

Reaping Wisdom from the Teaching of *Aluk Todolo* for Environmental Management

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Abstract

The teaching of *Aluk Todolo* (AT) adhered by *Torajanese* for managing their daily life is discussed in order to highlight the contained wisdoms which are beneficiary for the modern environmental management. Based on cosmological perspective the interaction between elements of the teachings is elaborated. The rules governing the interaction of the elements are potential to elaborate the identity life of the *Torajanese*. All the norms supporting the identity turn out to be relevant for the ethical and esthetical point of view in the current environmental management.

I. Introduction

In general, the ordered phase of a system shall shine a beauty supported and formed by order. The beauty possessed by the nature of *Tana Toraja*, stores abundance of information. Accordingly, the pattern of interaction between subsystems with various scales can be ideally existed. On the contrary, the breakdown is the process of information annihilation, which is physically known as entropy increase. The increase in entropy is always followed by the increase in disorder, and therefore the quality of the nature tends to degrade.

It is known thermodynamically that the entropy of the Nature continuously increases, commonly referred as the Second Law of Thermodynamics, where although the energy is conserved, the amount of renewable energy continuously decreases while non-renewable energy continuously increases. It is perceived that the breaking of the order in any component of the social systems and natural systems is the consequence of the patterns of the interactions which annihilates information entities. These components of the systems are manipulated in such a way the existing memory wares (storage, controller, modulator and demodulator) become disturbed, or even breaking, which in turn lead to inability of self-recovery.

In order to reduce the trend of quality degradation in a system, the concern of community member on the importance of recovery is a main choice in the development. The paradigm of the development in the past needs to be changed by simultaneously taking into account both economy and ecology, as well as by managing bottom-up aspiration rather than by adoption of up-bottom one. Accordingly, the development is not a scheme which uncontrollably coming from outside, but conversely it is the actualization of inner potential and environment. It is also admitted that in the subsequent thought, the development should be in a form of participation to the existence of the reality, both in local and global levels. Therefore the development should not be considered as a scheme which is merely based on local natural resources,

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but also should includes scheme based on knowledge and global interconnection (inter-connectivity).

The improvement of the sustainable utilization procedure of local natural resources should be based on equity and justice law among the community member in the same generation or inter-generation, and in turn it is the recovery law towards the exploited resources. The following verses mentioned in *Londe-londena Toraya* by J. B. Lebang [2003] are the indicator of old norms on equity and justice within the generation and inter-generation:

Apa siduruk dikale, bua pa'bo'yo'-bo'yo' *What you can pile up from the results of your effort*
Sandanni bati', da'na sumpu lalanna *Think of our descendants, may they not be in eternal difficulty*

The validity of these principles highly depends on the quality of the institution in the community itself, which can be observed from other indicators, such as growth, autonomy, and survival. The positive impact of the qualified institution can be seen from resistance of the old norms together with the projection of the new norms in environmental management with the natural resources, poverty alleviation of community members, well distributed welfare following the economic growth of community and the effort for sustainable system. This impact will increase various capabilities such as self-organizing in and for the sake of the system itself. The old norms supporting the capacity of self-organizing, self-supporting, and mutual beneficence among the community members and with outside community is mentioned in an article by J.B. Lebang:

The song of water as the source of life and happiness:

Tindak sarira merremme' dao lolokna buntu *The rainbow disappears above the mountain*
untuang uran, unnari kalimbuang *Pouring the rain, fertilize the spring*

A song of mercy for the sake of togetherness:

Ula'ko upa'na bubun, rongko'na kalimbuang *Imitate well's character, flow the spring*
mukkun mamengan, mukkun tang mekatae' *Always giving, never feels never fell limited*

It is admitted that the external uncertainty and complexity are very influential on the institutional quality of the local society, and therefore there is always uncertainty in doing action when the influence came. Although there is weary and anxiety, life remains having to be done, then systematic effort and care in facing it is badly needed (J.B. Lebang)

The verse about a journey always facing an uncertainty:

*Naa'panna' ta'pan mata, kuleak randan langi'
rampona' lako, rampo kanunu-nunu*

*Influenced by eyesight, one goes to the
horizon
Reaching very far distance, full of
confusion*

The verse about an effort always facing anxiety:

*Mataku'na' malaya'na, untiro bua ra'ta'
dako pu'pu'mi, dio tampak perarang*

*I am afraid , worried, of seeing all the
results
In a moment run-out, gradually
decrease*

The verse about life having to choose many possibilities:

*Tang ma'angge tu morai, tu dikaduangina
tappu' meloi, umbanna mupadolo*

*Unlimited intention, we need all
Choose wisely, which is priority*

Therefore, societal institution should evolve towards auto-poetical system. The intervention from outside is consequently screened by the value based on indigenous knowledge and does apply in the environment of the local community. If there exists fracture factor on a local system, then the nearest systems either that of horizontally similar hierarchy or that of vertically different hierarchy is supposed to influence its neighbour, so that leading to a mutually positive feedback. If the condition is otherwise, a mutually negative feedback will evolve from the broken neighbouring system which in turn degrades the whole systems collectively. On the contrary, the development of a system should enable neighbouring system to develop, and if the case is otherwise, the impact of the under-developed systems will degrade the whole systems. This rules hold the horizontally and vertically neighbouring systems are integrating into a single complex large system with full uncertainty.

The beautiful scene of *Tana Toraja*, known as *Tondok Lepongan Bulan Matarik Allo*, exhibits how the order consisting the full-life of its community. The daily temperature is fine, the flat and the sloping lands are covered by green leaves surrounded by the sound of flowing water, complete the harmonic environment which slopes toward Lotimojong Mountain. This is described in the natural song, *Londelondena Toraya* by J. B. Lebang:

Song with three verses of order which brings stillness and thankfulness:

*Toraya mennulu rekke nalolloan masakka'
lolokna buntu tamba'na kapussakan*

*Toraja stems to the north cuddled by
the stillness
All hills take away stressed thought*

*Tondokta tondok Toraya, lili' Matari' Allo
Taposikona, takurrean sumanga'*

*My village Toraja, the area of the sun
circle
Sticked to my call, To Him the
thankfulness uttered*

*Tondokta tondok Toraya, gente' Lepongan Bulan
Nabengan Puang, takurrean sumanga'*

*My village Toraja, surrounded by the
moon circle
The gift of God, to Him thankfulness
uttered*

II. Cases, Objectives and Methods

This paper will focus on how the identity of Aluk Todolo (AT) remains relevant with the current era of the development. Therefore, the objective of the paper will trace the birth, development, the adherence and defense of the AT identity as a law of encouragement and forbid between human and Nature; and elaborate the formulation of AT identities based on two main literatures, i.e., *Londe-londena Toraya* by J.B. Lebang [2003] and a book consisting of *Toraja* and its Culture by L. T. Tangdilinting [1974], as well as other written literatures. The method is the literature studies, interview of key hero and visiting the ground for some limited time.

III. Results

1. The Pre-AT Era

The region of *Tana Toraja* was initially inhabited by people collectively originated from the region in the south, who came through Sa'dang river using boat and raft. Although the tide is stronger to the north, the boats were able to reach the flat nearby Bambangpuang. The people of *seperinduan* from the same boat called themselves as those from 'Sanglembang' or 'angbua', who possesses the same culture and lifestyles, such as agriculture and ritual ceremony.

Initially, they had to search for suitable place for living (Lat: *colore*) and agriculture (it is believed that the English word, cultivation, was adopted from Latin word *colore*). During their leisure time in their inhabitation, the need for order in daily life is rendered by various thoughts for the self-fulfillment such as land property, self-immunity, ways of agriculture, marriage, inheritance, death, building houses, etc. Various ideas were doctrines in their way of life in long term, trial and error, reviewed, reformulated then developed into a set of principles, such as duty, encouragement, and exclusion, which finally for a culture. Those who inherited these values in the subsequent era called them as *Aluk Todolo* (AT), refers to the teachings from the ancestors.

The history of *Torajanese* migration from the southern to the northern part in groups was told by generation to generation according to each own group of *seperinduan*, such as from 'Sanglembang' until pre *Tomanurung* era [Rajab 1952]. The first group is known as *Ambe Arroan* group. After generation to generation, they formed a number of small groups called *pararrak* who spread to search for a new life, each was led by a *Pong Pararrak* (adventurer). In the subsequent stage, the distribution was followed by the arrival of the group of *kapuangan lembang* in Bambangpuang (*bamba* = camp; *puang* = the owner). Among them, during their migration time, there are some of them who diverged to the east, to the west and to the north within *Tana Toraja* region. The exchange of place and blood relation also harmonically took place either through conflict or treaty, association and de-association in turn in the frame of *Sukaran Aluk's* teaching based on unity, brotherhood, and mutual cooperation. The dissociation and association among the *Ambe Arroan*, *Pong Pararrak*, and *Puang Lembang* took place in order for the authority realization on a particular region based on idea suitability, or idea

conflict, or strength competition. The results of assimilation between the three powers resulted in new power known as *Kapuangan Bongga* whose one of its leaders' name was Puang Bongga Erong and the other with very strong and high commitment was Puang Londong di Rura.

2. The Birth, Evolution and Enforcement of AT

It was Pong Sulo Ara' who knew well AT's teaching until the end of the golden era of Puang Londong di Rura administration. After his golden era, there appeared old teaching development from *Marinding* area of northern part of *Tana Toraja*. The teaching was conveyed by Puang Tandilino'. The new teaching was then called *Aluk Sanda Pituna* (Aluk 7777). It was called 'pitu' (seven) as it is a combination between *Aluk Tallu* (three) controlling vertical relationship with Puang Matua and gods and *Ada' a'pa* (four) *oto'na* controlling interaction among themselves. Table 1 shows concise history of the people *seperinduan's* migration and their culture.

The implementation of *Aluk Sanda Pituna's* teaching was very concerned on local environmental condition, particularly in the ability to implement ritual ceremony. Therefore the area of *Tondok Lepongan Matarik Allo* (TLMA) was divided into three basic areas, i.e., sacrifice, pray and thankfulness, respectively corresponding to east, middle and west part. Based on this division, these areas were divided into three administrative areas, which was followed by a number of administrative groups, particularly after *Tomanurung* era. Firstly, the east part implemented *Pekamberan* Cult which consisted of four cult groups. This group was known as *Padang di-Ambei* (The guided field) which was governed based on the rule of *Siambe' Pong Pasontik*. Secondly, the middle part applied the *Kapuangan Adat* which consists of two groups. This part was called *Padang di-puangi* (The obeyed field) which was administered based on the rule of *Puang Pabane*. Thirdly, the west area applied *Adat Ma'dikai* which consisted of two groups. This area was called as *Padang di-Ma'dikai* which was administered by the rule of *Ma'dika Tangdililing* also known as *Pondang Padang*. Each area had its own representative board respectively called *Kombongan Ada' Ambe'*, *Kombongan Ada' Puang* and *Kombongan Ada' Ma'dikai*. The supreme representative covered the whole three areas was called *Kombongan Ada'*.

Tabel 1 Pre-Tomanurun Era

Era	Important Event
Ambe Arroan and Pong Pararrak (centered at Banua Ditoke)	Pong Sulo Ara' mastered Sukaran Aluk's Teachings based on the unity of family and mutual cooperation
Puang Lembang (Centered at Bambapuang)	Association and dissociation among several districts and several Pong Pararrak
Puang Bongga (Centered at Bambapuang)	Various strong Associations were formed such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puang Bongga Erong • Puang Londong di Rura
Puang Tangdilino' (Centered at Marinding)	Aluk Sanda Pitunna: unification of Aluk Tallu <i>oto'na</i> and <i>Ada' a'pa'oto'na</i>

The new power coming with concept of societal order had to start with the agreement from the old teaching followers, i.e., *Aluk Sanda Pituna*. To initially implement norms and wisdom, there had to be strong example which needed perception

to reach completeness of the old teaching. The success of the new power in giving examples in many aspects of life had led them to be considered as the descendant of god who came down to the world as *Tomanurung* at *Buntu Kesu*, *Buntu Kandora*, *Buntu Kaero*, *Rombe Ao'*, *Kabongian* and *Sado'ko*. The new teaching of *Tomanurung* was then known as *Aluk Sanda Saratu'* based on religious monarchy. The combination between *Aluk Sanda Pituna* and *Aluk Sanda Saratu'* resulted in *Aluk Sanda Karua*. The area of *Adat Padang di-Ambei*, *Adat Padang di-Ma'dikai*, and *Adat di-Puangngi Kesu* (Northern part) was consistent with the implementation of *Aluk Sanda Pituna* while the area of *Adat Padang di-Puangngi* at the Southern part implemented *Aluk Sanda Karua*.

3. AT Cosmology

The relationship between human being and human being, human being and Nature, human being and animal according to AT was considered as daily and eternal interaction which needs to be managed. Interaction between one and the other is mutually supporting for the sustainability for all. Among the people there existed a hierarchical role description of sustainer and supporter in connection with the relationship between human being and Nature, animal and plants. At the top of the hierarchy, the role of the highest sustainer was hold by the high aristocrat cast (*Tana' Bulaan*), the next hierarchy was hold by the middle aristocrat cast (*Tana' Bassi*), at the lower hierarchy was free people cast (*Tana' Karurung*), and lowest one was slave cast who supported all the roles above them (*Tana' Kuakua*).

In order to implement the concept, several rules were needed for the sustainable interaction, or otherwise some exclusion which might lead to extinction. If the relations are extended and considered in the form of at least six concentric circles, then it appears that it was originated from core identity, i.e., ego-sphere, up to the outer circle, i.e., cosmos-sphere, as shown in Figure 1 which consecutively shows ego-sphere, technosphere, socio-sphere, eco-sphere, geosphere and cosmos-sphere. Between these films, there was interaction resulting in mutual influence, either for sustainable management or extinction.

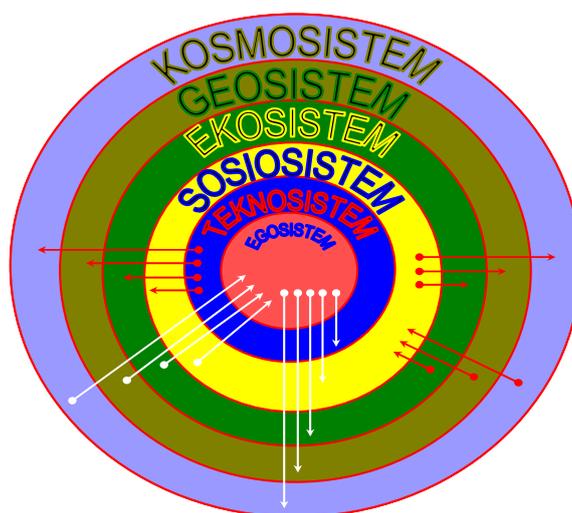


Figure 1 Location and interaction between spheres of *Aluk Todolo* cosmology.

In AT concept, the universe (i.e., sky, earth and all it contains) is an inseparable unity created by God known as *Puang Matua*. However, due to the existence of disorder

caused by human action contradicting with *Aluk Sanda Pituna* teaching, there exist separation between sky (cosmos-sphere) and earth (*Lino*, geo-sphere). There remained ruined ladders towards the sky (*Eran* in the sky), such several mountains as Sarira, Kandora, Kaero Mountain, etc. which lies in rows up to Bambapuang Mountains. *Puang Matua* and the other gods live in the sky, while human beings live on the earth.

Subsequently, in order to look after his creation, *Puang Matua* ordered the gods to act as the Sustainer. There are 3 main gods known: firstly, god living in the middle sky, namely the sustainer of the sky who controls cosmo-sphere; secondly, god *Kapadanganna*, namely the sustainer of the surface of the earth, who control geo-sphere; and thirdly, god living in the middle of the field, namely the Sustainer of the soil's, sea's and lake's contains, who control lithosphere and hydrosphere. In addition to these three main gods, there also existed other groups of gods corresponding to such places as mountain, river, jungle, etc. Among these, three sustainer gods who were known as *Puang Titanan Tallu*, i.e., firstly, the sustainer of ego-sphere, techno-sphere, socio-sphere and ecosphere, called *Puang Banggai Rante* who controls soil and human life; secondly the sustainer of geo-sphere, especially atmosphere is *Puang Gaun Tikembong* who controls sky, winds, clouds, rain and lightning; and thirdly, the sustainer of geo-sphere especially hydrosphere is *Puang Tulak Padang* (the god *Mangapi'na Padang*) who controls the earthquake, rivers and lake. For the intention of assessing the ethics and giving praise to human, the God ordered *Tomembali Puang* (the souls of the dead) to controls their own descendants.

Pemalinna Sukaran Aluk

The order of the environment regulated by *Pemali Sukuran Aluk* consists of exclusion principles inner and between ego-sphere, techno-sphere, and socio-sphere. The principles are known as *pemalinna aluk ma'lolo tau* (PAMT) consisting of three exclusions. Firstly, inside the eco-sphere circle and geo-sphere there exist interaction between human and the utilization their houses as resting places has exclusion principle called *pemalinna aluk bangunan banua*; secondly, interaction between human and plants has exclusion principle called *pemalinna aluk tananan*; thirdly, interaction between human and animal has exclusion principle called *pemalinna aluk patuoan*.

A more detail example of PAMT is the following four exclusions: Firstly, exclusion of *unromok sapen tabang* which limits in performing thanksgiving ceremony; secondly exclusion of *unromok panda dibolong* which limits the destruction of condition in performing funeral ceremony; thirdly exclusion of *unnola tangsalunna* which limits the behavior of societal interaction. Examples of this are exclusion *unromok tananan pasa'* which forbids people of doing bad, exclusion of *boko* which forbids marriage splitting, exclusion *unteka' palanduan* which forbids man of getting married with a woman from higher cast, and exclusion *ma'pakena* which forbids people from deceiving; fourthly exclusion of *aluk bangunan banua*, namely exclusion which forbids people of keeping corpse at the houses not-yet blessed.

In eco-sphere and geo-sphere there exist two exclusion principles, namely: exclusion of *aluk patuoan*, i.e., slaughtering cow together with its offspring, including a pregnant cow; and exclusion of *aluk tananan*, i.e., exclusion of doing plantation at night. Such an interaction rule between human being, plant, and animal is also called *aluk tallu lolona*, which consists of *lolo tau*, *lolo tananan* and *lolo patuoan*.

4. The Resistance of the AT Identity

Although many new thoughts arrives through Islamic teaching and Christianity,

the existence and loyalty to AT still applies and appears to be strong. Several utterances were mentioned by *To Minaa*, which is written as follows:

A caress song for sustainable hope:

*La tang rempo tana'mo aluk mellao langi',
Tang rempo tana'lan kapadanganna,
disiosso'i disiturananni.*

*Teachings from the sky will not be
exhausted
The stick on earth will not be rotten
But otherwise it will be used by
generation after generation.*

A caress song for hope of being followed:

*O, diallonni mamma', dituladenni matindo,
ia napopentoean manda' taruk bulaanta,
napopemparossoan matoto' lalong sumanikta*

*It becomes a pillow when we sleep,
example to be followed, a teaching for
the descendants, in the life of every
family*

From the verses it is clear that the intention to preserve AT still exists strongly, because it is believed that inside the teaching there exist norms building the identity of *Torajanese*, such as the idea of holism, togetherness and sustainability. Although there may be assimilation with new idea and new spirit in many aspects of life, the relevance of AT with the current situation is still hold.

5. The Identity of *Torajanese*

Personal vision as well as community which are always tightly adhered is the effort to be able to become smart (*manarrang*), wise (*kina'a*) and noble (*angga kale*). This vision is realized through several missions such as:

- *situndan sipakilala* (mutually awaking and reminding),
- *solaki' torro sitondon rau-rau* (unity in complexity, among all the differences)
- *matottongan lan mintu penggaukan* (to say that the truth is true, and the false is wrong)
- *ussattuan kale tu napotitumbunna* (egoism will results in stuckness)

The values in daily life of the *Torajanese* to achieve their vision and mission include the completeness, togetherness and sustainability. From the view point of completeness, there exists such values such as *katonganan* (truth), *kameloan* (goodness), *kamaballoan* (aesthetics); from the view point of togetherness, there exist values such as *marampa'na* (harmony), *masokan* (love), *makarimman* (peace), and from the view point of sustainability, there exist values such as *pa'paratui* (trust), *kabattaranna* (strength), *mukkun* (hard-working), *matuttu* (diligent). Every *Torajanese* collectively wishes their life achieve *marendeng* (happiness) by looking after *kapiradesan* (diversity) with *tasiayoka* (harmony). Although challenge and chance came in turn as a passage of time, the image of never giving-up, hard-working, and mutually reminding existing in *Torajanese* are included in the following verses:

A verse about the quality of life, never giving-up:

*Moi moro'mo tu buku, langga'mo pa'kalean
Manganan bakku', ra'damo kupotuo*

*Although the bone has been weak, the
body becomes old
Keep making basket for the
continuation of life*

A verse about suggestion for working hard:

*Ammu mari'pira iti', mellullung karerungan
Tassu'ko mai, anta lao tumorak*

*Why are you there standing still
Come out, we go for clearing the
weeds of the rice plant*

A song about togetherness for mutual thinking:

*Da' ta masorro situndan,
nenne' sipakilala
tae' tu tau, la tae' attanganna*

*Never get bored to mutually awake
each other
Always mutually remind, none free
from mistakes*

IV. Conclusion

Initially, *Aluk Todolo* (AT) is not a teaching which appears automatically, rather it experiences evolution through partial adherence, challenge and conflict, in the end there was an effort to implement spatially and temporally throughout *Tana Toraja* area, as point of departure. The sustainability of the AT's validity along the time is a point of arrival in the future. Between these two points the fluctuation of its adherence took place along the external influence as a dynamics of socio-ecological system. AT includes life between human being and the Single Sustainer *Puang Matua* together with other gods, between human being and the souls of the ancestors, and between themselves, between human being and the universe, and between human being and the sky canopy surrounding the earth. Therefore, it is from the AT, the identity of the *Torajanese* such as vision, mission, and the way of life can be elaborated. It is also these norms which can be harvested for the sustainability management of the environment based on local wisdom but universally significant.

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