

# Tau-tau dan ritual: fungsi dan makna dalam upacara pemakaman kaum bangsa toraja

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## Abstrak

### **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation discusses tau-tau as one of the funeral equipment (mmbu solo?) for the Torajan noble society (lana' bulaan). Tau-tau is a 'statue' of a deceased person. There are 3 kinds of tau-tau: tau-tau nangka', tau-tau lampa?, and batelepong. After a funeral, only tau-tau nangka is placed on top of a cliff, alongside other previous tau-tau nangira, while tau-tau lampa and batelepong are thrown to the shrubs.

At first, tau-tau was worshiped and mourned by the Aluk to Dolo Torajan family and community, but as the Torajan people left the Aluk to Dolo belief and most change their belief to Christiani or some change to Islam, tau-tau is no longer worshiped and mourned, but used to maintain and reinforce nobility. Therefore, tau-tau Aluk to Dolo rituals are modified according to the belief of a family who practice the ritual.

The phenomenon mentioned above is a general picture and a small part of tau-tau's existence and rituals in the past to present. Therefore, it is interesting to study it further; although Aluk to Dolo belief is gradually left behind by the Torajan people, almost all the principles are still practiced in various rituals, to maintain custom and tradition in Torajan.

This research's question is how the Torajan community conducts funeral where tau-tau is still made as a symbol of Torajan's nobility (although they do not practice Aluk to Dolo), and the use of it in social life and rambu solo'ritual which are conducted by Torajan Aluk to Dolo community and modern Torajan community.

This research uses Radcliffe-Brown's structure and function concept (1952), Durkheim (1954), Turner (1957, 1974), who suggest that religion reflects the structure of a social system, and functions to maintain the system throughout time. Structure and function concept sees the community as a system of social structures. Structure in this case is real patterns of relations or interactions among various social components - patterns which relatively last longer because those interactions occur in an approximately organized way (Saifuddin, 2009). The function of religion is an effort to strengthen and reaffirm social solidarity, and as something that has a significant symbol to a group or community. The existence of tau-tau's function and meaning which continuously changed and modified (no longer suitable with Aluk to Dolo), is an indication that the tau-tau they made no longer has a sacred meaning.

Findings in this research are: 1) Tau-tau is a personification, regarded as a reincarnation and the residence of the deceased's spirit after a series of Aluk to Dolo ceremonies. Tau-tau is accepted as a depiction of the deceased, not only shaped by association of

costume and ritual which affirms tau-tau as a "reincarnation" of the deceased, but also caused by the positive response from Torajan community which submits to and accepts the lau-tau and considers it resembles, even similar to the deceased. This made tau-tau is highly respected and worshiped by the family and Torajan community in general, as if the person is still alive. 2) Tau-tau represents nobility. This is because the making of tau-tau is based on social stratification in Aluk to Dolo, which is still held firmly by Toraja community up until now. Tau-tau as a representation of nobility also shows in how attributes, costume, and how the costume is worn by tau-tau. For example, the headband (passapu) on men, chignon (simbolon) on women, clothes (bayu), knee-length trousers (seppa tallu buku), sarong (dodo), pouch to store betel and nut (sepu). In daily life, only noble society is allowed to wear the costume, while common people are not allowed to.

Conclusion: The outcome of this research shows that the production of tau-tau as one of the funeral equipments in Toraja's noble families up to this day, has a close relation to an effort of reaffirmation and reconfirmation in group solidarity, and has a significant symbol in the families' social status in many ways, particularly in ceremonies where it is very respected by the Toraja community. The existence of tau-tau in a Toraja's noble family funeral was a part of a religious ritual, Aluk to Dolo. Therefore, it is not easy for a noble to remove a habit of making a tau-tau or a statue portraying a deceased person, even though they have left Aluk to Dolo belief.

Therefore, there are different kinds of tau-tau that consist of: 1) Original tau-tau (tau-tau Aluk to Dolo). It has a simple shape, not proportional, and entirely different from the deceased, placed at the funeral site, a spirit is believed to reside in the tau-tau, and is sacred. 2) Realistic tau-tau (Christian tau-tau). Ideal in shape and proportion, and resembles the deceased, placed at the funeral site, and profane. 3) Portrait statue. The shape, proportion and its style consider more on the artistic value to replicate the deceased, and placed in houses as an artwork. 4) Souvenir tau-tau. Made with various shapes, sizes, and materials, and sold around the funeral site and souvenir stores in Rantepao and Makale.