

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Research

The understanding and practice of sacrifice are known in every religion and culture. Sacrifice is upheld and is seen as a good and noble act. Realized or not, sacrificial values exist in every human being, in the conscious mind, or settles in the human subconscious. These values are practiced in various contexts of relations and carried out in several ways. Religion and culture are sources of ethical values that determine one's perspective on sacrificial values. Sacrifice is an important and very necessary attitude for the progress of a nation, religion, and group. The willingness to share some of the wealth, time, and energy for the good of others and mutual interests will create accelerated development and harmony in the welfare of society<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, the value of sacrifice needs to re-popularize amid a flood of individualistic cultures and egoistic hedonism.<sup>2</sup>

Sacrifice is the deepest teaching value that Christians believe in. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ to give his life through his humble death and resurrection from the dead is the culmination of the world's saving history.<sup>3</sup> His sacrifice is a

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob Viner, "Adam Smith and Laissez Faire," *Journal of Political Economy* 35, no. 2 (April 1927): 198-232, <https://doi.org/10.1086/253837>.

<sup>2</sup> Mike W. Martin, "Paradoxes of Happiness," *Journal of Happiness Studies* 9, no. 2 (June 1, 2008): 171-84, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-007-9056-3>.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Hefner, "The Cultural Significance of Jesus' Death as Sacrifice," *The Journal of Religion* 60, no. 4 (1980): 411-39, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1202658>.

picture of pure and perfect love. Sacrifices are part of the Christian faith. Believers need to sacrifice their lives every day because their lives and actions are more influenced and colored by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, whom they believe to be God.<sup>4</sup> Sacrificing means giving sincerely our valuable belongings for the benefit of others. Although we realize that willingness to sacrifice is a noble ethical act, in today's world, we rarely encounter willingness to sacrifice, maybe even considered a strange and stupid understanding. Even so, there are still small groups and individuals who are willing to do it. Sacrifice is a gift that is based on moral awareness,<sup>5</sup> which is sincere, without strings attached and without any agreement. Sacrifice is the result of a dedication. Sacrifice was based on "God's love for man" (John 3:16).

One culture that shows extreme acts of sacrifice can be seen in *Torajanese* culture.<sup>6</sup> The practice of their culture is assimilated with Christianity because most of the *Torajan* people are Christian. Sacrifice is carried out in cultural rituals to provide food for many people called *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo Rambu tuka'* is a thanksgiving and life ceremony, while *rambu solo'* is ceremonies for death. These ceremonies require no small amount of money, so often-traditional ceremonies are called parties. In particular, at the death ritual, the figure of budget

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<sup>4</sup> Nelson, Richard D. "He Offered Himself" Sacrifice in Hebrews." *Interpretation* 57.3 (2003): 251-65.

<sup>5</sup> Ionut Untea, "From Sacrifice to Gift: Aesthetic and Moral Aspects of the Experience of Awe for the Natural Environment," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 54, no.

<sup>6</sup> Dimitri Tsintjilonis, "Death and the Sacrifice of Signs: 'Measuring' the Dead in Tana Toraja," *Oceania* 71, no. 1 (2000): 1-17, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jJ834->

that is used for the implementation of this rite is enormous. This is a logical cultural consequence because this event requires many sacrifices in every stage of the ceremonial process. For the death ritual, it takes tens of buffalo, hundreds of pigs, tens of huts, hundreds of kilograms of rice, side dishes, sugar, coffee, cigarettes, cakes and other necessities that are used to entertain thousands of people for 3 weeks to a month. As for the traditional thanksgiving ceremony, hundreds of pork, side dishes, and drinks are prepared to entertain thousands of people.

To fulfill the customer demands of the *Toraja* people work hard, be able to live a simple life.<sup>7</sup> Income is collected and saved in various ways such as deposited or used to develop livestock or buy rice fields. So that when facing a traditional ceremony, it's not too heavy anymore. But for those who are less able to sacrifice this often brings problems such as child education is hampered because the costs for education must be used for *rambu solo* \ Costs for living necessities are often suppressed in such a way as to be able to save to meet customer demands. For some *Torajan*, the great material sacrifice at traditional ceremonies is seen as one form of Capital destruction.<sup>8</sup> Despite the heavy demands of ritual culture for *Torajan*, in practice the *Torajan* people cannot escape fully from their culture

One of the things that is interesting to note in the implementation of these rituals is the expression of the people who carry out and follow the ritual or the

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<sup>7</sup> Naomi Sampe, "Rekonstruksi Paradigma Ekonomis Dalam Budaya Rambu Solo' Di Toraja Utara," *BI A ? Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen Kontekstual* 3, no. 1 (June 27, 2020): 26-43, <https://doi.org/10.34307/b.v3i1.158>.

<sup>8</sup> Robyn Thompson, "Playing the Stockmarket in Tana Toraja," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (2000): 42-58, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1835-9310.2000.tb00262.x>.

traditional activities. Even though they have sacrificed tens of millions to hundreds of millions and billions of those who can afford it, they seem satisfied and enjoy the ceremony even though it is a death ceremony especially in a thanksgiving ceremony.<sup>9</sup> The organizing family is not reluctant to spend money even though in normal circumstances he is stingy. Usually, family and guests use new clothes, salon makeup and various jewelry. Despite being in debt, tired and aware that years of income were spent in a few days, the *Torajan* people seemed to enjoy the ceremony.<sup>10</sup>

The *Torajan* people seem to have the ability to delay small pleasures to achieve pleasure in the great sacrifice of many people for the good name of the family. In fact, the practice of sacrifice in *Toraja* traditional ceremonies, it is increasingly out of control, often even forced or not according to economic conditions. To buy pigs, buffalo, and all the needs of traditional ceremonies, people take debts that have been paid for years. In addition, this traditional ceremony seems to be a place for prestige battles among family members and a means to show off wealth. In observing and tracing the results of previous research, there are changes regarding the purpose of sacrifice in *Torajan* traditional ceremonies. In death rituals, previously, the sacrificial animals were intended as provisions for the spirits of the dead and to feed the whole people and for the special guest, but

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<sup>9</sup> Sampe, "Rekonstruksi Paradigma Ekonomis Dalam Budaya Rambu Solo' Di Toraja Utara." *BI A': Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen Kontekstual* 3, no. 1

<sup>10</sup> Andrew McGregor, "Dynamic Texts and Tourist Gaze: Death, Bones and Buffalo," *Annals of Tourism Research* 27, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 27-50, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(99\)00034-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00034-1).

later the purpose of sacrifice,<sup>11</sup> as well as to feed the people, is to uphold personal and family self-respect.

The interesting thing is that in its development, the *Torajan* people are not completely slaughtered but some are sold for village development, and more interestingly, they are offered to the Church. However, it is a shame that it's not that popular yet. If the church can direct and contextualize this enormous sacrifice and direct the sacrifice of these animals as offerings to God; because all that is owned by humans belongs to God, the welfare of Christians in *Torajan* as a Christian area will be guaranteed. Therefore, the slaughtering of animals in the ritual of *rambu solo'* does not become a kind of waste and a battle of prestige but directed to the glory of God, so that it is more controlled, and the funds collected are very large to finance church activities and missions. For this reason, it is very important that this research be carried out as a big step for cultural transformation that will bring prosperity and well-being to church members and the surrounding community who need it.

## **B. Problem and Purpose of the Research**

### 1. Problem

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<sup>11</sup> Paul C. Rosenblatt, "Grief in Small-Scale Societies," in *Death and Bereavement Across Cultures* (Routledge: Routledge, 1996).

Based on the above description, the formulation of the problem statements are as follows:

- a) Why do *Torajans* make such great sacrifices in death and life ceremonies?
- b) What happiness do *Torajan* people pursue by making great sacrifices in the ceremonies of death and life?
- c) How does the Bible and Christian theology view about true sacrifice and happiness?
- d) How is the contextualization of sacrifices in *Torajan* traditional ceremonies as offerings to God?

## 2. Purpose

This research is designed to account for those purposes below:

- a) Deep researching about motive and purpose *Torajans* make such great sacrifices in death and life ceremonies.
- b) To study about, the kind of happiness that *Torajan* people pursue by making great sacrifices in the ceremonies of death and life
- c) Deep researching the Bible and Christian theology view about true sacrifice and happiness.

- d) To analyze the contextualization of sacrifices in *Torajan* traditional ceremonies as offerings to God.

### **C. Assumption**

1. *Torajan* people make great sacrifices in death and life ceremonies to maintain the dignity of the family, social Service, and for salvation,
2. Contextualization and transformation of sacrifices in traditional *Torajan* ceremonies into a form of offering to God, will bring more lasting satisfaction and improve the welfare of the *Torajan* people.

### **D. Previous Studies and Experience**

Beginning in 2004, I was researched about the philosophy of work among *Torajan* people. After that in 2011 my research is about "Ethos and the Reality of Work Toraja Christian Youth". In 2013, I research on *Torajan* culture, with entitled "*Kande Sitnka'* Philosophy, a Theological-Philosophical analysis of *Kande Situka'* values in the existence of *Toraja* culture". Moreover, in 2016, I do the research, with the topic "In search of the peace philosophy of *Torajanese'*". In 2017, I research about traditional pawn of *Torajan* people, the title is "*Dipa'pentoean*, customary pawn transactions with fixed ratios in North Toraja in the perspective of Christian

ethics". And in 2019 my research topic was "countering religious radicalism with *Torajan* local wisdom".

## **E. Significance and Importance of The Research**

### **1. Social Contribution**

The sacrificial values that have been internalized in the *Torajan* people can be directed at religious motivation so that the impact becomes more positive. Excessive slaughter of animals can be limited according to the ability of the family concerned. Slaughtered animals; deliberate efforts are needed in the context of limiting animal sacrifices. This should refer to the everyday needs of the local community; the rest is donated to the government or religious parties. The price of a buffalo ranges from 30.000.000 rupiahs (2.700.000 KRW) to 300.000.000 rupiahs, in general the number of buffalo is cut around 7-30 buffaloes and occasionally there are those who are able to cut 50-100 buffaloes. At least each of the 7 customary activities from one congregation can donate 3 buffaloes at the lowest price, so funds will be raised in one church or congregation at least 630.000.000 rupiahs or around 56.744.054 KRW a year. From thanks giving ceremony average two ceremonies in one congregation that ceremony can donate around 1.000. 000 KRW. So, one congregation can



collect around 58.000 KRW. But unfortunately, this fund has not been managed properly until now.

With a fee of this magnitude will be a great potential for fund mission work and social development such as built roads, infrastructure and scholarships and others. Satisfaction from the family that provides sacrifice can be enjoyed and remembered for a longer period of time, because it has been realized in a more permanent form. For this reason, a conscious effort is needed to contextualize *Toraja* traditional culture with the current context to support progress in the future.

## 2. Scholarly Contribution

In this *Torajan* cultural theme, some research has been done before, but no one of them search about ethical reason behind the *Torajan* traditional ceremony as I do in this research. Furthermore, the uniqueness of my research is: this research not only about '*rambu solo*' but also will describe about "*rambu tuka* in other side, my participants come from every element in *Torajan* society who live in this culture, in entire their live, along three or four generations. As a writer and researcher, I live in among *Torajan* people, practice the culture, and have an ability to feel the psychological through the ceremony of sacrifice, finally I describe and formulate the cultural sacrifice, related to Christ sacrifice.

## **F. Methodology**

The method (model) of this research to accomplish this dissertation are: library researching and field researching. For library researching writer study deeply many sources such as books, theses, articles, journals, electronic sources, and others source related materials for the topic of study.

On the other hand, for the field researching, writer use descriptive qualitative and ethnography interview. In order to research this topic, I will principally utilize these four techniques: Participant observation, canalize of performance practice in *Torajan* culture, interview with the cultural leader, government, religion leader and practitioners, archival research.

## **G. Limitation**

The scope of this dissertation would be specified on the sacrifice and happiness of the *Torajan* people in traditional ceremonies of death and thanksgiving. This dissertation will focus on the practice and value of sacrifice and happiness for *Torajan* people in traditional ceremonies, within the “*Toraja Tae<sup>m</sup>*” sub-ethnic.

## **H. General Outline of the Study**

The presentation of this research is grouped into seven chapters. Chapter one will present introduction that outlines the general background, research problem and purpose, assumption, previous study and experience, research significance and importance (social contribution and scholarly contribution), methodology, limitation, and the general outline of the study.

Chapter two would be presenting the literature review sacrifice theology. This chapter explain terminology of sacrifice, an overview of sacrifice theology; as an access to God, theories of sacrifice according to Christian sacrifice. After that, Biblical foundation of sacrifice according to the story in the Old Testament and finally the truth in the New Testament. Then, I describe about sacrifice theology from Jiirgen Moltmann,

Chapter three explain the understanding of happiness theology based on the Old Testament and the New Testament, then Thomas Aquinas' theology of happiness. Last in this chapter the challenge of happiness culture today, especially YOLO culture in South Korea.

Chapter four will introduce the scenery of *Torajan* country with its ' ethnicity, anthropological character, geography, topography, demography and economy condition. Then explanation about ritual Zf sacrifice that describe paired tradition rules, basic norms, ritual of life and ritual of death, the importance of traditional houses as a centrum of *Torajan* culture, *Torajan* value lives and field research result.

Chapter five will discuss the contextualization of sacrifice in *Torajan* traditional ceremonies. Start with contextualization theories, and then sacrifice as theologian acts and social life purpose, sacrifice for eschatologist life and the last from sacrifice to offering.

Chapter six will discuss church role for new context. This chapter explain the role of the church as a theological and cultural director, five steps the church can take for contextualization consisting of: naming and embodying present-day action, critical reflection on present-day action, making Christian stories and visits accessible, vision for the story and the vision of the participants, responses to the Christian's life of faith.

Lastly, this study will be concluded by chapter seven with a summary, a brief discovery of self-knowledge for being a leader, recommendations for future researchers, and some additional suggestions for the church ministers and the followers in the new world.

