

Agricultural Rites in South Sulawesi*

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I Introduction

In this paper I present a check list of agricultural rites, mainly rice cults, observed among Bugis with special reference to Amparita, a village situated in the rice bowl area of South Sulawesi. The elements I discuss are (1) The rites as a cycle and their timing, (2) ritual requisites such as offerings and paraphernalia, (3) location and setting, (4) officiants, participants and spectators, (5) objects of worship, and (6) symbolic action or ritual procedures.

II Names of Agricultural Rites

It is difficult to enumerate all the rites systematically. Some rites are performed by everyone, as a group, while others are performed at the same time, but by each household separately. Some rites are only performed by a few people, some have been modified, and others have disappeared. The following list is not comprehensive, nor exhaustive, but a list of

the names of rice rites which farmers practice nowadays or practiced in the past. Column A shows the names used in Amparita; column B those used in Desa (village) Mangempang, Kabupaten (Regency) Barru [Sofyan 1982]; and column C is a general list for Sidrap, Bone and Soppeng [Muh. Yamin 1979]. The names of the rites are "gerunds" of local words which denote actual performances. There is no direct importation of foreign names.

III The Cycle of Rites and Their Timing

Farmers can not expect regular rainfall in this area as usual as in other parts of Southeast Asia. There are sometimes prolonged dry spells, for instance in 1972 and 1982. Thus deciding when to begin cultivation was, and still is for those cultivating rainfed fields, a crucial decision. Farmers can schedule their work individually, but the timing of certain activities, e.g., the beginning of ploughing, is fixed by agricultural rites. Farmers may only begin tilling their own fields after the communal rite of first ploughing, the date of which is decided after consulting a well informed elder, specialist, or religious teacher. It was formerly decided by the king and his specialists. The requisite knowledge is not evenly distributed even today and is sometimes monopolized, for example, by a *pallontara*' (a specialist in reading old documents) or *bissu* (a traditional transves-

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Table 1 Names of Agricultural Rites

A	B	C
I. Inauguration Rites		
1) tudang sipulung	1) tudang sipulung	1) tudang sipulung
2) mappalili	2) mappalili	2) mattoana galung
3) sipulung loka	3) mappamula ma' bingkung	3) mappalili
II. Seed-Preparation and Planting Rites		
4) sipulung noreng pine	4) maddese or marrese	4) maddoja bine
5) maddese bine	5) maddoja bine	5) communal eating on the bund after sowing
6) mappono bine	6) mampo	6) mappamula taneng
7) mappamula taneng	7) mappamula mattaneng	
8) sipulung pura' taneng	8) mabbisalobo	
III. Crop Growth Rites		
9) maggapi ase	9) mappassili	7) mappanre to mangideng
10) mappanre to mangideng	10) mappipulu	8) maddumpu ase
11) maddumpu ase	11) mappallise	9) madduppa bua' ase & mappasaro balawo
12) madduppa bua' ase	12) maddumpa & matteppo	10) mattaneng use
IV. Harvest Rites		
13) mappaguliling wesse	13) mappamula mengngala	11) mappamula mengngala
14) mappamula mengngala	14) mappadandang	12) pesta panen (padendang, mattojang, etc.)
15) sipulung lawa		13) manre sipulung
16) sipulung bette		14) maccera' ase
17) maccera' lappo		15) mappanre galung
18) mappanre galung		
19) mappadandang		

tite priest). The documents consulted are generally said to be *lontara'* or *sure' sure'*, some of which are regarded as sacred and the contents kept secret. In deciding the exact timing it is not unusual, even today, for the people to refer to *kotika* (i.e., "geschriften, tabellen, of figuren, of wat het ook vezen moge, waaruit zij vermeenen te kunnen zien, welke tijd hun gunstig zij, welke niet" [Matthes 1943: 458].) in order to decide when to begin a new enterprise. Most people have a general idea of what *kotika* are, and some may develop their own for

daily use in determining auspicious times, combining available systems such as traditional Bugis ones and Islamic mysticism.

It is said that there are no particular rites for *palawija*, except a first crop ceremony (*mappamula*) for maize. Rites may be repeated for a second crop, except community-wide festivals such as *Tudang Sipulung*. There is also an eight-year cycle (*pariamang* or *arwa taunna*) used to predict whether crops will be good or bad. To a certain extent one senses a belief in the similarity of the life cycles of padi and

Table 2 The Results of the Tudang Sipulung, Sidrap (Kec. Tellu Limpoe)

Main Season (ase pattaungge)	
Non-irrigated fields	
Sowing: slow growing varieties (IR-32, IR-42)	1-10 March 1983
medium varieties (Krueng Aceh)	11-20 March 1983
quick growing varieties (IR-36)	21-31 March 1983
Planting:	21 March-21 April 1983
Harvesting:	15 July-15 August 1983
Irrigated fields	
Sowing: slow growing varieties	10-20 March 1983
medium varieties	21-31 March 1983
quick growing varieties	1-10 April 1983
Planting:	1 April-1 May 1983
Harvesting:	25 July-25 August 1983
Dry Season (ase bara')	
Sowing: medium varieties	1-15 October 1983
quick growing varieties	16-31 October 1983
Planting:	21 October-21 November 1983
Harvesting:	1 February-2 March 1984

human beings.

However, where government irrigation schemes operate, the planting schedule for the whole Kabupaten is decided at in the beginning of the year at a ceremony called *Tudang Sipulung*. This ceremony is modelled on a traditional *tudang sipulung* and organized by the Bupati (Regent), who invites government officials, extension agents, local administrators, community leaders, and *pallontara'* to participate. The schedule for each Kecamatan (District) is determined, considering various factors, such as rainfall, water supply, rice varieties, infections, the supply of fertilizers, and local customs. The Table 2 above shows the schedule for 1983/84 for Kecamatan Tellu Limpoe, where Amparita village is situated. The village meeting was held on 9 December, that for Kecamatan Tellu Limpoe on 17 January, 1983, and for Kabupaten Sidrap on 29 January 1983.

All the varieties planted in this area are high yielding varieties except some local glutinous rice varieties. The regulations are so strictly applied that offenders may be punished in accordance with traditional sanctions, for example, the sacrifice of a fowl for a light offence. Village and hamlet leaders are urged to check the varieties the farmers plant. In one case where a farmer did not obstinately follow a sowing regulation, his seedlings were physically pulled out by the order of a Camat (District Head) and he eventually run away from the village owing to the disgrace caused.

IV Ritual Requisites

Essentially, for the Bugis, rites mean receiving guests (*towana*). As a means of communication, to induce better results, or as a supplication, farmers prepare offerings to supernatural beings or food for common consumption by

human beings. The most common ritual paraphernalia are a set of areca nut (*alosi*), betel-pepper leave (*ota*) and popped rice (*benno*), with *waru* leaves (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*), water, oil (*minya' bau*), incense (*kemenyang*) in a pot (*aduppadupang*), and candles (*pello' pesse*). The betel set is regarded as a symbol of the Tolotang group, although Muslims also use it. *Pekko ota* is a small betel kit of broken pieces of nut, symbolically folded in a betel-pepper leaf. Sometimes a *majing* (areca palm or coconut palm flower) is also used to sprinkle water.

Various kinds of rice are used: *ase* (padi), *werre'* (husked rice), *inanre'* (cooked rice), *bette* (parched glutinous rice), and *benno* (popped rice). *Sokko* is a heap of colored cooked glutinous rice. Boiled eggs, young coconuts, bananas and other fruits are also prepared as offerings. Various cakes, which because of sound associations are believed to be propitious, are prepared for consumption. Fowls, goats or buffalos are sacrificed according to the scale of the ceremony. In particular the blood from a cock's crest is significant in growth rites.

Although there is no sacred plough for *mappalili* (turning round, the first ploughing rite) in this area, the *rakkala arajang* (sacred plough) is among the objects (*arajang* or *kalompoang*) which are brought in procession to a ritual field in some parts of coastal Barru or Pangkep (See Maeda [1982]; Sofyan [1982]). This procession is accompanied by gongs, drums, spears, flags, and so on.

In the *mappadendang* (pounding, the harvest festival) there should be a long, naga like mortar (*palungang appadendang*) hung with pestles, a swing (*toja*), kites (*merra*), tops (*gasing*), rice-straw flutes (*panoi*) and other playthings, and dancing. At the beginning of

transplanting (*mappamula*) farmers post split bamboos in one corner of their own fields.

V Location and Setting

Rites may be performed in the farmers' own houses, leaders' houses, shelters, fields or an open space, depending on the occasion. Houses are divided vertically and horizontally. *Maddese bine* (treading rice seeds) takes place under the main part of the house, *mappono* or *maddoja bine* (descending or guarding rice seeds, i.e., soaking and incubation rites) in the house, usually in the central part called *lontang rileleng*. The attic (*rakkeang*) is used to store padi, formerly ears cut with a *rakkapeng* (harvesting knife) but nowadays unhusked grains in sacks. Formerly men were forbidden to enter this area, but it is said that nowadays men can enter the attic to carry padi sacks which are too heavy for women. The farmers also keep the first sheaves of padi from several years in a basket and hang *ance'*, a decoration made from palm leaves, over this. House size varies considerably, but they are generally divided into an area for guests, living and sleeping quarters, and a cooking area. The entrance, or door, is an important transition marker, where farmers put *aduppadupang* or *sabanngang* (a large pot for burning coconut husks with betel leave and flour) or a basket of first sheaves with bamboo poles wrapped with palm leaves (*dama*), to prevent evil spirits for entering. Farmers customarily shut the door while they take meals. When a man leaves his house to take seeds to the nursery, his wife shouts "Come back soon in the shape of paid," and he answers "Yah, I will, soon" from the door. The center of the house (*possi bola*) does not seem to have any

direct relation to agricultural rites. The *mac-cera' lappo* (purifying piles of padi, a storing rite) is performed in the houseyard. Among the Tolotang, the non-muslim community religionist, *uwa* (leaders) perform the first rite, *sipulung noreng pine* (gathering for descending seeds) at Perrinyameng, the sacred place for the Tolotang, then at their houses, before their followers perform a rite at their own houses, i.e., *mappono bine*.

In each community a rite to inaugurate ploughing is performed in a certain field, formerly the king's rice field, but nowadays it appears that each farmers' group (*Kelompok Tani*) performs the rite at its leader's field. The location may be changed if the preceding season's crop was not satisfactory. Other rites held in the fields are performed either in a corner of the field or on a bund. *Mappadendang* is celebrated in an open space in the village. A long pounding mortar is placed on the east side, and a fifteen meter high swing built on the west side of this space, with the rider facing east. A formal, village *tudang sipulung* was held under the swing in 1982. Other *sipulung* may be performed in an individual shelter in the fields or a communal farmers' pavilion. A procession from a house to a field, or from a field to a house, is observed for the first ploughing and harvesting.

VI Officiants, Participants and Spectators

A *sanro* is a traditional Bugis magician. The post of village magician (*Sanro Desa*) is not hereditary but occupied by a Muslim, who has semi-official status in Amparita. He administers non-Islamic rites and is consulted about ritual

procedures. *Sanro* represent the traditional belief system of the Muslims, while *Imam* are in charge of purely Islamic affairs. *Imam* may sometimes participate in part of a ritual, leading *berzanji* during *maddoja* or reading a prayer during *mappalili*. In Barru [Sofyan 1982] the *sanro* performs *mappalili*, *maddese*, *mampo* (sowing) and *mappadendang*. In Amparita the *sanro's* position is equivocal because of the existence of the Tolotang, the more authentically non-Islamic performers. For example, the *sanro* is not a member of the delegation sent to the Tudang Sipulung for the Kabupaten, although other *pallontara* and prominent figures, including Tolotang leaders, did participate. However, for the community *mappadendang* rite he is regarded as a technical guide and he initiates the inaugural ritual of pounding the mortar with the help of a female *sanro*. The festival itself is organized in the committee chaired by the village head. Many villagers participate in the various activities and most of the remainder attend as spectators. The village *tudang sipulung* is presided over by an extension agent, while those at the Kecamatan and Kabupaten levels are led by the Camat and Bupati respectively. Other *sipulung* are performed by farmers' groups. As mentioned above, the *uwa* of the Toani Tolotang usually perform the initial rituals for rites such as *sipulung noreng bine*, *maddese bine*, *mappamula*, *sipulung bette* (gathering of parched rice, offerings to Bulu Lowa).

Crop growth and preventive rites are prepared and performed by each household, mainly by housewives. Women are also responsible for preparing food and making cakes for rites. In Barru three groups of females pound the mortar in turn, i.e., girls, maidens, and widows [Sofyan

1982].

VII Objects of Worship

Apart from the paraphernalia mentioned above, there are many visible objects revered by the farmers. Typical examples in Bugis society are a small miniature house called *saukang*, and the center of the land (*possitana*). Chabot [1950:44ff] reports that the people in Bontoramba performed a harvest festival for the Lord of the Land (*patanna pa'ra-sanganga*) with a *saukang* beside a tree and some flat stones. In Amparita *saukang* are not used for rice rites and the people do not consider the center of the land an object of agricultural rites. However, after the harvest, some people make offerings to the conical hill 'Bulu Lowa', the legendary king's tomb on the top of which attracts many worshippers from a large area. The occasion is called *sipulung bette* (See Maeda [1990]).

The various plants used in rituals are not regarded as holy. The farmers feel that their use may be beneficial by virtue of assonance or their mythological and/or cosmological place. Rice itself is considered sacred or delicate, because it is an incarnation of *Sangiasserri*, the rice goddess. *Rakkeang*, the place of Sangias-

serri, symbolized the upper world.

Land may be an object of worship. *Mappanre galung* (feeding the rice fields) in Amparita or *mappamula mabbingkung* (inaugurating the use of hoes) in Barru, are individual supplications to the land or field. The field where the *mappalili* was formerly enacted might have been a holy spot, but the farmers do not consider these fields sacred now. Some farmers regarded rats as messengers of fortune, and hesitated to use raticide when it was introduced. *Mappasaro balawo* (feeding rats, C9 of Table 1) is a rite for rats so that they do not disturb rice cultivation.

Certainly *Sangiasserri*, whether she be Bugis sacred grass or the Hindu Sri or Laksmi, is the central element of the rice rites. *Sangiasserri* invokes the presence of *Batara Guru* and *Dewata Seuwae*, since the I La Galigo epic tells us that she was a reincarnation of *Batara Guru*'s daughter, *We Oddang Riu*'. The concept of land (*tana*) is also quite important, signifying rulers (*arung*), or the ancestors (*toriolong*) who opened the village. The figure below shows a hypothetical diagram of the rice rite complex connecting elements mentioned so far.

VIII Symbolic Action

Tudang sipulung means "gathering and sit-

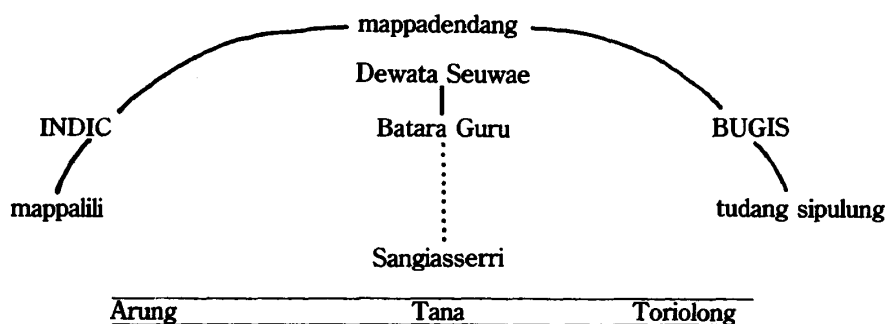


Fig. 1 Rice Rite Complex

ting together," and its original sense is retained most clearly in an annual Toani Tolotang ritual, also called Tudang Sipulung, in which the farmers gather together after the harvest and sit on the ground around an ancestor's tomb. There is no more real "sitting together on the ground" in village-wide ceremonies, but the symbolism of *tudang* seems still important whether the sitting be on chairs or the ground. *Mattoana* (to have guests) either deities or human beings, is a central part of all rituals, and common consumption of cakes or other food generally accompanies offerings. Betel chewing is no longer popular and has been replaced by cigarettes, but betel-pepper leaf and nuts, a necessity for entertaining guests, are still important as a means of communicating with the gods. Most rites require some invocation, incense-burning, water-sprinkling, popped-rice throwing, or percussion. Islamic prayer (*bacā' doa*) may be added to the traditional rituals.

Sangiasserri is a delicate and fickle being and farmers take every precaution so as not to disturb her, from the time they take the rice seed from the attic to the end of the harvest, and more generally in handling rice in everyday life. Guarding the seed at night and chanting a certain story (*sure' sure'*) are the main activities of the seed-soaking and incubation rites. *Singkerung*, (tying, to prevent *Sangiasserri* flying away) at the pre-harvest rite, also symbolizes her caprice. Prohibitions may be imposed upon officiants or farmers performing rites. Sacrificing or cleansing by blood is also practised. Fertility, marriage, pregnancy and birth symbols pervade the agricultural rites.

The festivity and public spectacle of *mappalili* and *mappadendang* contrast with the quietness of other rites. *Mappalili*, apart from an inau-

guration, is a prognostication rite, hoping for a propitious outcome. Farmers forecast the coming season's crop by telling buffalo dung and urine as well as the trace of their ploughing. The water buffalo used should be a healthy, fat one with big horns and the plougher's name is expected to be a propitious one, such as La Ompo, *lompo'* meaning "to come out," or Dalle, meaning "fortune." An officiant cuts the crest (*polong polowali*) of a cock (*manu bakka dodo*) and has the blood smeared on the forehead of the buffalo, plough (*rakkala ajoa*) and harrow (*salaga sompali*). Three lines or circles are ploughed. In Barru or Pangkep the rite is led by a temporary king, or the head of the *bissu*, and a merry procession goes from the Camat's office to the sacred rice-field (cf. Sofyan [1982]; Maeda [1982a; 1982b]; Takaya [1982]; also Wales [1931]). In Labakkang, Pangkep, there is a dance by boys (*pakkarana burane'*) [Maeda 1982b].

The communal *mappadendang* consists of symbolic pounding of a long mortar with farcial pantomimes, swinging by a maiden and guests, kite-flying, dacing by maidens, music, and other games. Distinguished guests are invited and the villagers feed themselves at the ceremony. An individual household, or a farmers' or neighbors' group, may hold a *mappadendang* near their homes without swing-flying, kite-flying or dancing. So, after the harvest, the sounds of *padendang* echo through the village everyday.

The first ploughing ceremony and the use of swinging and kite-flying in the harvest festival point strongly to Indic influences (See Wales [1931]; Keith [1908], for a Vedic ritual of the Mahāvratā which uses the swing *prènkḥā*; also cf. Porée-Maspero [1962]).

IX Technological Change and Rites

Sidrap is a kind of model area for mechanisation, and technological modernization is enthusiastically, and to a certain extent successfully, promoted by the government in accordance with national programmes. Although the Tolotang are said to maintain more traditional rites, the observance of agricultural rites has become more individualistic than collective. Thus whether they are performed or not depends on the individual farmer's belief in the effectiveness of such rites. Tractor tillage killed off the *mappalili*; the adoption of high yielding varieties and harvesting with sickles has almost extinguished the *maddese bine* and *mappaguliling wesse* (making round with a tool or string to tie up padi ears); insecticides, ratcides and herbicides have lightened the burden of *maggapi ase*, *maddumpu ase* and *madduppa bua' ase* (all collectively called *mita ase*, observing the rice, i.e., preventive rites during crop growth); fertilizers assure more product than propitiatory rites such as *mappanre to mangideng* (to give food to an expectant mother); and double cropping with a reliable water supply through technical irrigation has reduced the necessity of strictly following the traditional cycle of rites.

On the other hand, some rites, such as *padendang* and *tudang sipulung*, have been renewed or revived by incorporation into the government guidelines for rice production. Various *sipulung* or *mappalili* have become a good opportunity for extension agents to disseminate new knowledge. The Tudang Sipulung at Kabupaten level since 1974 had been a mixture of traditional rite and dissemination and enforcement of modern technology.

X Conclusion

Takaya proposed the hypothesis that the plough rice cultivation of the coastal zone of South Sulawesi, characterized by an inclination to direct broadcasting, has been strongly influenced by a rice culture of Indic origin, and that the coastal zone rice culture has been spreading into the region once dominated by the indigenous mountain type of non-plough rice cultivation [Takaya 1982: 170-171]. It is not undeniable that Indic influences can be seen in various aspects of the agricultural rites I have discussed. In Amparita now mechanisation and modernisation, especially the introduction of technical irrigation and high yielding varieties in the seventies, have resulted in their modification or complete disappearance. Nevertheless the data now available show that Indic influences have been more thoroughly localised, distilled, in Amparita than in the coastal zone, e.g., Pangkep or Barru. Presumably non-plough rice cultivation was originally practised in Amparita but Indic technology and rites were later imported from the coastal zone, perhaps between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries as suggested by Macknight [1983] in his discussion of the transformation of subsistence patterns in South Sulawesi. This remains conjectural but does appear to help us understand Amparitan rites, for instance *mappalili* in inundated fields, in contrast to those of the coastal zone where the same rite is performed in dry fields before the rains begin. Whatever the assumptions, the fact is that wet rice cultivation in South Sulawesi was Indicized, not directly from India, but indirectly from Indicized areas.

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