

Smithsonian/Folkways  
SF40420

# *Music of Nias & North Sumatra*

---

HOHO,  
GENDANG KARO,  
GONDANG TOBA



MUSIC OF INDONESIA

4

## MUSIC OF INDONESIA 4

*Music of Nias & North Sumatra:*

HOHO, GENDANG KARO, GONDANG TOBA



0 9307-40420-2 1

**MUSIC OF THE KARO** (Gendang Lima Sedalanen)

1. Simalungun Rayat 6:31
2. Gula Tualah 7:54

**MUSIC OF THE ONO NIHA** (Hoho)

3. Hoho Sisambua'a Matona 3:05
4. Hoho Si Tölu Fanema 5:46
5. Hoho Ninawuagö 2:51
6. Hoho Si Tölu Nawua - Hoho Maluaya Si'öligö 7:46

**MUSIC OF THE TOBA** (Gondang Sabangunan & Gondang Hasapi)

7. Gondang Haro-haro 4:55
8. Gondang Parsahadatan Tu Saluhut Sahala Habonaran 3:30
9. Gondang Malim 5:43
10. Gondang Si Monang-monang 3:50
11. Gondang Panogu-nogu Horbo Tu Lahatan 3:09
12. Gondang Arang-arang Dairi 2:50
13. Gondang Si Bunga Jambu 4:35
14. Gondang Parumbak-umbak Ni Alogo Bolon 3:10
15. Pinasa Si Dung-dungan 1:53
16. Si Tapi Tola 4:49

Music from three ethnic groups: the Toba and Karo of North Sumatra and the Ono Niha of Nias. The Toba and Karo have developed complex traditions of instrumental music, while the Ono Niha emphasize elaborate ceremonial choral singing. These surprising genres, virtually unknown outside of Indonesia, are presented here, with extensive notes, in digital recordings made in Indonesia in 1990.

**Smithsonian  
Folkways**

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings  
Center for Folklife Programs and  
Cultural Studies  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington DC 20560

*Recorded and edited by Philip Yampolsky.**Annotations by Esther L. Siagian, Calvin Dachi, and Philip Yampolsky.*

## MUSIC OF INDONESIA 4

**Music of Nias & North Sumatra:****HOHO, GENDANG KARO, GONDANG TOBA****MUSIC OF THE KARO (Gendang Karo)**

1. **Simalungun Rayat** 6:31  
*Gendang Lima Sedalanan recorded in Kabanjahe.*
2. **Gula Tualah** 7:54  
*Gendang Lima Sedalanan recorded in Kabanjahe, with Malem Pagi Ginting and Malem Ukur beru Karo, vocal.*

**MUSIC OF THE ONO NIHA**

3. **Hoho Sisambua'a Matona** 3:05
4. **Hoho Si Tölu Fanema** 5:46
5. **Hoho Ninawuagö** 2:51  
*Singers recorded in Hilisimaetanö, Nias.*
6. **Hoho Si Tölu Nawua - Hoho Maluaya Si'öligö** 7:46  
*Singers recorded in Bawömataluo, Nias.*

**MUSIC OF THE TOBA (Gondang Toba)**

7. **Gondang Haro-haro** 4:55  
*Gondang Sabangunan recorded in Parondang.*
8. **Gondang Parsahadatan Tu**

**Saluhut Sahala Habonaran** 3:30  
*Gondang Sabangunan recorded in Hutatinggi.*

9. **Gondang Malim** 5:43  
*Gondang Sabangunan recorded in Hari-an Boho.*
10. **Gondang Si Monang-monang** 3:50  
*Gondang Sabangunan recorded in Parondang.*
11. **Gondang Panogu-nogu Horbo Tu Lahatan** 3:09  
*Gondang Sabangunan recorded in Hutatinggi.*
12. **Gondang Arang-arang Dairi** 2:50
13. **Gondang Si Bunga Jambu** 4:35
14. **Gondang Parumbak-umbak Ni Alogo Bolon** 3:10  
*Gondang Hasapi recorded in Harian Boho.*
15. **Pinasa Si Dung-dungon** 1:53
16. **Si Tapi Tola** 4:49  
*Gondang Hasapi recorded in Hutatinggi.*

**THE SMITHSONIAN/FOLKWAYS MUSIC OF INDONESIA SERIES**

If Indonesia were superimposed on Europe, it would stretch from the western shore of Ireland almost to the Caspian Sea. Only three countries in the world (China, India, and the USA) have larger populations, and few encompass a more bewildering diversity of societies and ways of life. Indonesia's people belong to more than 300 ethnic groups, speak almost as many languages, and inhabit some 3000 islands (out of nearly 13,700 in the archipelago). Most (about 90%) are Muslim, but there are substantial numbers of Christians, Buddhist/Taoists, Hindus, and animists as well. Three-quarters of the population lives in rural areas, yet the information and entertainment media are saturated with urban images, mostly from the capital, Jakarta, a megalopolis with more inhabitants (by some counts) than any city in the U.S. and more territory than Tokyo. The Javanese rice-farmer, the Buginese sailor, the Balinese *pedanda* (Hindu priest), the Acehnese *ulama* (Islamic teacher), the Jakarta bureaucrat, the Jakarta noodle-vendor, the Minangkabau trader, the Chinese-Indonesian shopkeeper, the Sultan of Yogyakarta, the forest nomad of Kalimantan, soldiers, fishermen, batik-makers, bankers, shadow-puppeteers, shamans, peddlers, marketwomen, dentists—these are all Indonesians, and our picture of the country must somehow include them all.

Indonesia's music is as diverse as its people. Best known abroad are the Javanese and Balinese orchestras generally called *gamelan*, which consist largely of gongs and other metallophones, but *gamelan* is only one aspect (albeit an impressive one) of the whole. Solo and group singing and solo instrumental music (played typically on flute, shawm, plucked or bowed lute, plucked zither, or xylophone) are found everywhere, and so are ensembles of mixed instruments and ensembles dominated by instruments of a single type (most commonly flutes, drums, xylophones, zithers, or gongs).

Much of this music may be termed traditional, in the sense that its scales, idioms, and repertoires do not in any obvious way derive from European/American or Middle Eastern (or other foreign) music. On the other hand, some of the most prominent and commercially successful genres of popular music definitely do derive from foreign sources; but since these are sung in Indonesian, disseminated nationwide through cassettes and the mass media, and avidly consumed by millions of Indonesians, they must certainly be considered Indonesian, regardless of their foreign roots. Finally, along with the indigenous and the clearly imported, there are many hybrid forms that mix traditional and foreign elements in delightful and

unpredictable ways.

The Smithsonian/Folkways *Music of Indonesia* series offers a sampling of this tremendous variety. In selecting the music, we are concentrating on genres of especial musical interest and, wherever possible, will present them in some depth, with several examples to illustrate the range of styles and repertoire. We are also concentrating on music that is little known outside Indonesia (and even, in some cases, within the country), and there-

fore much of our work is introductory and exploratory. Accurate histories of the genres we have recorded do not yet exist and perhaps never will; studies of their distribution and their variation from place to place have not yet been done. So our presentations and commentaries cannot presume to be definitive; instead they should be taken as initial forays into uncharted territory.

— Philip Yampolsky, Series Editor



Map of Indonesia and neighboring countries with an insert detailing North Sumatra and Nias

## MUSIC OF NIAS AND NORTH SUMATRA

Sumatra, the fifth largest island in the world, is about 1000 miles long and as much as 250 miles wide. It stretches to the northwest off the western end of Java, straddling the equator, and, together with Nias and the other remote islands further to the west, it forms the western extreme of Indonesia. A mountainous spine runs the length of the island; to the east of the mountains are forests and plantations of coffee, rubber, tobacco, and oil palm. Over the centuries, many important trading centers have been established in harbors along both coasts.

The island is divided into seven administrative provinces. All of the music heard here comes from just one of those seven: the province of North Sumatra (Sumatera Utara). The name can give rise to some confusion, since North Sumatra is neither the northernmost region of Sumatra (the province of Aceh is that) nor is it wholly located on Sumatra—Nias, some 70 miles out in the Indian Ocean, is included in the province. Still, people who spend some time there may come to feel that a bit of terminological confusion is appropriate for such a bewildering place. At least seven ethnic groups have been established on the mainland long enough to be considered indigenous: the Melayu or Malay, and the six peoples who are commonly, though not always willingly, lumped together as "Batak." An eighth group, the Ono Niha, is

indigenous to Nias. On the mainland, there are also large numbers of Javanese and ethnic Chinese, the latter either born in Indonesia or having taken Indonesian citizenship. Moreover, in the cities—particularly in Medan, the province's principal city and Indonesia's third largest—there are also many immigrants and temporary residents from other parts of Indonesia (particularly from the neighboring Aceh and Minangkabau regions of Sumatra).

A noisy, hectic, teeming city, Medan is culturally and ethnically one of the most fragmented (and most interesting) places in

Three other recordings have already been released in this series on CD and cassette. Look for them in your local record store, order them by phone from Folkways mail order: (301) 443-2314 or write for a free Folkways catalogue: Catalogue, Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560, USA.

*Music of Indonesia 1 — Songs Before Dawn: Gandrung Banyuwangi* (SF 40055)

*Music of Indonesia 2 — Indonesian Popular Music: Kroncong, Dangdut, and Langgam Jawa* (SF 40056)

*Music of Indonesia 3 — Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong* (SF 40057)



Indonesia. Drive a few hours to the south or west, however, and you enter a different world, the quiet, rural upland country that is the homeland of the so-called Batak peoples. There are six main Batak groups: Toba or Batak Toba, Karo, Pakpak, Simalungun, Angkola, and Mandailing. Each lives in its own region, where it is the dominant if not the only group—a far cry from the ethnic scrabble and scramble of Medan. The Batak peoples speak related languages and share important elements of social structure, but since the 1800s they have had very different histories, and rivalries have developed among them to such a degree that several groups now resist being labelled “Batak” by outsiders. (Today it is mainly Toba who still use the term for themselves.) Two of the groups, the Karo and the Toba, are represented in this album, and the sharp contrasts between their musics provide an indication of how diverse the Batak are today.

Since our recordings present music from only those two Batak groups (along with music from Nias), we regretfully omit the other four from our commentary. For information on those groups, and for more extensive discussion of the Toba and Karo, we recommend the book by Achim Sibeth listed under “References.”

Although many Karo and Toba live in Medan, in the plantation belt along the east coast of Sumatra, or outside North Sumatra, their cultural and historical heartland is the

region of mountains and high plateaux in the northern half of the province. In the center of this region lies the beautiful Lake Toba, which almost completely surrounds the “island” of Samosir. (Actually, Samosir is connected to the mainland by an isthmus on the west.) Samosir and the mainland areas around the southern half of the lake are Toba, while the Karo live to the north of the lake. The highland Toba are today mainly subsistence farmers, while the Karo have successfully expanded into marketing fruits and vegetables outside the Karo region.

Aside from trade with Europeans and Malays in the coastal ports, Karo and Toba had little contact with outsiders until the middle of the nineteenth century, when German Protestant missionaries began their very successful work among the Toba. (The Dutch missionaries to the Karo were much less successful in this early period.) The Dutch colonial government, based in Batavia (Jakarta) on Java, did not attempt to establish a presence in the Toba and Karo lands until the 1870s, and the region was not brought fully under Dutch rule until the first years of the twentieth century.

The rest of the century, however, has wrought huge changes in the political and economic life of both groups. First, with the imposition of Dutch rule, they were incorporated into the Dutch East Indies; later, after a four-year war of independence (1945-49), they became citizens of the Republic of Indonesia. Widespread conversion to Chris-

tianity (and, among the Karo, Islam) has also had a great impact in the two societies. Precise figures are not available, but we estimate that about 85% of the Toba are now Christian, with the remainder divided among Islam, Buddhism, and practices based on the old Batak religion of spirit veneration. The anthropologist Mary Steedly suggests that in the Karo highlands the population is roughly 50% Christian and 15% Muslim, with another 30% following what they describe as the “first religion.” (A figure for the entire Karo region including the lowlands would show a higher proportion for Islam and a lower one for spirit belief.)

Despite the radical changes that have occurred since 1900, much that is “traditional” (i.e., that predates the arrival of the Europeans) is retained in the social, ritual, and ceremonial life of the highlands. In particular, the Karo and Toba continue to preserve and perform music whose instrumentation, tuning, idiom, and repertoire show little or no significant influence from Western music.

Especially among the Toba, but also, to a lesser extent, among the Karo, the survival of the traditional music has required an accommodation with the Christian church. Initially the church tried to stamp out traditional music and dance entirely, on the grounds that they were inextricably linked with “spirit-worship.” In essence the compromise that was reached prohibited to Christians music associated with rituals that summoned or propitiated

spirits, but allowed music associated with events from which the elements of spirit-worship had been purged. In this way it was possible for Christians to incorporate traditional music and dance into their weddings, funerals, and other occasions, so long as no spirit-worship was involved.

In Nias also, the Protestant mission (which began its activity there in 1865) was for many years hostile to traditional music and dance in general but eventually narrowed its prohibition to specific contexts. In central Nias, and especially in the south, where our recordings were made, this permitted the survival (with a purged repertoire) of the extraordinary choral music called *hoho*.

To speak of “surviving” is not to imply that the music performed today in southern Nias or the Toba and Karo highlands is exactly what it was before European contact. Stylistic traits may have changed; new repertoire, sometimes composed in modernized idioms (tracks 2 and 16, for example), has been added; repertoire too closely associated with the old religion has been abandoned or suppressed; and the cultural context and significance of performance have often changed radically. The importance of the music heard in this album—and throughout the *Music of Indonesia* series—lies not so much in its possible antiquity or “purity” as in its current vitality and independence (not to mention its purely musical interest). These musics, energetically performed and obviously full of meaning

for the musicians, borrow little or nothing from European and American music, or Middle Eastern music, or Javanese gamelan music. They don't even sound like music from elsewhere in Sumatra. Their context and frame of reference are wholly local; they spring from and are directed to their own communities. Such affirmation of the immediate community in the age of global media would deserve respect and admiration even if the music itself were less compelling than it is.

#### **NIAS: HOHO** (tracks 3-6)

Nias is a hilly, thickly forested island (before logging, at least), about 65 miles long and 25 miles across. Indonesian government figures give a 1980 population of around 470,000, including Sumatrans, other Indonesians, and ethnic Chinese along with the indigenous Ono Niha. Most Ono Niha live in villages and support themselves by farming and raising pigs. For centuries, the island was notorious for its inter-village wars and slave raids, which were not effectively suppressed by the Dutch until 1914. Nias is also famous for having retained into the twentieth century elements of a megalithic culture. Impressive stone stairways, streets, and fortifications are to be seen in the old villages, along with stone benches and other stone sculptures erected as part of "feasts of merit," through which people in this strongly hierarchical society gain prestige for themselves and their ancestors.

"The people of Nias sing on any and every

occasion," the ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst wrote after a visit in 1930, going on to growl, "that is for so far as the Rheinische Mission has not deprived them of this natural outlet of their feelings." The many types of song he lists include lullabies, children's songs, sung proverbs, laments, and other solo and informal genres, but most are choral songs for public occasions such as feasts, funerals, and preparations for battle. Instrumental music is much less important in Nias musical life than singing, being reserved mainly for games, for attracting a crowd, or for the private entertainment of the player. There is no equivalent in Nias to the complex instrumental ensemble music we find among the Toba and Karo; on the other hand, the Batak peoples have no counterpart to the group singing and elaborate sung poetry of Nias.

The general term for the choral songs is *hoho*. *Hoho* singing is led by a precentor, called the *sondroro hoho* or *ere hoho*, who is answered alternately by small choruses of two (occasionally three or four) singers. All singers are male. Some *hoho* require a minimum of two choruses, others a minimum of three, but more than the minimum is also permitted. In Bawō-mataluo, one of the two villages in southern Nias where we recorded, we were told that ideally the voices of the individual singers (*sanoyohi hoho*) in a chorus should blend, but that each chorus should have its own distinctive sound. (Kunst, by the way, observed a "harsh and fierce timbre" in the singing of

southern Nias, but we did not encounter it.) When *hoho* are sung for dance, the entire group of dancers may join in for interjections or refrains.

Depending on the occasion, *hoho* texts deal with such topics as religious belief and practice, village history, inter-village rivalry, warfare, local chiefs and eminent persons, and traditional wisdom. The texts are in oral tradition. Some of the shorter, repetitive texts are memorized by all the singers and hence invariable; longer ones are recomposed by the precentor in performance, and the chorus singers must catch the words as they are sung in order to be able to repeat them or respond to them properly.

The first three *hoho* recorded here (tracks 3-5) are sung for funerals (and also, with different texts, in certain other contexts). They were recorded—at a commissioned performance, not a funeral—in the village of Hilisi-maetanō, where a funeral may last for several days and nights. Most of that time is devoted to a sort of wake, before the corpse is buried. At night, a group of men sing *hoho* for hours on end, recounting stories about the deceased and attempting to entertain and comfort the bereaved. In this phase of the funeral, five *hoho* are sung, in a fixed order: *Hoho Laria*, *Hoho Sisambua'a Matona*, *Hoho Si Tōlu Fanema*, *Hoho Ninawuagō*, and *Hoho Nifasai*. There is no dance, and the singers remain seated. Each *hoho* may take hours—or all night—to perform, so we have obviously not been able to

include complete recordings of any of them; instead we provide brief excerpts from the second, third, and fourth *hoho* in the funerary sequence. (The singers at our recording session decided when they had sung enough to give an idea of each *hoho*.) On the last day of a Hilisi-maetan funeral, the mourners bear the corpse to the burial ground, singing a dance *hoho*; then they return to the house and sing a final seated *hoho*.

Track 6 presents two *hoho* that are sung as a unit at feasts of merit in the village of Bawō-mataluo. The first is sung without dance; in the second, the dancers move in a circle.

Musically, a striking feature of all of these *hoho* is that for the most part their melodies use a set of only four tones and emphasize the interval known in Western music as a tritone. If we call the lowest of the tones C, then the set is (approximately) C D E F-sharp, with C and F-sharp constituting the tritone. G and A are also sometimes heard at the beginnings of phrases, but mostly the melodies are confined to the first four tones. Kunst, who was intrigued by this unusual melodic structure, reported that he heard it in 1930 in four villages of southern Nias (among them the two where we recorded it sixty years later) but could find it nowhere else on the island. By 1939, when he published his essay on Nias, he had turned up no parallels in other parts of Indonesia, and neither, so far as we know, has anyone else since then.

## GENDANG KARO (tracks 1-2)

### Ensembles and instruments

For the Karo, it is instrumental rather than vocal music that is crucial to ritual and ceremonial life. Two instrumental ensembles are used. The larger and louder ensemble is used for large-scale occasions (usually but not always held outdoors), and the smaller and quieter for indoor events when the loud ensemble is not desired. The larger ensemble, which is considered the more important and prestigious, is known formally as *gendang lima sedalanen*, "five instruments playing together," or less formally as *gendang mbelin*, "large ensemble," while the smaller ensemble is formally *gendang telu sedalanen*, "three instruments playing together," or informally *gendang kitik*, "small ensemble." The musicians in both ensembles are always male.

In the larger *gendang*, the *gendang lima sedalanen*, the instruments are:

(1) *sarune*, a small high-pitched double-reed aerophone resembling an oboe, with seven fingerholes on the front (one of which is never used) and a thumbhole on the back. The instrument is often only 10" or 12" long. The technique of "circular breathing" allows the performer to play for very long stretches without pausing for breath.

(2) Two hanging gongs: a large one, *gung*, and a much smaller one, *penganak*. They play in unvarying cycles of steady beats, usually two *penganak* strokes to one *gung* stroke.

(3) Two drums, played by two drummers. Karo say the shape of the drums resembles an ear of corn: they are tapered, about 17" long, with two heads laced together. One head is about 2-1/2" in diameter and the other about 2"; the body of the drum swells to 3-1/2" near the larger head. (See photo.) Only the larger head is played. One of the drums is called *gendang anakna*, "child drum"; it plays steady repeating patterns with little or no variation. It is actually a double drum, since a minuscule third drum, cylindrical in shape and only 5" long, is mounted on the side of the *gendang anakna*. This third drum, the *gerantung*, is never played independently. The player uses two small beaters, one for each drum. The second drummer plays the *gendang indungna*, "mother drum," which may be slightly smaller than the *gendang anakna* but is otherwise identical, except that no *gerantung* is attached to it. Again using two small beaters, the *indungna* drummer plays variations on the *anakna*'s pattern and counter-rhythms to it. The *indungna*'s music is full of snaps and pops and virtuoso running passages with a surprising variety of pitches and timbres. The role of the drums in this music is purely rhythmic and decorative; they have none of the melodic function found in Toba drumming.

A remarkable aspect of both the drums and the *sarune* is how small they are. Such Lilliputian instruments are found nowhere among the Batak peoples except in the Karo highlands; even the lowland Karo (*Karo jahe*),

who live north and west of Medan, use larger instruments to play what is essentially the same music.

The smaller, indoor ensemble contains one or two struck bamboo zithers (*keteng-keteng*), a small ceramic bowl struck with a beater (*mangkuk*), and either a plucked lute (*kulcapi*), or a flute (two types may be used: *belobat* or *surdam*). The large and small ensembles share much if not all of their repertoire.

In the present album we offer recordings only of the highland Karo large ensemble, the *gendang lima sedalanen*. For excellent recordings of the small ensemble and of both the lowland and highland large ensembles, we refer readers to Artur Simon's 2-LP album of Karo music, listed under "References," below.

### Performances and repertoires

The large *gendang* is played at secular events that are intended to make a public splash: weddings, funerals, the inauguration of a church or other building, and so on. The secular harvest festival *guro-guro aron* also uses the large *gendang*. Rituals of spirit belief may use the large or small *gendang*, depending on where they are held and how conspicuous their sponsors wish to be. (A ritual held indoors with the smaller *gendang* may run less risk of offending Christian or Muslim neighbors than one held outdoors for all to see and hear.)

Outdoor or indoor, large ensemble or

small, Karo rituals and ceremonies involve dance. In events organized on the basis of kinship, members of a single lineage or a specific segment of the sponsor's kinship circle dance as a group; in possession rituals, spirit mediums dance in order to go into trance and while they are possessed; and at the *guro-guro aron*, which are sponsored by villages as social gatherings for unmarried adolescents, groups of boys and girls dance together or with adults representing segments of the community.

Karo classify their music into a few broad categories. Most purely instrumental music is classed as *gendang adat*—roughly, "traditional pieces." Songs with instrumental accompaniment are classified either as *lagu perkolong-kolong*, "songs of professional singers," which are mainly the Karo-language popular songs of decades past, or as one or another variety of contemporary Karo- or Indonesian-language popular music (*lagu pop*, *lagu dangdut*, etc.). By far the largest part of the music heard at Karo occasions, ritual or secular, is *gendang adat*. Modern popular songs and *lagu perkolong-kolong* are usually performed only in the secular context of the *guro-guro aron* (or the equally secular context of the recording or television studio)—though it sometimes happens, during a ritual, that the ancestral spirit who has possessed a medium demands that the ensemble play (in an instrumental version, necessarily) his or her favorite *lagu perkolong-kolong*.

One piece regularly crosses the boundary

between the instrumental and vocal repertoires. This is *Simalungun Rayat*, which Karo sometimes describe as their national anthem, as it is heard virtually any time the large *gendang* ensemble performs. We include it here in an instrumental or *gendang adat* version (track 1), but there is also a genre of vocal music that takes *Simalungun Rayat* as its only melody. The genre, called *katoneng-katoneng*, may be performed (though it is not obligatory) at the start of any outdoor occasion that uses a *gendang*: a singer, male or female, improvises lyrics of welcome and benediction, to the tune of *Simalungun Rayat* and to the accompaniment of the *gendang*. *Katoneng-katoneng* is also frequently sung at *guro-guro aron* festivals, where it is usually performed by professional singers, *perkolong-kolong*. It is thus technically a *lagu perkolong-kolong*, but it is unique in that all other songs in that repertoire have fixed texts and melodies taken from old-time popular music. The second Karo selection here (track 2) is a standard *lagu perkolong-kolong*, accompanied, as music for *guro-guro aron* usually is, by the larger *gendang*.

### Structure

The musical elements of standard *lagu perkolong-kolong* (track 2) are clear: the songs have fixed, pentatonic (five-tone) melodies that are repeated with minimal variation. The tonal and melodic organization of *gendang adat*, on the other hand, are poorly under-

stood, or at least have not been clearly explained. The issue is complicated by the fact that *sarune* technique permits considerable latitude in intonation, which *sarune* players exploit for variety. Artur Simon suggests (1987) that five-, six-, and seven-tone structures are all found; our performance of *Simalungun Rayat* (track 1) appears to have six structural tones. As for the melodic structure of pieces such as *Simalungun Rayat*: they are what may be called "motivic" melodies. The player's task is not to perform a fixed, pre-composed melody that will be the same in all but minor variations every time it is played, but rather to run through a set of motives or musical ideas, improvising or playing standard variations on each (perhaps with the interpolation of other freely-chosen material). Two performances of the same piece may contain many differences and include long passages of dissimilar material. Even two cycles of the melody in one performance may produce striking differences.

### GONDANG TOBA

Toba and Karo music resemble each other in certain basic respects. Both emphasize ensemble instrumental music over vocal music; both have two types of ensemble, a loud one usually played outdoors and a softer one usually played indoors; the functions of the ensembles correspond in the two societies; the instrumentalists in both societies are exclusively male. In instrumentation and

sound, however, the musics are strikingly different. The miniature instruments and jazzy drumming of Karo music have no counterpart in Toba, but neither do the tuned percussion and cramped, frantic melodies of the Toba match up with anything in Karo music.

### Gondang sabangunan (tracks 7-11)

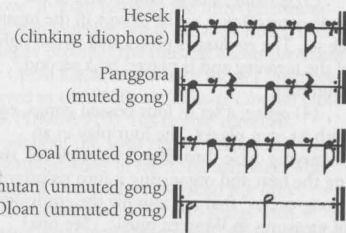
The large ensemble of the Toba, called *gondang sabangunan*, offers one of the few instances in the world of tuned drums playing full melodies. The European orchestra, of course, has timpani, but their role is usually just to emphasize certain pitches, not to carry the whole melody. Outside North Sumatra, tuned drums with melodic function are important in Burma (now Myanmar) and in parts of East Africa (notably Uganda).

The standard instrumentation of the *gondang sabangunan* is:

(1) *sarune*, a double-reed aerophone like the Karo instrument but three times as long and accordingly lower in pitch. The instrument is sometimes called *sarune bolon*, "large *sarune*," to distinguish it from the smaller one played in the indoor ensemble. There are five fingerholes on the front and a thumbhole on the back. The playing-technique involves circular breathing. To boost the volume, a second *sarune* sometimes doubles the first.

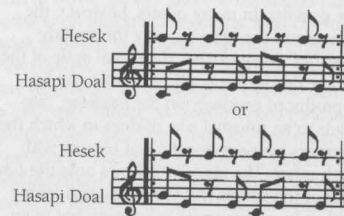
(2) *taganing* or *tataganing*, a set of five tuned drums, roughly cylindrical in shape, played by a single musician using two sticks. Graduated in size, the drums are suspended

### TOBA GONG-CYCLE & DOAL-CYCLE



In this diagram, the instruments are arranged in ascending order of pitch, with the lowest-pitched (*oloan*) at the bottom. The four gongs are collectively termed *ogung*. *Hesak* is technically not a member of the group, but it is convenient to show it as part of the cycle.

For *gondang hasapi*, a typical reduction of the cycle is:





from a crossbar, with the smallest drum at the player's left.

(3) *gordang*, a large bass drum, of the same construction as the drums in the *taganing* set. The *gordang* is positioned to the right of the *taganing* and is played by a second drummer.

(4) *ogung*, a set of four bossed gongs, each with its own player. The four play in an unvarying cycle throughout most pieces, stating the beat and organizing it into recurrent "gong-cycles" that are roughly the equivalent of measures in Western music. (See box)

(5) *hesek*, any object that will produce a clinking sound: two axe-blades struck together, for example, or a bottle or piece of metal struck with a nail. The *hesek* maintains a steady beat throughout a piece.

Individual melodies or pieces are called (like the ensemble) *gondang*. For some *gondang*, only one or two drums of the *taganing* set are used, and their function is therefore not melodic but simply rhythmic, like that of the *gordang*. In many others, however, the *sarune* and the *taganing* play the melody together. Since neither the actual scale of the *sarune* nor its intervallic structure can be reproduced precisely on the *taganing*, this leads to an unusual sort of duet in which the partners are permanently out of tune with each other. The *taganing* follows only the contour of the *sarune* melody, rising and falling with it in approximate synchrony but in an unrelated tuning. The result suggests a

melody played simultaneously in alternative universes. Western music theory's standard analytical terminology was not designed for a texture like this, but "heterophony" comes closest.

The *gondang sabangunan* plays at most outdoor ceremonies and festivals of the Toba—weddings, funerals, young people's social dances, holiday celebrations, and ceremonies honoring the ancestors, among others. As we said earlier, Christians are permitted to participate in such events, provided spirits are not summoned. *Gondang sabangunan* also plays for the rituals of spirit belief, which Christians emphatically may not attend, on penalty of temporary banning from church. Some of the *gondang* played at these rituals are unique to the old religion (track 8); others occur in both secular and ritual contexts (tracks 7, 9, 10, 14).

*Gondang* music is played for dance, and often one of the dancers chooses the particular *gondang* that is to be played. Many *gondang* have associations with specific lineages or with specific kinship functions. At certain points in the proceeding, members of the attending lineages or kinship groups will dance, and they may request the *gondang* appropriate to their group when they do.

#### **Gondang hasapi** (tracks 12-16)

The indoor Toba ensemble is called *gondang hasapi*. Although it is not impossible that a Christian would sponsor a ceremony using

*gondang hasapi*, the ensemble is more closely associated with the rituals of spirit belief. It plays for intimate, household rituals. Nominally Christian families sometimes use *gondang hasapi* for clandestine appeals to the spirits. Whether in ritual or in ceremonial performance, the repertoire of *gondang hasapi* is virtually identical to that of *gondang sabangunan*, though the sound of the two ensembles is very different.

The *gondang hasapi* ensembles in our recordings have the following instrumentation:

(1) *sarune* or *sarune etek* ("small *sarune*"), a single-reed aerophone with four fingerholes on the front and a thumbhole on the back. The player uses circular breathing. The instrument is also called *sarune na met-met*.

(2) *hasapi ende*, a two-stringed plucked lute that plays the melody line. The instrument is also called *hasapi taganing*.

(3) *hasapi doal*, a similar lute playing a repeating pattern that resembles the repeating cycle of the *ogung* group in *gondang sabangunan*.

(4) *hesek*—usually, indoors, a bottle struck with a beater.

(5) *garantung*, a xylophone with five keys.

(6) *sulim*, a side-blown flute with six fingerholes. An additional hole is covered by a membrane to give an edge to the timbre.

This instrumentation represents a fusion that has emerged relatively recently (perhaps in the late 1960s) of an older form of *gondang*

*hasapi* with an ensemble known as *uning-uningan*. The older *gondang hasapi* apparently included only the first four instruments listed above, though possibly the fifth (*garantung*) was also found in some old ensembles. *Uning-uningan* provides the musical accompaniment for *Opera Batak*, a now-rare theater form pioneered in the 1920s by Tilhang Oberlin Gultom (1896-1970). His troupe travelled throughout the Toba region performing loosely-scripted plays in the Toba language. The music of *Opera Batak* included not only instrumental pieces but also songs with instrumental accompaniment. The ensemble varied over time, but *hasapi* (playing melody), *sarune*, *sulim*, and *garantung* (with anywhere from five to eight keys) seem to have been the nucleus. Tilhang Gultom wrote his own plays and, it is claimed, composed at least 150 songs.

The ensemble-type heard here, combining *gondang hasapi* and *uning-uningan* instruments, seems more suited to entertainment functions than to ritual, mainly because the *sulim*'s (and perhaps *garantung*'s) association with *Opera Batak* makes it incongruous in ritual music. Nevertheless, the ensemble, which at present may exist more on commercial cassette than in live performance, is usually called *gondang hasapi* rather than *uning-uningan*, and it may represent an emerging entertainment form of *gondang hasapi*. Entertainment music—as at young people's social dances—is now normally played by *gondang sabangunan*.

The repertoire of the expanded, entertainment form of *gondang hasapi* draws both on traditional *gondang sabangunan* and on *Opera Batak*. The *Opera Batak* songs, which are called *lagu opera* and not *gondang*, are played in instrumental versions only. In our recordings, tracks 12-14 are traditional *gondang* heard in *gondang sabangunan* performances, track 16 is a *lagu opera*, and track 15 is apparently common to both repertoires.

Compared to *gondang sabangunan*, the sound of *gondang hasapi* is translucent. The wide sonic field of the larger ensemble, ranging from the booming gongs and *gordang* to the piercing upper tones of the drums and *sarune*, is here reduced to little more than a single octave in which all the instruments play. The percussive element of the larger ensemble is also reduced, since the *ogung* cycle is transferred to the *hasapi doal*, and the *gordang's* role simply drops out. The feeling of tension in *gondang sabangunan*—between melody and percussion, and between competing tunings—is here almost completely resolved, with every instrument but *hasapi doal* and *hesek* playing the melody, and all (usually) in the same tonality.

### Structure

*Gondang* melodies fall into two classes, which we may call (as before, with Karo music) "motivic" and "fixed." A peculiarity of Toba fixed *gondang* melodies is a pervasive doubling of phrases: most phrases are stated

twice in a row, and some of the phrases themselves have internal doubling. Motivic melodies in Toba seem more tightly controlled than in Karo, perhaps because more instruments may play melody simultaneously. In our recordings, *Gondang Haro-haro* (track 7) is a motivic melody, and so is the *Sitoru-toru* passage inserted into *Gondang Arang-arang Dairi* (track 12). The other Toba pieces have fixed melodies, with the characteristic doubling of most phrases.

*Gondang* melodies are basically pentatonic. If, as a convention, we take the lowest tone of most *sarune* melodies as C, then the five tones of the scale are (approximately) C D E F G. (See the commentary on tracks 7 and 9 below for exceptions.) Other tones are sometimes heard: some motivic melodies (tracks 7 and 12) add a higher tone for excitement, roughly equivalent (in our convention) to A-flat or A; and when played on *gondang sabangunan*, most *gondang* have a standard introduction and a standard ending phrase that include a low G never used in the melody proper except as an ornament. For the most part, *gondang* melodies are confined to the narrow compass of a fifth (C up to G, in our convention). To Western ears, accustomed to a greater number of pitches spread out over a wider range, this is one of the strangest features of Toba music.

### REFERENCES

Sibeth is a useful, well-illustrated introduction to the Toba and Karo. Kunst is all there is on

Nias music. Steedly gives a vivid picture of a Karo ritual involving trance. The two albums by Artur Simon are excellent, with abundant commentary (in English and German). We have incorporated some of Simon's technical observations here, though we disagree with him on some other matters of detail and approach.

Kunst, Jaap. *Music in Nias*. Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie, 38. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1939.

Sibeth, Achim. *The Batak: Peoples of the Island of Sumatra: Living with Ancestors*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

Simon, Artur. "Functional Changes in Batak Traditional Music and its Role in Modern Indonesian Society." *Asian Music* 15(2):58-66, 1984.

———. *Gendang Karo*. 2 LP with booklet. Museum Collection Berlin (West), 13. Berlin: Museum für Völkerkunde, 1987.

———. *Gondang Toba*. 2 LP with booklet. Museum Collection Berlin (West), 12. Berlin: Museum für Völkerkunde, 1984.

Steadly, Mary Margaret. "Severing the Bonds of Love: A Case Study in Soul Loss." *Social Science and Medicine* 27(8):841-856, 1988.

Further listening: *Batak Music* (Folkways FE 4357) presents melodies from *Opera Batak*. Two recordings of other North Sumatran groups, recorded and edited by Margaret J. Kartomi, have been issued by Bärenreiter-Musicaphon: *The Mandailing People of Sumatra*

(BM 30 SL 2567) and *The Angkola People of Sumatra* (BM 30 L 2568).

## COMMENTARY ON THE SELECTIONS

### GENDANG KARO

#### 1. Simalungun Rayat.

Perhaps the best-known piece in the Karo repertoire, played here in an instrumental version by the large *gendang*. The construction is motivic, with each segment apparently focusing on one or two pitches.

#### 2. Gula Tualah. Vocal: Malem Ukur beru Karo and Malem Pagi Ginting.

A *lagu perkolong-kolong*, a "song of professional singers." The song is thought to date from the 1970s. The melody has the feeling of a Karo pop song. The lyrics concern lovers who are unable to be together. "To find your beloved is like the taste of sugar mixed with coconut, but when lovers have to part everything loses its taste. I wander long distances without noticing where I'm going. When we are apart, let us both look at the moon, so our eyes can at least meet there."

### Hoho

#### 3. Hoho Sisambua'a Matona - 4. Hoho Si Tölu Fanema - 5. Hoho Ninawuagö

Excerpts from three funerary *hoho* sung by a leader and three two-man choruses. The singers are from the village of Hilisimae-

tanō, in Kecamatan (Kec.) Teluk Dalam, southern Nias. The lead singer was only 17 years old at the time of these recordings. The three *hoho* use the tritone melodic type (see above), but each has a different structure.

*Sisambua'a Matona* begins with an introduction sung by the leader and then by the leader and a chorus; after that the singers settle into a repeating melodic sequence consisting of a choral phrase, an overlapping phrase from the leader, then a phrase from both leader and chorus.

*Si Tōlu Fanema* has the most complex structure of the three. It begins with leader and chorus singing overlapping phrases and uniting for brief passages of triple meter. After several such sequences, a new short phrase is introduced by the leader (with the word "manana") and sung eight times by the choruses; then they return to the opening section before going to a new one, in which a series of phrases are sung by the choruses without the leader. A final long phrase ends the *hoho*.

*Ninawuagō* consists of two intermittently overlapping phrases, one sung by the leader and the other by the choruses.

6. **Hoho Si Tōlu Nawua - Hoho Maluaya Si'ōligō**

A stationary *hoho* and a dance song, sung by a leader and four two-man choruses, here using texts appropriate to feasts of

merit. The singers are from the village of Bawōmataluo, in Kec. Teluk Dalam, southern Nias. Again the tritone melodic type is used. *Si Tōlu Nawua* is sung twice, ending with a unison passage that is repeated; then the dance song, *Maluaya Si'ōligō*, begins. The period of the dance song is 30 beats, with a rather loose pulse.

**GONDANG TOBA: GONDANG SABANGUNAN**

7. **Gondang Haro-haro.**

Recorded in Parondang, Kec. Simanindo, on Samosir. This *gondang* is often heard in spirit-belief rituals, but may also be requested at secular celebrations. Commonly dancers who request it perform movements derived from the martial art *pencak silat*. The melody is motivic and is here played (after an introduction lasting 10 gong-cycles) twice through, with a third statement incomplete. The melody does not include C but does include the high A-flat (see above for the convention used in naming these pitches).

8. **Gondang Parsahadatan Tu Saluhut Sahala Habonaran.**

Played by musicians of the Parmalim group of Hutatinggi, Kec. Laguboti. Parmalim is a sect practicing a form of the old Batak religion, and this *gondang* is one that is special to the annual Parmalim ritual called *Si Paha Lima*. The title of the *gondang* means, roughly, "homage to the power of the local spirit." (Incidentally, it

is a habit of the *sarune* player here to swing the instrument in wide arcs as he plays, causing listeners at one end of the arc to hear variations in tone and intensity as the instrument swings toward them and away.)

9. **Gondang Malim.**

Recorded in Harian Boho, Kec. Harian. Sometimes requested at funerals, this slow, sad *gondang* is also heard in spirit-belief rituals. According to one musician, there are many versions of *Gondang Malim*, each "belonging to" the spirit of a particular place. One striking use of *Gondang Malim* in spirit-belief is in the ritual called *Gondang Mandudu*, which is held at night and during which a series of pieces, including *Gondang Malim*, is played in pitch blackness. None of the people present at the ritual may dance during these *gondang*, since they are believed to belong (in this context at least) to the spirits, who dance unseen.

*Malim* is one of very few *gondang* for which the *sarune*-player detaches the instrument's bell or lower section. The tuning heard in this performance differs somewhat from the others in our Toba recordings, sounding here more like B-flat C E-flat F G (if we retain C and G as the boundaries of the fifth that encloses most Toba melody).

10. **Gondang Si Monang-monang.**

Recorded in Parondang. *Monang* means

"to be victorious," and this *gondang* is associated with warfare. In the nineteenth century it was played to inspire the Toba fighters who resisted the Dutch; today it might be played at a celebration honoring local men who have joined the army. It is also played in rituals involving spirit-possession, where it seems to help push dancers into trance or deepen their trance once they have entered it.

11. **Gondang Panogu-nogu Horbo Tu Lahatan.**

Recorded in Hutatinggi. This *gondang* is associated with large-scale ceremonies honoring ancestors, during which a water buffalo (*horbo*) is sacrificed. The *gondang* is played as the buffalo is led into the center of the ceremonial arena. It is here played by the Parmalim musicians, but it is not exclusive to Parmalim rituals.

**GONDANG TOBA: GONDANG HASAPI**

12. **Gondang Arang-arang Dairi.**

Recorded in Harian Boho. This *gondang* has no particular ceremonial or ritual associations. Dancers from the Dairi region often request it. In this recording, after the melody has been stated, the musicians, instead of repeating it, go into a different, motivic *gondang*, called *Sitoru-toru*. This piece cannot be played on its own, but it can be inserted into other *gondang* to raise the level of excitement. It contains the additional A-flat. After *Sitoru-*

*toru*, the musicians return to the original melody and state it once again.

One factor that greatly complicates our understanding of Toba music is that the relationship between title and melody is not always fixed. The same melody may be known to different musicians under different titles, and the same title may be given to different melodies. The melody that these musicians played under the name *Arang-arang Dairi* is an unusual one for that title.

13. **Gondang Si Bunga Jambu.**

Recorded in Harian Boho. A well-known *gondang*, requested mainly in secular contexts.

14. **Gondang Parumbak-umbak Ni Alogo Bolon.**

Recorded in Harian Boho. This *gondang* appears in both secular and ritual contexts.

15. **Pinasa Si Dung-dungon.**

Recorded in Hutatinggi. This piece can be performed both in ceremonies and in *Opera Batak*, where it is sometimes given a vocal text (written by Tilhang Oberlin Gultom) and a different title, *Songon Lom-bang Na Marurus*. It is here played in *Opera Batak* style, and therefore does not begin with a melodic introduction.

16. **Si Tapi Tola.**

Recorded in Hutatinggi. This is a *lagu opera* sometimes attributed to Tilhang Oberlin Gultom; it comes from a play

about a boy (named Si Tapi To) who is broken-hearted in love and kills himself.

Listeners who would like copies of the texts of tracks 2-6 (and those associated with tracks 15 and 16) in the original languages should send a check for \$2.00 (for postage and handling) made out to the Smithsonian Institution along with their name and address to: Indonesian Texts 4, Smithsonian/Folkways Records, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, U.S.A.

The above notes result from a collaboration by Esther L. Siagian, Calvin Dachi, and Philip Yampolsky. Much of the contextual and ethnographic information comes from Esther L. Siagian (for Toba) and Calvin Dachi (for Nias). The writing is by Philip Yampolsky, who also provided the Karo material (with the help of Mary Steedly), some supplementary information on Toba and Nias, and the technical musical commentary.

**Track 1:** recorded outdoors in Kabanjahe, Kabupaten [Kab.] Karo, 23 Nov. 1990. Sarune: Ngantan Purba. Gendang Singindungi: Pinta Ginting. Gendang Singanaki: Saksi Ginting. Penganak: Malem Pagi Ginting. Gong: Ngayami Karo-karo.

**Track 2:** as track 1. Female vocal: Malem Ukur beru Karo. Male vocal: Malem Pagi Ginting. Sarune: Saksi Ginting. Gendang Singindungi: Nggura Ginting. Gendang Singanaki: Kilo Ginting. Penganak: Ponten Ginting. Gong: Ngayami Karo-karo.

**Tracks 3-5:** recorded indoors in Hilisimaetanö, Kcamatan [Kec.] Teluk Dalam, Kab. Nias, 9 June 1991. Singers: Rawatan Dachi (leader), Nita-hagölö Dachi, Fa'ewe Manaraja, Faneheli Dachi,

## TOBA MELODY STRUCTURES

In these schemes we show the structure of the Toba fixed-melody *gondang* heard in the recordings. The letters designate not pitches but melodic phrases; a prime after a letter shows that the phrase is similar but not identical to the one designated by the same letter without the prime. Below the phrase-letters are numbers indicating how many gong-cycles (or, in *gondang hasapi*, *doal*-cycles) each phrase takes.

8. **Parsahadatan Tu Saluhut Sahala Habonaran.**

Intro. A-A-A-A-B-A-B-A-A-C-C-D-D-F-F Melody 2x.

5 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-4-4-4-4-6-6

Confusion at the opening: *sarune* starts one gong-cycle later than *taganing* and thus begins in the middle of the first A.

9. **Malim**

Intro. A-A-B-B-C-C-D-D-E-E' Melody 3x.

3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-1

10. **Si Monang-monang.**

Intro. A-A-B-B-(B-B)-C-C-C-C-D-D-E-E Melody 6x.

8 1/2 2-2-2-2-(2-2)-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2 B 4x only in first statement.

11. **Panogu-nogu Horbo Tu Lahatan.**

Intro. A-A-B-A-A-C-D-D-E-E Melody 2x.

5 2-2-4-2-2-4-4-4-4-4

12. **Arang-arang Dairi.**

Intro. A-A-B-B'-A-A-B-B'-C-C'-C-C'-D-D'-D-D'

5 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

Melody 1x, then *Sitoru-toru* inserted (39 *doal*-cycles), then melody 1x.

13. **Si Bunga Jambu.**

Intro. A-A'-A-A'-B-B-A-A'-C-C-D-D-E-E'-E-E' Melody 2x.

2 4-4-4-4-2-2-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4

14. **Parumbak-umbak Ni Alogo Bolon**

Intro. A-A-B-B-C-C-A-A-B-B-D-D Melody 3x.

2 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

15. **Pinasa Si Dung-dungon**

No intro. A-A-B-B-C-C-D-D-E-E-C-C'-F-F Melody 2x.

2-2-4-4-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

16. **Si Tapi Tola**

No intro. A-A-B-B-C-C Melody 2x.

11-11-8-8-8-8



Ewada Söchi Laiya, Nitehe Zochô Dachi, Nisawa Zochô Ziraluo.

**Track 6:** recorded indoors in Bawômataluo, Kec. Teluk Dalam, Kab. Nias, 30 Nov. 1990. Singers: Saraini Bu'ulölô (leader), Bajaro Bu'ulölô, Dohugô Zagôtô, Sanea Bu'ulölô, Honogôi Hon-drô, Nafetali Zagôtô, Aro Haria, Dabalô Fau, Fanekhe Jaro Zagôtô.

**Tracks 7 & 10:** recorded outdoors in Parondang (Sosor Tolong), Desa Pardamean, Tomok, Kec. Simanindo, Kab. Tapanuli Utara, 5 June 1991. Taganing: Ama ni Hallasson Tamba. Sarune bolon: Ama ni Jontiar Manik. Gordang: Ama ni Rudi Simarmata. Ogung: Ama ni Saria Situ-morang, Hallasson Tamba, Ama ni Ronald Simarmata, Ompu Ramlan Sihalohe. HeseK: Ama ni Resta Turnip.

**Tracks 8 & 11:** recorded outdoors in Hutatinggi, Kec. Laguboti, Kab. Tapanuli Utara, 26 Nov. 1990. Taganing: Marningar Sitorus. Sarune bolon: Osner Gultom. Gordang: Sarikawan Sitohang. Ogung: Berton Gultom, Thomson Sirait, Marsius Sitohang, Jonner Nadapdap. HeseK: Kalabius "Sapeltek" Simbolon.

**Track 9:** recorded outdoors in Harien Boho, Kec. Harien, Kab. Tapanuli Utara, 6 June 1991. Sarune bolon: Jaliton Ambarita. Taganing: Guntur Sitohang. Ogung: Mangsi Simalango, Jora Laut Sipangkar, Lindung Sagala, Bertua Sitanggang. HeseK: Lasman Simbolon.

**Tracks 12-14:** as track 9. Sarune etek: Sotan Sitanggang. Hasapi ende: Jora Laut Sipangkar. Hasapi doal: Bertua Sitanggang. Garantung: Jawanter Sitanggang. Sulim: Media Silalahi. HeseK: Lindung Sagala.

**Tracks 15 & 16:** recorded indoors in Hutatinggi, Kec. Laguboti, Kab. Tapanuli Utara, 26 Nov. 1990. Sarune etek: Kalabius "Sapeltek" Simbolon. Sulim: Marsius Sitohang. Hasapi ende:

Sarikawan Sitohang. Garantung: Marningar Sitorus. Hasapi doal: Osner Gultom. HeseK: Berton Gultom.

All performances were commissioned for this recording. Recorded using a Sony TCD-D10 Pro DAT recorder and a Sonosax SX-PR mixer (six in, two out). Microphones: four Sennheiser MKH-40 cardioid condensers, an AKG CK2 omni condenser and CK8 shotgun (tracks 7, 9, and 10 only), and two Electro-Voice RE18 cardioid dynamics.

#### CREDITS:

Recorded and edited by Philip Yampolsky.  
Annotations by Esther L. Siagian, Calvin Dachi, and Philip Yampolsky.

Recording assistants: Mauly Purba (Kabanjahe, Hutatinggi), Jabatin Bangun (Nias, Parondang, Harien Boho).

Researchers: Jabatin Bangun, Calvin Dachi, Deni Hermawan, Irwansyah Hutasuht, Rotua Maharani, Asep Nata, Mauly Purba, Esther L. Siagian, Rizaldi Siagian, Marnala Siahaan, Agung Waskito, Philip Yampolsky.

Scouting and initial liaison with performers: Jabatin Bangun (Karo), Calvin Dachi and Dasa Manaô (Nias), Esther L. Siagian and Martogi Sitohang (Toba).

Design by Joan Wolbier  
Photographs: Rizaldi Siagian.  
Mastered at Airshow by David Glasser.  
Production coordinated by Matt Walters.

Research and publication sponsored jointly by the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies of the Smithsonian Institution and the Masyarakat Musikologi Indonesia, and funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation. Series edited by Philip Yampolsky.

Thanks first of all to the performers; and then to the Jurusan Etnomuskologi of the Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Sumatera Utara, its Chairman, Rizaldi Siagian M.A., and its Consultant, Ashley Turner, for facilitating the research and permitting students and faculty to participate. In Nias we were helped by M. Wawan Wau (Sekretaris Desa Bawômataluo) and A. M. Dachi; Raja Marnakkok Naipospos kindly allowed us to record the Palmalim musicians in Hutatinggi; and Guntur Sitohang, Marsius Sitohang, and Bangun Tarigan were also helpful during the Toba and Karo recordings. We are grateful to the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies of the Smithsonian Institution, the Southeast Asia Regional Office of the Ford Foundation, and the Masyarakat Musikologi Indonesia for their institutional, administrative, logistical, and clerical support, and to Anthony Seeger and Richard Kennedy (CFPCS), Alan Feinstein (Ford), and Sri Hastanto (MMI), for personal guidance and assistance. In the writing-up period, we have received information and assistance from Jabatin Bangun, Deni Hermawan, Rithaony Hutajulu, Irwansyah Hutasuht, Mary Steedly on Karo topics, and Marc Perlman, who had useful suggestions regarding the Toba analyses and other Toba matters. Finally, PY thanks Paul Blakemore, who designed the equipment package, and Alan Feinstein, Jennifer Lindsay, and Tinuk Yampolsky for their unflagging support.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Philip Yampolsky is a musicologist who has been studying Indonesia since 1970. A discography of Lokananta, the Indonesian national recording company, is the initial product of his long-term research on the recording industry in Indonesia. Esther L. Siagian and Calvin Dachi are finishing work on degrees in ethnomusicology from the Jurusan Etnomuskologi of the Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Sumatera Utara.

#### SMITHSONIAN/FOLKWAYS RECORDINGS

Folkways Records was one of the largest independent record companies of the mid-twentieth century. Founded by Moses Asch in 1947 and run as an independent company until its sale in 1987, Folkways was dedicated to making the world of sound available to the public. Nearly 2,200 titles were issued, including a great variety of music, children's songs, world music, literature, poetry, stories, documentaries, language instruction and science and nature sounds.

The Smithsonian acquired Folkways in order to ensure that the sounds and the genius of the artists would continue to be available to future generations. Every title is being kept in print and new recordings are being issued. Administered by the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, Folkways Records is one of the ways the Center supports cultural conservation and continuity, integrity, and equity for traditional artists and cultures.

Several hundred Folkways recordings are distributed by Rounder Records. The rest are available on cassette by mail order from the Smithsonian Institution. For information and catalogues telephone 202/287-3262 or write:

**Folkways**  
**Center for Folklife Programs and**  
**Cultural Studies**  
**955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600**  
**Smithsonian Institution**  
**Washington, D.C. 20560 U.S.A.**



Above: Toba musicians in Hutatinggi. Right: Karo drummer.



A hoho group dancing and singing in Hilisimaetanö, Nias.



Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings  
Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington DC 20560  
© © 1992 Smithsonian/Folkways Records  
Nationally distributed by  
Rounder Records, One Camp Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140 USA.

Printed in Canada

On the cover: Singer from Hilisimaetanö. Nias.



## **MUSIC OF INDONESIA, VOL. 4:**

### **Music of Nias and North Sumatra: Hoho, Gendang Karo, Gondang Toba**

*Liner note supplement 04/04/2008*

Recorded, edited, and annotated by Philip Yampolsky. 73 minutes. SWF 40420 (1992)

The Toba and Karo from North Sumatra developed complex traditions of instrumental music, while the Ono Niha of Nias emphasize elaborate ceremonial choral singing called hoho. The Toba are one of the very few societies in the world to use tuned drums to carry a melody. Combining these drums with gongs and an oboe-like instrument, the gondang sabangunan ensemble has a tense feel in which the melodic and rhythmic instruments seem to compete with one another. The Karo gondang lima sedalamen ensemble features, among other instruments, virtuosi drumming full of snaps and pops. Most importantly, these musics, dynamically performed and filled with social commentary, borrow little from European and American, Middle Eastern, or Javanese gamelan music. Their context and frame of reference are wholly local. These surprising genres, virtually unknown outside of Indonesia, are presented with extensive notes in digital recordings made in Indonesia in 1990.

#### **Track List**

1. Simalungun Rayat
2. Gula Tualah
3. Hoho Sisambua'a Matona
4. Hoho Si Tolu Fanema
5. Hoho Ninawuago
6. Hoho Si Tolu Nawua - Hoho Maluaya Si'oligo Also included is the text associated with "Si Tapi Tola", a Toba melody that is played in an instrumental version in the album (track 16).
7. Gondang Haro-haro
8. Gondang Parsahadatan Tu saluhut Sahala Habonaran
9. Gondang Malim
10. Gondang Si Monang-monang
11. Gondang Panogu-nogu Horbo Tu Lahatan
12. Gondang Arang-arang Dairi
13. Gondang Si Bunga Jambu
14. Gondang Parumbak-umbak Ni Alogo Bolon
15. Pinasa Si Dung-dungon
16. Si Tapi Tola

#### **Updates by Philip Yampolsky**

Regarding the tritone structure of hoho melodies: in the album booklet on p.[7], right-hand column, we say that this structure is a feature of all of the hoho in the album. Actually, tritone structure is clear only in tracks 4, 5, and in the second hoho of track 6. In track 3 and in the first hoho of track 6, the prevailing boundaries of the melody are a fifth, not a tritone.



Also on p.[7], right-hand column, there is a typographical error, "Hilisimaetan funeral" instead of "Hilisimaetanö funeral." We are not offering "Hilisimaetan" as the adjective deriving from the place-name Hilisimaetanö!

#### **Additional References; (March 2000)**

Carle, Rainer. Opera Batak: das Wandertheater der Toba-Batak in Nord-Sumatra. Schauspiele zur Wahrung kultureller Identität in nationalen indonesischen Kontext. (Veröffentlichungen;des Seminars für Indonesische und Südseesprachen der Universität Hamburg, Band 15.); 2 vols.; Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1990.

Hämmerle, Johannes M.;Famatö harimao: pesta harimao -fondrakö - börönadu dan kebudayaan lainnya di wilayah Maenamölö - Nias Selatan.; edan: Abidin, [1986].

Nias tribal treasures: cosmic reflections in stone, wood and gold. Delft: Volkenkundig Museum Nusantara, 1990.

Pasaribu, Ben M. "Taganing Batak-Toba: suatu analisis struktural dan stratifikasi social."; Seni Pertunjukan Indonesia [3]:1-20, 1992.

Patton, Marlene Meyer. "Traditional music in South Nias, Indonesia, with emphasis upon hoho: voices of the Ancestors." M.A. thesis, University of Hawaii, 1987.

Purba, Mauly.;"Mangido gondang di dalam penyajian musik gondang sabangunan pada masyarakat Batak Toba."; Seni Pertunjukan Indonesia 2:134-163, 1991.

Steadly, Mary Margaret. Hanging without a rope: narrative experience in colonial and post-colonial Karoland.;Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

#### **Recommendations for Further Listening**

Several CDs have been issued since our album first came out. Batak of North Sumatra (New Albion NA 046) contains examples of Toba, Karo, and Mandailing music and is a useful complement to the present album. So is Sumatra: musiques des Batak (Inédit W 260061), which includes Toba, Karo, and Simalungun music and has much better annotations than the New Albion album. The Inédit album was recorded in Paris; the New Albion album was recorded in the US. Nias: epic songs and instrumental music (Pan 2014) is a full album on Nias music, recorded in 1992 in Bawömataluo and the neighboring village of Orahili Fau; texts and translations of the hoho are available from the publisher. Sing Sing So (JVC VICG 5219) provides some Toba popular songs with guitar accompaniment, and Frozen Brass: Asia (Pan 2020) includes some splendid examples of Toba hymns and gondang melodies played on a European-style brass band.

#### **Transcriptions**

##### **KARO**

##### **2. Gula Tualah**

*Female singer:*





Endam nanamna turang, jumpa ras ate ngena  
gula radumken tualah arih turang  
entebu melam nanamna, mama Ginting turang,  
entebu melam nanamna

Beras nakan pulut turang, gula tualah adumna  
musim pagi ukurndu gulut arih turang  
aku nge maka malemna, bere Biring turang,  
aku nge maka malemna

Lanai ku geja turang, nahengku njingkangken bana  
gia piah ndauh perdalan arih turang  
lalap lalit tujunna, mama Ginting turang,  
lalap lalit tujunna

Adi tedeh pagi atendu aku, tatap tare bulan meganjang  
ije pagi mata petintang arih turang  
ngataken arihta la sirang, mama Ginting aron,  
ngataken arihta la sirang

*Male singer:*

Enda mei kepe nanamna turang, sirang ras ateku ngena  
gula kin pe ras tualah arih turang besan  
la me kuakap lit nanamna, o keleng ate,  
pagit me kepe nanamna

Lakel nge jina ku geja agi, nahengku njingkangken bana  
seh ku jenda ndauh perdalin o turang besan  
bagepe labo lit tujunna, o keleng ate  
labo kap lit tujunna

Ku tatap kahe kolu agi, ku idah pulo-pulona  
pulo-pulo kuta kena arih turang  
ingan kena rengada-ngada, o keleng ate,  
ingan kena rengada-ngada

Nakan beras pulut turang, gula tualah adumna  
musim bagei ukur ku gulut nande Karo agi  
kena nge maka malemna, o turang besan  
kena nge maka malemna

Tedeh pagi atendu aku nindu min, tatap tare bulan meganjang  
ije mata petintang Karongku turang,  
ngataken arihta la sirang, o turang besan,  
ngataken arihta la sirang



Bagendam kap jadina ndei agi, sirang ras impalku kena  
adi nikut lalit dalanna nande Karo turang  
kuja pagi cibalku, o keleng ate  
sirang aku labo ngasup

*Language: Karo. Transcribed by Jabatin Bangun.*

## NIAS

### 3. Hoho Si Sambua'a Matona

Haiwa hö tabörötai tabörögö, ae  
Ho ya, aehe, aö

Ya'ia haiwa na lahuta balö e  
he balö zechu, aö a  
lawa lö zechula, aö a

Ae, ta tou'ö ba iwawö  
he ba iwawö ma, aö a  
lawa wawö maera, aehe, aö a

Hai me'acha alacha e  
aehe ba na mowa, aö a  
yawa na mowa'a, aehe, aö a

Hai wa na lahuta balö e  
he, balö gölö, aö a  
lawa lö gölömbu, aehe, aö a

Ae ta tou'ö ba iwawö  
he ba iwawö mba, aö a  
lawa mbawa batu, aehe, aö a

Hai mea alacha'ö e  
he ba na mombu, aö a  
lawa na mombulu, aehe aö a  
Aehe

### 4. Hoho Si Tölu Fanema

Haiwa hö tabörötai tabörögö ae  
ho ya, aehe aö a

Ya'ia ndre ndra ta mamane, andre ndra ta  
ho ba lau ka'a he, aehe andre ndra tamamane, aehe ho nachi  
ilau andre ndra tamamane gamaedola, aehe no inagu ae no ina aö wa



ho lau ka'agu ka'a, ha'ö he a

Ba famaedo mbowo, ba famaedo  
ae ba famaedo mbowo ndruri ma latahö, ba lau e  
famaedo mbowo ndruria, famaedo mbo  
ho ba lau ka'a, ae famaedo mbowo ndruria, aehe ho nachi  
ilau famaedo mbowo ndruria haya böörö, ae no inagu ae no ina aö wa  
ho lau ka'agu ka'a, ha'ö he a

Nama oi ba mbörö ndra, nama oi ba  
ae nama oi ba mbörö ndraha nihalö ba lau e

Manana, manana nono manu sidou limi, ba dörö  
Ba dörö, ba dörö nama lahuta labözi, ndrambe na  
Ndrambe na, ndrambe na böliu ya sadumba uli, haine'e

Manana, manana nono manu sidou böra, ba dörö  
Ba dörö, ba dörö nama labözi lahuta, ndrambe na  
Ndrambe na, ndrambe na böliu ya sadumba böra, haine'e

Haine'e, haine'e noso niha na mamate, haine'e  
Haine'e, haine'e noso niha na mataiha, ba me ya  
Ba me ya, ba me ya moguna nafo sisara  
Aehe no inagu ae no ina, aö wa  
Ho lau ka'agu ka'a, ha'ö ae ha

Nama oi ba mbörö ndra, nama oi ba  
ae nama oi ba mbörö ndraha nihalö, ba lau e  
nama oi ba matulai, nama oi ba  
ho lau ka'a, ae nama oi ba matulai aehe ho nachi  
ilau nama oi ba matulai zitola'ö, aehe no inagu ae no ina aö wa  
ho lau ka'agu ka'a, ha'ö ae ha

Ba ara jasoso, ba ara ja  
ae namara jasoso olaja danö, ba lau e  
Izö chöu ae izö chöu  
izö chöu iwagu naya da'adulo manu  
Salagu ae salagu, salagu iwagu na tohawia na tegulu  
Fanasa ae fanasa, fanasa  
Gu fanasa ae göi ina na na'utou, ae na'utou'ö tou

## 5. Hoho Ninawuagö

Ya'ia andre ndra tadunö-dunö tazara-za,  
lau e ha'ö  
da tawao sambua gamaedo  
ae gamaedola, ba lau e, ha'ö ae ha



Na'utuno wa lumana  
ae lumana, gaö wa ya

Ma'ililu sihombo zöu ba,  
ae zöu bagoa, wöwö wa

Ma'ililu soloi mbola-mbo  
ae mbola-mbola, wöwö wa

Nama me ba daro-daro ani  
ae anindroa he

Nama me ba lumö ha no mbase  
ae mbasela, gaö wa ya

Ae fekoli tou tanö ni  
ae tanö niha, gaö wa ya

Aö tamamane gamaedo  
ae gamaedola, gaö wa ya

Izö na fahusu lawere bö  
lawere böra, gaö wa ya

Izö na fadou lawere tuga  
ae tugala, ba lau e

Hana ma gömane mbe'e gölö, ae  
ae ölö aifa, ba lau e

Ba gömane zoyo lö ambe  
ae ambeta, gaö wa ya

Ba gö faöndru-faöndru lö ni  
ae lö niha, gaö wa ya

Ba mofa'u'i-u'i lö sane  
ae lö sanema, gaö wa ya

Me aröu ma olina-li  
ae lina-lina, gaö wa ya

Ba zi lö isai ifa'u'i ba  
ae fa'u'i mbanua he

Awai, aehe aö aehe





## 6. Hoho Si Tölu Nawua – Hoho Maluaya Si'öligö

### ***Hoho Si Tölu Nawua***

\* Hema mofanö ga Zandrawa  
(no lau ka'a ae, inagu ho ina)  
Wöwö fana (ho ina) wöwö fanali zimane  
Simae awöni lafene  
Lau fabö-bölihe

Hema mofanö ga Zandrawa  
Wöwö fanali zimane  
simae, simae awö, simae awöni lafene [2x from \*]

### ***Hoho Maluaya Si'öligö***

Andre ndrao mane-mane, andre ndrao mane-mane manö-manö  
He siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Andre ndrao mane-mane manö-manö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Andre me gubörötai, andre me gubörötai gubörögö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Andre me gubörötai gubörögö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama ba fofanö Bö, nama ba fofanö Börö Zamugö  
Ae ba ya ndrahu göi ndraugö, ba ya ndrahu göi ndraugö  
Nama ba fofanö Börö Zamugö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama me ilau wa fa, nama me ilau wa famanö-manö  
He siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama me ilau wa famanö-manö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama me chö ndrumi nia, nama me chö ndrumi nia sanambatö  
Ae ba ya ndrahu göi ndraugö, ba ya ndrahu göi ndraugö  
Nama me chö ndrumi nia sanambatö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama me nihagi sa, nama me nihagi sarurutanö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama me nihagi sarurutanö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Ae ba me mofanö ya, ae ba ma mofanö Börö Zamugö



Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama me mofanö famanö-manö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama me chö ndraononia, nama me chö ndraononia anau gölö  
Ae ya'ia na hö'ö, ba ya'ia na hö'ö  
Nama me chö ndraononia si haugatö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama ho sibaya u, nama ho sibaya ulu nidanö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama ho sibaya ulu nidanö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama izö wa niwau, nama izö wa niwau talifusö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama izö wa niwau talifusö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Ae ba mae nihagi sa, nama mae nihagi sarurutanö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama mae nihagi sarurutanö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama matona nomoe, nama matona nomoe zi'ahöndrö  
Ae siwöwö no niwa'ömö, ba siwöwö no niwa'ömö  
Nama matona nomoe zi'ahöndrö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama yazö wa nonou, nama yazö wa nonou hadaugatö  
Ae sindrahu göi ndraugö, ba ya ndrahu göi ndraugö  
Nama yazö wa nonou hadaugatö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama moi ana awai, nama moi ana awai gagambatö  
Ae sabölöta göi ndraugö, ba sabölöta göi ndraugö  
Nama moi ana awai gagambatö  
Haiwa hö, haiwa hö, hu he

Nama mae zimae nimba, nama ma zimane awö aehe ho lau he  
Ae no ina ae gumaö mea simae awöni lafene

Hema mofanö ga Zandrawa  
Wöwö fanali zimane  
simae, simae awö, simae awöni lafene  
He ya'ia, ya'ia hö

*Language of all the hoho texts: Li Niha. Transcribed by Calvin Dachi.*



## TOBA

### 16. Si Tapi To

Pudung jadi palia si Tapi To jengga-jengga jadi pinasa  
ai na lao ma au marluga amang si Tapi To mareakhon Onan Muara  
O inong o among o inong oi

Lao ma ahu maronan si Tapi To manuhor demban sangkababa  
ai na lao ma hami marluga amang si Tapi To sian tao ni Janjiraja  
O inong o among o inong oi

Beta ma lao marluga si Tapi To da laosanta ma Bakkara  
sian na so panagaman ba ro ma simbur dohot udan haba-haba  
O inong o among o inong oi

Hubuat ma napuran si Tapi To huantuk demban sangkababa  
ai martonggo ma baoadi si Tapi To da tu Boru Saniang Naga  
O inong o among o inong oi

Lao ma ahu marluga si Tapi To sahat tu tao ni Tamba  
ai disi ma rohangki amang da guga ahu so adong huboto hata  
O inong o among o inong oi

Naung sampulu sada si Tapi To ba jumadi sampulu dua  
sahat ahu tu Pintusona si Tapi To da hutatap ma Tanjung Bunga  
O inong o among o inong oi

Jumpang ahu ma sada partoba si Tapi To ba hutangihon ma barita  
ai si boru na tinongke si Tapi To tartangis-tangis do nasida  
O inong o among o inong oi

Marluga ma Hasinggaan si Tapi To da mangalap batu ni doton  
aut saut do natinongke amang si Tapi To da gana dia pe tinolon  
O inong o among o inong oi

Tompu ma hape hubege si Tapi To da hubege asu mangorong  
huida disintak siboru si Tapi To hutingganhon ma au modom  
O inong o among o inong oi

Sai tangis do ibana si Tapi To tarilu-ilu simalolong  
hubege nunga dilangkup si Tapi To tu aek on ma ahu malonglong  
O inong o among o inong oi

*Language: Toba. Lyrics: Tilhang Oberlin Gultom.*