DIVERSITY
LOGIC JOURNAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY
SYNTIFIC Publisher
E-ISSN 2988-571X
Vol. 4 Issue 3, 2026 Page.345-368

Original Article

THE DYNAMICS OF TORAJA CULTURE IN FAISAL ODDANG'S NOVEL *PUYA KE PUYA*: A LITERARY ANTHROPOLOGY REVIEW

St Nursaadah[1)*], Ipa Bahya[2)], AB. Takko Bandung[3)]
[1),2),3)] Hasanuddin University, Indonesia
*Corresponding Author, E-mail: stnursaadah6@gmail.com

Submitted: 3 November 2026, Revised: 17 November 2026, Accepted: 25 November 2026.

ABSTRACT

Background. Toraja society upholds ancestral traditions, particularly the rambu solo' death ceremony and the Aluk Todolo belief system. However, these traditions face growing tensions with modernity, religion, and economic pressures. Faisal Oddang's novel Puya ke Puya portrays these tensions through a noble family struggling to organize an expensive funeral for its customary leader.
Research Purpose. This study examines Toraja cultural dynamics in the novel, focusing on the rambu solo', sacrificial animals, art, religion, and noble titles.
Research Method. It employs a qualitative-descriptive method within literary anthropology, drawing on Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory, Koentjaraningrat's seven universal cultural elements, and Stuart Hall's concept of representation. Data were collected through repeated reading, classification, and thick-description interpretation.
Findings. The findings reveal shifts in the meaning of rambu solo' from spiritual obligation to social status and economic display. Christian burial practices emerge as alternatives to Aluk Todolo traditions, while sacrificial animals increasingly symbolize hospitality and contribute to family debt. Noble titles no longer guarantee wealth or social respect. The analysis identifies seven instances reflecting contemporary interpretations and three representing earlier traditional concepts, indicating that the meaning of rambu solo' has become increasingly blurred.
Conclusion. The study shows how literature represents cultural transformation and the negotiation between Toraja traditions and changing social realities.

Keywords: Dynamics, Literary Anthropology, Novel, Toraja Culture.

BACKGROUND

Faisal Oddang's novel *Puya ke Puya* is a work of Indonesian literature that has left its mark on the development of Indonesian literature in the 2000s. It won the Jakarta Arts Council (DKJ) novel competition in 2014, and a year later, in 2015, it was named Tempo's best novel. Set in the Toraja culture of South Sulawesi, the novel offers a number of remarkable strengths and distinctive features.

One of its strengths is its representation of Toraja culture. This representation can be found in the novel through a number of local cultural terms such as rambu solo', rambu tuka', puya, tongkonan, passiliran, Aluk Todolo, puang matua, tarra, bombo, ambe, and indo.

These terms form a setting that carries readers into the atmosphere of Toraja's cultural locality, stimulating and building readers' imaginative creativity and imagery of Toraja and its culture. Ratna [1] states that facts about tradition, custom, myth, local wisdom, and other cultural phenomena can be conveyed through other fields of knowledge, but conveying the meaning of culture through literary works has very different characteristics. Literary works convey cultural meanings implicitly and symbolically, evoke emotion through language with stylistic devices, and present plots with particular conflicts, thereby offering appeal and aesthetic experience. *Puya ke Puya* possesses this strength, leading readers into an aesthetic recreation as they enjoy the landscape and come to understand Toraja culture.

Another distinctive feature of *Puya ke Puya* is its symbolic representation of events through characters, in which realist and surrealist figures are interwoven. Realist characters such as Allu Ralla, the Village Head, Malena, Mr. Berth, Aunt Mori, and Uncle Marthen alternately narrate events alongside surrealist characters such as the spirit of Rante Ralla (Ambe), the spirit of Maria Ralla, and the spirits of the Ancestors. Another strikingly ambiguous character is Indo, who appears both as a realist figure (Allu Ralla's mother) and as a surrealist figure (the mother of all the infant spirits whose teeth have not yet grown, entombed in the tarra tree at the passiliran in Toraja). Notably, dialogue between realist and surrealist characters is blended in telling the story of the rambu solo tradition, the Aluk Todolo belief system, the bombo myth, and other cultural elements the characters encounter. This blending is a strategy for representing the beliefs of Toraja society, and it ultimately builds a magical realist narrative. Magical realism is the aesthetic style the novel adopts, mixing the real world with the irrational. Through this style, the novel is able to re-present irrational images (spirits, to membali puang), narrate myths (bombo), and portray traditional beliefs (Aluk Todolo).

Toraja society in South Sulawesi is known for steadfastly upholding the traditions inherited from its ancestors. Two of the traditions still firmly held are the rambu solo ritual and belief in Aluk Todolo. Sandarupa [2] notes that the Toraja, as an Indonesian ethnic group, have consistently sought to preserve elements of their local religion, Aluk Todolo (the ancestral religion), by integrating them into a newer religion. The Toraja also maintain the death ceremony tradition (rambu solo), which is an inseparable part of Aluk Todolo.

The Toraja cultural events presented in *Puya ke Puya* are built dialectically between local traditional Toraja culture and modern global culture, and are portrayed as a push and pull. One of the traditional practices represented symbolically in the novel is the death

ceremony known as rambu solo. Among the many ceremonial traditions in Toraja, rambu solo is the most important and the most expensive. Sandarupa [2] states that the Toraja customarily perform four kinds of ceremony: aluk tallu lolona, a'pa' tauninna, meaning the ceremonies of the three shoots of life and four placentas. The three aluk comprise ceremonies concerning humans (aluk tau), plants (aluk tanaman), and animals (aluk patuan). The fourth is the ceremony of atoning for wrongdoing (suru' pengkalosorang). Within this fourth category, the most important is rambu solo, the death ceremony. Rambu solo is a ceremony that transforms the dark and frightening spirit of a person who has just died (bombo) into a spirit journeying toward puya (bombo mendeatanna) to become a deity in the heavens (to membali puang).

Puya ke Puya tells of the death of a customary leader named Rante Ralla, head of customary law in the village of Kete' and a descendant of the highest nobility there. Consequently, when Rante Ralla dies, his family must perform the rambu solo ceremony to escort him to puya. This is an obligation of the family, especially of Rante Ralla's son, Allu Ralla. As the son of a customary leader and a noble descendant, Allu Ralla bears the duty and responsibility to carry out the ceremony. Abdullah [3] states that culture shapes beliefs that serve as a blueprint and a compass for human life, and as a guide to behavior. The rambu solo tradition is a custom practiced across generations and inherited from one generation to the next. It grows within Toraja society and carries sacred, kinship, belief, and artistic values. In line with this, Teeuw [4] states that understanding a literary work is impossible without understanding the culture that underlies it.

In the novel, the rambu solo tradition for the customary leader and high nobleman of Kete' Village, Rante Ralla, cannot be carried out by his son, Allu Ralla, because Allu Ralla rejects the tradition. He considers it no longer necessary because it requires too much money and would leave his children and family in debt. Allu Ralla says:

> "Of course the prices of buffalo and pigs and sugar and coffee will keep climbing day by day. So if I go into debt, it means I will pay far more. That is what I dislike about custom: in a subtle way, it is even regarded as noble by society, yet indirectly custom has instilled a quiet practice of cunning" [5].

This passage portrays a struggle of symbolic representation between traditional culture and modern or global culture. The struggle extends into a contest over symbolic space. Abdullah [3] states that conflicts of interest within a culture bring about awareness of change. As a result, cultural symbols are no longer guides that determine a code of conduct that is obeyed and carries coercive force. Cultural symbols have become tools for asserting

group authenticity, as groups become part of a global social system with increasingly sharp value conflicts. Culture is no longer generic but differential. It is situational, its existence depending on the character of power and on relationships that change over time. The collapse of traditional centers of orientation and the emergence of new value centers make value conflict plural, and a potential driver of change toward a better order.

The dialectical struggle lies between the obligation to perform the ancestral rambu solo ceremony with all its consequences (leaving children and family in debt) and the refusal or alteration of the ceremony with its own consequences (the family would lose face and bear shame). The struggle between preserving tradition and accepting change through humanistic rationalization is presented dialectically and aesthetically in this work, and is represented symbolically through Toraja culture. Beyond fulfilling an aesthetic function, literary works are also a cultural means of conveying human concerns. These human concerns are what the novel depicts. In line with this, Endaswara states that in literary texts, cultural identity and its representation are displayed through character and characterization, plot (conflict), setting, point of view, and theme [9].

The representation of Toraja culture in *Puya ke Puya* not only reflects the symbolic forms of Toraja tradition but is also constructive of the new meanings and messages the work seeks to convey. This is evident in the struggle between performing rambu solo and rejecting it. Relatedly, Hall states that the concept of representation refers to a series of signifying practices [6]. Meaning is not stable or fixed but relational. Representation is a cultural construction whose meanings differ, and a process of producing, circulating, and exchanging meaning through images, symbols, and language. As a process, cultural symbols can always be interpreted differently because their meanings are never final facts. This process of production never ends and always remains within the realm of representation, through which cultural construction takes place.

Globalization in Indonesia has brought currents of change to every culture in the country, and Toraja culture is no exception. The character Mr. Berth, a symbolic representation of Westerners with a background of power as a mining owner (a symbolic representation of capitalism), seeks to take control of Toraja. This Westerner hegemonizes Allu Ralla and his family, including the Village Head, Aunt Mori, and Uncle Marthen. The presence of the local government and tourism interests in connection with rambu solo is a symbolic representation within Toraja culture that is highly interesting and warrants critical examination.

Besides the rambu solo ceremony, the novel also discusses other traditions, such as the burial of infants who have not yet grown teeth in tarra trees at the passiliran. The religious or belief system, as an aspect of culture, is also narrated in a highly distinctive way. This includes devotion to ancestors through Aluk Todolo, Toraja myths such as bombo, the Toraja kinship system, and proverbs expressed through the kada-kada to mina.

Based on the foregoing, literary works and culture can be said to be closely related, and their relationship is dialectical. Culture is the basic material for writing literary works, and literary works legitimize various aspects of culture as the result of interaction between humans and their surrounding culture. Ratna [1] states that literary works are closely tied to the author's background. Authors observe the culture of the society around them, so authors with broad cultural insight will incorporate their cultural knowledge into their works. Accordingly, this study uses the theory of literary anthropology.

This study is grounded in literary anthropology and draws on Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory of culture. Geertz [7] understands culture as webs of significance that human beings themselves have spun, so the analysis of culture is not an experimental science in search of laws but an interpretive one in search of meaning. Understanding culture therefore means interpreting the symbolic meaning of social action, not merely observing its surface [7]. To achieve this, researchers must read culture as a text through thick description, that is, by situating an action within the layers of meaning that give it significance, so that the true meaning is not lost [7].

Two further concepts from Geertz are particularly relevant here. First, in his analysis of religion as a cultural system, Geertz [7] argues that sacred symbols function both as a model of reality and as a model for reality: they express how a community understands the world and, at the same time, shape how that community acts within it. This allows rambu solo to be read not only as a funeral procedure but also as a symbolic system that expresses and guides Toraja understandings of death, kinship, and social obligation. Second, Geertz [7] treats cultural forms as an ensemble of texts that people read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong. This view supports reading the ritual episodes in *Puya ke Puya*, such as the buffalo fights and the slaughter of buffalo, as texts that reveal tensions in Toraja society.

Hall [6] offers a complementary perspective on cultural identity, describing it as a matter of both becoming and being. Identity always relates to the future and the past, transcending boundaries of space, time, history, and culture. It undergoes continuous

transformation and is therefore not eternal. Cultural identity is always in process and is formed within representation. Signs and symbols in culture, as representations, can therefore be regarded as socio-political constructions. Signs are not innate or passed down through generations; rather, they and their significance are discovered through the context of time and situation, and are highly contextual. Representation can be approached in three ways. First, the reflective approach holds that meaning lies in objects, ideas, individuals, and events in real life. Second, the intentional approach holds that meaning is given by humans through the language they use. Third, the constructionist approach holds that meaning is constructed and is unstable or non-fixed. Language here functions as a system that constructs meaning, and the meaning it produces becomes a representation. In this study, Geertz's theory provides the interpretive procedure, while Hall's concept of representation helps explain how meanings of Toraja tradition are produced and contested in the novel.

The novel is so rich in cultural issues that it resembles an ethnography. According to Ratna [1], a novel is essentially ethnography itself, since novels are also written after research, interviews, and perhaps even something like questionnaires. Examining literary works from a literary anthropology perspective is still unusual for some scholars. However, anthropological approaches to literary works have in fact been taken by many literary researchers. According to Sudikan, literary anthropology is indispensable because literary works are rich in culture [2].

Ratna [1] explains that the issue of the relationship between literature and anthropology first emerged at the "Folklore and Literary Anthropology" congress [8], held in Calcutta in 1978 and initiated by Kahyani University and the Indian Museum. Literary anthropology is the analysis and understanding of literary works in relation to culture [1]. Endraswara [9] states that literary anthropology research can focus on two things: first, examining ethnographic writings with literary qualities in order to see their aesthetics; second, examining literary works from an ethnographic viewpoint in order to see the cultural aspects of society. Thus, in addition to studying the literary aspects of ethnographic writing, the focus of literary anthropology is to examine the cultural aspects of a society in literary texts.

Literary anthropology refers to the analysis of literary works using anthropological instruments. In this study, the anthropological instruments follow Koentjaraningrat's theory or concept of culture [10]. To obtain a broader and more detailed understanding, Ratna [1], in analyzing literary works anthropologically, examines cultural elements according to the

seven universal cultural elements proposed by Koentjaraningrat: the equipment of human life, livelihood, social systems, language, the arts, the knowledge system, and the religious system. Literary anthropology research yields an understanding of the relationship between literary works and culture. Ratna [1] states that the central understanding in literary anthropology is that literary works exist in context, and are not merely vacuous or autonomous data. Poyatos [11] states that literary anthropology also means cross-cultural literary analysis, in which different cultures produce comparative literature. Literary anthropology therefore has the task of revealing the cultural aspects of society that are packaged through literary works.

Literary anthropology is defined as a study that analyzes literary works as cultural products, examined from an anthropological perspective. Ratna [1] formulates its position as follows: first, literary anthropology complements extrinsic analysis alongside the sociology and psychology of literature; second, it anticipates new trends in literary works that present much local wisdom. This shows that literary anthropology centers on the study of extrinsic elements and accommodates the local wisdom contained in literary works.

Literary anthropological analysis is an effort to give identity to a literary work by regarding it as containing certain aspects, in this case the characteristics of its culture [1]. It analyzes a literary work with attention to the anthropological theories and data within it. In this study, the anthropological approach is used to reveal elements of Toraja culture in Faisal Oddang's *Puya ke Puya*.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative research, which is descriptive and foregrounds the process of discovering meaning. Qualitative research uses natural data as its source and the researcher as the key instrument. It does not prioritize numbers but rather depth of engagement with the interaction of the concepts studied, empirically or experientially [12]. Endraswara [9] states that the quality of words in qualitative data analysis is determined by in-depth data collection.

The main instrument in this study is the human instrument, that is, the researcher, meaning that the research is conducted through the researcher's ability and interpretive capacity in describing all the results of the work using the required data sources. The quality of the data is not necessarily determined by tests, interviews, observations, or questionnaires

as research instruments, as in most other research, but depends solely on the researcher as the instrument [13].

The data in this study comprise all information or raw material deliberately collected by the researcher in accordance with the problem under investigation. The data source is the novel *Puya ke Puya* by Faisal Oddang. The primary data are all cultural elements found in the novel. The secondary data are obtained from various readings such as articles, journals, books, and internet information related to the problem formulation being analyzed.

Data were collected through library research. The steps were as follows: reading the novel closely and repeatedly to gain a full understanding; marking data related to Toraja cultural elements in the novel with red sticky notes; classifying the data into cultural elements and characteristics in accordance with the established problem formulation; and then interpreting them in accordance with Geertz's interpretive theory of culture through thick description, supported by Hall's concept of representation.

FINDINGS

Following Geertz's interpretive approach, each passage from the novel is treated as a symbolic text and read within its cultural context, so that the analysis moves from describing the ritual to interpreting the meanings and tensions it carries. *Puya ke Puya* takes Toraja culture as its theme. In the Toraja language, puya means the realm after death. In Toraja culture, before the deceased proceeds to the realm of spirits and heaven, the body is escorted by the family through the rambu solo custom. As a religious ceremony in the novel, rambu solo is one of the important items of Toraja culture. However, in the novel, rambu solo undergoes dynamics. Formerly, rambu solo was grounded in the ancestral teachings of Aluk Todolo; now it is grounded in Christian practices [14]. Lusi and Yuwanto [15] identify several indicators that distinguish rambu solo in the past from rambu solo today. These distinctions serve as the basis for analyzing the dynamics of the rambu solo concept in *Puya ke Puya* in this paper. In the past, rambu solo was based on Aluk Todolo belief; now it rests not only on Aluk Todolo but also on Christianity. The meaning of the ceremony was the salvation of the spirit in the heavens, blessing for descendants, and an expression of affection; today, rambu solo is performed as a form of respect and as social glue. The motive for the ceremony was tradition and culture; today it is accompanied by social and economic motives. In the past, participation was wholly obedient; today it is increasingly accompanied

by a critical attitude. The ceremony was once held privately; it is now held openly. Slaughtered animals were once regarded as light and provisions for the deceased; now they are understood as hospitality for guests and respect for community figures. Costs were once met according to ability; now the ceremony is held lavishly for the sake of social status, giving the impression of wastefulness. The ceremony was once held only after 12 noon; now it may be held before or after noon.

Toraja society has a death ceremony tradition called rambu solo. The burial tradition in rambu solo is a customary ceremony inherited from ancestors by successive generations to the present day. In *Puya ke Puya*, after Rante Ralla's death, Allu Ralla, his son, acts as heir. He is asked by his father's brothers to perform the rambu solo ceremony in Toraja. Since Rante Ralla was a customary leader in Toraja, it was only proper that the rambu solo burial tradition be carried out. This can be seen in the following passage:

> Once, this village was lively only when a death was being celebrated. When a "sick" corpse was paraded. Yes, sick. You understand too, don't you? For the Toraja, before rambu solo, every corpse is still sick. Like anyone who is ill, relatives continue to talk with them. They give them food, cigarettes, and betel [5].

The passage clearly shows that the dead are not immediately considered dead. The corpse is always treated as present, like a living person. Accordingly, the corpse cannot be at peace until the rambu solo ceremony is performed.

Rante Ralla's family demands that Allu Ralla promptly hold the rambu solo ceremony. Because Rante Ralla was a customary leader in the village of Kete', the ceremony must be held lavishly and festively. His family asks Allu Ralla to buy many buffalo and pigs. However, Allu Ralla has not yet held the ceremony, particularly because he is still studying at Hasanuddin University and needs money to complete his studies.

> "You understand, surely. If there is no rambu solo, the faces of the relatives will be smeared. The prestige of the Ralla family will fall like ripe fruit striking stones. Their self-esteem will be crushed. Yes, crushed by three statements from society..." [5]

This passage depicts the very strong social and cultural pressure in Toraja society concerning the performance of rambu solo. It shows that for the Ralla family, holding rambu solo concerns not only respect for ancestors but also the family's self-esteem and prestige in the eyes of society. Failure to hold the ceremony would be regarded as a failure that stains the family's dignity, as if their loss of prestige were "like ripe fruit striking stones," a metaphor that stresses how severe and shameful the social impact of not performing rambu

solo would be. In this context, Allu Ralla is compelled to hold the ceremony to preserve the family's good name, even when facing heavy economic pressure.

Puya ke Puya offers an early picture of custom as the beginning of disaster. Everything begins with the rambu solo ceremony, which requires a great deal of money. This leads Allu Ralla's uncle to agree to sell land, an ancestral inheritance, on the grounds that the proceeds will fund Rante Ralla's rambu solo. Selling ancestral land to hold a funeral is in fact improper. Land is a legacy from the ancestors that has been guarded since long ago, so it should not be sold for a funeral ceremony that lasts only a few weeks. Raising money is also not easy, and gathering funds for rambu solo takes a long time, while a corpse should not be kept too long. A person's funeral should not become an arena for prestige. Custom should be a medium through which society lives in harmony; it should ease our lives, not burden people. Custom should not weigh heavily on those who follow and adhere to it.

The burial tradition of rambu solo is a customary ceremony in Tana Toraja inherited from ancestors by successive generations to this day. It is performed as a final tribute to the deceased. The rambu solo tradition is grounded in Toraja society's belief in Aluk Todolo, or belief in the ancestors. The people of Kete' Village likewise hold the ceremony for their deceased customary leader, Rante Ralla. As a respected figure in his village, Rante Ralla must be honored as a nobleman would be, festively, with dozens of buffalo and hundreds of pigs offered at his funeral. The following data concern the sequence of the rambu solo ceremony for Rante Ralla's death in *Puya ke Puya*. One activity in the ceremony is mappasilaga tedong.

> Before mantanu tedong, among the buffalo to be slaughtered, several were pitted against each other in the mappasilaga tedong sequence [5].

This passage depicts one part of the rambu solo ceremony, mappasilaga tedong, the tradition of pitting buffalo against each other before the slaughter that forms the main ritual. Although outwardly the tradition remains attached to the practice of custom, its essence has undergone dynamics. Mappasilaga tedong, which should be part of honoring the spirits of the ancestors, now tends to be understood as mere entertainment, even as an occasion for gambling involving large wagers. Buffalo fights are no longer merely symbolic rituals but have become public spectacles driven by economic motives and amusement, which ultimately risks obscuring the spiritual values and sacredness of the ceremony itself.

> Rambu solo has been held. Today there is the mantunu tedong ceremony, the slaughter of buffalo, to be precise. [5]

This passage carries deep symbolic meaning about the relationship among humans, death, and culture in Toraja society. The sentence reflects an important phase of the rambu solo ceremony, in which the slaughter of buffalo (mantunu tedong) is not merely a physical act but a sacred rite as a final tribute to the spirits of the ancestors. However, the phrase "to be precise," inserted at the end of the sentence, gives the narration a sharp and slightly ironic tone, as if to emphasize the brutal reality behind the symbolism of custom. This points to a tension between lofty spiritual values and a concrete reality that is harsh and bloody. On one hand, the buffalo is a transcendental means believed to carry the spirit to the afterlife (puya); on the other, the practice involves earthly violence, which may prompt critical reflection on how society maintains custom while facing moral and humanitarian challenges. The sentence thus becomes an entry point for reading the dynamics between sacredness and violence in an inherited tradition.

> The simbuang menhir planted atop a mound of earth resembling a small hill stands firmly erect. The buffalo are lined up at the slaughter site. There are about thirty buffalo of various kinds [5].

This passage depicts the start of Rante Ralla's rambu solo, which begins with the mantunu tedong procession, the slaughter of buffalo. The simbuang menhir, standing upright on the mound, serves not only as a marker of place but also as a symbol of eternity and respect for the ancestors. The sight of dozens of buffalo lined up suggests that the ceremony is not only a spiritual rite but also a display of the deceased family's social status and economic strength. The placement of the buffalo before the menhir shows the bond between the human world and the spirit world, while also revealing the material reality that accompanies the performance of custom. The depiction confirms that rambu solo is not merely an occasion of mourning but also an arena of symbolic contestation among cultural power, spirituality, and worldly interests.

> The buffalo ready to be tanu-ed with a Toraja machete slash to the neck have had their front legs tied to the simbuang. Beside them stands a to pa'tingoro, skilled at felling a buffalo with a single stroke. The machete is tucked at his waist. His left hand lifts the buffalo's head, his right reaches for the charcoal tucked away [5].

This passage depicts a crucial stage in the mantunu tedong procession, when the buffalo are slaughtered as part of the rambu solo funeral rite. The buffalo are tied to the simbuang, a sacred menhir, not only to restrain the animals' movement but also as a symbol of surrender to the will of the customary rite. The to pa'tingoro, the buffalo executioner, is not merely a technical operator but a figure who bears an important role in maintaining the

authority and sacredness of the ceremony. His skill in felling a buffalo with one stroke reflects precision, honor, and spirituality united in every movement. The gestures of lifting the buffalo's head and reaching for the machete are not only physical acts but also symbols of human control over sacrifice, and a final form of respect for a living creature believed to be an intermediary carrying the spirit to the afterlife. The depiction confirms that behind ritual violence lies a narrative laden with cultural, spiritual, and symbolic power, carried out with great honor.

> The people tasked with collecting blood hurry to catch it in bamboo containers. The blood will be cooked together with the buffalo meat [5].

This passage depicts an important aspect of the mantunu tedong procession: the community's involvement in every stage of the ritual, including the handling of the slaughtered buffalo. The people tasked with collecting blood hurry to catch it in bamboo containers right after the buffalo is struck. The blood is not left to go to waste but is carefully collected to be cooked with the buffalo meat. This reflects a noble value in Toraja culture, which honors every part of the sacrificial animal as respect for the life that has been sacrificed. The use of blood in cooking also shows a local wisdom that unites spiritual ritual and everyday practice, underscoring that in Toraja tradition no part of the sacrifice is considered wasted. Every element has a function, a meaning, and a place within a sacred and enduring cultural order.

> Today my corpse will be brought down to the granary at the front of the main tongkonan, which is often used to store bodies before departure to puya. People call this event ma'popengkaloa [5].

This passage symbolically explains one important stage in the rambu solo funeral sequence in Toraja, the ma'popengkaloa procession, also known as ma'mopengkalo alang. This ritual marks the moment when the body is lowered from the inner space of the tongkonan, the traditional Toraja house, to an alang, or granary, located at the front of the main tongkonan. In this ritual context, the granary is not only a building for storing harvests but takes on a new meaning as a temporary resting place for the body before it continues its journey to puya, the afterlife in Toraja belief.

The procession begins with the ma'tuda mebalun stage, the ritual wrapping of the body in particular cloths with symbolic and spiritual meaning. This wrapping is not merely a practical preparation of the body but also a final act of respect and a spiritual preparation so that the spirit is ready for the transition to the realm of the ancestors.

Placing the body in the granary symbolizes the starting point of the soul's journey. The granary, a storehouse of life (rice), now becomes a storehouse of death, suggesting continuity between life and death in Toraja cosmology. The ma'popengkaloa procession also reflects how closely domestic, symbolic, and spiritual space are bound together in the structure of Toraja society. No space is profane; every location and action has meaning directly tied to the order of values and the traditional belief system.

> We buried Ambe's body in the highest cliff hollow. Close to the sky. So that, as they say, Ambe will reach Puya quickly [5]

This passage reflects the culminating stage of the rambu solo' funeral, the burial of the body in a high rock cliff. In the narrative, the body of Ambe, who refers to Rante Ralla, a customary leader, has been interred in the highest cliff hollow, a place symbolically believed to be closer to the sky. This placement reflects not only Rante's social status as a respected customary leader but also the Toraja spiritual belief that the higher the burial place, the faster a person's spirit reaches puya, the afterlife where ancestral spirits dwell. The high cliff used as a grave is not merely a geographical choice but a sacred space that reflects social stratification and spiritual value in Toraja culture. In this context, height carries not only physical but also symbolic meaning as a representation of closeness to the spirit world. Burial in a high place is the highest honor, reflecting a person's social position, merit, and spiritual worth in life.

By burying the body on a towering cliff, the Toraja collectively express a final form of respect and recognition for the deceased. The procession also affirms the belief that death is not the end but the beginning of a journey toward eternal life. In the Toraja belief system, the spirit of the deceased must pass through a series of rites to reach puya, and every stage, including the burial location, plays an important role in smoothing this spiritual journey.

The data above show the meaning and procedures of the rambu solo ceremony. The following data concern the dynamics of its performance in Toraja society. The first data show the concept of the meaning of rambu solo presented as a sacred procession laden with spirituality and noble values. Death is seen as a sacred journey to puya, the place of meeting with God. In this context, the ceremony is experienced as a tribute to the ancestors and a celebration of the life that has been lived, colored by solidarity and spiritual connection among humans, ancestors, and God. The second data show the present-day meaning of rambu solo, namely mingling with guests (sociality). In this data, the protagonist's wife does not speak, but only stands and gazes silently at her guests. The guests, who were previously

pushy and noisy, suddenly fall silent and dare not look back. This moment reflects social tension, perhaps even a refusal of interaction. The wife's silence signals resistance to the social expectations the guests bring. This can be seen in the following data:

> "Most Toraja people celebrate it as close kin of the past to memory. People shrouded in black cloth gather. They escort relatives who wish to walk to puya, the realm where one meets God" [5].
>
> "My wife stands without saying a word. She goes to the door, stands, then gazes at her guests in silence. The guests, who had been noisy and kept demanding her agreement, now fall silent and dare not meet my wife's eyes." [5].

The dynamics of the motives and meaning of rambu solo occur because of several factors. The following three data from the novel show the dynamics in the ceremony:

> Motive: I use the word aluk rather than adat though the meaning is the same, because I want to remind that everything will return to a belief that has become tradition [5].
>
> The road to heaven can only be traveled with buffalo. The spotted buffalo is the best of buffalo for God. We followers of aluk todolo believe this. Including the Ralla family [5].
>
> The Ralla family, too, have much land. Yes, that is right, from the family's noble past [5].

These three data show dynamics in the meaning and motive of performing rambu solo in Toraja society. The ceremony, originally spiritual-religious, has shifted into a symbol of social status. In the first passage, the use of the word aluk instead of adat confirms that rambu solo was formerly grounded in Aluk Todolo belief, the ancestral belief system that had become tradition and sacred. This is reinforced in the second passage, which states that the road to heaven can only be traveled through the offering of buffalo, especially spotted buffalo, believed to be most pleasing to God. These two passages stress that the main motive of rambu solo in the past was the fulfillment of a spiritual obligation, as respect for ancestral spirits and an expression of faith in the traditional religious system. The third passage, however, shows a shift in meaning: the Ralla family, said to own much land and to descend from nobility, becomes a representation of social status. In this context, performing rambu solo is no longer based solely on religious conviction but becomes an occasion to display power, wealth, and social standing within the social structure. This inconsistency reflects a change in motive in the practice of rambu solo', from the spiritual to the more socio-economic, as a result of cultural dynamics and changes in the social structure of Toraja society.

A significant change in attitude toward aluk (custom) in performing death ceremonies, especially rambu solo, also occurs. A character's statement of his resolve, together with Indo, to bury Ambe in Makassar, without following Toraja customary rules but according to Christian procedures, signals a desire to break away completely from the bonds of Aluk Todolo tradition. This attitude reflects a shift in paradigm in modern Toraja society, in which some individuals or families begin to choose formal religion, such as Christianity, as the main foundation of burial procedures, replacing the ancestral belief system.

The decision not to hold rambu solo and to choose a Christian burial carries deep meaning. On one hand, it reflects individual freedom to determine the form of final respect for the deceased, no longer bound by customary rules regarded as complex, expensive, or no longer relevant to personal belief. On the other, it shows a change in cultural and religious identity in contemporary Toraja society. Aluk, formerly the spiritual, social, and moral foundation, is now being abandoned by some who prefer the officially recognized belief systems of the state. This can be seen in the following data:

> Attitude toward aluk (custom): I have made up my mind with Indo; Ambe once bought a plot of land in Makassar, and we will bury him there, without any binding customary rules, though we will still follow Christian rules [5].

An important aspect of the rambu solo' funeral is the role of sacrificial animals, especially buffalo and pigs, which carry not only spiritual meaning but also a complex social function. Traditionally, buffalo and pigs were sacred offerings believed to help the spirit of the deceased reach puya, the afterlife in Toraja belief. Over time, however, the meaning of these animals has undergone dynamics.

> Animals: I know, it troubles the money for buying buffalo and pigs to entertain guests at rambu solo [5].

The statement that the money for buffalo and pigs is troubling shows that these animals have also become a source of economic burden for the families who hold the ceremony. Buffalo and pigs are no longer merely emblems of spiritual sacrifice but have become symbols of social status and a means of hosting guests on a large scale. As a result, families holding the ceremony often feel financially pressured to meet the demands of custom and the social expectations of those around them. In these data, buffalo and pigs, once offered as part of a spiritual ritual to escort the spirit to the afterlife, are now understood more as fare for hosting guests, so that the ceremony generates anxiety about cost and social

burden. The function of the animals in rambu solo has shifted from a symbol of belief to a symbol of status and economic capacity.

The function of buffalo and pigs as hospitality for guests initially reflected the values of mutual cooperation and honor in Toraja society. Serving sacrificial meat was a way of honoring guests and strengthening social ties in the community. In practice, however, these values sometimes conflict with the economic realities facing the host family. The data below reinforce the burden that families bear in performing rambu solo.

> Funding: As far as Indo's ability went, it was impossible to meet the price of the buffalo from weaving alone. There were also land and rice fields left by Rante, but they were never enough. Surely... of course, rambu solo would become Allu's responsibility. And the responsibility of the to balu, the widow left behind by the Corpse. Even if relatives contribute pigs, or buffalo, or sugar, coffee, rice, or most simply, labor, all of it becomes debt. Not repaying it is a festering sore that becomes a disgrace for the debtor [5].

> As I usually see, some bring buffalo, some bring pigs, or even just sugar or coffee. And it will be recorded as the family's debt. ... Of course the prices of buffalo and pigs and sugar and coffee will keep climbing day by day. So if I go into debt, it means I will pay far more. [5].

This two data show that funding the rambu solo ceremony is a burden and a debt for the family. In present-day Toraja society, the cost of the ceremony is laden with economic burden and tends to create financial problems for the host family. The first passage highlights how meeting the cost of buying buffalo and pigs, the main animals in the ritual, is almost impossible from weaving or from inherited land and rice fields alone. As a result, the cost falls on the extended family, especially Allu (a close relative) and the to balu (the widow), and even contributions from other relatives are still treated as debts to be repaid. Failure to repay not only poses an economic problem but also brings social stigma and disgrace to the family. The second passage reinforces this by explaining that contributions of buffalo, pigs, or staples such as sugar and coffee are recorded as family debt to be repaid, at a value that keeps rising over time. This phenomenon creates heavy financial pressure and a tendency toward wastefulness in the ceremony, so that rambu solo today is not only a spiritual ritual but also a significant economic burden. Both data thus indicate that the function and meaning of rambu solo have changed, from a sacred tradition involving social solidarity into an occasion of extravagance and a source of debt that burdens families, ultimately harming the economic well-being of Toraja society.

DISCUSSIONS

The Art System in Puya ke Puya

As we know, culture has seven elements, one of which is the art system. The art system in *Puya ke Puya* can be observed in the Tongkonan house and in Toraja literature sung by the characters in the novel. The Tongkonan is a traditional house from Toraja, South Sulawesi, based on the philosophy of Aluk Todolo. It is also a symbol of the dignity of Toraja families, so its construction is not arbitrary. Its design, down to the position of the house and its pillars, carries different values and meanings. There are various types of Tongkonan, each built differently according to the role of its leader. In the past, the tongkonan was reserved for kings, tribal chiefs, and their descendants. The tongkonan is shaped like a Chinese imperial boat. The following are several types. 1) Tongkonan Layuk is the first and foremost Tongkonan, since in custom it is the source of study in making customary regulations. 2) Tongkonan Pekamberan or Pekaindoran is the second Tongkonan, which implements or enforces customary rules, commands, and authority in each customary region it governs. 3) Tongkonan Batu Ariri is the third level. It holds no customary authority but serves as a place of unity and family cultivation for the descendants of those who first built the Tongkonan. The Tongkonan owned by Rante Ralla's family belongs to the Layuk category. This is evidenced by Rante Ralla's high position in custom as customary head.

> Actually, when his company first entered this village, I was the first person he approached. He knew my position as customary head must not be underestimated, even though, in terms of permits, administratively it had nothing to do with me. Yet he came anyway [5].

Besides being customary leader, the land and tongkonan owned by the Ralla family are an inheritance handed down by the ancestors from the first Ralla family. That might not have happened.

> I could have given up the inherited land, and indeed, the money they offered was worth far more from the standpoint of buying and selling. But from my own perspective as customary leader, nothing can pay the price of our land. Land from the first generation of the Ralla family. There are many things money cannot pay for: custom and inherited land, of course. [5, p. 64]

In addition to Rante Ralla's status as customary head and the fact that his tongkonan is an inheritance from the first-generation Ralla ancestors, his high noble status is a strong supporting reason to state that the Ralla tongkonan falls into the Tongkonan Layuk category.

> Actually, deep in my desire, I want a ceremony for myself, but then, until when would I torment Allu, torment my wife? That question is what makes me resigned now. What a pity that the noble title and the title of leader of the Kete' tongkonan group cannot be sold to buy buffalo. Truly not. On the contrary, the title must be bought with dozens of buffalo once the holder is gone [5].

> I am uncomfortable being used as an excuse for neglecting responsibility. Although I feel guilty that in life I did not leave them much inheritance. So when I die, it becomes a very heavy burden; relatives scrambling left, right, here and there to find funds for the funeral of a tana bulaan nobleman and a customary leader of the penuluan who must of course be given a perfect send-off. The higher a person's position in custom, the more burden he places on others, especially on wife and children and on himself. In this case, the burden will certainly fall on Tina, and Allu, and me. [5]

From the narrative above, it is clear that Rante Ralla is a tana bulaan (golden-level) nobleman. This is the highest noble caste in Toraja. This noble class has long held roles and power. They usually serve as customary heads or officials, and they also control agricultural and livestock land.

Songs and Verse

Toraja literature has many genres, including karume, londe, bating, sengo, badong, pakatia, pa'retteng, and dondi'. These are called oral literature because they are transmitted by word of mouth. Each genre is inseparable from symbols, figurative language, and meaning, and from sequences of beautiful words that give it high aesthetic value. One form of Toraja literature presented in *Puya ke Puya* is dondi'. In the rambu solo funeral ceremony, dondi' is a form of oral literature chanted in song by several people as a group.

> I know she is chanting dondi, a Toraja verse for me. She is skilled at it, ah, her beautiful voice begins to flow. I feel I want to live again when I hear it. Mario-rio makarorrong naboko'i. My chest aches from it. Over and over Tina sings it: she leaves grief and sorrow behind, turns her back on the silence; surely this is for me, the song of my death, Tina's song of the loss she is trying to overcome now [5].
>
> Messaile tang tongdokna mentiro tang banuanna messaile tumarantan mentiro ma'rio-rio. Tina continues, I do not realize my tears have fallen as Tina's voice begins to grow hoarse. That song, that song reminds me of my life. I often performed it to escort spirits journeying to puya; looking back not at their land, seeing not their house, looking back only at streams of tears, seeing only grief and sorrow [5].

In *Puya ke Puya*, this dondi' is sung by Tina Ralla, the to balu or wife of the deceased, Rante Ralla. From the narrative, we can see how Tina Ralla sings the dondi' with deep sorrow.

The Religious System

The religious system of Toraja society, namely burying infants inside trees (Passiliran), is a belief of Aluk Todolo adherents in *Puya ke Puya*. The people of Tana Toraja deeply honor the spirits of ancestors and relatives who have died and gone before them. Before being placed in a high cliff, a funeral with a grand customary procession (rambu solo)

must be held. Besides rambu solo, another unique tradition from Tana Toraja in the novel is passiliran. Passiliran is the ritual of burying infants inside a tree to smooth the infant's spirit's path to the afterlife, with the tarra tree as the burial site. The tarra tree has existed for hundreds of years, as old as the passiliran custom practiced by Toraja ancestors who followed Aluk Todolo. The tarra tree grows and can be found only in Kambira Village, Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi: Toraja 2016. The novel presents:

> Seventeen years ago, the Ralla family also grieved. They lost Maria Ralla, a five-month-old toddler who died suddenly. Maria cried all night without stopping. No one knew the cause for certain. Her Ambe, Rante Ralla, said their child suffered from stomach pain. Yes, an unusual stomach pain. From then on Maria Ralla's body was buried in a tarra tree. A large tree with sap the color of milk. Believed to be a substitute for the mother. The Toraja call it a passiliran grave [5]

The passage describes how the body of an infant who has not reached the age of teething (under six months) is buried in a tarra tree regarded as a substitute for the mother. The infant lives in the passiliran for approximately 17 years before going to puya. After 17 years, the infant is absorbed by the tarra tree. When it has merged with the tree as trunk, branch, and leaf, it is time to go to puya.

> "No. Look, my body has merged into the tree and I am already seventeen. The time has come. In puya, if you keep your promise to meet me, we will live happily forever. Believe me, I will wait for you to come." A white light I had seen before appeared in my tomb chamber. I began to hear no sound at all. I saw Bumi waving [5]

The tarra tree is one that yields abundant white sap, which is believed to substitute for breast milk. As shown in:

> This morning I drank more milk than the sap of Mother Tree's body. I also managed to take some of Bumi Tandiongan's milk. Mother Tree says Bumi is a year younger than I am. She is only sixteen years in this passiliran tomb [5]

The funeral in the passiliran tradition in Tana Toraja is carried out very simply. The deceased infant is buried unwrapped, so that the baby feels as if it were in its mother's womb. As follows:

> The journey to puya is very hard, difficult to undertake. So says Mother Tree. Of course, I learned many things from Mother Tree. After my burial, Mother Tree became my new birth mother, Mother Tree said so. I died before my teeth grew. My parents and custom believed I was a pure being, so I was returned to the Tarra tree. Like a baby returning to its mother's belly, I was not wrapped in a single thread .... [5]

Placement of the Body in Passiliran as a Reflection of Social Stratification in Toraja Society

The placement of the body in the passiliran tradition in Tana Toraja determines social stratum. The position of the hollow in the tarra tree corresponds to the family's social stratum: the higher the hollow on the tree, the higher the family's stratum. This burial method is practiced only by Toraja followers of Aluk Todolo (belief in the ancestors). As shown below:

> ".... My home is in the topmost part of the trunk because I come from a noble family, and Bumi is below me because he is a commoner, that was Mother Tree's explanation ...." [5]

On another page:

> ".... Fortunately, I took part in burying her then, Ambe put Maria's body in the highest part of the trunk. It should indeed be so given our noble rank, so I knew exactly where Maria's grave was and had no need to fear stealing the wrong one. I stole the infants buried lower down. Besides not needing to climb anymore, they were descendants of the lower caste, so their families would not be too angry if they found their child's body gone." [5]

The passage makes clear that the position of the grave hollow is determined by the caste of the deceased infant's family. This means that the higher a family's caste in society, the higher the grave hollow is on the tree trunk. Having analyzed the position of the passiliran tradition in the novel, we can say that passiliran is a cultural element of Tana Toraja society that follows Aluk Todolo. It falls within one of the seven universal cultural elements, namely the religious system of Toraja society. This system concerns the beliefs of individuals and particular social groups and governs the relationship between humans and the Creator. Passiliran forms part of the journey of Toraja people who die under six months of age back to puya (heaven/the Creator), as believed by Aluk Todolo adherents. Passiliran also belongs to another cultural element, the social system of Tana Toraja society, as depicted: nobles must be buried higher, while the lowest caste are buried according to their families' caste. This is strongly influenced by the social stratification of everyday Toraja life, which always places the nobility highest (tokapua), followed by the middle class (tomakaka) and finally the lower class (tobuda). In addition, passiliran is also one of the three products of human culture, namely the complex of cultural ideas. It shows how Toraja followers of Aluk Todolo thought and believed that infants who die under the age of six were pure beings who must be placed in the Tarra tree as a mother substitute, and only after 17 years could they go to puya. Over time, however, this complex of cultural ideas ultimately turned into a complex of cultural artifacts: passiliran is no longer practiced but has become an artifact that can be

seen with the naked eye, showing that the cultural idea of Aluk Todolo once existed in Tana Toraja.

Besides ceremony, the art system, and the religious system, *Puya ke Puya* also portrays Toraja leadership. The leadership system, or system of social organization, in Toraja society is determined by lineage. The Toraja choose their leaders based on noble descent, as happens to Allu after his Ambe dies. Allu immediately becomes head of the tongkonan, entitled to lead meetings and make decisions. Yet Allu, as head of the tongkonan, himself refuses to follow Toraja aluk. This is a cultural dynamic found in *Puya ke Puya*. Literary anthropology serves as the approach for exploring the cultural element of noble titles among the Toraja, through facts in the text of *Puya ke Puya* that prominently foreground cultural elements.

> Since the quarrel over the division of inheritance, Uncle Marthen seems to have gone mad for wealth. [5]

Rambu solo, rambu tuka', passiliran, and other traditions all require very large sums in carrying out Toraja aluk. As depicted through the characters Allu and Marthen, there are two choices: be poor or be stingy. The cultural dynamic between performing aluk and going bankrupt becomes a deeply dilemmatic choice. They must choose between wretched poverty and the contempt of relatives, or being forced to become "money-minded." Or perhaps become like Indo, who is silenced and unable to decide anything, hoping others will understand her wishes. Allu is ultimately cornered into choosing between these options. He ends up performing rambu solo, no longer as a sacred ritual but solely to honor his father, as in this data: "I do all this for Ambe" [5].

Allu's development in the novel is markedly significant, from the opening, which portrays a boy raised well by Ambe and Indo, who guards the inheritance, dares to become head of the tongkonan, and loves his mother. As the pages dwindle, Allu begins to change toward Toraja custom. Perhaps this is another way of saying that the Toraja in this novel are haunted by their aluk. Aluk is embedded in their flesh and blood. Rambu solo is required for every Toraja who has died. For ordinary people the cost of rambu solo is already great, let alone for those who bear a noble title. Blue blood may have been coveted in its day, but now only its bitterness remains. Today it means nothing except the high cost of custom, at least in Toraja aluk. For in the past, the highest in rank, the richest, and the most respected were the nobility. A shift in meaning, whether or not realized, has occurred in the term "nobility." The title now seems to mark lineage only. All the things once defined can be obtained by

something other than blood, namely money. Consider how Uncle Marthen treats Allu as head of the tongkonan and Mr. Soso as head of a mining company with plenty of money.

> One more infant corpse and I will have enough money for the wedding with Malena. As for Ambe's funeral, of course I will rely on the money from selling the inherited land [5].

Money is one of the central problems in the story. With plenty of money, *Puya ke Puya* could be resolved in a single page, if only his Ambe had left more inheritance. The problem is that a noble title alone counts for nothing when it comes to money. They are no longer the richest, even though among the Toraja a person's wealth is measured by the number of buffalo or pigs owned.

It is not only a matter of money. As quoted earlier [5], when people from the mining company came, they admitted that meeting with the head of the tongkonan at that time, Allu's Ambe, was merely a formality. This means that outside the Toraja circle no one truly cares about this noble title. Even the provincial government, which ought to recognize the nobility and aluk Toraja as part of an ethnic group in Indonesia, easily treats them arbitrarily.

> I had wondered what Mr. Dark Glasses whispered to the Police Chief. If I am not mistaken, he must have explained to his superior who I am. And surely people who know who I am will be deferential, for Ambe's name is respected and upheld throughout Kete' Village. Everyone knows who Ambe is [5].

Where, then, does that blue blood flow, which is just the same as red blood? Although Ambe's name is revered by everyone, the same does not apply to Allu. Although Allu is the eldest son of the head of the Kete' village tongkonan, he does not receive the same treatment as his Ambe. Naturally, his Ambe was better known to the villagers. Allu spent his last few years in Makassar studying and rarely returned to his home village. When he did, few even recognized him. He carries only his family name wherever he goes. The noble title seems to have become more "troublesome" in discussions of aluk. Surely their great-grandparents were figures worthy of respect for having struggled in the past, and the title has been passed down through the generations to this day. The policy has shifted, but the standards of a noble title must still be met, as seen through the character Allu. Nobles are no longer rich and no longer so respected. Yet the aluk of a grand and festive rambu solo still demands a nobleman.

Study Limitation

This study has several limitations. First, it analyzes a single novel, so its findings describe how Toraja culture is represented in *Puya ke Puya* and cannot be generalized to Toraja society as a whole or to other literary works. Second, the analysis relies on the literary

text and secondary sources, without fieldwork such as interviews or direct observation of rambu solo, so the novel's representation was not compared with the practices and views of Toraja communities today. Third, the study uses a qualitative-descriptive design in which the researcher is the main instrument, so the interpretation of the selected passages reflects the researcher's reading, and other readings are possible. Fourth, the discussion centers on rambu solo, the art system, the religious system, and the noble title, so other cultural elements present in the novel, such as rambu tuka' and the kinship system, receive less attention. Future research could address these limitations by comparing several novels set in Toraja, adding interviews or ethnographic observation, and examining the remaining cultural elements.

CONCLUSION

Faisal Oddang's *Puya ke Puya* takes Toraja culture as its theme. The religious ceremony rambu solo is one of the Toraja cultural systems it portrays. In the past, rambu solo was grounded in the ancestral teachings of Aluk Todolo; now it is grounded in Christian practices. However, the change in the foundation of rambu solo' in *Puya ke Puya* is not clearly visible because the concept of rambu solo used in the novel appears inconsistently. Seven data points show the present-day concept of rambu solo', while three show the earlier concept. There are thus dynamics in the concept of rambu solo' in *Puya ke Puya*. As a result, the foundation of rambu solo' in this novel is blurred. Readers cannot know for certain which period's concept of rambu solo' the novel uses, because the earlier and present-day concepts have been blended with each other in *Puya ke Puya*.

This study contributes to literary anthropology in three ways. Theoretically, it shows that Geertz's interpretive approach, supported by Hall's concept of representation, can be used to read ritual episodes in a novel as symbolic texts, so that changes in the meaning of a tradition can be traced through narrative and not only through ethnographic observation. Empirically, it maps how the meaning, motives, and funding of rambu solo, the function of sacrificial animals, and the value of the noble title shift in *Puya ke Puya*, adding to the literary anthropology scholarship on Toraja culture as represented in Indonesian fiction. Practically, it offers readers, teachers, and cultural researchers a reading of the novel that links the literary text to the social pressures facing living Toraja traditions.

REFERENCES

[1] Ratna NK. Literary anthropology. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar; 2017.

[2] Sandarupa S. Toraja then and Now. Makassar: PT Torindo; 2015.

[3] Abdullah I. The Construction and Reproduction of Culture. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar; 2010.

[4] Teeuw A. Literature and Literary Studies: an Introduction to Literary Theory. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya; 2003.

[5] Oddang F. *Puya ke Puya*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama; 2015.

[6] Hall S, editor. Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London: Sage Publications; 1997.

[7] Geertz C. The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Sssays. New York: Basic Books; 1973.

[8] Poyatos F, editor. Literary Anthropology: a New Interdisciplinary Approach to People, Signs and Literature. Amsterdam: John Benjamins; 1988.

[9] Endraswara S. Research Methodology in Literary Anthropology. Yogyakarta: Ombak; 2020.

[10] Koentjaraningrat. Introduction to Anthropology. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta; 1990.

[11] Sholehuddin M. A Literary Anthropology Study and the Educational Values of the Novel Ca Bau Kan by Remy Sylado. Universitas Sebelas Maret; 2013.

[12] Semi MA. Methods of Literary Research. Bandung: Angkasa; 2012.

[13] Siswantoro. Methods of Literary Research: Analysis of Poetic Structure. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar; 2010.

[14] Arianti I, Nurlela, Junaeda S. The Shift in Cultural Values and Meanings of the Rambu Solo' Tradition of Toraja Society in the Modern era. ALLIRI: Journal of Anthropology. 2021;3(2):62-70. https://ojs.unm.ac.id/JSB/article/view/25916

[15] Lusi RA, Yuwanto L. Psychological Aspects of the Rambu Solo' Procession (a Review of Religiosity Theory). Jurnal Insight. 2020;16(2):336-46. doi:10.32528/ins.v16i2.2057

Copyright and Grant the Journal Right under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright @ 2022 SYNTIFIC PUBLISHER