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The phenomenon of Tugu construction from a socio-cultural perspective and the Batak Toba Kindness system in Simanindo District

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the phenomenon of monument construction and analyze it from a sociocultural, religious, and Toba Batak kinship system perspective, even though this activity is contrary to the teachings of the monotheistic religion, which is predominantly adhered to by the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District. The method used in this research was descriptive and qualitative, and informants were selected using purposive sampling. The selected informants were 14 people representing community leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, religious leaders, and clan groups who have built and are currently building monuments. An interview guide was used to collect primary data, and in-depth interviews were conducted with informants as well as participation in observations of the monument construction event. Secondary data were collected through a library research. Primary data collected in the form of interview transcripts were tabulated, reduced, presented, verified, analyzed, and concluded. To increase the validity and meaningfulness of research results and minimize subjectivity, researchers carried out cross-analysis, content analysis, and data triangulation. The results of this study show that monument building activities in the life of the Toba Batak tribe are still being carried out because of the strong influence of religion, social culture, kinship systems, cultural missions, and other traditions that require the Toba Batak people to construct monuments, dig up ancestral bones, and rebury ancestral bones into Saompu monuments. The Toba Batak people believe that ancestors who have been buried in the ground (Banua Toru) must be exhumed and reburied in a monument (Banua Ginjang) so that ancestral spirits will reside in heaven and bless their descendants.

Keywords: phenomenon, monument, social culture, Toba Batak, kinship system



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Public Interest Statement

The phenomenon of building monuments in the life of the Toba Batak community before the arrival of a monotheistic religion in the Simanindo District was discovered. The construction of the monument was influenced by the traditional religion (pamalim) adhered to by the ancestors of the Toba Batak people. Around the 19th century, the religion of monotheism was introduced and embraced by the Toba Batak people, who did not allow them to dig up the bones of their ancestors and rebury them in monuments, but in reality, the construction of ancestral monuments is still being carried out. In building ancestral monuments and parsadaan monuments, the Toba Batak people are very attached to sociocultural values and the three-hearth kinship system. The bones of the ancestors are reburied in the monument, following male lineage, and the inauguration ceremony must be attended by Dalihan Na Tolu's relatives. The number of parsadaan monuments found in the Simanindo District was 12 and 300, respectively. Analyzed from the perspective of the kinship system, the construction of the monument must be attended and approved by Dalihan Na Tolu's relatives (relatives of the same clan, father's sister, and mother's brother). From a sociocultural perspective, the phenomenon of monument construction is carried out as a form of respect for ancestors, achieving the cultural mission of wealth, prestige, and many descendants, resolving conflicts, elevating social status, and confirming ownership of customary land owned by each clan or clan branch.

Introduction

Universally, before the introduction of religion, humanity had different sociocultural systems and experienced a cycle of life from birth to death (Diamond, 2015; James, 2015; Pals, 2018). To regulate their lifestyle, each ethnic group is guided by norms, ethics, customs, and kinship systems (Murdock 1949; Koentjaraningrat 1990; Napitu 2021). In all their life activities, Toba Batak people and other ethnic groups are bound by the norms, ethics, customs and kinship of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, starting from birth, death, burial, exhuming the bones of ancestors and reburying the bones in the Saompu monument (Vergouwen, 1986; Koentjaraningrat, 1990; Nainggolan, 2012; Purba et al., 2023a). This socio-cultural phenomenon persists in the lives of the Toba Batak tribe, influencing the mindset of the Toba Batak people, even though they live in a modern world. In traditional society, elements of modern culture are found, and in modern society, elements of traditional culture are still found (Oldham, 1925; Warner, 1986; Napitu, 2021; Purba et al., 2023b).

The Toba Batak tribe, who lives in the Simanindo District, still maintains the socio-cultural and religious values inherited from their ancestors. Sociocultural values and kinship systems are currently undergoing a process of accommodation and acculturation to the values of progress and modernization (Haviland, 1993; Napitu, 2021). The socio-cultural phenomena of building monuments, *mangokkal holi* (digging up the bones of ancestors), and *panakkok saring* (re-burying the bones of ancestors) are among the traditions of the Toba Batak people who still survive and are maintained. The role of *Dalihan Na Tolu's* relatives was very important in building the monument. If one of the members of *Dalihan Na Tolu's* relatives is not present, the ritual of building a monument cannot begin. The strong roots of culture, cosmology, and religion influence the cognition of the Toba Batak people, who continue to carry out monument building events based on clans, descent groups, and the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system. The Toba Batak people in building the monument are one unit in a traditional event that must involve elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship in their area of origin and overseas (Vergouwen 1986; Pelly 1994; Situmorang 1993; Suk 2001; Reid 2002).

The construction of the monument, the *mangokkal holi*, and *panakkok saring* events function as a forum for strengthening group unity and solidarity among clan descendants, clan branches, extended families,

and nuclear families. Realizing the importance of the meaning of this traditional event, it is mandatory to present elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives. The *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system binds all Toba Batak people, like a spider's web, into one unit, clan descendant groups, clan branches, nuclear families, extended families, and all clans that have kinship relations with *Dalihan Na Tolu* both during life and after death. Toba Batak people in the construction of monuments, *mangokkal holi*, and *panakkok saring* events are obliged to involve elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives, because elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives carry out functions and roles in accordance with their respective positions. The lineage adhered to by the Toba Batak people is patrilineal, which has the consequence that the male clan is the one who is obliged to build the monument, but the bones included in the monument are the bones of the ancestors (husband and wife) (Sianggaran, 1979; Saragih, 1980; Sibeth, 1991; Pelly, 1994; Siagian, 2024).

To analyze in depth the sociocultural phenomena behind the real phenomenon of monument construction in the lives of Toba Batak people who have lived in the modern world and adhere to a monotheistic religion in Simanindo District and the important role of *Dalihan Na Tolu's* relatives.

Research Method

Qualitative descriptive methods were used to collect and analyze data related to the phenomenon of monument construction in the lives of the Toba Batak people from a socio-cultural and kinship system perspective. The qualitative method aims to explore values, experiences of human life, meaning, and essence of experience, and obtain a picture of life from a first-person perspective through formal and informal interviews with informants (Creswell, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 2009; Herman et al., 2024).

In analyzing the research results comprehensively, the researcher first described in detail the phenomenon of monument construction, which is related to the socio-cultural values and kinship system that underlies the thinking of the Toba Batak people in doing so. To focus on the implementation of data collection and the discussion of problems, research hypotheses are still formulated but not tested (Singarimbun, 1987; Spradley, 2006). Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique with as many as 14 people, including community leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, religious leaders, and community members who have carried out and are currently carrying out the construction of the monument. The selection of informants is based on their knowledge and experience related to the research problem and can introduce the researcher to an objective discussion of the research (Miles and Huberman, 1992; Creswell, 1998; Spradley, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2009; Purba et al., 2024).

Secondary data were collected through library research from books, journals, research results, and various other sources. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants and results of participant observations by researchers (Spradley, 1980; Sutrisno et al., 2023; Prasetya et al., 2023). Data analysis begins with research, collecting interview transcripts, tabulating data, verifying data, reducing data, presenting data, and formulating conclusions (Huberman and Miles, 1992; Spradley, 2006; Bungin, 2008). To increase validity and reduce research subjectivity, data meaningfulness techniques were implemented through content analysis, cross-analysis, and data triangulation. (Batubara et al., 2023; Andayani et al., 2023).

Results and Discussion

A. General description of Simanindo District

Simanindo District is located between 2o 32'-2o 45' north latitude and 98o 44'-98o 50' east longitude with an area of 198.20 km² above sea level between 1539-1630 meters, with a height of 931 meters. Simanindo District consists of 20 villages and one sub-district with the largest population in Tuktuk Siadong village and Tomok village, and the smallest in Parbalohan village. The population of Simanindo

District is 24,309 people, 11,988 men, and 12,321 women. The average number of family members was 4. The average number of family members shows that the family planning program has been successful in Simanindo District when compared to the early 70s, when the average number of family members was between 5-10 people (BPS, 2023). Currently, Toba Batak people's perception of the number of children has changed. In their view, children are not complete symbols of hagabeons. Children are currently considered an economic burden due to the increasing complexity of their needs. Boys have a higher status than girls because they are the successors of the clan. Based on the monotheistic religion adhered to by the Toba Batak people, the position of boys was the same as that of girls. Monotheistic religious teachings have gradually changed the views of the Toba Batak people regarding the status of boys and girls (Sianggaran, 1979; Pedersen, 1975; Lumbantobing, 1996; Causey, 2006; Sinaga et al., 2012).

The religions adhered to by the population include Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, and believers. Of the 24,309 residents of Simanindo District, 16,767 were Protestant Christians, 6,902 Catholic, 308 Muslim, and 332 believers (BPS, 2023). The majority of those who adhere to Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, and believers are Toba Batak people, while followers of Islam consist of the Javanese, Minang, Malay, and a small number of other Batak people. Believers known as *ugamo parmalim*, a traditional religion of the Toba Batak people, still influence the monotheistic beliefs of the Toba Batak people, the majority of whom are in the Simanindo District. The strong influence of religion is indicated by frequent ritual events and the construction of monuments rooted in traditional religion (Sibeth, 1991; Sinaga, 2000; Suk, 2001; Sumbayak, 2001; Reid, 2002; Hasselgren, 2008; Gultom, 2010; Wiradyana et al., 2014; Corry, 2017).

The Population pluralism in the Simanindo District occurs because of the territorial mobility of the population and marriage. Territorial mobility causes interactions and intermarriages between different ethnic groups, as well as cultural acculturation. The ethnic groups living in Simanindo District consist of 97.38% Toba Batak tribe, 0.58% Simalungun tribe, 0.34% Karo tribe, 0.14% Mandailing, 1.27% other ethnic groups, and 0.28% of the residents' foreign countries (Simanindo in figures, 2023). Toba Batak culture is dominant. All customary rules and etiquette refer to Toba Batak customs according to Toba Batak kinship (Brunner, 1972; Simanjuntak, 2015; Manalu et al., 2016; Corry, 2017).

B. A Glimpse into the Origins and Kinship System of the Toba Bataks

The Toba Batak tribe is an ethnic group that has lived in the Lake Toba area since 800-900 AD, adhering to a clan system and patrilineal lineage (Brunner, 1972; Sangti, 1976; Hutagalung, 1991; Gultom, 1992; Vergouwen, 1986). Silalahi (2014) stated that the origins of the Toba Batak people remain controversial. Based on cosmology, the Toba Batak people originated from Pusuk Buhit and spread to eight winds (Hutagalung, 1991; Gultom, 1992; Hasselgren, 2008; Corry, 2017). Some Toba Batak people live in the Asahan area, called the *Pardembanan Batak* (Cunningham, 1958; Pederson, 1975; Siahaan, 1982). Toba Batak people who live in Asahan tend to adopt the Malay culture and are Muslim. The Toba Batak people who lived in the mountains at that time still adhered to paganist beliefs, and today most of them have adopted Christianity (Cunningham, 1958; Pedersen, 1975; Gultom, 2010; Perret, 2010).

Another opinion states that the Toba Batak people came from North Asia and spread to South Sulawesi and then to Lampung, South Sumatra along Barus, to Bukit Barisan in the Lake Toba area (Hutagalung, 1991; Situmorang, 1993; Gultom, 2010; Simanjuntak, 2006). Pedersen (1975) stated that the Batak people came from Indo-China and migrated during the Old Malay era. This opinion cannot be fully proven because there is no scientific evidence or facts. The basic concept of the Batak people is that they recognize the truth of genealogy, adhere to the patrilineal lineage, and recognize the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system with different designations for the Toba, Simalungun, Karo, Mandailing, and Pakpak Batak

tribes (Cunningham, 1958; Vergouwen, 1986; Gultom, 1992).

The Toba Batak people adhere to a clan system starting with descent groups, parent clans, clan branches, clan branches, nuclear families, extended families, and patrilineal lineages. In the kinship system known as *Dalihan Na Tolu*, namely *Dongan Sabutuha* (relatives of the clan), *Hula-hula* (relatives who gave the wife) and *Boru* (relatives who received the wife). The balance between these three elements is *sombah marhula-hula* (respect for the wife-giver), *manat mardongan tubu* (being careful with clan relatives), and *elek marboru* (protecting sisters). This balance pattern harmonizes the lives of the Toba Batak people (Brunner 1972; Marbun 1987; Siahaan and Harahap 1987; Vergouwen 1986; Hutagalung 1991; Gultom 1992; Napitu 2021).

The Toba Batak tribe uses the *Dalihan Na Tolu* Kinship System. To maintain their kinship, they adhere to the clan system, genealogy, patrilineal lineage, and symmetric connubium a marriage. This means that intermarriage between the same clan and sub-clan is not permitted, and does not mean that marriage between different clans is permitted (discordant marriages). (Siahaan and Harahap 1987; Vergouwen 1986; Simanjuntak 2006; Napitu 2021; Corry 2017).

C. Construction of a Monument in Simanindo District

Monuments are works of art that contain meaning as memorials to honor ancestors or descendant groups. In Toba Batak terms, a monument is called a *simin*, *tambak*, *batu na pir*, or *tambak na timbo*. *Tambak na timbo* is a tall tomb building in which the bones of one clan's ancestors are collected for several generations (Marbun, 1987; Reid, 2002; Corry, 2017). The mass construction of monuments among the Toba Batak people began in the 1950s, when a magnificent tomb for the king was inaugurated, and the monument was considered a sacred building containing the name oppung parsadaan (Sibeth, 1991; Schreiner, 1996; Reid, 2002). Monuments function as memorials for people who have contributed or ancestors in the form of pillars or statues erected to commemorate various important events for someone who has died. The tradition of building monuments in the lives of the Toba Batak people was initially to create buildings called carved stone monuments, made to look like their ancestors. In 1950, the Toba Batak people used the terms Tugu Saompu and Tugu Parsadaan. The monument became increasingly popular after the tomb of the 12th Sisingamangaraja hero was inaugurated in 1953 in Sopesurung Balige (Sianggaran, 1982; Reid, 2002; Corry, 2017).

The monument is the result of Toba Batak culture. Almost all Toba Batak people in Simanindo District built the Parsadaan and Saompu monuments. The underlying cognition of Toba Batak people building monuments is that they believe that building monuments is an obligation and respect for ancestral spirits, both Toba Batak people who have adhered to a monotheistic religion and Toba Batak people who adhere to the belief (pamalim). Toba Batak people interpret's 5th law of the Toba as requiring them to respect parents and ancestors, both living and deceased (Hutagalung 1991; Sibeth 1991; Suk 2001; Reid 2002). The religious roots that underlie this idea are that the Toba Batak people still have strong beliefs that there is still a relationship between living humans and the dead; therefore, maintaining good relationships is mandatory. The socio-cultural background, the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system, and the religion that underlies the construction of the monument consist of the following:

1. The desire to elevate the social, personal and family status of the clan in their hometown reflects that their descendants are already rich and successful with the belief that this success cannot be separated from the blessing (blessing) of the spirits of their ancestors (Sumagot)
2. Identity (unifying the clans and descendants of one ancestor (saoppu)).
3. The Toba Batak believe that humans consist of flesh (body), breath (hosah), and spirit (tondi). When

humans die, the body returns to the earth, breath (hosah) returns to the wind (alogo), and spirit (tondi) becomes begu (spirit). Begu, sumagot and sambaon will give blessings to their surviving descendants

4. The Toba Batak people still live with their deceased ancestors, bound by the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system, clans, and patrilineal lineages (Hutagalung, 1991; Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002; Gultom, 2010; Nainggolan, 2012; Corry, 2017).

The tradition and religion of respecting ancestors is carried out by the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District by building monuments, excavating ancestral bones, and reburying ancestral bones in the monument. This phenomenon is still found in the lives of the Toba Batak tribe in Simanindo District. The parsadaan monuments in Simanindo District correspond to the main clan and branch clans consisting of the parsadaan monuments of the Ambarita, Manik, Sidabutar, Rumahorbo, Napitu, Dabukke, Sidauruk, Siallagan, Simarmata, Sitio, Sijaga and Turnip clans. Each clan, clan branch, and nuclear family generally has 300 saompu (family) monuments. The shapes and types of Saompu monuments are diverse; the models and buildings depend on the financial ability and descent group to build them.

The Parsadaan Monument Building does not contain bones. The building was more magnificent because a group of descendants worked together to build the monument. There are more Saompu monuments than Parsadaan monuments, and the buildings are simpler depending on the family's financial capacity to build them. Until now, both the Saompu and Parsadaan monuments in collecting funds and ritual events for their inauguration must involve elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives. Saompu monuments contain bones from several generations of descendant groups, and some contain only one nuclear family. Currently, the phenomenon of building Parsadaan and Saompu monuments is still being carried out by the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District.

D. The Relationship between the Religious System and the Construction of Monuments in the Life of the Toba Batak Tribe in Simanindo District

The Toba Batak religion views the universe as consisting of three worlds: the upper world (banua ginjang), middle world (banua tonga), and lower world (banua toru) (Reid, 2002; Simanjuntak, 2009; Gultom, 2010; Nainggolan, 2012). During life, humans are in *Banua Tonga*, and after death, they are in *Banua Toru*. For the human spirit to enter banua ginjang (heaven), its bones must be exhumed and reburied in a monument (Gultom, 1992; Schreiner, 1996; Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002). There are three elements that rule these three worlds which are united in one name, namely *debata Mulajadi na Bolon* (Maha Dewa), namely the original god of the Batak tribe, meaning the God of the beginning of all ecosystems including the ruler of this universe (Vergouwen, 1986; Gultom, 1992; Schreiner, 1996; Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002;

The ruler of the upper world is called *Tuan Bubi Nabolon*, the ruler of the middle world is called *Ompu Silaon Nabolon*, and the ruler of the underworld is called *Tuan Pane Nabolon*. Apart from being the ruler of each level of the world, God personally rules the world, meaning that God is the same as the world. Trust is total. *Dewa Mulajadi na Bolon* rules the upper, middle and lower worlds with the name *Mulajadi Na Bolon* who at all levels of the world uses different names, making him present in all places, at all times and for all purposes. This concept is called pantheism (Simanjuntak, 2009; Sinaga, 2012; Wiradiyana et al., 2014).

The Toba Batak religion differs from the concept of monotheism, which states that God has only one form. Monotheism is the opposite of pantheism, which states that God has many forms. The Toba Batak people accepted Christianity as a new religion, causing contradictions in beliefs. They were not able to immediately abandon the traditional religion of pantheism. In times of joy and sorrow, prayers are still

heard calling to the first ompu, naso marmula naso marujung or “the main God who has no beginning and no end, “ namely, *Debata Mulajadi na Bolon*. Before the event begins, as adherents of the Christian religion, Suhut, who has a celebration, asks the pastor or church elders to open the event with Christian prayer. Two beliefs apply and take place in one event: monistic values conflict with pantheistic values in the thoughts and social behavior of the Toba Batak people (Simanjuntak, 2009; Sinaga, 2012; Nainggolan, 2012; Manalu et al., 2016).

The idea of totality based on the Toba Batak religion concerns the relationship between gods as the macrocosm and humans as the microcosm of totality. The relationship between the upper, middle, and lower worlds is a functional relationship that produces harmonization. The elimination of one world destroys the other. The impact of the separation of divine power on the three world levels cannot always be calculated. Although each level of the world has the name of a special ruling god, it seems that the name is only given to facilitate recognition and worship. The sole ruler is the god *Mulajadi na Bolon*, who is the ruler of the universe and manifests himself with other names, so that humans are convinced of how close and intimate the relationship is between the cosmos and its rulers and inhabitants. This concept is similar to that of *God sitolu sada*, the tri-unity of Christianity, although there are still large differences (Vergouwen, 1986; Lumbantobing, 1996; Suk, 2001; Sumbayak, 2001; Sinaga et al., 2012).

The function of the three gods in the Batak people’s beliefs is unclear, and they often refer to the *Mulajadi na Bolon*, the original name of the Batak people. There are various examples of reciprocal analogies between Christian and traditional belief concepts. For example, the Toba Batak people’s religion of offering offerings to the ancestral spirits of one clan group or sombaon is sacred during mamele (worship) events, and the offerings offered are called peleans (Warneck, 1909; Tideman, 1992).

Manulangi is a form of event that honors parents, especially *hula-hula*, as well as biological parents who are facing death (dying). The Manulangi tradition persists in Toba Batak customs because there is a Christian concept that is considered to legalize this custom, namely respecting parents. People who have died are traditionally performed by erecting saompu monuments, excavating the bones of *ompu hasadaon* (relative grandparents), and erecting monuments of one clan that are seen as respect for ancestors, which is a manifestation of maintaining unity and unity of descent among the Toba Batak people. who still live with their ancestors (Vergouwen 1986; Gultom 1992; Schreiner 1996; Suk 2001; Reid 2002; Simanjuntak 2009; Gultom 2010; Nainggolan 2012; Sinaga 2012).

Apart from their religion in debata, they still have a Toba Batak version of God called *tondi*. *Tondi* is the spirit of every creature in the universe, and has the power and authority to grant human desires, good, and bad. Worship of spirits, erecting *Parsadaan* monuments and *saompu* monuments as places for reburial of ancestral bones, aims to elevate the social status of ancestors so that their spirits will give blessings to their living descendants. Erecting the monument as a memorial to the ancestors was intended so that the spirits of the ancestors would be happy to see the prosperity and number of their descendants (gabe). Spirit worship ensures the safety, welfare, and resilience of all descendants (Vergouwen, 1986; Gultom, 1992; Schreiner, 1996; Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002; Simanjuntak, 2009; Gultom, 2010; Nainggolan, 2012; Sinaga, 2012; Wiradyana et al., 2014).

This traditional Batak religion greatly influences the minds (cognitions) of the Toba Batak people. Even though they have embraced a monotheistic religion and lived in the modern world, they still carry out the construction of monuments, dig up the bones of their ancestors, and rebury the bones of their ancestors in the district. Simanindo believes that ancestral spirits give blessings from their ancestors. These religious roots influence the behavior of the Toba Batak people as well as their mindset in perceiving that people who have died still have a relationship with people who are still alive. The strong influence of traditional religion is still empirically seen from the continued implementation of mamele, mangase tao, menulangi,

trance summoning ancestral spirits, building monuments, and other ritual events in the daily lives of the Toba Batak people on Samosir Island and Simanindo District.

E. The phenomenon of monument construction is analyzed from the perspective of the kinship system in Simanindo District

The *Panakkok saring* event and the construction of a monument involving *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives in the lives of the Toba Batak people must be carried out. The tradition of building monuments and *panakkok saring* in Toba Batak society is a form of shared value that, according to cosmology, if carried out, the spirits of ancestors will bless their living descendants (Marbun, 1987). A similar view was conveyed by Yudosaputro (1993), who stated that the excavation of bones and the construction of statues, reliefs, and statues is basically a manifestation of people's views on the past, which to this day are still alive as symbols or emblems full of hope for something, so that their existence is often used as a means of rituals with religious meaning.

The construction of the monument, the *Magokkal Holi* event, combined with the *Panakkok Saring Saring* activity, is a socio-cultural phenomenon in the lives of the Toba Batak people, which is still valid today. Humans currently live in Banua Tonga, and after death, go to *Banua Toru*. To please the spirit, surviving descendants are required to carry out the *Panakkok* filter ceremony at the monument (Banua ginjang). This respect aims to ensure that ancestral spirits are at peace in the afterlife and will provide blessings, health, and sustenance to all their living descendants (Marbun, 1987; Corry, 2017). The construction of the monument, *mangkokal holi*, and *panakkok saring* to *tambak na timbo* are functional in the lives of the Toba Batak people because, in accordance with their religiosity, the event is held as a last respect for ancestors that must be attended by all relatives of *Dalihan Na Tolu*. If this has not been implemented, the *na gok* traditional event will not be fulfilled properly, so that balance and integration will not be realized between the Toba Batak tribe and their ancestors (Corry, 2017).

All aspects of the life of the Toba Batak people are bound by customs based on the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship system and clans, both Toba Batak people who are still alive and Toba Batak people who have died. In carrying out the traditional events of building the *Parsadaan* monument, *Saompu* (family) monument, digging up ancestral bones, and reburial of ancestral bones in the *Saompu* monument, *Dalihan Na Tolu's* relatives must be involved and play a role according to their respective positions. In building the monument, elements of *Dalihan Na Tolu's* relatives must be present in person and work together to cover the costs of building the monument, accepting and paying for customs and other ritual events. These customs are still valid in the lives of the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District (Vergouwen 1986; Sibeth 1991; Sumbayak 2001; Suk 2001; Reid 2002).

Referring to the clan system that follows patrilineal lineages, the naming of the monuments built, both the *Saompu* and *Parsadaan* monuments, is based on the name of the male clan, not the female clan. The *Parsadaan* and *Saompu* monuments in Simanindo District are monuments in the name of the male clan (*marga Suhut*). This tradition is still valid and upheld by the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District (Sijaga 1979; Sibeth, 1991; Reid, 2002; Corry, 2017). The customs in the life of the Toba Batak people, as well as other cultural elements throughout their life cycle up to the reburial of ancestral bones into monuments, cannot be separated from the elements, functions, and roles of the *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives because the Toba Batak people are all bound by the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship (Sibeth, 1991; Reid, 2002; Suk, 2001).

If the Toba Batak kinship system is connected to marriage ties between men and women of different clans, then the bones included in the *Saompu* monument are not only the bones of men but also the bones of women who serve as wives, grandmothers, and other female ancestors because they are bound by *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship relations (Gultom, 1992; Gultom, 2010; Nainggolan, 2012; Simanjuntak, 2006; Napitu,

F. The phenomenon of monument construction is analyzed from a socio-cultural perspective in Simanindo District

1. Strengthening the Bonds of Fellowship

The monument is a work of Toba Batak art and culture in the Simanindo District, which has an important meaning because, apart from its religious meaning, this building is also related to cultural values in the form of works, kinship systems, religion, and art. The event of building a monument and reburying the bones of ancestors in a monument in a traditional religious manner was to strengthen the ties between the living Batak people and their ancestors and strengthen the bonds of the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship group for several generations. Monument building events and *parsadaan* and *saompu* monument parties are a means of strengthening and reaffirming bonds of fellowship between all groups of the same clan from one ancestor and strengthening ties between *Dalihan Na Tolu* kin groups from different ancestors and clans (Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002 ; Nainggolan, 2012; Corry, 2017).

Meetings between members of the same clan and different clans in the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship ties of the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District were able to tighten and strengthen kinship ties that had begun to loosen. This diversity can be united through the *Parsadaan* and *Saompu* monument festivals, which are forums for strengthening fellowship ties between all the same clans and different clan groups in the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship element (Siahaan and Harahap, 1987; Suk, 2001; Reid, 2002). The inauguration of the *Parsadaan* monument and the *Saompu* monument is a forum for strengthening solidarity, integration, and kinship between the Toba Batak people, who have moved to various areas that do not know each other because they rarely see each other. Kinship ties and a sense of clan solidarity in the lives of the Toba Batak people are very strong, marked by strong feelings of helping each other in sad and happy events, as well as in monument-building events. Apart from strengthening ties between the main clan, branch clans, and different clans within the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kin group, the construction of the monument also strengthened spiritual ties and reaffirmed the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship ties for all descendants of the Toba Batak people. These kinship ties strengthen the sense of solidarity, integration, and feelings of shared destiny among fellow descendants of the same clan and relatives who are members of *Dalihan Na Tolu* (Hasselgren, 2008; Nainggolan, 2012; Corry, 2017).

2. Conflict Resolution

The process of building the *Parsadaan* and *Saompu* monuments in Simanindo District begins with deliberation between the clan group and elements of the *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives who will build the monument, bearing in mind that the construction of the clan monument must be agreed upon by all relatives. According to the beliefs of Toba Batak, if there are still descendants of clans that are in conflict, the construction of the monument will not be carried out well. If the warring relatives are not reconciled first, it is believed that the ancestral spirits will be angry and will not approve of the construction of the monument. The parties who play a role in reconciling and resolving conflicts between the descendants of this clan are the *Dalihan Na Tolu* relatives. The *Dalihan Na Tolu* element functions to mediate conflict, namely the *hula-hula* (uncle). The *hula-hula* party is considered the most respected person in the Batak community. Apart from the *hula-hula* parties, the eldest clan relatives can resolve conflicts if an agreement cannot be reached. The resolution of this conflict in Batak society is known as *siborupuas siborubakara*, *molo nungapuas*, or *soada mara* (the resolution of conflict for Batak people is openly stated, and when it has been openly stated that there is no longer any anger or revenge) (Siahaan and Harahap, 1987; Hasselgren, 2008; Nainggolan,

3. Elevating Social Status

The erection of a monument for the Toba Batak people today is a form of self-actualization of the entire descent group or clan, which shows that many of them have been successful overseas and in their home areas. The Toba Batak people have an ideal life goal, namely to obtain *hamoraons*, *hasangapons*, and *hagabeons* in their lives. If these three life goals have been achieved, relatives and clans who achieve these goals will be able to build a very magnificent monument and improve their social status among the Toba Batak community (Simanjuntak, 2009).

If this view is connected to the ideal cultural mission of the Toba Batak people, if this cultural mission is achieved and they are able to build very majestic and luxurious *parsadaan* and *saompu* monuments, their social status will increase. This means that the more wealth and the higher the position achieved by the Toba Batak people, the more they will be able to build a very magnificent monument at a very high cost, but on the other hand, the Toba Batak people will have a lower social status if they are not able to build a very magnificent monument. The success or failure of the Toba Batak people in building the monument depends on the costs incurred to build the monument, the size of the monument, the majority of the monument, the number of people present at the inauguration of the monument, and the length of the monument inauguration party. If this can be fulfilled, the social status of the clan or descent group will increase in the Batak community and Bona Pasogit (Siahaan and Harahap, 1987; Pelly, 1994; Simanjuntak, 2009; Corry, 2017).

The construction of the monument shows the social status and ownership of wealth of the Toba Batak people, both those who live in their area of origin and overseas. The more wealth one has, the more visible the *Parsadaan* and *Saompu* monuments will be. In development, the desire to raise social, personal, and family status in one's hometown is discovered because abilities in the material field are considered well established. For this reason, various efforts have been made to achieve the cultural mission of the Toba Batak people, namely, to obtain as much *hamoraon* (wealth), *hagabeon* (many children), and *hasangapon* (honor). If these three cultural missions are achieved by the Toba Batak people in the Simanindo District, it will raise their social status among the Toba Batak people, clan groups, and Dalihan Na Tolu relatives.

4. Sign of Territory Ownership

In the life of the Toba Batak tribe, the clan owns customary land on Bona Pasogit. Customary land ownership is based on the territory of a particular village, called a *lumban*. Each *Lumban* has territorial boundaries of the clans within Toba Batak society, such as the *Lumban Tobing* clan, *Lumban Julu* clan, and other clans. If it is related to the location of the construction of the *Parsadaan* monument, then this territorial boundary is used as a collective right (*ulayat*) for every clan in the Toba Batak community. Therefore, the *Parsadaan* and *Saompu* monuments were built in their hometowns in accordance with the clan's land ownership (Simanjuntak, 2006; Napitu, 2021).

To protect the expansion (control) of other clans over the customary land of other clans because many of these clans have migrated, as a sign that the land belongs to that clan, a *parsadaan* monument was built as a symbol of ownership. In the context of the construction of the *parsadaan* monument, the monument is not a sign of customary rights; it is also a sign of land ownership by the clan or group of clans who jointly own the land or area. The social and political meaning of the monument is a legal notification of the ownership of land or *huta* (village) (Simanjuntak, 2015; Napitu, 2021). The importance of erecting a monument for the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District is due to the nature of the Toba Batak people, who like to wander, and their way of thinking has not been separated from traditional religion. The

establishment of the monument is a notification of the proof of the land ownership rights of a clan in the Simanindo District. The function of the monument is far beyond what people know, but there is another dimension that can penetrate the spatial-temporal and unify the clan, as well as uphold the philosophy of *argado bona ni pinasa* for all Toba Batak people wherever they are.

Land in the Toba Batak sociocultural perspective is a symbol of regional or territorial legitimacy, not only in the form of forests but also in rice fields (Simanjuntak and Situmeang, 2004). The results of research in Simanindo District found the customary land of the clans: Turnip, Sidauruk, Sitio, Napitu, Simarmata, Sijaga, Ambarita, Sidabutar, Siallagan, Rumahorbo, Sidabukke and Manik. There are 12 communal lands owned by clans in Simanindo District, which are joint rights of the clans (*raja huta*). The amount of customary land ownership when linked to the construction of *parsadaan* monuments, ideally in Simanindo District, should be 12 *parsadaan* monuments built. There are 169 *Saompu* monuments because the number of branch clans in Toba Batak society is greater than that of the main clan. The existence of the *Parsadaan* monument on this communal land is a territorial boundary owned by each clan. Therefore, erecting a *parsadaan* monument on each customary land according to the clan owner emphasizes the boundaries of clan land ownership (Vergouwen, 1986; Simanjuntak, 2015; Napitu, 2021).

Conclusion

The cognition that underlies the construction of monuments in the lives of the Toba Batak people in Simanindo District is the religiosity of the Toba Batak people, who believe that after their ancestors die, they are buried in the underworld and their bones must be exhumed and placed in a *saompu* monument so that their spirits can enter heaven (*banua ginjang*), from which the ancestral spirits bestow blessings on their living descendants. There were indications of syncretism in the lives of the Toba Batak people in the phenomenon of monument construction in Simanindo District because the Toba Batak people, although the majority have adhered to a monotheistic religion and live in a modern world, still believe in and practice traditional religious rituals in the construction of the *Parsadaan* monument and the *Saompu* monument.

In the process of planning, implementing, inaugurating, and inserting ancestral bones into the monument, analyzed from the perspective of Toba Dalihan Na Tolu Batak kinship, it is very important to decide whether to carry out the construction of the monument and name the monument based on the clan or group of descendants of the male clan. male (*patrilineal*). The construction of the monument is analyzed from a socio-cultural perspective as having an important meaning, namely, as the culmination of artistic and cultural works, strengthening bonds of fellowship, integration and solidarity, resolving conflicts, raising social status, and a symbol (*sign*) of territorial ownership for each clan (*descendant group*) in the Simanindo District. The number of *parsadaan* monuments found in Simanindo District is 12, and 169 *saompu* monuments are symbols of respect for ancestors and the achievement of the cultural mission of *hamoraon*, *hasangapon*, and *hagabeon*.

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