

ASPECTS OF THE MARANAO *TARITIB* AND *ADAT* AS REFLECTED IN *RADIA INDARAPATRA* *

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If I may be allowed to begin with a footnote, I would say that it would be enlightening, perhaps, to talk on the concept of "*panakip butas*" (*olen sa lebo* in Maranao) as an *adat* in the Maranao context. This explanation is intended to satisfy a colleague here and to justify my accepting his invitation to come over to speak.

The Maranaos as a "rank-conscious" group do everything under any circumstance if only to safeguard their *maratabat* (pride), which is a manifestation of their rank. To an outsider, such peculiar behavior and idiosyncracies can be interpreted as "*kayabangan*." However, to a Maranao such behavior and idiosyncracies are manifestations of rank consciousness which is exhibited not only by the peculiar behavior but also by the display of flags, musical instruments, and other material possessions.

To illustrate this point, if a daughter of a sultan is impregnated by somebody not belonging to the "sultan class," two drastic measures are taken upon consultation among immediate members of the family: (1) If the fetus cannot be aborted by the use of primitive methods, the infant is strangled right after birth. Later, when its body is wrapped up and buried, no one is allowed to talk about it. To gossip about the incident will mean severe punishment. (2) An immediate member of the family (usually a first cousin) is married to the girl to protect the *maratabat* of the family. Meanwhile, a secret negotiation is made between the girl's family and the culprit. This act, made to save the *maratabat* of the family, is called *ini-olen sa lebo* (*panakip butas* in Pilipino).

From the above illustration, two important points are emphasized, namely: (1) that there is rank-consciousness, and (2) that the quality (rank) of the material (person) which is used to patch the hole (literal) must come from the same quality (rank) as the torn

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sheet. This is precisely the reason why a first cousin must be married to the girl — such marriage is also the only opportunity for first cousins to marry. Within the society, this is built-in mechanism designed as a measure to safeguard the *maratabat* of the sultan, thus maintaining the “pureness” of the class, freeing it from any taint of “impurity.”

Today, while there is a need for the study and inclusion of traditional laws in our society, the immediate problem is the study and collection of these traditional laws for their fullest utilization. As it is, outside of a few dissertations, master's theses, and term papers written by students as requirements to get a degree, printed materials on the subject are fairly inadequate.

Considering these obstacles, therefore, this writer has decided to discuss, “Aspects of the Maranao *Taritib* and *Adat* as Reflected in *Radia Indarapatra*.” My choice is based on a premise that the literature of the Maranaos embodies details of their traditional laws (*adat*, *luwaran*), norms, conduct and behavior (*maratabat*); the origin of their very existence as peoples; and their rituals which can be traced to the time before the coming of Islam. In short, this literature is the “charter,” the basic reference of the Maranaos in their explanation of events and festivities which they believed to have happened in the past. As Dr. Saber says, “It [the literature] is an evidence of their ideals and ideology that guide [their] behavior. Their epics play an important role in their moral and intellectual life”

Secondly, this writer's choice of subject arises from his familiarity with it — in fact, it is his master's thesis. Moreover, discussing this matter with you here gives him the opportunity to share with you some of his findings.

Studies on Radia Indarapatra

The *Radia Indarapatra* narrative has two versions, namely, Magindanaon and Maranao. The former appeared in Saleeby's *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion* in 1905, which he considered a Magindanaon myth. It was secured from Datu Kali Adam, who learned it from the late Maharaja Layla of Magindanao and from Alad, one of the oldest living Moros at that time. Twenty-one years later, it appeared as a re-narration in verse in *Philippine Magazine*. Both the Saleeby and the *Philippine Magazine* versions do not have the original texts (i.e., in the Magindanaon language).

In 1963, Maceda recorded a fragment of the narrative (about 56 lines) as transcribed for him by Masil Uka, an assistant, and Balun Ragasan, an informant. The Magindanaon text with an English translation was also included in his study with musical notation and analysis.

Fragments of the Maranao version with Maranao text appeared in the *Lanao Progress*, two of which were entitled, "Tutol Ko Tulo a Maroni a Salut sa Lo-ok a Ranao" (Legend of the Three Islets of Lake Lanao), and "Iringa o Maranao Mipantag ko Kiasong i Radia Indarapatra sa Ingud a Antar a Langit" (Maranao Study about the Journey of Radia Indarapatra to the Province of Antar a Langit), published in 1938 and 1939, respectively.

Another fragment appeared in the *Philippine Magazine* in 1939 written by Buenafe entitled, "Radia Indarapatra and the Dragons." This was in English and no original Maranao text was presented.

However, the Maranao text of that fragment was passed on to me by J. R. Francisco in 1968 when I started working with him as a research assistant for the project, "A Preliminary Investigation on Probable Sanskrit Elements in Maranao Language and Literature." The text was transcribed by Camama Mamacol and Berua Cañar of Tamparan and Taraka, respectively. The latter also worked with Francisco as a research assistant.

The text was in *Kirim*, the Arabic script modified to suit the phonological system of Maranao. This was transliterated into *madrassa*, the romanization of the *kirim* by the same informant above. The same text has been put together from the following sources: (1) the first part was taken from a *salsila* (chain of descent lines) from the sultan of Butig; (2) the middle part was from a *kirim* owned by Datu Sambarani Tandual, and (3) the last part was from a canto of the Darangen, *Diwatandao Gibon*. These three parts have been consolidated to constitute the *Radia Indarapatra composite text*.

This composite text is a work of Camama Mamacol, the chief informant. The reason he gave for this text was that since the narrative seemed to be floating about in fragments, and since he had been given the chance to work on it, he decided to put the stories together in sequences, which now stands as the composite text, having continuity and mass, at least in written form.

The middle component, which is in *kirim*, was acquired from Datu Sambarani Tandual who claims to have bought it a few years

before the Lanao earthquake in 1954. This written text which is actually a fragment is so far the earliest evidence in written form of the folk narrative found among the Maranaos.

While Datu Tandual claims that he bought the manuscript, he cannot remember from whom he bought it; neither can he remember the number of leaves it originally had. The manuscript, which is in mimeographed form (brown mimeo paper), consists of 50 leaves as of now. It starts on leaf⁹ (Arabic numerals) and ends on leaf 58 (also in Arabic numeral). It measures six and a half inches in width and eight inches in length. It is roughly one-half centimeter in thickness. Another written text of the same type is found in Balindong, but the leaves have become very brittle and delicate to handle. Both written texts are available in micro-film. The original texts are now in my possession.

Since the first leaf starts on leaf⁹ and the last leaf on leaf 58, we can speculate that the missing leaves should be leaves 1 to 8, and probably also leaves 59 to 66. As compared with the *composite text* the contents of these missing parts may correspond to the later part of Part II and a portion of Part III.

The singer-informants claim that they have learned to chant the *Radia Indarapatra* from their fathers. By constantly listening to his father and accompanying him in gatherings of socio-religious importance, the son has learned the narrative part by part. By the time the father was too old to recite the narrative, the son was already capable of taking his place before the eager audience. In one recording (Notong, Pualas), father and son narrated together, a style known as *pendoiogen*, "duet."

The narrative is orally transmitted and there are many techniques in presenting it. Such presentation is determined by the kind of occasion, and the idiosyncracies of the singer. There are at least three distinct groups of singers, each with a specific role in Maranao society, who can recite the narrative, namely: (1) the *onor* entertainers, (2) the *pananalsila*, genealogists, and (3) the *ulama*, religious leaders. Moreover, the basic structure of the narrative becomes an excuse for additional episodes or stories which are chanted. The singing of the narrative is a living tradition in Maranao society.

Singer-informants come from all parts of the lake region. These singers such as the *onor* are found in all the municipalities of Lanao Sur, and this more or less explains the existence of several "variants" of the narrative and variations and styles in narrating it. In the begin-

ning these "variants" were distinguished by the singers, since they considered their way of presenting the narrative as *sadorog a kepenotola* (one way/style of narrating the narrative). (Madale, 1973: 181-187).

Radia Indarapatra as Reflection of the Maranao Taritib and Adat

A. The Taritib

1. Radia Indarapatra as the Beginning of Maranao Chain of Descent Line (Sadorog a Bangsa):

One of the most important claims of informants in the relationship between the narrative vis-a-vis Maranao society is that the narrative is conceived of as an account of one line of descent (*sadorog a bangsa*) of the Maranao.*

The narrative is believed to be the earliest account of the *apo* of the Maranaos who established the *pat a pengampong a ranao* (four sultanates of Lanao). It is also considered the *po-onan*, the beginning of the Maranao *salsila* ("chain of descent lines"), which is traced to Radia Indarapatra (see Appendix-A). As a *salsila*, it is a basic reference in the tracing of one's descent line through Radia Indarapatra himself and another historico-legendary character, Sarip Kabungsuwan.

Radia Indarapatra is used as one of the basic references in the attempt of the individual to validate his position in the social structure. As such, it is not only recited for entertainment but is also treated according to the social needs of the individual. (N. Madale, 1973: 191-2).

The descendants of the hero, namely: Butuanen Kalinan, Dima-ampao Kalinan, Batara sa Kilatan and Amirogong Topaan were in fact the four earliest datus who at a precise time in the past convened together and among others established a charter of order, one of which is the creation of the four geographical and political divisions of Lanao. Such order agreement (*taritib* or *atoran*) were finally etched in copper plates and sworn to by the ancestors. This contract provided the basis for claiming rights and obligations by every individual or groups of individuals within the group.

Detailed provisions of this contract include the following:

- a. The precise definition of the superordinate lines of descent (*pegawidan*), the subordinate lines of descent (*pegawid*) and, by implications, those not belonging to the above categories and may not make any claim to any line of descent, thus being relegated to the *oripon* category;
- b. The specific association of inheritable positions of authority and power as symbolized in a title;
- d. The provisions for the rights and obligations of individuals holding title within any one level;
- e. The provisions for the protocol involved in the interaction between any one single village with another or between individuals within a village (Baradas, 1973:9).

2. *Radia Indarapatra and Maranao Social Structure*

Included within the provision in the division of Lanao into four geographical and political divisions is rank differentiation, which is also drawn out of the different divisions mentioned above. The sub-*pengampong* is sub-divided into *inged* (village). There are two categorical rankings of the villages: (1) the *pegawidan*, "supported" or superordinate, of which there are fourteen in number; (2) the *pegawid* "supporting or subordinate" of which there are twenty-eight. It is at the village or the "inged" level that political institutions, inheritable titles such as that of a *solotan*, and the fixed association of particular lines of descent are manifested. (Baradas, 1973:5-6).

In the narrative (lines 2362-6), the *pegawidan* are the descendants of Sarip Kabungsuan who intermarried with the descendants of the people of Bembaran, the setting of the epic, *Darangen*. Only those who can trace direct descent from them can claim title in the local hierarchy.

Moreover, as provided for in the *taritib*, when the "standardization" of ranks of the different villages, as well as the accompanying titles of the offices in each of the villages were made, the titles created at this period were the only *bona fide* titles that should be in use and could be claimed for succeeding generations.

B. Radia Indarapatra as a Reflection of Maranao Adat

As used in this paper and for our purposes, *adat* is defined both as a *bride-price* and as *customary practice*. Perhaps, this is the reason why the informants consider the narrative *anonen a rawaten* (the height of ethnocentrism), since it embodies the belief system, practices, and norms of conduct – collectively referred to as *andang sa mona*, “the way of the ancestors.”

1. Adat as Bride-Price

In line 815 of the narrative, the Sultan of Antar a Langit (Kingdom in the Sky) made a vow (*samaia*) that whoever can present the *bolawan a saladeng ago bolawan a aso* (golden deer and golden dog), respectively, will be married to his daughter. These animals are integral parts of the bride price. The hero, Radia Indarapatra, being able to present the animals (this presentation was one of the several concessions given by Allah), was married to the sultan’s daughter.

As observed and practiced today by Maranaos, during weddings there are some parts of the bride-price which are distributed to the people during the occasion, since this was part of the set of agreement forged by the founding *apo*. For illustration, the *getas sa rirai* belongs to the *pat a pengampong a ranao*; the *pagopawan* to women, and the *siwaka* to all those present during the wedding.

2. Adat as Customary Practices

2.1 Polygyny

Polygyny is best exemplified by the hero, Radia Indarapatra. In the narrative he got married three times. In one of the thirteen variants (Marawi, Tuca Variant-B), the hero was to be married forty-one (41) times. However, on the 41st marriage, the hero was to return to Heaven.

At present, polygyny is largely practiced, although a good number of educated Maranaos prefer monogamy. Besides the provisions of Islamic law another factor which tends to promote polygyny among the Maranaos is his society’s notion that the greater the number of wives the man has, the higher is his social prestige.

Apart from being a status symbol, polygyny serves as a means of extending one’s influence. He who has four wives establishes

relationships with four families which, in the local society, are solid and close kin units (Isidro, *et al.*, 1969:151).

2.2 *Display of Flags*

Line 1960 of the Indarapatra narrative describes the pageantry of the *kalilang* (festivities) with the display of flags of multi-colors, sizes and shapes, which are collectively called *isa ka labo-al*.

The display of this set of flags is an indication of rank, honor and prestige, since only the *pegawidan* has the exclusive use and display of the flags. There is also a *tarittib* in the display of flags. For example, if the *dopo* (rectangular flag) is displayed at the prow of the boat, it indicates that the user belongs to the *pegawidan*. However, if the same flag is displayed at the stern of the boat, the user is identified with the lower stratum in the local hierarchy.

2.3 *Games in Radia Indarapatra*

Lines 1715 and 1970 of the narrative mention lots of *kalilang* held in Raia Zainon where all datus from all kingdoms converged to witness the festivities which seemed endless. Games like *kasator* (chess), *kasipa sa manggis* (kickball game of manggis), *kanggarotata* (tug of war), and *kapeso* (horse race), to mention some, were played during that most celebrated event.

The *pakaradian ago kalilang* (games and amusements) as well as the festivities mentioned in the narrative are revived by the Maranaos during significant occasions like weddings, coronations, etc., believed to have happened in the past. As such, the festivities are *riawat* (based) upon the narrative (N. Madale, 1973:194).

2.4 *Tonong (Spirits)*

In the narrative, there are a number of socio-religious activities which are no longer allowed by the *Imam* (Muslim priest). However, some which persist to the present are derived from it. The narrative basis may be the reason why Maranaos, in spite of having been Islamized, continue to adhere to these un-Islamic practices.

In a recent trip to Taraka (a municipality in the eastern side of the lake) to record an indigenous rice ritual called *kashawing*, the writer was told that the *tonong* (spirits) invoked during this ritual, conducted before clearing the field, were children of Radia Indarapatra by a nymph (*karibang*), Putri Rainalut, who was believed to reside under water. The reason why Maranaos have to invoke these *tonong*

in a number of rituals may be that one of their own *apo* (ancestor) is *unseen* (*da peiag*). This *apo* has become the forebears of all the *tonong* that Maranaos invoke.

This is better illustrated by this diagram:

Radia Indarapatra

Potri Rainalut

(water nymph)

Aia Diwata Mokom

Pinatola i kilid

sa Inialonod a Ig

(unrevealed brother
of Aia . . . Ig)

Pinatola i kilid is the *apo* of all *tonong* invoked by Maranaos in rituals like the *kashawing*, *kaganat sa lantai* (child baptism), etc. While the Imam tries to discourage such "un-Islamic practices," the Maranaos continue them because these are *andang sa mona* (the way of the ancestors). (N. Madale, 1973:23-5).

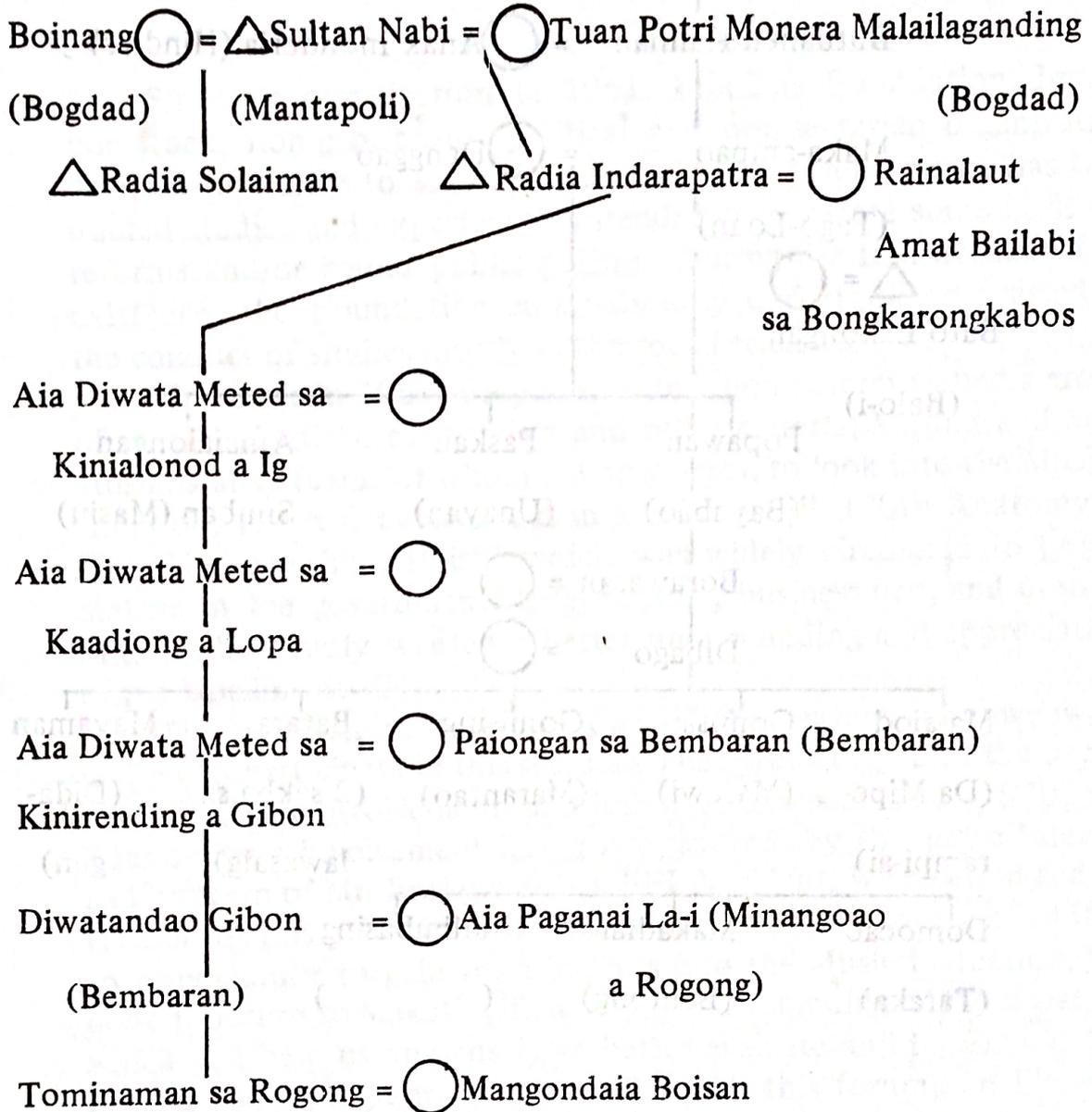
Concluding Remarks

While the survival and preservation of Muslim literature can be attributed partly to the success of the Muslim in defending themselves from colonizers, such preservation is due mainly to the functional value of the literature to the Muslims who treasure such literature.

At this point, it is needless to emphasize the need to understand Muslim literature. As part and parcel of one nation, an understanding of Muslim literature is inevitable. It is the key to the understanding of Muslims as an integral part of the larger national community.

Appendix

The Salsila Bangsa of Radia Indarapatra*



* The "chain of descent line" (*salsila bangsa*) of Radia Indarapatra showing the earliest *apo* of the Maranaos. The narrative is considered the earliest account of the *apo* of the Maranaos who settled in Lanao, thus the narrative is the *beginni*. (*po-onan*) of the Maranao "chain of descent lines." The informant, Imam sa Kalokan, claims that he learned this episode from his father who learnt it from his great-great-grandfater. (From the field notes of the writer, April 5, 1973.)

