



The Roles of the Reba Ceremony: A Review of Cultural Anthropology



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Abstract

This article conveys the significant issue entitled: “The Roles of Reba Ceremony: A Review of Cultural Anthropology”. This title was raised from the study conducted by Hoban as a team leader, in 2018 which was carried out in Bajawa district, Central Flores. However, the title was inspired by an assumption that the Reba ceremony contains a set of roles that it plays, among others as an instrument to create a harmonious relationship with the Almighty and the Ancestors. This is an important and interesting issue to be discussed in this scientific paper. Then, it aims to examine more deeply the role of the Reba traditional ceremony. Moreover, the problems stated above can be analyzed based on the structural functionalism theory introduced by Talcott Parson (in Pell, 1994:60). He argues that every element in society has a function, which is contributed to maintaining a system as a whole. Related to this theory, the Reba ceremony is an element of the Bhajawa Society of their life system. Based on that theory, the ceremony attached to it has an important role in the life of its people.

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Contents

Abstract.....	105
1 Introduction	106
2 Materials and Methods.....	107
3 Results and Discussions.....	108
4 Conclusion.....	114
Acknowledgments	115
References.....	116
Biography of Authors.....	117

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1 Introduction

A ceremony is a term that can be defined as a series of planned actions with a certain order, rule, sign, or symbol of greatness. The ceremonial performances use expressive means of social relations related to important goals or events (Khairiah, 2018). Moreover, this term means rules, customs, and forms of ideas consisting of cultural values, norms, and laws that are interrelated with one another in one system. Along with that opinion, the custom is something that is known and repeated and yet it becomes a habit in society in the form of words or various deeds.

In connection with the notion mentioned above, this scientific paper is going to present “the traditional Reba Ceremony of the Bhajawa people, more specifically discuss the roles of the traditional ceremony. As quoted by Hoban (2007), the Reba ceremony is known as a farming ceremony as well as recognized as an agricultural tradition. Besides that, it contains a moral message and norms that guide people to live better lives, in harmony and peace. The moral message might be understood through the ritual stages and utterances spoken during the ritual. Meanwhile, the norms can be seen in the regulations for carrying out traditional ceremonies.

Recently, this traditional ceremony has faced a globalization atmosphere, whose influences can impact all aspects of human life. Besides that, it can cause a shift in the traditional values, the value order, and the norm that binds tribal citizens or fellowmen. Another impact of globalization is to lose and turn to other norm options. Under these conditions, society is faced with a dilemmatic choice between global norms and ancestral heritage traditions as an ethical reference for society (Dilley, 2002; Palmer et al., 1997).

As mentioned in the previous part, the Reba ceremony is a cultural reality that is grappling with the socio-cultural order of the ethnic Bhajawa, becoming as the ethnic identity of Bhajawa has slowly shifted. This can be seen from the disobedience of the people and ethnic Bhajawa youth in following the reba steam, besides that the process of performing the reba ritual is no longer complete.

However, the shift in traditional values (ritual reba) is deeply felt, especially by teenagers as the next generation of reba culture. Ethnic Bhajawa teenagers can be said to have begun to lose their identity as heirs to the Reba culture. This can be seen from the pattern of actions and attitudes that lack respect for reba culture in the involvement of adolescents in reba ceremonies and adolescents' passion for reba cultural values. Moreover, Most ethnic Bhajawa teenagers follow the reba ritual as a routine but do not understand very well the cultural values of reba which are the norms and role models of adolescents in the social life of the community. The Reba ritual is considered only as a routine, it is very dangerous to the mentality of ethnic Bhajawa teenagers.

Globalization and technology have influenced adolescents in life choices so that their earnestness in the ritual of reba is not a part of their lives. In terms of ritual reba contains a moral message that must be obeyed by every people in the social life of the community. This ritual is considered by teenagers to be a waste of time and effort, they prefer to live freely. This is evident from their disobedience in following the reba ritual as a whole, as if the Reba ritual only came to eat and drink, some even did not follow it at all (Mutanga et al., 2015; Yang, 2016).

Besides that, The reba ritual is unique both in the form of ceremony and from the sociocultural side. The Reba ritual in the cultural context is a ritual of the Bhajawa ethnic farming cycle. This ritual contains the life teachings of the Bhajawa ethnic farming community which are passed down from generation to generation. This teaching of life is reflected in the whole series of ceremonies that contain the meaning of an invitation to be obeyed by its citizens in connection with the relationship between humans and God (*God Zeta*), humans with ancestors (*ebu nusi*), natural spirits (*nitu*), humans with humans, both fellow tribal citizens and with others and the preservation of the natural environment. This is what distinguishes the celebration of Reba from other family parties in the Bhajawa ethnicity such as: *ka sa'o*, *lawi aji*, *kiki ngi'i'* wedding party and others. This reality has similarities with Tri Hita Karana which belongs to the Balinese people.

Although, the “reba rituals” of the Bhajawa ethnic as a farming community have undergone a shift in values, functions, and sequences, activities related to culture and worship of the ancestral spirits are still carried out. Yet, the preservation of this site is due to their view of nature which has supernatural power. Notohamidjoyo (1974), argued that human beings are influenced by a way of life, acting, social thinking, and totality, thorough, concrete, intuitive, inductive, emotional, mystical, and symbolic. According to Indonesian

people, the goal of human life is unity with the universe. They see this universe as a subject just like themselves. So, man, for instance, does not seek to conquer the world, but always maintains and guarantees unity and harmony with nature (Octavianna et al., 2020; Yan & Bramwell, 2008).

2 Materials and Methods

As stated in the previous section, Reba as a traditional ceremony is an expressional culture passed down by the ancestors of the Bajawanes people. From this point of view, Reba reflects on ancestral wisdom in the past. And another important thing about the Reba ritual is that it is still being carried out today. Then, the Bajawanes people maintain this traditional ceremony as a tribute and respect for their ancestral traditions. Therefore, in terms of methodology, this condition is understood as a cultural phenomenon.

Based on the clarification above, the team considered using qualitative research to gather the data. This study prioritizes processes that produce qualitative data in the form of words, expressions, and clauses both in written and oral form. After all, this type of research requires researchers to take part directly, and intensively and requires quite a long time in the field (Ericson, 1986). This is in line with what was claimed by Robert & Taylor (1973), in qualitative research, the researcher himself involves in the life of the subject with a natural background.

The type of data of this study is qualitative data in the form of words, expressions, and sentences found in the research field. Then, the data sources are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained in the field, the results of interviews with informants (tribal chiefs and traditional elders) while secondary data is data obtained in the form of previous literature studies and other official documents related to this research. Besides that, the data was obtained by recording, and the oral data (results of interviews) are primary, meaning that the data obtained in the field during the reba ritual ceremony is held, including the meanings extracted from the performers of the ceremony (Kim et al., 2004; Boyer, 2003).

The research instruments used to record the data were interview guidelines and observation guidelines. The list of questions refers to the formulation of the problem associated with the form of agricultural rituals in the Bhajawa ethnicity in terms of form, function and meaning. This study uses a naturalistic paradigm, one of the characteristics of which is the human instrument. Such character confirms that humans are research instruments because they are more able to adapt to uncertain situations, and can build from unspeakable knowledge, apart from what is said (Lincoln and Guba in Noeng, 1999). The focus of data acquisition is: on traditional elders (mosalaki), as key informants, selected informants based on the criteria that the person concerned is experienced and has knowledge of the Reba ritual, and members of the tribe (woe) supporting the reba ritual ceremony.

The data collection procedures used in this study are as follows: interviews, observations (observations), records and records and documentation studies. To collect data in the field, researchers used structured and unstructured interview methods carried out in this study. The dialogue was carried out directly in structured interviews to reveal the Bhajawa ethnic culture. To collect data in the field, researchers used structured and unstructured interview methods carried out in this study. The dialogue was carried out directly in structured interviews to reveal the Bhajawa ethnic culture.

The following method is observation. This method is designed to find out the mindset and behavior patterns of the Bhajawa people which are revealed in the Reba ceremony. In this research method, the researcher uses two instruments, namely the researcher himself and a format containing research aspects such as the form, meaning, and function of the Reba ceremony. On the other hand, field observations were carried out to obtain a complete and comprehensive picture of the aspects of the form, function and meaning of the reba ritual in the reality of the socio-cultural dynamics of the Bhajawa ethnic community.

In addition to the data collection method described earlier, the researchers also use the document study method. In this method, researchers are required to read previous studies about the Reba ceremony. How to collect data through the study of documents is important because documents are one of the media which is a record of social processes and phenomena. Documents often include specific details about social relations activities that are difficult to capture through direct observation. On the other hand, documents only contain a small part of broad empirical social processes and phenomena. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the internal and external documents that will be reviewed as data sources (Kartodirdjo, 1990).

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After researchers collect data, they perform analysis and interpretation. First, they organize, sort, classify, codify, and categorize them (Moleong, 1995). And then, they analyze the data based on the following procedures:

- a) Data reduction is the first step to reducing data that is not relevant to the problem;
- b) Data display is the next step for the group and categorizes data according to the function and meaning of the reba ritual in the cultural context as well as strategic steps in efforts to restore or maintain the authenticity of the rituals of the Bhajawa ethnic community;
- c) Moreover, the researchers explored the meaning and function through the interpretation of the meaning of the entire ritual process and the results of the interpretation of meaning should be confirmed with the customary elder of the community and as well as the functions or roles of that ritual to, function are carried out in consultation with the customary elders of the Bhajawa ethnic community;
- d) Lastly, the researcher concludes the form, function, meaning and cultural influence as well as steps to empower the reba ritual in the Bhajawa ethnic community.

3 Results and Discussions

This article raises an issue that has been investigated by a team. Referring to the research result, the team can conclude that the reba ritual is a series of traditional activities in the form of movements, singing and prayers that refer to the original belief system of the Bhajawa people in Ngada Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. Rambut (2015), claims that ritual ceremonies are usually called local traditional ceremonies which are sacred. Furthermore, a traditional leader, Naru (73 years old) said that the traditional reba ceremony was carried out to establish a transcendental relationship with the figure of the Almighty and with the ancestors.

Moreover, the ritual is carried out to establish kinship between residents within the tribal area. It is interesting what the traditional leader said that 'people in the area carry out the ceremony should be based on mutually agreed norms or customary rules. That is why all village residents should participate in the entire series all, other activities must be stopped.

As a result, this section is intended to explore the several roles of the ritual reba to maintain balance and harmony in relations with God and ancestors and on the other hand to maintain harmonious relationships with others and the environment in which they live. Therefore, in the following, the role of ritual Reba will be analyzed in terms of the context of relations with God and ancestors, horizontal relations with fellow human beings and the surrounding environment (Koenigs & Grafman, 2009; Hastorf, 2003).

Moreover, The reba ritual is usually carried out to harmonize and preserve the relationship between humans with God and ancestors, humans and humans, and the natural environment. To determine the significant roles of Reba ceremony, it is better to be considered the stages of its implementation such as cleaning the offering place which is so-called *wasi loka lanu* in the local language, place of offering (*bui loka*), the night of opening ceremony (*kobhe dheke*), and the night of closing ceremony (*kobhe dhoy*). These stages of implementation indicate the roles of Reba traditional ceremony. Moreover, it is clearly understood by the ritual speech of its stages that is spoken by the traditional leader and heard by all members who follow the ceremony (Syamsumarlin, 2018).

Therefore, by explanation, Reba traditional ceremony could be identified into three roles such as religious function, social role (solidarity and unity), and preservation of the environment. In line with the idea promoted by Taylor said that the role of ritual as a spiritual medium of sociocultural reality. So, the existence of the Reba ritual bears a heavy responsibility in the Bhajawa community, namely as a bridge to maintain and harmonize the connection with God and ancestors (religious function), as a binder of relations with others (solidarity and unity), and a guardian and preserver of relations with the environment (environment function).

1. The Religious Role of Reba

As stated in the previous section, the *reba* ceremony is a tradition passed down by the ancestors of the people in the Bhajawa district. Until now, the ceremony is carried out as a sign that the Bhajawa people are very loyal to their ancestral traditions. More than that, people love their ancestors. On the other hand, they believe that the *reba* ceremony is an ancestral belief which is referred to as the religion of the ancestors for several reasons, namely that the ceremony contains moral or good teachings and is a means of communication with God and ancestors.

According to [Hoban et al. \(2012\)](#), claim that the early religion of the Bhajawa ethnic group and the people of Flores in general are still visible in the social life of the community. In line with the idea, [Fernandez \(1983\)](#), says that human existence is determined by the cosmic and social whole. Humans and other creatures are both subjects on the whole. In the universe, humans realize themselves as insignificant creatures among the many creatures.

They felt that they had to integrate and align themselves with the universe. He always tries to maintain good relations with all members who are involved in a harmonious togetherness. He integrates himself in union with the highest being, with nature, with the ancestral spirits, with spirits and fellow beings who have higher power, with the same and with those who are lower. He must pay homage and appreciation to the higher powers, and act politely and orderly so that harmony is guaranteed which brings happiness and peace to life.

Furthermore, [Koentjaraningrat \(1998\)](#), says that people's belief in magical things is still present among ethnic groups in Indonesia even though they have been influenced by major religions. In attitude, behavior, and mentality, mystical thoughts are still visible. The mystical thinking referred to here is the human attitude that feels surrounded by supernatural (natural) forces around it, namely the power of the gods of the universe or the power of fertility as staged in mythology ([Van Peursen, 1985](#); [Fernandez, 1990](#)).

In addition, mystical and magical ways of thinking are still visible and inherent in the life order of the Bhajawa ethnic community. This can be seen from their activities in social and cultural life which are always preceded by rites as a form of respect for God and ancestral spirits, as well as their view of those who have supernatural powers. The rites performed by the Bhajawa ethnic group at certain times and continuously are considered traditions as well as religion. This religion is practised by the Bhajawa ethnic farming community as a spiritual activity to align humans with the Supreme Being, ancestral spirits and other nature spirits.

In the religious dimension, the *Reba* ritual is a vehicle for regulating the behavior of the Bhajawa ethnic farming community in a pattern of action, both the relationship with the highest being as well as the human relationship with others and the human relationship with the natural surroundings. Moreover, [Purwasito \(2003\)](#), said that the power of religious elements is human belief in the existence of the highest power which is considered to have a higher position than humans. For this reason, people carry out religious ritual activities as a vehicle to communicate with this supreme power according to their beliefs. So, the statement indicates that the *reba* ceremony holds a religious role.

In the current development of religiosity, especially for the ethnic Bhajawa farming community, the concept of *Dewa Zeta* is very familiar in their lives. The term *Dewa Zeta* which means the Highest Being is equivalent to the terms *Du'a Ngg'a'e* for the Ende lio ethnic, *Mori Kraeng* for the Manggarai ethnic, *Ina Nian Tana Wawa Ama Lero Wulan Reta* for the Sikka ethnic, *Rera Wulan Tana Ekan* for the Lamaholot ethnic. Religion is surrender to God, with the belief that humans depend on God. It is God who provides salvation for humans so that humans surrender to Him (*Driayarkara* in [Herusatoto, 1977](#)). [Koentjaraningrat \(1988\)](#), defines religion as a system consisting of four components (1) religious emotions that cause humans to become religious or a vibration that moves the human soul; (2) a belief system that contains human beliefs and imagination about God, the existence of the supernatural, the supernatural, and the forms of gods, and other spirits inhabiting the unseen realm, (3) a system of religious ceremonies aimed at seeking human relations with God, gods and spirits that inhabit the unseen world, (4) religious groups and social units.

Magical and mystical thoughts are also reflected in the social life of the Bhajawa ethnic farming community. [Subagya \(1979\)](#), says that thinking magically, mystically, magical humans are humans who project nature and natural energy into themselves and imagine a fictitious power over nature. He controls nature not with technique, but with sorcery and magic. Power is not experienced empirically but imagined a priori through mantras, primbons, taboos, magic and ceremonies. A mystical man is a man who makes every effort so that self-awareness is merged into an awareness of oneness with the cosmos, with the universe.

The religion of the Bhajawa ethnic community with symbols that lead to the worship of the highest being called: Lord Zeta. The figure of the highest Being animates the Bhajawa ethnicity. Apart from worshipping the supreme god, Dewa Zeta, the Bhajawa ethnic community also recognizes other forms of respect for other gods, such as ancestral spirits (*ebu nusi*) and other spirits that inhabit nature. As a form of obedience to the god Zeta and the ancestral spirits and spirits that inhabit this realm, the Bhajawa ethnic group performs rites. Rites as a religious reality are embodied in the form of symbols such as cultural discourse which is used as a medium in the Reba ceremony. This is done as a form of their understanding of forces outside of humans, which greatly determine their existence as humans. This understanding and concept are reflected in the means and language used in the Reba ritual as a form of religious activity. The Reba ritual as a religious aspect contains messages of worship of the highest being (God Zeta), the ancestors (*ebu nusi*) and other natural spirits.

With the entry of Catholicism in 16th-century poetry, the original religion of the Bhajawa ethnic group underwent a shift and change. This can be seen in the existence of ceremonies both concerning the circle of human life and in the agricultural sphere, which were previously carried out traditionally but now involve the church, namely starting with a holy mass by the priest or deacon.

Despite the influence of modern religions, such as the Catholic religion as described above, pure religion is still adhered to by the Bhajawa ethnic community. Pure religion is a myth. One of them is the Reba mythology adopted by the Bhajawa ethnic community. Hayon said that it is generally said that myths are stories about "the Holy One". *Mithe* or *mythos* is a Greek word that comes from the Indo-European word, namely *meudh* or *mudh* which means to recall, contemplate or consider so that myth is then interpreted as a story about a sacred event that once happened at a certain time (986:36). To the Reba ritual, it is seen by the Bhajawa ethnic group as a sacred experience that inspires it to be realized in socio-cultural reality.

Sara (1982), says mythology or myth is a real story coloured by past situations, which is a mingling of the divine with the human and the natural with the natural. Mite is a sign of real spiritual life in traditional society, which is prehistoric and is something sacred. Because of that myth is a way of life for humans. According to Sara (1982), said that Mite is a divine form for humans. Furthermore, Wouden (1985) states that myth is a sacred story about the nature of things, which took place in ancient times. Through the distinction between the present and the mystical ancient times, the sacred and profane characteristics are revealed. However, this profane present flow is interspersed with sacred act rites, thus mystical events from ancient times are displayed again and again for generations living today. Thanks to the interaction of human power and cosmic power in this rite, the preservation of the universe is guaranteed. The link between human power and cosmic power and the overarching classifications based on social criteria are both a result and a cause of the essential unity of culture.

The Reba ritual as a religious aspect which is raised in this paper is revealed through the narratives of traditional elders, that in ancient times there lived a farmer named Sili in the village of Bena, south of the center of the capital of Ngada Regency. As a farmer, Sili planted a garden with *uji* (*discoerea alata*) for his family's life. As a farmer, Sili works to support his family but every year does not meet the family's needs even though the land around him is very fertile. It was told that the cassava plants that were cultivated did indeed appear to be thriving, however each time the harvest always disappointed Sili because the tiles were small. One day, Sili accidentally replaced the cassava (*ladu uji*) supporting wood in his garden with *kaju reba*. After replacing the supporting wood (*ladu uji*) with *kaju reba*, a miracle happened that surprised Sili and his family. Before the harvest of yams or yams the results were very satisfying, it was even said that some of the yams were plundered by a herd of wild boars, on the other hand, a group of porcupines came to destroy the yams, but there were still lots of *uji* in Sili's garden. Sili then invited the whole village to harvest *uji* in his garden. But an extraordinary miracle happened because the sweet potatoes that were dug up never ran out. The whole village was in an uproar, and Sili frankly said that he had replaced the *ladu uji* in his garden with *kaju reba*.

At night after the harvest, Sili dreams of being visited by a very authoritative grandfather, asking for human sacrifices in exchange for an abundant harvest. The dream occurred repeatedly the following night, causing fear for Sili and his family, so Sili looked for a way out to be free from the calamity that threatened Sili and his family.

The next night the very authoritative grandfather came again, so Sili seduced the grandfather, the head of a human being replaced by a ritual/ceremony by all its residents. The ceremony will be held every year by bringing offerings to the god Zeta Nitu Zale to give thanks for all the successes that have been achieved by its

citizens, and safety from the threat of death. Based on this consideration, in the Bhajawa ethnic tradition, a reba ritual is held at a certain time every year.

In the cultural context, myths have provided a foundation in socio-cultural reality, so they cannot be thrown away from a rational point of view. The element of myth is needed to understand the reality of the Reba ritual as a religious element. Thus Reba mythology is expressed in rituals to bring back sacred experiences in the past which contain some norms for its citizens to repeat or re-experience in the present.

The Reba ritual reminds its current residents of the longing or hope that used to be their ancestor's role model (at the beginning of Sili), to be applied to the present and future. Mythology or myths are seen as something holy and sacred so they demand respect for their citizens, because behind that there is an almighty power that controls humans.

It can be concluded that the rituals of Reba ceremony are held by special people, tribal chiefs or people who have special expertise. Mites as the basis of the original religion before the development of major religions in the world. Mite is performed with great respect because it presents the highest form and the ancestors. In myths and rites, there is a very close spiritual relationship between the supreme being (*God Zeta*) as the ruler of everything and his citizens. The relationship with the highest being is reflected in good relations between humans and each other. The things stated above will appear at every stage of the Reba celebration.

2. Social Roles of Reba Ritual:

The Reba ritual always provides space and time for communities in the Bajawa district to interact with each other. On that occasion, they create patterns of togetherness, mutual assistance, and a beautiful and harmonious opportunity to reunite. That is the most beautiful time for those who migrate elsewhere. Primarily, the traditional ceremony creates a harmonious relationship with the ancestors and the Highest Being. This is called "Collective thinking" (Hoban, 2007). Moreover, he argues that the term, in general, is also presented in the ethnic group of people in the East Nusa Tenggara Province and in particular the Bhajawa ethnic farming community. In addition, Nataatmaja (1984), say that to be able to practice it humanely, these values must be rooted in human nature, especially from the meaning and position of humans with other humans.

On the other hand, we cannot deny that humans always live together with other people. Their lives can be meaningful if they work together, help each other, and love one another. However, humans as living beings have feelings, therefore in living together a positive response from other people is needed. These emotional reactions are understanding, compassion, self-esteem, recognition, and other emotional responses that are very important for healthy relationships and well-being. To express the togetherness and collectivity of the Bhajawa ethnic community in the Reba ritual, there is the expression "*modhe-modhe ne'e hoga woe*" which means to be kind to others and *Moku bhou meda utu* means sitting together for one purpose. These two expressions indicate that the reba traditional ceremony carries the responsibility to unite the community to do a common task. In other words, Ritual is obligated to unite the bhajawa society harmoniously. As additional information, the expression: *moku bhou meda utu* means Let's sit down for deliberation to reach a mutual agreement.

The ideas as stated above, are reinforced by Fernandez (1990), who says that living in togetherness with others in groups, tribes and in society, there is an interaction between its citizens. A person is only meaningful if he is involved in the whole of social life because actually, it is in togetherness that he can survive. Collective social life is a field of self-socialization as well as a feature of traditional community life.

If the conditions described above are not anticipated, then it is certain that in this kind of situation, the younger generation will experience a crisis of meaning. That is, they will have difficulty in finding the meaning of their own life. Ferdinand Tonnies in Gana (1992), says that the development of a society or social system is a linear change from small (simple) to large (complex), *gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft*.

The *gemeinschaft* describes a simple or traditional society with integrated relations between citizens, changes become *Gesellschaft* when the community becomes large and the relations between its citizens are impersonal and instrumental, the direction of such changes becomes large and the relations between its citizens are impersonal and instrumental; the direction of change like that is inevitable. Thus acknowledged by Toymbee, that not all civilizations are in the same position or stage at one time.

The reality above shows that the social life of the Bhajawa ethnic community is a place to see oneself and see others in social relations. The intimate atmosphere involved in the Reba ritual celebration signifies the importance of living together. Living together will give birth to emotional bonds between members of the community to take part if there are members of the community who get into trouble. Genealogy will strengthen the ties of brotherhood among members of the tribe and residents outside the tribe, so a safe and prosperous life will be born. For harmonious relations between residents to exist, revitalization of traditional culture, and strengthening the role of traditional institutions as well as strict sanctions for residents who violate them. Reba culture stores local wisdom, namely noble values and norms inherited from ancestors that prioritize elements of sincerity, sacrifice and brotherhood in social life, which become good role models and are used as parameters that function socially to normalize people's lives and maintain self-identity amidst the swift currents of globalization.

The Reba ritual carries out the function of harmony, this is revealed in the activities of the tribal members in the social life of the community. Every human activity is directed to create harmony in the social relations of its citizens. The harmony of the Bhajawa ethnicity is expressed in the togetherness of the tribal members who are found in the implementation of Reba rituals and other social activities in the form of joint garden work, helping each other (papa laka), deliberating (papa maji) and greeting and greeting (papa veka or niu ngo'e). Bhajawa ethnic morality in establishing harmony, all of this has been regulated in custom. *Adat* is a reference for guiding morality to be implemented in everyday life. Whoever does not comply with customary rules is considered a human being who does not know customs, for those who violate it means violating cosmic rules. Moral and ethical references are born from the ancestors because they are the drivers of custom.

Fernandez (1990), said that NTT people are always understood in their social relations. All his actions are referred to by the rules of society, which are recognized as the center of truth, norms that are infallible. If a person behaves according to the ideals of society, he will become a significant human being, which is the guarantee of his security and continuation of life. Because obedience is an absolute demand, and it manifests in public communication. He must know his status because social relations are hierarchical. It must guarantee the creation of harmony and harmony, which is a form of social obedience because all members of society live side by side in peace. The value of harmony can be seen in terms of cooperation, the spirit of helping each other, being tolerant, and the custom of deliberating.

The Bhajawa ethnic group in their activities is always preceded by a ritual. Rituals as a means to communicate with ancestors and with fellow human beings. In the Bhajawa ethnic tradition known as "ti'i ka ebu nusi" the reba ritual means in the form of betel nut, rice and meat, which serves to harmonize the relationship between humans and their ancestors. Fernandez (1990), says "ti'i ka" which means to feed the ancestors. According to them, ancestors had a close affinity with humans and they also controlled human actions. When building a traditional house, for example, before eating together, food should be provided for the ancestors first. Living harmony with the ancestors like this should not be ignored, if you want to avoid disaster.

The Bhajawa ethnic group believes that fostering good relations in the attitude of feeding their ancestors from the results of their work and hard work, has the function of harmony between the tribesmen and their ancestors, that they still remember their ancestors for the results obtained, not only for the strength of the tribesmen in working, but this is because the participation of the ancestors who always sustain and protect the tribal people so that they live healthy and prosperous lives. This is expressed in a respectful attitude by sitting cross-legged or squatting before the eyes of the body when giving offerings and how to call upon the ancestors which can be heard as follows: *Dia ine ema, ebu nusi, Gami da bhe miu moe wawi ba'a lako leghe, wi mai ka teme, gami da niu miu mai inu da riu, he is ne'e ana ebu one woe, ka nari nari he* is an old friend of him, *ka ate manu /ate ngana* he means oh father and mother and ancestors are here posterity and tribesmen, we call upon you from the serenity of resting like a sleeping pig and a curled up dog, to eat good food and fresh drinks and eat these chicken/pork livers.

The expression above functionally contains a harmonious relationship between fellow ethnic Bhajawa and ancestors. The provision of food and drink eaten by the ancestors in the Reba ritual has a function as a bridge to create balance and harmony between humans and humans and the Highest Being mediated by the ancestors. It is the view of the ancestral Bhajawa ethnic community that is close to the Supreme Being. Hadiwijono (2000), says that these ancestors guarded the custom and punished those who violated this custom. People need the blessings of their ancestors, especially if there are important events, such as

marriages and others. Every family can relate to it, namely by offering dishes consisting of food and drink at family meals and feasts.

In addition to the relationship between humans and their ancestors and the Supreme Being, the relationship between fellow tribesmen and other tribes also needs to be maintained in harmony. Ethics and morals of the Bhajawa ethic can be seen in their behavior towards holy places, social life, marriage and the behavior of the Bhajawa ethnic people such as respecting parents, respecting older siblings, and others. This is a form of establishing a harmonious relationship between tribesmen. If there is a violation then the person concerned will be subject to sanctions.

According to traditional elders, for example, if a resident is found to have defamed a member of the community, he will be subject to sanctions, to restore his good name, the ritual is held at the menhir in the middle of the village attended by traditional elders and tribal members. This has been mandated in the Reba ritual "*toke ma'e dheke mote mae weo*" which means don't talk about people's names. Customary marriage ethics regulate it strictly, if there are residents too who do the marriage is still related by blood, for example, if the father or mother is still close relatives, customary sanctions will be imposed in the form of expulsion from the village because they are considered to have violated cosmic rules. Such marriages in the Bhajawa ethnic tradition are called "*la'a sala*". In the past, those concerned were stoned to death but the current developments with the existence of positive law are considered to violate human rights.

3. *The environmental Role of Reba Ritual deal with the environment*

The Bhajawa ethnic group mostly work as farmers, functionally implying the preservation of the natural environment and strengthening the economy of the tribal people. The definition of environmental conservation functionally carries out a balance between humans and the natural environment around them. The preservation of the natural environment is evident in the behavior of the Bhajawa ethnic farming community, not cutting down trees carelessly and replanting trees for the sake of preserving the natural environment.

Functionally, carrying out ecological balance, as well as strengthening the economics of the Bhajawa ethnic group as carriers of farming culture. This can be seen in the prayers and supplications in the previous discussion, the Reba ritual is a product and practice of the Bhajawa ethnic culture which characterizes their existence as bearers of an agricultural culture with a farming system.

Moreover, [Poespawardoyo \(1989\)](#), argues that in the context of human and natural dialectics, production is the result of mediation that is carried out through work. This means that humans build themselves through work, and work manifests itself in production. Because production is the result of perfecting humans in the world around them, production is also called a reflection or expression of the development that humans undergo, so production appears as a function for the benefit of humans in self-perfection. As a field farmer, the main types of crops he grows are seasonal crops, such as corn (*hae*), rice (*kosu*), and vegetables (*uta*), tubers (*uwi*) which are the staple food of the Bhajawa ethnic group.

Apart from being field farmers, they also raise livestock in a simple and small way to support the economy of the family. Some of the domesticated animals include pigs (*Ngana*), chickens (*manu*), horses (*jara*), cows (cows), buffaloes (*kaba*), as revealed: *Loka wi lowa, peni wi dhesi, pia way mata su'a* means thriving and breed domestic animals only by hard work. *Gami wi tuza wi wuka sugar cane, setoko wi bo woso, sewidha wi tara wira* means we plant so that it grows fertile and produces a cob, it grows into many and one sticks has many branches.

It can be concluded that the reba ceremony is a tradition carried out to maintain a harmonious relationship system between God and ancestors, between humans and all humans, as well as harmonious relations with the surrounding environment. In addition, the ceremony educates residents to always maintain a balance between humans and their environment, whether visible or not.

4. *The Economical Role of Reba Ceremony*

Functionally and meaningfully, the ceremony contains a wish that the livestock he keeps breed. These types of livestock such as chickens (*manu*) and pigs (*ngana*) have an economic function, as a means of offering but also function to improve the family economy. For example, pigs are often used as a means of exchanging goods or other animals such as horses (*jara*).

The physical condition of a boar or pig is often equated with that of a horse (*wawi seeko sama jara seeko*). In certain rituals, buffalo are often used as a means of offering, but depending on the reason and purpose of certain rituals, such as in the *ka sa'o* and *ka ngadhu* rituals, the use of offerings implies an economic function or symbolizes the greatness or prestige of the woe (tribe), horses are not used as offerings in the Bhajawa ethnic tradition. Pigs and chickens are used as sacrificial animals in the Reba ritual because these two sacrificial animals are pets that are close to them. For the Bhajawa people, these animals are known as cultural animals. Because of this, the price of animals is very high. That is why the Bhajawa people like to keep these animals. More than that, the livestock business can increase per capita income.

4 Conclusion

In this globalization era, humans have been challenged along with the advancement of civilization, leading humans to difficult choices both internally and externally. These two things had a big impact on the social life and culture of the Bhajawa ethnic group. In addition, the modern era produced a new civilization and was supported again by increasingly widespread educational and technological advances, as well as Catholic religious teachings changing the perceptions and behavior of the Bhajawa ethnic towards social and cultural elements including the *reba* ceremony.

The cultural reality narrates that technological advances, science and advances in information technology currently do not have too much influence on the Reba ceremony. In other words, these things do not have a serious impact on destroying the traditional ceremony. This fact can be seen in some ways, namely traditional leaders, old people, and the younger generations who are involved in the ceremony which is still held every year. The Materials, and implementation procedures are still based on ancestral traditions. Except for members who work in remote places, for example in Java, Kalimantan, etc., who do not take part in the ceremony, they still contribute money for the smooth running and success of the ceremony.

However, the Reba traditional ceremony plays a very important role for the Bhajawa ethnic group, especially in ecotourism development. According to Nong Hoban et al., a team leader of research (2017) claims that Reba ceremony employs several functions. It can be seen at the implementation and can be interpreted from ritual speech. The tradition refers to the transcendental connection with God and the ancestor's so-called religious function, the horizontal relationship with others (socio-economic function), and with the environment (its role related to environmental preservation). Through this article, it is important to convey some suggestions to those who are responsible for the continuity of the tradition as follows:

- a) For cultural researchers: It is important that studies on the culture of the Bhajawa ethnic community need to be continued to develop cultural studies because many aspects are studied such as structures, places, facilities, and actors.
- b) Recently, the Reba ritual has been amid a global cultural threat, so it cannot be avoided from shifts due to the intersection between cultures that lead to a new order. For this reason, efforts to "revitalize local culture" in a synergistic form between past realities and social realities of the culture of the Bhajawa ethnic community. This is the responsibility of traditional leaders and the Bhajawa community
- c) The government of Ngada Regency needs to make efforts to document the Reba ritual, like other rituals in printed form (book) or recorded (video) so that it can become a reference for the next generation of Bhajawa ethnicity.

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