

THE TOBA-BATAK BAPTISM

by Anicetus B. Sinaga

Introduction

"Baptism" is one of many rituals in the *Toba-Batak religion*. To adequately understand this particular "sacrament"¹, we must bear in mind the general religious experience of the Batak. The traditional Toba-Batak are no exception among the "Ancients": they "tend to live as much as possible in the sacred or in close proximity to consecrated objects"². A Batak is a *homo religiosus*, who has particular spiritual attitudes and manifests religious behaviour characteristic of his sense of life. A religious man, he attempts to remain as long as possible in a sacred universe, and the world where the Batak live is "capable of becoming sacred"³.

In a world charged with the felt presence of God, virtually everything has a sacred aspect and, indeed, much of Batak religious activity is concerned with reinforcing and augmenting this inherent quality of things. When a traditional Batak ritually pours water on a child, it is an actualization and celebration of the sacred *power* hidden intimately in water: the *numen* or *theion* of water. Religious *gesta* become a sacrament, a communion with the sacred⁴. We have to

¹ In employing the term sacrament we refer to that particular species of religious activity focused on a concrete object causing it to become receptical of divine life and power that is then communicated to man and his mundane affairs. As G. VAN DER LEEUW writes: "'Dinge' gibt es nicht, es gibt nur Röhren und Behälter, die gegebenenfalls die Macht beherbergen können. Entweder sind also die 'Dinge', die dem Menschen aufstoßen, Gehäuse, die er mit Macht erfüllen soll, Räder, die er in Bewegung bringen soll; dann gilt es eine magische Tat, der Mensch tritt gewissermaßen als Schöpfer auf, wenn nicht der Dinge, so doch der Mächte, die ihnen Leben verleihen. Oder: die 'Dinge' sind 'Geschöpfe', *creaturae*. Das heißt: sie sind unmittelbar zu Gott, und Gott kann ihnen jeden Augenblick neues Leben einblasen, neue Mächtigkeit verleihen; er macht aus den 'Dingen' Instrumente seiner Macht, er schafft sie um und neu. — So kann eine Tat, ein Wort, eine Person, jederzeit 'mächtig' werden, sei es aus der Machtvollkommenheit des Menschen, der die Macht in sie hineinzwängt, sei es aus der Machtvollkommenheit Gottes, des Schöpfers" (G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Phänomenologie der Religion*. 2nd ed.; rev.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1956, pp. 407f.).

² MIRCEA ELIADE, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Trans. by Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959, p. 12. *IBID.*: This tendency is perfectly understandable, because, for primitives as for men of all premodern societies, the sacred is equivalent to a power, and, in the last analysis, to reality. The sacred is saturated with being. Sacred power means reality and at the same time enduringness and efficacy. Cf. G. VAN DER LEEUW, *op. cit.*, pp. 19—27.

³ M. ELIADE, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁴ *IBID.*, 14.

try to feel the dominant sense of mystery that surrounds them, a feeling of spontaneous forces and energies whose meaning are understood in the form of myth⁵.

To understand adequately the meaning of a ritual, in this case baptism, we must refer to the *Archetype*, which is narrated in myth. As MIRCEA ELIADE notes: "Every ritual has a divine model, an archetype⁶." "The main function of myth is to determine the exemplar models of all rituals, and all significant human acts⁷." The need to do what the deities have done in the beginning is recognized in every "ancient" country⁸.

Myth narrates sacred history; it tells about an event which took place in the primordial time, the fabulous time of "the beginning". It narrates how, thanks to the exploits of Supernatural Beings, a reality has come into existence, be it the total reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment such as an island, a way of behaviour, an institution, a ritual. Myth reveals the creative activity and manifests the sacrality of the works of the Supernatural Beings⁹.

Therefore, in order to adequately conceive the nature of God, the deities, and man, *one must carefully* examine the myths of a people and compare them with one another. Likewise, to understand a ritual, one has to refer the description provided by the myths.

Dealing with the Toba-Batak experience of baptism, we propose to investigate their conception of God and how they experience their High God, *Mulajadi na Bolon*, while they are celebrating and dramatizing their faith in this particular sacrament.

The materials used are taken from manuscripts, tapes of prayers, versions of the Myth and rituals, and the scholarly studies.

A. The Toba Batak

The name "*Batak*" refers to an ethnological and linguistic grouping of people in North Sumatra, Indonesia. It is subdivided into six main groups, of which the Toba Batak is one. The Batak people believe that they have a common forefather¹⁰, and they share same language, which has six clearly distinct dialects. As the Batak prospered, the original two exogamous patrilineal units split into dif-

⁵ Cf. W. BREDE KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*. Trans. by: John B. Carman. 3rd ed.; The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971, p. 20.

⁶ M. ELIADE, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour: Archétypes et répétition*. 2nd ed.; rev.; Paris: Gallimard, 1969, p. 33. Cf. C. G. JUNG, "Contribution à la psychologie de l'archétype de l'enfant". In: C. G. JUNG and CH. KERÉNYI, *Introduction à l'essence de la mythologie: L'enfant divin, la jeune fille divine*. Trans. H. E. Del Medico. 4th ed.; rev.; Paris: Payot, 1968, pp. 105—144.

⁷ M. ELIADE, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Trans. by; Rosemary Sheed. 2nd ed.; London and Sydney: Sheed and Ward, 1971, p. 410.

⁸ M. ELIADE, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*, p. 34.

⁹ M. ELIADE, *Aspects du mythe*. Paris: Gallimard, 1971, p. 15.

¹⁰ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organization and Customary Law and the Toba-Batak in Northern Sumatra*. Trans. by: Jeune Scott-Kemball. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964, p. 21.

ferent tribal groups¹¹: the Toba Batak, the Pak-Pak or Dairi Batak, the Karo Batak, the Simalungun Batak, the Angkola-Mandailing Batak and the Pardem-banan Batak.

The Batak culture can be traced back to a series of migrations from South China, Yunnan and North Viet-nam sometime during the eighth and seventh centuries B. C. The early Bataks, settling in the region of Lake Toba in North Sumatra, were probably shifting cultivators of root crops or perhaps rice with nonmetallic technology¹².

The Toba Batak, who number some 2 million, live in the Barisan Mountains of North Central Sumatra. This country is fertile thanks to formerly active volcanoes that provided rich lava soil. The sloping valleys and the reliefs of the plateaus produced luxurious forests. Nowadays, however, these forests have been mainly cleared to make way for cultivation. In addition to rice, the staple crop, this district produces various vegetables, such as cabbage, onions, peanuts, maize. Important domestic animals are buffalos, horses, pigs and chickens¹³. The most important export of this region is camphor, and Barus, on the west coast of this region, was for many centuries as the centre of the camphor trade¹⁴.

The holy mountain of the Batak, the Toba-Batak "Olympus", is Pusuk Buhit, on the north west side of Lake Toba, the largest lake of Sumatra. On its slope, we find Sianjur Mulamula (the primordial protruding land), which is thought by the Batak to be their place of origin before they spread to the whole "country". They believe that their common forefather, Si Raja Batak, lived there and offered sacrifice to the High God, Mulajadi na Bolon.

B. Baptismal Celebration

When a child is born, it is ceremonially brought to a stream, where it is baptized. During the festivity following the baptism, it is given a name. I was privileged to witness a baptismal ceremony.

In the evening before the day of the baptism, a ceremony was held by the father of the newborn child. Rice cakes, loaves, and sweet-smelling flowers were offered together with a hen, and the High God, deities, and ancestors were invoked. As it got dark, a relative of the child's parents was sent to lay some of the offered rice cakes and loaves on the crosspaths and the curves of the path to the spring. The offered cakes were put on thorny leaves and were called "the warding off of hiding evil spirits¹⁵." At the same time, the path was cleared of overhanging branches.

¹¹ W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis van de stamverwantschap, de inheemsche rechtsgemeenschappen en het grondenrecht der Toba- en Dairibataks*. Leiden: Uitgegeven door de Adatrechtsstichting, 1932, pp. 24ff.

¹² PAUL B. PEDERSEN, *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul: The Development of National Batak Churches in North Sumatra*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Willian B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970, p. 18.

¹³ EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra: Its History and People*. Vienna: Verlag des Instituts für Völkerkunde der Universität Wien, 1935, pp. 1ff.

¹⁴ J. TIDEMAN, *Hindoe-Invloed in Noordelijk Batakland*. Amsterdam: Uitgaven van het Bataksch Instituut, 1935, pp. 32ff.

¹⁵ In Toba Batak: "pangolat begu monggop."

Early in the morning, the mother of the child took a *ragi idup*-cloth¹⁶, wrapped the child in it, and followed the *datu*¹⁷ and her husband to the spring. The *datu* led the procession and was followed by close relatives of the family. He waved a sword right and left while murmuring ritual formulae. When the group arrived at the spring, a sand pyramid was built. Under the guidance of the *datu*, a little channel was made around the pyramid, the top of which had been flattened. Some three metres from the pyramid, a fire was made and incense was lit, and the *datu* put some of it on the pyramid. Chews of betel and the holy cakes were also laid on the pyramid. The pyramid was called "the dried sands, the beloved earth". Then the incense was extinguished, and the *ragi idup*-cloth was spread out on it while the *datu* murmured prayers. The *datu* scooped water from the spring and poured it on the child¹⁸. The naked child was frightened and began to cry. Instead of being alarmed, the people were happy, and said: "May there be many voices of sons and daughters from now on." The child was then taken by its mother together with the *ragi idup*-cloth. Though the cloth was wet, the mother did not use any other cloth.

The group returned informally and the festivity continued at home. The *datu* performed the ceremony of purification with lemon juice (*pangurason*). The whole house was sprinkled: the sleeping space, the utensils, the door, the stable and the exterior. After the meal and during the "ceremony of uttering beautiful words", the child was given a name — much discussion preceded its choice.

C. Data of the Creation Myth

When a child is born, the High God of the Toba Batak is invoked. The name of the High God has several variants: *Ompu Tuhan Mulajadi*¹⁹, *Ompu Mula-*

¹⁶ An important kind of traditional cloth. Lit.: "Living pattern".

¹⁷ The *datu* is a combination of priest, doctor, teacher, and shaman.

¹⁸ J. B. NEUMANN notes that the actual 'baptism' among the Karo Batak may be by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring: "Eerst bij den zoogenaamden doop, d. i. de eerste wassching in de rivier (*patuaekkon*), waarbij de familieleden worden uitgenoodigd, wordt het kind een naam gegeven. Voor deze gelegenheid wordt eene stellage gemaakt van eenigszins piramidalen vorm van ongeveer een meter hoogte en van boven vlak, zoodat het kind er op geplaatst kan worden. De doop geschiedt op verschillende wijzen. Sommige plaatsen de stellage in het ondiepe gedeelte van de rivier en dompelen het kind geheel in het water; anderen gieten er water over heen; weer anderen besprenkelen het alleen met een weinig water. De moeder wordt gevolgd door andere vrouwen die bij deze plechtigheid tegenwoordig zijn. Is de doop geschied, dan vraagt zij de genoodigden om het kind een naam te geven. De vader gaat alsdan met de mannelijke verwanten te rade en neemt eene beslissing" (J. B. NEUMANN, "Pancén Bila-Stroomgebied op het Eiland Sumatra", *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, 3 (1886), pp. 464f.

¹⁹ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Lebenskräfte des Evangeliums: Missionserfahrungen innerhalb des animistischen Heidentums*. 7th ed.; Berlin: Verlag von Martin Warneck, 1922, p. 12: "Der genuin batakische Übergott ist Ompu Tuhan Mula jadi." *Tuhan* means Lord, God.

*jadi na Bolon*²⁰, *Debata Mulajadi na Bolon*²¹, *Mulajadi na Bolon*. In the version of the Creation Myth cited by JOH. WARNECK, the High God is repeatedly referred to simply as *Mulajadi* and under this name he is described as the Creator²². The fact that *Mulajadi* is found in every name here given, and that the High God is presented under this name as the Creator, shows that this component of the name of the High God is essential.

Mulajadi is a composition of the words *mula* and *jadi*. *Mula* means "beginning"²³ and *jadi* (in its active intransitive form *manjadi*) means "to become"²⁴. The combination of both words means "the beginning of becoming" or "the beginning of genesis"²⁵. *Bolon* means 'great', and the complete name means "the Great Beginning of Genesis".

There are also several personal titles attributed to him. He is addressed as *Ompung* (Grandfather)²⁶ and as the "Primordial King": "*Ompung*, the Primordial King, King the Beginning²⁷". Another title of the High God is "lord". He is considered to be "the Great Lord of the World²⁸". Further, the personal character of *Mulajadi na Bolon* is indicated by his function as judge. He is seen to be a totally just judge, who impartially, though mercifully, administers his law and rules²⁹. The High God is presented as a person conversing and acting in a human way³⁰, and in the primordial Golden Time, he often visited the Batak and lived near them.

²⁰ RAJA PATIK TAMBUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing: Adat Batak — Patik/Uhum*. Pematang Siantar, 1964 (stenciled), pp. 15ff.

²¹ LOTHAR SCHREINER, *Adat und Evangelium: Zur Bedeutung der altvölkischen Lebensordnungen für Kirche und Mission unter den Batak in Nordsumatra*. Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1972, p. 197; W. SCHMIDT, *Grundlinien einer Vergleichung der Religionen und Mythologien der austronesischen Völker: Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien. (Philosophisch-historische Klasse)*. Vienne, 1910, pp. 38f.; W. MÜNSTERBERGER, *Ethnologische Studien an Indonesischen Schöpfungsmythen: Ein Beitrag zur Kultur-Analyse Südostasiens*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1939, pp. 68ff.; C. M. PLEYTE, *Bataksche vertellingen*. Utrecht: H. Honig, 1894, p. 17; LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure of the Toba-Batak Belief in the High God*. Amsterdam: Jacob van Campen, 1956, p. 16.

²² JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 27—32.

²³ JOH. WARNECK, *Tobabataksch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Batavia: Landsdrukerij, 1906: "mula, (aus dem Mal. Sankr. *mula*), Anfang, Beginn . . ."

²⁴ IBID.: "*jadi* (Mal. *jadi*), *manjadi*, werden, gelingen, zustande kommen . . ."

²⁵ Cf. JOH. WARNECK, *Die Lebenskräfte*, p. 12; PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 27.

²⁶ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 33; PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 31; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 17. Cf. F. HEILER, *Das Gebet*, 6th ed.; München and Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1969, p. 133.

²⁷ *Tape*, I A, 00.15'57"ff.

²⁸ PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 31.

²⁹ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 13.

³⁰ EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, p. 76. Cf. F. HEILER, *Das Gebet*, pp. 131—135.

The personal High God dwells in the seventh and highest sphere of heaven, and created everything³¹. Living in the height of heights³², the High God governs his creation, blesses it, and grants rain and warmth to sustain it. As a prayer says:

"*Ompung*, Mulajadi na Bolon!
The Beginning of all that exists,
Who has created the Upperworld and the Middleworld,
together with everything in them.
Who has no beginning,
Who has come from the non-beginning,
Who has no origin, and
Whose end is unknow.
Look and gaze, *Ompung*,
Be attentive, stoop from the heaven of heavens,
From the height of heights, and hear the words
of my prayer.
You, *Ompung*, who enjoy being the Beginning,
You are the (most) notable Counsellor,
You drip rain and the warmth of the day.
May fortunate sons be born like the sun, and,
Honourable daughters who are notable of council³³."

Considering that the Toba Batak conceive their High God to be the personal Creator of the Cosmos, we may translate *Mulajadi na Bolon* by "the Great Beginning of Genesis" instead of "the Great Beginning of Genesis"³⁴.

This commonly accepted conception³⁵ that the Upperworld, Middleworld and Underworld³⁶. Nevertheless, the version of the Creation Myth³⁷, generally con-

³¹ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 27.

³² *IBID.*

³³ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 173ff. Cf. JOH. WARNECK, „Studien über die Litterature der Batak“, *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen (Ostasiatische Studien)*, 2 (1899), p. 109; W. ABRAASEM, *Proza en Poëzie om het Heilige Meer der Bataks*. Djakarta — Amsterdam — Surabaya: De Moderne Boekhandel Indonesia, 1951, pp. 95f.; AMA NI R. SAMOSIR, "Tonggo Mulamula", *Tape*, I A, 00.15'57"ff.

³⁴ The choice of *mula* (beginning) could be because of lack of the suitable equivalent of "beginner" in the Batak language.

³⁵ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 27. Cf. R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 27; W. KÖDDING, "Die batakische Götter und ihr Verhältnis zum Brahmanismus", *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, 12 (1885), p. 406; EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, p. 75; WALDEMAR STÖHR, "Die Religionen der Altvölker Indonesiens und der Philippinen." In WALDEMAR STÖHR and PIET ZOETMULDER, *Die Religionen Indonesiens*. Stuttgart — Berlin — Köln — Mainz: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1965, p. 48.

³⁶ According to the Toba-Batak *Weltanschauung*, the Cosmos consists of three 'Worlds': The Upperworld, where the High God, deities and their servants live; the Middleworld, peopled by man and spirits; and the Underworld, the home of the World Dragon, Naga Padoha (= the Primordial Dragon) and subordinate evil spirits (C. M. PLEYTE, *Bataksche Vertellingen*, pp. 12,15; W. KÖDDING, "Die

cern the creation of the Middleworld, the creation of the Upperworld and Underworld often being neglected. The creation of the Tree of Life and the mythical bird from which miraculously derived the Deities and later man, is always mentioned. In one version³⁸, it is said that the High God directly created the Deities. The Three Gods, Batara Guru, Soripada and Mangala Bulan, and the servants of the High God, Swallow Mandi and Swallow Naguranta (the guard of the gate of the heaven) are very important.

Si Deang Parujar, a daughter of Batara Guru, is, after Mulajadi na Bolon, the most important figure in the creation of the Middleworld. She is, in fact the direct shaper of the Middleworld. She began her creative adventure with her betrothal with a son of Mangala Bulan. According to the version cited by Tampubolon, her disobedience to the law of betrothal roused the High God's anger³⁹. As a means postponing the marriage, she decided, as many versions have it, to spin and weave for as long as she could and then she fled to the infinite sea beneath the Upperworld⁴⁰. According to one version, the daughter of Batara Guru was sitting on a branch of the Tree of Creation when a violent wind blew

bataksche Götter", p. 404; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 10; PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 50; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 12—17, 26—34).

³⁷ Some versions of the Toba-Batak Creation Myth: *Adong ma mula ni deebata Sideakparujar* [sic] (The beginning of the deity Sideakparujar), *Codex Orientalis* (Leiden), 3417, pp. 240—265; *Asa manomba ahu* (I adore), *Cod. Or.*, 3400, pp. 258—277; *Nanggorga di Portibi* (The Woman who shaped (lit. painted) the World, *Cod. Or.*, 3410, 70—73; *Poda ni Rurituri (y)an* (The Rule of Narrative) *Cod. Or.*, 8493, pp. 2833 (transcribed from Batak into Latin character by PIET VOORHOEVE); *Pustaha Parbuhitan* (The Mountain Book of Bark), *Cod. Or.*, 3454, pp. 40—69 (transcribed by P. VOORHOEVE); *Adong ma na saingan, na saingan ni na robi* (In the very beginning), in: PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 30—50; *Ia di mula ni mulana* (In the very beginning), *ibid.*, pp. 115—120; *Mandjadi ma Ompunta Mula Djadi nasa na djinadina* (Our Ompung Mula Jadi began to create all that is created by him), *ibid.*, pp. 50—60; *Banua Parjolo* (The First World), in: R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 12—34; *Eine andere Theo- und Kosmogonie*, in: J. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 32f.; *Erschaffung der Menschen*, *ibid.*, pp. 33f.; *Erzählung von der Erschaffung der Götter und Menschen*, *ibid.*, pp. 27—32; *Hoedjooe hoetonggo badia ni goeroengkoe, boraspati ni tano on* (I invoke and I pray the holiness of my teacher, the lizard of this earth), in W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 179 n. 1; *Hoepio hoetonggo hoepangaloealoei* (I call, I pray, and I appeal to you), *ibid.*, p. 181 n. 1; *Hoedjoe hoetonggo badia ni goeroengkoe Debata na Toloe* (I invoke and I pray the holiness of my teacher the Three Gods), *ibid.*, p. 180 n. 2; *Moela ni Djolma* (The Beginning of Man), in: MANGARADJA SALOMO PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor — Morsada*. Haenatas — Balige, 1938, pp. 7—48; *An unpublished Batak Creating Legend* (C. M. PLEYTE, "An unpublished Batak Creation Legend"), *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 26 (1896), pp. 103—109.

³⁸ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 28.

³⁹ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 16f.

⁴⁰ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 9; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 26.

and the branch broke. The heroine fell down together with the branch into the infinite primordial sea⁴¹. Her situation was desperate. According to the version cited by M. S. PASARIBOE: "Hence Si Deang Parujar was weeping tossed by waves and the sea while a great crab was beating her"⁴².

Being powerless, she called for the messengers of the High God to help her. She asked for a handful of earth from the High God, and when it was given, she formed the first earth. Naga Padoha, the Primordial Dragon, feeling the heavy heap of earth above his head, began to turn around. Immediately, the newly created earth decomposed and turned into water. Si Deang Parujar was upset and extremely frightened. She again asked for help and the High God gave her more earth to make the Middleworld and helped her to conquer Naga Padoha. This was accomplished by piercing him with a sword and finally imprisoning him under the earth. She then succeeded in forming the earth into a strong, sacral, fertile, prosperous and happy place. This is the primordial paradise where man lived at peace with himself, his world and the gods.

Nearness and frequent visits by the gods are the most remarkable characteristic of the primordial paradise⁴³. On particular occasions such as when a child was born, Mulajadi na Bolon was invited to renew his blessings and his commandments and thereby deepened his communion with them. Man had to bring offerings to the top of the holy Mount Pusuk Buhit in order to encounter the High God and talk to him⁴⁴. When Si Deang Parujar bore two children, the first men, she invited the inhabitants of the Upperworld to attend the ceremony of rejoicing, jubilation and benediction for her children⁴⁵.

Because of the disobedience of man — he worshipped the spirits and the ancestors more than God and the deities — man was punished. Communion with God and the inhabitants of the Upperworld⁴⁶ was severed and man became subject to suffering, anxiety and calamity. This was the primordial sin and fall⁴⁷.

⁴¹ *Cod. Or.*, 8493, p. 30.

⁴² M. S. PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor Morsada*, p. 12.

⁴³ C. M. PLEYTE, *Bataksche Vertellingen*, p. 14; "In den aanvang luidt het, was de afstand tusschen menschen en goden veel minder groot, dan tegenwoordig. Tusschen beiden heerschte een vrij levendig verkeer, zelfs een eenigszins gemeenzame omgang. De goden bezochten op gezette tijden regelmatig de aarde en vergunden bevoorrechte bewoners dezer wereld wel eens tot hun domein op te stijgen of af te dalen." Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 274; P. VOORHOEVE, *Overzicht van de Volksverhalen der Bataks*. Vlissingen: F. van de Velde Jr., 1927, p. 130; C. M. PLEYTE, "An unpublished Batak Creation Legend", pp. 103ff.; ARSENIUS LOEMBANTOBING, *Pingkirian ni Halak Batak Sipelebegoe taringot toe Tondi ni Djolma doeng mate*. Leiden: Uitgaven het Bataksch Instituut, 1919, pp. 16f.

⁴⁴ M. S. PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor Morsada*, p. 39f.

⁴⁵ W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarombo ni Bangso Batak*. Lagoeboti: Zendings-Drukkerij, 1926, p. 24. Cf. R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 32f.

⁴⁶ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 32f.

⁴⁷ C. M. PLEYTE, *Bataksche Vertellingen*, p. 14; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 32; EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, p. 75; M. S. PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor Morsada*, pp. 39f.; W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarombo ni Bangso Batak*, p. 24; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 13.

D. The ritual Function of Water

There are several rituals using water among the Toba Batak.

1. Cult of Spring

Water in general is sacred and its sacredness is indicated by the deification of a particular spring and by its cult. *Boru Sanaiang Naga*⁴⁸ and *Ompu Homban ni Juma* (= the Spirit of Field Spring)⁴⁹ are the personified deities of the sacrality of water. To these deities are attributed fertility, sacred life, purification power and transformation. A holy spring amidst a field is called *homban* and the ceremony of cleansing a *homban* is called *patiur homban*⁵⁰.

The materials they offer to the spirit of the spring indicate that they attribute the powers of life to the deity residing in water. They plant small but strong plants⁵¹ to denote beauty and the ability to survive. They offer "husband-wife" hens in order to renew, to strengthen and to sanctify marriage which is associated with the mythical bird and its egg⁵². During many important ceremonies, God is invoked for fertility and numerous children⁵³. According to G. VAN DER LEEUW, the elementary sacred experience of water derives from its refreshing and life-sustaining power⁵⁴. Religious insight into this mysterious power leads man to perceive a mystic union with the life of the Divine intimately hidden in the depth of water⁵⁵. More specifically, KRISTENSEN attributes divine power and life to water. He notes:

⁴⁸ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 37.

⁴⁹ W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 159. Such a holy spring is always the common possession of a group of people. (J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organization*, pp. 121, 401).

⁵⁰ JOH. WARNECK, *Tobabataksch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1906: "*Homban*, eine Quelle im Felde, die man nett zurecht macht und um die man Blumen herum pflanzt, um da zu opfern" "*Patiur homban*, eine solche Quelle durch Opfer reinigen." W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, pp. 159f.: "Een *homban* is eene heilige bron, welke bewoond wordt door een brongeest, eveneens de algemeene benaming dragende van *homban*... Telken jare wordt onder het afsmecken van voorspoed, een goeden, oogst, toename van den veestapel enz. zoowel vóór de grondbewerking der *saba parhombanan* [the field] als na den oogst van de daarop geplante rijst aan den brongeest en, naar ik meen, ook aan de geesten der voorzaten geofferd, wat gepaard gaat met het schoonmaken van de wallen en het onderhoud van de daarop staande beplanting."

⁵¹ W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 160.

⁵² R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 14ff.; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 27ff.; PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 31ff.

⁵³ W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 160: "... men niet daartoe overgaat dan na eerst water uit de bron te hebben gehaald en *silinjuangtakken* van zijn wallen te hebben geplukt om zich het hoofd daarmee te sieren..."

⁵⁴ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 47: "Im wasserarmen Lande ist die schönste Vorstellung, welche man sich vom jenseitigen Leben machen kann, diejenige, daß man dort Wasser trinkt und daß eine wohlthätige Göttin von ihrem Baume herab dem Verschmachtenden Wasser reicht."

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: "'Wasser des Lebens' bringt Fruchtbarkeit und Gedeihen; seine Mächtigkeit reicht aber weiter: es spendet ewiges Leben, es wirkt Wunder und Groß-

"According to the Ancient conception, water, which is essential to the life of plants, animals, and men, and which enables life to flourish, must possess a self-subsistent life energy, i.e. a divine power. In the nature and activity of water there is revealed self-subsistent, divine life: God himself. Water ist the mysterious bearer of divine energy⁵⁶."

With the Batak, however, while water immanently bears mysterious divine life, it is never conceived to be totally self-subsistent. As we have pointed out, their religion is characterized by priority and creatorship assigned to Mulajadi na Bolon. Here again, it is explicitly stated that every deity worshipped as the personification of the sacred power of water is created by the High God, as he "created the Woman Homban⁵⁷".

2. Citrus Purification

Citrus Purification is the "holy — water practice" of the Batak. Using particular materials, they consecrate it for several purposes.

a. Materials Used and their Symbolism

The materials used in performing the Citrus Purification (*Pangurason*) are water, lemon juice, *banebane*-plants and *waringin* (*ficus religiosa*) aspergillum in a pure-white Chinese cup⁵⁸.

The *waringin*-twigs used as the aspergillum in this ritual suggest the Tree of Life, of which the *waringin*-tree is the symbol par excellence. It is not be confused with the citrus tree.

According to a myth, Batara Guru (the first of the Three Gods) planted the Tree "Happy Sprout" (*Hau Tumbur Tua*), i.e. the primordial Citrus Tree, in the centre of the eight points of the octagon. Its twigs sweep evil spirits which spread bad dreams, its leaves fan away the magic of enemies and evil spirits, and its fruit is used for holy water and purification⁵⁹. The pure-white cup suggests a state of purity, for the expression of "purewhite" designates immaculacy and separation from the dirty and impure elements of evil. The *banebane*-plant has a sweet-smelling blossom and is often used in ceremonies.

b. Purpose of Citrus Purification

The rite of holy water and citrus juice is held on different occasions and for different purposes. It is performed to atone for an offence against morality. VERGOUWEN gives some examples of moral violation for which purification is necessary.

"The purification, *pangurason*, can be demanded after conduct that we should class as 'an offence against morality' such as the violation of a virgin; having sexual intercourse with a member of one's own *marga* [=extended

taten, es bedeutet schließlich die Gottesgemeinschaft. Fruchtbarkeit und Gedeihen wirkt es dem primitiven Menschen, der die Belebung des Feldes durch Überschwemmung, Regen, Quellwasser als eine Offenbarung der Macht erlebt."

⁵⁶ W. B. KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion*, p. 120.

⁵⁷ W. K. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 175.

⁵⁸ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 184.

⁵⁹ J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra in gesunden und kranken Tagen: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des animistischen Heidentums*. Stuttgart: Chr. Belser A. G., 1925, p. 203 n. 1.

family]; abduction; whoring among young people, and similar delicts. But it can be necessary after other offences, such as the fouling of a spring, creating a disturbance in the village or the market whereby blood flows or abusive language has been used. The cleansing and strengthening effect is not produced exclusively with the lemon juice, it can also result from other acts of which the aim is to remove a supernaturally unfavourable situation⁶⁰."

Another case in which citrus purification is performed is at the termination of a mourning period. If a married man dies, his widow wraps herself in mourning clothes which she has to wear for several days. During this period she may not leave the 'house of mourning' nor may she associate in the usual manner with those with whom she normally has social intercourse. Shortly thereafter, the *hulahula*⁶¹ group, or the group of her *marga*, comes to end the mourning. This ceremony is accomplished by purifying her with the citrus holy water. She is comforted with florid and favourable words⁶².

A consecrated object or animal is set apart for God by sprinkling it with citrus holy water. Each *marga* possesses a particular „horse of God“. When an old one is to be replaced by a young one, the latter is consecrated to one of the Three Gods by sprinkling it with citrus holy water⁶³.

Citrus juice is prepared together with cumpers, the "prosperous" fish is ritually eaten for wealth and for a long, fortunate life. "Thus it is fish that the sower, for example, must eat when he has sown his field; and it is fish that is offered when the rice is first in grain⁶⁴."

When somebody has a bad dream, he consults a *datu*, who performs a ceremony to ward off the impending evil. The *datu* prepares an effigy⁶⁵ consisting of a banana stem as substitute for the victim. The *datu* invokes God and deities in order to strengthen the souls of the members of the family so that they may resist the danger. He prepares the citrus juice and water sprinkles all the members of the family with it⁶⁶.

It sometimes happens that before entering upon an undertaking or beginning a journey, one feels in his heart a warning of an impending misfortune⁶⁷. If he must carry through the undertaking, an offering must be made or, at least, the *datu* must perform the rite of citrus purification. This will strengthen his soul and preserve him from danger⁶⁸.

⁶⁰ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 356.

⁶¹ *Hulahula*: Daughter giving group for marriage.

⁶² JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 44f.; J. WINKLER, *Die Toba Batak auf Sumatra*, pp. 152f.

⁶³ EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, pp. 91f.; J. WINKLER, *Die Toba Batak auf Sumatra*, p. 152.

⁶⁴ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 91.

⁶⁵ For a photo of such effigies, see: PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, photo 3. E. MODIGLIANI, *Fra i Batacchi Indipendenti*. Rome: Società Geografica Italiana, 1892, pp. 100f.

⁶⁶ J. WINKLER, *Die Toba Batak auf Sumatra*, p. 165.

⁶⁷ HARLEY H. BARTLETT, "The Labors of the Datoc: Part II. Directions for the Ceremonies." *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*. An Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, 1931, p. 14.

⁶⁸ J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra*, p. 125.

c. Prayer

The following is a typical prayer of Citrus Purification:

"I pray, I invoke, you, *Ompung*⁶⁹, Mulajadi na Bolon,
The Beginner of the Upper and Middleworld,
Who created everything and everything in it.
And, you, *Ompung*, the Three Gods, the three groups, the three chieftaincies,
Who govern the Upper and Middleworld as well as human beings.
And the majesties of our ancestors,
Who are honorable and blessed . . .

May you stoop down and look upon us,
Hear and listen, *Ompung*: to the content of my prayer.

Here, *Ompung*, I hold the bowl of purification:
The clear water to make sight, mind, and soul clear.
And the fruit of the citrus tree, the knowledge of beauty and good.
And the *waringin*-branch,

In the pure-white, immaculate, never blown and never tossed-by-wind bowl.

Be they for us, *Ompung*, purification and well-being.

Support and bless it, *Ompung*, to be the purification of our bodies and souls
from now on,

May we have a spring of goodness, of princely morning water,
And be blessed in beauty . . .

Be it antidote for us, *Ompung*,
Protection and medicine, strength and immunity.

May we not miss profits, not become impure, inquiet and defiled from beauty
by this immaculate and never tossed-by-wind purification.

Furthermore, if there is any lack or excess in our conduct and behaviour,
Ompung . . .

Be appeased by a pumpkin and cooled by a cucumber . . .

Shield us from the sides, screen us from above and support us from beneath,
To guard off any harm that may injure us . . .

So that we may peacefully bear the power of your blessings and benediction,
Which will be given to us.

Fortify and make our bodies and souls cool.

Remove, *Ompung*, hindrances and evil omens;

The blessings we long for you to grant our bodies and souls,
In our daily life.

Be bright like a day, clear like the moon, pure-white like a bobbin-thread.

May they be white, immaculate and never tossed by wind.

Grant them to us in the future.

Then, we have a waving knife fore, a waving knife behind,
To strike the foreign evil spirits and the *toba* ones,

⁶⁹ *Ompu(ng)*: Title of respect, applied to God and man. "*Ompu* means grandfather, great-grandfather, forefather, and ancestor" (J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 33). "It is also an appellation for all that people wish to worship" (PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 31). "The word *OMPUNG* is the highest and noblest to appeal to the inhabitants of the Upperworld . . ." (R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 17).

The black magic of the field and the seven offensive black magic charms.
 If there is any offensive or hostile magic (that may pervert us),
 Strike it off and take it from us, *Ompung*,
 Make us firm and cool ..."⁷⁰

3. Cleansing of Utensils

During the Great Festivity of the New Year Celebration (*Mangase Taon*)⁷¹, a ceremony that can be called "the Great Cleansing" is held. Cooking and eating utensils as well as the whole house are scrupulously cleansed⁷². Not only the traditional Bataks but also the Christian clean and decorate the whole village before celebrating a festivity.

It is to be noted that the Toba-Batak word for 'impure', *rotak*, has the same meaning of 'befouled' or 'dirty' which is equally applicable to man and objects. An impure person or object can be purified and freed from the influence of the evil spirits: "it is repeatedly necessary for men, animals or a region to be cleansed and freed as far as possible from the impurities with which they have become befouled, *rotak*"⁷³.

The opposite of impurity is purity, *ias*, which has the meaning of 'clean'. A *rotak* (befouled) person or object can be purified through a cleansing rite. "The aim of this purification is to make clean, *ias*, to make pure, *uras* ..."⁷⁴.

This reflects the Batak notion of the unity and inseparability of the physical and spiritual, of the concrete and the mystery behind it. This mysterious component is spontaneously perceived and arouses religious involvement and total "commitment"⁷⁵.

Before gaining control of an individual, group, or region the Demon spreads his influence through impurity. The vulnerable creation begins to be controlled by the evil spirits. This corruption is reflected in process of decay. Dirt and rust stain and damage tools to the point where they gain control of them. The owner of the tools, man, is thereby threatened by this attack as his instruments are an extension of his person. If damage or corruption occurs, the objects as well as man necessarily need cleansing and "reparation", which is conceived as an act of removing evil elements from the world in order to restore them to their original purity, strength, sacrality and being, and to provide them new strength.

4. The Strengthening Bath

When a child has an "accident". When it slips and frightened, on a slippery path, when it passes through a forest or an eerie place and is terrified by a wild beast, a snake, or by the terrible place itself, then traditional Batak parents give

⁷⁰ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 432f. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 184f.

⁷¹ PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 152; J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 76; V. E. KORN, "Bataksche Offerande", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 109 (1953), p. 50; P. VOORHOEVE, "Bataksche Buffelwichelarij", *Bijdragen*, 114 (1958), p. 243. Cf. M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, pp. 388—384; ID, *The Sacred and the Profane*, pp. 77—104; G. VAN DER LEEUW *Phänomenologie der Religion*, pp. 439—445.

⁷² V. E. KORN, "Bataksche Offerande", p. 48.

⁷³ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 101.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ IAN T. RAMSEY, *Religious Language*. 3rd ed.; London.

the child a "strengthening bath". They take a can or a pot of water, lead the child to the place of "accident" and bathe it⁷⁶. Christian Batak also do this⁷⁷. The strengthening bath is required when the child has a nightmare or falls ill after the "accident".

The idea behind this practice is that:

"Illness, misfortune, etc. are imputed to the *tondi* (soul) leaving the body. If it stays away for a long time, a man must die. It is the spirits which can entice a *tondi* from the body and keep it in their power. It often occurs that a man passes an eerie place and becomes horror stricken and terrified. If such a man should fall ill, his *tondi* is said to have been caught by the *sombaon* (= a powerful spirit) living in that place⁷⁸."

As for a terrified child, it is feared that its soul is shocked by the evil power which causes it to be horrified and to think of fleeing. Therefore, it is strictly forbidden to suddenly awaken a sleeping child or to make noise around it. If the child falls ill, it is an indication that its soul is seriously frightened or has been absent from the body.

In the ceremony of the Strengthening Bath, the mysterious power of water appeases and calms the soul of the child, strengthens it, and keeps it "at home"⁷⁹. Furthermore, it wipes away the horrible elements of evil that the spirits imposed on the child in the accident. This is indicated by a simple prayer uttered during the ceremony:

"I bathe and cleanse this child with clear water.

May this child be clean and pure from fear and danger.

May its soul be firm and peaceful supported by the Blessed God.

May my soul call its soul back home⁸⁰."

⁷⁶ When I was a boy of seven, on the way to our field, a centipede stung my toe. I ran crying to my mother. After a simple medication, she took a pot of water and led me to the spot to bathe me.

⁷⁷ Some weeks ago, one of my parishioners, a good Christian, told me that his child got ill. He was riding a tandem bike with the child when it fell off. He performed a strengthening bath, but the child had not yet totally recovered.

⁷⁸ PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, p. 86, I have never heard of a grownup being so bathed. To heal an adult, "the *tondi* must be called back that the sick man may be well again. This rite is called *mangalap tondi* (= the calling back of the *tondi* from the desolate place)" (*Ibid.*). Cf. SIMON KOOIJMAN, *Sahala, Tondi: De begrippen "mana" en "hau" bij enkele Sumatraanse Volken*. Zeist, 1942, pp. 21ff.; H. TH. FISCHER, "Het begrip 'mana' bij de Toba-Batak", *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 20 (1931), pp. 592ff.; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tum-baga Holing*, pp. 73ff.; J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra*, pp. 2ff.; J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, pp. 69ff.; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Lebenskräfte*, pp. 60ff.; Id., "Der Animismus im Indischen Archipel", *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, 34 (1907), pp. 34ff.

⁷⁹ The Toba-Batak expression "*sai di ruma tondi*" (= "May the soul be at home") reflects the hope that the soul may remain with the person so that the person may be well and sound.

⁸⁰ "Hudidi jala huuras ma gellenghon dohot aek na tio on. Sai ias jala polin ma gellenghon sian biar dohot mara. Sai pir ma tondina jala so hariboriboan

tumpakon ni Namartua Debata. Sai diariari tondinghu ma tondina mulak tu ruma.”

E. Function of Water in Baptism

We have noted that a rite is a celebration of faith. Religious truth and mysteries, the elements of faith, are handed on in a story and ritual.

1. Transposition to the Primordial State

In the ceremony of Strengthening Bath, the parents pray: “May this child be clean and pure from fear and danger. Danger and fear occur in the accident, and are the manifestations of the various powers of Evil that terrify and menace man.

In the prayer of Citrus Purification, in addition to purity, immaculacy and beauty, God is invoked to grant power against Evil:

“May it be an antidote for us . . .

Protection and medicine, strength and immunity . . .

Fortify and make our bodies and souls cool.

Remove . . . hindrances and evil omens . . .

If there is any offensive or hostile magic [that may pervert us]

Strike it off and take it from us . . .

Proceeding to the spring of baptism, the *datu* held a sword and waved it right and left while murmuring ritual formulae. The meaning of these *gesta* is indicated in the prayer of Citrus Purification. „Then, we have a waving knife fore, a waving knife behind, to strike the foreign evil spirits and the *toba* ones, the black magic charms.“

We may conclude that one of the purpose of water sacramentality is to eliminate evil powers and carry on the battle against Evil.

The Myth provides the archetypal exemplar of this ritual. The use of a sword by the *datu* during the baptismal ritual suggests a dramatization of the battle of God and Si Deang Parujar with the dragon, Naga Padoha, the prince of evil and the Underworld⁸¹. In the Toba-Batak religion, there are different forms of the dramatization of the battle against the destructive powers of the Underworld. Sometimes evil spirits are expelled with a “driving away buffalo sacrifice”⁸², sometimes with “a warding off pig offering”⁸³, with the horns of a

⁸¹ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 30f.; “Damit durchstach sie den Leib des Raja Padoha, bis an den Griff stieß sie das Schwert hinein, bis Raja Padoha rief: “Töte mich nicht, lege mich in einen eisernen Block . . . Aber manchmal, wenn mein Schwanz sich herumwälzt, und die Erde infolgedessen erbebt, dann ruft ‘suhul’ (Schwertgriff), nicht ‘lalo’ (Erdbeben), damit ich mich erinnere an das Schwert, das bis an den Griff in meinem Leibe steckt; dann werde ich mich sofort beruhigen.” Cf. R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 29; W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarombo*, pp. 16f.; “Naga Padoha, die Erdschlange, der Gott der Unterwelt und der eigentliche Teufel der Bataks, bewirkt Erdbeben und sonst trachten die Götter der Unterwelt hier oben einzudringen“ (W. KÖDDING, “Die batakische Götter”, p. 404). Cf. A. SCHIMMEL, “Schlange”, *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, V, pp. 1419—1420. 3rd ed.; Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1961. Cf. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 295f.

⁸² J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra*, p. 149.

sacrificed buffalo, which are hung at the ends of a ridgepole⁸⁴. The primordial battle is dramatized during the New Year Celebration, the archetype of rites, when two groups fight a sham battle⁸⁵.

To this category of expulsion of evil spirits from creation belong the holy cakes of the baptismal ritual, which were put on the thorny leaves, and called "the warding off hiding evil spirits." It is not an offering in the sense of worshipping evil spirits but rather of appeasing them. The clearance of the path should be understood as ritual expulsion of the demonic hindrance⁸⁶. Air, land and water are seen to be full of evil spirits that impose suffering, calamity, and anxiety⁸⁷, and they can hide in the overhanging branches.

The intimate relation between the baptismal ritual and the primordial creation is further indicated by the sand island. It is necessary to dig a channel around the pyramidal island, for, according to the Creation Myth, Si Deang Parujar "formed the handful of earth on the sea"⁸⁸.

The most important indication of the transposition to the Primordial State is the name of the sand island: "the dried sands, the beloved earth"⁸⁹. In a prayer of the New Year Celebration, the most important festivity, during which the world is seen to be recreated⁹⁰, it is said: "You are the beginning of clay and of calcareous earth of this beloved and weighed⁹¹ earth, of this clear earth

⁸³ W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 166.

⁸⁴ *Encyclopedia Americana*. III, p. 343.

⁸⁵ EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, p. 92; W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, p. 168; V. E. KORN, "Batakse Offerande", p. 107; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 107f.; Id., "Das Opfer bei den Tobabatak in Sumatra", *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, 18 (1915), pp. 346ff. Cf. H. SCHÄRER, *Die Gottesidee der Ngadju Dajak in Süd-Borneo*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1946, pp. 156f.; M. ELIADE, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*, pp. 84ff.; Id., *The Sacred and the Profane*, pp. 68ff.; Id., *Patterns*, pp. 400; H. BAUMANN, *Schöpfung und Urzeit des Menschen im Mythos der afrikanischen Völker*. Berlin, 1964, passim.

⁸⁶ Pregnancy is a taboo period, with special amulets prescribed by the Myth to resist evil influence (R. P. TAMFUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 3lf.; Cf. JOH. WARNECK, "Sanggul", *Tobabataksch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*). The ideal birth for the Toba Batak seems to be a birth without hindrance or quarrel, a birth which brings prosperity, a birth like the genesis of the creation. When the child is born, friendly and "beautiful" words are spoken (JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 77) and the house is guarded against evil elements (EDWIN M. LOEB, *Sumatra*, p. 94).

⁸⁷ JOH. WARNECK, *Die Lebenskräfte des Evangeliums*, p. 11. Cf. M. ELIADE, *The Sacred and the Profane*, pp. 29f.

⁸⁸ W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarombo*, p. 16. Cf. M. S. PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor Morsada*, p. 12.

⁸⁹ Batak: "Horsik na niarsikan, tano na nihatian."

⁹⁰ W. STÖHR and P. ZOETMULDER, *Die Religionen Indonesiens*. Stuttgart — Berlin — Köln — Mainz: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1965, p. 68. Cf. M. ELIADE, *The Sacred and the Profane*, p. 12.

⁹¹ It could be that there is an alteration or textual error in the word *tinimban-gan*, which we translate here with "weighed". The right word would be *tinombangan* meaning *that to which one emigrates*. Si Deang Parujar emigrated from the Upperworld to the Middleworld, which she formed an loved.

which was sent to be the Middleworld⁹²." That Si Deang Parujar loved the Middleworld which she formed, is reported in a version of the Creation Myth. Instead of obeying Mulajadi na Bolon's invitation to come back to the Upperworld, she answered: "I prefer to remain here than to go back⁹³."

PH. LUMBAN TOBING records a version of the Myth in which it is said that the Middleworld consisted of sand:

"...sand came into the proa of our mother... The heap of sand became larger and began to look like a *jeruk* (= orange), like a shuttle of a loom. And after some time this heap grew larger in the middle of the sea, for this middleworld was merely water⁹⁴."

Originally the sand was wet and gradually dried out.

The incense also has symbolical implications. A fire was made for the incense during the ceremony we described above⁹⁵. This implies light symbolism which for the "Ancients" symbolizes creation, life, purity, and fortune⁹⁶. The antagonism between light (clear) and darkness among the Toba Batak is expressed, as follows: "The clear squares [on the calendar] are the bright days which are clear of danger. They are the bright days which are totally clear of danger. On these days feasts can be held⁹⁷." The house of the High God, where life and happiness reign, is described as being full of the brightest lights⁹⁸. Fire also is that which purifies man and nature from evil⁹⁹. Making fire, therefore, symbolizes the termination of the dark chaos before the creation¹⁰⁰, the establishing of

⁹² W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, pp. 179f.

⁹³ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 26.

⁹⁴ PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 57f.

⁹⁵ According to LICINIUS W. P. A. FASOL, a missionary among the Karo Batak large torches are lit during the baptismal ceremony.

⁹⁶ S. AALEN, "Licht und Finsternis", *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, IV, p. 357: "Tod und Finsternis gehören zusammen, ebenso Licht und Leben. Das Licht (die Sonne) sehen heißt leben. Die Sonne schenkt Licht und Leben und wird Licht der Länder, der Welt, der Menschen genannt... Der Gegensatz von Licht und Finsternis ist also primär kein ethischer, obwohl das Recht... mit der Sonne verbunden ist und die Bösen als Freunde des Dunkels gelten. Licht bedeutet vor allem Glück und Wohlergehen, Finsternis Unglück und Schrecken..."

⁹⁷ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 433. Cf. PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 107ff. Regarding the ritual extinguishing and enlightening of fires during the New Year Celebration, see W. K. H. YPES, *Bijdrage tot de kennis*, pp. 16f. Cf. M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, pp. 399f.

⁹⁸ M. AM. RENES-BOLDINGH, *Bataksche Sagen en Legendes*, Nijkerk: G. F. Callenbach, 1933, p. 22.

⁹⁹ FRIEDRICH HEILER, *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1961, pp. 185.

¹⁰⁰ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 21; AMA NI R. SAMOSIR, "Tonggo Mulamula", *Tape*, I A, 00.15'57"ff.: "...the Beginner of the thirty days and the first month... the Beginner of the mountainous earth, the Beginner of water sources and the lake comes together..."; Cf. M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 399: "...as the rekindling of the fires symbolizes creation, the re-establishing of forms and of limits."

the day and life in creation and the decision of the High God to eliminate impurities from creation¹⁰¹.

Putting offerings and incense on the pyramid suggests that the original earth is the place of offering and worship. This could be an allusion to the holy Mount Pusuk Buhit, the offering place of the first Batak, Si Raja Batak. The pyramid form supports this interpretation¹⁰².

From this, we may suffice to draw some conclusions. By putting the child on the original and sacral earth, it is returned to the original state of man. It is brought back to the state of innocence, the paradisiacal state before the fall. It is offered to Mulajadi na Bolon in order to re-establish the original intercourse and communion with the inhabitants of the Upperworld. The original state of man is conceived as a state of purity, and blissful happiness, and the child acquires this same happiness.

While dramatizing and performing the baptismal ritual and uttering prayers, they receive an insight into and vision of the transposition to and reactualization of the paradigmatic Primordial Time. V. E. KORN notes that the Toba Batak perform their festivity with a particular commitment: paying their contribution, spending much time, and observing the rigid festal prescriptions¹⁰³.

2. Function of Water

The returning to primordial innocence and fertility is fully achieved only through contact with water. Dealing with water symbolism, ELIADE says:

"To state the case in brief, water symbolizes the whole of potentiality; it is *fons et origo*, the source of all possible existence. 'Water, thou art the source of all existence!' says one Indian text, summing up the long Vedic tradition... Principle of what is formless and potential, basis of every cosmic manifestation, container of all seeds, water symbolizes the primal substance from which all forms come and to which they will return either by own regression or in a cataclysm¹⁰⁴."

In accordance with the miraculous potentiality of water, VAN DER LEEUW says that water is essentially feminine. Therefore, while vivifying, it renews life for all beings. The symbol of generative water as the revivifying element can be very deeply rooted; the water of maternal womb where an embryo is formed are exactly parallel¹⁰⁵.

In further dealing with water symbolism, ELIADE says: "In cosmogony, in myth, ritual and iconography, water fills the same function in whatever type of cultural pattern we find it; it precedes all forms and upholds all creation¹⁰⁶."

¹⁰¹ Cod. OR., 3454 p. 60; JOH. WARNECK, *Die Religion der Batak*, pp. 30—32.

¹⁰² W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarombo*, p. 24; R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, pp. 32—34, 50—52; C. M. PLEYTE, *Batak-sche Vertellingen*, Utrecht: H. Honig, 1894, pp. 14f.; M. S. PASARIBOE, *Tarombo Borbor Morsada*, pp. 39f., F. VAN DER LEEUW, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, pp. 39ff.; F. HEILER, *Erscheinungsformen*, pp. 37f.; W. STÖHR and P. ZOETMULDER, *Die Religionen Indonesiens*, p. 138f.

¹⁰³ V. B. KORN, "Batakse Offernade", pp. 115f.

¹⁰⁴ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 188.

¹⁰⁵ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁶ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 188.

Emphasizing the creatorship and superiority¹⁰⁷ of the High God, Mulajadi na Bolon, it is narrated in nearly all version of the Cretion Myth that the Middle-world originated from the handfuls of earth sent from the Upperworld by the High God. This earth was formed by Si Deang Parujar into the Middleworld. Therefore, the generative power of the Primordial Water is not applied to the origin of the Middleworld.

Nevertheless, contact with the Ur-water before the genesis of the Middle-world is found in every version. Interestingly, the version recorded by PH. LUMBAN TOBING says that the Middleworld originated from sand that "came into the proa of our mother¹⁰⁸". It came from the sea. Our conclusion is that water maintains its generative and vivifying power although its significance is dominated by the priority of the creative power of the High God.

We have noted that, among the Batak, water is seen to have sacred power. *Boru Saniang Naga* and *Ompu Homban ni Juma* are the personified deities of the sacrality of water. From the materials used to worship these deities and the content of the prayers, it is obvious that the Batak attribute the power of fertility, prosperity and the strength of life to them¹⁰⁹. This can be comparable to the Sumerian conception of the sacred power of water: "it means 'water', but also 'sperm, conception, generation'¹¹⁰".

In addition to this generating and sustaining power of water while imparting divine life, it can also disintegrate, abolish, and regenerate that which has taken form. Considering these most elementary qualities of water, ELIADE notes:

"In whatever religious framework it appears, the function of water is shown to be the same; it disintegrates, abolishes forms, 'washes our sins' — at once purifying and giving new life. Its work is to precede creation and take it again to itself; it can never get beyond its own mode of existence — can never express itself in forms. Water can never pass beyond the condition of potential, of seeds and hidden powers."¹¹¹

Applying this to the Toba-Batak baptism, we may say that this baptism implies a transformation from being born among sinful men to a re-birth into a new life and a new world in harmony with God and nature. The child "dies" to our impure world and is "reborn" in a pure, sacral, and happy life. As ELIADE continue:

"Breaking up all forms, doing away with all the past, water possesses this power of purifying, of regenerating, of giving new birth; for what is immersed in it "dies", and, rising again from the water, is like a child without any sin or any past, able to receive a new revelation and begin a new real life¹¹²."

¹⁰⁷ W. STÖHR AND P. ZOETMULDER, *Die Religionen Indonesiens*, p. 49: „Die Schöpfungstat des Mulajadi na Bolon, seine Vaterschaft und Priorität werden fast in allen Mythenfassungen bestätigt. Die wichtigsten Kulthandlungen sind auf ihn bezogen..."

¹⁰⁸ Cf. above, n. 79.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. above, nn. 32—37.

¹¹⁰ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 190.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 194.

Considering this, we may say that by the Toba-Batak baptism and Strengthening Bath the child "dies" from being sinful and frightened, and rises again from the water to an integral and happy life. Especially for baptism, ELIADE states:

"Immersion in water symbolizes a total regeneration, a new birth, for immersion means a dissolution of forms, a reintegration, into the formlessness of pre-existence; and emerging from the water is a repetition of the act of creation in which form was first expressed¹¹³."

In the Toba-Batak dramatization of baptism, there is a close parallelism between the regeneration of the child and the Middleworld. The baptism rite is a transposition both of the child and the Middleworld to the primordial Golden Time. To Toba-Batak religious feeling in particular, but also common among the "Ancients", "water, which is essential to the life of plants, animals, and men, and which enables life to flourish, must possess a self-subsistent live energy, i. e. divine power¹¹⁴". If one of them is effected by evil, the whole cosmos, man and other beings, are threatened by the champions of the Underworld. For, as J. C. VERGOUWEN says: "...if people have sexual intercourse when such is forbidden between them; if by acts such as these, a person, a village or the land is defiled, *rotak*...¹¹⁵", then purification rites must be performed. Personal sin directly effects events in the order of nature. There is intimate continuity between nature and the life of man. Therefore, according to this religious *Weltanschauung*, baptism is parallel with the abolition and regeneration of nature and the life of man. It is the regeneration and re-creation of the cosmos and man is included.

Considering this total regeneration of which the primordial creation is the archetypal exemplar, we may conclude that since the first creation is the ideal of virginity and fertility, the baptized also participates in it. Therefore, the baptized child gains the sacred power of fertility in order to have host of children and wealth. As asked in the prayer of Citrus Purification: "We desire to beseech... the power of wealth, of richness..."

The Toba Batak also have the idea of "living water"¹¹⁶. The symbolical language expressing this notion combines several elements that are considered to be the symbols of divine generation and sustaining of life. The divine attribute of beauty and goodness is connected with the morning when the sun rises because Malajadi na Bolon is "the unopposable horns, the unfaceable sun"¹¹⁷. The Batak pray: "May we have a spring of goodness, of princely morning water, and blessed in beauty..."¹¹⁸. Its relation with the Tree of Life, *Jabijabi*, supports the idea of the "water of life". They believe that they drink of it. "Where the

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹¹⁴ W. BREDE KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*. Trans. by: John B. Carman. 3rd ed.; The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971, p. 120.

¹¹⁵ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, p. 353.

¹¹⁶ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 48; M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, pp. 189ff.; F. HEILER, *Erscheinungsformen*, pp. 41f.

¹¹⁷ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 21.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 432. Cf. F. HEILER, *Erscheinungsformen*, p. 41.

jet of water is of brass and the drinkingwater springs from a *jabijabi*-tree, for washing in the morning and purification in the evening"¹¹⁹.

Baptism and purification imply expulsion and elimination of evil elements that cause creation decay and die. Dealing with holy water, VAN DER LEEUW notes:

"Holy water, freed from all damaging influences by exorcism, defends the person or object sprinkled with it from all demonic sway, drives off spooks and sickness, protects entrance and egress, house and cattle"¹²⁰.

Comparing this with the prayer of the Citrus Purification¹²¹ and its use, we may say that the Toba Batak share this religious insight. From the point of view of water, human life is something fragile that must periodically be purified because it is the fate of all forms to be dissolved in order to reappear. If forms are not regenerated, they will crumble, exhaust their powers of creativity, and finally die away. Man would eventually be completely deformed by wickedness and sin; emptied of his "seed" of life and creative power, he would waste away, weakened and sterile. Instead of permitting this slow regression into sub-human forms, sprinkling or immersion is performed by which sins are purified and from which a new, regenerated person and nature will be born.

The miraculous power of water has two effects: on the one hand it washes away sins and stains, it disintegrates forms, and on the other hand, it regenerates and conveys new and sacred life through "resurrection" of the new man, providing a new "birth" into a state of sacredness and happiness. As KRISTENSEN notes:

"... the water used in ritual purifications is water of life; whether by origin or by consecration it is the water which bestows life, and it is thus a means of purification which grants a positive vital power. In most ritual purifications the negative and positive effects are thought to go together"¹²².

A particular healing technique called *Martup* or *Manangas* (i. e., vapour bath) is related to holy water among the Batak. WINKLER reports that fruits, and leaves of several citrus species and different herbs are cooked in a large earthen pot. The boiling pot is put between the patient's legs and he is covered with thick clothes, so that the vapour fills the whole body. Such a technique of medication is performed for someone who suffers fever, dropsy, cholera, rheumatic disease or rabies¹²³.

This medico-religious technique of healing is related to the Citrus Purification. The influence of evil spirits, which spreads sickness and disasters, is seen in the phenomenon of fever. The Batak pray: "Purify and make our bodies and souls cool." A capable physician is called a "cool-handed-doctor". In addition to its curative character there is also a preventive one. The people pray: "Be it an antidote for us, *Ompung*, protection and medicine, strength and immunity."

¹¹⁹ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaha Tumbaga Holing*, p. 433.

¹²⁰ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. Trans. by: J. E. Turner. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1938, p. 60.

¹²¹ Cf. above, n. 54.

¹²² W. B. KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion*, p. 447.

¹²³ Cf. J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra*, pp. 90f.

A Vedic priest pray: "May the waters bring us wellbeing!" "The waters are indeed healers; the waters drive away and cure all illnesses"¹²⁴!

"Even in modern times, sick children have been dipped three times in the well of Saint Mandron, in Cornwall. In France there are a considerable number of healing rivers and fountains... And yet other waters are esteemed in popular medicine. In India illnesses are cast into water. The Finno-Ugrians think that some illnesses are the result of profaning or polluting flowing water"¹²⁵.

The influence of evil perverts not only the body but the soul as well. Noteworthy is the conception of the inseparability of the health of the body and that of the soul. In the ritual, purification of the body and soul is explicitly requested. On the spiritual level the influence of evil can darken the mind and soul, so that the people pray that "the clear water may make sight, mind, and soul clear". The citrus purification is also the means of achieving clear knowledge of beauty and goodness.

When mind and soul are obscure and darkened, one can not easily see the difference between goodness and evil. One begins to behave contrary to order and to commit transgressions against morality. Disasters and calamities are seen as the punishment of their transgressions by their faults and sins. Remission of sins and the reconciliation are described in images of appeasement and the cooling of anger.

Confession of sins is related to water purification. In the prayer of Citrus Purification, God is besought to forgive the sins of the people. "If there is any lack or excess in our conduct and behaviour... like the too short or too long cloth of unskilled wearer, like the too far forward and too far behind-swinging hand of a marketgoer, be appeased by a pumpkin and cooled by a cucumber"¹²⁶.

Remission of sins, and reconciliation of the body and mind are obtained through humble purification and *par excellence* through baptism. The water of baptism "washes our sins" at once purifying and giving new life. "Ablution purifies man from... madness... destroying sins as well as stopping the process of mental or physical decay"¹²⁷.

Washing and baptism eliminate death from man. Among traditional as well as some Christian Batak, there is a custom, after a funeral of a parent, of taking the children to the tomb for a purification bath. The idea, here, is that the children may be purified from the abominable dead elements. In the communitarian thinking of the Batak the totality and unity of the family is stressed. Children belong to the body of the family under the tutelage of heir parents. After the death of the father, the eldest son must immediately take over his function.

ELIADE says that "ablution purifies man... from the unlucky presence of the dead..."¹²⁸. A deeper analysis of this practice is given by KRISTENSEN. A *homo religiosus* understands death as the result of sin, "sin" being taken here in the religious... sense". They are "saved from death (the negative effect), for to 'sin' is the same as to transgress the divine law, the law of abiding and eternal life. Sin is death"¹²⁹.

¹²⁴ *Atharva Veda*, II. 3, 6; VI, 91,3 Quot. by: M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 188.

¹²⁵ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, pp. 193f.

¹²⁶ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 433.

¹²⁷ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 195.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ W. B. KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion*, p. 448.

In the concept of the religious conviction that baptism and water ritual in general negatively removes sin and evil powers and elements, and positively regenerates new and sacred life, the ceremony here is a means of avoiding death and strengthening their lives.

Summing up the meaning of water ritual, baptism in particular and water sacramentality in general, we may say together with ELIADE that

"... all the metaphysical and religious possibilities of water fit together perfectly to make a whole. To the creation of the universe from water there correspond — at the anthropological level — the beliefs according to which men were born of water... Whether at the cosmic or the anthropological level immersion in water does not mean final extinction, but simply a temporary reintegration into the formless, which will be followed by a new creation, a new life or a new man, depending on whether the reintegration is cosmic, biological or redemptive¹³⁰."

The main purpose of the Toba-Batak baptism is to transpose the baptized into the original state of happiness, purity, sanity, and fertility. The baptized is also returned to the original harmony with God and creation and, therefore, to the primordial intimacy with God. Man is a part of the nature. Therefore, in performing this, nature, together with man, is also regenerated and "re-created" into a pure, happy, and fertile state¹³¹.

G. Name giving

Choosing and giving a proper name is an important event. After the baptismal ceremony, described above, the name of the child was carefully chosen by the assembly of the members of the family.

The meaning of a name among the "Ancients" is described by KRISTENSEN, as follows:

"The name, too, is a spiritual 'image' or double of the person. It is not an abstract formulation of the essence, not a 'concept' whereby one becomes aware of the content, or a means for communicating an idea to someone else. Someone's name contains his living essence, his power and greatness, his mystical vital energy. This is its religious meaning. The name is, therefore, the 'image' in which the person lives and maintains himself; it is the self-sustaining spirit¹³²."

Among the Batak, it is a tabu to call the proper name of married people. They are named according to their *marga* or, if they have children, according to the

¹³⁰ M. ELIADE, *Patterns*, p. 212.

¹³¹ In many respects, the Batak baptism is similar to the Christian one. The essential difference is this: While the Toba-Batak baptism transposes the baptized to the happy Golden Time *in illo tempore*, i. e., to the past, Christian baptism disposes man to the eschatological future. This obtained through being "buried with Christ in order to arise with Christ". In this linear, instead of circular thinking, the case in all "ancient religions", communion with the Son of God — through being buried and participating in his resurrection at the end of time together with the everlasting life in heaven — is bestowed to the Christians. This is lacking among the "Ancients".

¹³² W. B. KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion*, pp. 411f.

eldest's name. Particularly important is the choice of the name of the first child because it will be a component of its parents name and if the father is the eldest son, also of its grandparents.

There are several stages of life in the Toba-Batak religio-social system. The name is changed in accordance with these stages.

Indiscriminately, a newborn child is called "Si Bursok for a he child and Si Tatap for a she child"¹³³. Sometimes a male child is called *Si Unsok* and a female child *Si Butet*, an alteration of Si Bursok and Si Tatap.

The second stage begins with the name giving festivity, generally after baptism. Beautiful names are chosen, because hopefully "*nomen est omen*".

The third stage begins with marriage. Married people are called according to their *marga*.

The fourth begins with the birth of the first child (*buha baju*) and a new name is received. Suppose the child is called *Si Martua* (the Blessed). The father then called *Ama ni Martua* (the Father of Martua) and the mother *Nai Martua* (the Mother of Martua).

The stage of *Ama ni* and *Nai* ends with arrival of the first grandchild¹³⁴. Suppose the name of the grandchild is *Si Hasoloan* (the Beloved). He is, then, called *Omptu ni Hasoloan* (the Grandfather of Hasoloan). Attaining this stage is the ideal for the Batak. If someone reaches it, a great festive meal, which is called *paampe goar* (= to raise and put name on someone), is held: The grandfather is then said to be *saur matua, mar-Ompu ni aha* (= having longevity, getting the title of Grandfather)¹³⁵. As a Batak maxim has it "The *hadungka*-rope is used to lead a cow; a long living man leads his grandchildren; his grey hairs get branches and moss grows on his back"¹³⁶.

These different stages of life are manifested in a well-defined social position and a code of behaviour. Traditionally, as soon as a boy is about twelve years old, he ceremonially leaves the parental house. From then on he must sleep in the men's house. It is during this time that he is taught the customary law (*adat*). When he is older he may visit girls in the meeting house. Young men and married people have their own social circles. The youth have their own "language" and "affairs" and when someone marries he transfers to the married group of life. Every time they pass to the next stage, they "pretend to have forgotten their previous life and not to recognize their old acquaintan-

¹³³ R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 37.

¹³⁴ In fact, the third stage is between childhood and maturity (initiation). The initiation ceremony is called *Pasae Utang* (= to pay the debt) whereby the teeth are filed (J. WINKLER, *Die Toba-Batak auf Sumatra*, p. 37). Before this, "as soon as the boy is about twelve years old he leaves the parental house in a ceremonial way. From now on he must sleep in a men's house" (PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 140; Cf. ELIO MODIGLIANI, *Fra i Batacchi Indipendenti*, pp. 28—33). By both ceremonies there is no name changing. But after the *Pasae Utang*, the boy is usually named according to his *marga*, e. g., Lumbantobing, Tampubolon, Sinaga.

¹³⁵ Cf. W. HOETAGALOENG, *Adat Pardongan Saripeon di Halak Batak*. Jakarta: Pustaka, 1963, pp. 239—256.

¹³⁶ "Andor hadungka ma togu-togu ni lombu; saur matua patogu-togu pahompu; mardangka ma ubanna limut-limuton tanggurunnga."

ces"¹³⁷. At the same time, they diligently learn and give up themselves to the new standards.

One can easily distinguish people the stage by the manner of dresses. A girl wears a long gown and a married woman a short one (*kebaya*). Boys usually wear short trousers and the grown-up men long ones. Sometimes a young widow or divorced woman again wears a long gown.

The betrothal party is nearly exclusive for the young people. Traditionally, the parents of the engaged do not participate in the affair. The economic aspects of the betrothal, "the sign of their sincerity", are arranged by representatives of the parents of both sides. The engaged say farewell to their friends, who have nothing to do with married people. In Ceram, Indonesia, for example, the betrothed

"take a most moving farewell of their friends, since they going to meet death: the *nitu*, the spirits of the departed, will tear out their hearts... On returning they walk with unsteady gait, look distracted, enter their houses by the rear doors and avoid the light, just as though they were coming from the other world"¹³⁸.

If the psycho-physical process of puberty does not correspond to the religio-sociological one, a problem arises concerning the name change and social position. If someone, psycho-physically is of age, but, for whatever reason, he does not marry, he remains a boy. The same thing happens for those who are sterile or impotent. Although they enter into marriage, they never have the "father of" or the "grandfather of" position. Barenness and sterility are a great disgrace among the Batak¹³⁹. "He who has no name, then, has not been born, and whoever has not been initiated remains all his life a child; no matter how aged he becomes he cannot even 'grown old', since he has never grown up¹⁴⁰."

There is also among the Batak a ceremony of "name changing". If a child for a long time suffers from disease, it is said that his name does not fit him. The ceremony of "name changing" is held among his friends with some witnesses from the old people. In general, the proper name is abbreviated while *marga* is given in full. One does not easily tell strangers ones his name. KRISTENSEN gives the reason of such phenomena. "... the name was conceived as the audible and spoken image of the person, which was taken to be his spiritual essence... The idea of the magical power of the word makes itself felt in the conception of the name¹⁴¹."

We have seen that, according to the Batak religious vision, birth, naming initiation, marriage, having child, and growing old are accompanied by name changes that correspond to rites of passage. They must be celebrated because, in rites of passage, life affected by Power, turns towards Power. This power is experienced both outside and inside oneself, transcendent and immanent. Life is the expression of this Power. Birth is never perfected, nor is it an actual beginning. Indeed, sacred life know neither beginning or end, but circularly strives

¹³⁷ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, p. 198.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ J. C. VERGOUWEN, *The Social Organisation*, pp. 49,94; PH. LUMBAN TOBING, *The Structure*, pp. 66ff.

¹⁴⁰ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, p. 198.

¹⁴¹ W. B. KRISTENSEN, *The Meaning of Religion*, p. 416.

after continuity by means of power. It never remains in a permanent static state. If the name is the image and the spiritual essence of the person, and this person is changed by a rite of passage, the name must change. "This alteration of name indicates a complete change, a total renewal of life¹⁴²."

One of the fundamental changes of life and of spiritual essence, as we have seen, is baptism. Therefore, in baptism a child must be given a new name, a proper name, indicating a new essence and a new state of life. It is not an individual affair because, "human life is first of all not the life of the individual, but that of the Community"¹⁴³. Therefore, before deciding the name, it must be discussed in an assembly, and sometimes oracle is consulted.

Conclusion and question

In the baptism ceremony, the Toba Batak express and experience their belief in the High God, Mulajadi na Bolon. The representation of the primordial earth by the sand island is the dramatic actualization of the creative activity *in illo tempore* and in this rite. The earth is clearly described in the Myth as having come directly from God¹⁴⁴. The baptism ceremony is seen to be located on the original island of paradise in direct relation to the High God and his creative activity. The pyramid of sand reminds the Holy Mountain Pusuk Buhit that was made sacred as the site of the visits of the High God to the first Batak and the intimate relationship thereby established. The child is placed on the "mountain" in a gesture of offering, thus acknowledging dependence and symbolically locating him within the context of Mulajadi na Bolon's close personal intercourse with man. The Toba Batak experiences God in his Highness, let us say in his transcendence. But the rite goes on. The water is poured out over the child. It is the power of the water itself that drowns all evil and makes the child pure and innocent as the first man in the paradise on the *Pusuk Buhit*.

How are we to understand the power of the water ceremony? Does it have any connection with the power of Mulajadi na Bolon? In any case, there is a connection in the mind of a Batak even in this rite. It would be too much to speak about an immanence of the High God or to sacramentalize the world in a western Catholic way. But there is something more than the radical God — world opposition, the pure transcendence of some modern Protestant theologians and missionaries. Here is a field of research that is not unimportant for a people in transition to Christianity, a people that loves its own "Old Testament".

¹⁴² G. VAN DER LEUW, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, p. 197.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁴⁴ W. M. HOETAGALOENG, *Poestaha taringot toe Tarambo*, p. 6. Cf. W. STÖHR and P. ZOETMULDER, *Die Religionen Indonesiens*, p. 48; ANDAR LUMBANTOBING, *Das Amt in der Batak-Kirche*. Wuppertal-Barmen, (1961), p. 11. R. P. TAMPUBOLON, *Pustaka Tumbaga Holing*, p. 13: "He created the Upper-world, the Middleworld and the sea and everything in them."