

# Simbuang Stone as a Symbol and Medium of Respect for the Ancestor of Toraja Nobleman

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## ABSTRACT

The Toraja ethnic community has a unique culture that was passed down from a predecessor generation and is still maintained today. One of the cultural uniqueness is the tradition of establishing a *simbuang* (*menhir*) in the implementation of ritual ceremonies, especially in the ceremony of the death of the nobility that is marked as the ritual ceremony. The question is what the role of the establishment of the *simbuang* in the procession of the death ceremony for the Toraja people. The research method was carried out using survey and interview techniques with ethnoarchaeological approach. The results of this study provide an explanation that the nature of the establishment of the *simbuang* at Rante during the *rapasan* ceremony is a sign for a deceased figure who will become a media of respect by his children and grandchildren and the relatives he left behind. When the ceremony of the ceremony is placed in a place of symbol (*rante*), the symbols that stand in the *rante* are considered as the embodiment of the ancestors who need to receive certain treatment such as respect, given offerings, a place to bind the buffalo symbolically to be offered, and even as a medium for worship of ancestors, as stipulated in the *aluk to dolo* belief.

**Keywords:** *Toraja, simbuang, medium of respect, rapasan, aluk todolo.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Toraja traditional people reside in a settlement location in groups in one customary unity. Based on the results of field observations, the traditional settlement of the Toraja people always reveals the existence of several elements or elements that show order and connectedness between one element and other elements based on customary rules. The elements in question are *tongkonan* and granary, *rante* and *simbuang*, burrows, wells, bamboo groves, rice fields and gardens and customary forests.

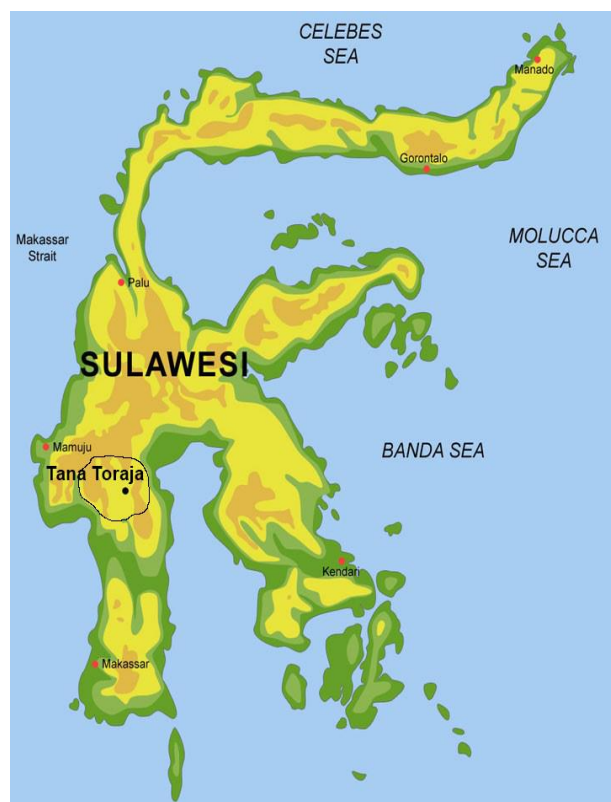
*Tongkonan* is always placed in the middle or always in the highest place of the other elements and there is always a barn to the south, the grave (burrow) is always around the village (*tongkonan* house) there is placed in the west, but there is also placed in the south *tongkonan*, subject to land availability. This also applies to the placement of *rante* placed in the south of the *tongkonan* and partly placed in the east. All the basic elements of

Toraja settlement have similarities, except for the grave. The form of a grave found in each of the traditional settlements of Tana Toraja shows the difference between one settlement and another. The results of research on the early development of a unique Toraja culture, have been known since the 7th - 8th century AD (Duli, 2012, 2013; Duli et al, 2019).

One important element in the traditional Toraja settlement is the *Rante Simbuang*. *Rante* is a place to carry out death ceremonies for the Toraja nobles, especially the high level ceremony called *rapasan*. In the *rante* a *menhir* (*simbuang*) was established for high-ranking nobles who had held positions as customary leaders or who were economically well-off at the time of the death ceremony. An interesting question of the existence of *simbuang* in the *rante* is what is the function and role of the *simbuang* in Toraja cultural system. To answer these questions, it is necessary to have an in-depth study by conducting intensive research

on the sites of traditional Toraja settlements that have Rante simbuang.

The study was conducted with a systematic survey method including activities of population calculation, depictions, photographs, measurements of objects and site areas, identification of species, determination of location, and recording of the environment. In addition, interviews were also conducted to obtain information about the function, meaning, and role of the culture in the Toraja cultural system.



## 2. PROFIL WILAYAH TANA TORAJA

Tana Toraja is located in the northern part of South Sulawesi and is approximately 340 km away from Makassar. The area is very easy to reach because it is supported by a variety of transportation facilities and road facilities that are very adequate. Tana Toraja Regency is bordered north by Mamuju Regency of West Sulawesi and Luwu Regency in the east with Luwu Regency in the south with Enrekang Regency and Pinrang Regency and west with Mamasa Regency in West Sulawesi Province.

Astronomically, Tana Toraja Regency prior to the division occurred between 119° 30' to 120°10' East Longitude and 2°20' to 3°30' South Latitude. Administratively, Tana Toraja Regency is divided into 9 subdistricts including: Rindingallo, Sesean, Rantepao, Sanggalangi, Saluputti, Bongkakaradeng, Sangalla,

Mengkendek and Makale which are also the Regency Capital.

In general, Tana Toraja Regency is steep mountains and hills with an average height of between 600 - 2800 m above sea level. The Tana Toraja area has an area of 3205.77 km<sup>2</sup>. is located between 1190 - 1200 East and 020 - 030 South East coast. Corrugated topographic forms consist of 20% plateau, 2% in the form of swamps and rivers, 40% in the hills and mountains, 38% in the form of lowlands. The state of the land in general consists of Itosols, regosols and clays which make this area very fertile for agriculture in the form of fields and rice fields.

The Tana Toraja region has a tropical climate with an average rainfall of 2000 - 3000 mm per year. Air humidity between 82-86% with temperatures during the day between 25- 30 C and at night reaches 15 C. The large difference in temperature and high rainfall and humidity causes various types of rocks exposed to the ground surface to experience very intensive weathering, so produce chunks and rock blocks that can be easily used for various purposes by the residents (Toraja in figures, 2014).

Mountain morphology with rough relief is the biggest part of Tana Toraja's surface. The mountains are generally north-south oriented, except to the west of the Bongkakaradeng area there are several east-west oriented mountains. Rocks that are exposed on the surface are breakthrough rocks, sandstone and limestone. Limestone (karst) hills stretch north-south along the Sa'dan River. The limestone mostly has wide and deep lines, and experiences cracks (Duli, 2001: 36-37).

## 3. MENHIR IN TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS OF THE TORAJA COMMUNITY

The Toraja traditional people reside in a settlement location in groups in a traditional unity centered on tongkonan (traditional houses). Based on the results of field observations, the traditional settlement of the Toraja people always presents the existence of several elements or elements that show order and connectedness between one element and other elements based on customary rules. The elements in question are tongkonan and lumbung (granary), rante and simbuang, burrows, wells, bamboo groves, rice fields and gardens and customary forests (Duli and Hasanuddin, 2003).

The results of a survey in Tana Toraja on 49 traditional Toraja villages, all found the existence of rante and simbuang as one of the elements that must be present in their settlement system.

**Table 1.** List of traditional megalithic settlement sites in Tana Toraja

No	Desa/Kel.	Sites Names	Location
1	Saluara	R. Batutumonga	Sesean
2	Saluara	R. Tabong	Sesean
3	Saluara	R. Bulahan	Sesean
4	Saluara	R. Buntu Limbong	Sesean
5	Tallung Lipu	R. To'lo	Rantepao
6	Nanggala	R. Pananinag	Tondongnaggala
7	Bolu	R. Patu	Rantepao
8	Kesu Malengong	R. Gantanang	Sanggalangi
9	Bunto	R. Buka	Punto Rinding Batu
10	Buntu Dengen	R. Paniki	Punto Rinding Batu
11	Buntu Dengen	R. Bamba	Punto Rinding Batu
12	Patapadang	R. Lalipu	Sanggalangi
13	La'bo	R. Mangian	Sanggalangi
14	Kesu Malengong	R. Galamoang	Sanggalangi
15	Sesean Matallo	R. Bomba	Sesean
16	Sesean Matallo	R. Matallo	Sesean
17	Sesean Matallo	R. Lempa	Sesean
18	Sesean Matallo	R. Kanengke	Sesean
19	Sesean Matallo	R. Tobulo	Sesean
20	Talu Lipu	R. Alo	Rantepao
21	Dura Indu	R. Tongka	Rantepao
22	Buntu la'bo	R. Bamba Mingkape	Sanggalangi
23	Rinding Daun Induk	R. Pa'Palungan	Sanggalla
24	Rinding Daun Induk	R. Patunuang Pananiang	Sanggalla
25	Buttoa Patan Panan	R. Indek	Buntoa Rante Bua
26	Buntu Ampang	Lembang Salu	Buntoa Rante Bua
27	R. La'bi	Rinding Daun Induk	Sanggalla
28	R. Sigunta	Nonongan	Sanggalangi
29	R. Barana	Buntu Barana	Rantepao
30	R. Balulang	Tikal	Rantepao
31	R. Sitanduk	Tikal	Rantepao
32	R. Ba'tan	Kesu Malengong	Sanggalangi
33	R. Buntu Paku	Buntu Paku	Mengkendek
34	R. Sipanan	Silaman	Mengkendek
35	R. Toddoa	Silaman	Mengkendek
36	R. Palato	Sa'dan Sangkaropi	Sa'dan
37	R. Kalimbuang	Bori'	Sesean
38	R. Pallawa	Pallawa	Sesean
39	R. Pasang Lombe	Mata'allo	Sesean
40	R. Walida	Mata'allo	Sesean
41	Ketek Kesu	Kesu Malengong	Sanggalangi
42	R. To'nagka	Kesu Malengong	Sanggalangi
43	R. Karasi	Rinding Batu	Sanggalangi
44	R. To'asa	La'bo	Sanggalangi
45	Panga	Ba'tan	Sanggalangi
46	R. Randanan	Randanan	Mengkendek
47	R. kalua	Buatu Sura	Saluputti
48	R. Embong	Tondon	Tondongnaggala
49	R. Lobe/Tayo	Buntu Suaya	Sangala

(Hasanuddin, et al, 2014)

This article will briefly describe some of the menhir sites found in Tana Toraja that are well-known and representative for other sites.

### 3.1. Traditional Settlement of Ke'te' Kesu'

The traditional settlement of Ke'te' Kesu' is located in Bunoran Village, Panta'rukan Lolo Village, Kesu District, North Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi

Province. Astronomical map 02° 59 '47.8 "latitude, 119° 54" 36.3 "east longitude, with a height of 814 m above sea level. It is directly adjacent to the limestone hills area on the south side, paddy fields on the north side, east side of the karst hill and the west side of the bamboo forest and paddy fields.



**Figure 1** The traditional village of Toraja at Ke'te 'Kesu'.

The area of traditional ceremonies (rante simbuang) is in the northern part which is about 50 m from tongkonan with an area of around 2000 m<sup>2</sup>. There are 17 menhirs (simbuang) standing at the rant. The size of the menhirs varied, the largest being 3.85 m in height and 0.9 m in stone thickness. The smallest menhirs are 0.4 m high and 0.4 m thick.



**Figure 2** Menhir of Rante Simbuang at Ke'te 'Kesu'.

### 3.2. Rante Simbuang Karassik

Rante Simbuang Karassik is a family burial ceremony from Tongkonan Buntu Pune, which is about 1 km to the north. Its location is at coordinates 02° 59'14.29 "LS, 119° 53'49.20" East. This Simbuang Rante is one of the funeral rites of the Siambe family 'Pong Maramba' from Tongkonan Kamiri Potok Sia in Buntu Pune. It was put into use in 1909 for a funeral ceremony for a grandson and uncle Siambe 'Pong Maramba'. Previously, Siambe's ancestor 'Pong Maramba' used Rante Menduruk as a place for funeral rites. It is located about 1 km from Rante Karassik, which is currently located at the location of Kodim 1414. The number of simbuang (menhirs) in rant is 26 in various sizes. The largest size has a height of 490 cm and a stone width of 160 cm. The smallest simbuang measures 65 cm high and rocks 40 cm wide. In the location of Rante besides simbuang, there are still other cultural symbols related to funeral rites, including: a). Lakkian, the hut where the body was buried during the ceremony at the rant. b). Bala'kaan is a hut built using kapok tree poles which are used as a stage for the

distribution of livestock (buffaloes and pigs) which were sacrificed traditionally at funeral ceremonies. c) Lantang is the cottage used as a place to stay at the funeral taking place at the rant, as well as d) the location of buffalo fighting..



**Figure 3** Menhir (simbuang) at situs Rante Karassik.

### 3.3. Rante Simbuang Bori' Parinding

Bori 'Parinding is administratively located in Kalimbuang Bori Village', Bori Village', Sesean District, North Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Being at an astronomical point 02 ° 55 '12.8 "latitude, 119° 55" 13.8 "east longitude, with a height of 835 m above sea level. The Bori site 'Parinding borders the Bori road' Kalimbuang on the east side, the tongkonan complex on the south side, the hill on the west side, and the bamboo forest on the north side, with an area of 19067 m<sup>2</sup>. Bori 'Parinding, also known as Rante Kalimbuang, was first used in 1717 by Ne' Ramba'. Bori 'Parinding is a place to conduct neat death ceremonies for eight tongkonans scattered around it. The oldest tongkonan is the Lumika Tongkonan which is on the northwest side of Rante and the Tokeran Gandang Tongkonan which is on the southwest side and Tongkonan Ne 'Mambela and Buntu Toding. Tongkonan Lolo' The stone on the south side and the Tokeran Gandang Tongkonan. Tongkonan Papa Kayu and Ne 'Kende are on the northeast side, and Tongkonan Ne' Lame is on the north side.



**Figure 4** Menhir (simbuang) at Rante Simbuang Bori' Site.

The Bori 'Parinding site is a combination of the ceremony field and the location of the cemetery. There are four lakkian built permanently around the menhirs which until 2010 amounted to 112 menhirs. Some menhirs have a height of about 7 m and a width of 1.5 m. The type of rock used varies, which indicates the amount of source area from which the stone was



planted. Bori 'Parinding is basically a ceremony field surrounded by bamboo forest. Around the rante are scattered large boulders, which are currently used as burial media. The stone is carved into a square hole measuring about 1 x 2 m. The hole is usually closed with a wooden door after the body is placed in it.

### 3.4. Rante Simbuang Pallawa

The Pallawa site is located in Pallawa Village, Pallawa Village, Sesean District, North Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Being in an astronomical position 02° 54'34.1 "latitude, 119° 56" 32.4 "east longitude, at an altitude of 864 m above sea level. Rante Simbuang as a ceremonial area in which 65 menhirs (simbuang) were built on average large and not arranged, located on the southeast side of the tongkonan and about 500 m apart. Rante Pallawa which has an area of around 3900 m<sup>2</sup>, traditional rice fields are spread on the north and south sides, while bamboo forests are on the south and west sides of the *tongkonan*.



Figure 5 Menhir (simbuang) at Pallawa Site.

### 3.5. Rante Simbuang Nanggala

The Pallawa site is located in Pallawa Village, Pallawa Village, Sesean District, North Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Being in an astronomical position 02 ° 54 '34 .1 "latitude, 119 ° 56" 32.4 "east longitude, at an altitude of 864 m above sea level. Rante Simbuang as a ceremonial area in which 65 menhirs were in the large large and not arranged, located on the southeast side of the tongkonan and about 500 m apart Rante Pallawa which has an area of around 3900 m<sup>2</sup>, traditional rice fields are spread on the north and south sides, while bamboo forests are on the south and west sides of the *tongkonan*.



Figure 6 Menhir (simbuang) at Nanggala Site.

### 3.6. Rante Simbuang Sillanan

The Rante Simbuang Sillanan site is located in Tondon Hamlet, Lembang Sillanan, Gandang Batu-Sillanan District, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province. It is situated at the coordinate point 3 11 49.4 South Latitude, 119 51 23.3 East Longitude, with an altitude of 1196 m above sea level, with an area of 3,109 m<sup>2</sup>. There are as many as 23 menhirs, located quite regularly, extending from north to south. This area has borders to the north bordering gardens and footpaths, to the south bordering bamboo forests, to the east bordering gardens, and to the west bordering bamboo forests. Rante Simbuang Sillanan is a millik of *Tongkonan Sillanan*, which consists of eight main *tongkonans*.



Figure 7 Rows of menhirs (simbuang) at the Sillanan site.

## 4. THE PRESENCE OF MENHIR (SIMBUANG) IN TRADITION OF TORAJA PEOPLE

Menhir culture has been known since prehistoric times (Caldwell, 2014), and continues until the era of ethnography in various parts of the world. Etymologically the term menhir (in Toraja is called simbuang) comes from the Breton language, namely from the word "men" means stone and "hir" means to stand. Thus menhir means standing stone or upright stone. In terminology, a menhir is an upright stone, whether or not it has been done and placed deliberately in a place that serves as a memorial stone in relation to ancestor worship (Soejono, 1984; Sukendar, 1993), even containing symbols that are myth (Whittle, 2000). Menhir function is closely related as a warning sign with regard to ancestral spirits, but its implementation in aspects of life in various community groups, there are different versions as local development of each region (Duli and Hasanuddin, 2003; Duli and M. Nur, 2016).

Ferguson's research on the Kasia (Indian) tribe stated that the menhir was established to commemorate victory and as a sign of burial (Mohanty, 2002). Chandran Jeshurun and Tom Harrison's research in Malaysia,

suggests that menhirs were established as a sign of burial (Mendaly, 2015, 2016). Furthermore, Haris Sukendar in his description of the functions of menhirs in various regions in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, it can be known about the functions of menhirs that are diverse in various community groups. In Ende, the function of the menhir is generally used in ceremonies relating to worship of the sun, moon and stars (oropa sanga). In West Sumatra menhirs were established in large numbers, related to burial ceremonies. In Nias menhirs have more complex functions (Sukendar, 1993), such as sacred functions and profane functions relating to social status (Hasanuddin, 2000). While Van der Hoop in his research in Sumatra said that establishing a menhir was a sign of gratitude after being released or avoiding a plague or disease (Hoop, 1932).

Menhir also has a function as a means to lay down weapons when there are certain ceremonies, as a symbol of adat, and as a means to save the skull of the king or tribal leader (Sukendar, 1981). In South Sumatra, menhirs found associated with dolmen are used as a means of worshiping ancestral spirits. On Sumba, the menhir which is located near the tomb serves as a sign to avoid the dangers that threaten ancestral spirits and as a sign of the dead. In Nias, a Menhir statue was erected with a function as a sign of resistance. The megalithic tradition in the area continues to this day, and the establishment of the menhir has a function as the symbol of the customary head, a place to bind the defendant to be punished, as a means to give the final command command, a place to dry the skull of the customary head, a place to keep the skull of the tribal chief, a place to put the weapons of the tribal chiefs who were temporarily convening, the boundary between the sacred and profane regions, and as a sign of a burial from the adat head. In the Naga (Flores) area, menhirs function as a sign of burial, where the number of menhirs indicates the number of people who have been buried (Sukendar, 1983). In Bali, the menhir has a function as a means of worshiping to ask for the fertility of plants, and for the safety of the community so as not to be disturbed by evil spirits. In the worship offered offerings aimed at preventing evil spirits from disturbing them (Yuliati, 1996).

The results of research on megalithic culture show that menhirs made from natural stone obtained from the surrounding environment (Serra, 2016, 2017) have various functions. The difference in function is usually determined by its location and context with other findings, for example menhirs that function as a means of worship are placed in strategic areas, such as on a hilltop or in the middle of a garden. Megalithic sites is originating from earlier periods and no longer functioned in society, found simpler forms of menhirs and always functionally related to the worship of

ancestral spirits. While in subsequent developments, especially as a continuing tradition in society, the bias of the Menhir does not always function in relation to ancestor worship (Sukendar, 1983), even tends to function as a symbol of social status (Duli and Hasanuddin, 2003; Duli and M. Nur, 2016). Even in some traditional societies which still continue the megalithic tradition, menhirs or erect stones are more associated with profane interests, such as those related to social status. But this needs to be examined in depth because it seems that the functions that tend to relate to the social aspects that are clearly observed in the community, are actually ideologically still based on their association with ancestral spirits (Duli, 2012). This is in accordance with the opinion of R.P. Soejono, that the construction of megalithic buildings such as the Menhir, has always been based on the belief that there is a relationship between the living and the dead, especially the belief in the strong influence of ancestors or ancestors on community welfare and plant fertility (Soejono, 1984).

Toraja megalithic culture is expected to develop rapidly since the 7th century AD and continues to the present in various forms of surviving traditions (Duli, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). In Toraja, menhirs whose raw materials are obtained from the natural surroundings (karst stones and andesite stones) reveal a different shape, layout and composition, apparently reflecting different functions. As described by Akin Duli and Hasanuddin (2003), based on the naming of the Toraja people, the menhirs can be divided into four types, namely basse menhirs, spilled menhirs, banek banhir types, and simbuang menhirs. The division is very closely related to the layout and function. Menhir basse functions as a medium in ceremonies related to agreements in relation to human relations and with the supernatural. The function of menhir type basse in the implementation of the ceremony is as a medium, because it is considered as an embodiment of the highest god (Puang Matua). Menhir Tumpuang, functions as a repellent, usually placed at a certain room boundary, for example at the village boundary or the boundary between the sacred space and the profane. Menhir Pesungan Banek, functions as a medium in the implementation of ceremonies aimed at human welfare and safety. Menhir (simbuang) established in Rante when a character has died, as an embodiment of the deceased person. However, not all noblemen at the time of death were founded by simbuang, only nobles had been high leaders or nobles. This embodiment is a true embodiment of the ancestors, because it is real and the community knows who died and founded the symbol, so that each symbol is known by its owner. Simbuang was established before the process of the death ceremony began and functioned until the ceremony was finished,

so that its function was a symbol of a figure who was considered as if he was still alive even though he was dead. When the death ceremony takes place, the ancestral spirits are considered to be present at these symbols to lead their descendants in their participation in the execution of the death ceremony, but do not play a role in their capacity as gods. Because it is considered an embodiment of a leader figure but not a god, the *simbuang* is not functioned as a medium for offering ceremonies like other types of menhirs. In the process of death ceremonies at the venue and the implementation of other types of ceremonies, no one makes a *simbuang* as a place to put offerings. Unlike the case with other types of menhir functions such as *basse*, *overthrow*, and *banek banek*, although it is considered a symbol of the ancestors but the ancestors in question are not known with certainty and from which descendants the ancestors came from. What is known by the community is that the ancestors have reached the level of perfection and then become a god, so that functioned as a medium of worship to the gods by placing offerings around it.

At the time of the death ceremony at Rante Simbuang, the participants consisted of relatives and friends, both coming from the surrounding area and from distant areas, to donate the victims of the main offerings in the form of buffalo or pigs. The buffalo is slaughtered by slicing its neck once (*maktinggoro*), then it is first symbolically tied to each symbol in accordance with the origin of their offspring, or based on which lineage is intended. The aim is as a sign that they are offering sacrifices to the deceased, who come from a character symbolized by a place where the victims are offered (Kadir, 1980).

The Simbuang function has indeed experienced very complex developments such as the meaning of the Toraja people until now, namely: as a place to bind buffaloes to be victimized in a symbolic death ceremony, signs of the dead or symbols of ancestral spirits, symbols to *adat* or customary leaders in a unity. Certain customs, symbols of social status, namely as high aristocrats, and as symbols of social prestige and legitimacy, especially those related to the legitimacy of power for their offspring. Megalithic sites in Toraja which are famous for their menhirs are Bori, Sangalla, Sillanan and Ke'te Kesu.



**Figure 8** Menhir (*simbuang*) of Bori' Parinding Site at North Toraja.

Other megalithic sites are menhirs in South Sulawesi, such as Pantilang, Kanna (Luwu), Tincu and Umpungeng (Soppeng), Lampung PatuE and Bulu Garaccing (Bone), Gojeng, Karampuang and Bulu Bapejang (Sinjai), Bulu-Bulu (Soppeng), Lampung PatuE and Bulu Garaccing (Bone), Gojeng, Karampuang and Bulu Bapejang (Sinjai), Bulu-Bulu (Soppeng) Bulukumba), Bissorang (Selayar), and Buntu Asu (Enrekang) (Duli and Hasanuddin, 2003; Duli and M. Nur, 2016). Menhir is typologically still ongoing in the recent times even today. Since the entry of Islamic influence in South Sulawesi, menhirs still appear on grave graves, such as at the ancient tomb site of Jera Lompoe - Soppeng, the ancient tomb of Sumpang Ralla - Barru, the ancient tomb of the kings in Lamuru - Bone (Rosmawati, 2013), and in several other regions in Indonesia (Handoko, 2016) even in the Toraja community even today.

## **5. FUNCTION OF SOME MENHIRS IN RITUAL CEREMONY FOR TORAJA PEOPLE**

Menhir (*basse* type) literally means a covenant, and in a broader sense the word *basse* implies a place to hold a treaty ceremony relating to human relations and with the supernatural. Based on the analogy of ethnographic data, the function of the *menasse* type of *basse* in Tana Toraja can be categorized into two, namely as a place for making agreements and deciding matters, as well as a means for holding religious ceremonies. *Basse* can function as a symbol (sign) of agreement between a group of people with the spirits of their ancestors. Menhir types of *basse* are usually established in connection with the commencement of the construction of a new Tongkonan house in that place, and at the same time as a sign of opening a new village, which is a fraction of the main village. The symbol of ancestral spirits, is associated with their first origins, namely from the highest god called Puang Matua. While religious is as a place to carry out the ceremonial lime ceremony, which is the type of ceremony that aims to convey to the highest god (Puang Matua) that a series of sign signs ceremony will be held in the community. In the ceremony, offerings were presented in the form of a set of betel food placed in front (south side) of *basse*.

*Basse* sometimes functions as a symbol (sign) of peace agreements and alliance with customary unity groups or other traditional villages. In this case, it is a sign of a peace agreement and alliance between one Tongkonan as a customary unit and another custom Tongkonan. Its religious function is as a place to carry out a lime ceremony, by placing offerings in the form of betel food as a sign of the start of a type of signpost ceremony, which is a group of ceremonies relating to

life to prosper with successful harvests and salvation from evil spirits.

Another function is the *basse* as a symbol (sign) of the occurrence of a war with a customary unity group or another kingdom. The symbol (sign) of the agreement is made as a warning that there has been a war with another group that has brought misfortune, damage and casualties, so it is necessary to make a sign after the war is over. The religious function is as a place to put offerings in the form of a set of betel food addressed to the highest god (*puang matua*) as a sign of the commencement of the ritual repellent, such as *massalu-salu*, *makdampi*, and *makbungik*, all three of which are included in the group of signs of *tukak* signs. The purpose of the ceremony is that the watchdog gods (*tomembali puang*) can avoid humans from the influence of evil spirits. Another function of *basse* is as a place to decide cases and its religious function is as a medium in carrying out ceremonies to ask forgiveness from the highest god (*puang matua*), as a result of violating the customary provisions that apply in society.

The function of *menhir* type of *basse* in the implementation of the ceremony is as a medium, because it is considered as an embodiment of the highest god (*puang matua*) which is none other than the spirits of ancestors believed to have become deities (Duli and Hasanuddin, 2003). In the understanding of traditional Toraja society, gods are ancestral spirits that have reached perfection so that they reach the highest god level. The god is symbolized by the type of *menhir* *basse*, so that it can provide magical power when used as a medium of ceremony, both ceremonies relating to religious aspects as well as those related to social aspects. Thus the function of *basse* relating to social aspects cannot be separated from the existence of symbolic interpretation of ancestral spirits. *Menhir* type of *basse* is considered as the embodiment of the highest god (*puang matua*) when it functions as a place to carry out religious ceremonies.

*Menhir* type of overlap is as a ritual medium to reject slots placed at certain space boundaries, usually placed at the boundary of settlements or boundaries between sacred space and profane, for example, types of *menop* that are placed at settlement sites aim as a repellent blades that also show the boundary between sacred spaces with profane space. In ceremonies related to rejecting objects such as *massalu-salu*, *ma'dampi*, and *ma'bungi* 'ceremonies, sacrifices are offered in the form of pigs and chickens. Certain parts of the victim are taken to be used as offerings placed in front of the *menhir* type of pouring. The purpose of the ceremony is to always be protected by ancestral spirits (to *membali Puang*) from evil spirits. Thus the *menhir* type of *tumupung* which is used as a means of ceremony is

considered to have supernatural powers, namely the power of ancestral spirits.

*Menhir* type of *pesungan bane'*, is as a medium for ritual ceremonies to ancestral spirits aimed at human welfare and safety. All of the offerings are usually cooked using bamboo called *piong* (*lemang*), either in the form of rice, vegetables, or animals that are sacrificed, such as buffalo, pigs and chickens. While the word *banek* means leaf, which is a place for offerings, usually what is used is banana leaf. So *banek banungan* is an offering offered to ancestral spirits by using banana leaves as a container.

The *simbuang* type *Menhir* in Tana Toraja is still used in society related to death ceremonies, especially the ceremony of *rapati* for high nobles. *Simbuang* type *menhirs* are established when a character has died, as an embodiment of the deceased person. But not all aristocratic families at the time of death were founded in *simbuang*, only nobles who had been high leaders or aristocrats who had economic capacity. This embodiment is a true embodiment of the ancestors, because it is real and the community knows who died and founded the symbol, so that each symbol is known by its owner. *Simbuang* was established before the process of the death ceremony began and functioned until the ceremony was finished, so that its function was a symbol of a figure was considered as if he was still alive even though he was dead. When the death ceremony takes place, the ancestral spirits are considered to be present at these symbols to lead their descendants in their participation in the implementation of the death ceremony. Because it is considered to be an embodiment of a leader figure who has been transformed into a god, the *simbungang* is sometimes functioned as a medium for offering ceremonies like other types of *menhirs*.

At the time of the death ceremony at Rante *Simbuang*, the participants consisted of relatives and *taulan* companions, both coming from the surrounding area and from distant areas to donate the main victims of buffaloes or pigs. The buffalo before being slaughtered by cutting the neck once (*ma'tinggoro*), it is then first symbolically tied to each symbol in accordance with the origin of each offspring, or based on which lineage is intended. The goal is a sign that they are offering sacrifices to the deceased, who come from figures who are swarmed by a place where the victims are offered. Thus the function and role of *menhir* type of *simbuang* in Toraja society seems to be very complex, among others, as a symbolic place for buffalo to be victimized in a death ceremony, a sign of a dead person or a symbol of ancestral spirits, a symbol to a custom or customary leader in a certain customary unity, a symbol of social status that is as a high



aristocrat, a symbol of prestige and social legitimacy especially related to the legitimacy of power for his descendants.

## 6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The social stratification of Toraja people who continue their agrarian megalithic cultural traditions in their daily lives is strongly influenced by clear social strata. Social status symbols for high aristocratic people who live excessively and are able to construct monumental social status symbols such as tongkonan and simbuang. The ritual of the procession of death becomes a means of proving social status for high-ranking, powerful and wealthy nobles. Ritual rituals of high death are known in their culture, called *upacara rapasan* (rapasan ceremony) which is held in an open field where menhirs (*rante simbuang*) are established. The Simbuang Rante site is a tool that must be built on a traditional Toraja settlement.

Simbuang for the Toraja people has a very important function and role in their culture. Made from stone material obtained from the natural surroundings, the size of the size is closely related to the economic ability of the nobles who built it. Rich aristocrats built large and majestic simbuang, middle class aristocrats who had sufficient economic ability only established simbuang that were not too grand and not too big, and ordinary aristocrats with a mediocre economy were only able to establish very simple and small simbuang.

In general, simbuang in Tana Toraja is still used in traditional societies related to ceremonial death, especially ceremonies for the level of rapat for high aristocrats. Simbuang type menhirs are established when a character has died, as an embodiment of the deceased person. This embodiment in practice is something that is actually real because the community knows who died and founded the symbol, so that each symbol is known by the owner. When the ritual takes place the simbuang functions as a symbol of a figure is considered as if he was still alive even though he was dead. Various types of menhirs are known in traditional Toraja societies such as *simbuang*, *basse*, *tumpuang*, and *bane pesungan*, they are essentially as symbols of ancestors which are used as a medium for various rituals that are implemented in the social system arranged in the *aluk todolo*.

The implication of this research is a recommendation for government. Tana Toraja has always been known as a Tourist Destination in South Sulawesi. It is natural that several cultures and traditions that have been ongoing so far will be retained to identify themselves and also as a tourist promotion. In the future it is necessary to always preserve the site and explore cultural potential by conducting more intensive research

so that all aspects of Toraja culture and traditions can be revealed. It provides an opportunity for the implementation of cultural education processes in future generations and also always maintains important values contained by Toraja culture and traditions.

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