SOME NOTES ON BONTOK SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

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SINCE the publication of Jenks' definitive monograph on the "Bontoc Igorot," or Bontok,[1] this Philippine mountain people has provided something of a classic case in ethnographic description. Notable features of Bontok culture, frequently cited from Jenks by subsequent writers, include their terraced rice cultivation; feuding and headhunting usages; the division of their settlements into "politically independent" sections or wards (*ato*) with their characteristic ceremonial stone platforms and "men's houses"; and the "girls' houses" (*olag*) in which "trial marriages"are consummated.

In 1932–33 the writer and his wife made Bontok their main headquarters for an eight months' study of acculturation and administration in Mountain Province.[2] At this time a careful examination was made of the extant literature, including the Beyer collections in Manila, and various unpublished materials at the administrative headquarters of Mountain Province at Bontoc.[3] This pre-existing information was made the basis for further observation and inquiry. The original draft of this paper, presented at one of Malinowski's seminars in London during 1934, was subsequently made available in typescript along with certain other ethnographic materials on adjacent mountain peoples to scholars interested in Philippine ethnology. But publication was withheld to await fuller data from later studies being made in the area by the late Dr. R. F. Barton. The latter's posthumous manuscripts still appear to leave a valid place for this paper, so at the request of several Philippine scholars it has been revised for publication. Not least of all, it may serve as a reminder to students that Philippine ethnology is a rich yet little worked field.[4]

The Bontok comprise one of approximately ten ethnic groups into which the "Igorot" (mountain peoples) of the Cordillera Central in North Luzon have been classified.[5] Estimates of the total number in the Bontok group range

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[1] Jenks, 1905, based on field work done in 1902–03.

[2] Keesing, F. and Keesing, M., 1934.

[3] The Beyer collections comprise a large series of typescript volumes assembled over some years by Dr. H. Otley Beyer at the University of the Philippines, and include translations of Spanish sources and early American official field reports. The Bontok volumes are titled, "The History and Ethnography of the Bontok People." Notable among the materials at the Mountain Province headquarters were a series of typed manuscripts on Bontok customs by an educated Bontok in the official service, Mr. A. Faculo, who also acted as one of the writer's principal informants. For other available sources see the bibliography.

[4] Before his recent death Dr. Barton looked over the original manuscript, and several of his comments are incorporated as footnotes.

[5] Cf. Beyer, 1917, 1921; Kroeber, 1919a; Cole, 1922, 1945; Eggan, 1941; Keesing and Keesing, 1934; Krieger, 1942.

from about 30,000 to 40,000.[6] They live in 32 villages scattered over wild steep country where the headwaters of the Chico river bisect this great mountain mass. Here, at about the three to five thousand foot level, the malarial forests of the lowlands are replaced by scrub and grass, with occasional stands of pine and oak. Wherever water for irrigation, and soil and rock for building agricultural terraces, can be brought together in sufficient amount, even though enormous labor is involved, a settlement is likely to be established. A close correlation exists between the size of each village and the flow of water which it controls in its ancestral streams. The annual cycle of agricultural production, so ably recorded by Jenks, dominates Bontok life: a drama in which supernatural forces must conjoin with human activity for successful consummation.[7]

The inaccessibility and poverty of this section of the mountain country, its sparseness of population, and the warlike character of its peoples, caused the Spanish conquerors of the Philippines to leave it practically untouched for three centuries. Initiating a more active policy from 1860 on, they exercised a precarious control with the aid of garrisons, cutting trails, collecting tribute, enforcing peace, and putting down frequent "revolts."[8] After 1902,when Americans established a special protective type of government for the "non-Christian" peoples of Mountain Province, a group of American and Filipino administrators were able to develop an equilibrium of relationships among Bontok villages and between the Bontok and their neighbors through a series of "peace pacts" for which leading elders were made responsible. Headtaking became an occasional occurrence only, quickly dealt with by constabulary units mainly enlisted locally. Regional and local self-government were fostered, and welfare measures advanced. Protestant and Catholic missions also started work.

After Jenks' time, therefore, marked acculturation took place. Nevertheless the Bontok continued their earlier reputation of being the most conservative of all the mountain peoples. Changes were mainly voluntary and highly selective, and as of 1932–33, at least, the basic features of Bontok culture appeared little disturbed.[9] Among the most obvious readjustments have been

[6] As of 1932, administrative records of population by Municipal Districts gave a total of close to 30,000; over-all numbers at that time appeared to be about stationary. Subsequent statistics of the 1939 census, only available to the writer in general totals by Municipal Districts, appear to indicate that certain predominantly Bontok areas are increasing in population somewhat, others decreasing, e.g., Barlig:—1932, 1,942; 1939, 1,827. Natonin:—1932, 4,648; 1939, 5,999. Sadanga:—1932, 3,224; 1939, 2,933. Sagada:—1932, 6,617; 1939, 7,851.

[7] Jenks, especially pp. 81–166. For an analysis of demographic and ecological factors relating to this type of economy, *see* Keesing, 1938.

[8] Jenks, pp. 35–39; Blair and Robertson, 1903–1909, index volume, "Bontoc"; Gaerlan, no date; Beyer collection documents.

[9] Kane, 1933; Keesing and Keesing, 1934; Eggan, 1941; Beyer collection documents.

the quiescence of feuding and headtaking, a widened range of mobility now that travel is reasonably safe, increased trading, new opportunities for earning money, especially in government services and in the Benguet gold mines to the south, education of increasing numbers of children in schools, and conversion to Christianity of some of the people, especially in the more accessible settlements.

The settlements counted as of Bontok ethnic type show a sufficient cultural uniformity to mark them off as distinctive. Yet there is a considerable diversity in subregional and local custom and dialect not yet well documented, and a shading off of the most marginal groups into neighboring ethnic areas. Cultural uniformity is most immediately visible in their styles of house structure and of clothing (e.g., the small basketlike hat worn by men). Among many other characteristic culture elements is a body of rather uniform tradition, including myths such as that of common descent from a brother and sister who survived a flood on local mountain tops, and also a cycle of events relating to an outstanding culture-hero, Lumawig, through whom Bontok culture was first given to man.[10] Long-standing trade relationships also existed among villages, with the exchange of metals, clay pots, salt, and grave cloths. Some intermarriage has taken place between villages, especially among aristocratic families, and this has been increasing under modern conditions of peace. Certain mutual rules also appear to have been observed even for the conduct of war and headhunting.

Such cultural uniformities and interrelationships, however, did not involve any strong sense of common identity or intervillage co-operation. Even neighboring villages feuded and fought when it was considered expedient, and the association of headtaking with prestige status, with agricultural rituals, and with recreation, formerly made the headhunting expedition an essential activity. Even today relatively few individuals, other than perhaps the small number who have had more advanced schooling, would refer to themselves as "Bontoks."[11] People identify themselves by the names of their own villages, and such local settlements remain the effective units of organization.

Bontok villages are sometimes spoken of in the literature as "towns" or *pueblos*. The Bontok language itself appears to have no generic word for such a community unit, so that the people have adopted the term *ili* from Iloko speech, that is, the language of the coastal Ilocano which has long since become the *lingua franca* of the mountain region. As suggested by the demographic data given above, the average number of people to a Bontok village appears

[10] Beyer, 1912; Moss, 1934.

[11] "Bontok" is really the name of the particular village in which the Spaniards established their administrative headquarters in the area. In turn it became applied politically and geographically to the local district (subject to a number of subsequent boundary changes), and also in an anthropological sense to all people of this ethnic type whether inside the district or not.

to be somewhat under a thousand. As of 1933, however, there was a range of variation from over 2,000 in the capital, Bontoc, not including a considerable immigrant fringe, to perhaps 300 in small villages high up in poor country.

The village sites have undoubtedly been occupied for centuries, as shown by the extensive group of step-like terraces which surround each. The names of a number of them appear in the records of the first Spanish explorers. Every topographic feature has ancestral associations, while all types of land have their precise definitions of ownership and use. No one lives outside the village, and no system of scattered farming is possible short of a revolution in social organization and belief, of which there are scanty signs.[12]

Each village is zoned into a number of units which are referred to in the literature by such names as "sections," "wards," or "precincts." Out of an elaborate terminology connected with such a unit, the most comprehensive Bontok name for it is *ato*, a term made familiar through Jenks' work.[13] The number of *ato* sections varies from community to community, and in villages actually analyzed with local informants a range showed from as few as six to as many as eighteen.[14]

Each *ato* has a permanent name and its boundaries are clearly defined geographically and historically—though to the eye of the stranger there may be little if any indication as to its limits since the thatched dwellings, stone house platforms, granaries, pigpens, and other structures, including low stone dividing walls and walks, appear to be continuous over the hillside. The ceremonial center of an *ato* is a stone platform of varying shape, having a paved

[12] The only exception of a kind is at Bontoc, the capital, where beside the Bontok village a non-Bontok settlement has grown up as the government and trading center: the *poblacion* as it is called. A number of Bontok families now live in and around the margins of this settlement instead of in the village. These comprise some of those employed as officials, migrants from other Bontok villages who have settled more or less permanently at Bontoc, and Christian families who have preferred to move out of the village to live near the missions and make more or less of a break with Bontok usages; in the village itself they would be subject to considerable ostracism. Bontoc village was burnt during the "liberation" in 1945, but has subsequently been rebuilt.

[13] *See* especially Seidenadel, p. 289; Faculo, "Bontoc Subdivisions." In some villages the term *ato* is replaced by *chapay* (or *dapay*, "d" and "ch" being phonetic variants in Bontok), though this term is usually applied with greater frequency to the paved floor of the stone platform which is its ceremonial center. Jenks had the impression that division of villages into such units was unique to the Bontok region and looked to the Southeast Asian mainland for the nearest parallels. But subsequent investigation has revealed it not only among the Bontok, but also among the Lepanto (northern Kankanai) and Amburayan further west. The writer, tracing by visits among the latter groups or through informants, the geographic distribution of this general type of village organization, found that it penetrated into the mountains from the west somewhat like a great wedge, with the Bontok at the inner point, and among the Amburayan on the coast side from San Emilio in the north to San Gabriel in the south. *See also* Eggan, 1941; Cole, 1945.

[14] Bontoc, the largest village, which in Jenks' time had seventeen *ato* sections, has had an eighteenth added subsequently at Kaluktit, an area adjoining both Bontoc village and the non-Bontok *poblacion*.

top ringed with large stones for sitting or leaning, a fireplace, one or more carved or pointed posts for displaying heads of slain enemies, and a low rectangular hut at the back end. This platform and the hut provide a formal and informal "clubhouse" for the males of the households attached to the *ato* section; it is ordinarily taboo to females, other than very young children in their fathers' care who sometimes may be there. The older men assemble there in "council" (*intugtukan*) to deliberate on matters of justice, politics and other *ato* concerns. Formerly ceremonies of war and headhunting were consummated at this center, and it was and may still be the repository of skulls; at the time of the writer's visit the *ato* was still thought of as dominantly connected with this type of activity. Rituals including animal sacrifices appropriate to the *ato* are conducted upon the platform, often accompanied by dancing in a space adjacent to it. At night the stones, often mat covered, together with wooden planks in the hut, are a sleeping place for unmarried boys and youths, and for divorced or widowed men of the households. The *ato* group also forms a unit for particular types of economic activity, especially of a ceremonial nature, calling for co-operation among members. Its adherents refer to themselves as *sinpangato*, literally "united with (the group) belonging to the *ato*."

Asked about the origin of the *ato*, several old men immediately referred back, as is usual in the discussion of any important Bontok custom, to the culture-hero Lumawig. "The origin," one said in a typical statement, "is that Lumawig gave his approval to headhunting, and the *ato* was established as the proper place for carrying it on. It is necessary to have the *ato* in order to have the proper ceremonies." Now that headhunting has been stopped, another explained, "Instead of the head *kanyau* (*cañao*, i.e., rituals which include animal sacrifices) it is the place for ordinary *kanyau* pleasures." Informants also stressed the importance of the *ato* for the transmission of law, religion, and other customs. A 1931 report of the Deputy Governor of the Sub-Province, himself a Bontok, rightly states that "the *atos* are not only dormitories, but schools in which laws, customs, histories, and traditions are related and conserved." No field worker, however, yet claims to have penetrated the screen of Bontok conservatism to record in any detail the undoubtedly rich lore of particular *atos*.

In the village of Bontoc, to which Jenks confined his study almost wholly as being the main center of American penetration and control at that time, there is an elaboration of the *ato* apparently not existing in any other Bontok community. Sixteen of its eighteen sections have two platforms and huts each instead of one. These either adjoin end to end without a through communication or are separate. One is called *pabafungan* (*pabafunan*), and corresponds in the main to the *ato* elsewhere, as being the principal ritual center. The other, often smaller, is called *fawi*, and tends to be used more by the older men as

the center for their councils; it is also considered more secular.[15] Elders of Bontoc village asserted, when asked, that the duplication was brought by overcrowding in this village, which is the most populous Bontok settlement. Jenks himself noted (p. 50) that the neighboring village of Samoki directly across the Chico river had only one platform to an *ato*. But it has been usual for subsequent writers to to assume with him that two platforms are characteristic of the Bontok area as a whole.

"Each *ato*," Jenks writes, "is a separate political division. . . . The pueblo (village) must be studied entirely through the *ato*. It is only an aggregate of which the various *ato* are the units, and all the pueblo life there is due to the similarity of interests of the several *ato*" (pp. 49–50). Here and in other parts of his study he gives the impression that the Bontok village is merely a spatial association of adjacent but independent *atos*. It can be said immediately, anticipating in part later data, that Jenks' interpretation appears to be unduly limited and artificial. It arises from laying overmuch stress on the *ato* system and on the undoubtedly weak development of super-*ato* political institutions, and minimizing the existence of other factors, especially the vital ties of kinship, which criss-cross *ato* groupings, common ceremonial activities, ideological links, and needs of public safety, which bind the village together into a larger whole. Even in the case of political and judicial affairs, though in many respects these are handled by the elders in *ato* councils acting singly or in mutual consultation, they are also concerns of heads of households and of the elders in more extended kin groups which transcend *ato* lines. Though there has been no permanent headman or council heading the village as a whole, at least until American times, the villagers co-operate across *ato* lines in varied social and economic activities.

The unity of the village is perhaps most clearly seen in an elaborate system of community rituals (*kanyau*) connected variously with the annual cycle of agriculture, safety from storms, epidemics or fires in the village, droughts affecting the water supply, and other matters of common welfare.[16] These, organized

[15] Jenks, pp. 50–52. *Pabafungan* is the name usually applied to the hut only where a single *ato* structure exists. *Fawi*, in its more general Bontok usage, refers to a small shelter or hut at places in the fields, on a trail, or in the mountains, where rituals are consummated.

[16] Jenks, 48; 168, 205–215; Faculo, "Traditional Tengaos"; Beyer collection documents. At the time of village rituals no outsider is allowed to enter, and no villager to leave. Hogs killed in such community sacrifices often represent "fines" levied on persons for infringing village order. In Bontoc village a special seat-like stone structure exists called Lumawig's "seat" or "stone" at which a sacred fire is burnt, along with sacrifices and other offerings, when typhoons hit the area. Periodically the sacred places are cleared, and each household of the village is expected to send workers. Another example of community-wide ceremonial is a spectacular "rock fight" in which the boys and younger men of the village split into two sections and "battle" for hours, using shields for protection. This is held normally in August after planting the sweet-potato crop, and is considered to make the crop prosper. An attempt by the government authorities to stop it at Bontoc met with failure.

and conducted by recognized experts or priests who variously hold their positions by hereditary right or by nomination according to the nature of the activity, involve common religious holidays (*tengao*), hog sacrifices at sacred groves (*papatay*) on the outskirts of the village, consultation of omens, and other ritual procedures. Above all, the villagers are held together by an elaborate network of kinship connections and neighborly associations, by the needs until recently of common defence, and by the sense of identity so real in a little community with a common tradition and the intimacies of daily contact and gossip. The identity of the village is expressed in the term *sinpangili*, "the united community."

Cole, in an excellent brief summary of Bontok culture, inclines to the idea that each *ato* may have originally been an independent settlement, but that the need for defence led to later union into village groupings.[17] This suggests itself as a possibility in view of the lack of centralized political institutions in such Bontok villages. The scattered hamlet system among the Ifugao, whose territory adjoins Bontok to the east, is inevitably brought to mind here.[18] Yet it is also notable that among the neighboring Lepanto (northern Kankanai) immediately to the southwest, where the *ato* system likewise exists, the villages do have an overarching village council of elders and outstanding leaders recognized by the community as a whole. Though a suspicion may be entertained that it is possibly an adjustment made as a result of Spanish influence, this more centralized political system appears to bear the stamp of long tradition.[19] It could be equally inferred, if this is true, that the Bontok system of decentralizing political authority may have been a later modification. The fact that the responsibility for executing war forays and headhunting rituals has been focused in Bontok upon the *ato* unit rather than being a matter of common village activity could be used equally as an argument to support either a theory of early voluntary aggregation or of later village decentralization. It can be noted, furthermore, that actual cases are known in Bontok of new *atos* being founded along the margins of existing villages by a hiving-off process suggesting the possible origin of *ato* elaboration from a former more unified village system.[19a] The problem at least merits further study; probably both processes have been at work.

Writers on Bontok also feature as the other characteristic institution the *olag* or girls' house. Each *ato* section has usually one or possibly two low huts of thatch, mud and stones, often built alongside a pig-pit, to which the girls of its constituent households go at night to sleep. A small *ato*, however, may be at times without an *olag*, so that the girls of its households use one in an adja-

[17] Cole, 1945, p. 142.

[18] *See* especially the works of Barton and Beyer on the Ifugao.

[19] Keesing, unpublished ms.; Robertson, 1914.

[19a] E.g., Jenks, p. 49, also footnote 14 *supra*.

cent *ato*. In other words it is a usual, but not a permanent and inevitable part of the *ato* organization.[20]

The *olag* huts are a nightly gathering place, not only for the unmarried girls and unattached women, but also for unmarried youths and more occasionally unattached older men. Boys and young men are likely to go from their *ato* structures in congenial parties, visiting one *olag* after another, crooning, joking, teasing, and engaging in sex play with the girls. Those who have developed liaisons may, with full public sanction, sleep with their current partners in the hut. Nearly all Bontok marriages are the product of experimental pairing in the *olag*, the test of congeniality usually being that a child is on the way—hence the term "trial marriage" found in the literature. It is necessary, however, clearly to distinguish personal sex play and experimentation under these conditions from marriage proper, as the latter involves public ceremonies, rights and obligations that involve not only the couple, but also their kin groups.

How do these institutions really "function" in the total context of Bontok life? What relation do they have to other elements of the culture such as the household and wider kinship units already mentioned in passing? Is the *ato* membership based on local contiguity, kinship, or the needs of economic, political or other forms of co-operation? What kinship and other considerations regulate the contacts of young people in the *olag?* Such questions as these have not been given adequate consideration in writings to date. Within the limits of the writer's own field notes, supplemented by other source materials available, the following is a tentative analysis.

The Bontok household can provide the most useful starting point. Its essential nucleus is an "individual family" of husband, wife, and children, almost always monogamous.[21] It has, however, a somewhat elastic membership in terms of the different activities centered around the house—sleeping, eating, doing chores, conducting rituals, and so on. Unattached older relatives, for example, may come for meals, and young men courting the daughters may join in household work. Such a house group is called *pangafong*, literally "(those) belonging to the house." Terms for marriage, too, usually translate as variants of "becoming a householder," e.g. *iafongko*, "marry," *paafongek*, "perform

[20] Jenks, pp. 53–54. The village of Bontoc, at the time of his study, had 17 *olags* serving 17 *atos*, but 4 small *atos* had no *olag* and 4 large ones had 2 each. An informant said that "The number of *olags* varies with the number of young girls." In some villages of the west Bontok area the girls' house is called *ebgan* (or *efgan*, "b" and "f" being dialectal variants), from *ebeg*, "bedfellow." Among the neighboring Lepanto the girls' house (likewise called *ebgan*) also exists, but instead of having a special hut an empty house or the house of a widow is used. In Ifugao to the east of Bontok, the usages of the girls' *agamang* are closely comparable: *see* Barton, 1938.

[21] Aristocrats occasionally have more than one wife, but it is a rarity. Jenks cites an instance where such an individual had five wives, but this seems the only known case of more than two (p. 59).

wedding ceremony." An *ato* section will have from about ten to fifty such households within its boundaries.

The better class of Bontok house (*faoy*) is a substantial pyramidal structure on piles, described by Cole as like a "sharply pointed haystack." The ground space beneath has sections for husking rice, cooking, and storage. There is also a box-like compartment (*angan*) in which the husband and wife sleep, together with very young children.[22] Under the eaves, the house has a second story room more or less walled in, and a loft used as a storehouse for *palay* (rice on the stalk), and other goods. A far less pretentious structure (*katufong*), rectangular shaped and on the ground, is used by very poor families and sometimes by widows. A feature of a marriage settlement is nearly always the provision of a house by one or other of the relationship groups concerned, customarily the bridegroom's kinsmen in accordance with a dominant principle of patrilocal *ato* residence. The building of a new house consumes much time, labor and wealth, and its erection is an affair in which many kinsmen and neighbors take part, not to mention ancestral and other spirits which are ritually invoked. At particular times in the yearly cycle of activities, and on special occasions such as births, marriages, cases of sickness, and deaths, it becomes a gathering place for appropriate groupings of kinsmen and friends.

During much of the day, the house may be deserted. The men and boys, if not away from the village, are usually at the *ato* platforms. The women and girls are likely to be in the fields, often leaving the young children to the care of their somewhat older siblings, to the fathers if they are handy, or to old men and women of the kin group. Females who remain at home because of taboos, childbirth, or to rest from the exacting agricultural tasks gather to work or gossip under their own house eaves or those of relatives and friends. For the two daily meals, or at least for the evening meal, the whole household normally assembles. Perhaps the family pigs should receive mention, too, for in their well constructed stone pits near the house they are in a real sense members of the group; fed by the girls with leafage gathered after much hard climbing, eating up all the household rubbish including human excreta, providing in turn fertilizer for the fields, and coming at last to a distinguished end in the course of some all-important ritual sacrifice and feast. When darkness falls over the village, the stone pathways that traverse it are alight with moving pine torches as old people, boys and girls go from the households to their sleeping places, and amorous youths commence their visiting. Behind them are left the husband, wife and very young children who will crawl into the sleep-

[22] Children usually leave the parents' sleeping box at about two years old. They may go directly to sleep in the *ato* or *olag*, especially if elder siblings are available to keep an eye on them. Otherwise they may sleep for a period on a bench in the dwelling or stay with some older widowed relative. By about the age of six, however, all children will be sleeping regularly at the *ato* or *olag*. Jenks gives a full account of house structures, with excellent illustrations (pp. 56–59).

ing box, stoke up the embers of a fire within, and shut tight the door to keep out the chill mountain air and its wandering ghosts.

Such a household is the main unit for everyday economic, social and religious life. As part of a Bontok marriage, a series of consultations take place between the kin groups involved, as a result of which the couple receive agricultural land and other property to be held in common so long as they remain together. Unmarried persons rarely own important property of their own, so that such arrangements exercise a strong stabilizing force upon the household life. In case of divorce, which can take place by mutual consent or by pressure brought to bear by one or the other set of relatives—the usual cause being infertility or the repeated death of children—there are elaborate legal prescriptions as to the disposal of such common property. Both husband and wife may also accumulate property separately in their own names through inheritance, gift, manufacture, or in other ways. A woman's rights, and back of them the related rights of her kin group, are meticulously observed.[23]

What is the working relation of the household unit, as pictured here, to the *ato* unit? Normally the households which lie spatially within the *ato* boundaries provide its membership as a social, political and ceremonial grouping. Since *ato* affiliation is based typically on a patrilineal principle, and marriage on the patrilocal principle as noted above, males ordinarily adhere throughout life to the *ato* sections of their fathers' lines. Informants, in speaking of this, usually expressed it by reference to the grandparent generation: "I keep on in the *ato* of my (paternal) grandfather."

As with so much of Bontok usage, however, individuals are not compelled to adhere strictly to the norm, but have latitude to make personal choices. Cases occur where men live within an *ato* section other than that of their male ancestors, as where a newly married youth may stay for a time with his wife's people, or even transfer his allegiance to that *ato* group because of circumstances involved in the marriage settlement, or because of quarrels or personal tastes. A decision to shift is particularly likely to occur at marriage where the wife's relatives are of higher status or possess more rice lands. Again, in cases where a new *ato* has been founded near the village those initiating such a move have drawn in various kinsmen and perhaps friends. Jenks says in his study that the *ato* "formally releases and adopts men who change their residence from one to another," and refers to a ceremonial feast to mark such adoption. Informants stated that this would be a minor ritual only, though a small animal sacrifice would be in order.[24] Primarily, it was stated, a man signifies

[23] For a fuller analysis of property rights *see* especially Jenks, pp. 134–136, 157–165.

[24] Barton, in a note made here, pointed out that in Sagada, where he made an intensive study, such a minor animal sacrifice is the rule, "usually of a hen, or perhaps some dried meat given." Sagada is a village on the southwest fringe of the Bontok area adjoining Lepanto. It is usually classed as dominantly of Bontok ethnic type, but Barton considers it to be of "mixed" Bontok and northern Kankanai (Lepanto) culture.

his change of allegiance by his "public words," together with his absence from the rituals and enterprises of his former *ato* and his presence at those of the new *ato*.

Allowing for these exceptions, the extent of which could not be ascertained precisely, ancestral tradition and public opinion nevertheless operate strongly to keep a man in the *ato* of his male progenitors. The boys growing up within each *ato* group become steeped in its special lore, and develop rights and duties in relation to it. A term *pangatona*, "*ato* comrades," expresses the warm relation especially between age mates in the group. To leave one's *ato*, or to be absent unnecessarily from its ceremonial activities, would mean risking not only the weakening of important social ties, but also incurring the displeasure of the ancestors and of family and *ato* spirits. An older man would rarely if ever shift to a new *ato*. Even if a young man moves, as through circumstances connected with his marriage, it is said that his sons tend to return to the *ato* of their grandfather.[25]

The *ato* may therefore be visualized as comprising, in ideal terms, both a territorial and a social unit made up of a set of patrilineal and patrilocal households. It provides the main focus for political organization, and also involves important religious, ceremonial, economic, and other ties. Until the last two generations, it has been notably associated with war and headhunting activities.

The steps that lead to marriage and the formation of the household bring into focus customary relationships between the sexes, including the role of the *olag* or girls' house. Principles of sexual segregation operate strongly in Bontok public behavior, and boys and girls tend to work and play apart from each other from their earliest years. Siblings of opposite sex meet within the home during the day, yet restraints are fostered that from the age of perhaps nine or ten become a definite rule of avoidance.[26] This "brother-sister taboo" extends equally to step-children and adopted children. There are also restraints in conversation and in other behavior regarding sex matters between all males and females who are close relatives.

Young people of opposite sex have two main opportunities for getting to-

[25] In the same way a Bontok man does not readily migrate from his home community. As an informant put it: "The spirits of ancestors won't know their way to the new *ato* fires, and so may be angry (hence causing sickness, bad luck, or other trouble.)" Barton again notes here that, in Sagada, rituals reiterate the phrase: "Stabilize us in our houses and our sleeping places," i.e., in the *ato* groups.

[26] The writer was told by Dr. Hilary Clapp, medical officer at the Bontoc hospital in 1933, and a Bontok, of the consternation caused when, after some fifteen years in the United States, he returned to his home village of Bontoc and, meeting his sister, greeted her affectionately. Dr. Clapp, called as a child Pitapit, was adopted from a poor family by an Episcopal missionary, the Reverend Walter C. Clapp. After being brought up in the United States, and completing his medical degree, he returned to practice among his people; he has exercised great influence there.

gether: on ceremonial occasions, many of which include dancing, and in the *olag* or girls' house. Even in the dance formations, however, the sexes characteristically line up apart. The *olag* affords the principal place where informal and intimate associations between unmarried and unattached persons of opposite sex can occur. The boys, as has been noted, visit the *olag* huts, and as sexual maturity is reached by boys and girls their casual sex play tends to give place to more serious and permanent liaisons. In the adolescent years, the young people are likely to make *olag* sexual adventures their principal preoccupation.[27] Older unattached men may also visit the *olags*, but married men rarely do so; an elderly Don Juan would be considered rather ridiculous, as a man is expected to have had his playboy days in youth.

Because the girls belonging to the households of each *ato* normally spend their nights in the *olag* of that *ato*, the boys of those households are likely to have sisters, first cousins, or other close female relatives there. The rules of avoidance referred to above tend, therefore, to force boys to go to other *ato* units for their sexual contacts, either in their own village or nowadays even in other villages. If one desires to bring in the word, this operates to provide a kind of informal *ato* "exogamy." On the other hand, there is no explicit prohibition of sex contacts or of marriage between members of any *ato* group as such, other than as regards close relatives.[28] Especially in larger *ato* groups, liaisons seem not infrequent, and these would be facilitated in the rare cases where an *ato* has more than one *olag*. Again, if a boy and girl in the same *ato* are eager to effect a liaison their fellows may help them, either by close female relatives shifting out temporarily to another *olag*, or else by the girl making such a shift. The pattern can be described as an avoidance of close relatives, which often extends on account of *olag* customs to cover approximately the immediate *ato* of the youth or man, and in a similar way to other *ato* groups where there are close female relatives in the *olag*.

The norm of youthful conduct could be stated thus. A boy cannot enter an *olag* in which there are immediate relatives such as his sister or step-sister. He either stays behind in the *olag* to which his amorous party has just been, or passes ahead to the one next on the visiting list. Should he have a somewhat less close female relative, such as a first cousin, aunt, or niece, he may enter, but should "hold back" instead of joining in the fun. Such rules are the more effective in that boys and girls rarely have opportunities for close association outside the *olag*, and public opinion frowns on sex intimacies elsewhere. Sex experiences are so much a matter of mutual interest and co-operation among

[27] The usages and atmosphere of the Bontok *olag* appear to be closely comparable with those of the girls' *agamang* hut among the Ifugao, as intimately revealed in three autobiographies collected and published with comments by Barton, 1938. *See* also Jenks, pp. 66–68.

[28] Jenks (p. 68) gives a table of Bontok marriages forbidden a man thus: mother or stepmother or their sisters, daughter, step-daughter, adopted daughter, sister, brother's widow, and first cousins by blood and adoption.

the boys' and girls' groups, that the deviant would meet with ridicule if not ostracism.

Bontok marriage has two facets. The first is that of choice and compatibility. The great majority of first unions take place within approximately the same age-groups as the result of *olag* romances and experimentation, regulated by the above rules. Subsequent marriages, which are not infrequent because of the death of one of the partners or else of divorce, often cross age lines, especially through older men taking unmarried girls as wives. Genuine attachments often come from *olag* alliances, but the most frequent test of compatibility is that a child is forthcoming. A girl is therefore approved only if she has one lover at a time, ensuring, as the Bontok say, that paternity can be recognized.

The other facet to marriage is where the kin groups concerned, together with the ancestors and supernatural forces, have their say. This takes the form of a complex set of observances, varying with the class status and seniority of the parties, and including performance of symbolic services towards the prospective parents-in-law, consultations within and between the relatives, the reading of omens through animal sacrifices and other means, successfully maintaining a sacred fire during a ritual period and in other ways getting the sanction of the unseen world, and finally the passing of property by the two groups to the couple.[29] Should the marriage be cancelled through family disapproval or bad auguries, an appropriate settlement is made. A pregnant girl may be given a rice field in trust for her expected child, or else some *carabao* (water buffalo). Neither she nor the child would suffer any social stigma. Possibly because women have to work under such trying environmental conditions as in the wet rice fields, and also because there is high infant mortality, children are all too few; the infant would therefore be readily adopted into the kin group of its mother, while the girl would perhaps even be the more sought after for having proved her fertility.

A consummated marriage links the two households concerned and the kin groups back of them with a series of mutual and reciprocal associations, privileges and responsibilities. These are especially elaborate where they involve persons and kin groups of the aristocratic class. Parents-in-law play a role of great importance, receiving every respect and in turn standing by to assist in all difficulties. Again, a husband and wife have relations of propriety and respect towards their brothers- and sisters-in-law, especially the eldest ones. The wife's kin keep an eye on the husband to see that his wife and children are well treated, and vice versa.

A marriage has at first a somewhat tentative character, and the relationships created between "in-laws" are correspondingly tentative. Subsequent

[29] Faculo, "Marriage Ceremonies"; Nathorst, C. E. "Marriage and Burial Ceremonies . . . of the Bontoks," Beyer collection, vol. IV, paper 14; Jenks, p. 69.

participation in ceremonial and other activities, and above all the arrival of children on the scene, "build up" the marriage and cement affinal ties. In relation to the children, the kin groups of the husband and wife become in turn conjoined into a single kin group, which will stand back of such children as they grow up and in turn are married. Each marriage, especially if fertile, thus initiates fresh alignments of kin within the community. Each man, too, is the focal point for a network of lineal and affinal relationships extending not only within his own *ato* but also into the *atos* of his mother, his parents' sisters, his wife, his parents-in-law, his married sisters, his sisters-in-law, his daughters-in-law, and so on. A woman has corresponding ramifications of kinship. These linkages as indicated may even extend to other villages, especially in modern times and in the case of aristocratic lines.

This leads to broader consideration of the principles of kinship which operate beyond the household grouping. The written and photographic materials presented by Jenks show tantalizing glimpses of kin ties at work—groups of relatives building a house, mourning and burying the dead, dividing property among heirs, conducting feasts and animal sacrifices and so on. But apart from a few very general references and a meager list of kinship terms, he fails to trace the many ways in which kinship is actively exercised in interpersonal relationships pertaining to economic, social, political, ceremonial and other activities both within and outside the *ato* units.[30]

An individual in such a close-set community constantly sees in the daily round persons who stand in various relationships to him, and may speak respectfully, stop to gossip, pass a joke, share a task, step aside modestly, or otherwise actively exercise prescribed or permitted kin behaviors. More formally, he is likely to take part relatively frequently in gatherings of kinsmen at his own house or those of others. As noted earlier, even certain types of political and judicial activity may be handled by elders of the kin instead of in the *ato* "councils"; for example, property disputes among relatives or troubles between different kin groups. Weddings and funerals are among the many other occasions in the social round which bring kinsmen together, and also their ramifications such as ceremonies to overcome sterility in a childless couple or holding memorial sacrifices for an illustrious ancestor. Again, bad luck or illness call for rituals at which relatives come together. Assemblies of kinsmen will be organized and directed by the senior elders present in the group.

The size and membership of such kin gatherings, including the extent to which they involve both lineal and affinal relatives, vary with the occasion, and generally according to the class status and seniority of the persons upon whom the occasion is focused. The Bontok do not have any precise delimitation of such larger kinship associations that would justify speaking of an "extended

[30] It hardly needs to be pointed out, in fairness to Jenks, that studies of kinship were little developed at the time of his field work.

family" system over and above the household. Terms used to refer to kinsmen *in extenso* are very general. The one by which the identity of a group sharing common descent is expressed in the large is *pangapo*, literally "having unity with the same elders (ancestors)." A consanguineal group looked at from the viewpoint of youth may be called *sinpangapo*, i.e., belonging to the parent and other ascendant generations; similarly from the viewpoint of age it would be *sinpanganak*, i.e., belonging to the descendant generations.[31]

A detailed analysis of the Bontok kinship structure has never been made. Most of its formal terminology is extant in the vocabularies published by Jenks, Clapp, Scheerer, and Seidenadel. Usually, however, terms are translated with little reference to the social context in which they are used, as for example, the marked classificatory character of nearly all terms of reference. Kroeber's important general study of Philippine kinship brings out, however, the major features of this as of other "Malayan type" systems, including marked bilateral emphasis; the merging of collateral with lineal kin; the use of reciprocal terminology; the primary importance of the generation principle; the strong classificatory tendency; and the rarity of sex differentiation in general terms of reference.[32]

Space does not permit full analysis of how these principles work out as regards Bontok kinship structure. It may be noted, however, that the terminology of kinship reference is compounded for the most part from a few basic terms by the use of prefixes, suffixes, and descriptive addenda, including *ay lalaki* to indicate "male" and *ay fafai* to indicate "female." The following are the main terms: grandparent generation and above: *apo;* grandparent, more specifically: *ikid;* father: *ama;* other males of parental generation: *alitau;* mother, *ina;*[33] own sibling: *itad;* child generation and below: *anak;* spouse: *asawa;* parent-in-law: *katukangan;* brother-, sister-in-law: *kasud.* Illustrating further the reciprocal character of kinship terminology, the following are examples of terms indicating relationships to one another: siblings: *agi;* spouses: *sinasawa;* "in-laws" generally: *aliwid;* brothers-in-law: *sinkasud;* brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: *sininget,* grandparents and grandchildren: *sinpangapo.*

The markedly bilateral character of Bontok kinship has already been stressed in discussing marriage. Though a selective stress to the patrilineal side is discernible, as in the norm of *ato* affiliation, in succession among the aristoc-

[31] *Anak* is a classificatory kinship term more strictly for those one generation below that of the speaker. *Apo* is used as a respectful term for elders and those of high rank, and may also be given the more specific connotation of kinsmen, living and dead, above the parental generation.

[32] Kroeber, 1919b.

[33] It may be noted that *ama, alitau* and *ina* are the only sex-differentiated terms. Females of the parent generation (aunt, uncle's wife, etc.) are *inaek,* a verbal form of *ina,* i.e., "to mother," that is, mother equivalents.

racy (below), and sometimes in choosing personal names, an individual takes status and receives property by way of both parental kin groups. In household ceremonies, all ascendant generations on both sides, living and dead, will be honored.

The range of effective kinship appears to be rather elastic. In general, memories of specific genealogical data do not appear to go far back,[34] perhaps at the most for seven or eight generations in the direct male line, and for the average person not more than two or three generations beyond the living. Members of aristocratic kin groups appear the more meticulous in this respect for the obvious reason to be shown that ancestry is of so much greater importance to them. Outstanding personalities, too, especially great warrior heroes of the past, are immortalized in the lore and story of kin and *ato* groups, and their lines of descendants may be kept, as Jenks says, "carefully in memory" (p. 50). Among the living, kin reckoning tends to be significant in close lines only. Usually little importance is attached to collateral ties beyond first cousins. Relationships in more distant lines may, however, be remembered and exercised if they are socially useful; that is, if they involve links to important kin groups and outstanding individuals, especially those of aristocratic status.

Three additional principles of Bontok social structure, already seen above to some extent as importantly at work in defining status, may be discussed more systematically here: age and generation, seniority among siblings, and rank and class distinctions.

The Bontok child learns from earliest years to obey those of the generations above him within the kin, and to respect older age in general. This principle holds throughout life, and as each individual becomes older there is a corresponding shift from being directed and dictated to by a circle of seniors, toward having rights and responsibilities as regards an enlarging circle of juniors. Correspondingly strong social bonds tend to exist between age-mates, even though no formal age-grade system is involved. Within the hierarchy of generations are included the remembered dead as well as the living, for Bontok religion has as an important element a cult of ancestral spirits (*anito*) who are supposed to continue living around the village margins.

A clear distinction is made between siblings according to their order of birth. The terms *pangolo*, "head" or "senior," *yunan*, "older," *anodi* (*anochi*), "younger," and *yugtan*, "the last" are not only conversationally prominent, but express a hierarchy of privilege and responsibility. In some respects distinctions of generation and primogeniture transcend distinctions of sex, and this shows especially where the eldest survivor of a kin group or among sib-

[34] Compilation of genealogical data among the Bontok is complicated by a tendency to change names, and also by restraints upon an individual mentioning his own name or those of his ascendants.

lings is a female. Except in the distinctively male functions, as in the *ato* affairs, the eldest women members of a kin group exercise important authority, and this is enhanced if a woman is the eldest among siblings in the senior line. An examination of the *ato* "council," described by Jenks[34a] shows it to be essentially a gathering of the male elders from the constituent *ato* households, deriving their right to a voice in *ato* affairs primarily from their age and seniority.

Jenks speaks of such an *ato* "council" as "thoroughly democratic." Informants with which the writer discussed this matter and the distribution of authority within kin groups, indicated that underlying the outwardly free-and-easy discussion of problems a marked difference exists in the extent to which participating elders have an effective say. Though "all old people are consulted," an old man "must have influence in the community" for his voice to count strongly. An unimportant or "poor" person, no matter how old "doesn't have much say." In earlier times, one of the major ways in which an individual became influential was to be an outstanding warrior and taker of heads—and, of course, to survive to older age. The other major way, still current, is to be a member of what has been called at a number of points an aristocracy.

The existence of a strongly developed rank and class system has been reported from some of the other mountain peoples. Its presence among the Bontok, however, has only been hinted at in published materials. Jenks spoke of "rich" and "poor" people, and of the subservience of the latter;[34b] he also described elaborate ceremonies occurring at the death of one of the "rich" men. The vocabularies of Clapp and Seidenadel bring out piecemeal information relating to the existence of an elite group, and of dependent peons at the other end of the social scale. These distinctions, however, emerge strongly in the unpublished writings of Faculo, and the writer found the whole matter of rank and class much to the fore in discussions with informants.

At the top of the social scale in Bontok is a class known as *kadangyan* (*kachangyan*), or nowadays sometimes by the general name used in the mountain region for such an elite, and of *Iloko* origin: *baknang*. The main basis from which *kadangyan* status is derived is hereditary rank, or more strictly descent through senior lines within the class; secondarily it is possession of wealth and performance of major *kanyau* (ritual) observances, involving animal sacrifices and public feasts. In its narrower sense the term *kadangyan* is applied to the current titleholder or head in the senior family line, whose succession at the death of his father has been validated by the required *kanyau* ceremonies. More widely it is extended to cover the household and immediate kin lines, so that people speak of the *kadangyan* as a class. Faculo and others spoke some-

[34a] Jenks, 1905, pp. 32–33. [34b] *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 163, etc.

what vaguely of three grades of *kadangyan* status. At the top were those counted *pangolo* ("head," or "first") or "royal" as Faculo translated it, and estimated by him at about 10 per cent of the *kadangyan* group; next came those classed as *misned* ("second"), and comprising about 15 per cent; and finally those *yugtan* ("last"), comprising about 75 per cent It seems more realistic, however, to look at differentiations in *kadangyan* status not in terms of distinct subclasses, but rather as expressing degrees to which different households and their heads are linked more or less closely to senior *kadangyan* lines.

The individuals and kin groups counting themselves as more or less of *kadangyan* status were estimated by some as perhaps a quarter of the total population. Others regarded this figure as too high. Clearly it would require a detailed social "census" to make this matter definite, and in any case it would undoubtedly vary by villages. Below this group are the main body of the villagers who hold lands of their own, a kind of middle or commoner class. The households in this group may nevertheless have links through blood and marriage with *kadangyan* lines, which as indicated earlier they find it useful to remember and exercise. Probably few of them would not count themselves as of *kadangyan* derivation in some minor degree. In each generation the descendants in junior *kadangyan* lines (i.e., the offspring of younger sons and daughters in the senior lines) tend to shift downward into this middle group.

At the bottom of the social scale are a class of people in a state of peonage, because of debts and other obligations to their richer fellows. They own little or no rice lands or livestock, and work on a share-cropping or tenancy basis, usually in the service of the top *kadangyan*. The traditional rates of interest and of crop division here as in so many other sections of east and south Asia make escape from this group, once in it, almost impossible so that the obligations tend to carry over indefinitely from generation to generation. The usual name for such people is *pusi* (often translated "poor," and said to be of Spanish derivation); another appellation is *kokitak* ("to be least, last, poorest"). Just as with the *kadangyan* group, this status interpenetrates with the main middle class group by way of blood and marriage ties, and so it is relative to the particular kin connections of the individual and household concerned. Links may even join between *kadangyan* and *pusi* groups through marriages of past or present, though this is more rare.

"The Bontok," Faculo writes, "feel that wealth, influence, and dignity do not count without children to inherit and to care for the parents. Life to them is a matter of succession." He describes the absorption of the Bontok with marriage and death ceremonies, with emphasis upon marked contrasts existing between the types for those of high and low class status. "Each class," he says, "has its own marriage and burial customs." These differ to some extent in kind as well as in degree, an example being that outstanding *kadangyan* may be buried in special places away from those of lesser status. He, as well

as other informants, described additional rituals emphasized in the *kadangyan* class, including "wedding anniversary feasts" held every three or four years to consolidate their marriages and make them fertile, and mourning ceremonies held periodically to honor their dead ancestors. In 1932, just before the writer reached the Bontok area, a wedding feast held at Dalican village involved the slaughter of 41 carabaos, along with numerous pigs.

Marriage operates as a major factor shaping the status of individuals within this class structure, and fosters counter tendencies of rigidity and mobility. Every marriage creates some new alignment of status. Each child in turn gets an ascribed status according to the position of his father and mother and their lines of kin within the class hierarchy.

At the top, the superior status of the senior *kadangyan* lines is maintained and reinforced through strategic marital alliances. It is quite usual for a *kadangyan* to betroth his children even in infancy, especially eldest sons and daughters, rather than waiting for *olag* liaisons to develop. In some cases those of the highest level marry within close degrees of relationship to maintain status and retain land and other property within their group. They may also marry across village lines, especially under modern conditions of peace, so as to link together lines of the highest status for mutual advantage. A betrothal arrangement made for an eldest son or daughter is likely to be insisted on. With younger children, however, earlier betrothals may be broken in favor of mates of their own choice. Even so, the *kadangyan* class discriminate against those of their members who marry beneath them. This was shown at the time of the writer's visit when an educated young man of high birth married a girl schoolteacher equally educated but of low class origin. His kinsmen refused to accept her into their circle: "She is just poor," they said.

Correspondingly at the bottom of the scale the tendency is for persons of the *pusi* group to marry among themselves for want of other partners. Granting the free-and-easy sex relations of the *olag* system, youths and girls are well aware, both by way of admonitions of kinsmen and their own ambitions to have rice fields and other possessions come to them via the marriage settlement, that the class status of a prospective lover should be taken into account. Faculo, recording in his manuscript on marriage customs the specific case of an *olag* attachment between a youth Kala and a girl Udchao, tells how "Kala's parents, satisfied of the prestige, means and standing of Udchao's parents called a man from the neighborhood to act as a message-bearer, (and) sent to Udchao's parents to ask if they would agree to the marriage proposal." As a norm it would appear that unions, to be acceptable to the kin groups concerned, should take place within approximately the same class level, especially so in the case of eldest sons and daughters. But many exceptions occur, disrupting any tendency toward sharp class differentiation.

As might be expected in such a hard physical environment, aristocracy

has become closely associated with wealth and economic dominance, a tendency which furthermore has been stimulated by the increasing penetration of the modern commercial economy in recent years. Asked as to the origin of the *kadangyan*, informants referred to stories telling how "in olden times rich people had a chance to buy the lands of the poor" and so consolidate their position. The leading *kadangyan* usually own the bulk of rice lands and claim rights over unoccupied lands; they are also likely to have the most hogs, and perhaps large water buffalo herds. A circle of poorer people are always in debt to them, and hence are partially or wholly their tenants and laborers. Over against this, however, the aristocrats carry responsibilities as financiers, storers of food, and organizers of community work. Tradition also demands of them the giving of elaborate feasts and sacrifices on varied ceremonial occasions, these participated in by a wide circle of the community, and even (at least nowadays) by invited guests from other Bontok villages. In this way, they exercise a function of village leadership which Jenks failed to record. In reality they accumulate prestige and, if their services are well performed, popularity, rather than much permanent wealth other than in land.

At times, individuals of *kadangyan* rank have become pauperized. This does not affect their hereditary standing in any immediate way, though it would tend to be impaired if prolonged, especially over several generations, as animal sacrifices believed necessary to bulwark social and supernatural status could probably not be performed. In modern times a few poorer people have risen to wealth and high position through commercial activities or as government officials and employees. While this gives them a status in terms of the new set of values inevitably filtering into the mountains today, and perhaps allows them to make strategic marriages, they remain in the eyes of conservatives—that is, of almost everyone—lowly.[35] The persistence of the class system has become a source of personal difficulty among a small group of educated young people who have come under the influence of democratic American ideas, and at the time the writer was in the area there was presage of growing disturbance. Meantime, as in the past, wealth and other personal factors have remained subordinate to rank by birth.

The *kadangyan* households seem to be scattered fairly evenly through the *ato* sections. Though their houses are not markedly differentiated in construction from those of others, more elaborate material possessions such as rice

[35] Colonel Dosser, Governor of Mountain Province in 1932–33, from his personal experience, remarked to the writer apropos of this: "No matter how wealthy you may become, unless you belong to the 'baknang' class you're still a nobody." One of two Bontok informants, discussing the matter together, said: "People now may call a man of the poor class who has become rich *kaiung* ('friend,' 'relative'), but still he will not be well considered; his only recourse to lift himself is by marrying a girl of the *kadangyan* class." To the writer, going to Bontok after field work in Polynesia, the resemblances here as in so many other aspects of social organization between Bontok and Polynesia were particularly striking.

granaries, a greater number of pig pens, and ceremonial porcelain jars of high value are usually an index to their status. Within *ato* councils as well as kin groupings, the voice of the *kadangyan* tends to carry a dominant weight. This is especially so now that the old men having fame as fighters and takers of heads are dying off. Such personal exploits gave even low ranking persons an important place in the public eye, for war was essentially a man's career. With peace and commerce, however, the prestige and influence of the *kadangyan* tends to be enhanced, the more so as the government has generally used people of this class as local officials in the villages. An informant said: "The *kadangyan* now have all the real power."[36]

Both the *ato* and the *olag* systems are also undergoing inevitable changes in modern times. The cessation of headhunting, and the transfer of political and judicial affairs increasingly to the government officials, have tended to thin out the *ato* activities considerably. The *olag* has been a main point of attack for missions and schools as being "immoral." While so far the institutions seem visibly little impaired among the Bontok, a study of their working, and of the attitudes of numbers of younger people toward them, revealed a trend toward disintegration. Already among the neighboring Lepanto, this is well under way. In all Lepanto villages one *ato* has tended to emerge to importance as the center to which officials come, and the others have correspondingly lessened in significance, especially as the people become Christianized and

[36] Such changes have gone much further in the neighboring Lepanto area which has been pacified for decades longer than Bontok. The *cacique* system of the Christianized lowlands seems to be rooted in a similar hereditary aristocracy; indeed, the field worker can see the transition from village *kadangyan* to *cacique* actually taking place throughout the mountain region today—*see* Keesing and Keesing, 1934, pp. 198–201. Some index to the relative status of persons in terms of wealth in modern Bontok society is afforded by the local tax rolls, based primarily on the value of the annual production of rice from rice lands owned. These, including both *kadangyan* and newly rich, showed the following situation as of the year 1932 for several selected Bontok villages:

Valuation (pesos)	*Bontoc*	*Alab*	*Sacasacan*	*Anabel*	*Mainit*	*Talubin*
151–200	9	1	0	1	10	27
201–250	32	52	9	5	35	25
251–300	33	28	9	7	29	1
301–350	12	12	12	6	3	7
351–400	18	10	3	8	8	
401–450	12	8	2	4	7	3
451–500	7	2		4	4	
501–600	10	2		5	4	
601–700	8	1	2	5	1	
701–800	4	1		1		
801–1000	2			1	1	
1001–1200	2	1		2		

their ritual functions thin out. Again in some villages the girls' house system appears practically at an end.

No attempt has yet been made in the literature relating to such mountain peoples as the Bontok to analyze their cultures from the newer viewpoints of "personality" or "character structure." A number of observers, however, have offered broad characterizations, including Bontok officials in their reports. There is general agreement that the Bontok are the most "aggressive," "pugnacious," "stubborn," "proud," "conservative" and "unrepressed" of the mountain groups; as one writer put it, where members of other groups acting as carriers would stop outside or merely come inside the door, the Bontok would stride unconcernedly into your bedroom. A Bontok man usually looks a person deliberately in the eye, and gives an impression of self-confidence, even superiority, and of being good-humored and relaxed while yet having a very positive attitude to life; women, however, are likely to be more shy in the presence of strangers. Even Bontok conservatism has a certain resiliency, the people having adapted their usages freely where new experience fitted in with their own values. Of the former headhunting, Jenks writes: "(It is) his most-enjoyed and highly prized recreation."

Bontok "personality" ("character") formation offers tempting vistas for analysis: the baby usually slung precariously on the hip of mother or older sister, or being cared for by father or the elders; the traumatic shift from parents and the home sleeping box to the *ato* or *olag;* the little disciplined childhood mainly among age mates; the *kanyau* sacrifices to meet all insecurities; the steep barren habitat and precarious livelihood. A striking feature here is that most of these patterns are shared closely with neighboring ethnic groups, especially the Lepanto. Yet the end results are far from the same, as noted in the previous paragraph.

A search for the key to the distinctive aspects of Bontok character is likely to lead back in part to Bontok history. The Bontok know well that in the eyes of neighbors they have long been feared as the most dangerous and expert fighters in the region, always threatening, always likely to be on top, and their self-evaluations reflect this knowledge. Again, habitat factors may be involved. The Bontok country is in general the steepest and least hospitable zone of the mountains, and floods from the Chico river and its tributaries periodically wash out sections of the rice terraces, calling for adaptability and toughness of fiber as well as the labor of reconstruction. Again, as implied in a report written in 1931 by a Bontok official which states: "it is the things learned in (the *ato* and *olag*) that renders them so hostile to change," more would have to be known specifically of the role of these institutions in conditioning the distinctive Bontok character.

Summarizing this sketch of Bontok social organization, the household is seen as the basic economic and social unit, taking form typically out of *olag*

attachments. Households are aligned, normally on patrilineal and patrilocal principles, into *ato* sections. These are territorial-social groupings having their own traditions and varied political, economic, ceremonial and other functions, particularly connected formerly with war and headhunting. Avoiding Jenks' unduly *ato*-centric focus, it can be seen that the households are also linked by wider kinship ties, lineal and affinal, which transcend *ato* lines, and in which age and generation, seniority, and class status are important principles of organization. The class system is based particularly on degree of relationship to the *kadangyan*, or hereditary aristocrat, whose position is based on succession and inheritance from senior lines, and validated by possession of wealth and by ritual activities. Though political and judicial authority tends to center in the *ato* units, the village as a whole has a real identity, fostered by common interests and ideology, the extensive network of kinship, and a round of common social and religious activities.

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