



BATAK SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION PART I.: SOCIAL GROUPS

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Bataks, the sedentary agricultural people in Central Sumatra, belong to the so-called ancient-Malayan stratum of population. Through their physical type, language and pattern of culture they are related to many other ethnic groups in Indonesia. The origin of the Bataks is not satisfactorily known—or better, is known as little as the origin of all the Malayo-Polynesian peoples of the islands of Indonesia. It is supposed, however, that by the beginning of our era they were settled already in the region of Lake Toba, which seems to be their cradle on Sumatra. The formation of later genealogical division of Bataks began here where can also be found the point of origin of their newer migrations up to their contemporary extension.

The contemporary Batak population, more than half a million people, is linguistically and / or ethnically divided into several groups (e. g. Toba, Karo, Dairi, Timor, Mandailing, Raja, Sime-lungun a. o.). The Batak regions, as well as the larger part of Indonesia, was occupied by the Dutch in the second half of the last century. Under their influence and with the new administrative organisation of Indonesia certain structural changes appeared in the Batak social organisation, especially in the territorially-genealogical and territorially-economic organisation (the institution of markets) and in the position of Batak hereditary aristocracy, let alone the direct removal of several institutions by the government's commands (as slavery). These changes

based on factors not comprised in the tendencies of the Batak society as such are not organic; for the purpose of understanding of the Batak society they can have only negative meaning if any and therefore are not taken into consideration; in this paper we attempted to describe the factors of social grouping of the Bataks as they existed before the Dutch influence made herself felt.

The purpose of this article is to define the different social groups of the Bataks, their fundamental characteristics and functions. Their system of government, the standing of different social classes, their custom-law, economic life etc. are mentioned here only as far as they reflect the respective functions of social groups. The achieved pattern represents consequently only one trait of the Batak society—the social grouping.

The most important in the Batak social grouping are still the genealogical ties, we find them however frequently combined with the territorial ones; in some instances the territorial ties appear independently. Both factors are intersected moreover by the division of people in social classes: hereditary aristocracy, commoners and slaves. By the fact of his birth every Batak consequently becomes member of a large scale of genealogical groups, of a territorial organisation¹) and also of a social class (that is practically not interchangeable with the exception of the slave-class, as the member of either of the two higher classes can be enslaved or a slave set free). The groups formed on the basis of genealogical or territorial ties have in social life different economic, religious, governing etc. functions.

The Batak social life and its organisation has been for a long time subject of numerous studies of Dutch sociologists and legal scholars. They use native Batak terms for the social groups and do not attempt to compare them with the standard anthropological terminology, the names for the different functions of a certain group are assumed to be names of different groups, some factors of integration are stressed and others undervalued. To clarify the terminology is the foremost task and the basis for the understanding of the Batak society.

Genealogical groups

Even if the genealogical ties were at the time of the beginning of the European influence not the only ones, they were

nevertheless most important and represented the basis for any other grouping. The largest genealogical groups, too large as to have any practical meaning in Batak everyday-life, conserved at least important functions for the regulation of marriage, the offering festivities connected with the cult of the ancestors etc. The smaller the genealogical groups are, the more distinct and important their role in social life, as far down as the clan-village which is the most important economic, governing and religious unit. The smaller groups having usually more functions appear in different roles; Batak customary law, Adat, distinguished rigorously one different function of the same group from another and usually called the group by different names according to its functions. These distinctive names sometimes led to confusion in the studies relating to the Batak social life. The genealogical groups in Batak society with their different functions, beginning with the largest, are discussed in this article. The relations between different functions of the same genealogical group are sometimes difficult to specify, especially because some of these are common to the groups on different level, we suppose however that this division corresponds with reality on the whole.

A. M a r g a

It can be truly said that marga is the largest genealogical group of the Bataks. The exact meaning of this term is very vague however; it denotes large groups consisting of as much as many tens of thousands people and at the same time indicates also their component-parts. "Limpong, containing only several thousands of people is marga even as Lontung which is divided into seven smaller margas and each of these on their part consists of two or more new margas." (Vergouwen p. 33.) Boer finds marga a term that cannot be exactly explained. We can only say it is a genealogical unit with a more or less distant common ancestor. (Boer p. 356.) Keuning defines marga merely as a "patrilinear exogamous group deducing its origin from the male ancestor who lived ten or more generations ago." (Keuning p. 490.) Vergouwen points out that even exogamy is not a reliable criterion, because in some regions exogamy is conserved for the

whole large marga, in other places only small split margas are exogamous. He states that generally speaking marga was a group which (after removing the exogamous taboo between itself and other groups of the same original marga) had its own name in spoken language. (Vergouwen p. 33—35.) For Ypes too marga is a genealogical group with the specific name; the smallest known number of generations in marga was eight. (Ypes I, p. 4—5.) Loeb (p. 19) identifies marga with a sib, i. e. a consanguineal kin group the members of which acknowledge the bond of common descent in maternal or paternal line but are unable always to trace the actual genealogical connections between individuals. (Murdock p. 47.) I think that this identification concerns only the smallest groups still called margas. The large or chief margas and especially the marga-complexes overreach the limits of sib and have more resemblances with a phratry.

1. Marga as a genealogical group

The majority of margas are named after their common ancestor. Even if the actual genealogical connections are not always clear (e. g. during migrations some parts of marga may forget their common ancestor and for everyday-life needs deduce their descent from the founder of the new village or complex of the villages; cf. Boer p. 357), there is conserved in the Batak tradition the complicated genealogical tree of margas, going far back and beginning with the mythical ancestor of Bataks Si Radja Batak. His two sons, Guru Tateabulan and Radja Isombaon, were tribal ancestors of the groups Lontung and Sumba. From these two chief groups a great number of contemporary margas were formed by gradual splitting-up; each of them has its exact place in the genealogical tree (see Vergouwen, and Ypes I.).

Even from the contemporary division it is clear that margas were originally also territorially united²) and the members of them inhabited one or more villages (Loeb p. 19; Boer p. 356). In the oldest Batak territory, region of Lake Toba, the traces of this division are most distinctive. With the increase of population migrations took place; margas did not migrate as a whole, only one part severed itself at a time from the main body and occupied new territory either independently or mixed with parts of other margas (cf. Dijk p. 298). These migrations changed the territorial

character of margas this significance of which often passed over to smaller genealogical groups. That is the chief reason for the somewhat split-up pattern of contemporary population; margas have not (besides exceptions) their own closed territory, in the territory of one marga we can find small parts of other margas either forming enclaves or living there as strangers. (Vergouwen p. 130.)

The genealogical character of marga appears in foreground in the connection with the regulation of marriage. Batak society is patrilinear and exogamous—a man has to marry a girl from other marga than his own, preferentially from his mother's marga and if possible his mother's brother's daughter (cross-cousin marriage, cf. sub E). Exogamy is one of the principal characteristics of marga. (e. g. marga Simorangkir, part of marga Panggabean, began to figure as an independent marga when one of its members was allowed to marry a girl from the group Lumbang Siangian of the same marga; Lumbang Siangian and the third group—Lumban Ratus—remained nevertheless bound together as marga Panggabean). The infringing of exogamous taboo was considered as an incest and strictly punished. The strictness of this taboo is becoming gradually smaller and smaller nowadays.

2. Land rights

According to the rule of exogamy the whole marga cannot form a residential unit, because its female members are bound after the marriage to go to live with their husbands—members of another marga. Its male members who are however the only ones to own lands form the core of a residential unit. In this sense we can speak about marga as of a group with land rights. Theoretically speaking marga is the owner of all non-cultivated lands inside its territory (Boer p. 355—6, Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 48; and others). Each member of marga has the right to cultivate a part of this territory and thus to appropriate it as his individual property. By the fact of the first cultivation the member of marga becomes hereditary tenant of the land; any stranger, member of another marga, has to beg for the permission to cultivate and even then he is given the land for use only. His right terminates with his death or departure from the marga's territory.

[Practically this right is hereditary too, but the son of the deceased must ask formally the chief of village for the new permission.] The difference between these both forms of land-tenure is practically non-existent in everyday-life. The land-owning by marga has also theoretical meaning only, because different villages themselves dispose mostly of the non-cultivated land in their neighbourhood.

The territory of marga was divided in some regions among its composed parts so that marga has now not even theoretical land rights there (see Ypes I, p. 382 for Toba Plateau and passim for other districts; cf. here sub B/3).

On the same or higher level as marga appears as a collective landowner also *bius* (cf. here sub A/3), which was in the origin literally an offering community. *Bius* divides its lands also among its smaller parts; the rights of the members of *bius* are the same as the rights of the members of marga, with the difference that as a member of *bius* is considered everybody who lives continually in its limits.

3. Religious and offering groups

The ancestor's cult was an important part of the Batak religion and of the whole Batak social life. To have a common ancestor means, in a society based on genealogical ties, ipso facto to have a claim on membership in a given group, a claim on a share of all its rights. And that is the reason why so many complicated genealogical trees in Batak tradition were conserved, the reason for the great honor Bataks show to the ancestors. The more distant an ancestor was—i. e. the more numerous the descendants were—the greater the offerings which were dedicated to him and the larger the circle of people participating in the offering festivities. To organise offering festivities on the highest level usually a great disaster, concerning all region, gives reason for, e. g. an epidemy, bad harvest etc., when magic help of the powerful ancestor of the largest group is needed.

It is very difficult to identify the purely genealogical groups with the offering groups, even if the second ones represent only one aspect of the first. The same inexactitude that is typical for the term marga also appears in the names of offering groups.

Besides the offering festivities organized by larger or smaller genealogical groups often overlap.

BIUS.³⁾ The highest offering group is the so-called bius. It is not known in all Batak regions, its presence is limited to the central parts of the territory only. The religious function of this group was conserved always, but in some places bius developed also different characteristics of a governing group, especially in its relation to the land-rights and their defense (cf. here sub A/4). Bius as an offering group is centered around the common sombaon, i. e. spirit of a certain place (a mountain, a spring etc.). The nature of sombaon combined with the fact that bius includes the whole great region were basis for conclusion that it was a group organized on territorial, not genealogical ties (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 23—4; Vergouwen p. 41). Against this reasoning speak conclusive arguments however: sombaon, although the spirit of a certain place, at the same time was the godlike spirit of a very ancient ancestor, forefather of a chief marga or of a group of margas (Warneck p. 85—6); even if bius was not a group genealogically pure (it included also strangers living in its territory), at least it was formed upon a genealogical basis,⁴⁾ because even Vergouwen spoke about the great bius, "bius na bolon", which consisted of a whole tribe or a larger part thereof and was divided into several small bius, "bius na metmet" (Vergouwen p. 88). Keuning defined bius as a religious unit which was composed of several hordjas of either one or more margas, but always of one chief marga. (Keuning p. 496.) Schröder stated that marga Pangabeian had its own bius.⁵⁾ (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 28.)

It follows from the facts presented above that bius was not an offering group of marga, but a higher unit comprising all the chief marga inhabiting a vast territory as well as the small groups of other margas living inside the boundaries. Bius organized great offering festivities in the honor of sombaon. According to the number of members different beasts were offered the names of which bear symbolically the respective offering groups.

Group of the buffalo: the name of the highest group, probably identical with bius. It was sapanganan horbo sombaon: the group offering buffalo in the honor of sombaon. This group

organized festivities called *hordja rea*, *santi rea*, *sahordja horbo* or *hordja rari* (Vergouwen p. 40; Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 20—1; Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 90). The group of the buffalo gathered for offering after great disasters only. The smaller groups—components of the group of the buffalo—were represented only by several persons. As to its extent this group was composed of members of at least 16 generations (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 90) or grouped the people whose common ancestor lived at least three centuries ago (Vergouwen p. 39).

4. Government and administration

Even if *margas* had often their own territories with exact boundaries, one of characteristics of any administrative group, they never appeared as such (Loeb p. 19; Vergouwen p. 128). There existed no public administration, no centralised power—either in the hands of one single chief or as a collective power of a certain group of chiefs (Vergouwen p. 128). *Marga* was simply a genealogical group of land-tenants and all its possible governing functions were connected with this character only. Ypes asserts that according to the tradition “there were formerly three states on Tjinendang: one of the *marga* *Angkat*, second of the *marga* *Tendang* and third of the *marga* *Buluara*” (Ypes II, p. 359), it is true, but the term “state” apparently is to be understood only as a “territorial community”, the collective land-owning.

The position of *bius* is somewhat a different one. This religious group comprising one chief *marga* (or several related *margas*) and strangers living in its territory developed in some regions into an administrative unit governed by highest chief or assembly of the chiefs (as e. g. in Samosir, Lumban Djulu, Siambaton, Tuka Dolok, Tuka Holbung, Muara, Plateau Toba etc., see Ypes I). It had usually also a common market—*onan*; also *marga* or even smaller group however could have a common market. The territory of a *bius* had exactly defined boundaries and it was defended, if necessary, with arms, by all its inhabitants. As we have mentioned already, *bius* is not an all-Batak institution however and is known mainly, but not exclusively among the Toba- and Dairi-Bataks.

Therefore it is possible to say that, generally speaking, the administrative and governing functions are not the most important aspect of the highest groups on the level of marga, but appear more distinctly with the smaller groups.

B. Hordja

The term itself means festivity, celebration (Warneck, Wörterbuch), in the figurative meaning also the group which used to gather itself for the celebration. The hordja festivities were organized in honor of a tribal ancestor by the circle of agnate relatives. Hordja is substantially a genealogical religious group which later developed also the land-owning and governing functions.

1. Hordja as a genealogical group

"Hordja is genealogical and religious group comprising the members of one greater clan, living in more or less exactly limited territory formed by several villages" (Keuning p. 495).

(In Laguboti) the margas were divided into hordjas; e. g. marga Pangaribu now has six hordjas (Ypes I, p. 292).

In Plateau Toba the terms "bus" and originally "sapamelean ompu" were used instead of "hordja". From the former term (ompu: forefather, grandfather) it is possible to deduce that it was an offering group of a marga-branch (ibid. p. 391—2).

"Hordja is here (in Toba Holbung) genealogically pure unit, but on the other side also an offering group and a territory... The great branches of the margas of the Pohan tribe formed hordjas." (Vergouwen p. 144.)

"The term hordja is used for denoting a territory with un-mixed population" (ibid. p. 41).

"Hordja is here (in Balige) an offering group the members of which belong to the same marga-branch or submarga" (Ypes I, p. 228). It follows from the cited references that hordja (in Karo—kerdja) was genealogically a consanguineal group smaller than marga, but larger than saompu (see here sub C) which corresponds to lineage.

2. Hordja as an offering and religious group (see also references cited sub B/1). The members of hordja used to gather at the offering festivities organized in honor of a common ancestor, usually when there the need for his magic help had arisen. The help was begged for by offering an animal; the name of the offered animal was also that given to the festivity and to the group organizing Sapanganan lombu ("being of one festivity of the cow"): circle of 12—15 generations, which offers a cow (Vergouwen p. 38—9; according to Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 89, is hordja lombu a circle of 8 generations, in Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 22 six generations are needed to form a hordja lombu).

Hordja saparsantian or sahombanan (in Silindung) consists of the members of 10 generations and offers a buffalo (Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 22).

Hordja rea—the circle of 12 generations (ibid.).

Sahordja horbo—the offering group formed by larger or smaller marga-branch or whole marga, which offers a buffalo. It is usually at least three centuries old (Vergouwen p. 39) or consists of the members of 10—12 generations. This festivity is already mentioned here under marga-offering groups; it can appear on the level of both marga and hordja.

Conclusion: hordja is an offering group of a higher level, organizing festivities in honor of a common ancestor who lived at least seven generations ago. All the relatives are not present the smaller component-groups of hordja being represented only by few members. The overlapping of higher hordja-festivities with lower bius-festivities is probably the result of the fact that small bius—bius na metmet—sometimes fulfills the functions of hordja (Ypes I, p. 344).

3. Hordja as a governing and administrative unit

Hordja, i. e. marga-branch or submarga living in a coherent territory, usually is the highest group forming haradjaon.⁶⁾ "Haradjaon" (radja—chief, prince, member of hereditary aristocracy) means a group with proper administrative and with centralized power in the hands of either one highest chief or assem-

bly of the chiefs of smaller component-groups (cf. Ypes I, p. 159.) Hordja usually was governed by the highest chief (called e. g. radja pardjolo) with the assistance of the lower chiefs, radjas of different villages or groups of villages.

Hordja also was a land-owning unit which could have exact boundaries. Where the marga-territory remained undivided hordja had at least the right of disposition to the lands cultivated by its members. The integrity of hordja's territory was defended against any intruders. Any persons outside the hordja could settle on its territory only with the permission of the chief (theoretically the permission must be given by hordja's chief, practically it was sufficient to obtain the consent of radja huta, cf. here sub C/3). The economic unity of an hordja was strengthened by its having a common market -onan- with which different rules were connected. The most important was the rule of market's peace and of the uniform measures and weights.

The personal security of the members of hordja were guaranteed inside its territory by the chief's authority; every injustice or crime committed against any of its members outside this territory would be punished by all hordja. With all members of hordja also lay the responsibility for anything what could happen on its territory to a member of another hordja. Peace and law were secured by the court-assembly of hordja consisting of the highest chief of hordja, the lower dignitaries and the chiefs of different villages. Hordja formed in the territorial sense a larger group of villages in a coherent territory. It is a Toba-Batak term; in other dialects or regions we can find the same group having various names as: tahi or sapartahian, i. e. "agreement", "being of the same mind" (Cf. Warneck, Wöterbuch), aur (in Dairi, cf. Ypes I, p. 88), sembarur (in Barus, cf. Ypes I, p. 137), kuria (in Mandailing, cf. Willer p. 158, and Neumann IV, p. 6), urung (in Karo, cf. Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 217).

Sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish hordja from saompu (see later) especially when saompu is formed by a larger group of villages—a mother village and the descendant ones.

C. Saompu, sasuhu

The name saompu means "being of common ancestor" (ompu—grandfather, figuratively forefather, ancestor); sasuhu: "being of one group". Both terms are somewhat overlapping. Generally speaking sasuhu consists of members of about four generations, saompu has a larger meaning; it groups together people with the common ancestor 4—12 generations ago (Vergouwen p. 35—6). 12 generations is the highest limit for saompu and can be found in the regions of ancient peopling only, where the kinship ties remain known for a long time.

1. Saompu as a genealogical group

"A consanguineal kin group produced by either rule of unilinear descent is technically known as a lineage when it includes only persons who can actually trace their common relationship through a specific series of remembered genealogical links in the prevailing line of descent." (Murdock p. 46.)

Lineages in the patrilinear Batak society cannot form residential units; also they have not any administrative or governing functions. The members of saompu are merely the male and female descendants of the founder of a village or a complex of villages who would gather only for organizing a religious festivity (cf. Boer p. 358). The female members of saompu go to live to their husband's home after their marriage, the male members remain in village and form the core of the community (besides them and their families also their affinal relatives -boru- are living here; see here sub E). Only in this sense we can identify lineage, i. e. saompu, with a village or a group of villages around the mother-village.

Saompu is in the same time also sapanganan djuhut—the group of agnate relatives who have to be advised about the marriage of any of the members and who are invited to the marriage-festivity. In its largest extension—as sahardja mangan tuhor ni boru—it belongs already to the hordja-group; different lineages in this case are represented however only by a few members. (Vergouwen p. 40—41.)

2. Saompu as a religious and offering group

The group of agnate relatives would gather for the worshipping of a common ancestor when the need for his magic help arises: e. g. after a misfortune, bad harvest, sickness of one of their members or on the other hand at the birth-festivity or marriage. During this gathering an animal was offered and the group is symbolically named after it. The universal term for this group is "sagondang" ("the people of—or belonging to—one gondang"; gondang means gong), "sapanganan" ("the people of—or belonging to—one feast"), or "sapelean" ("the people of—or belonging to—one offer"). a) sapanganan (or sagondang) manuk—the group of the rooster. It is the smallest offering group consisting of the members of four generations who usually live together in a newly founded village. All members must be present at the festivity (Vergouwen p. 38). This group can be identified with the genealogical group sasuhu. b) sapanganan (sagondang or sapelean) daludalu (or babi)—the group of the pig. This offering group is a larger one composed of the members of at least four generations, i. e. 10—16 families (Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 20). The collection of Batak customary law "Patik dohot uhum ni halak Batak" demands that this group consists of six generations (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 89). The members of sapanganan daludalu usually are living together in a group of villages as a saompu.

It can be supposed that in some regions even higher units appear as a lineage (or saompu)—offering groups, as e. g. sapanganan (or sahordja) lombu: the group of the cow consisting of the members of at least eight generations. This is possible especially in the ancient Batak territory where there are stronger genealogical traditions. In the territories of new migrations where practically every founder of a village becomes an important ancestor sapanganan lombu groups together larger group than mere saompu.

Besides that saompu appear as sada djambar—the consanguineal group which has at the festivity of a higher group the common claim on a certain share of the offered animal (Vergouwen p. 20). The same group in a reciprocal function—as bringing the contribution to the festivity of a higher group—is named sada guguan.

3. Saompu as an administrative and governing unit

Saompu is a consanguineal group and as such cannot form a residential unit (cf. Murdock p. 42). The rule of patrilocal marriage binds the wife to live after the marriage with her husband, i. e. in other village than her native one. The male descendants of a common ancestor however stay in the village and with their families and certain affinal relatives form a residential kin group based practically on the ties of saompu. This residential kin group forms a village—huta, or a group of villages consisting of the so-called mother village and the neighbouring villages founded from it.

Huta is the most important administrative and governing unit of the Bataks (cf. Loeb p. 19). All of the everyday-life affairs are decided here: the small quarrels about the land, the offences or crimes committed against persons or goods etc. The inhabitants of an huta are interrelated — they are all descendants of one ancestor — the founder of the village. Naturally, a small number of strangers are living there too, mostly the affinal relatives — boru —, but they form a distinct group with reduced rights. Huta is governed by the chief, called radja huta (the name is different in various regions — e. g. pertaki, radja pamusuk etc.) who is helped by two or three other dignitaries. Theoretically the chief has only executive power, all cases or quarrels have to be brought up at a general assembly of inhabitants and ruled by common consent.

Radja huta is the direct male descendant of the founder of a village, the heredity of this office being usually subject to the rule of primogeniture. The later is by no means obligatory; if the oldest son of the chief is for some reasons not able to hold the chieftainship the inhabitants can choose from among other sons or even brothers of the deceased.

Theoretically speaking huta has not land rights which lie with higher groups (cf. sub A and B). The inhabitants of the village, the members of a land-owning marga, have their individually tenanted lands however, which together form the territory of huta (with the ground on which huta itself is built and common pasture-land owned by huta as such). The non-cultivated lands

around the huta which are not used as a common pasture-land are the property of marga or hordja. Practically appear huta however as an unit with the right of disposition even to these non-cultivated lands. A stranger is given a permission for cultivating not by marga- or hordja-dignitaries but by radja huta. The abandoned lands are not returned to marga common-property, but to huta common-property which is administered by radja huta. (For huta as an administrative and governing unit see Vergouwen p. 130—141; Ypes I passim: Keuning p. 498,, Soangkupon p. 91—2,, Neumann IV, p. 3—5; Adatrechtbundels XX, p. 38—9; Henny p. 43 sq; Willer p. 151; Adatrechtbundels XXXV p. 84—8).

D) Extended family

The usual type of a house with the Bataks is the large common house inhabited by several families. The exact relations of these families are never stated; it can be however inferred that they represent a patrilinear extended family (e. g. the man's parents call his wife "parumaen", i. e. "being of — or belonging to — one house"). The inhabitants of one house are called dongan sadjabu. It is to them that a man addresses himself when requesting help for different kinds of work; as an old Batak proverb says: You go for help to the inhabitants of your house first, and thence to the inhabitants of your village. (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 120). By the husband—wife quarrels appear inhabitants of the same house as arbiters (ibid.).

E) The family — ripe

The smallest universal social unit is a family. The family in the Batak patrilinear society is patrilocal — the married couple lives in the house of husband's parents or in its neighbourhood.⁷⁾ Husband (or his father) having paid the bride-price to his wife's parents⁸⁾ acquired her thus as a property not only for himself but also for his larger genealogical group. The wife does not return to her family after her husband's death. She has to marry again some relative of her late husband, usually his brother

according to the rule of levirat.⁸⁾ In case the wife dies first and childless her parents are obliged to give to the surviving husband one of the sisters of his deceased wife at a substantially lower bride-price.

The preferential form of marriage is polygyny, although it naturally depends on the economic possibilities of the man. That is the chief reason for greater frequency of polygyny among hereditary aristocracy than among commoners.

The family is usually called ripe (Vergouwen p. 37), partners call themselves dongan saripe.¹⁰⁾

a) Family of orientation

(i. e. the family in which ego is born, nurtured and reared). The family -ripe- consists of the husband, his wife (or wives) and their unmarried sons and daughters. In the local sense ripe forms part of a house.¹¹⁾

It is an economic unit which earns their living by cooperative efforts. Ripe has basic functions in economy, reproduction and in the education of children up to a certain age.¹²⁾ The father has practically unlimited authority in his family. It is he who owns and administers whole of the family property. Naturally, the family as such has no functions in religion or administration, only higher groups are concerned with these.

Man — father of the family — is the only owner of the family property the most important components of which are lands and cattle. After his death this property is divided among different heirs according to strict rules of heredity. Generally speaking there exist only male heirs, either descendants or ascendants of the deceased. When there are none the heirloom goes to the more distant male patrilinear relatives.

Sons are the heirs of their father, father inherits the property of his sons (Vergouwen p. 361—2; Loeb p. 21—2). Grandson is heir of his grandfather, but not contrariwise (Willer p. 186; Loeb p. 22). When there are no direct male relatives the property goes over to the side-line, to brothers and their sons. When even these are absent the heirloom passes over to the waris (from arab. — heir), i. e. to the next closest male relative (Neumann 1887 p. 271; Loeb p. 22: there is the meaning of waris given as a “head of the family”). The rules for passing-over of the heirloom to the more

distant relatives are somewhat different in each territory. With the Toba-Bataks the side-line of relatives can go on practically without limits; only when someone died in some village where his kinship ties were not known his property went to the chief of the village (Vergouwen p. 362—3). In Mandailing the right of the chief of ripe (here it means not “a family”, but “a quarter of a village”) is second only to the rights of the deceased brother's sons. (Willer p. 186). In the Pane and Bila rivers region the chief of the village is the sole heir when the deceased left no waris (Neumann 1887 p. 271).

The largest part of the heirloom goes to the oldest son of the deceased; sometimes the share of youngest son is also larger than the shares of his elder brothers. Sons of the first wife have preferential rights over the sons of other wives (Willer p. 186; Neumann 1887 p. 271; Vergouwen p. 362 sq.).

b) Family of procreation and affinal relatives

Every married man is a member of his family of orientation into which he was born and also a member and head of his family of procreation formed beside him by his wife and children. By the fact of his marriage he initiates moreover the affinal ties not only between himself and his wife's relatives but also between his kin group and his wife's kin group.¹³⁾

Preferential form of marriage is cross-cousin marriage or at least marriage with a girl from mother's marga. Husband becomes so called “anak boru” (male daughter) of the wife's parents who on their side are his hulahula.

Marriage with a parallel-cousin or any other girl from the group where ego's female relatives are married are strictly forbidden; contrariwise men of this group are ego's anak boru and he is their hulahula.

To marry repeatedly the wives of a certain group and to give female relatives as wives to a certain other group becomes the basis for the forming of the so-called “three-lineage system” which is very typical with the Bataks. Group A gives girls to group B and takes girls from group C. Group B gives girls to group C and takes girls from group A. Group C gives girls to group A and takes girls from group B. (Keuning p. 491—2). Group A is hulahula of B and

anak boru of C, group B is hulahula of C and anak boru of A, group C is hulahula of A and anak boru of B.¹⁴)

These ties bind together not only individuals but whole families and even higher genealogical groups. Every individual has consanguineal and also affinal relatives: his anak boru and hulahula. On the family level it means three through affinity related families. For each member of this three-family unit there are certain rights and obligations towards other members. Every anak boru has to pay homage to his hulahula, to help him with certain work (e.g. building of a house). In some regions there is even the obligation to help one's hulahula in war. The hulahula on the other hand is obliged to defend his anak boru, to render him magic help, to invite his anak boru to religious and festive feasts etc. (Soangkupon p. 98 sq.; Keuning p. 492—3; Loeb p. 30; Stratanovič, *passim*.) Considering that these one-way marriages have been passing for many generations already, very firm ties between different genealogical groups were formed. The greatest importance and social significance these interchanges of wives have had in the families of hereditary aristocracy.

c) Kinship terminology

The indivisible part of mutual behavior of members of family is the system of kinship terminology, i. e. the terms by which the different members of a Batak family (and affinal families) address themselves or by which they refer to themselves. In the following there are the kinship terms as given by Loeb (abbr. L), Vergouwen (abbr. V) and Brenner (abbr. B).

- Father for mother: by name or as "mother of so and so". The technical term is *dongan saripe* (V).
- son: anak (V), also term for brother's son and sons of all men of his generation in the genealogical group (L).
- daughter: boru (V), also term for brother's daughter and daughters of all men of his generation in the group (L).
- mother: uses the same terms as father.
- son for father: ama (V), also term for father's brother and all male relatives of the father's generation in the group (L). *Bapa* (B).

- mother: ina (V), also for mother's sister, father's brother's wife (L). Nandei (B).
 - brother: ampara (V), older brother: haha (V, L), kaka (B); younger brother anggi (V, L); in Angola older brother: anggi (L).
 - sister: iboto (V, L), also for father's brother's daughter (L).
- daughter: for parents the same terms as son
for sisters the same terms as son for brothers
for brothers the same terms as son for sisters.
- man's father for wife's father: tungane (V, L).
- wife's mother: ompu (L), silich (B), sasa — when she is older (B).
 - son's wife: parumaen (L), maen, parumaen (V), permahin (B).
- man's mother for wife's father: iboto (L), tuangku (when he is older, B). They are strictly forbidden to speak with each other.
- wife's mother: eda (L), silich (B).
 - son's wife: same terms as man's father.
- man for wife's father: tulang (L), mama (B).
- wife's mother: nantulang (L), mami (B).
 - wife's brother: tungane (L), siluh (B).
 - wife's sister: haha, angga (L), when they are older, anggi (L), when they are younger.
- wife for man's father: benkila (B), amang boru (L, V).
- man's mother: bibi (B), nan boru.
 - man's brother: same terms as man for his wife's brother (L).
 - man's sister: same terms as man for his wife's sister (L).
- wife's parents for her husband: kala (L).

Notes:

1) An individual can change from a certain territorial organisation to another, e. g. he can become inhabitant of a genealogically entirely strange village after living there for at least two paddy seasons. (cf. Willer p. 154.)

2) "In Palembang Malay 'marga' means 'district' and among the Garo the sibs are still territorial." (Loeb p. 21.)

3) Schröder deduces the term from "ibus": the palm from the wood of which the gongs are made. (Adatrechtbundels XXXV. p. 19.)

4) That can be deduced also from the fact that *buis* is divided into smaller groups, *hordja*, which correspond to *marga*-branches or even to small *margas*.

5) *Marga Panggabean* is a "chief *marga*" however, which is divided into three *margas* and at least one of these is further divided into two smaller *margas*. (cf. Vergouwen p. 15.)

6) With the exception of territories, where *buis* had also administrative chief.

7) Only when the husband did not pay the whole or part of the bride-price he is bound to live in his wife's parents house till the paying of this duty.

8) It is necessary to state in this connection, that the bride-price is fictitious only, because the gift given by husband's parents to wife's parents almost or wholly correspond to the value of bride-price.

9) The brother does not pay the new bride-price. The man from larger kin group pays the reduced bride-price. (Adatrechtbundels XXXV, p. 10.)

10) In Mandailing "ripe" means also the quarter of a village (see Vergouwen p. 37; Neumann 1887, p. 19). Figuratively it may mean even higher group, the descendants (e. g. "hita na saripe pinompar ni Si Radja Silitinga" — we the descendants of si Radja Silitongs, who are of one family;" Vergouwen tab. II.).

11) In a certain age the sons leave their parents' house and are living in a village-house: "sopo".

12) This "three lineages system" actually has not only three links, it is usually more complicated (cf. Keuning passim; Stratanovič passim).

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