



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF FISHERMEN'S COMMUNITY (A CASE STUDY ON THE ETHOS AND WORLDVIEW OF BUGINESE FISHERMEN IN TORONIPA VILLAGE, SOROPIASUBDISTRICT, KONAWA REGENCY, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at understanding the concept of "tellutemmaserang" and "duatemmalesseng" as a cultural value system embodied in the ethos and worldview of Bugis Fishermen in Toronipa Village Konawe Regency, the function and effect of the ethos and way of life in going through the socio-economic life as well as a shift or change of the ethos and worldview principles in relation to the dynamics of social and cultural changes occurring hitherto. The data in this study were obtained through field observations and in-depth interviews and analyzed in a qualitative descriptive way. This study lead to some main conclusions. First, in an attempt to lead to a variety of social life, the Buginese fishermen in this area base their life on the ethos and social philosophy which are called "tellutemmaserang" and "duatemmalesseng". Second, in the ethos and worldview, the fishermen realize that nature is an integral part of human beings, so that the structure of nature is reflected in the social structure, social stratification and economic structure. Third, with the ethos and worldview, to meet the socio-economic needs, the Buginese fishermen keep up high morale with untiring perseverance. Fourth, the principles that shape attitudes and behavior within the framework of integrated and interdependent social relations seem to undergo considerable changes occurring at the same time as the process of social development and cultural changes going through in modern life. Fifth, the economic and social behavior of Buginese fishermen in the past, i.e. mutual cooperation, has now changed into individualism.

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INTRODUCTION

In the process of living the social life in rural communities especially among fishermen, based on their ethos and worldview, these ethos and worldview provide specific guidance in their relationship with the natural surroundings (ecological condition), social environment, environmental influence (cultural setting), including the human itself (self existence) (Geertz in Tarimana, 1989). With the ethos and worldview, they will not do anything that can harm marine ecosystems and physical environment. However, based on the preliminary studies, the growing phenomena and the reality of life are polarized between the leader of fishermen union

(Punggawa) with members of fishers (Sawi) and other community members who live in the immediate vicinity. It is solely caused by the differences in their skills to use the catching equipment that is strikingly different between Punggawa and Sawi, and also in terms of the unequal sharing in the profits between them (Personal, 2002, Bauto, 2003).

The use of home-made bombs in the fishing activity is quite thrilling when we stand around the coast of the village. From about 200 meters in length, there is a burst of home-made bombs which are thrown or blown up by fishermen. Thus, we have a commonly held assumption that the hallmark of rural social communities with their local culture and customs, based on a code of ethics, homogeneity, solidarity and egalitarian, started to undermine greatly with the degradation of values and cultural norms today. For that reason, the research on "ethos and worldview of Buginese Fishermen Community" in the context of social and economic life, is urgently required, and it is real and problematic due to the understanding of the

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fishermen community towards the ethos and philosophy of life can be an alternative solution to prevent the use of homemade bombs in the fish catching process. The concepts of three in one (Tellutemmasarang) and the dual undistinguishable features (Duatemmaleseng) are an ethos and sacred worldview which can see the God, man and nature as integral and interdependent part, so that if they damage the nature, it implies that they ruin themselves. Based on the acknowledged expert opinions, and the results of the previous studies, the most basic concept of this research, is the extent to which the links between the cultural value systems and the ethos and worldview of fishing communities in providing a source of livelihood. Then, how the underlying principles of the ethos and worldview socio-psychologically affect the choice in using fishing technology, production capacity, the distribution of goods and services, and take advantage of the operating results that have been achieved as well as how the change of this principle is related to the social dynamics and cultural changes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kluckhohn (1961) and Koentjaraningrat (1984) assert that the characteristics of indigenous culture of certain ethnic groups who live in rural areas such as the ones in Southeast Sulawesi in relation to the community development, can be identified through five basic issues which determine the orientation of cultural values; namely (1) the truth of life, (2) the truth of work, (3) the worldview of time, (4) the worldview of nature, and (5) the human relationship with each other. People and communities in organizing their social life, shows that they have ethos and worldview that underlie and guide them in all their life (Geertz in Tarimana (1989). According to some experts quoted by Tarimana (1989), they stated that the ethos of a society is the social systems of cultural value which distinguish good from bad things (ethics), beautiful from ugly (aesthetic), and also the right from wrong (logic) i.e., technological value, economic value, the value of ritual, magic and religion and cosmologic value, and the value of a work of art. The ethos is more directed to the nature, character and life quality of the nation, moral and aesthetic style, or, in other words, the ethos is fundamental attitude towards the people themselves and the life itself.

Sociologists and anthropologists view that since the development of agriculture began to be intensified on rural areas, especially in rural Java in the 1970s, there are two opposing views on the influence of agricultural development towards social change in the countryside. First, the experts' view which regard that the diffusion of modern agricultural technology in rural areas has been increasing the number of landless peasantry where it leads to polarization. Second, the experts' view which regard that the diffusion of modern technology has achieved economic equality so that it does not lead to polarization, but rather increases the number of peasantry in a continuous and stratified spectrum of structure. (Scott, 1985, Marzali, 1993, Trijono, 1994, Collier *et al*, 1996, Budijanto, 2000). The debate about the changes in rural communities, especially in Java stems from the findings of Geertz in the 1950s. The main point of his idea is that the political and economic policy of the Dutch forced planting had lead to the involution processes and shared poverty. This view means that the impact of the Dutch government's policy did not divide the rural communities into the rich and poor dichotomy as generally occurs in the developing countries.

It occurs due to the fact that the culture of rural communities tend to be egalitarian and symmetrical social homogeneity (Wahono, 1994). When the New Order government (led by Soeharto) launched the green revolution program for countryside, it seems Geertz' view spark severe criticisms from many experts. Some of them were Collier *et al*, (1974) who contend that the green revolution has undergone an evolutionary process, so that the egalitarian institutional system in rural society is increasingly closed, which in turn may lead to inequalities and social polarization in the countryside. This occurs because of the ample opportunities for peasants with extensive land to be more successful and ignore loyalty to poor farmers. Of course over a long period of time, the villagers get polarized, so that the potential of social homogeneity which exhibits the distinctive characteristics of rural communities seems to be fading away. Hayami and Kikuchi (1987) state that the gap in rural areas is not caused by technology, because technology is neutral, but due to the uneven spread of technology, thus it cannot keep pace with the population growth. Some opponents of the structural school of thought state that the dynamics of social and economic value in village leading to the stratification is not just the presence of the technological revolution in biology and chemistry, but also conditioned by the high level of population growth and the emergence of capitalist system in rural areas (Hayami and Kikuchi, 1982; Amaluddin, 1987; Kano, 1990). The emergence of phenomena and realities of life concerning the polarized fishermen's community, especially among the leaders of the fishermen union along with their members and other people in the neighborhood, due to differences in the ability to use the fishing equipment. In addition, the unfair treatment also takes place between *Punggawa* (leaders of fishermen union) and *Sawi* (members of fishers) in terms of the unequal distribution of the catch (Peribadi, 2002; Bauto, 2003).

RESEARCH METHODS

The informant in this study was selected purposively, consisting of a key informant to obtain preliminary information and 6 other informants consisting of the fishermen union leaders (*Punggawa*), boat's captain and members of fishers (*Sawi*). This refers to (Spradley, 1997). Method of collecting data in this study was conducted through observation and in-depth interviews using close-ended interview technique. The data were analyzed in a qualitative descriptive way. The data that have been successful to be collected were analysed qualitatively with social anthropological approach. The interpretation of data was developed according to what is meant in the remark of Max Weber, namely *verstehen* in the case of obtaining a valid discussion concerning the subjective meanings of social and rational actions (Johnson, 1986). Likewise, the recording of conversation was analysed by using ethnomethodological method and symbolic interactionism analysis (Muhadjir, 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Social Economic Behavior

In living their lives, people show that they have ethos and worldview which guide them in all their lives (Geertz in Tarimana, 1989) and as a system of socio-cultural values which lead to good and bad, beautiful and ugly, and right or wrong (Al Bert, Beartie, Brain, Eliade, Gennep and Summer in Tarimana, 1989).

Like other communities, Buginese fishermen in Toronipa Village, Soropia Subdistrict, Konawe Regency, certainly have an ethos and worldview as well. "*Tellutemmasarang*" (three in one, i.e. "*pengalataalanabitaatana*" (Allah as the Almighty God, Muhammad as prophet and men as servants) and "*duatemmaleseng*" (dual undistinguishable features), i.e. "*attanapuangepengetaala*" (Allah and Prophet Muhammad). These are the ethos and sacred worldview which see the God, men and nature as the integral part and interdependent entities used as a standard or a normative reference in devoting their lives. This is where the ethos and worldview realize positive aspiration value which evoke every thought, feeling and behavior in all aspects of the social life, cultural and economic life. Buginese fishing communities understand that the ethos and way of life are extremely urgent and substantial in their lives, especially as fishermen, so it is perceived as something that cannot be separated (integral) with themselves. This occurs because it has given an enormous influence upon their soul (psyche). Psychologically, Buginese fishing community, in an effort to live their economic life, has a strong motivation and immense courage and eventually they have greater mobility as well. Their mobility and courage can be seen from the considerable distance of their operational area of the sea around Southeast Sulawesi, across the Kolono bay, around Menui and Wawoni waters, and they just operate small boats having a carrying capacity of 1.5 tons only. They could do it both in the west and east monsoon.

The ethos and the way of life, as recognized by the informants, derived from the teachings of Islam through the prophet Muhammad. Buginese fishermen believe that the whole universe is under the absolute control of the Almighty God, i.e. the whole things take place with His permissions and blessings. Such a firm belief has been deeply ingrained in their high spirit, so they do not fear death or any kinds of obstacles. They believe that good fortune, age, life and death have been arranged by the Almighty God, and human race must depend on Him. Based on the field observations and in-depth interviews, the writer found that there are some concepts still embraced by the fishing communities in organizing their social life, and some of them have experienced a drop in values in line with the dynamics of social and cultural changes occurring in this modern era. Through a qualitative approach, in the context of the case study, there are four factors underlying the life of Buginese fishermen in Toronipa Village.

The Conception and Attitude towards Nature

The conception of the Asian people in general towards the universe could be found both in cosmologic and cosmogonic perspectives. On the other hand, behind this physical nature, the eschatological orientation is obtained through religious teachings and typical traditional beliefs. Nature for them is integral and interdependent with the humankind himself. Therefore, they should be subject to the nature. In an effort to exploit the nature to meet their needs, they always maintain the natural balance. In the past, conceptions and cultural perceptions of fishing communities in the coastal village Tondonggeu were reflected in their social structure, social institutions and cultural values and daily behavior. It is recognized by the *Punggawa* fishermen that all activities implemented mainly in catching fish around the beach and at sea should be based on natural phenomena. Otherwise, they believe that the fishing activity will not last long and will eventually run into trouble.

This situation can be seen in some instances; (1) in an effort to develop fishing technology, the fishermen always emphasize the accuracy, appropriateness and usefulness. In designing the boats and fishing equipment, they must be adapted to the climate and the season at hand; (2) to identify a spot for shoal, characterized by a certain natural phenomena; (3) in the process of installing and operating the fishing equipment, it is determined by the natural conditions which are believed to be precious and marvelous time. Therefore, they are always in a relationship with the servant of the Lord dubbed as the wind ruler (Prophet Solomon) and water and fish ruler (Prophet Khaidir).

Perceptions and Attitudes toward Community

The cultural understanding of Buginese fishing community toward their society bound by natural process. Based on the in-depth interview with the informants, it was found an understanding in the review of Steward's theory of cultural ecology that the organizational structure of fishermen consisting of the leader of *Punggawa* (manager), the operator of *Punggawa* (the captain) and member of fishers (*Sawi*), reflecting the social stratification of the fishing communities consisting of Petta, Andi (noble families), and the common people. This type of social stratification system divides the leader of *Punggawa* and the captain as the people coming from the noble families. While the one acting as *Sawi* is derived from the common people. Such a social stratification is based on the ability and knowledge proposed by Geertz as "Local Knowledge".

Fishing activities with all the possible and potential threats, must be manned by someone who has supernatural powers from the noble families. Otherwise, it is highly probable that they will suffer awful disaster at sea. On the other hand, most of the *Sawi* are generally the common people lacking the supernatural powers, and they usually do not have the courage to sail across the sea unless they belong to members of *Punggawa* (captain). Moreover, the common people who have no basic skills in fishing, they usually catch fish as far as 1 mile from the coastline. The daily catch is merely intended for fulfilling his family needs and it is also sometimes sold to *Punggawa* who controlled fish marketing strategies. The dynamics of social and cultural changes that occur today show that the social status can also change for *Sawi* since they have acquired special knowledge adopted by *Punggawa*, so they can successfully enhance their social status to be *Punggawa*.

Conception and Attitude towards themselves

Mankind as a minor entity (microcosm) representing the major entity (macrocosm) poses the typical teachings handed down from generation to generation for the fishing communities. This is proved by establishing a close relationship with the natural surroundings (both in the real world and in the invisible world) as well as the relation to their own and other ethnic groups in their surroundings. The relationship with the surroundings, especially with the invisible world, as previously described, is shown in terms of anticipating the challenges of nature with all the possible consequences. The informants explained that mankind consist of four elements, i.e. earth, water, wind and fire, as contained in the great nature (earth). Therefore, if the wind is blowing hard, they just withstand it by controlling how to inhale and exhale the breath. Similarly, big waves can be overcome with

the water contained in human body. To this end, the conception of Buginese fishermen's culture concerning their own self is a symbolic representation contained in the real world and eschatological world. On this basis, Buginese fishermen are convinced that all relationships with the natural surroundings continue in accordance with the ethos and philosophy of life, then no catastrophic disaster will befall them. Conversely, if they underestimate their cultural values and faith, then they will face severe punishment from nature. In other words, the understanding of the invisible world containing supernatural power will not work properly.

Conception and Attitude against Time

Buginese fishermen perception about the present and future time seems cannot forget the past. In general, it seems that Buginese fishermen in Toronipa fishing village do not plan their promising future. They just focus on their daily chores and works merely to meet their daily needs today and are always guided by the past knowledge and experience. They were spoiled by the natural surroundings having everything available. Once they head out to sea, the catch is merely to make both ends meet for a time. The ethics of subsystem appears in religious myth way of life, including the lingering cultural taboo, and tend to be oriented towards the supernatural powers. In addition, they also do not like to surpass others, tend to praise or idolize managers and prefer to take a shortcut. Although in general the Buginese fishermen, especially in this fishing village, still apply the consumptive way of life (subsystem) and tend to ignore their promising future, few of them have abandoned such a bad habit, mainly due to the social and cultural dynamics as well as the advances in today's science and technology. Their perception regarding time is seen in an effort to perform their activities, ranging from building a home, buying a boat, going out to sea and selling their catch. They always believe in an appropriate or good time in order to avert disaster. They tend to suspend their activities in bad or inappropriate times.

Social Dynamics and Economic Behavior

The humanistic and harmonious ethos and worldview of the fishermen as a system of cultural values having the adaptive response to nature, social solidarity with others and humanistic *gemeinschaft* lifestyle, have undergone dramatic and drastic changes, especially in the contemporary trend full of logical consequences and the noticeable impacts. The orientation of cultural values which, in the past, tended to leave everything to fate, to give up to the forces of nature, to work to earn livelihood with the consumptive way of life and to lose respect for others' work, frequently ignore the quality of work, the vertical orientation as the picture of the mental attitude lacking confidence, deny the responsibility and do not like to surpass others, have created the culture change and its influence upon today's fishing communities. First, fishing activities used to be based on the ethos and the worldview with social and ecological custom, simple but appropriate fishing equipment in accordance with the natural state, the small catch of fish is just to make both ends meet, they used to barter the catch for other kinds of foodstuffs as well as making use of the temporary catch. Now, almost everything has changed, except the traditional social structure which is still maintained, although it is just a slight change. Empirical evidence in the field proves that those who catch fish around the Abeli Subdistrict are no longer based entirely on the ethos and philosophy of life

oriented towards social and ecological custom. It is due to the fact that, they have been using home-made bombs as fishing gear considered to be more practical and easier to catch a large amount of fish. In addition, the fishermen who used to believe that nature as an integral part of their own lives (microcosm), representing a macrocosm, has undergone a considerable change. Although damaging the natural environment actually means self-destructive, now they stick to a principle that is totally contrary to the past principle. Second, if catching fish used to merely fulfill their daily (temporary) needs, and not prefer to surpass other people's work, then at this moment they have been working with high economic motivation, signifying that they will stop at nothing to catch fish, though they have to do illegal fishing (using bomb). Third, if, in the past, the perception of Buginese fishermen on social relations between human beings is based on the religious relationship within the framework of social stratification and the supernatural powers owned by the nobility (*Punggawa*), then now it seems to be weakening, signifying that no more social stratification, so that all people are treated equal.

Stratification and Polarization Phenomena

When it comes to stratification and polarization, it is still hotly debated by sociologists and anthropologists, especially about the changes in rural communities in Java. As a result of the green revolution staged in the 1970s, then the experts are divided into two different views. On the one hand, the spread of modern agricultural technology in rural areas will increase the number of landless peasantry and create "polarization". On the other hand, the spread of the technology has established economic equality, and not lead to polarization, but the increase in the context of their social stratification. These results indicate that these two views appear to occur in the Buginese fishing village in Tondonggeu but undergo some slight modifications due to their potential impact.

Stratification

Based on the observation and extensive interview, it is shown that the *Punggawa* of Buginese fishermen in Tondonggeu is characterized as the informal leader (the leading figure). But in this case there are no factual and comprehensive data showing that the *Punggawa* are actually descended from noble family. However, the informant acknowledged that people having the title of "*Juragang*" (captain or skipper) are those who have supernatural powers because sailing and fishing are always confronted with dire or terrible threat. These views are based on two motives, namely; (1) metaphysical knowledge, specially handed down from generation to generation to their nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. However, the present tendency is the exception that proves the rule where transparent social interaction takes place. However, in the past, such a thing is a family secret that is considered sacred; (2) traditional fishing techniques fails to improve their social and economic welfare, except they set up in other profitable businesses like being a *Juragang* (skipper or captain) who can sail everywhere. Thus only a *Juragang* who could expand lucrative business that later can be used to develop other ventures such as the establishment of fishermen's organizations. Based on empiric phenomenon, the implications of social stratification of Buginese traditional fishermen can be seen in the organizational structure of fishermen in this village. But that is not entirely true, because there has been a *Punggawa* who used to be a *Sawi* in the local fishing business,

now has managed to enhance his status due to his remarkable skill in fishing and supported by advanced fishing equipment.

Polarization

When socio-economic growth of fishing communities in Tondonggeu has been fostered, at first glance it seems that there is no tendency of polarization of people in the fishing village. However, by careful and first-hand observation and in-depth interviews with some members of *Sawi*, the polarization between *Punggawa* and *Sawi* is extremely noticeable. The data about the gap between *Punggawa* and *Sawi* are analyzed based on the system and patterns of profit sharing between *Punggawa* (30%), boat (30%), compressor (20%) and provisioning (20%) and the *Sawi* acquire the remainder of the previous distribution. Of course, *Punggawa* will take more profit sharing belonging to their own properties, while *Sawi* will keep earning small income by this system. Thus, the fishermen's polarization of social and economic life is fairly noticeable in the *Punggawa* structure "The Have" and the *Sawi* category of "the have not" or poor. This polarization symptom is considered to be caused by the unequal spread of fishing technology or fishing equipment. In this context, for Buginese fishing communities, the problem does not lie in the unequal spread of fishing technology, but rather, it lies in the unequal capabilities in buying explosives used as the primary fishing equipment.

Conclusion

Based on the above descriptions, it can be inferred that (1) in an effort to spend and go through socioeconomic life, the fishermen in the fishing village Tondonggeu, Abeli Subdistrict, base their own life on the ethos and philosophy of life (ethos and worldview) as proposed by Geertz. (2) The fishermen do not only view nature as an integral part of their own life, but also at the same time as the social stratification and its economic structure, reflecting the natural structure, so that the activities conducted are enormously influenced by natural conditions, climate and natural state itself. (3) The patterns of socio-economic relations began to change over time. For example, three *Punggawas* used to be *Sawis*. Similarly, various activities undertaken, have been dominated by economic values, so the value of rural communities such as the social solidarity, contract workers and *gemeinschaft* lifestyle, seems to be weakening.

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