

EGO DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN THE NOVEL PUYA KE PUYA BY FAISAL ODDANG

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Keywords	Abstract
Ceremony Puya Rambu Solo Ego Defense	<i>Rambu Solo is known as the ultimate form of respect for the deceased parents in Toraja's culture. However, how this ceremony is viewed from the perspective of the deceased's family responsible for carrying out the Rambu Solo, whether it is considered a source of pride or a burden, could be varied. This research aims to analyze the values contained within the Rambu Solo ceremony through the novel 'Puya ke Puya' and the perspectives of the characters within it. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories, including the concept of the ego, were used to analyze this novel. Freud's theories delve into the depths of the human psyche, exploring how unconscious desires, conflicts, and defense mechanisms shape human behavior and, by extension, the characters and their motivations in this novel. The research method used is qualitative descriptive. The research findings and observations will be elaborated and analyzed in the discussion chapter, as well as explained through a review of relevant literature related to this research. The background of this research is related to the storyline in the novel 'Puya ke Puya,' which depicts the perception of the Toraja community in the village of Kete' in conducting the Rambu Solo ceremony.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Customs in society refer to practices that have been carried out for generations and have become a symbolic part of a particular community group. These traditional customs are passed down from one generation to the next, either through written or oral means, resulting in diverse traditions among various community groups (Santamaría-Hernández, 2018; Ssebulime, 2024). These traditions reflect sacred elements such as kinship systems, belief systems, art, customs, and various other habits preserved traditionally.

The novel *Puya ke Puya* by Faisal Oddang (2015) tells the story of the death of a highly respected tribal leader in the village of Kete', named Rante Ralla. As the adat (customary) leader of Kete', Rante Ralla is revered and respected by the entire community. Being a nobleman in his village, Rante Ralla is required to be buried by the traditional funeral ceremony known as Rambu Solo. This novel was chosen as the research object because it highlights the funeral ceremony derived from the traditions of Tana Toraja. The author, Faisal Oddang, aims to convey to readers that every region has diverse traditions, each

with its values. These traditions must be preserved by future generations to prevent their disappearance due to the impact of modernization.

In the field of education, psychoanalytic theory is highly relevant. Psychology in education, also known as educational psychology, has a broad definition. This theory pertains to all behaviors exhibited by adults including teachers, parents, experts, or non-experts that shape and influence the behavior of children or students during their learning process. The term "education" also refers to principles that shape behavior to protect students' attitudes. Psychoanalysis refers to overall propositions, not merely to the treatment methods or observations from which these propositions originate. In educational development, educators must also consider psychoanalytic ideas, one of which is the notion that humans have fundamental needs and desires (Bainbridge & West, 2018; Lemma, 2012; Mayes, 2009; Passone, 2017). In reality, every nation, including Indonesia, aspires to have a high-quality education system, as reflected in the national education goals aimed at improving people's lives and developing human resources holistically. Literature carries educational values as messages or moral lessons conveyed by authors to teach readers something valuable. Thus, novels can serve as media for learning and research (Jarvis & Gouthro, 2019; Johansson & Löfgren, 2022; Moya García, 2025). As bearers of educational values, literary works are expected to influence readers' thinking about right and wrong, good and bad. This is because literature serves as a means of educating both oneself and others as members of society (Cybal-Michalska, 2021; Sutherland, 2018; Witte, 2018).

This study aims to analyze the perceptions of the characters and the plot of *Puya ke Puya* concerning the Rambu Solo funeral ceremony. It seeks to answer whether Rambu Solo is truly intended to preserve tradition and serve as a final tribute to the deceased or if it has become merely a competition of prestige with materialistic elements that are not necessarily mandatory. Through this study, the findings from the novel can be applied to society, guiding how we should approach the preservation of traditions in our lives as Indonesians, who are inherently connected to various customs and traditions, regardless of our backgrounds and ethnic origins.

A previous study by Anggraeni and Putri (2020) titled "The Meaning of the Rambu Solo' Traditional Funeral Ceremony in Tana Toraja," analyzed the meaning and symbolism present in the Rambu Solo ceremony. There is an overlap in the object of study between that research and this study, as both examine the Rambu Solo funeral ceremony in Tana Toraja. The qualitative research concluded that there is a symbolic relationship between God and humans within the ceremony, which contributes to the sacredness of the ritual in the eyes of the Torajan people. However, while that study focused on analyzing the symbolic and religious meaning of the ceremony, this study examines the characters in *Puya ke Puya* through the lens of ego defense mechanisms and explores how these mechanisms influence their perceptions of the Rambu Solo ceremony. This research approaches the topic through the novel *Puya ke Puya* by Faisal Oddang.

Another relevant study was conducted by Febrianto and Anggraini (2020) titled "Ego Defense Mechanisms in the Novel *Kaki Langit Talumae* by Wishnu Mahendra: A Literary Psychology Study." This research is relevant because it also applies Freud's ego defense mechanisms to analyze characters in a novel. In their study, Febrianto and Anggraini examined all seven of Freud's defense mechanisms and matched each one to different characters for detailed analysis. However, the key difference between that study and this one lies in the research focus. While their study analyzed all defense mechanisms across multiple characters, this research focuses only on the specific defense mechanisms present in the characters of *Puya ke Puya* that directly address the research questions. As a result, not all of Freud's ego defense mechanisms will be explored only those relevant to the novel's characters and events will be analyzed.

To investigate the perceptions of the characters regarding Rambu Solo, this research employs the lens of the human ego and emotional defense mechanisms in relation to the

characters' perspectives on tradition and customs. Therefore, the psychoanalytic theory focusing on ego defense mechanisms, as developed by Sigmund Freud, is chosen as the analytical framework for this research.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method using a textual analysis of paragraphs from the novel. It also incorporated library research, where data was collected from books relevant to the research topic. The primary data source was the novel *Puya ke Puya*, while secondary sources included books and scholarly articles. Data collection methods involved reading and note-taking techniques. Research materials were gathered through books, reputable academic journals, Google Scholar, digital libraries, and other sources using keywords such as psychoanalysis in literature, ego defense mechanisms, and Rambu Solo funeral ceremony. The data analysis approach for *Puya ke Puya* utilized Freudian ego defense mechanisms, combined with hermeneutic reading techniques to interpret the characters' psychological responses.

RESULT

In this study, the researcher analyzes three characters from the novel *Puya ke Puya*. These three characters were chosen because they are considered to represent three major perspectives or the core of the novel's storyline. The selected characters are the main protagonist, Allu Ralla, along with Rante Ralla and Marthen Ralla.

Allu Ralla is the first and only son of Rante Ralla, who is responsible for burying his late father a Torajan traditional leader and a descendant of nobility through the Rambu Solo funeral ceremony. Allu is the central character who experiences significant internal conflict and dilemmas regarding the traditional burial of his father. As a final-year literature student, Allu holds the belief that traditions should not become a burden.

Rante Ralla is a farmer and a traditional leader of the Torajan community, as well as Allu Ralla's biological father. Rante, who is also classified as a nobleman due to his family lineage, dies suddenly, assumed to have suffered a heart attack since his heart was already weak. The character of Rante Ralla is chosen because he provides the perspective of the deceased, experiencing a dilemma between his desire to uphold tradition as he did in life as a customary leader of the Torajan people and his pride and honor as a descendant of the noble Ralla family, and his role as a father who does not wish to burden his beloved family after his passing. In the novel, Rante appears as a spirit lingering on Earth, listening and observing the lives of his surviving family while awaiting the funeral ceremony that will guide him to Puya (heaven).

Marthen Ralla is the younger brother of Rante Ralla and the uncle of Allu Ralla. The character of Marthen is selected because he sufficiently represents the perspective of the extended family and the community of Kete' village. Marthen's opinions and demeanor largely reflect the collective voice and viewpoint of the extended family and village community. As someone who is not part of the immediate family, Marthen firmly believes that Allu is obligated to bury his father with a noble-level Rambu Solo ceremony to uphold the honor and good name of Rante Ralla, given his societal role during his lifetime. Marthen disregards the financial burden placed on Allu. Along with the rest of the Ralla extended family, Marthen is deeply conservative in adhering to traditions and acts as a strong enforcer, insisting that every effort must be made to ensure a grand Rambu Solo ceremony. For Marthen, the proper execution of this ancestral tradition is essential for maintaining the dignity of both the surviving family members and the late Rante Ralla. The researcher analyzes ego defense mechanisms based on Sigmund Freud's theory. These defense mechanisms are used by the three main characters in the novel *Puya ke*

Puya to cope with conflicts, anxiety, and distressing emotions. Below is the analysis of the ego defense mechanisms found in the three characters:

1. Allu Ralla:

1.1 Rationalization

Rationalization essentially serves three purposes. First, it reduces excessive disappointment when something does not go as planned. Second, it provides relevant reasoning and a pattern that appears logical or acceptable (Febrianto & Anggraini, 2020).

Allu uses the defense mechanism of rationalization to cope with his dilemma between his desire to avoid the burden of the traditional funeral ceremony and his social obligation to bury his father.

I want to endure, even if it means using the excuse of financial constraints, even if it means setting aside my pride because this is also for our own good. I don't want to hold a lavish celebration only to end up living in a shop's doorway afterward. A soon-to-be literature graduate like me cannot do much.

Allu seeks rational justifications to support his perspective, arguing that traditional ceremonies should not impose a financial burden.

"But I also disagree if customs or aluk, or whatever it is called, become a burden. Shouldn't traditions be flexible? Even stones can be carved, so why must customs remain a rigid block of stone, Ambe?"

Allu is depicted as a critical-thinking student, especially since he is an activist at his university and studies in the city, which has broadened his views on tradition and customs. His liberal way of thinking leads him to question the very tradition that defines his family's honor.

Allu also employs rationalization to cope with the conflict between his priorities. Rationalization occurs when a person attempts to justify their actions or decisions that contradict certain norms or values.

Everything involves risk, including love, and for Malena, I have taken them all. Just one more corpse and my task will be done. I will no longer have to deal with them, except for matters concerning the land I plan to sell.

In this case, Allu tries to find logical reasons to justify his actions of stealing infants' corpses and selling his inherited land without his mother's knowledge, Tina Ralla.

1.2 Reaction Formation

Reaction formation is a tendency caused by anxiety-driven impulses that conflict with suppressed tendencies. This defense mechanism helps prevent individuals from engaging in anxiety-inducing behaviors and often inhibits antisocial tendencies (Minderop, 2010).

Allu experiences reaction formation, as he initially intended to bury his father in Makassar with a simple religious ceremony to save costs but later decided to hold the most extravagant *Rambu Solo* funeral at the noble class level, which required an enormous financial expense.

I will conduct the most perfect Rambu Solo for Ambe. For the mistakes I have made, I want Ambe to reach Puya and become Membali Puang. There is no higher status for a spirit than that. Secretly, without anyone knowing, I agreed to sell our inherited land to Pak Soso. As the head of the family, I have the right and authority to decide everything.

Allu knows he cannot marry until he has buried his father, as his mother insists that marriage must follow *aluk* (Torajan customs), where no joyous celebrations can take place before funeral rites are completed. This becomes a personal source of anxiety, as Malena continuously pressures him to marry her as soon as possible, warning him that if he delays, her father will arrange for her to marry someone else.

"But soon, right?"

"Soon, Malena."

"I don't want anyone else getting ahead of me. Daddy has been warning me."

"I understand," I said. "Just trust me, Malena."

This pressure creates anxiety, which Allu unconsciously counters through reaction formation. His anxiety about wanting to marry Malena as soon as possible leads to contradictory behaviour going from opposing *Rambu Solo* to organizing the most extravagant ceremony, motivated by guilt toward his father. This guilt becomes a mental burden, compelling him to seek redemption. His conflicting emotions and inner turmoil drive him to act against his original beliefs, but he does so to alleviate the anxiety within him.

2. Rante Ralla:

2.1 Regression

Retrogressive behavior is one of two types of regression. It involves childlike behaviors such as crying, being overly dependent, or seeking attention for comfort. The second type, primitivation, refers to uncivilized behaviors exhibited by adults, where they lose self-control, such as starting fights without consideration.

Rante experiences regression due to his internal conflict between upholding tradition as a noble descendant and his desire not to burden his family.

Slowly, his lips trembled, muttering, murmuring, then forming words. I knew he was reciting dondi Torajan poetic chants for me. He was skilled at it, oh, his beautiful voice began to resonate. I wanted to come back to life when I heard it. I was anxious about not being accepted in Puya if there was no ceremony. I felt guilty for burdening my family. I thought about Allu, my wife Tina, Marthen, and of course, Mori. I feared the Ralla family would fall apart because of me.

This suggests a return to a more comfortable or easier role. As a spirit waiting for his funeral, Rante longs to be alive again because he fears being unaccepted in Puya (the afterlife). He finds his human role easier than facing his obligations to his ancestors in Puya.

Every morning, Tina would sing for me while bringing breakfast, tobacco, and rolling paper. And she never forgot fresh betel leaves for me to chew.

A role that offers comfort to Rante Ralla is his continued presence during breakfast listening to his family's concerns, especially hearing Tina Ralla's songs and poetic chants, which soothe him. Like a child cared for by a maternal figure, given everything he needs, and sung to for comfort, Rante experiences **retrogressive regression**, where he seeks the role of being nurtured and fully attended to by Tina Ralla. Rante only feels peace when he is with Tina, receiving her full attention, and living a simple, carefree existence like a child without burdens.

3. Marthen Ralla:

3.1 Projection

Projection is the process of transferring unwanted or disliked attributes onto others to reduce tension and provide an alternative justification for maintaining one's security. Marthen employs projection to emphasize the importance of *Rambu Solo* and force Allu to conduct the ceremony.

Uncle Marthen, Aunt Mori, and other relatives returned home with the same expectations to bury Ambe in Toraja, with Rambu Solo, with at least 24 buffaloes and hundreds of pigs.

Marthen, as part of the Ralla family, understands that even though he sometimes had conflicts with Rante Ralla, Rante was still the family head and a respected adat leader. Marthen and the extended family know they cannot financially support the grand *Rambu Solo* for Rante Ralla, yet the family's reputation is at stake. Therefore, Marthen projects his helplessness onto Allu, accusing him of being an unfilial son as a means of deflecting his inadequacies.

Marthen strongly insisted, and honestly, I was shocked.

"So, we need to slaughter more buffaloes, Uncle?"

"Do you expect people to eat stones?"

"Why not just pigs?"

"Where is the family's dignity in that? We are noble descendants; it would be shameful to offer only pigs."

Through projection, Marthen may be attempting to transfer his feelings and expectations onto Allu. Marthen often acts harshly and conflicts with Allu to emphasize that the *Rambu Solo* ceremony is Allu's obligation and is crucial for preserving the family's honor and tradition. However, this is a projection of Marthen's dissatisfaction with himself. As Rante Ralla's younger brother within the Ralla family, Marthen is also unable to uphold the family's reputation by financing the *Rambu Solo* ceremony for Rante Ralla, the customary leader and head of the Ralla family.

The Value of the *Rambu Solo* Ceremony Through Ego Defense Mechanisms

Ego defense mechanisms, as ways for humans to cope with psychological stress and emotional conflicts, can help individuals manage difficult emotions but can also influence how they interact with the world around them. In the context of *Puya ke Puya*, the ego defense mechanisms of the three main characters reflect their internal and external conflicts regarding the *Rambu Solo* funeral ceremony and Torajan traditions.

From Allu's character, it is evident that he does not consider *Rambu Solo* necessary if it becomes a burden. He only feels that *Rambu Solo* is important because it aligns with other life goals he wishes to achieve, which can only be accomplished after he has performed *Rambu Solo* for his father. Among the three characters, only Rante Ralla sees *Rambu Solo* as a meaningful ceremony, likely due to his deep-rooted role as a customary leader closely tied to Torajan culture. However, Rante Ralla is also resigned to the fact that if *Rambu Solo* cannot be performed, he understands the financial burden that his family cannot bear.

In other words, Rante Ralla, the character with the most profound understanding of tradition, recognizes the importance of *Rambu Solo* as a final tribute and a means of guiding a deceased Torajan's spirit to *Puya* (heaven). Yet, he does not insist on an extravagant *Rambu Solo* ceremony. Rante Ralla believes that if the ceremony cannot be held for him, it is his own fault for not leaving behind sufficient wealth to finance it. Therefore, he surrenders to whatever decision his family makes regarding his burial. Rante is even disappointed when he learns that Allu conducts an extravagant *Rambu Solo* ceremony for him not because Allu prioritizes honoring his father or ensuring his passage to *Puya* in the best way possible, but because Allu wants to quickly marry Malena.

Allu's reasons actually make sense, but I am not foolish enough not to realize that my funeral is not the main priority the real concern is the cost of his wedding with Malena.

Meanwhile, Marthen Ralla and the Ralla extended family view *Rambu Solo* as essential due to the prestige and the family's noble status, as well as Rante Ralla's leadership position during his lifetime. Marthen Ralla and the extended Ralla family insist on holding a grand *Rambu Solo* ceremony, regardless of whether Allu and his mother must go into debt and endure significant financial stress. Marthen sees *Rambu Solo* as an absolute obligation and Allu's responsibility, no matter what. Marthen does not concern himself with preserving culture or traditions for their true values; he even manipulates Allu into selling his inherited land in Kete' and the *tongkonan* (traditional ancestral house) that has been in the Ralla family for centuries just to obtain quick financial gain.

In the context of the novel and the analysis of ego defense mechanisms, we see how the perspectives and actions of these characters reflect their psychological responses to cultural traditions and social expectations. The novel illustrates the complexity of individuals' differing attitudes toward customs and traditions, highlighting the role psychological factors play in shaping their behavior and beliefs. Ego defense mechanisms are a normal part of human behavior, reflecting an individual's ability to adapt to certain principles. However, this does not mean individuals can escape reality, as the defense mechanisms used depend on their personal development and level of anxiety.

By applying ego defense mechanisms in the analysis of Allu, Rante, and Marthen, the researcher is able to look beyond surface-level actions and understand the deeper motivations, emotions, and conflicts driving the characters' behaviors in the novel. The differing perspectives of each character highlight the complexity of the values associated with the *Rambu Solo* ceremony.

Thus, from the varying viewpoints of the characters, it can be concluded that *Rambu Solo* can be perceived in two different ways. For some, it is an inseparable part of cultural identity and heritage that must be preserved. However, for others, *Rambu Solo* may be seen as a burden or an external obligation that creates conflict with their personal values or goals.

Maintaining the *Rambu Solo* tradition as a whole is crucial for preserving cultural heritage and a community's identity. However, it is also important to recognize that adaptation to modern contexts and individual values is necessary. There may be ways to honor this tradition without imposing excessive financial burdens or severe internal conflicts on individuals or families.

DISCUSSION

Güzel and Akyurt Kurnaz (2023), Vatan (2021), and Zhetpysbaev (2023) stated that the concept of culture encompasses tradition as the inheritance or repetition of norms, customs, regulations, and material possessions. Thus, tradition is an inseparable part of culture. Traditions within a society also serve as meaningful symbols for those who practice them. According to Harris (2001) in his book *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, the concept of culture is reflected in various behaviors associated with specific communities, such as their customs and way of life. Culture always influences the quality of human life and livelihood. Society and culture form an interrelated system, as no culture develops independently of a society. Conversely, no society exists without culture, as a society cannot survive without it.

One way to study culture is through literature, as literary works allow readers to explore different cultures, whether distant or familiar. The relationship between psychoanalysis and literature serves as a tool to delve into the human mind and fictional

characters. In this study, the connection between these two disciplines and the novel is linked to the psychological aspects of literary characters. Freud's concepts, as explained by (Milner, 1992), identify dreams, fantasies, and myths as fundamental elements of the subconscious mind. These three components stem from the author's creative imagination, conveyed through language in literature. To understand a character's disposition and how it relates to self-awareness or lack thereof, this study employs Freud's personality framework, which consists of the *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. This aligns with Freud's explanation of human personality structure, which consists of these three components (Freud, 2024). The *id* is the primitive and unconscious part of the personality that represents human instincts and desires, such as sexual urges and aggression. The *ego* is a more conscious and realistic aspect of personality, shaped through interaction with the environment. Meanwhile, the *superego* is the moral and ethical component of personality that regulates thoughts and behaviors based on moral principles, inducing guilt and shame when one violates moral standards. The *superego* strives for perfection and acts according to high moral standards.

After understanding the *id*, *ego*, and *superego*, this study applies Freud's ego defense mechanisms to analyze the characters in *Puya ke Puya* to assess the significance of the *Rambu Solo* ceremony through character portrayal. Various unconscious mechanisms are used to prevent distressing or unacceptable thoughts and emotions. In this theory, ego defense mechanisms serve as psychological strategies used by individuals, groups, or nations to cope with reality and protect their self-image. Their function is to maintain psychological balance and shield individuals from significant psychological distress. Healthy individuals typically use different defense mechanisms throughout their lives (Habsy et al., 2023). Sigmund Freud developed the theory of ego defense mechanisms as part of his personality structure theory. These mechanisms are natural ways in which the *ego* one of the components of personality protects itself from emotional conflict, anxiety, and psychological threats. They help individuals manage uncomfortable feelings or anxieties. According to Jarvis, ego defenses can help individuals process emotions and experiences in a tolerable way, but they may also hinder a deeper understanding of oneself and the surrounding reality (Habsy et al., 2023). The psychoanalytic approach to literature in this study is used to gain deeper insights into the thoughts and subconscious processes of literary characters.

This study analyzes the three main characters from *Puya ke Puya*, Allu Ralla, Rante Ralla, and Marthen Ralla through Freud's theory of ego defense mechanisms to assess their psychological responses to the *Rambu Solo* funeral ceremony. The findings highlight how these characters employ different defense mechanisms to navigate internal conflicts and external pressures related to cultural traditions. By examining these mechanisms, the study provides insight into the deeper motivations behind their actions and perceptions regarding *Rambu Solo*.

The analysis of Allu Ralla demonstrates how he employs rationalization to justify his reluctance toward an expensive *Rambu Solo* ceremony while still conforming to societal expectations. His internal struggle is also reflected in reaction formation, where he initially rejects the traditional ceremony but ultimately organizes an extravagant funeral, motivated by personal anxiety and guilt. Rante Ralla, as a deceased spirit observing his family, experiences regression, longing for the comfort of his past life and struggling with the expectations of the afterlife. Meanwhile, Marthen Ralla utilizes projection to transfer his own anxieties and limitations onto Allu, imposing the burden of conducting *Rambu Solo* as a means of preserving family honor, despite the financial strain it imposes on Allu.

These findings align with previous studies that have examined *Rambu Solo* from different perspectives. Anggraeni and Putri (2020) analyzed the symbolic and religious significance of *Rambu Solo*, emphasizing the relationship between God and humans within the ceremony. While their study focused on the cultural and spiritual meanings embedded in the ritual, this research shifts the focus to the psychological struggles

experienced by characters within the context of *Puya ke Puya*. This study extends its findings by demonstrating how personal conflicts, economic burdens, and societal pressures influence the way individuals perceive and engage with the *Rambu Solo* tradition.

Similarly, the study by Febrianto and Anggraini (2020) on *Kaki Langit Talumae* used Freud's ego defense mechanisms to analyze literary characters. However, their research examined all seven defense mechanisms and assigned them broadly across different characters. In contrast, this study specifically focuses on selected defense mechanisms that directly manifest in the *Puya ke Puya* characters, making a more targeted analysis of how ego defense mechanisms shape their attitudes toward *Rambu Solo*. By limiting the scope to the most relevant defense mechanisms, this study provides a nuanced understanding of how individuals react psychologically to the demands of tradition.

The analysis suggests that *Rambu Solo* holds different meanings for different characters, shaped by their psychological responses. Allu's rationalization and reaction formation indicate that he views *Rambu Solo* as a burden, only accepting it when it aligns with his personal goals. Rante Ralla, despite being the most deeply rooted in tradition, ultimately accepts that his family may not be able to afford the ritual, illustrating a reconciliatory approach to cultural expectations. Marthen Ralla, on the other hand, enforces *Rambu Solo* as an obligation, using projection to mask his own inability to support the ceremony financially.

By integrating psychological analysis with cultural studies, this research provides a deeper understanding of how traditions like *Rambu Solo* can be perceived both as sacred and burdensome. This aligns with the broader discussion in literary and anthropological studies that suggest tradition is a dynamic construct while it holds cultural significance, it must also be adaptable to individual and societal changes (Frevel, 2021; Önem & Somuncu, 2022; Sultanov, 2020). The psychological struggles of *Puya ke Puya*'s characters reflect real-life conflicts where individuals must navigate between honoring their heritage and managing practical realities.

Thus, this study contributes to the discourse on cultural traditions by highlighting the psychological dimensions of how individuals interact with customs. It suggests that while maintaining traditions like *Rambu Solo* is essential for preserving cultural heritage, the rigid enforcement of these customs may create undue psychological and financial stress. This supports the idea that cultural practices must evolve in response to contemporary challenges, ensuring that tradition remains meaningful without becoming an unsustainable burden.

CONCLUSION

Faisal Oddang's *Puya ke Puya* is a literary work that presents intense dynamics surrounding the *Rambu Solo* funeral tradition in Toraja. Based on the analysis using Freud's ego defense mechanisms, the study concludes that human beings experience various anxieties and unconsciously develop different ways to cope with them.

The study suggests that while preserving traditions is essential for cultural identity, it is equally important to adapt traditions in ways that are practical and sustainable. Upholding traditions should not impose unnecessary burdens but should instead focus on maintaining their core values and significance.

As individuals belonging to an adat-based society, we have to preserve traditions responsibly, ensuring that customs remain meaningful rather than becoming a source of financial or social pressure.

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