulted in a number of Minang *perantau* becoming world renowned intellectuals and diplomats. This competency became apparent in the early 20th century when Minangkabau scholars left for Europe to go *merantau* as students. Names such as Rivai, Mohammad Hatta, Roestam Effendi, Nazir Pamuntjak, and Sutan Sjahrir were Minangkabau *perantau* who studied in Europe and became activists in Indonesia's independence movement.²⁴ There was also Tan Malaka who resided in numerous countries.²⁵ These Minangkabau *perantau* living abroad had strong political influence, like Raja Baginda who went *merantau* to South Philippines and established the Sulu Sultanate in 1390. In the period of 1558 – 1575, Rajah Sulayman was the ruler of the Maynila Kingdom, which we know today as Manila, Philippines.²⁶ Meanwhile, in the domestic scene, Minangnese's eloquence in speech can be observed in the performance of national politicians during the early period of Indonesia's independence with figures such as Mohammad Yamin and Mohammad Hatta, who were nationally involved as founding fathers of Indonesia and succeeded in uniting Indonesia's identity through *bahasa Indonesia*.²⁷

By maintaining these ten fundamental competencies, Minangkabau *perantau* were spread throughout even the most remote corners of Indonesia and beyond such as the Malacca Strait, which was known as Negeri Sembilan, and other parts of the world.²⁸ They were born into this world as a *perantau* because they philosophically believe that people of Minangkabau were essentially born into the world to engage in an act of *merantau*. Birth is part of the *merantau* process from the womb to the world. Then, once they have matured, they would go *merantau* to all corners of the world. They were born because of *merantau* and they live for the purpose of *merantau*. Life for them is an act of *merantau*,

²³ Mochtar Naim. *Merantau, Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau....*

²⁴ Harry A. Poeze., et.al., *Di Negeri Penjajah : Orang Indonesia di Negeri Belanda 1600-1950*, Jakarta: KPG kerjasama dengan KITLV, 2014.

²⁵ Harry A. Poeze. *Tan Malaka: Strijder voor Indonesie's Vrijheid*. Leiden: Brill, 1976.

²⁶ Mochtar Naim. *Merantau, Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau....*

²⁷ John Monfries, *Different Societies, Shared Futures: Australia, Indonesia and the Region*. Singapore: ISEAS, 2006.

²⁸ Muhmmad Hanif Abdul Wahab and Azizi Bahauddin, "Merantau": Agents of Developments of Malay Heritages Built Environment. In: Anwar R., Mahamood M., Md. Zain D., Abd Aziz M., Hassan O., Abidin S. (eds) Proceedings of the Art and Design International Conference (AnDIC 2016). Springer, Singapore, 2018.

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merantau into the world and *merantau* in the world. And to lead life as a successful *perantau* in this world, the Minangkabau culture provides them with ten basic competencies.

Merantau as a Customary Product of the Matrilineal Culture

According to M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, most children or youths who engage in the act of *merantau* in Minangkabau are given their parents' blessings. Nevertheless, parents only give their blessings because in Minangkabau culture parents are not obligated to bear their children's expenses. The system of the clan or social group is based on the family assigning responsibility to the uncle who customarily is called *Mamak* to look after his siblings' children. The process in which a *Mamak* looks after their wellbeing is by using the clan's wealth, which is known as high ancestral wealth.

In the Minangkabau custom there are two kinds of wealth. First, there is high ancestral wealth, which is wealth controlled by a *Mamak* for the wellbeing of his nephews/nieces. Second, low ancestral wealth, which is wealth inherited from the parents to their children. Meanwhile, a *Mamak* (Uncle) in Minang customary practice lives under the same roof with his parents-in-law. This is also a source of problems since his wife is also the niece of others. That (the *Mamak* concept in managing wealth and expenses) shifted a bit (from Islamic sharia).²⁹

High ancestral wealth is defined as wealth that is inherited down from one generation to another based on the matrilineal lineage. Physically-symbolically speaking, the management of high ancestral wealth is found in a *rumah gadang* (big house) or paddy field where the women (mother) functions as the center of authority. In principle, high ancestral wealth is not to be apportioned, sold, or passed down as inheritance.³⁰ As for low ancestral wealth, it refers to wealth inherited from the descendants of previous generation. The heir is the rightful owner of such wealth and it may continue to increase along with rise in the heir's wealth or income. Minangkabau's customary law provisions that low ancestral wealth is acquired and accumulated from the fruits of labor. Low ancestral wealth may be sold or used according to the terms that apply and the heir's approval.³¹

The matrilineal culture places the Mother as the center of authority in managing high ancestral wealth. Yet, contemporaneously, a *Mamak* (Uncle)

²⁹Interview with M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, General Chairperson of the West Sumatra Association of Minangkabau *Adat* Councils, (LKAAM), February 17, 2020.

³⁰ Ellyne Dwi Poespasari, "Dispute Settlement Norm of Estate Distribution on Adat People of Minangkabau (West Sumatra)," *Journal of Dinamika Hukum* 17, No. 3, (2017), p. 308-313.

³¹ Anwar Fauzi. "Dualitas Hukum Waris Minangkabau dan Islam (Studi Konstruksi Sosial Masyarakat Muslim Minangkabau Di Malang)," *Jurisdictie: Jurnal Hukum dan Syariah* 3 No. 1, (2012), p. 45-54.

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living with a Mother as his in-law, also bears responsibility for the wellbeing of his siblings' children. This is a very unique relationship which is a particular Minangkabau custom. A woman (Mother) maintaining the role as a mother-in-law of a man holding the role as a *Mamak* (Uncle), who is also responsible for the wellbeing of his siblings' children, living in the same *rumah gadang* (big house). The Woman (Mother) enjoys the ancestral wealth, while the man (Uncle, *Mamak*) manages it. Various conditions may emerge from such matrilineal culture.

According to Irsal Very Datuk Lelo Sampono, the matrilineal culture had led to the introduction of the *merantau* tradition in Minangkabau. The reason being that such culture places men in a particular position as illustrated in the following Minangkabau *pepatah petitih*: "*Maratau bujang dahulu, di kampung paguno balun*" (O child do first wander forth, at home remains of no use still). Minangkabau boys seem to be 'forced' by culture to engage in the act of *merantau* because they are considered useless still in their homeland. Although Minangkabau boasts fertile and rich natural conditions, their management remains to be under the control of women (Mothers). Hence, men's uselessness in their own homeland is attributed to the matrilineal culture that places women (Mothers) as the center of Minangkabau culture.

There is no *nagari* (self-contained communities–researcher) in Minang that does not engage in the act of *merantau*. People of Minang go *merantau* because of the matrilineal custom. In the Minang custom, women enjoy the right to ancestral wealth, while men merely manage them. Women are afforded the right to enjoy ancestral wealth since from a customary perspective, women are considered to be in a weak position, hence there is a need for them to be supported. A Minang proverb states, '*nan condoang makanan tungkek, nan lamah makan tueh*', (the leaning ones need to be sustained, the weak ones need to be supported, weak individuals should be given guidance and assistance–Researcher). However, customary titles are given to men. Such customary conditions have driven Minang men to go *merantau*. Their natural land is abundant but reserved for women. So, the men engage in an act of *merantau* on account of the matrilineal culture.³²

The state of matrilineal culture in Minangkabau, which places women as the center for managing ancestral wealth, has a considerable impact in their men's decision to go *merantau*. Various risks that the *perantau* may confront while adapting to the new environment at their destination are still taken on account of the pressure brought about by the matrilineal culture. Hence, this leaves no doubt for Minangkabau *perantau* to have any hesitation living abroad outside of their

³² Interview with Irsal Very Datuk Lelo Sampono, Chairperson of LKAAM in Batu Sangkar, West Sumatera, February 20, 2020.
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homeland despite the various challenges they may face.³³ The process has consequently fortified the survival power of Minangkabau men at their *merantau* destination because their culture has forged them to become resilient individuals. Within such context, culture is considered as a factor that may enhance an individual's power to survive.³⁴

Through the matrilineal culture, which places women as a substantial actor of Minangkabau cultural production, men are consequently trained and formed to become independent, courageous, dynamic, and responsible in leading their life. Brought up under such conditions of being independent, a man playing the role as a husband in the family assumes the responsibility of not only to provide for his wife and children, but also to look after his nephews and nieces from the mother's lineage. The matrilineal culture with its implications on the distribution of inheritance or the management of high ancestral wealth to women has rendered Minang men to have no expectations in matters of inheritance. Accordingly, a Minang man who expects to inherit wealth in the matrilineal culture is considered as a bad example because inheritance distribution often causes social jealousy and it may even become a potential for discord.³⁵ Therefore, in the Minangkabau tradition inheritance distribution is a process that strictly takes into consideration the context, method of production and different distribution of wealth between ancestral wealth and non ancestral wealth.

Such Minang customary practice in the matrilineal culture has existed since before Islam entered Minangkabau. The tradition has been passed down from one generation to the next by their ancestors so that it ultimately became a convention. The convention is a product of consensus that developed within the setting of the matrilineal culture. As a result, *merantau* as a Minangkabau custom was established through a consensus in the matrilineal culture. The consensus in the matrilineal culture affected the behavior of every relevant actor in Minangkabau.³⁶ The culture was then integrated into several tiers.³⁷ imbuing the Minang culture with extraordinary adaptability and capability for it to survive for centuries until the present time.

³³ Ahmad Ibrahim and Mochtar Naim, *Persepsi Minangkabau Minangrantau*, Medan: Madju, 1984.

³⁴ Edith H. Grotberg, *Resilience for Today: Gaining Strength from Adversity*, Westport: Preger Publishers, 2003.

³⁵ Sotar Rajab., et.al., "The Level of Jealousy towards High Heritage Assets Distribution in Minangkabau," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 9, No. 10, (2019), p. 127-144.

³⁶ Aya Fukushige., et.al., "Moderating Effects of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions on The Relationship Between AEWOM and FEWOM in Thailand," *ABAC Journal* 39, No. 2, (2019), pp. 1-22.

³⁷ Andre Habisch and Bing Zhu, "Cultures as Determinants of Innovation- an Evidence from European Context," *ABAC Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 1, (2017), p. 1-11.
<http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

However, in the subsequent development of Minangkabau civilization, the customary practice in the matrilineal culture also underwent a shift to adapt to the changes of the time, particularly when Islam was introduced in Minangkabau. According to Ramayulis (2011),³⁸ the Minangkabau tradition has been in place since the time when Minang ancestors had no knowledge about Islam of any kind. When Islam was then introduced in Minangkabau, custom and religion (Islam) went through three stages of assimilation, namely:

First stage, custom and sharia (Islam) functions separately without one affecting the other. At this stage, the following customary philosophy emerged: “*Adat Basandi Alur dan Patut–Syara’ Basandi Dalil (ABAP–SBD)*” (custom is based on rules and suitability, while sharia is based on proof).

Second stage, custom and sharia have a mutual association that does not perturb or intrude upon one another. At this stage, the following customary philosophy emerged: “*Adat Basandi Syara’– Syara’ Basandi Adat (ABS–SBA)*” (custom is based on sharia, and sharia is based on custom).

Third stage, a consensus and compromise between custom and sharia was achieved resulting in a new relationship between the two. At this stage, the following customary philosophy emerged: “*Adak Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah (ABS/SBK)*” (custom is based on sharia and sharia is based on the Qur’an).³⁹

Although the concept of *Adak Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah (ABS/SBK)*” (custom is based on sharia and sharia is based on the Qur’an) indicates the religious figures’ victory against the customary figures, Hadler (2010)⁴⁰ argues that the concept is actually a midway compromise to preserve the custom of Minangkabau culture when religious authority began encroaching into Minangkabau’s culture and customary system. According to Mursal and Siregar (2017),⁴¹ the ABS/SBK consensus made between ulemas as religious figures and *ninik mamak* as customary figures took place in the 19th century in Bukit Marapalam, Tanah Datar Regency, West Sumatera. At the time, there was a religious purification movement spearheaded by the Padri group. The consensus was subsequently known as the “Marapalam Treaty” (Marapalam Hill Agreement).

Nevertheless, in practice, “*Adak Bersandi Syarak, Syarak Bersandi Kitabullah (ABS/SBK)*” (custom is based on sharia and sharia is based on the Qur’an) has yet to be implemented in accordance with the Marapalam Treaty. As of current, there are some parts of Minangkabau customary life that are not only

³⁸ Ramayulis. *Traktat Marapalam.....*

³⁹ Jeffrey Hadler. *Sengketa Tiada Putus.....*

⁴⁰ Jeffrey Hadler. *Sengketa Tiada Putus.....*

⁴¹ Mursal., Amiur Nuruddin and Saparuddin Siregar. *Strengthening the Role.....*

unsupported by, but even contradictory to sharia. The tradition of wild boar hunting⁴² or bull fighting⁴³ has continued to this day as customary practices carried out by Minangkabau's traditional community. Hence, according to Amir (2006)⁴⁴, customary practices in traditional Minangkabau culture can be categorized into four hierarchies, namely *adat sabana adat*, *adat nan diadatkan*, *adat nan teradat*, and *adat istiadat*.

Adat nan Sabana Adat (custom that is truly custom) refers to customs that are fundamental, permanent, eternal, unaffected by time and place or conditions. This type of custom deals with natural law or *sunnatullah* (Allah's universal system and order) and Allah's decree. Some examples are customs of natural phenomenon in which fire burns, water makes wet, and chickens cluck. *Adat nan Diadatkan* (custom that is customized) refers to customs that are determined by the two forefathers of Minangkabau custom, namely *Datuk Perpatih nan Sabatang* and *Datuk Katumanggungan*. Some instances are rules of communal life based on consensus, and the consensus should also be based on suitability such as attires people wear during weddings. *Adat Teradat* refers to local habits that may change and differ between one region and the next. For instance, technical customary practices of local weddings that may differ between one *nagari* and another such as the arrangement of the bridal chamber in the *rumah gadang* (big house). *Adat Istiadat* refers to habitual practices in a *nagari* that some people in the community are fond of, such as art, sports, and architecture.⁴⁵ There are a number of *petata petitih* that generally apply in Minangkabau regarding *merantau*, such as:

Karatau madang di Ulu, babuah babungo balun,

Marantau Bujang dahulu, di kampuang paguno balun.

[Karatau grows upstream forth, fruits flowers have yet appeared,

O child do first wander forth, at home remains of no use]

Kalau pandai bakain panjang, labiah pado kain saruang

Kalau pandai bainduak samang, labiah pado bainduak kanduang

[When putting on a long cloth better than a sarong (is akin to)

When mutual care with a landlady is better than having a mother]

Jan disangko murah batimbakau, maracik maampai pulo

Jan disangko murah pai marantau, basakik marasai pulo.

⁴² Zainuddin and Zulkifli, "Sharia and Tradition, Pig Hunting In Minangkabau," *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research* 8, No. 10, (2019), p. 3295-3299.

⁴³ Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam, "The Society of Minangkabau in Tulis Sutan Sati's *Sengsara Membawa Nikmat*: Between Local Traditions and Islamic Teachings," *Analisa Journal of Social Science and Religion* 01, No. 01, (2016), p. 859-873.

⁴⁴ Amir M.S., *Adat Minangkabau: Pola dan Tujuan Hidup Orang Minang*, Jakarta: Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2006.

⁴⁵ Sotar Rajab., et.al., *The Level of Jealousy.....*
<http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

[Don't consider it easy making tobacco, blending then drying
Don't consider it easy leaving *merantau*, there's pain and also suffering]

We argue that *merantau* is a type of *Adat nan Diadatkan* (custom that is customized). We propose the argument that the *merantau* tradition is contained in numerous Minangkabau *petata petitih* (sayings/proverbs), wherein these proverbs are manifested in advices, perspectives, and guidance from the two forefathers of Minangkabau customary practices, Datuk Perpatih nan Sabatang and Datuk Katumanggungan. These *pepata petitih* pertaining to *merantau* is expressed with the purpose of attaining a better life for future Minangkabau generations as well as a guide in social relationship among the people of Minangkabau. These *petata petitih* are useful to consider as advices and way of life as well as customary teachings that have been passed down from one generation to the next in the Minangkabau community.

Merantau, Custom that is not Truly Based on Sharia

Despite the fact that *merantau* as a customary practice has its basis on a number of *petata petitih*, there has yet been any consensus on the existence of *petata petitih* that is based on *syara* (sharia). According to M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, out of the ten fundamental competencies individuals should maintain to go *merantau*, the sharia basis lies on the individual's ability or competency in reciting the Qur'an and going *merantau* for the sake of making their parents happy. Such opinion, actually, remains unconfirmed as the ten basic competencies that Minangkabau *perantau* should have are also not a part of cultural consensus. Sayuti's opinion on the matter is a reflection of the *merantau* custom that has become one of Minangkabau's cultural identities after the advent of Islamic teaching into West Sumatera. Because, undoubtedly, before Islam was introduced in West Sumatera, the two customary ancestors of Minangkabau, Datuk Perpatih nan Sabatang and Datuk Katumanggungan, had neither knowledge about reciting the Qur'an nor understanding Islamic sharia.

Nevertheless, *merantau* as a Minangkabau custom is considered to have some similarities with *merantau* in the Arabian culture or custom. According to Ustad Zulkifli Zukarnain, Arabian communities also maintain a culture of *merantau*. However, the *merantau* culture found among Arabian communities is not conducted on account of a matrilineal culture but due to trade and weather conditions instead. Hence, *merantau* in Arabian communities refers to a customary practice that is instigated by weather changes and the intent to seek better fortune.

The habit of the Quraysh tribe, as mentioned in the verse *Li ilaafii Quraisyin, Lilaafihim rih latasysyitai washshaiif* (Surah Quraysh–Researcher). They embarked on different journeys during the winter and the summer. During the winter, they journeyed to Yemen to trade, as

Yemen was a hot region. During the summer, they journeyed North to Sham (present day Syria—Researcher) as Sham was a cold country.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, according to Buya Gusrizal Gazahar, *merantau* is a process that forges Minangkabau men to become stronger and more resilient in confronting life's challenges. The purpose is to become successful, return home to get married, and ultimately help develop their homeland. Thus, when discussing custom, the arguments used are custom related arguments (instead of sharia ones).

When we talk about custom, we refer to custom related arguments. The reality of customary practices emerged first, custom related arguments are called *Mamang*, *mamangan adat* (custom related arguments), *Mamangan* or a custom related argument pertaining to *merantau* is '*Karatau madang di Ulu, babuah babungo balun, marantau bujang dahulu, di kampung paguno balun*'. *Karatau* grows upstream forth, fruits flowers have yet appeared, O child do first wander forth, at home remains of no use. This means that in the Minang tradition, *merantau* is a process of forging oneself to become stronger, more resilient in facing life, then returning home once he succeeds, then he takes a wife, and then he develops the homeland. The *merantau* tradition is for unmarried men, it's not for those who are already married.⁴⁷

Buya Gusrizal Gazahar's opinion indicates that the *merantau* culture has existed amidst the Minangkabau community long before Islam came to West Sumatera. Islam's introduction into the Minangkabau culture emerged for the sake of finding a basis to legitimize that custom is based on sharia, and sharia is based on the Qur'an. Searching and finding verses in the Qur'an to corroborate *merantau* is relevant with the argument that custom is based on the Qur'an, but it is not based on sharia. This implies that in the perspective of the Qur'an, it may be the case that *merantau* is based on the Qur'an because if *merantau* is a journey, then there are numerous verses in the Qur'an that can be cited to corroborate the *merantau* culture, as mentioned in Surah Al-Mulk verse 5, Surah Muhammad verse 10, Surah Yusuf verse 109, Surah Ali Imran verse 137, Surah An-Naml verse 69, Surah Luqman verse 31, and Surah Ar-Rum verse 42 and 9.

However, according to Gusrizal, although *merantau* uses custom related arguments, as a custom it should be based on *syara* (sharia).

Merantau is a Minangkabau custom based on sharia. Its sharia relevance is in the Hijrah, *merantau* is hijrah. By engaging in the act of *merantau* and

⁴⁶Interview with Zulkifli Zukarnain, a prominent religious figure in West Sumatera from Padang Pariaman, February 18, 2020.

⁴⁷Interview with Buya Gusrizal Gazahar General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) West Sumatera Region, February 18, 2020.
<http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

facing issues abroad, the individual would mature. If you take notice, there was not one Prophet that did not go *merantau*.⁴⁸

Considering the *hijrah* event in which the Prophet Muhammad PBUH departed on a migratory journey from the city of Mecca to Medina as a basis of *syara* (sharia) for the *merantau* tradition is surely inappropriate. *Hijrah* was a significant event in Islamic history. *Hijrah* was a social and political strategy employed by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.⁴⁹ Social wise, the proselytization efforts carried out by Prophet Muhammad PBUH in Mecca experienced numerous pressures and intimidations from the Quraysh tribe. Political wise, *hijrah* was aimed at establishing a new social order.⁵⁰ *Hijrah* is hence understood not only as a physical migratory process but a process of initiating various social conceptions. Moreover, *hijrah* is considered as a concept of Islamic community with solidarity, Islamic community that is established on principles of love, mutual care and protection, willingness to sacrifice, replete with feelings of togetherness, comradery, obedience to rules, with expressions of dynamicity, diversity, equality, and tolerance.⁵¹

In one of the Prophet's sermons upon his arrival in Medina, he even elaborated the protection of basic human rights and the dignity deserved as fellow human beings, despite differences in one's religion and belief "*Whoever oppresses a mu'ahid (one who enters into and is protected by a covenant) or infringes their rights or puts a burden onto them that exceeds their capability or takes something away from them without their willing consent, then I will be their enemy in Judgment Day.*"⁵² In Medina, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH had established basic principles of a new society called *ummah* as a representation of an open and tolerant society where meetings of different cultures neither cause tension among one another nor lead to a coalescing of beliefs.

Nevertheless, there is an argument indicating a correlation between *hijrah* and *merantau*. According to this perspective, *hijrah* and *merantau* both emerged as a form of strategy to avert various social pressures of the surrounding environs during a different time and place. *Hijrah* was conducted because the Prophet

⁴⁸ Interview with Buya Gusrizal Gazahar General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) West Sumatera Region, February 18, 2020.

⁴⁹ Mohamed Sulaiman., et al., "The Applicability of Prophet Muhammad's Strategies in his Battles and Campaigns in Modern Business," *Asian Social Science* 11, No. 26, (2015), p. 323-336.

⁵⁰ Khel, Muhammad Nazeer Kaka, "Foundation of The Islamic State at Medina and Its Constitution," *Islamic Studies*, No. 3, (1982), p. 61-88.

⁵¹ Iswandi Syahputra, "Media Sosial dan Prospek Muslim Kosmopolitan: Konstruksi & Peran Masyarakat Siber pada Aksi Bela Islam," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 08, No. 01 (2018), p. 19-40.

⁵²T. M. Hasby Ash-Shiddieqy, *Islam dan Hak Asasi Manusia*, Semarang: PT Pustaka Rizki Putra, 1999, p. 23.

<http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

Muhammad PBUH experienced pressures and intimidations by the Quraysh tribe when proselytizing in Mecca, whereas *merantau* is carried out due to the pressures of the matrilineal custom in West Sumatera. This indicates that *hijrah* and *merantau* do have a correlation, although it is a negative correlation instead of a positive one.

Meanwhile, Ustad Zulkifli Zakaria explained that there is no correlation between *merantau* as a Minangkabau tradition and *hijrah*. The customary practice of *merantau* in Minangkabau actually emerged because of the spousal relationship in the *rumah gadang* under the matrilineal culture. A husband and wife living together with the Mother-in-law and *Mamak* in the *rumah gadang* may bring about conflict. The authority of the husband living in the *rumah gadang* is just like dust upon a stove, it flees with a single blow.

I don't see the correlation between the *merantau* tradition of Minangkabau community and the *hijrah* of the Prophet PBUH. It is the matrilineal culture that compels Minang men to go *merantau*. Since I am Minangese, there is indeed a sense of discomfort living together with in-laws (in the *rumah gadang* – Researcher). Sometimes there's conflict because in addition to the in-laws, the *Mamak* (Uncle – Researcher) is also in the house. This is purely a Minangkabau tradition. *Urang sumando*, which refers to the son-in-law living in the same *rumah gadang* along with the mother-in-law and the wife's Uncle, in the Minangkabau custom is like dust upon a stove with no authority. *Urang sumando* does not maintain any authority in the *rumah gadang*. The authority of *sumando* is only limited within the confine of his bedroom with the wife. Beyond that lies the authority of the mother-in-law.⁵³

A similar argument was also mentioned by Irsal Very Datuk Lelo Sampono. He is of the opinion that the conditions and relations in the *rumah gadang* between the husband, the wife, the in-law (Mother), and the *Mamak* (wife's uncle) along with the other *Ninik Mamak* are among the reasons husbands leave for *merantau*.

There is a Minangkabau proverb which says, '*Nikah jo perempuan, kawin jo ninik mamak*' (Wed the girl, marry the uncles – Researcher). Because that's what the customary condition is like, it forces Minangkabau men to think. I wouldn't be able to survive as a man living in Minangkabau if I don't get out of here. This means that the matrilineal culture compels Minangkabau men to leave for *merantau*.⁵⁴

⁵³ Interview with Zulkifli Zukarnain, a prominent religious figure in West Sumatera from Padang Pariaman, February 18, 2020.

⁵⁴ Interview with Buya Gusrizal Gazahar General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) West Sumatera Region, February 18, 2020.
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Even so, according to Buya Gusrizal, once a Minang man is married, the husband is not obligated to go along with his wife and live in the *rumah gadang* along with his Mother-in-law.

There is not one religious argument (*syara*) prohibiting that (husband going along with his wife living together with the Mother-in-law in the *rumah gadang*). The husband can refuse (to go along with his wife and live together with the Mother-in-law in the *rumah gadang*) because it all depends on the premarital discussions. I, myself, do not live in my in-law's house, due to my impossible condition. Customary law that is based on sharia is flexible. In Minangkabau, strict (customary – Researcher) rules refer to matters of halal-haram or foundational issues in sharia.⁵⁵

The statement above emphasizes that *merantau* is a customary practice that truly is without any sharia basis. The reason for this is that in the context of family life, a woman who is married would prioritize obedience to her husband rather than her parents (Mother). Conversely, Minangkabau's customary rule stipulates that the state in which a husband (*sumando*) is living with his wife along with the Mother-in-law and uncle in the *rumah gadang* may be adjusted according to the agreement of the parties involved and condition at hand. This means that custom runs its own course while sharia too runs its own course. Yet, when the two converge with its respective differences, the issue may be resolved through a consensus agreed upon before marriage. A husband who adheres to the sharia law stipulating that wives should obey their husband may come to an agreement with the Mother-in-law not to live under the same roof with her in the *rumah gadang*. Since, as mentioned by Ustad Zulkifli Zakaria, according to sharia law a women's obedience after marriage is to her husband not her parents.

As a matter of fact, in the Islamic sharia in the Qur'an surah Al-Isra, a woman or a man's first obedience in terms of human relations is with their parents. However, once a woman is married, in the hadith it is explained that her main obedience is to her husband. This is where I am critical of my cultural tradition, (the husband after marriage – Researcher) living with the wife at home (meaning the *rumah gadang* – Researcher) along with his in-laws (including with other family members including the Uncle or *Mamak* – Researcher) is not in line with sharia law. Because the obligation to provide sustenance, the obligation to educate the children have been passed on to the husband. And the wife's obedience has been passed on to the husband, while in the reality of Minangkabau's tradition the wife's obedience is to her parents. If the husband asks his wife to go *merantau* with him and the parents prohibit her to, the wife would obey her parents more

⁵⁵ Interview with Buya Gusrizal Gazahar General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) West Sumatera Region, February 18, 2020.
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than she would her own husband. That's why many husbands remarry while in their place of *merantau* as they too have biological needs.⁵⁶

The views of both Minangkabau religious figures clarify that the correlation between customary law and Islamic (sharia) law pertaining to *merantau* is dynamic, dialectical, and compromissory. If all parties agree and reach a consensus in considering custom as a common virtue, then sharia law is present to seek a basis for legitimizing customary law so that it does not contradict sharia law. If all parties agree and reach a consensus in considering sharia as a common virtue, then customary law can adjust to sharia law. This is the uniqueness of Minangkabau custom and its correlation with sharia law. Such dynamic Minang customary practice has, in fact, led to a spirit of independence, cosmopolitanism, egalitarian, and resulted in the *merantau* culture becoming embedded in the hearts of the Minangkabau people.

Conclusion

Life to the people of Minangkabau is the act of *merantau* in itself *Rantaue* from the womb into life in the real world. *Merantau* from their homeland to places beyond their homeland. *Merantau* in Minangkabau emerged from the matrilineal tradition that has continued for ages, even long before Islam's arrival in Minangkabau. According to this perspective, an unmarried Minangkabau man is considered of no use at home or in his homeland if he has yet engaged in an act of *merantau*. Meanwhile, a married Minangkabau man may choose *merantau* as a strategy to avoid the life of living in the *rumah gadang* along with his Mother-in-law and his wife's *Mamak* (Uncle). As of current, the Minangkabau custom continues to run in accordance with *syara'* (sharia) as its basis, and sharia is based on the Qur'an. This relational model is known as ABS/SBK. However, *merantau* as a Minangkabau customary practice is not truly based on *syara'* (sharia). In the context of *merantau*, the correlation between customary law and Islamic (sharia) law is dynamic, dialectic, and compromissory in nature. Nevertheless, such dynamic Minang tradition has, in fact, led to the spirit of *merantau* in the Minangkabau culture. This indicates that the relationship between custom and sharia is not hierarchical as suggested by the ABS/SBK model. This also clarifies that the relationship between custom and sharia does not necessarily pertain to issues of value or teaching, but compromise and consensus as customary tradition in Minangkabau. Therefore, the research results may surely have implications on new relations between custom and sharia or culture and religion. This implies that the relationship between custom and sharia or culture and religion is not constantly a confrontation of two different entities that are separated as being right

⁵⁶ Interview with Zulkifli Zukarnain, a prominent religious figure in West Sumatera from Padang Pariaman, February 18, 2020.
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or left and right or wrong. Or, the relationship between custom and sharia or culture and religion is not always a hierarchical one with one being on top and another on the bottom or one being good and another being bad. The findings in this study is of considerable significance for communities with very strong Islamic and customary features, particularly in Indonesia, such as Aceh, Malay, Java, or Bugis.

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Interviews

Interview with M. Sayuti Datuk Rajo Penghulu, General Chairperson of the West Sumatra Association of Minangkabau *Adat* Councils, (LKAAM), February 17, 2020.

Interview with Buya Gusrizal Gazahar General Chairperson of the Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) West Sumatera Region, February 18, 2020.

Interview with Irsal Very Datuk Lelo Sampono, Chairperson of LKAAM in Batu Sangkar, West Sumatera, February 20, 2020.

Interview with Zulkifli Zukarnain, a prominent religious figure in West Sumatera from Padang Pariaman, February 18, 2020.