

*Collective Memory,
2021*

But I remember, maybe I was six years old, I can remember, eh I want, clothes, new clothes, didn't get yet, and then at SD (Sekolah Dasar), primary school, close to grandma, right, I went to lake Toba to wet my clothes ... so I would get new ones.

If it's a government school ... must wear uniform, and also when not government, of subsidy.

Back then by sepeda. I already had a sepeda back then [laughing].

No, back in the days, not yet have a bus. Sepeda, but a lot of people from far away came by foot. With sepeda sometimes. Just like you, a bit. Too late, too late, and then they would bring me by car sometimes. Car, pick-up.

Well, when I married, it was completely, completely according to the adat, I was married.

The adat, that is, yes, the adat, everything according Dalihan Na Tolu.

Sombar Marhula-hula, Manat Mardungan Tubu, is actually Manboru.

That is, have to, mama married according the adat, had to follow.

That's why, your dad, so to say, eh, dinobatkan di Silalahi.

Beause it has something to do with my granddad, something to do with marga Silalahi. My sister married with Silalahi, but three generations back.

My parents and the partents of mama tua's husband, they kinda wanted it, but it's also jodo, destiny, by chance.

When married, mama, like your dad, and according to Raja Batak, that is, talking about how, so that don't need to use another marga.

Oh, before married in the church, Martongo Raja.

Somba Marhula-hula, Manat Mardungan Tubu.

Then, what I, I am the, the penanting, wedding, yes, then I am Sombar Marhula-hula. That means, mama, my hula-hula is tulang.

Well, that is with my partner, have to, like, Sombar Marhula-hula. Well, that is actually Manboru.

Well, Manat Mardungan Tubu, has to be careful with my Mardungun Tubu, is the marga of my husband. I have to have respect to them.

This is eh, consumption at the adat Batak, that is, have to, how do you call it, slaughter a pig, completely with its head.

That is eh, the pig is slaughtered, in pieces, put in a dish.

Well, listen carefully, inang. The jambar, presented in the dish, this must end up with the right person. For example, the head piece, the kepala, has to be given to the son, not just for anyone.

So it goes back to Dalihan Na Tolu.

If not the right person, it's dangerous.

The Raja Raja could protest.

Somba Marhula-hula, Manat Mardungan Tubu, actually Manboru.

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If you're talking about living situation, it was very basic, but I mean like really basic, so for example, you would get water from a water well and then you go home, with eh, then you go fill the bucket and then you go home with that bucket and you fill the bottle, where the water goes. Well you just walk a couple of times.

To shower, to pee, to do your thing.

You have to wear uniform, and not in eh, yes you have to wear a uniform. And next to that you also go to school for six days, but the days are shorter.

But eh, that's obviously because of the weather. Because there it is really warm. So you're not going to sit at school the whole day, because most schools don't have air-conditioning, or well, actually no school when I went to school there.

What do we do on Saturdays? Well just regular classes, like maths or eh topography, that's what you do, basically just like every other school day but then on a Saturday.

History about the Dutch colony, back then it was extensively repeated and spoken about, and clips about how violent it was.

And those images were quite violent, images, violent images, that we saw, that I saw, and that quite hit me, and then our mother married a Dutch man! Yes, that was of course like eh, something's not right, but you know you were a child so you immediately put it aside.

You know that in Batak culture you have, eh, if you belong to this surname, then eh, then this, then these surname match, those matches.

And this surname with that surname is not allowed, or something.

Adat is, I believe, ehm Batak language for traditions.

Well, I was actually upset with mom, because she can be really eh, she can be mysterious sometimes and pretend like I don't have understanding of things or too young to get it which is so so annoying. And then suddenly there is a man, a Dutch man, and a few days later they marry [laughing].

I was really pissed off of course, because eh, I saw that as if I would never see her again you know, I was really young, how old was I then, I'm not sure how hold, like eight years or something.

So, I was really mad, so during the wedding day of dad and mom, I was furious, I was mad! That is what I can remember, I was mad, I was pissed off, no one told me anything.

Oh I have to, I could cry right now.

So, no one told me anything, and I, I didn't get it you know, all those parties, this and that, people dressed up. That's why in mom and dad's wedding photos, my eyes are small and red, you can really see that I wasn't happy, and that's true because I was so mad.

And after that, eh, after their wedding, they stayed in Indonesia for a couple months, to Jakarta I believe, and then they moved to the Netherlands for a year.

Like a year without mom.

With that garment, you are wrapped so to say, and it's a symbol of being one.

Are you listening?

Are you following?

When I cannot be followed?

I am hidden in the dark corners of ^{distant} stories

Waiting to be dug up

To be revealed

Guide me back home

If you want

Don't let me
down

Until I get no air

I understand the silence

Do not let the silence get to you