

Cultural Identity and the *To Lotang* Belief System in *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng*: A Literary Anthropology Perspective

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Abstract—This research explores the belief system of the *To Lotang* people as depicted in the novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* by S. Gegge Mappangewa. Using a literary anthropological approach informed by Clifford Geertz's theory, the study adopts a descriptive qualitative research method. Data is gathered through literature review to analyze the portrayal of *To Lotang*'s belief system. The findings reveal that this belief system is a syncretic tradition, blending elements of animism, dynamism, and Hindu influence. Through characters who uphold ancestral values and customs, the novel illustrates how these beliefs shape the identity and worldview of the *To Lotang* people, emphasizing the enduring legacy of cultural traditions passed down through generations. The study highlights the role of spirituality in the daily lives of the *To Lotang*, showing how their belief system is intricately woven into their cultural practices and social interactions. It also demonstrates how the characters' adherence to these traditions influences their decisions, relationships, and understanding of the world. Ultimately, the research underscores the significance of literature as a medium for preserving and conveying indigenous belief systems, offering insights into the deeper cultural values of the *To Lotang* community.

Index Terms—*To Lotang* Belief, novel, literary anthropology

I. INTRODUCTION

The novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* by S. Gegge Mappangewa has gained widespread recognition as a best-selling work and was awarded first place in the 2011 *Republika* Novel Writing Competition. This literary masterpiece not only captivates readers with its compelling narrative but also delves deeply into the values, belief systems, myths, and traditions of the Bugis-Makassar people. Central to the novel is the portrayal of the *To Lotang* belief system, which is uniquely presented alongside the influences of Islam and Hinduism. This fusion of religious and cultural elements creates a rich tapestry of reciprocal and dynamic interactions between different belief systems.

The *To Lotang* belief system, as presented in *Sajak Rindu*, is more than just a religious practice—it represents the cultural identity of the people of *Amparita, Sidenreng Rappang*. As Hall (1997) posits, cultural identity is an ongoing process of becoming and being, shaped by both the past and the future, transcending time and space. In this sense, the *To Lotang* belief system, intertwined with rituals, traditions, and community behaviors, plays a vital role in forming and maintaining the identity of the *To Lotang* people. These cultural expressions are vividly captured through the characters, plot, setting, and themes of the novel, offering a rich representation of the dynamic relationship between local traditions and larger religious influences.

Indonesia, a nation known for its cultural and religious diversity, offers a fascinating context for studying the intersections of traditional beliefs and official religions (Mazya et al., 2024; Abbas et al., 2024; Ilham & Rahman, 2024). In particular, the *To Lotang* community in South Sulawesi presents a unique example of how traditional belief systems can endure and adapt, even amidst the pressure of dominant religions such as Islam and Hinduism. Though officially classified as part of Hinduism by the Indonesian government, the *To Lotang* religion maintains distinctive practices and beliefs that set it apart from mainstream Hinduism. This community's ability to preserve its traditional identity amidst

religious and cultural change provides valuable insights into the complexities of cultural survival. *Sajak Rindu* serves as an important literary work that not only explores the life and beliefs of the *To Lotang* people but also sheds light on the intricate interactions between their indigenous beliefs and Islam, offering a profound understanding of how these influences shape both individual and collective identity.

In addition to its exploration of religious and cultural dynamics, *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* also highlights the ways in which literature functions as a powerful tool for preserving and transmitting cultural heritage. Through the characters' experiences, the novel provides readers with an intimate view of the *To Lotang* people's worldview and the importance they place on ancestral traditions. By intertwining these beliefs with the narrative, the author not only portrays the *To Lotang*'s rich cultural identity but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the resilience of traditional belief systems in the face of modernization and religious pluralism. The aim of this research is to analyze the *To Lotang* belief system as depicted in the novel, uncovering how these beliefs shape the cultural identity and worldview of the community. This study is important as it offers a deeper understanding of the role literature plays in preserving indigenous belief systems, while also examining the intersection of traditional beliefs with mainstream religions like Islam and Hinduism. Through this, the research emphasizes the significance of cultural representation in literature and contributes to broader discussions on cultural survival and adaptation in contemporary societies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies are relevant to this article, providing a foundation for understanding the depiction of cultural identity and belief systems in *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng*. Yantu (2020) conducted research titled "Local Wisdom of the Bugis Community in the Novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* by S. Gegge Mappangewa," which highlights the values of honesty, commitment, politeness, conflict resolution, hard work, and mutual cooperation in Bugis culture as depicted through characters like Halimah. The study shows how these values manifest in the characters' actions, particularly in Halimah's difficult decision to remain true to her faith despite the pressures of love, reflecting the moral compass of the Bugis people. Mahfiroh et al. (2020), in their study "Social Conflict in the Novel *Lontara Rindu*," examined the various forms of social conflict portrayed in the novel, categorizing them into conflicts of gender, religion, groups, interests, and individuals. Their research highlights how these conflicts are resolved and their societal impact, offering insight into the social dynamics of the community depicted in the novel.

Another significant contribution comes from Ardiansyah et al. (2021), whose research on "Bugis Ethics in the Novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* and Its Contribution to Character Education in Schools" demonstrates how the three key Bugis ethics—*sipakatau* (respect), *sipakainge* (remind each other), and *sipakalebbi* (humility)—serve as valuable tools for character education, especially in the context of schools. These ethical values, embodied by the characters, are presented as vital components of the community's cultural fabric. Additionally, the anthropological aspects of literature are explored in studies like those by Febrianto and Anggraini (2019); Rohmana (2012), who apply literary anthropology to examine the cultural elements in works such as *Rahvayana Aku Lala Padamu and Perempuan Named Arjuna*. These studies reveal how literature serves as a medium to represent and explore cultural traditions, values, and systems within various communities, such as the Balinese and Sundanese cultures.

The theory of Literary Anthropology, as outlined by Ratna (2011), is fundamental to this research. It provides an interdisciplinary framework for analyzing the relationship between literary works and the cultural contexts in which they emerge. Literary anthropology suggests that literary works cannot be understood in isolation; instead, they must be examined in relation to the social, cultural, and historical circumstances that shape them (Blissett, 2024; Abbas et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2023). This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of how cultural identity, belief systems, and societal norms are represented and transmitted through literature. Furthermore, as literary works often evoke and construct cultural meanings, they play a crucial role in reflecting and challenging cultural realities (Gottlieb, 2024; Suma et al., 2023; Junaid et al., 2023). By applying literary anthropology to *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng*, this study aims to uncover the intricate ways in which the *To Lotang* belief system is woven into the cultural identity of the community and how it interacts with other belief systems in the novel.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative research method to analyze the belief system of the *To Lotang* people as depicted in *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* by S. Gegge Mappangewa. The primary aim is to explore how the *To Lotang* belief system is represented in the novel and how it interacts with elements of Islam and Hinduism, contributing to the cultural identity of the community. The study uses a literary anthropological approach, drawing on Clifford Geertz's theory to examine the relationship between cultural phenomena and the narrative structure of the novel.

The data collection method involves literature study, focusing on the novel as the primary text. The text will be analyzed for its portrayal of the *To Lotang* belief system, identifying key symbols, rituals, and traditions that shape the characters' worldview and cultural identity. Additionally, the analysis will consider the social context and interactions between the characters, particularly those influenced by religious beliefs and cultural practices. Through this, the research aims to uncover how the *To Lotang* belief system is represented and how it intersects with broader social, cultural, and religious dynamics.

In the analysis, both intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the novel will be considered. Intrinsically, the research will focus on the characters, plot, setting, and themes to understand how the *To Lotang* belief system is embedded in the narrative. Extrinsically, the research will contextualize the novel within the broader cultural, historical, and religious environment of the *To Lotang* people, exploring how their beliefs interact with and adapt to other belief systems, such as Islam and Hinduism. By applying literary anthropology, this method allows for a deeper understanding of how literature reflects and constructs cultural identities and belief systems.

IV. RESULTS

A. History of *To Lotang* Beliefs

The novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* describes the belief of *To Lotang* embraced by the main character, Ilham. Ilham's character comes from Amparita, Sidenreng Rappang Regency, likes Halimah as a Muslim who comes from Pakka Salo. During Ilham *KKN at Pakka Salo*, Ilham fell in love with Halimah. Halimah did not know that Ilham had a different belief from him. This is the conflict that builds the story.

This novel tells the story of the *To Lotang* belief which originated from the traditional belief system embraced by the *Towani To Lotang* community. This belief is a unique blend of various elements, including animism, Hinduism, and local traditions, passed down from generation to generation. Although officially classified by the Indonesian government as part of Hinduism with a distinctive name, Hinduism *To Lotang*, orally, they still refer to them as *To Lotang*. This belief has very distinctive characteristics and practices and is different from Hinduism. The *To Lotang* Trust is one of the beliefs of the Bugis Wajo community, especially Wani Village. This belief existed before Islam entered the Wajo kingdom. This can be seen in the following quote:

Data 1

He didn't realize that the Ilham he chose, even though his father didn't like him because he never got him to pray at the mosque during KKN in his village, was a follower of the Tolotang Hindu religion. The religion that was initially only recognized as a school of belief brought by Ipbber entered Amparita, but after this country only recognized five religions, its adherents preferred to name themselves Hinduism for many reasons in common. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 163)

The data above reveals that the *To Lotang* belief system was first introduced to *Amparita* by *I Pabbere* centuries ago, marking the beginning of a distinct cultural and spiritual tradition in the region. Although the *To Lotang* people are identified as Hindu, their practices diverge significantly from mainstream Hinduism. For instance, they do not observe Nyepi Day, which is a central celebration in Balinese Hinduism. Instead, the *To Lotang* community follows their own unique set of traditions, including holidays established by the Uwas through the process of *tudang sipulung* (a traditional consultation). One of the most significant holidays for the *To Lotang* people is held in January at *Perrinyameng*, where they gather to celebrate and reinforce their cultural identity. This distinctive practice underscores the ways in which the *To Lotang* belief system has adapted and evolved over time, maintaining its roots while integrating some aspects of external religious influences.

Data 2

Today, at the end of January, according to the results of *tudang sipulung*. It is designated as the Tolotang holiday which will be held in *Perrinyameng*. The first place *I Pabbere*, the bearer of the Tolotang teachings entered Sidrap, received asylum hundreds of years ago. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 241)

Historically, the origins of the *To Lotang* community can be traced back to the 16th and 17th centuries in the *Wajo* region. At that time, King *Wajo* ordered all its inhabitants to convert to Islam, and those who refused would be expelled from the area. The *Tolotang* community that refused this order eventually spread to areas such as *Amparita*, *Bacukiki*, and *Otting*. Although they are scattered, they still maintain their ancestral beliefs and practices. Bandung (2016) stated that *Raja Wajo* who was titled *Arung Matoa Wajo XI* named *La Sangkuru* obliged all his people to embrace Islam (p. 178). Those who reject are those who still believe in the teachings of *To Lotang*. King *La Sangkuru* emphasized that those who did not follow the teachings of Islam immediately left *Wajo*. Adherents of the *To Lotang* teachings from *Wani* village, which numbered about 50 families, finally left *Wajo*. The leader of the *To Lotang* teachings at that time was *I Pabbere*. He asked for asylum to *Arung Amparita*, *La Paduppai*. *Arung Amparita* also declared to the King of *Addatuang Sidenreng*, *La Patiroi*. Their request was finally accepted by setting the terms of the agreement. The conditions of the agreement include that *To Lotang* adherents must be held in an Islamic ceremony if someone gets married and dies.

Based on the data above, it shows that *To Lotang* originally came from *Wajo* Regency. After King *Wajo* converted to Islam, he asked all his citizens to embrace Islam. Those who refuse to embrace Islam are welcome to leave *Wajo*. Some of the residents chose to leave their hometowns to maintain their faith. Therefore, their leaders do *tudang sipulung* (deliberating) to make decisions. The decision was taken that the *I Galigo* group was given a place in *Bacukiki*, Pare-Pare, the *I Mango* group to the *Otting* area and the *Pabbere* group was accepted by *La Patiroi*, the King of *Sidenreng*, and placed in *Amparita*. *I Pabbere* is very strong in maintaining and spreading the belief in *To Lotang* (Bandung, 2009, p. 180).

The uniqueness of this *To Lotang* belief, even though it is in the name of Hinduism, is that their dress culture in ritual events does not resemble the clothes used by Hindus in performing ritual ceremonies. Their clothes are more like Muslims. This is possible because of the agreement between King *Addatuang Sidenreng* and the leader of *To Lotang*, *I Pabbere*

above. When the ritual event is carried out in *Perrinyameng*, the men use black songkok made of velvet like the songkok used by Muslim men. They also use sarongs, like the appearance of Muslims who will pray. While women wear batik sarongs with kebaya tops.

They carry out various rituals related to the cycle of life, nature, and ancestors. This ritual involves offerings to the spirits of ancestors and the gods they believe in. Respect for ancestors is a central element in the *To Lotang* belief. They believe that ancestral spirits can influence daily life, so various ceremonies are performed in their honor. This belief also includes elements of animism, where they believe that everything in this realm has a spirit or soul. Therefore, they have great respect for nature and the surrounding environment.

B. *To Lotang* Trust System

Adherents of the *To Lotang* belief believe in God Almighty called Dewata Seuwae. Etymologically, *de'* means not to be concerned with the body. So, Dewata means disembodied, intangible, invisible. In addition, Dewata can also mean God or Gods, Seuwae means singular, one or one. They believe that the Seuwae God has power beyond human strength because He is able to create seven layers of heaven upwards and seven layers of earth downwards. The *To Lotang* people believe that the Seuwae Gods are able to see all human movements. Therefore, humans perform rituals and offerings to Him both through ceremonies, rituals, and offerings. Adherents of this belief cannot worship the God Seuwae directly, but through a religious intermediary called Uwa. Uwa is the one who can be directly related to the Seuwae God (Bandung, 2009, p. 181).

According to Clifford Geertz (1992), God is a symbol rich in meaning and is used by humans to understand and interpret the world around them. This explanation is similar to the concept of the One God in monotheistic religions. The *To Lotang* community also believes in the system of revelation. This is clearly illustrated in the story of La Panaungi, a figure who is believed to be the bearer of the treatise of the forerunner of *To Lotang's* beliefs. Bandung (2009) stated that once La Panaungi performed a belief ritual embraced by the teachings of Sawerigading, suddenly there was a voice out of nowhere which read: "Hi La Panaungi, stop doing it, accept what I will say later". La Panaungi replied, "Who are you?" the answer was "I am the God of Seuwae as the Lord who rules over all things and will give you confidence". La Panaungi acknowledged and believed that the voice was the word of God, namely the Seuwae God. In addition to believing in revelation, this community also believes in an afterlife called *lino paimeng* (the afterlife). According to their belief, *lino paimeng* is a *lipu bonga* (beautiful place) as a place for people who obey the rules of the Gods and the Uwatta and Uwa (p. 177).

The leader of *To Lotang's* belief is called Uwa. Uwa is a religious leader who has a role model in society. He has a very large position and influence amid his society because he has excellence, both in science and integrity. In the novel, Ilham's father is Uwa. Therefore, Halimah could not be accepted by Ilham's father as a son-in-law unless Halimah entered *To Lotang*.

Data 3

In front of there, where the *Uwa* lead the ritual, there is the tomb of I Pabbere and several tombs of their ancestors who used to carry the teachings of *To Lotang* from Wajo district. This area is not allowed to be entered by anyone, except for certain people, and cannot even take pictures there. Very, very sacred! (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 245)

The *Uwa* holds a crucial position as a spiritual intermediary between the human world and the *Seuwae* Gods, embodying a role of great reverence and responsibility within the *To Lotang* community. As the trusted leader in all ritual activities, the *Uwa* is responsible for ensuring that the community's spiritual practices are carried out with precision and respect to tradition. Their leadership in these rituals is not only vital for maintaining the cultural continuity of the *To Lotang* belief system but also for preserving the connection between the people and their ancestral gods. Through the *Uwa's* guidance, these sacred rituals continue to be a cornerstone of the *To Lotang* community, reinforcing both spiritual and social cohesion.

Data 4

Their feast day is the day of the grave pilgrimage to the grave of I Pabbere which is held in January every year. Even then, the certainty of the day is uncertain, we have to wait for the results of the *tudang sipulung* of the *tolotang* leaders whom they call Uwa. (Mappangewa, p. 163)

In the novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng*, Ilham's father, who serves as an *Uwa*, plays a pivotal role in the tension surrounding the relationship between Ilham and Halimah. As the *Uwa*, he holds significant authority over spiritual matters and traditions, which becomes a barrier to their union. Ilham's father is unable to accept Halimah into the family unless she embraces the *To Lotang* belief system, highlighting the deeply rooted influence of cultural and religious identity on personal relationships. This conflict underscores the central theme of the novel, illustrating the complexities of navigating love within the context of tradition, belief, and cultural expectations.

Data 5

Now the problem is no longer because you are considered inappropriate for Ilham who has just graduated, but... I am from *Tolotang's* family, Halimah! And my father can only accept you if you want to hug *Tolotang*. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 165)

This is the conflict that becomes the climax in this novel. Halimah did not want to abandon her faith. She is willing to lose everything as long as it is not her belief. This can be seen in the following quote:

Data 6

She does not know where to go because it is impossible to go home, but he will not be able to leave Islam just because of love... She can betray his father in love affairs, but in religious affairs, she does not need to think twice to say NO. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 166)

The Book of Lontara is a book that is believed by the To Lotang community to be a holy book. They consider that the teachings received by La Panaungi come from the Seuwae God. They call this book Appongenna Tolotangge. This book contains stories and ancestral messages about life contained in scattered Lontara writings, not in the form of formal books. However, the book has been burned. From then on, they no longer had a book. The concept of theology, which includes revelation and religious ritual procedures, is all oral. The To Lotang community as an entity that recognizes the existence of God, has religious reason. In principle, the concept of religiosity in the belief in To Lotang is a belief in God. The supreme god in the Tolotang perspective is Dewata Seuwae, as well as several companion gods such as Dewa Langie; a god who resides in the sky, this god is tasked with bringing rain, fertility/prosperity as well as disasters. The god Mallinoe, the god who occupies certain places on the earth such as in trees, roads, land and so on, and the god Uwae, which is the god who lives in water.

C. *To Lotang Ritual*

To Lotang's beliefs are the same as other beliefs in general. They have several rituals that are carried out through ceremonies. This ceremony serves as a medium for meeting with his God who is referred to as the Seuwae God. The To Lotang ritual is generally divided into 2, namely rituals related to offerings to the Seuwae God and rituals related to human life such as birth rituals, marriage rituals, and death rituals. This ritual is carried out by the To Lotang community through the intermediary of Uwa. Some of the To Lotang rituals in the novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Rindu dari Sidenreng* by S. Gege Mappangewa.

(a). *Perrinyameng*

Perrinyameng is actually the burial place of I Pabbere (the first person to bring the teachings of To Lotang to Amparita in Sidenreng Rappang Regency). This place is the center of the ritual of celebrating the To Lotang holiday which is held in January. Etymologically, *perri* means suffering/difficulty and *nyameng* means happiness/pleasure. So, the To Lotang people symbolize the implementation of the holiday as a symbol of celebrating happiness after going through/going through various difficulties in living this life. This celebration was held in Perrinyameng. This can be seen in the following data:

Data 7

Today at the end of January, according to the results of the tudang sipulung, is designated as the Tolotang holiday which will be held in Perrinyameng. The first place I Pabbere, the bearer of the Tolotang teachings in Sidrap, received asylum hundreds of years ago. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 241)

Implementation of Eid al-Fitr To Lotang decided through Tudang Sipulung. Tudang Sipulung consists of two words, namely Tudang 'Sit' and sipulung 'gathered'. Ritual Tudang Sipulung carried out before Hari Raya To Lotang. This ritual is carried out to determine the holiday. Implementation center Tudang Sipulung carried out at the grave of I Pabbere. The data below shows that Tudang Sipulung is carried out to determine the day of the ritual Perrinyameng and other rituals such as the ritual of the first day going down to the rice fields. They will open their book called *lontara*. Bandung (2009) mentioned that there are two sources of religious law In Lotang: written law and unwritten law (p. 184). The source of the written Law is *Lontara*. This book is distinguished from *Lontara Kutika* and *Lontara said*. *Lontara Kutika* is *Lontara*, which contains good times or times, and bad times, such as days, months, and years, are good and bad. *Lontara* is a *Lontara* that can be used as a guideline in knowing the good or bad schedule, especially related to agriculture. The following data shows that the ritual *mappalili* also carried out by the community To Lotang.

Data 8

This gathering event is called tudang sipulung. At this tudang sipulung event, *lontara* will be opened. From this *lontara*, it will then be determined when it will be made the day of *mappalili* as the first day to go down to the rice fields. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 93)

The implementation of this *perrinyameng* ritual is carried out every year. The basis for the implementation of this ritual was that when I Pabbere's death was approaching, he advised that when I pass away, bury me in Perrinyameng and make a mass pilgrimage to my grave every year. The grave of I Pabbere cemetery is located approximately 3 km from the center of Amparita. This cemetery is under a large shady tree and is always locked, except on the day of the ceremony (Bandung, 2009, p. 228). Their feast day is the day of visiting the grave of I Pabbere. This can be seen in the following quote:

Data 9

If Hindus have the Nyepi holiday, Tolotang Hindus do not know it. Their feast day is a day of pilgrimage to the grave of I Pabbere which is held in January every year. Even that certainty is uncertain, we have to wait for the results of the tudang sipulung of the Tolotang leaders whom they call Uwa. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 163)

Implementation of rituals Perrinyameng This was done massively and lively.



Figure 1. Rituals *Perrinyameng*

Source: <https://nopagunawan.com/towani-tolotang-salah-satu-agama-asli-nusantara-dari-sulawesi-selatan/>

The devotees To Lotang who migrated will return on this Eid. They believe that it is a sacred day, a day of gathering, a day of blessing, so they will try to attend the ritual event.

Data 10

Thousands of Tolotang believers spilled out next to the Amparita market. Men wear black songkok made of velvet and use an industrially woven sarong. Meanwhile, the woman also uses a sarong but a batik motif, with a kebaya shirt top. Young and old, big and small, all in the same clothes and no one wears footwear... (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 241)

The implementation of this holiday was not only attended by To Lotang adherents, but those who held office such as the Regent, Sub-district Head, Chairman of the DPRD, Police, Army and other community leaders were also invited (Bandung, 2009, p. 228). In the novel poem *Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng*, data on the implementation of the To Lotang holiday is also found.

Data 11

A year, people outside Tolotang who usually attend the event held at Perrinyameng, are people who receive special invitations such as the Regent and a number of district officials. Journalists are also not free to take pictures, especially at the funeral of I Pabbere. Although in fact, the holiday has been similar to a tourist parade because of the many interesting attractions that they hold after the main menu of their ritual is completed. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 223)



Figure 2. I Pabbere Cemetery on Foot Barefoot

Source: <https://nopagunawan.com/towani-tolotang-salah-satu-agama-asli-nusantara-dari-sulawesi-selatan/>

The Uwa used horses accompanied by the To Lotang people who walked beside them. This can be seen in the following data:

Data 12

The cavalry began to move slowly. His companions, who wore red sarongs, walked beside the horses of the gods. Other Tolotang adherents also moved. Visitors from outside Tolotang also walked to witness firsthand the ritual that only exists on the land of Amparita. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 245)

The clothes used by To Lotang devotees at the ceremony are sarongs, regular shirts, and black skullcaps for men. Women use sarongs with batik motifs and kebaya tops. Bandung (2009) stated that women use two sarongs (p. 229). One sarong is directly used, and the other is used as a scarf or head covering. Some women also wear Bodo clothes and silk sarongs. In addition to clothes, this ritual also has special ways of carrying out the ritual. Bandung (2009) stated that the

implementation of the ceremony was carried out in such a way that all participants of the ceremony faced the direction of the I Pabbere cemetery by sitting cross-legged around the I Pabbere cemetery (p. 231). Then several religious leaders entered the cemetery of I Pabbere. These are the ones who pray to the God of Seuwae. First Uwa poured water on the tombstone of I Pabbere, then he was given a cotton sack and then given minnyak smell. Other followers of the To Lotang religion are only outside the cemetery but with the same attitude. In addition to water, cotton, and oil smell, this ritual also carries pesse pelling (candles made from candlenuts) lit during the ceremony. In addition, they also bring betel leaves and areca nuts.

(b). *Pammasetau*

Pammasetau is basically the burial place of To Lotang's ancestors as well as a place to worship and hand over their slaughtered animals. Some opinions say that this pammasetau ritual is carried out when a person has a wish/vow. They will come to the tomb of I Pabbere to deliver their vows. This ritual is carried out by watering the minnyak bau grave of I Pabbere carried out by Uwa. In the novel, the implementation of this ritual is described as follows:

Data 13

One of the unique rituals when visiting Pammasetau, visitors usually tie a rope on the fence of the tombstone while praying and promise to release the bond again when their prayers are answered. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 148)

People pray in front of I Pabbere's tombstone and tie a rope to a tree as a sign that he has come to make a vow. For example, when they have a celebration to be able to build a house, then they make a vow and promise that after the vow is fulfilled, they will come back to express gratitude and gratitude because their vow has been received by cutting a goat, cow, or buffalo as well as removing the ropes/cloth that have been tied in the past. In addition, he also brought offerings and miniature houses that he built. Offerings that are mandatory at a vow release event like this are betel leaves, jasmine rice, grease smell and incense.

Data 14

One of the three tombstones is fenced with blocks made of black wood. The three shiny black stones look like they have just been painted and varnished. That's because there is a special treatment on the stone when it is burned. If people in general when going to the tomb usually water the tombstone with water, the treatment of the tombstone is different from the others. The stone can be watered with a smell. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 147)

(c). *Massempe*

Massempe is a pencak silat game that is carried out to fight against leg strength. This ritual is carried out at the To Lotang holiday. This activity was carried out after the sacred ritual of perrinyameng was carried out. In the past, this massempe was carried out by adults and children. Now massempe is only done by children. This massempe is carried out to carry out ancestral habits, foster courage, fostering physical health to find a resilient To Lotang generation in the future. This massempe has referees and special rules.

Data 15

The field that was occupied by people sitting and performing rituals, is now empty. Soon it will become a massempe massempe area (kicking each other. As a rule, it is permissible to kick the calf and shin. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 247)

The novel *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta dari Sidenreng* tells the story of the characters Vito and Vino as twin brothers who are separated due to the difference in their parents' beliefs. Ilham, his father, was a To Lotang and Halimah, his mother, was a Muslim. Vino followed his father to become To Lotang and Vito followed his mother to Islam. When Vito missed meeting his father, he came on the To Lotang ceremony and participated in the massempe in the hope of meeting his father but never met.



Figure 3. The Massempe Ritual

Source: <https://nopagunawan.com/towani-tolotang-salah-satu-agama-asli-nusantara-dari-sulawesi-selatan/>

Several times, Vito became the winner in the massempe ritual. Uwa (Ilham's father) thought Vito was Vito who was his grandson.

Data 16

Vito didn't realize, besides Jihang, there was a horseman who was watching his movements. The man is one of the Uwa who is respected in the Tolotang community. And Uwa is his grandfather. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 241)

To Lotang's marriage with Muslims often occurs. The adherents of To Lotang who converted to Islam called themselves To Lotang Benteng. Although some original To Lotang adherents do not recognize the existence of the term To Lotang Benteng. Those who married to Islam and moved from To Lotang were no longer recognized as To Lotang. This happened to Uncle Ilham. Halimah asked for asylum when she left her home to live with Ilham, and Ilham's parents did not accept Halimah.

Data 17

Some To Lotang Benteng people have admitted to Islam and are Islamic in terms of ID cards, but in their daily behavior they still carry out some To Lotang rituals without feeling that they have worshipped Allah who they have acknowledged without allies in their shahada. (Mappangewa, 2016, p. 168)

In daily lives, they continue to perform traditional To Lotang rituals. These individuals do not seem to recognize that these rituals, which may involve practices not in line with Islam, conflict with the core Islamic belief in worshipping Allah alone. The paragraph suggests a disconnect between their formal religious identification and their ongoing engagement with traditional practices.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *Sajak Rindu: Lontara Cinta Dari Sidenreng* by S. Gegge Mappangewa not only explores the personal journey of the characters but also intricately weaves the history and belief system of the To Lotang people from Amparita, Sidenreng Rappang. Through the depiction of rituals such as perrinyameng, pammasetau, and masssempe, the novel highlights the cultural significance of the To Lotang's belief in the Seuwae God. These traditional practices play a crucial role in shaping the narrative and conflict, particularly through the character Ilham, whose internal struggle reflects the tension between cultural beliefs and the broader themes of change and identity. Thus, the novel serves as both a cultural and personal exploration, showcasing the complexity of the To Lotang belief system and its impact on the characters' lives.

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