Role and Value of Buffalo for Culture Society Toraja in South Sulawesi

Moses Usman, Asriany, Gufran D. Dirawan, Nurlita Pertwi

Abstract—This study aimed to determine the cultural roles of buffalos (Bubalus bubalis) in Toraja society and their importance for the communities in RandanBatu village of South Makale Sub District, TanaToraja. The collecting data strategis primary and secondary data. The informants were ten people and consist of the community members and the traditional leaders in RandanBatu. The result of the study showed that buffalos in RandanBatu played two significant roles. The role is traditional ceremonies requirement and part of the farming system. While the importance of Buffaloes was determined by economic, social, and cultural aspects, of which economic aspect as the most dominant.

Index Terms—Role, importance, buffalo, culture

I. INTRODUCTION

Every living community has a cultural heritage in the form of ideas or cultural values, norms, and artifacts or products. It becomes the identity of the community in a region, rooted in the social conventions of society. The concept of inheritance is a meaning inherent in the life of today's community and tangible as a social, political and cultural context. The sense of cultural heritage is normative as a supporter of social values. This development is the reason for protecting the cultural heritage.

Virtually, culture can serve as a reflection of a country that is an indicator of the development of human civilization. With the existence of cultural heritage, man develops his social potential. Many forms of culture that include rules, principles or beliefs that are well maintained through its members from generation to generation. The Toraja community in South Sulawesi is known as a community that retains a cultural heritage. Religious values in culture encourage people's integrity to maintain their culture. Such a relationship between TanaToraja ancestors and how buffalos are traditionally given meanings in that community earns this region its peculiarities.

The beliefs of people of Toraja, Aluk Todolo, historically passed from their ancestor PuangMatua and the rules of beliefs passed from Datu Laukku, are now experiencing some changes out of modernization. Such changes are inevitable as an impact of the development of technology and capitalism. The adaptation with world dynamic, the members of the community, ignore their cultural heritage.

Toraja is one of the ethnicities in South Sulawesi that has a series of cultural rituals. The rituals in Toraja belong to two prime categories: rambusolok and rambutukak. "Rambusolok" are the rituals associated with death while "Rambutukak" as those associated with life. The ceremonies of these two kinds of rituals must stand apart from one to another. No intermingling allowed between the two. Ceremonies of one ritual must be conducted entirely before those of the other one can be commenced.

One of the general predilections of people of TanaToraja is animal keeping, like buffalos, pigs, chicken, and dogs. Buffalos and pigs are pets with essential meanings to the community as they are used as a standard to measure the economic and social lives of the community members. In traditional ceremonies, these animals bear a particular value as a sacrificial animal to the AdhiKodrati.

Buffalos have even the most significant importance compared to all other animals. A buffalo or which is in the local language called long, or karembau is an inextricable part of people's daily lives. In addition to meeting the needs of social life, rituals and traditional beliefs, a buffalo also become a measure of social status, and as a means of transactions, marriages, inheritances, and is used in death ceremonies. The owning of buffalo then serves as a social status symbol. Therefore, it is just natural that in the hands of TanaToraja people, buffalos are very special, entailing a rigorous naming, classification, and valuing process.

One of the areas with such great potential for buffalo development is indeed TanaToraja. The area can be seen regarding its humid geographical conditions with a reasonably extensive year-round paddy fields, like in the RandanBatu village of South Makale. Based on the explication of TanaToraja community and the importance of buffaloes for that community as elaborated above, the authors were interested in conducting this research. The focus of this research was then to determine the roles and the importance of buffaloes for the cultural society of TanaToraja in RandanBatu village of South Makale Sub District as well as to elaborate the determinant factors for such roles and importance.

II. METHOD

This study was conducted for two months in RandanBatu Village, South Makale Sub District, TanaToraja Regency. Randan Batu village was chosen as the location to conduct the study due to two reason. Firstly, the population of buffaloes in Randan Batu is quite large, compared with other villages in South Makale, reaching up to 250 buffaloes. Furthermore, the second reason that the members of this village rely on the Buffaloes as their sole symbol and value for the prosperity and the status of its members.
The sampling technique of this study was purposive snowball sampling which included all the community members met at the study location. The data were collected through direct interview with ten informants. All informants were sufficient in providing the information intended to be collected in this study.

The analysis of this study was qualitative analysis following three paths. Firstly, the reduction of data, in which the raw data were selected, simplified according to the focus of the study, then made into abstracts and transformed out of the written records in the fields. Secondly, the presentation of data is a collection of arranged information from which possible conclusion and actions can be taken. Thirdly, the withdrawal of the conclusions which includes the verification of the previously made conclusions.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The Characteristics of The Research Location

The origin of word Toraja has various versions. One of the versions maintains that it is derived from the Bugis language, to Riaja, which means "one who dwells in the upcountry." Another version says that it was named after the leader of a China fleet "Toraya" which was stranded on the east coast of Celebes Island. In 1909, Dutch colonial government named the ethnic as Toraja. Ethnic Toraja also settle in the northern mountainous part of South Sulawesi. The majority of the Toraja people are Christian, while the rest is Moslem and adherents of animism known as AlukTodolo that Indonesian government recognizes as part of the religion of Hindu Dharma.

Toraja is located between 1190-1200 east longitude and 20-30 south latitude where the settlement center is in TanaToraja. Administratively, Toraja ethnic also settle in some parts of Enrekang, Pinrang, Polmas, Mamuju, and Luwu. The area of Toraja ethnic is surrounded by mountains of Latimojong. Several rivers flow over in this area like rivers Saddang, Karama, Rongkong, Massuppu, and Mamasa. There are two centers of twin cities in this region: Makele and Rantepao. The former serves as an administrative center and the latter as for care and services center in the north. South Makalesubdistrict covers an area of 61.70 km², with a population of 12,703 inhabitants. RandanBatu village covers an area of 9.41 km² and an altitude of 1,454 m with 2,186 inhabitants Randan, composed of 1,113 men and 1,073 women.

The Roles of Buffaloes in Cultural Society AtaToraja

Buffaloes in TanaToraja community have several roles which are the main treasure of the community members. In other words, buffaloes are connoted as the primary capital for families in TanaToraja. Thus, visualizing buffalo is an attempt to emphasize the importance of the buffalo in social culture life of the community. The roles of buffaloes in this community are elaborated as follows.

As a sacrificial animal in RambuTukak ceremony. The buffalo is a significant sacrifice in the ceremony of Rambu Tukak which has the most ultimate meanings in the community, as narrated by Mr. Randan, 67 years old, the following statement:

"In every time Rambu Tuka is held for gratitude, like happiness, births, marriages, and after harvest, it can only be held at the time of sunrise until noon. The place for this ceremony is to the east of tongkonan, as mandated in Aluk Rampe Mataallo. The offerings in this ceremony are betel leaves and areca which are placed in a bronze container, while the offerings of a buffalo head are placed at the southeast of the tongkonan and addressed to Tomembali Puang” (interview in the RandanBatu village, July 2016).

While the narrative of Mr. Roni, 73 years old, was as follows:

"That there are several levels of ceremonies of Rambu Tukak, such as kapurang Pangnang (the offerings of betel leaves and areca), Piang Sanglampa (the offering of a rod of lemmang), Menamumu (the offering of two buffaloes and a pig), Makpakande deata diong Padang (offering of a pig and chicken), Massurak Tallang (the offerings of a pig and a rooster) and Merok (the offering of five buffaloes, a pig and some chickens) " (interviews in the village of Randan Batu, July 2016).

From the informant information, it can be determined that the role of buffalo in the cultural ceremony of RambuTukak be a symbol of the prosperity of the community. As a sacrifice in Rambu Solok ceremony. Rambu Solok is a ritual associated with death and grief. As governed by the "RampeAlukMatampo", it is a ritual conducted in the afternoon. In any stage of the ritual, there contain religious and social values. Based on the social stratification, this TanaToraja ceremony of death is divided into four kinds, as follows: The disilik ceremony is a death ceremony for people of tanakkua-kua. The bodies should not be stored overnight in the home and buried in the afternoon or evening. As the narrative of Tuangin, 67 years, goes as in the following statement:

"Ceremony disilik was intended from the class of low caste or a slave or tanak kua-kua, who can not afford sacrifices, while those who could, the sacrifices are some chicken eggs, a rooster, a pig, and a Buffalo" (interview in the village of Batu, August 2016).

While the narrative of Mr. Remon, 68 years, is as follows:

"Disilik ceremony corpses are buried in natural caves (Liang silik) and they are just wrapped in a cloth without using a container ‘erong’ “ (interviews in the village of Randan Batu, July 2016);
Dipasangbongi ceremony is a death ceremony which lasted only one night, especially for people who come from Tanak Karurung, as stated by Mr. Marten, 60 years, as follows:

"Dipasangbongi ceremony is for people from tanak karurung, tanak basse, tanak bulaan with a low level of the economy. The sacrifices of these people are eight buffaloes and four pigs" (Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, July 2016).

While the narrative of Tuangin, 67 years old, goes as follows:

"The burial from tanak karurung, tanak basse, tanak bulaan, is in a cave, using the container in a rectangular shape, so-called 'erong'” (Interviews in the village of Randan Batu, August 2016);

Didoya ceremony is a death ceremony lasted for three days and five nights, seven nights, especially for those from tanak bassi with a high level of economy and those from tanak bulaan or the families of the high nobility whose level of the economy is low. This is narrated by Luka, 67 years old, as follows:

"In the course of didoya ceremony, the participants of the ceremonies should not sleep through day and night (didoya). For the sacrifices, they would be some to hundreds of pigs and 12 buffaloes” (Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, August 2016);

Dirapat or rapasan ceremony is a death ceremony for tanak bulaan, which lasts for at least seven days and seven nights, even in months and years, depending on the capability and family agreement. This ceremony takes place in two stages, Makbatang and Makpalao. Makbatang is held in tongkonan layuk and Makpalao in Rante Simbuang, as narrated by Efrahim, 60 years old, as follows:

"thatrapasan ceremony which is performed for high nobles (tanak bulaan) is held in stages and they take times. The sacrifices are from 24 buffaloes and hundreds of pigs to an unlimited number by the family’s capability” Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, August 2016).

All this information then may lead us to conclude that Rambu Solo ceremony is one of the cultural activities embraced by the people of Toraja, which in its implementation should be by the aluk or the cultural rules. However, in fact, this ceremony is no longer implemented strictly. Families of lower and middle classes to perform RambuSolo ceremony as extravagant as possible so as their social status can be higher. In the end, it leads to too much coercion and the waste of money, hat appears even coercion from inside or relatives and eventually result in waste.

The Buffalo roles in the farming system. The maintenance of Buffalo in TanaToraja is well conducted both in the highlands and lowlands by the farmers in paddy fields. This is related to the farmers’ using the livestock as a source of labor to cultivate the fields, from the loosening to the planting preparation, as shown by the survey of this current study.

The Values of Buffaloes in Cultural Society AdatToraja

Buffalo values in cultural society AdatToraja. The results of this research showed that buffaloes are used as a symbol of prosperity and the status of the members of the community. That has a high social value that symbolizes prosperity and social status, used in solving the social problems in the community particularly in the process of cultural ceremony ‘RambuSolo’. In the assessment of tana and kapalaw, buffaloes must be used to determine the number of buffaloes as well as the payment for kappa. Tanaregarding the value of the buffaloes also applies to the violence law and errors in adat law. For instance, when a noble with the status of puang would like to divorce his or her spouse, then the husband or wife who was convicted guilty in the customary deliberation (kombonganada) is required to pay tana’ of 24 buffaloes to the other party.

Socioeconomic value. Buffalo breeding business is one of the types of business developed in TanaToraja for the fulfillment of the family economy of the community. If substantial funds are required for an urgent need, then the members of the community may sell the Buffaloes at their disposal. This means that some money is the urgency, buffaloes are sold to meet the needs. Remon of 68 years old confessed that they rely on the buffaloes they breed on their backyard, as his narrated in the following:

"Thanks that we breed two until five buffaloes in the backyard as with them we could manage to meet some urgent needs and those that require lots of money, like for the children’s school fee, common purposes, and others so that we are spared from trouble of finding loans for others. Just sell the buffaloes".

While another informant, Yahanis of 59 years old, narrated as follows:

"People keep buffaloes as money reserves and as labors to cultivate the lands when planting seasons come " (Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, July 2016).

Similarly, Randa, 58 years old, came with his statement as follows:
"Buffaloes that we breed as preserve can be sold at times of immediate and urgent needs" (Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, July 2016).

While Marten of 60 years old said:

"the sales of buffaloes are carried out based on the needs of farmers, and the money may be used for setting up a business, paying children’s school fees, conducting traditional parties, and purchasing the household appliance and motor vehicles" (interviews in the village of Randan Batu, July 2016).

Based on some of the mentioned information, the buffalo breeding is aimed at money reserves, hobbies, or a source of additional income. While the Buffaloes bred for farming are used to plow the fields when the rice planting season comes. All the three purposes are an integral part of each other. Besides as the field labors and pleasure, buffaloes are also used as the family money reserves. Although in general Buffaloes bear a high social value, but the people of Toraja have a particular way to assess the values of their buffaloes. Such assessment is also made use by Buffalo current traders to determine the selling price of these animals. The critical value of the buffaloes is significant support for the family economy. While the narrative of Mr. Yahanis, 59 years, went as follows:

"Buffalo’s horn determines the value of the buffalo. However, the role of the buffalo horn is more important in male buffalo than that in the female. The size and the shape of female buffalos’ horns are not taken into much account while those of male serve as a meaningful decorative device in the community. In tongkonan, buffaloes’ horns are arranged in such a way as a symbol of the social status of the owners or the tongkonan" (Interviews in the village of RandanBatu, August 2016).

Based on the narrative information, it can be seen that the Toraja people assess buffaloes just based on the types of the horns, the patterns on the buffalos’ bodies and the palisu. Such assessment is a part of the inherited knowledge passed on for generations.

Discussion
TanaToraja as a realm of culture has a comparative advantage both regarding its old legacy, norms, customs, culture and the performing arts, and the art of the craft, not to mention the natural potential full of the wonders and beauty. All these are the blessing from God (PuangMatua) that must be maintained by the local wisdom that to make it as a world cultural heritage [7].

According to the philosophy of life of the community, the local language for buffaloes is Tedong or “Karambua” which have important roles and functions in the community for which they acquire the name “GarontoEanan”. This is evidenced by the use of the emblem of Buffalo’s head as a symbol of prosperity and life.

In AlukTodolo, buffaloes are viewed as the most prime animal as they are used as sacrifices of final values in traditional ceremonies. Additionally, buffaloes in the social life of Toraja people are used as the livestock to breed and give advantages for the family as to be used as the standard of the high exchange rate.

Figure 1. Roles and Values Buffalo

The Roles of Buffalo in Culture Society AdatToraja

Buffalo roles in RambuSolok ceremony. In TanaToraja community, buffaloes are used as a symbol of status of the deceased. In the old times, they were used in religious ceremonies by the whole society regardless of the social strata of the members. However, with the passage of time shift in cultural values of the buffalo as sacrificial animals took place that nowadays they are regarded as animals with very special meanings, sacred and of high value, especially in the TanaTorajagreat traditional ceremonies. One of the biggest and the most renowned ceremonies is the death ceremonies “RambuSolok” in which buffalos are used as a symbol of the ultimate sacrificial animals in the peak of the ceremony.
Buffalo roles in the farming system. Traditionally, farmers in TanaToraja do not work on their lands by themselves. They do that by such help from livestock, like cattle or buffaloes. Through such shared function, livestock is an integral part of the agricultural activities in the community. Livestock is even sometimes considered as the farmers’ friends. The condition indicates that livestock has an important role in Indonesian farming system, that is, as a source of labor, fertilizer, and the farmers’ extra incomes. Besides, they also play an important role for the family’s savings. This is an indication that TanaToraja farmer may raise buffaloes at times when money is in shortage to the Buffalo next sales can be used to support some needs, like for school fees, wedding celebration, house building, and other purposes. Another role of buffaloes in the TanaToraja farming system is a source of fertilizer. This role shows that farmers in TanaToraja use mixed crop-livestock farming systems. In this system, livestock maintenance integrated with farming. The using of livestock to plow land, transportation of farm products, and as a provider of fertilizer for the production of seasonal crops. Also, livestock also functions as a provider of food (protein source) and as a life saving[8].

The social role of the buffaloes is much caused as the farmers owning buffaloes are respected people in the society and have a particular influence on the life of the community. It is evidenced by the fact that the influential people in the society like the religious leaders, community leaders, and the wealthy farmer have buffaloes although their maintenance is performed by others. Buffalo keeping for mere pleasure can be found in these two locations despite the decreasing number. This case is conducted by beginning farmers, those who search for personal satisfaction, and those who just try their luck with Buffalo, who will proceed if the buffaloes show promising, thus, this kind of buffalo keeping is limited in number.

The Values of Buffalo in Cultural Society AdatToraja

Cultural Values.

Toraja ethnic, cultural community through RambuSolok is a culture full of cultural values and meanings. Cultural ceremonies are part of their living environment. During those ceremonies, one can have actual experiences. In that concern, buffaloes are animals inextricably tied with such ceremonies. Their roles, among others, are as follows: Buffalo requirements in cultural activities in Toraja community, Broadly speaking, traditional ceremonies in TanaTorajaaare divided into RambuSolok and RambuTuka. Despite some of the difference in the procession of the two ceremonies, the commonality between the two persists, that is, buffaloes are as the requisite for holding both of the ceremonies. However, the number, the type, and the price of the buffaloes for each ceremony are different; The tradition of using buffaloes, Buffaloes are traditionally used as a prime means of exchange and fighting animals. This tradition had lasted centuries and seemed forever; The community perception and beliefs of buffaloes, In regard with buffaloes, the community members seem to have different perception and beliefs as an influence of the different status of the members.

Economic Values

Efforts of breeding buffaloes play an essential role in the economy of TanaToraja farmers. The high or low value of a Buffalo depends on the quality of the buffalo by the accepted appraisal by the members of the community, the appraisal that has been used for generations since the days of the ancestors of TanaToraja. Before money is used as a means of exchange in the modern transaction, horned animals have frequently been exchanged with other objects in trades. In addition to having high economic value, this fat-bodied animal also symbolizes prosperity and signifies the level of wealth and social status of the owners in the community. Despite the traditional nature of these efforts, these kinds of business have a substantial impact on the economy of the farmers. Naturally, with the existence of such market, farmers’ income increases. Buffaloes as one of the commodities in the livestock sector are very significant for society, and their roles in the economic sector are to increase life assurance and family economic stability. Such business of buffaloes also increases employment in the livestock processing industries.

This business of TanaToraja can surely be sustained if the communities pay serious attention and the local government policies are there for support. Toraja people value Buffaloes based on the status of the buffaloes. The prices of buffaloes by the values are as follows:

- **TedongSaleko** (striped buffaloes) is a type of buffalo with perfect spots in a symmetrical position in all around the body. These buffaloes have very high social values that their prices could reach Rp. 500.000.000 each;
- **TedongBonga** (striped buffaloes) is a type of buffaloes with strips covering most until a few part of the body. The price for this kind of buffaloes may reach Rp. 100.000.000-250.000.000, depending on the vastness of the striped areas;
- **TedongBudu** is a type of buffaloes that are burly and black. Buffaloes of this type is very strong for fights. In the rites of the death ceremony, they come to be a strong fighter. The selling price for this type is around Rp. 30.000.000-100.000.000;
- **TedongBalian** is a type of castrated male buffaloes with some 2.5 meters in their body sizes. Their selling price is sometimes higher than that of the striped Buffalo, ranging from Rp. 150.000.000 – 250.000.000; TedongSambao is a type of buffaloes with bleak body color, neither black nor red. Their price is the most expensive, that is, from Rp.10.000.000 – 20.000.000;
- **TedongBulan** is a type of Buffaloes whose entire body skin is white. The local legend says that if the whole body of the buffaloes including his eyes is white, then the Buffaloes may not have the opportunity to live. The division of Buffalo into such strata is thus seen from the type of pattern and color in the buffalo body.

In addition to all the buffalo types aforementioned, there is another type of buffalo, called **TedongBulan**, in which the whole body of the buffalo is in white without even a strip of black [9]. The efforts to maintain that family interaction is a mirror for the cultural values and behavioral patterns of an individual member. Racial and ethnic apply to individuals, while culture supports interaction within the family system as well as with other communities.[10]. In the context of Toraja culture, the role of the buffalo
used as a means of family interaction and values accepted by this ethnic community. Thus the buffalos serve as a general measurement for lives in Toraja community as they have two basic prominent that philosophical value and material value. Philosophically, they bear values as the main sacrificial animals in cultural ceremonies RambuSolok and RambuTukak and as the symbol of working life and prosperity of TanaToraja community. With material value, buffaloes serve as sacrifices in RambuSolok ceremony. The values of the assets of the deceased and the legal values ‘kapa’ or ‘kapa payment’ set the level of the burial ceremonies.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and the discussion, it can be concluded that the roles and importance of the buffalo in the cultural society of TanaToraja is determined by factors as follows:

1. The functions of the buffalos in Toraja community significantly affect the lives and minds of the people so that the buffalos have always been a reference in the traditional ceremonies as they function as symbols of special meanings for the community. Buffaloes play in social cultural aspect they are used in traditional ceremonies like in RambuSolok and RambuTukak and the farming system as a means to improve the agricultural productivity by loosing the soil and by their dung being used as manure.

2. Buffalos are valued as the main treasure in Toraja culture society in which their values are determined by social cultural aspect, such as they are required in the common activities of Torajanese, used as a means of exchange and as fighting animals. Their values are also determined by economic aspect. Buffalo sales are conducted dependent on the needs of the farmers. For examples, they are required as a venture capital and their children’s school fees. It is male buffalos that are sold, but under some urgent circumstances, the sales also apply to females. Many Torajanese sell buffalos for wedding and for buying household appliances.

REFERENCES