

# The Political Impact of Dutch Colonial Ethnic Spatial Planning on the Territorial Fragmentation and Existence of the Pakpak Tribe (1842-1942)

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## Abstract

This article examines the political impact of ethnic spatial planning implemented by the Dutch Colonial government on the existence of the Tapanuli Residency in the Onder Afdeling Pakpak Landen from 1842 to 1942. This study employs the historical method, which includes the heuristic, criticism, interpretation, and historiography stages, and is supported by a sociological approach to analyze social structure and changes. The results show that the establishment of the Tapanuli Residency, as a concrete manifestation of colonial ethnic spatial planning policy, was deliberately designed to divide, separate, and weaken the power of ethnic groups to make them easier to monitor and control. This penetration policy resulted in the fragmentation of the territory of Tanah Pakpak, which was originally a unified cultural and customary entity based on clan land ownership, into five customary regions (Pakpak Silima Suak). As a result of this ethnic spatial arrangement, the customary territory of Pakpak Silima Suak experienced a highly significant reduction and was administratively split into three different residencies. The Kelasén region was integrated into Batak Landen, Tongging into the East Sumatra Residency, and Boang into Singkil in the Aceh Residency. This fragmentation left the Onder Afdeling Pakpak Landen area consisting of only three suak, namely Suak Pegagan, Suak Keppas, and Suak Simsim. The political impact of this ethnic spatial policy not only weakened the political existence of the Pakpak people at the local level but also degraded their traditional leadership system. The abolition of customary leaders' roles such as the takal aur and pertaki, replaced by the colonial bureaucracy, ultimately threatened the existence of the Pakpak people and triggered deep social, cultural, and economic marginalization in their own ancestral land.

**Keywords:** Tapanuli Residency; Pakpak Silima Suak; Ethnic Spatial Politics; Pakpak Landen Sub-Districts; Regional Fragmentation.

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## Introduction

The focus of this article is to examine the ethnic spatial politics initiated by the Dutch Colonial government on the existence of the Tapanuli residency in Onder Afdeling Pakpak landen from 1824 to 1924. This policy caused the Pakpak Silima Suak (group) to no longer be intact but to be fragmented into three residencies: Suak Simsim, Suak Keppas, and part of Suak Pegagan

included in the Tapanuli residency, Suak Boang included in the Aceh residency, while Suak Kelasén was included in Batak Landen and Tongging in the East Sumatra residency (Castles, 2001). As a result, the Pakpak tribe is now spread across two provinces: North Sumatra and Aceh, and six districts/cities: Dairi, Pakpak Bharat, Humbang Hasundutan, Central Tapanuli, Singkil, and Subulussalam (Flores et al., 2011).

The politics of spatial planning by the Dutch colonial authorities can be traced back through several previous studies, including a book written by L. Van Vuuren, titled "Eerste Maatregelen in Pas Geannexeerd Gebied: Met Beschrijving der Pakpak Landen (Dairy Landen) en Schetskaart 1:250.000" (Vuuren, 1910)." This book discusses how the Dutch colonial government incorporated the Pakpak lands into Batak Landen. The Tapanuli Residency was established in October 1842, subsequently forming the districts of Mandailing, Angkola, and Teluk Tapanuli. These three areas were previously part of the northern region under the control of the Governor of the Northern Coast. Gradually, Simalungun, Karo, Toba, and Pakpak were included in a term "Batak Landen," which later became known as the Tapanuli Residency (Castles, 2001). Tapanuli Resident W.K.H. Ypes wrote "Nota Omtrent Singkil de Pakpak-landen Tijdschrift Voor Indische Taal-, land- en Volkenkunde" (1907) (Castles, 2001). where Ypes documented the division of the Pakpak lands into four parts: Pakpak Keppas, Pakpak Pegagan, Pakpak Simsim, and Pakpak Kelasén. For Pakpak Boang, it was separated into Upper Singkil and Lower Singkil, clearly showing the Dutch colonial effort to divide the Pakpak lands because the Boang tribe had already converted to Islam.

The implementation of spatial arrangement strategies, in the form of ethnic spatial planning politics, was used to address the resistance of Batak Landen led by Sisingamangaraja XII. This colonial penetration strategy ultimately succeeded in controlling all the remaining "white patches" in the interior of North Sumatra (Courperus, 1855; Castles, 2001). Controlling Batak Landen through ethnic spatial planning proved to be very effective due to the collusion between the Dutch and the Toba, by taking over land and controlling other ethnic spaces through migration to the Simalungun and Dairi regions (Agustono, 2010). The Pakpak ethnic group became a minority in their own land as the Dutch government carried out massive migrations of Toba people to Dairi, employing them as colonial officers, construction workers, laborers, rice field and coffee plantation workers, and filling various colonial government positions in the Tapanuli Residency (Castles, 2001).

The main issue examined in this article is the fact that the administrative division introduced by the Dutch Colonial government was usually based on ethnic considerations, including preserving the culture and traditions of local communities. However, the establishment of the Tapanuli Residency led to the fragmentation of Tanah Pakpak into three residencies, with some areas eventually being separated from Tanah Pakpak, resulting in the disintegration of the Pakpak silima suak region (Eron, 2018).

During the colonization of the Tapanuli Residency, Tanah Pakpak experienced significant territorial reduction through its division into several parts: Tongging became part of the Tanah Karo region; Manduamas and Barus became part of Central Tapanuli; Sienem Koden (Pakkat, Parlilitan, Tarabintang) became part of North Tapanuli; and Simpang Kanan, Simpang Kiri, Lipat Kajang, Gelombang, Runding, and Singkil became part of Aceh. As a result, the remaining areas of Tanah Pakpak included in the Onder Afdeling Pakpak Landen were: Salak, Kerajaan, Siempat Rube, Sitellu Tali Urang Jehe, Sitellu Tali Urang Julu, and Mahala Majanggut in Suak Simsim; Kampung Karo, Silalahi, Paropo, Pegagan Jehe, and Tanah Pinem in Suak Pegagan; and Sitellu Nempu, Si Empat Nempu, Silima Pungga-Pungga, Lae Luhung, and Parbuluan in Suak Keppas (YPES, 1932). Therefore, this article aims to answer

the main questions of why this happened, how the process unfolded, and what factors affected the Pakpak tribe when the Dutch colonial ethnic spatial politics were implemented in the form of the existence of the Tapanuli Residency in Tanoh Pakpak, and as a result, the Pakpak tribe was fragmented, leaving only Onder Afdeling Pakpak Landen as Tanoh Pakpak. Administratively, Tongging, Suak Kelasen, and Suak Boang were separated from Tanoh Pakpak, reducing the unity of Tanoh Pakpak Silima Suak to just three remaining suak: Suak Pegagan, Suak Keppas, and Suak Simsim (Westenberg, 1891; Vuuren, 1910). Using historical methods, this article discusses several issues: first, colonial politics in the context of ethnic spatial planning; and second, the formation and existence of the Tapanuli Residency in the Onder District Pakpak Landen.

## Method

This article is structured using the historical method, which involves four stages: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 1987). Before conducting the research, the author selected a topic that is rarely addressed by other historians. This topic is crucial due to the significant marginalization and disintegration experienced by the Pakpak ethnic group, which is the subject of this study. The data sources used include explorers' travel reports; colonial records and reports such as *Memorie van Overgave* (MvO), *mededeelingen*, *tijdschrift*, *bijdragen verhandelingen*, *verslagen*, as well as newspapers, folklore, and studies on the history and culture of the community. Pre-colonial and colonial ethnographic notes, folklore, and interdisciplinary studies are elaborated using the historical method.

The approach used in this research is a sociological approach. The sociological approach studies social structures and social processes, particularly social changes (Soekantoro, 2001, pp. 21-22). Sociology does not dictate the direction in which something should develop in terms of providing guidance related to the societal policies of communal life. This discipline also discusses social processes, recognizing that knowledge of societal structure alone is insufficient to gain a comprehensive understanding of communal life (Sunggono, 1998, p. 123). Deep analysis and interpretation of these sources provide a detailed picture of how Dutch colonial ethnic spatial planning politics affected the existence of the Tapanuli Residency in the Onder Afdeling Pakpak Landen in Tanoh Pakpak. Through this approach, the sources are sorted according to their content and context. Using these various approaches, historiography is then constructed to uncover the reasons and forms that led to the fragmentation of the Pakpak ethnic group into three residencies.

## Geographical Dynamics and Colonial Penetration in Tanoh Pakpak: From Social Space to Political Construction

The study of spatial arrangement has experienced significant development, particularly in Europe, over the past few decades. These studies involve the substance and theory of spatial planning, encompassing both landscape (land space) and seascape (sea space). Such studies are considered unique because, historically, in any given area or space, there exist various human communities as well as other living beings like plants and animals that cannot be separated from the space in which they live. Therefore, space is not only a physical entity but also the result of social construction (Punggeti, 2012, pp. 51-54).

There are times when a physical space has not yet been used by humans. Such a physical space might be utilized only by plants and animals. Thus, the space has not yet been occupied by humans, let alone by a state power. Alternatively, the space might be used by humans and their communities but has not yet been controlled or regulated by the state. The absence of the

state in a social space allows various social and ethnic groups to engage in social relations among themselves. Before the arrival of the colonial state, the Tanoh Pakpak area was inhabited by various clans with blood relations as part of the Pakpak ethnic group. Similar studies have been conducted by Hong regarding the maritime area of the Strait of Malacca (Jun, 2016, pp. 28-35; Sulistiyono, Rochwulaningsih, Masrurroh, 2016, pp. 74-93). Naturally, the landscape in Tanoh Pakpak resembled the southern Malacca region before the penetration of Western colonialism.

In line with globalization, spatial planning in the Indonesian archipelago, particularly in the Tanoh Pakpak area, was highly attractive to Dutch colonialism and capitalism. The forces of capitalism and colonialism tended to view social spaces not yet under their control as no-man's land, legitimate for occupation (Baldacchino, 2012, pp.55-62). Lefebvre (1991), in his work "The Production of Space," argues that regions are social products; complex social constructions and ideologies based on the values and meanings of social production that influence spatial practices and perceptions. Therefore, in the context of colonial politics, social-spatial planning can be engineered to serve colonial power interests (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 60-82). This occurred in the Tanoh Pakpak area, where the Dutch colonial government implemented specific spatial planning policies as a strategy for penetration and domination in this region.

The Pakpak ethnic group is geographically located in North Sumatra, situated in the Barisan Mountain range that stretches across Sumatra Island, positioned much closer to the western coast of the Indian Ocean. Its boundaries are: to the north, it borders Karo; to the northeast, it borders Karo and Simalungun; to the east, it borders Simalungun and Samosir; to the southeast, it borders Samosir and Humbang Hasundutan; to the south, it borders Humbang Hasundutan and Central Tapanuli (Mandauamas, which is parallel to Barus); and to the west, it borders Aceh, specifically Subulussalam and Singkil, which directly borders the Indian Ocean.

The borders from the southwest to the northwest are Aceh (Tanjung et al., 2011). In the pre-colonial period, the geographical boundaries of Tanah Pakpak were spread across five regions: Pegagan, Keppas, Simsim, Kelasen, and Boang (Vuuren, 1910). In 1905, the Dutch colonial government expanded its power by incorporating and dividing these five areas into different administrative regions. Pegagan, Keppas, and Simsim were included in the Dairi Landen area. Kelasen was merged into Batak landen, specifically Parlilitan, while Boang was integrated into Singkil, part of the Aceh Residency (Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie, 1905).

The Pakpak tribe during the colonial era was classified by the Dutch as part of the Batak group, along with Toba, Karo, Simalungun, Angkola, and Mandailing, to represent the inland communities. The Encyclopedia Britannica provides the following information about the Batak:

"Batak also spelled Battak or Batta, several closely related ethnic groups of north central Sumatra, Indonesia. The term Batak is one of convenience, likely coined during precolonial times by indigenous outsiders (e.g., the Malay) and later adopted by Europeans. The groups embraced by the term — the Toba, the Karo, the Simalungun, the Pakpak, the Mandailing, and the Angkola — have to a limited degree adopted it as a self-designation (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015)".

The term "Batak" was likely created during the pre-colonial period by outsiders, such as the Malays, and later adopted by Europeans.

Lothar Schreiner, in his book *Adat dan Injil; Perjumpaan Adat dengan Iman Kristen di Tanah Batak* (Custom and Gospel; The Encounter of Custom with the Christian Faith in the Land of Batak), states that the term “Batak” and the Batak region only emerged after Christianization. Similarly, Castles (2001) suggests that the term “Batak” originated from the stereotypes of Muslim Malays in East Sumatra towards the Batak people, with connotations of being ugly, rough, dirty, and stupid. As a result, many people preferred not to identify themselves as Batak, choosing instead to identify as Karo, Simalungun, Mandailing/Angkola, or Pakpak/Dairi, except for the Toba people who were more comfortable being called Batak (Schreiner, 1999, p. 11; Castle, 1972, p. 138). Both Lothar Schreiner and Castles (2001), as well as the Encyclopedia Britannica, indicate that the term “Batak” only appeared with the advent of Christianity and colonialism in the interior regions of North Sumatra (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The *Batak Landen* Area in North Sumatra  
Source: Groeneboer, 2002, p. 110, as cited in Sibeth, 1991, p. 8.

The Dutch colonial administration then implemented a process called Batakization on the Pakpak, Karo, Simalungun, and Mandailing groups, transforming these non-Malay ethnicities into sub-ethnicities of Batak Toba, Batak Pakpak, Batak Karo, Batak Simalungun, and Batak Mandailing, all collectively referred to as the Batak Nation. There were attempts to Batakize the Nias, Alas, and Gayo groups as well, but these efforts faced significant challenges. By labeling these six ethnic groups as Batak, there was confusion in both their designation and cultural identity because there is no single Batak ethnicity. Instead, there are the Toba, Simalungun, Pakpak, Karo, Angkola, and Mandailing tribes (Damanik, 2018). The term Batak was a Dutch colonial construct to group these six tribes into a single Batak Landen territory, which later became the Tapanuli residency.

### Colonial Ethnic Spatial Politics

The Tapanuli Residency or Tapan Nauli (*Residentie Tapanoeli*) was an administrative region of the Dutch East Indies, with its capital in Sibolga, encompassing the Tapanuli area located on the west coast of North Sumatra. Established in 1842 after previously being under the Ajer Bangis Residency from 1837 to 1841, the territory underwent several administrative expansions, including the formation of the Trumon division (*Afdeling*) in 1902 and the Singkil division in 1903. By 1905, the Tapanuli Residency became an independent residency under the Government of Batavia, following the structural downgrade of the *Gouvernement Sumatra's*

*Westkust* to a residency, and by 1938, all residencies on the island of Sumatra were unified under the *Government Sumatera Einland*, headquartered in Medan.

Following the successful conquest of the Batak lands and Padang Lawas areas by the Dutch East Indies government, the Tapanuli Residency was restructured into four administrative divisions (*Afdeling*) starting in 1915. The first was *Afdeling* Mandailing and Angkola, a territory that currently comprises Padang Sidempuan City, South Tapanuli Regency, Padang Lawas Regency, North Padang Lawas Regency, and Mandailing Natal Regency. The second division, *Afdeling* Bataklanden, now includes Toba Samosir Regency, North Tapanuli Regency, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, Dairi Regency, Samosir Regency, and Pakpak Bharat Regency. The remaining jurisdictions were *Afdeling* Nias, which today consists of Nias Regency, West Nias Regency, North Nias Regency, and South Nias Regency, and *Afdeling* Sibolga en Omstreken, which now forms the Central Tapanuli Regency and Sibolga City (Figur 2).



Figure 2. *Gouvernement Van Sumatra's Westkust*

Source: *Kolonial verslag* in Dutch East Indies, uploaded November 4, 2017.

The Tapanuli Residency included areas to the south and southwest of Lake Toba and Samosir Island, predominantly inhabited by the Batak Toba people, now known as North Tapanuli Regency. To the northwest was Pakpak Dairi, consisting of five suak: Pegagan, Keppas, Sinsim, Kelasen, and Boang. North of Lake Toba was the Karo region, and between the mountains surrounding Lake Toba and the Strait of Malacca was the Simalungun area. South of the Batak Toba region, in Angkola, Mandailing, Padang Lawas, and Tapanuli Bay, were the Angkola and Mandailing regions, which later became known as South Tapanuli (Castles, 2010).

The Tapanuli Residency was established by the Dutch Governor General based on the *Staatsblad* dated December 7, 1842, following recommendations from the Raad van Indie (Council of the Indies) about the need to form a new residency to counter the influence of Aceh and Minangkabau, which had already embraced Islam. The aim was to create a barrier against

the spread of Islamic power that had reached Sibolga. This effort led to the establishment of the Batakraad (Batak Council), which was intended to facilitate administrative governance while fostering Batak tribalism and suppressing the spirit of nationalism (Castles, 2010). This residency became part of the West Sumatra Province (Gouvernement van Sumatra's Westkust). The regions included in this residency were the afdeeling (divisions) of Singkel, Barus, Sibolga, Angkola, Mandailing, Natal, and Nias. Except for Nias, which was conquered in 1852, all these areas were subdued and controlled by the Dutch between 1832 and 1842 (Castles, 2010). Subsequently, in line with the Governor General's decision (besluit) no. 12 dated January 14, 1879, all interior regions had to be subdued. Between 1857 and 1887, areas such as Silindung, Humbang, Samosir, and Toba were conquered and brought under Dutch control. This conquest led to the formation of the afdeeling Bataklanden in accordance with besluit no. 21 dated January 16, 1883 (van Anrooij, 2014).

After the death of Sisingamangaraja XII in 1907, Pakpak Dairi was established as an onder afdeeling in Bataklanden. Since 1906, the Tapanuli Residency became independent, separated from West Sumatra. The areas included in the Tapanuli Residency since 1906 were the afdeeling Bataklanden in Tarutung, afdeeling Sibolga in Sibolga, afdeeling Padang Sidempuan in Sidempuan, and afdeeling Nias in Gunungsitoli. According to Staatsblad no. 496 of 1906 and no. 398 of 1907, the Bataklanden region was reorganized into several onder afdeeling: Silindung, Toba, Samosir, Dairi, and Barus (Coleman, 1983).

However, in 1907, Barus was removed from Batak landen and merged into the Sibolga afdeeling. By 1915, the afdeeling Bataklanden in the Tapanuli Residency consisted of the following onderafdeeling: i) Onderafdeeling Silindung, which included the areas of Tarutung, Pahae, and Pangaribuan, ii) Onderafdeeling Toba Highlands (Hoogvlakte Toba) or Humbang, consisting of Siborong-borong, Dolok Sanggul, Pakkat, and Parmonangan, iii) onderafdeeling Toba which included Balige, Porsea, Lumbanjulu, and Habinsaran, iv) onderafdeeling Samosir which included Pangururan, Ambarita, and Onan Runggu, and also onderafdeeling Pakpak Landen consisting of Sidikalang, Salak, and Tigalingga.

This territorial structure within the Tapanuli Residency remained in place until 1942. The Dutch colonial government's policy in establishing the Tapanuli Residency was not merely for administrative purposes but was predominantly focused on spatial planning as an instrument for managing ethnic spatial politics in the Batak Landen region. The establishment of the Tapanuli Residency aimed to fill the area's spatial arrangement with new rules and values according to Dutch East Indies law (Castles, 2001). In other words, the establishment of the Tapanuli Residency was a colonial effort to facilitate the management of the colony by dividing, separating, and reducing the strength of ethnic groups to make them easier to monitor and control.

### **From Afdeling to Residency - The Process and Existence of Tapanuli Residency**

The Dutch colonial penetration advanced into Samosir, Dairi, and Uluan around 1880, slowly and gradually, preceded by Christian missions brought by the missionaries (*zending*). They did not use the same methods of conquest as in Aceh and Minangkabau, considering the difficulties the Dutch faced there due to the isolated terrain and dense forests. The Dutch government entered Batak Toba slowly and progressively, using relatively little force, and often with the consent of the Toba people themselves, who requested their leaders to annex their territories. The Batak Toba became the Dutch's favored group because they proved loyal in supporting the Dutch and openly accepted the missionary activities (*zending*). Some of their leaders hoped to gain various benefits from the Dutch government, while others feared that

they would lose out on advantages if they did not align with the powerful new rulers entering their lives.

In terms of territorial context, the Pakpak ethnic group was traditionally divided into five parts known as Pakpak Silima Suak, which refers to the five customary Pakpak community groups, each maintaining its own autonomy and traditional leader (*raja aur*). These five *suak* possessed their own *ulayat* lands, inhabited by the *si pajek rube* clans, who were the original clans that first occupied the *ulayat* lands, and the *rading berru* clans, consisting of newcomers who married daughters of the *si pajek rube*. Geographically, these regions are divided accordingly, beginning with Suak or Aur Simsim, which includes the areas of Salak, Kerajaan, Siempat Rube, Sitellu Tali Urang Jehe, Sitellu Tali Urang Julu, and Mahala Majanggut. Next is Suak or Aur Pegagan, encompassing the areas of Silalahi, Paropo, Tongging, Pegagan Jehe, and Tanah Pinem. This is followed by Suak or Aur Keppas, which includes Sitellu Nempu, Si Empat Nempu, Silima Pungga-Pungga, Lae Luhung, and Parbuluan. Finally, Suak or Aur Boang covers the areas of Simpang Kanan, Simpang Kiri, Lipat Kajang, Beleggen, Gelombang, Runding, and Singkil. Finally, Suak or Aur Kelasen completes the traditional territory, including the areas of Sienem Kodon, Manduamas, and Barus.

During the colonization of the Tapanuli Residency, Tanoh Pakpak experienced significant territorial reduction through its division into several parts: Tongging became part of the Karo region. Manduamas and Barus were incorporated into Central Tapanuli. Sienem Kodon (Parlilitan) became part of North Tapanuli. Simpang Kanan, Simpang Kiri, Lipat Kajang, Gelombang, Runding, and Singkil became part of Aceh. As a result, the remaining areas of Tanoh Pakpak were: In Suak Simsim: Salak, Kerajaan, Siempat Rube, Sitellu Tali Urang Jehe, Sitellu Tali Urang Julu, and Mahala Majanggut. In Suak Pegagan: Kampung Karo, Silalahi, Paropo, Pegagan Jehe, and Tanah Pinem. In Suak Keppas: Sitellu Nempu, Si Empat Nempu, Silima Pungga-Pungga, Lae Luhung, and Parbuluan (Ypes, 1932).

The Dutch then conducted social engineering to ensure that the Batak Landen area did not become a concentration of anti-colonial ethnic forces. Pakpak Landen was renamed Dairi and established as an Onder Afdeling, led by a Dutch Controleur and assisted by a Demang from the indigenous population. These two officials were named Controleur Der Dairi Landen and Demang Der Dairi Landen (Figure 3) (Dairi Regency Portal, 2022).

Tanoh Pakpak (Dairi) was unfortunate from the beginning because it supported Sisingamangaraja XII during his flight and hiding while conducting guerrilla warfare against the Dutch from 1887 to 1907, following the burning of Bakkara by the Dutch. As a result, Tanoh Pakpak (Dairi) was perceived as a still volatile, dark, and pagan area, necessitating special handling to ensure its compliance with the Dutch colonial government. The Pakpak ethnic group was subsequently divided into several parts to prevent their strength from disrupting the control of Batak Landen, which had already been established as the Tapanuli Residency. Additionally, Suak Boang, a part of Pakpak that borders Aceh and had converted to Islam due to the Padri conquest, was seen as a threat that needed continuous monitoring.

This ethnic spatial arrangement coincided with the growth of the plantation industry in East Sumatra in the early 20th century and the nearing end of the Acehnese resistance in the northern tip of Sumatra, which had lasted a long time. Consequently, the remaining "white patches" (areas not yet touched by Dutch rule) between Aceh and Minangkabau were seen as a disturbance. The last "white patch" was located on the border of Tapanuli, in the interior region bordering East Sumatra. The Dutch aimed to expand plantations into the vast, isolated interior of Sumatra. This "white patch" was then constructed with the term Batak Landen to refer to the ethnic groups Karo, Pakpak, Simalungun, Toba, Angkola, and Mandailing,

distinguishing them from the coastal Malays. The Dutch were able to conquer these areas relatively peacefully through cooperation with the RMG missionaries (Castles, 2001). Once the remaining "white patches" were subdued, the Tapanuli Residency was fully annexed and became part of the Dutch East Indies' territory.



Figure 3. Lieutenant L. Van Vuuren - *Controleur Der Dairi Landen* (1904-1926)

Source: Batavia Land. (2021, April 19). *Louis van Vuuren waterschrijver* [Louis van Vuuren water writer]. Flevolands Geheugen. Retrieved June 20, 2022, from <https://www.flevolandsgeheugen.nl/page/10830/louis-van-vuuren>

### **The Existence of Onder Afdeling Dairi Landen (1906 - 1942)**

The administration of Dairi Landen was part of the governance of *Afdeling Bataklanden*, which was led by the Assistant Resident of Batak Landen based in Tarutung. During Dutch colonial rule, Tanoh Pakpak experienced significant territorial reduction due to the Dutch colonial policy that restricted and severed connections with other Pakpak regions. This policy involved dividing Tanoh Pakpak into four regions and integrating these areas into the territories of other ethnic groups. As a result, the Pakpak tribe was administratively fragmented and culturally intermixed with other tribes (Pakpak Bharat Central Statistics Agency, 2006). The areas that were separated from Tanoh Pakpak were: Tongging, which became part of the Tanah Karo region, Manduamas and Barus, which were integrated into Central Tapanuli, Siemem Koden (Parlilitan), which became part of North Tapanuli, Simpang Kanan, Simpang Kiri, Lipat Kajang, Gelombang, Runding, and Singkil, which were incorporated into the Aceh region.

Tanoh Pakpak (Dairi) was officially incorporated into the Tapanuli Residency in 1905 and became part of the administration of *Afdeling Bataklanden*, which was led by the Assistant Resident of Bataklanden based in Tarutung. Subsequently, Tanoh Pakpak (Dairi Landen) as an *onder afdeling* in the North Tapanuli region was divided into three districts (*kenegerian*) in 1926, namely *Onderdistrict Van Pakpak*, *Onderdistrict Van Simsim*, and *Onderdistrict Van Karo Kampung*. Thus, the division of *Onder Afdeling Dairi* was organized into these three sub-districts.

According to the Pakpak Bharat Central Statistics Agency (2006), the structural division began with *Onder District Van Pakpak*, which included seven *kenegerian*, specifically Kenegerian Sitellu Nempu, Kenegerian Siempat Nempu Hulu, Kenegerian Siempat Nempu, Kenegerian

Silima Pungga-Pungga, Kenegerian Pegagan Hulu, Kenegerian Parbuluan, and Kenegerian Silalahi Paropo. Next, *Onder District Van Simsim* comprised six *kenegerian*, consisting of Kenegerian Kerajaan, Kenegerian Siempat Rube, Kenegerian Mahala Majanggut, Kenegerian Sitellu Tali Urang Jehe, Kenegerian Salak, and Kenegerian Ulu Merah dan Salak Penanggalan. Finally, *Onder District Van Karo Kampung* encompassed five *kenegerian*, which were Kenegerian Lingga (Tigalingga), Kenegerian Tanah Pinem, Kenegerian Pegagan Hilir, Kenegerian Juhar Kidupen Manik, and Kenegerian Lau Njuhar.

After the division of the *kenegerian*, only three of the Pakpak Silima Suak remained: Suak Pegagan, minus Tongging, Suak Keppas, plus Silima Pungga-Pungga, and Suak Simsim. Suak Kelasén was integrated into Batak Landen, while Simpang Kiri, Simpang Kanan, Gelombang, and Runding, collectively known as Suak Boang, were incorporated into the Aceh Residency. The reintegration of Dairi into North Tapanuli Regency, with Tarutung as its capital, provided additional motivation for the Toba people, who eventually dominated Dairi Landen in colonial politics and bureaucracy as an *onder afdeling* of Batak Landen. With the conquest of Dairi Landen by the Dutch colonial government, all remaining "white patches" (areas not yet colonized) in Batak Landen became part of the Dutch East Indies territory (Dairi Regency Portal, 2022).

### **Political Changes and the Loss of Tanoh Pakpak's Existence**

Before the Dutch colonization reached Tanoh Pakpak, there was already a governance system in place that managed the community's administration. Although the terms for autonomous regions or areas were not yet known, the presence of governance during that time was evident to the community through the recognition of traditional kings (Raja-raja adat). The administration of that period was controlled by Raja Ekuten/Takal Aur/Kampung/Suak and Pertaki, who served as traditional leaders as well as heads of government (Dairi Regency Portal, 2022).

Since the Dutch colonial administration took control of Tanoh Pakpak (Dairi), the role of traditional leaders was eventually abolished and replaced with colonial governance. To ensure smooth administration, the Dutch East Indies government divided *Onder Afdeling Dairi* into three *Onder Districts*: Pakpak Keppas, Pakpak Simsim, and Pakpak Pegagan. Meanwhile, Pakpak Kelasén and Pakpak Boang were excluded from the Dairi Landen territory.

Since the division of Dairi Landen into three *Onder Districts*, the involvement of traditional leaders came to an end, leading to the discontinuation of generational leadership in Tanoh Pakpak. The *Onder Districts* were led by a Raja Ekuten, who governed the *kenegerian* within their respective areas. These divided *kenegerian* were then headed by a village head (*kepala negeri*), who had to be approved by the Dutch colonial government (Agustono, 2010). The primary challenge was that the traditional Pakpak leaders appointed as *kepala negeri* were often illiterate, which hindered their ability to perform administrative tasks and correspondence. As a result, they were replaced by Toba workers who had received education after converting to Christianity.

The first action taken by the colonial government after gaining control of Tanoh Pakpak was to implement administrative changes in the region. These administrative changes impacted the traditional local leadership of the Pakpak people, such as the takal aur and pertaki. The takal aur was the leader of a suak, or customary community unit. The Pakpak people had five suak, each led by a takal aur. At that time, Tanah Pakpak had five takal aur, which are akal Aur Keppas, Takal Aur Pegagan, Takal Aur Kelasén, Takal Aur Boang, and Takal Aur Simsim. The authority of a takal aur depended on the size of the suak's territory

(Kozok, 2010).

The territorial authority of a takal aur was extensive, and their power extended to the people within their dispersed customary community. Therefore, in exercising their jurisdiction, the pertaki—who were leaders within each adat community—played a more significant role. The leadership function of the takal aur was symbolic in nature, serving more as a cultural leader rather than an administrative or political one. The takal aur oversaw the pertaki. The pertaki were leaders of specific clans within a certain territory, and their position was associated with the establishment of villages (*kuta* or *kampung*) (*Sumatra Post*, 1925).

During the colonial period, there were several changes to the positions of takal aur and pertaki, which were traditionally hereditary based on clan (*marga*). These positions were then transformed into roles that required approval from the Dutch government. Additionally, the term pertaki, which originated from the Pakpak language, was replaced with *kepala kampung* (village head). Despite the name change, the traditional functions of the role were retained, and the position of *kepala kampung* was still assigned to Pakpak individuals. However, anyone appointed as *kepala kampung* had to receive approval from the Dutch government, with the positions becoming *raja ekuten* and *kepala kampung*. The Dutch government transformed the traditional structural roles of takal aur and pertaki into the political positions of *raja ekuten* and *kepala negeri*. Although the individuals holding these positions were not initially changed, their inability to perform administrative and writing tasks led to these roles not functioning as intended (*Adatrechtbundels*, 1919/1923).

The transformation of traditional positions into political roles weakened and marginalized the customary communities and clans because the roles were no longer based on the clan that owned the *ulayat* land. Instead, they were filled by individuals who had to be approved by the Dutch and possessed writing and administrative skills, which were still very rare among the Pakpak people at that time. Upon closer examination, there was a significant reduction of Pakpak ethnic territory during the Dutch colonial era. This reduction included: i) Releasing parts of Tarabintang, Parlilitan, and Pakkat from Suak Kelasén to North Tapanuli, now Humbang Hasundutan, ii) Releasing the territories of Manduamas and Barus from Suak Keppas to Central Tapanuli, iii) Releasing Simpang Kanan, Lipat Kajang, Singkil, Simpang Kiri, Bilegon, and Rundig from Suak Boang to South Aceh, and iv) Releasing Tongging, Pegagan Jahe, and Tanah Pinem from Suak Pegagan to Tanah Karo. Since then, the area known as *Onderafdeeling Pakpak Landen* only consisted of three suak: Simsim, Pegagan, and Keppas. This area was later formed into Dairi Regency in 1964. Furthermore, when Dairi Regency was divided in 2003, it retained two Pakpak ethnic suak: Keppas and Pegagan, while Pakpak Bharat Regency consisted of one suak which is Simsim (Damanik, 2018).

## Conclusion

Before the arrival of Dutch colonialism, Tanah Pakpak was a unified entity in terms of customs and culture, although it was divided into five suak (groups) based on dialect and territorial distribution. Pakpak can be classified into five main parts: Pakpak Simsim, Pakpak Keppas, Pakpak Pegagan, Pakpak Boang, and Pakpak Kelasén. Each suak group was distinguished based on clan land rights, and administratively, they were not only located in Dairi Regency (before its expansion) but also in Aceh Singkil, Humbang Hasundutan (before its separation from North Tapanuli), and Central Tapanuli. Pakpak Simsim, Pakpak Keppas, and Pakpak Pegagan were administratively located in Dairi and Pakpak Bharat regencies, while Pakpak Kelasén was located in Humbang Hasundutan Regency, Central Tapanuli Regency, particularly in Parlilitan and Manduamas districts. Pakpak Boang, on the other hand, settled

in Singkil Regency, particularly in Simpang Kiri and Simpang Kanan districts.

The establishment of the Tapanuli Residency, initiated by the Dutch colonial government through ethnic spatial planning politics, incorporated Tanoh Pakpak into one of the Afdeling Dairi Landen. This ethnic spatial planning policy altered the map of Pakpak land, reducing the five Pakpak suak to only three suak, later referred to as onder districts: Onder Afdeling Dairi into three Onder Districts, namely: Onder District Van Simsim, encompassing six kenegerian; Onder District Van Pakpak, encompassing seven kenegerian; and Onder District Van Karo Kampung, encompassing five kenegerian. Suak Kelasén and Suak Boang were seemingly deliberately excluded and no longer considered part of Pakpak. This separation resulted in Tongging, Singkel, Barus, and Manduamas being separated from Tanoh Pakpak. Consequently, suak Boang and suak Kelasén were no longer recorded as part of Tanoh Pakpak by the resident at that time, significantly reducing Pakpak's customary land (Ypes, 1932).

The factors mentioned above, such as the division of Tanoh Pakpak into several residencies, led to a significant reduction in Tanoh Pakpak and the administrative division automatically weakened the Pakpak ethnic group politically. The introduction of colonialism with ethnic spatial planning politics through the establishment of the Tapanuli Residency and the conquest of the Dairi Landen colony impacted the existence of the Pakpak ethnic group. From the original five Pakpak suak, only three suak remained: Pegagan, Keppas, and Simsim, while suak Kelasén and Boang were excluded from the Dairi Landen territory. This reduction of Pakpak suak threatened the existence of the Pakpak ethnic group and affected them politically, socially, culturally, and economically.

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