



## The Discourse in Lontaraq Meongpalo Karellae: An Anthropological Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses the Lontaraq Meongpalo Karellae manuscript from an anthropological perspective. The manuscript narrates the story of a cat subjected to violence by humans, leading to the descent of celestial beings known as Dewata Sangiangseri to administer 'retribution' against those who mistreat animals. The manuscript also explores the relationships between humans, nature, and other living beings to foster harmonious coexistence for environmental preservation. This narrative imparts ethical lessons from an anthropological and cultural standpoint. The study employs an anthropological approach to analyze cultural practices among the Bugis community, particularly in maintaining harmony among humans, nature, and the surrounding environment. Analyze the text of Lontaraq and use the qualitative research. Through the Maddoja Bine ritual, these practices substantiate how the Lontaraq Meongpalo Karellae manuscript provides concrete implications for Bugis ethnic entities to nurture and care for the environment. Furthermore, this research enables a deeper understanding of the dynamics of traditional Bugis society, especially in the contexts of social interaction, family structure, and inherited cultural values. Oral traditions, myths, and rituals constitute integral aspects of the cultural identity of the community, effectively manifesting as relational entities within historical and environmental contexts, thereby underscoring their relevance in contemporary anthropological studies.

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Lontaraq serve as a source of authority and legitimacy within the societal context of South Sulawesi. Generally, these manuscripts contain historical narratives and chronicles, laws, customs, folklore, epics, social institutions, and religious literature, resulting in a diverse collection of Lontaraq manuscripts (Abidin 1971). In line with this, Salim's work related to I La Galigo also provides an illustration of the urgency of Lontaraq as a story to gain authority (Salim et al. 1995). One particularly intriguing manuscript for scholarly study is the Naskah Meongpalo Karellae henceforth referred to as the MK manuscript, which encompasses traditional knowledge, especially in agricultural practices. The MK manuscript narrates the processes and rituals preceding rice planting, known as seed sowing, or "maddoja bine." The community believes that these activities are ancestral

legacies, imparting advice and positive values from the seeding process to the harvest to ensure maximum yield. Additionally, the MK manuscript holds cosmological values associated with Dewi Padi or Sangiang Serri. The manifestation of Sangiang Serri in the text carries a message of legitimization in traditional knowledge, symbolizing power as a form of community legitimization to preserve tradition and culture.

The MK manuscript also implies the life journey of a tricolor cat living alongside humans. This cat becomes a pet until it experiences mistreatment from humans for eating a fish caught by them. Following this incident, the cat flees to the rice barn (*rakkiang*) and meets Sangiang Serri. Upon seeing the cat's condition due to violence, Sangiang Serri becomes furious and abandons the house owner, leading to a period of famine and food scarcity for the household. Manuscript studies tend to be dominated by manuscripts containing stories of nobility, palace records and many more things related to political aspects.

Interestingly, the MK manuscript rarely becomes a subject of academic discourse due to the limited availability of reading materials and comparative references, thus escaping formal academic discussions. The textual analysis of the MK manuscript divides into several contexts: first, the life of Meongpalo Karellae with its owner, who subjects it to physical violence; second, the social relations and legitimacy involving *Sangiang Serri* and local rulers; and third, the condition of Meongpalo Karellae with *Sangiang Serri* related to rice planting. However, the MK manuscript also recounts animal cruelty resulting in drought, subsequently becoming local wisdom. The implied message is to avoid violence against Meongpalo Karellae. The narrative of violence in the *Lontaraq* manuscripts encompasses various actions and events involving human interactions with animals and nature, including hunting, inter-tribal warfare, animal sacrifices in rituals, animal abuse, and human treatment of the environment. Understanding violence in the *Lontaraq* manuscripts should not be viewed narrowly; these manuscripts are always interpreted symbolically, carrying positive meanings concerning the ethics, norms, and spirituality of the Bugis-Makassar society.

Studies related to the study of the Lontara manuscript in South Sulawesi mostly translate and transliterate the manuscript without looking at the impact of contemporary practice from the values contained in the manuscript. For example, Mattulada's work (Mattulada. 1985) describes in great detail the values known as pangadereng, but in subsequent studies it does not explain how the implications of these values are in the social life of the Bugis community. Cummings' work is quite different because it makes Lontara Bilang Gowa and Talloq to see the historical flow of the kingdom (Cummings 2010). However, the narrative is quite elitist because the historical narrative that was built is very close to the palace. A similar study was also written by Shah who succeeded in transliterating and translating the Lontara of the Balanipa Kingdom in Mandar (Shah 1992a, 1992b). However, the stories highlighted are the Kingdom's narrative. It is undeniable that these works contribute to the study of History and Anthropology in Sulawesi, but in their development the study must be useful holistically by looking at the contemporary conditions that occur in the community.

Utilizing manuscript works as a database to reveal the value understood by the community in the past has been written by Warta (Warta 2019) by sitting it as a symbol of human behavior. Hamsiati's work (Hamsiati, Hamid, and Mustolehudin 2021) is also the same, examining Lontara I La Galigo as a tradition of reading manuscripts in certain rituals. In line with this, Sulkarnaen positioned the manuscript as an oral tradition in the community that is still carried out today. However, among these works that have not positioned the manuscript in the current conditions of society, the perspective stops at the ritual procession. This article provides a new perspective on previous studies by focusing on the values inherited through the Lontara manuscript and the implementation of traditions. This means that the Constitutional Court manuscript is positioned as a source of value that influences the behavior of the community, especially in the agricultural tradition.

The main issue in this article is to understand and analyze the socio-cultural conditions depicted in the MK manuscript. This *Lontaraq* discusses the narrative of violence, presenting a cultural contradiction within Bugis society. Consequently, the analysis of the MK manuscript will highlight the critique of agrarian-based traditional knowledge. Additionally, this article aims to analyze the cultural aspects embedded in the MK manuscript concerning humans, nature, and animals, reflecting harmony.

Cultural representations from the past have persisted to influence contemporary views (Hasanah et al., 2023) and behaviors in maintaining ecosystem balance and environmental sustainability. The primary question posed in this study is: how does the narrative within the MK manuscript influence the values and culture of its preserving community? Moreover, how does cultural reproduction impact their understanding of dignity and honor, implicating the community's cultural identity?

The implicit message within the MK manuscript also narrates human behavior towards other living beings, suggesting that human attitudes can alienate animals and plants from them. An environmental ethic from a cultural perspective, as discussed in this article, is expected to serve as a medium to convey local wisdom and the reproduction of positive values contained within it. This study is crucial as the MK manuscript holds the potential to transmit local wisdom values to future generations, aiming to preserve cultural and environmental ethics.

## METHODS

This article operates the analysis of text data and then analyzes the conditions influenced by the values conveyed through rituals in the community. The research data was obtained using qualitative methods through interviews and in-depth observations of the condition of the community and its environment. This article looks at the context of the manuscript and the events studied, observes and discusses the current cultural currents including their relevance to the text of the manuscript as well as certain rituals where the manuscript was preserved or developed (Azra 2010). On anthropological perspective in literary criticism entails examining literature within the framework of human cultures, societies, customs and historical context of a literary works. This approach aims to comprehend how literature mirrors, shapes, and is shaped by the cultural environments in which it is created and experienced. Thus, anthropological literary criticism is a detailed and multifaceted method that places literary works within their cultural settings. By exploring the cultural, social, and historical aspects of literature, this approach provides a deeper insight into how literature influences and is influenced by human cultures. It not only deepens our interpretation of texts but also enhances our appreciation of the diversity and intricacy of human societies.

Numerous studies have examined the cosmological relationships and human interactions in South Sulawesi.

For instance, research by Pelras (2006), Syamsurijal et al. (2023), and Adnan (2018) highlights the role of the Bissu as mediators between humans and ancestral spirits. This intermediary role underscores how human actions, often motivated by ego and desire, disrupt the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Douglas and Waksler (2002:197) further imply that humans frequently overlook the intrinsic connection between themselves and the natural world.

In particular, literature concerning local manuscripts from South Sulawesi, such as *Lontaraq*, is analyzed in Mattulada's work (1985), which interprets the origins and behaviors of South Sulawesi society. Warta (2019) also discusses Lontara, emphasizing its ethical guidance on human behavior. Suarka (2018) identifies a decline in ethical standards, attributing student violence to the erosion of local values. Suarka argues that the human-nature relationship should be evidenced through actions that protect the environment to prevent disorder.

Moreover, the preservation of nature is a significant theme in *Lontaraq*, reflecting local wisdom. Studies by Diantika and Utami (2022), Putri and Diana (2017), Niman (2019), Baharudin (2010), Yus Darusman (2016), Siswadi, Taruna, and Purnaweni (2012), Wibowo, Wasino, and Setyowati (2012), Mahbub (2008), Gorda and Anggria Wardani (2020), Azhari (2019), Sinapoy (2018), Mansur (2018), Rusdiansyah (2019), Raka Dalem (2007), Heru, Maslikatin, and Hariyadi (2017), Waluya et al. (2021), Berdame and Lombogia (2020), Marfai (2019), Dahana and Martana (2020), Juhadi (2007, 2019) collectively conclude that *Lontaraq* significantly contributes to modern society's understanding of environmental preservation through local wisdom.

Therefore, *Lontaraq* serves as a vital representation of human efforts to preserve cultural heritage and traditions. Helmon (2020), Nesi (2018), and Riskawati, Nensiliani, and Saguni (2023) argue that oral traditions often convey messages advocating for environmental conservation, emphasizing humans' integral role within the environment. As stewards of the earth, humans must protect animals and plants, acknowledging their potential to cause harm. The relationship depicted in the MK narrative and other literatures is crucial for analyzing these local manuscripts' texts and contexts. Anthropologically, the relationship between humans and nature is portrayed in local prose during the rice planting process, *Maddoja Bine*, which epitomizes the cultural importance of preserving nature, nurturing plants, and fostering harmony among nature, humans, animals, and the environment.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Description of the *Lontaraq* MK

The *Lontaraq* MK is a compilation of oral traditions from Wage, Wajo, South Sulawesi that has been transcribed into written form. The manuscript is written in the *Lontaraq* Bugis script. There were two versions have been found on *Lontaraq* MK manuscripts; *first*, from Drs. H. Suaib Azis, the personal collection former Head of the Cultural Section, Department of Education and

Culture, Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi; *second* from Drs. Muh. Salim, Head of Facilities P&K Kanwil, Department of Education and Culture, South Sulawesi Province, were duplicated in 1993.

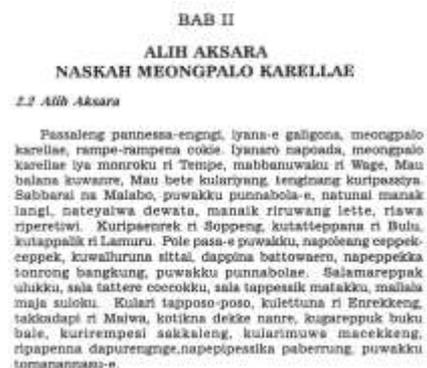
The first manuscript from Suaib Azis was translated by the Department of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in 1999. In the manuscript was rewritten by Drs. H. Palippui and Muhammad Hatta in 1993, making it more legible and clear to read. Initially, the manuscript was in poor condition, decayed, and difficult to read, with modern paper. The collection of manuscript from Suaib Azis's has measures 14 x 21.5 cm, consists of 67 pages, and is written in the *Lontaraq* Bugis script. The second manuscript duplicated by Muh. Salim is handwritten on modern paper measuring 21 x 33 cm and comprises 29 pages. Interestingly, both manuscripts contain the same content, narrating a story involving a cat, *Meongpalo Karellae*, as the main character.

Generally, the *Lontaraq* MK includes various tales about a cat and its master. The cat's story begins with its journey in Wage with its master but then experiences mistreatment, leading it to move to several places including Wajo, Soppeng, Lamuru, Enrekang, and Maiwa. In these locations, the cat faces various conditions until the meeting with *Sangiangseri*, the *Dewi Padi*, who comes to protect and save it.

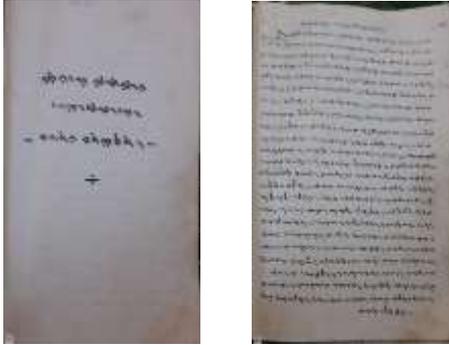
Explicitly, the *Lontaraq* MK embodies local wisdom values related to the Bugis community, particularly during the rice planting season until harvest time. The manuscript contains both explicit and implicit messages of goodness, ancestral advice, instructions for performing good deeds, and prohibitions against dishonorable actions driven by desires. For farmers, the manuscript serves as prose containing prayer incantations for fertile soil, good seeds, the elimination of pests, and abundant yields blessed by the *Dewata* for the general well-being of the community. Additionally, the MK manuscript advises farmers to maintain harmony between humans, the environment, nature, and animals as a unified organism in the world.

Below is an example of the MK manuscript that has been transliterated while retaining the Bugis *Lontaraq* script:

Picture I: The Translation to Latin script in 1999



**Figure 2:** The Manuscripts was duplicated by Muh. Salim in 1993



From the MK manuscript, the translated text reads as follows:

"This is the passage that explains the story of Meongpalo Karellae. Meongpalo Karellae narrated when I lived in Tempe, residing in Wage, even though I ate mullet, I carried away bete (fish), and I was never tortured. For my master, the owner of the house, was patient and generous. When I was cursed in the sky, hated by the gods from the heavens above to the earth below, I was taken to Soppeng and arrived in Bulu, and stranded in Lamuru. My master brought ceppek-ceppek (little fish) from the market, and I came to grab a large one. I was struck with a machete by my master, the owner of the house. My head felt like it was shattered, my brain seemed scattered, my eyes bulged, and my vision became blurred. I ran breathlessly until I arrived in Enrekang and stayed in Maiwa." (Inilah pasal yang menjelaskan tentang cerita Meongpalo Karellae. Beginilah tutur kata Meongpalo Karellae. Ketika aku tinggal di Tempe, bermukim di Wage. Walaupun belanak kumakan, namun bete kubawa lari, tidak pernah aku disiksa. Sebab penyabar lagi pemurah tuanku pemilik rumah. Tatkala aku terkutuk di langit, dibenci oleh Dewata dari angkasa langit, hingga di petala bumi. Aku dibawa ke Soppeng dan tiba di Bulu, serta terdampar di Lamuru. Tuanku dari pasar membawa ceppek-ceppek, aku datang menyergapnya seekor yang besar. Aku dipukul dengan parang oleh tuanku pemilik rumah. Terasa pecah kepalaku, seolah-olah tercecer pandanganku. Aku lari terengah-engah sampai tiba di Enrekang dan tinggal di Maiwa)

Referring to the translation of the MK manuscript, the initial part serves as an introduction that describes the Cat's condition while living in Wage in a harmonious and peaceful environment. However, things changed when the Cat received a 'curse' from the gods, which turned the previously good situation into one where the Cat experienced violence from its master. This initial fragment indirectly shows the Cat's condition until the descent of *Sangiangseri*, the Goddess of Fertility, who came to assist the Cat in receiving better treatment from humans.

The *Lontaraq* MK manuscript not only tells the story of the Cat but also describes the various regions the Cat once inhabited and the contributions of *Sangiangseri*. In Maiwa, the Cat's last stop, the conditions were harsher than before, with the Cat experiencing violence from its master. The Cat was stabbed, beaten, and chased just for eating its master's leftover rice and fish. The Cat hid in the rakkiang, a place for storing harvests between the roof and ceiling of the house. There, the Cat met *Sangiangseri*, who became its 'guardian' before finding a wiser master. The journey of the Cat and *Sangiangseri* continued in search of people who could appreciate their conditions and situations. However, they did not receive the treatment they had hoped for until they finally arrived in Barru. In Barru, they received better treatment, depicted by the Cat and *Sangiangseri* being treated well by the local community.

In the MK manuscript, the wanderings of the Cat and *Sangiangseri* to find good and wise people are not merely about human relations but also emphasize the relationship between humans and other creatures as part of the life chain. Interestingly, the MK manuscript conveys various implicit messages that later become moral values in shaping the culture and identity of the community. Thus, the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript can serve as a behavioral foundation for the Bugis community, especially in South Sulawesi.

## 2. The Manuscript of *Lontaraq* MK: The Power Narrative in Cultural Relation

The discourse of the past often influences contemporary societal life. There is an intrinsic connection and continuity in the context of forming modern social entities. In Bugis society, the manuscript of *Lontaraq* MK conveys cultural messages within the community. Several excerpts from the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript invite us to observe, digest, and analyze the cultural aspects within the power relations of the past.

For instance, the early passages of the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript illustrate power as a chain of life. The Cat and its Master serve as the primary representation of this power relationship, emphasized through various conditions the Cat must endure. The Cat's tranquility and harmonious life only last briefly at the beginning of the story when it encounters a patient master. This patience allows the Cat to live more peacefully until a disaster befalls it. The Cat is then cursed by the Divine Being in the sky and returned to Earth in a different situation.

The manuscript does not detail why the Cat must endure the curse, but upon careful reading, it appears that the Divine Being aims to demonstrate its power over human tyranny towards other creatures. Thus, the Cat becomes a 'mediator' for the Divine Being to reveal the true nature of humans in specific situations. This notion is reinforced when the Cat roams various regions and continues to suffer violence from every human it encounters. The best hiding place for the Cat is the rakkiang, a rice barn located between the house's roof, until it meets the Divine Being *Sangiangseri*. This encounter illustrates that the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript contains power relations within the human life chain.

Instances of violence in the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript are recurrent, particularly the master's treatment of the Cat. Acts of beating, stabbing, and throwing often happen to the Cat from its master, indicating human dominion over other creatures. Even the rice barn, the Cat's hiding place, echoes the master's harsh curses. After hearing these abuses, the Cat, 'rice,' and *Sangiangseri* decide to meet an influential person in Maiwa, a Pabbicara, but *Sangiangseri* finds a worse situation at the Pabbicara's house. Eventually, *Sangiangseri* decides to leave Maiwa, causing a famine due to the people's behavior.

A fragment of the story goes as follows:

*Matowa paddiuma-e nasituruk bacchi maneng, sining lisek langkana-e mabacci rimeongngede, orowane makkunrai. Telleppe lalo adanna, datunna Sangiangseri nasama tokkong manenna, mining gilingngi sitemmu, mangguliling rilappo-e, ase lalo ase pulu, sining ase maega-e, sining ase mancetti-e. Ala maressek ota-e ala kedek pabboja-e, nasiwewangeng tarakka sining ase maega-e, ruluk-ronang mattoddang, larung-larungi tarakka, datunna Sangiangseri. Nalettu pole makossongi, bola Pabbicara-e, Sulewatanna Maiwa, menrek-ni -meongpaloe, pennoi bola sipolo, natessau tekkotopa, maccokkonna ri bola-e, datunna Sangiangseri. Nasitujuwang peggangngi, manrena kawalaki-e, natimpuk tasiyak-siyak, nasaji tattere-terre, tenna cukunamittei, inanna ncajiyangengngi, nateya pesangkai, kuwarisilaowanna. Nagiling siya mattejo, naterri massolasola, maddaju-raju teppaja, nakkakangiwi ulunna, maccolo-colo. (Matowa Pallaeruinae, bersama-sama marah dan seluruh keluarga istana marah terhadap kucing, pria dan wanita. Belum habis bicaranya Datunna Sangiangseri, mereka serentak bangun seraya berpandangan mata, mengelilingi lumbung, baik padi biasa maupun padi pulut, bahkan seluruh jenis padi yang ada disitu, termasuk padi pulut mancetti. Belum habis sirih terkunyah, belum berkedip matanya, bersama-samalah berangkat seluruh jenis padi, mengiringi gerakan turun, menemani berangkat Datunna Sangiangseri. Akhirnya sampai di rumah Pabbicara, Pemerintah di Maiwa. Naiklah Meongpaloe separuh rumah penuh. Belum pulih perasaannya berada di rumah Datunna Sangiangseri. Kebetulan sekali anak-anak sedang makan, menyuap terhambur-hambur, menyendok tekserak-serak, tidak tunduk memungutnya oleh ibu yang melahirkannya dan tidak melarangnya kepada teman-temannya, bahkan berbalik membentak, menangis tersedu-sedu, tak henti-hentinya meminta sesuatu, menggaruk kepalanya. Bercucuran keringatnya meleleh ingusnya, sambil melemparkan piringnya, menumpahkan nasinya, terhamburlah gerakan, di kiri-kanan. Membentak berkata, suara hatinya, ibu yang melahirkan hanya membelai-belai anaknya dekat teman-temannya)*

*Matowa Pallaeruinae, along with the entire royal family, became angry at the cat, both men and women. Before Sangiangseri finished speaking, they simultaneously rose and exchanged glances, surrounding the rice barn, including both regular rice and glutinous rice. The rice, even the glutinous rice, began to stir. Before the betel leaf was chewed, before their eyes blinked, all types of rice accompanied Sangiangseri as they descended, following Sangiangseri's departure. They eventually arrived at the Pabbicara's house, the ruler of Maiwa. The house was filled halfway with Meongpaloe. The residents' feelings had not yet settled after being in Sangiangseri's house. Coincidentally, the children were eating, scattering food, and not obeying their mothers. The mothers were not reprimanding them; instead, they scolded back, crying and demanding something, scratching their heads. Sweat poured down, mucus dripped, and they threw their plates, spilling rice left and right. The mothers just caressed their children near their friends.*

The power relations related to the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript are also well described when the Cat and the entourage of *Sangiangseri* meet Datunna Tiusenge in Lengkemme. Datunna Tiusenge felt sad when the people of Lengkemme did not appreciate the harvest they provided. Consequently, their journey did not continue in Lengkemme, and they moved to Kessi. *Sangiangseri* and Datunna Tiusenge planned to meet Matowa Pallorumae in Kessi. This meeting also ended in disappointment for *Sangiangseri* and Datunna Tiusenge, as they saw the people of Kessi wasting food.

Their journey took them to Mangkoso in Wettung Village. Upon arrival, they rested in a house that had just harvested rice. However, they were met with unpleasant treatment from the house owner in Wettung. The owner, who tried to take the produce from the rice barn, found the Cat resting there and chased it away with a broom, even kicking it. When the owner tried to pound the rice into flour, the effort was futile, causing further despair. This condition was a consequence of his own actions when he disturbed *Sangiangseri*'s entourage.

Their journey continued to Lisu, where a harvest festival was underway. The village leader, *Matowa Lisu*, felt that what he did for the people was inadequate. The food served at the festival was insufficient, and *Matowa Lisu*'s wife was ungrateful for *Sangiangseri*'s gifts, resulting in insults and curses. Hearing this, *Sangiangseri* felt that human nature is characterized by dissatisfaction and ingratitude. Nevertheless, *Matowa Lisu* tried to persuade *Sangiangseri* to stay a while, but *Sangiangseri* did not respond. The *Lontaraq* MK manuscript narrates:

Bowing in respect, *Matowa Pallaoruma*e spoke, perhaps addressing a *Datu*, descended from the sky, a noble on earth, spreading their fragrance and enticing aroma. He pleaded, "Stay in my village in Lisu." *Sangiangseri*, crying, said, "Your words are kind, *Matowa Pallaoruma*. However, I still seek good behavior, both in honest women and loyal men who can care for all the rice and *Sangiangseri*."

Translation:

*Sangiangseri's* journey continued to Barru, where he met the Pabbicara of Barru. *Sangiangseri* received a special reception, expressing gratitude and joy for the blessings in Barru. *Sangiangseri* felt pleased with the reception, hoping to find someone to care for the Cat, MK. *Sangiangseri* advised the people of Barru to behave well and avoid conflicts, promising to stay in Barru to unify the Poor People. Pabbicara agreed, and *Sangiangseri* accepted. Eventually, Meongpalo Karellae, Dewi *Sangiangseri*, and their entourage decided to settle in Barru.

The relationship between *Sangiangseri* and the Pabbicara of Barru ended happily, reflecting the positive treatment by the people of Barru. A fragment from the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript narrates:

*Upon reaching the crossroads leading to Barru, all types of rice bowed and asked, "Is this the way to Barru?" Sangiangseri replied, "This is the best way, leading to Barru." They then stopped at the Pabbicara's house, the ruler of Barru. "We hope to receive the neglected people, awaiting a helping hand, guiding the misguided so they do not wander aimlessly. Seeking good behavior to find a place in my heart, patient and wise, controlling their emotions, not harboring anger in their hearts and minds. All of them went to the Pabbicara's house, their lights shining brightly, the voices of children heard, and diligently advising their descendants, expressing gratitude to their friends. This is the place, with an honest heart, for the safety of oneself and respect for the entire family and others, gentle in speech, and an honest Pabbicara." Crying, Sangiangseri remembered the actions of Matowa in Maiwa. Wiping tears, they said, "All the people of Barru, whom I stay with, sympathize with me. That is why I stay since I left Luwu, residing in Ware. Now I am stranded in Barru, standing for truth, hoping for happiness. My heart is attached, patient and wise, awaiting divine mercy, caring for the rice and maintaining Sangiangseri." (Sampailah di persimpangan jalan yang menuju ke Barru, sembah sujud seraya berkata seluruh jenis padi, yang mana puwang dituju. Inikah yang dilalui yang menuju Barru. Jawabnya Datunna Sangiangseri. Inilah yang baik dilalui, yang menuju ke Barru. Disitulah singgah di rumah Pabbicara, yang memerintah di Barru, semoga sudi menerima orang terlantar, yang menantikan uluran tangan, menyadarkan orang sesat, supaya tidak terlunta-lunta. Mencari perilaku yang baik, yang dapat ditempati, yang sama hatiku, penyabar lagi bijaksana, membendung emosinya, mengekang rasa marahnya, tidak terpendam dalam hatinya, di pikirannya. Semuanya menuju ke rumah Pabbicara, terang cahaya pelitanya, ramai terdengar suara anak anak dan rajin menasihati anak cucunya, berucap syukur kepada teman-temannya. Itulah yang ditempati, hatinya jujur, demi keselamatan dirinya dan menghormati seluruh rumpun keluarganya bersama orang lain, lemah lembut budi bahasanya, Pabbicara yang jujur. Tunduk jua sembari menangis Datunna Sangiangseri, mengenang ulahnya Matowa di Maiwa.*

*Membuang ingus seraya berkata. Semua orang Barru yang aku tempati yang simpatik terhadapku itulah yang kutempati sejak aku tinggalkan tanah Luwu, berdiamku di Ware. Kini aku terdampar di kampung Barru, jika berdiri di atas kebenaran, niscaya mendapat kebahagiaan. Sebab hatiku sudah terpaut, penyabar lagi bijaksana, menantikan rahmat Dewata, tanggap meramu padipadian memelihara Sangiangseri)*

The stories in the *Lontaraq* MK demonstrated a 'power' relationship shown by *Sangiangseri* to the people on earth. In Bugis culture, such practices legitimize societal actions in building civilization in the past to the modern context.

## DISCUSSION

The issues presented in the *Lontaraq* MK reveal a variety of perspectives that impact the development of culture, the evolving cultural ecosystem within society, and the formation of societal entities. Intriguingly, the discourse surrounding the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript also highlights the continuity between humans and nature in terms of ecological and environmental status, which implicates the relationship and harmonization between humans and nature. This integration is briefly depicted through characters frequently mentioned, such as the cat 'Karellae', the Dewata *Sangiangseri*, and *Datunna Tiusenge*, which relate to the sacredness between cosmology and ecology beings as manifestations of culture.

The general depiction of the story of the Cat and the Rice Goddess illustrates a relationship between non-human and human beings. Initially, their relationship is harmonious; however, after humans behave harshly toward animals, plants also become agitated. This indicates that human behavior drives animals and plants away. Although the harsh treatment received by the cat is a consequence of its actions. Consequently, the human was arrogantly toward the Cat by treating harshly.

Through the *Lontaraq* MK, on the anthropological values are well depicted when the community engages in the ritual practice of preparing for the *Maddoja Bine*, the rice sowing ritual. In this tradition, the *Lontaraq* MK is recited as a prayer and a hope for the Bugis community to achieve maximum yields. This ritual practice manifests as an environmental ethic that strives to maintain the interconnected or symbiotic life chain among humans.

In the anthropological realm, the *Lontaraq* MK depicts the relationship between living beings and 'heavenly beings' through the figure of the 'Rice Goddess.' This intersects with the Bugis cosmological values regarding intermediaries between the earth and the sky, represented by figures suddenly introduced as cultural legitimations. Nonetheless, through the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript, the Bugis community preserves this tradition as a value and local wisdom, emphasizing that local wisdom conveyed through traditions and customs is essential for every human to maintain environmental and natural harmony.

The Bugis community views the *Lontaraq* MK as a guide for societal morality in behavior toward animals and plants, particularly rice and grains. For instance, the Bugis community reads the manuscript during the *Maddoja Bine* ritual (rice sowing) (Nurhalisa 2022:16-17) (Sulkarnaen

2018:266-267). Generally, this ritual is performed with the belief that it will bring blessings to the rice plants, result in abundant harvests, and protect against pests (Mubaraq, Sultan, and Arifin 2023:112). The tradition also illustrates the spiritual relationship between humans, animals, plants, and the Creator (Maeda 1991:540). The recitation of the manuscript symbolizes this relationship, indicating that humans, in their life cycle, are always connected to the Creator through animals and plants.

The symbolic orientation (Cohen et al. 1976:51) of the Bugis community, as reflected in the MK manuscript, also embodies their moral values. However, this manuscript is considered sacred with various community interpretations. Humans will gain blessings by believing that MK and DS are always present in their lives, even though the *Lontaraq* MK narrates the story of a cat and *Sangiangseri* who suffer violence from humans. The *Maddoja Bine* ritual is seen as a means to achieve abundant harvests, but the hopes expressed in these "prayers" conceal the harsh treatment of animals and plants.

Human relationships must be oriented towards the condition of the environment and other beings. Few local Bugis manuscripts narrate the relationship between humans, animals, and plants. Consequently, the subconscious of readers and appreciators of the manuscript is constructed to interpret its contents as a message of wisdom. Ultimately, this interpretation overlooks the textual narrative of violence, seemingly forgetting human transgressions against the environment and other beings. The primary objective of the MK manuscript's narrative is positive, aiming to convey that human harshness results in detrimental effects on their well-being.

Academic interpretations of the ritual and the MK manuscript often view the manuscript as a means to achieve well-being, often overlooking the significant role of MK. DS frequently occupies a higher position and receives more praise from humans compared to MK. However, MK is the initial character in the manuscript, whose journey triggers DS's journey due to the violence MK suffers from humans. Therefore, the manuscript serves not only as a means of vertical communication between humans and cosmic elements but also as a relational context between humans and all environmental elements, namely animals and plants.

Human behavior will become a boomerang in environmental management, positioning humans as the main actors in environmental destruction. This occurs because humans feel superior to other aspects of God's creation on Earth, leading to negligence in treating animals and plants. The MK manuscript becomes an oral tradition for the Bugis community, serving as a transmitter of memory to protect the environment. The MK manuscript represents the dark memory of humans in their relationship with animals and plants, illustrating human superiority despite humans, animals, and the environment holding equal positions before the Creator.

## CONCLUSION

The narrative of violence in the story of *Meongpalo Karellae* and *Dewata Sangiangseri* provides important moral lessons for the Bugis ethnic in South Sulawesi.

The moral message conveyed by this story is that humans must maintain a harmonious relationship with their environment, where animals and plants coexist. According to the *Lontaraq* MK, humans, animals, and plants hold equal status in the eyes of God. Buginese as users of *Lontara* in the *Maddoja Bine* agricultural ritual try to internalize the collective memory not to repeat the actions done to animals and plants.

The *Maddoja Bine* ritual is an expression of the community's appreciation for other living beings in nature. The reading of the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript during this ritual aims to achieve the desired harvest outcomes, thereby ensuring human well-being. However, this ritual also serves to guide community morality, bring blessings, and maintain relationships between humans, animals, plants, and the Creator.

In reality, harsh human behavior positions them as the primary agents of environmental destruction. The moral value intended by the author of the MK manuscript is that humans must protect their environment and serve as a balance on Earth to achieve a prosperous life. Human arrogance must be eliminated as it hinders overall life. The reality depicted in the story should not be repeated by humans in the future to ensure the preservation of life as a whole.

The *Maddoja Bine* ritual is an expression of the community's appreciation for other living beings in nature. The reading of the *Lontaraq* MK manuscript during this ritual aims to achieve the desired harvest outcomes, thereby ensuring human well-being. However, this ritual also serves to guide community morality, bring blessings, and maintain relationships between humans, animals, plants, and the Creator.

On the other hand, the narrative of violence dominates the story. Academics often overlook this narrative of violence, frequently viewing the manuscript as entirely positive dialogue. The ritual is often perceived as a means of communication between humans and God, whereas the manuscript actually describes the horizontal relationships between humans, animals, and plants, not the vertical relationship between humans and God. In conclusion, the *Lontaraq* MK provides significant moral lessons to the community about the importance of preserving the environment and avoiding violent behavior towards other living beings. By doing so, humans can achieve well-being and maintain harmonious life on Earth.

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