



The *retteng* as grief therapy: Pastoral approach in the context of Toraja culture

Ismail Banne Ringgi' 

Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Toraja, Indonesia
padarangan@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract: Death frequently triggers a sense of alienation that underscores human vulnerability. Within the context of Torajanese society, a latent tension often arises between cultural expressions of mourning and the dogmatic formalities of Christian pastoral theology, leaving a vacuum in the management of the mourners' psychological trauma. Addressing this issue, this hermeneutic-contextual library research marries cultural anthropology with the theology of lament to dissect *retteng*, a traditional Torajanese lamentation poetry, as a medium of catharsis. The objective is to uncover the therapeutic and spiritual dimensions of *retteng* in order to formulate a hybrid pastoral care model capable of integrating local wisdom into pastoral ministry. The analysis demonstrates that *retteng* operates beyond mere aesthetic boundaries; it serves as a communal space to nurture the psychological resilience of grieving families. As an intersection between cultural spirituality and faith, this poetry weaves the misery of human transience with the transcendent sovereignty of God, transforming fatalistic lamentation into a transformative proclamation of eschatological hope. Through this study, *retteng* is proven to possess legitimate theological healing power, making it a contextual and adaptive pastoral instrument. Integrating this tradition into pastoral ministry will revitalize a grounded faith, where local cultural expressions are elevated into profound acts of faith that restore the community in Christ.

Keywords: grief therapy, lamentation, pastoral, *retteng*

Article History:	Received: 26-08-2025	Revised: 22-06-2026	Accepted: 23-06-2026
------------------	----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

1. Introduction

Death is a universal phenomenon experienced by every human being regardless of background, while simultaneously remaining a deeply personal and existential reality. Across cultures, death is understood not merely as the cessation of biological functions, but as a multidimensional event encompassing social, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. In Torajanese society, death occupies a central locus within the social and religious structure and is regarded as a transcendent moment that bridges the present world with the world to come.

Within the cultural framework of Toraja, death is not simply the termination of physical life but the pinnacle of an individual's social journey, marked by a series of elaborate and symbolically rich funeral rituals. One unique form of cultural

expression in this context is *retteng*, an emotionally charged lamentation articulated through verses and performed by family members or relatives in response to loss. *Retteng* functions both as a conduit for expressing grief and as a psychological and spiritual healing mechanism, reinforcing social cohesion within the community while affirming the enduring bond between the living and the deceased.

The funeral ceremony, known as *Rambu Solo'*, embodies the collective values of the Torajanese people in confronting death. This ritual is a procession of releasing the body, a manifestation of respect, a shared experience of grief, and a spiritual reconciliation between the living and the dead. Through *retteng*, the Torajanese demonstrate how death is deeply experienced and responded to via cultural mechanisms that address emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated manner. *Retteng* embodies profound psychological, social, and spiritual functions, serving not only as an expression of sorrow but also as a medium for healing and communal solidarity. It is an expression of grief and a channel of communication between the living and the deceased, as well as between humans and transcendent powers.¹ In practice, *retteng* is frequently performed in a poetic style rich in metaphors, delivered in a solemn rhythm, and infused with theological and historical values. This underscores the potential of *retteng* as a pastoral medium that can be utilized in ministering to grieving families.

Retteng is a lament and a form of spiritual and social communication containing theological, psychological, and pastoral values. It serves as a medium for conveying feelings of loss, commemorating the life of the deceased, and restoring emotional and spiritual equilibrium within the community. This phenomenon indicates that the Torajanese possess a complex cultural mechanism for coping with grief that is both therapeutic and pastoral in nature.

While the church has traditionally managed grief solely through pastoral visits and consolation services, *retteng* offers a more intimate dimension of healing to help families surrender and “let go” of their loved ones. The strength of *retteng* lies in its deep roots within local tradition, making the message of comfort feel familiar and alive to the mourners. Through this framework, pastoral accompaniment no longer feels rigid and detached; instead, it manifests tangibly as communal emotional and spiritual care mutually channeled by family, relatives, and respected religious figures. In Christianity, which has been deeply rooted in Torajanese society since the early twentieth century, pastoral care for grieving families is an integral part of church ministry. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of pastoral practices heavily relies on a profound understanding of the local cultural context, including the role of *retteng* as a form of grief therapy. For this reason, it is crucial to examine how *retteng* can be

¹ Hetty Nooy-Palm, *The Sa'dan-Toraja: A Study of Their Social Life and Religion: II: Rituals of the East and West* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 1979), 16.

interpreted and integrated into pastoral ministry as a contextual and transformative mode of therapy.

In contemporary pastoral studies, grief therapy emphasizes not only individual psychological recovery but also the restoration of social and spiritual relationships within the community. According to William J. Worden in his book *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, an individual undergoes four core tasks in the mourning process: accepting the reality of the loss, processing the pain of grief, adjusting to a world without the deceased, and finding an enduring emotional connection with the deceased while embarking on a new life.² In the Torajanese context, these four tasks are implicitly embodied in the practice of *retteng*, which allows individuals or families to openly express their sorrow, acknowledge the reality of death, and construct a new narrative of life after loss. A pastoral approach drawing upon local culture can significantly enrich church ministry in addressing the realities of death and mourning. Emmanuel Lartey emphasizes that effective pastoral care must be contextual, intercultural, and attentive to the social and spiritual dynamics of the community.³ Within this framework, *retteng* is not merely cultural heritage but a theological resource that can be cultivated in pastoral practice as a therapeutic form touching the deepest dimensions of human suffering. This creates a space for dialogue between the Christian faith and local culture, while simultaneously reinforcing the spiritual identity of the Torajanese in times of mourning.

Furthermore, the practice of *retteng* carries a performative dimension that strengthens social solidarity. In Toraja, grief is not solely an individual experience but a shared one. Through *retteng*, mourning becomes a collective reality, with the entire community assuming their respective roles in the emotional healing process. This resonates with Victor Turner's⁴ concept of *communitas*, a form of social solidarity that emerges during the liminal moments of life, such as death. In the context of church ministry, recognizing this collective dimension of grief is vital for designing pastoral services that care not only for the individual but also for the community as a space for spiritual healing.

However, challenges arise as the practice of *retteng* confronts the forces of modernization, shifting social values, and the impact of globalization. The younger generation of Torajanese, raised in urban and digital environments, often experiences a disconnect from this tradition. In certain cases, *retteng* is deemed outdated or irrelevant to contemporary life, even when dealing with death. Yet, from pastoral,

² James William Worden, *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*, 4th ed. (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2009), 88.

³ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World* (London, UK: Epworth Press, 2006), 43.

⁴ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New Brunswick, US: AldineTransaction, 2008), 132; Douglas W. Hollan and Jane C. Wellenkamp, *The Thread of Life: Toraja Reflections on the Life Cycle* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 188.

spiritual, and psychological perspectives, *retteng* retains significant therapeutic value. It enables individuals to openly vent their grief, construct narratives of loss, and find new meaning in life following the demise of a loved one. Moreover, the church, as a spiritual institution, holds a strategic role in preserving and revitalizing the practice of *retteng* as part of contextual pastoral ministry. In the ministry practices of the Toraja Church (*Gereja Toraja*), pastoral approaches to grief often adopt Western models, such as rigid, standardized liturgies,⁵ which do not fully address the needs of the bereaved. This misalignment creates a gap between the applied ecclesiastical services and the contextual spiritual and emotional needs of the congregation. Consequently, a pastoral approach that can respond critically and reflectively to the richness of local culture is required, including the integration of *retteng* into ministries for grieving families.

As Stephen Pattison emphasizes in *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology*, effective pastoral care must be contextual and liberating, capable of addressing the spiritual, psychological, and social needs of the community as a whole.⁶ In the Torajanese context, such an approach opens up the possibility of utilizing *retteng* not only as a cultural expression but also as a theological source to be developed within pastoral practices. Integrating *retteng* as a form of grief therapy has the potential to strengthen the spiritual identity of congregants while enriching church ministry through constructive dialogue between the Christian faith and ancestral traditions in the Torajanese language.

From a pastoral perspective, grief is a dimension of life that demands special attention and sensitive handling. The ministry to individuals and families experiencing loss seeks to provide comfort and encouragement, accompanying them through the ongoing process of emotional and spiritual recovery. A relevant pastoral approach must seriously consider the cultural context in which the mourning service occurs. Within this framework, understanding *retteng* as a distinctive Torajanese grief therapy practice is crucial, as it embodies the inherent spiritual, psychological, and social dynamics of the community while offering a collective and transformative pathway toward healing.

Several articles related to *retteng* have been written. Dina Gasong,⁷ for instance, conducted a hermeneutic study and found that the local wisdom of *singgi'* and *retteng* exists within Torajanese oral literature. Although research on Torajanese oral literature pioneered by Gasong positions *retteng* as a guideline for macro-based

⁵ The worship services conducted here consist merely of a collection of songs and monological sermons.

⁶ Stephen Pattison, *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 39.

⁷ Dina Gasong, "Implementasi Kearifan Lokal Singgi' Dan *Retteng* Dalam Sastra Lisan Toraja: Kajian Hermeneutik," *Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 3, no. 3 (December 2017): 651–65, <https://journals.ukitoraja.ac.id/index.php/jkip/article/view/96>.

social ethics, the functional orientation of *retteng* as a medium for inner healing has not received adequate portion of discussion. While Gasong's interpretation stops at the codification of communal moral values, the research in this article ventures deeper into the dimensions of Christian pastoral theology and the psychology of grief. This study positions *retteng* as a legitimate psycho-spiritual therapeutic instrument, wherein the lamentation poetry functions as a cathartic space to nurture psychological resilience and communally process the psychological trauma of mourners. Thus, the theoretical and practical contribution of this article lies in formulating a hybrid pastoral accompaniment model—an integrative care of souls (*cura animarum*) approach between Christian faith and Torajane local wisdom.

Stanislaus Sandarupa has also made significant contributions to the study of *retteng*, though focusing primarily on its linguistic, rhetorical, and performative dimensions.⁸ Sandarupa dissects how *retteng* is performed in groups of three individuals who respond to one another to build a moral community, execute social critique, and test the formal structure of the discourse. While Sandarupa's analysis is highly acute in capturing the dynamics of performative rhetoric, his study does not touch upon the sublimation of faith and the psychological restoration occurring beneath the poetic structure. The present study aims to cross these linguistic boundaries. It thoroughly unpacks the theological-psychological content within its structural components (such as verses of empathy, acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, and eschatological assurance). This research transforms the understanding of the formal structure of *retteng* discovered by Sandarupa into an applicable instrument of pastoral care for grieving families.

The study of the therapeutic function of lamentation in the Christian faith aligns with the thoughts of Kefas Jonathan et al.,⁹ who assert that lament plays a vital role in emotional and spiritual recovery processes under the support of a pastoral community. However, the analysis offered by Jonathan et al. tends to be limited to the level of normative biblical theology and general counseling spaces. In contrast to their approach, which relies on a universal narrative of lament, this study specifically frames the theology of lament within the ethno-pastoral locus of Toraja through the poetic expression of *retteng*. This study not only affirms that lamentation is spiritually restoring but also dissects how the localized components within *retteng* serve as a concrete cathartic medium for the mourners' psychological trauma in the field. As a ritual, lamentation provides a distinct space for grieving families to express their

⁸ Stanislaus Sandarupa, "'The Voice of a Child': Constructing a Moral Community through *Retteng* Poetic Argumentation in Toraja," *Archipel* 91 (2016): 231–58, <https://doi.org/10.4000/archipel.316>.

⁹ Kefas Jonathan, Muryati, and Gidion Hery Susanto, "Teologi Ratapan dan Pemulihan: Pendekatan Teologis Terhadap Rasa Duka dalam Kehidupan Kristen," *Matheo : Jurnal Teologi/Kependetaan* 11, no. 2 (November 2021): 233–45, <https://doi.org/10.47562/matheo.v11i2.409>.

deepest emotions through ritual elements, which are simultaneously interwoven with liturgical functions to sustain the congregation as they confront sorrow.¹⁰

This article aims to explore *retteng* as a form of grief therapy within a contextual pastoral approach in Torajanese society. The study will examine the meaning and function of *retteng* in Torajanese culture, analyze its relevance for pastoral ministry in the church, and propose a theological and practical framework for integrating *retteng* into culture-based grief therapy in Toraja. Through an interdisciplinary approach unifying pastoral theology, cultural anthropology, and the psychology of grief, this article endeavors to contribute to the development of a contextual, inclusive, and transformative pastoral ministry in addressing the realities of death and mourning, particularly within the Torajanese context. This investigation is vital to deepen the exploration of the meaning and function of *retteng* in Toraja and to trace its potential as a mode of grief therapy in pastoral practice.

2. Research Methods

This study examines *retteng* poetry as a form of grief therapy within the cultural context of Toraja. The primary focus of this study lies in the symbolic meanings, emotional expressions, and spiritual values contained within these poems, as well as their relevance to pastoral ministry. The primary data for this research consist of textual transcriptions of *retteng* poetry delivered during funeral ceremonies obtained via YouTube channels, complemented by the written works of H. van der Veen, Jeanine Koubi, and Stanislaus Sandarupa. Additionally, theoretical literature addressing grief therapy, pastoral theology, and Torajanese culture is utilized to support the analysis. Data analysis was conducted using an interpretive qualitative approach through the following steps: identifying major themes in *retteng* poetry related to expressions of sorrow, comfort, and emotional recovery; interpreting the symbolic and spiritual meanings within the poetry based on the Torajanese cultural context; and correlating the interpretive results with concepts of pastoral therapy, particularly in accompanying individuals or communities experiencing loss.

3. Results and Discussion

Retteng Poetry as an Expression of Grief in Torajan Culture

Retteng poetry is an integral part of Torajanese mourning rituals. *Retteng* is a collection of poetic expressions of sorrow¹¹ delivered during the funeral ceremony (*rambu solo'*) in a specific rhythm, performed either by a single individual or by several people responding to one another.¹² According to J. Tammu and H. van der

¹⁰ Jonathan, Muryati, and Susanto, "Teologi Ratapan Dan Pemulihan," 234.

¹¹ Sandarupa, "The Voice of a Child," 235.

¹² Pusbang Gereja Toraja, *Rambu Solo' Dan Persepsi Orang Kristen Tentang Rambu Solo'* (Rantepao: Pusbang Gereja Toraja, 1996), 98.

Veen, *retteng* is defined as a “song usually sung in response to sarcasm.”¹³ In the group performance of *retteng*, Sandarupa states that the ideal number of performers is three. The first person serves as the opener (*to ma’ bungka’*), then the second person provides a response (*to umbali*). When someone is about to initiate a *retteng*, they take a staff usually adorned with goat hair, and call out “*le... le... le... le...*” to capture the audience’s attention. At the end of their statement, they repeat the same call to invite others to respond to what has been said. If during the performance of the response a discrepancy arises between the first and second speaker, the third person acts to rectify it (*ussamboi retteng*).¹⁴

Regarding its content, L.T. Tangdilintin states that *retteng* expresses the good fortune of the deceased for receiving a proper and luxurious funeral from their descendants. Occasionally, the expression is used to mock certain individuals within acceptable boundaries.¹⁵ At times, *retteng* recounts the past life of the deceased, or contains praises and messages for the descendants so they may emulate the virtues of the departed.

According to Sandarupa, *retteng* can be classified into two main categories. First, *retteng* is addressed directly to the dead (*retteng malolo lako to mate*), which is often viewed as a form of tribute or elegy. Second, *retteng* that presents an opposing or critical perspective (*retteng sindung*). Although the first type is explicitly interpreted as an expression of grief over someone’s death, in practice it frequently touches upon broader issues, such as social, spiritual, political, and cultural matters. Therefore, both forms fundamentally share the characteristics of *sindung*, containing the potential for deep critique and social reflection. Etymologically, the term *sindung* refers to a “deep and wide hole,” while the verb *massindung* means “digging into the core of a problem” that deepens and widens as the process unfolds. A hole, though appearing narrow on the surface, contains vastness within. For Sandarupa, this metaphor elegantly illustrates the dynamics of *retteng* as a rhetorical process that not only constructs a symbolic space for the deceased but also opens a vast discursive arena to explore meaning, critique, and collective reflection within a socio-communal context.¹⁶

Structurally, each form of *retteng* consists of four main components that constitute its rhetorical framework. The first part is the opening (*mekatabe’*) with example expressions like *tabe’ indo’, tabe’ ambe’ ...* (excuse me, mothers and fathers), which serves as a greeting to all participants. Following this is the introductory section known as *mebala kollong* (e.g., *lo’bang luangan pa kan sidi’*—give us a brief

¹³ J. Tammu and H. van der Veen, *Kamus Toradja-Indonesia* (Rantepao: Jajasan Perguruan Kristen Toradja, 1972), 480.

¹⁴ Sandarupa, “The Voice of a Child,” 237.

¹⁵ L. T. Tangdilintin, *Toraja Dan Kebudayaanannya* (Rantepao: Yayasan Lepongan Bulan (YALBU), 1975), 244.

¹⁶ Sandarupa, “The Voice of a Child,” 238.

opportunity), which symbolically functions to establish boundaries and protect the content to be delivered. The third part is the core of the *retteng*, namely the main content or *lise'na* (e.g., *mario-riokan dikka, makarorong silelekan, natampe te malolle'*—we are truly heartbroken to be left behind by this young child), where ideas, critique, or respect are poetically developed.¹⁷ Finally, the closing (*pa'paupu'*) marks the end of the delivery and simultaneously restores the atmosphere to harmony. The three parts outside the main content—the opening, introduction, and closing—serve as framing devices regulating the rhythm and ethics of communication in *retteng*. Although the form of the opening may vary depending on the social context, such as the identity of the participants, status hierarchy, and ritual situation, it is generally delivered as a greeting. Its primary function is a polite mechanism to request permission to speak in public, while reaffirming awareness of prevailing social norms within society.¹⁸

The closing of the *retteng* also follows a predetermined pattern. Upon concluding the *retteng*, the singer sometimes repeats the final line as a signal for the audience to join in reciting it. This repetition also signifies that the *retteng* segment has concluded. This closing is then followed by the repeated utterance of the syllables *le... le... le...*, which is a short form of *dipalele*, literally meaning “the turn to speak now shifts to another person.” However, the words *le... le... le...* are also commonly used to link phrases or sentences as an introduction to the subsequent phrase or sentence.

Therapeutic Analysis in *Retteng* Poetry

Psychologically, the words in *retteng* function as a form of catharsis, releasing suppressed emotions resulting from loss. Through the recitation or hearing of these poetic expressions, the grieving family undergoes a gradual process of inner healing. In Torajanese culture, grief is not hidden but expressed openly and collectively through rituals and other relevant forms. This therapeutic function is further reinforced by the narrative structure of the poetry, which often depicts a journey of hope, moving from sorrow toward recovery. Such expressions create a reflective space for the grieving family to view death not as an end, but as a transition toward life in the world to come. The following are the sections of *retteng* related to grief therapy.

Empathy in Grief

Kita angge mangsangbara' (We are all of the same age group)

Mintu' to situran dadi (All those who were born at almost the same time)

¹⁷ Mantasia Tips, *Terharu! Ma' Retteng Sebelum Penguburan Alm. Ely Pamalingan Sarungallo Di Obyek Wisata Kete'kesu'*, 2023, 08:57, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8tXEWVAUEA>.

¹⁸ Sandarupa, “The Voice of a Child,” 238; Salebu' Makaruen, *Ma' Retteng Di Lolok Batu Tadongkon* // *Seni Budaya Adat Toraja*, 2021, 11:50, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L40FPqv2ZO4>.

Ke'de'ko anta umbating (Stand up so we can mourn)
Anta tannun rosso inaa (So that we weave sorrow)
Tumangi'ki' sola nasang (We all cry)
Si'dan ki' angga mairi' (We all sob)¹⁹
Mario-rio kilambi' (We face sorrow)
Makarorong kiratui (We encountered loneliness)²⁰

When death claims a loved one, the grieving family is instantly enveloped in a profound sorrow rooted in the struggle to fulfill Worden's first task: accepting the reality of the loss.²¹ The internal denial of the deceased's absence often triggers psychological disorientation and a traumatic sense of profound abandonment. This psychological manifestation is intensely human, even expressed theologically by Jesus Christ through His cry of lament on the cross, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt 27:46). In this critical phase, *retteng* arrives to mitigate trauma through the call *ke'de'ko anta umbating* (stand up so that we may mourn). The physical act of standing and being present together at the mourning courtyard (*tongkon*) confirms that the reality of death is non-negotiable, yet this grief is now witnessed and validated by the entire community. The physical presence of the mourners provides significant therapeutic value because it helps the grieving subject interpret, unravel, and process complex emotions both affectively and cognitively.²²

Furthermore, the phrase *anta tannun rosso inaa* (so that we weave our sorrow) poetically addresses and processes the pain of mourning. The process of "weaving" represents active psychological work that transforms tangled threads of despair into a fabric of mutual strengthening. As social beings, humans have a fundamental need for interpersonal support when facing an emotional crisis. Through the rite of communal mourning (*umbating*), the pain that originally isolated the mourner is transformed into shared solidarity. This experience resonates with the theological mandate of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:2 to bear one another's burdens, as well as the radical invitation to blend empathy by weeping with those who weep (*tumangi'ki' sola nasang*—Rom 12:15). This model of wordless emotional accompaniment echoes the biblical narrative of Job's friends who sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights in total silence (Job 2:13). Such non-verbal intervention proves that the willingness to share space, time, and pain in intimate silence is often far more therapeutic than cliché verbal consolations. This communitarian presence provides a safe space for the grieving family to express their

¹⁹ H. van der Veen, *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased* (s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 74.

²⁰ Jeannine Koubi, *Rambu Solo', "La Fumée Descend": Le culte des morts chez les Toradja du Sud* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1982), 422.

²¹ Worden, *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy*, 88.

²² J. L. Ch. Abineno, *Pelayanan Pastoral kepada Orang Berduka* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991), 7.

vulnerability, while serving as a foundational transition to adjust to a new environment without the deceased, knowing that the *mangsangbara'* (peers/fellow community members) community remains standing to guard their steps.²³

The profound representation of empathy in the phrase *mario-río kilambi', makarorong kiratui* (we encounter deep sorrow, we find utter loneliness) indicates the finding of an enduring emotional place for the deceased while continuing with life. The death of the individual is no longer the end of social relations; rather, it is transformed into a collective memory nurtured by the *tondok* (village). Presenting together in sorrow through this framework of *retteng* not only cements social cohesion but also affirms the presence of God (Immanuel) in the midst of His people. Through this anchor of faith and cultural support, the bereaved family is enabled to digest the loss, reduce psychological trauma, and move forward into the future with restored hope.²⁴

Human Fragility and God's Sovereignty

The next therapeutic dimension of *retteng* is where the structure of the poem facilitates the mourners to renegotiate the shattered boundaries of self-control caused by death.

Tallang turananna Puang (Human like bamboo that is cut down)
Ao' bela'-belaranna (Like a cut aur that can be cut at any time)
Pangeloranna Puangta (God's will be done)²⁵

The use of the symbols *tallang* (bamboo) and *ao'* (reed), which can be cut down at any time by the Creator, represents an honest acknowledgment of the mourner's powerlessness in the face of death.²⁶ Psychologically, failure to surpass this phase can trap the mourner in complicated grief, where they continuously deny reality (denial) or remain trapped in an illusion of control. The expression *la ditulakraka langi'* (we are unable to prop up the sky) functions as a cognitive intervention that cuts through this resistance. This sentence dismantles human egoism and forces them to absolute acceptance of the empirical reality that death lies beyond the jurisdiction of human power. In reflecting on grief, a deep awareness of human vulnerability arises. Despite all achievements and strengths, humans remain limited and fragile creatures, lacking absolute control over their life journey. Death, as an inevitable reality, stands as the sharpest marker and most powerful reminder of this inherent limitation. Confronting death, individuals often experience profound

²³ Abineno, *Pelayanan Pastoral kepada Orang Berduka*, 35.

²⁴ Abineno, *Pelayanan Pastoral kepada Orang Berduka*, 5.

²⁵ Koubi, *Rambu solo'*, 423–24; Mantasia Tips, *Terharu! Ma' Retteng Sebelum Penguburan Alm.Ely Pamalingan Sarungallo Di Obyek Wisata Kete'kesu'*.

²⁶ Harun Hadiwidjono, *Iman Kristen* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1992), 174.

disorientation, loss, and emptiness. Grief becomes the space where this fragility is most clearly exposed. When losing a loved one, the mourner faces not only that person's absence but also fundamental questions regarding the meaning of life, the nature of justice, and the existence of God. At such moments, humans realize they do not possess ultimate control over time, over themselves, over life, and especially over death. They are like bamboo standing tall by the river, yet at any moment, they can be felled by a hand greater than themselves.

However, lest this acceptance of reality culminate in fatalism or clinical depression, the text of *retteng* immediately shifts the axis of control from the fragile human self to transcendent sovereignty (*Puang ya ma'kada tongan*). Yet, within this vulnerability, the Christian faith affirms that God remains sovereign over human life.²⁷ In cognitive psychology theory, this strategy is known as religious coping or the deferral of primary external control to God. This surrender is not a form of passive defeat, but a necessary cognitive restructuring to process the pain of grief. Through the affirmation that death occurs within transcendent permission and knowledge, the pain initially felt as chaotic (*chaotic pain*) is transformed into a reality that has a macro-order under divine providence. This theological foundation is rooted in Psalm 139, which describes God's intimate knowledge of human existence, as well as Romans 8:38–39, which guarantees that death lacks the destructive power to separate humans from this transcendent relationship. The awareness that a supreme authority holds the narrative of life provides a new sense of psychological safety. A grieving person is enabled to let go of their collapsed demands for control because their cognitive structure has been assured that the lost object resides within a safe space.

This psychological adaptation pattern resembles the resilience of Job in Job 1:21 ("The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord"), which within Torajanese culture is expressed in parallel through the concept of *pangeloranna Puangta* (the will of our Lord be done). This pattern of adaptation facilitates the mourner to find a new emotional place for the deceased and continue living. When mourners internalize the meaning that death is not a random, destructive event but a sacred transition governed by transcendent sovereignty, they can place the memory of the deceased within the compartment of "divine will."

In the cultural context of Toraja, for example, death is viewed not merely as the end of biological life, but as a sacred moment connecting humans with the spiritual world. Meaningful funeral rituals reflect society's acknowledgment of the importance of honoring this transition, affirming that death is not a random occurrence but a predetermined segment of the human journey. Human fragility in

²⁷ Gerrit Cornelis van Niftrik and B. J. Boland, *Dogmatika Masa Kini* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2008), 134.

the experience of grief also becomes a space where solidarity and empathy manifest deeply. When someone mourns, they need the presence of others for support and strength. This demonstrates that under the sovereignty of God, humans are called to be an extension of His love through concrete actions. Being present in grief is not merely an expression of condolence, but a participation in the mystery of suffering and hope. When humans recognize their own fragility, they become more open to the divine presence and the presence of others.

Remembering Goodness

Bating tongan toda tondok (The entire village truly weeps)

Mario tang sipoleri, malimbongan kiratui (Irremediable grief, abundant tears we encounter)²⁸

Songka barana' te tondok, barana'na te tongkonan ... (The banyan tree of this village has fallen, the protector of this clan house)

Ta'de to ma'pakaboro' (The one who loved us is gone)

To masokan penaanna (The person with a kind heart)

Natampekan sola nasang (Has left us all behind)

Umpakande redekkan (Who always fed us in the morning)

La umbarra' karoenkan (Who gave us rice in the evening)²⁹

The verse above paints a portrait of profound grief (*mario tang sipoleri*). The loss of a beloved figure is likened to the falling of a protective banyan tree (*songka barana'*), which instantly triggers the tears of the entire village (*bating tongan toda tondok*). Why is this mourning so massive? Because the memory recalled at the mourning courtyard is a tangible record of love: *umpakande redekkan, la umbarra' karoenkan* (the figure of generosity who provided food from morning till evening). Psychologically, remembering the positive contributions of the deceased functions as an emotional bridge connecting the past and the present. The memory of a figure who was *masokan penaanna* (kind-hearted) is reproduced through *retteng* not to lament fate fatalistically; rather, it constitutes the raw material to weave a shattered new life narrative. This is an effective intervention within this framework—namely, the practice of remembering the deceased's virtues (reminiscence) as a means to reconstruct a disrupted life narrative.³⁰

Kessler, in developing the sixth stage of grief, *Finding Meaning*, suggests that remembering the positive contributions of the deceased can be the starting point for

²⁸ Salebu' Makaruen, *Ma'Retteng Di Lolok Batu Tadongkon*//*Seni Budaya Adat Toraja*.

²⁹ Veen, *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*, 77.

³⁰ Robert N. Butler, "The Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged," *Psychiatry* 26, no. 1 (February 1963): 65–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1963.11023339>; Faith Gibson, *The Past in the Present* (London, UK: Health Profession Press, 2004), xvii; David Farrell Krell, *Of Memory, Reminiscence, and Writing: On the Verge* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 112; Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 55.

personal transformation.³¹ He writes that “meaning does not erase the pain, but rather allows it to coexist with love and growth.”³² When *retteng* chants these tales of goodness, an active process occurs where the mourners integrate the figure of the deceased into their new identity, this narrative coherence is crucial for psychological recovery. When individuals succeed in marrying positive memories of the past with their current life values, grief is no longer a cold wall of isolation. Instead of forcibly forgetting the deceased, the mourners successfully grant an enduring emotional place for the deceased within memories and continued good deeds. Through the therapy of communal memory in *retteng*, unhealable sorrow is humanely transformed into a space for existential growth and hopeful personal transformation.

By narrating the virtues of the deceased in *retteng*, this activity serves as an active process of constructing new meaning that integrates the loss into one’s evolving self. Narrative coherence is vital for psychological healing. When individuals are capable of integrating positive memories from the past with their contemporary life values, grief ceases to be a burden of isolation, transforming instead into a meaningful experience that enriches and deepens self-understanding. In this context, grief therapy emphasizing the remembrance of the deceased’s goodness not only facilitates the process of coping with loss but also opens up a space for existential growth.

Peace of Mind Guarantee

The final phase of the grief adaptation process is the mourner’s ability to reorganize the future without losing the emotional bond with the deceased. Worden positions this fourth task as a crucial moment where the pain of loss begins to transform into stable peace. Within the Torajanese oral tradition, this psychological turning point is uniquely mediated through expressions of eschatological gratitude contained in the following *retteng* verse:

Kurre, kurre sumanga’na (Thanks, dynamic gratitude be expressed)³³
Lalundun kapuanganna (Encountering their ancestors / entering divinity)
Sau’ rumombena langi’ (To the southern horizon / the heavenly realm)³⁴

The declaration of *kurre, kurre sumanga’na* (thanks/gratitude) in the midst of a mourning situation represents a unique emotional paradox. This expression is not born out of ignoring the pain, but rather from a firm proclamation of faith that the deceased has transitioned to a beautiful place (*sau’ rumombena langi’*). Through these

³¹ David Kessler, *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief* (New York: Scribner, 2021), 13.

³² Kessler, *Finding Meaning*, 45.

³³ Mantasia Tips, *Terharu! Ma’ Retteng Sebelum Penguburan Alm. Ely Pamalingan Sarungallo Di Obyek Wisata Kete’kesu’*.

³⁴ Veen, *The Sa’dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*, 75.

lines of lyrics, *retteng* operates as a pastoral instrument, facilitating the mourner to calmly let go of grief, grounded in the certainty of salvation in Christ Jesus. Theologically, death within the Christian faith is no longer viewed as a curse or a terrifying end, but as a gateway to eternal life. The sting of death has been broken through Christ's redemptive work (1Cor 15:55). It is this conviction that provides the basis for cognitive restructuring for the mourner. Christ's promise in John 11:25 ("I am the resurrection and the life") and the doctrine that salvation is a gift from God (Eph 2:8–9) transform fragile emotional hope into a definitive eschatological certainty.

Randy Alcorn³⁵ asserts that heaven is not an abstract, distant concept, but a tangible reality promised to believers—a space free from tears, suffering, and death. When the bereaved family internalizes this truth, the function of *retteng* shifts from mere mournful lamentation into a space of profound spiritual meaning-making. Inner peace is achieved not because the memory of the deceased is erased, but because the mourners know with certainty that their loved one has returned to the transcendent embrace of God. Here, tears are not shed in vain; they are blessed with new meaning in the light of the hope of eternal reunion. Peace for the deceased is not merely an emotional hope, but a steadfast confession of faith. In death, believers do not lose themselves; rather, they find the fullness of life in Jesus Christ. For those who mourn, the deepest comfort lies in knowing that God's love does not end at the grave, but continues into a life that never ceases.

Guarantee of Life After Death

At the crucial phase of mourning, mourners are required to adjust to reality without the physical presence of the deceased while establishing a stable new emotional space for their memory. Within Torajanese culture, this arduous psychological adaptation process is eased through the articulation of *retteng* poetry, which provides an ontological guarantee regarding the condition of the deceased in the afterlife. This assertion is captured in the following verse:

Ullambi' tondok mala'bi', daenan torro madatu (Reaching the glorious village, the realm of royal dwelling)
Disangai bambanna mukun, suruga tungkasanganna (Named the eternal abode, heaven is its only name)³⁶
Sangtongkonanmo nene'na (They now share the clan house with their ancestors)
Sangesungan to dolona (Sitting together with those who passed before)
Torro maelomo lolo' (They dwell there in perfect wellness)

³⁵ Randy Alcorn, *Heaven* (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), 25–27.

³⁶ Mantasia Tips, *Terharu! Ma' Retteng Sebelum Penguburan Alm.Ely Pamalingan Sarungallo Di Obyek Wisata Kete'kesu'*.

Maya-mayamo yang tidak diungkai (Sitting and relaxing undisturbed)³⁷

The lyrics above explicitly affirm that death is not a destructive, absolute separation, but a transition toward eternal fellowship in the *tondok mala'bi'* (heaven). The depiction of the deceased now being *sangtongkonan* (sharing the same clan house/community) and *sangesungan* (sitting together/equal status) with the ancestors provides an instant calming effect on the family's psychology. The tragic experience of death is humanely transformed into a peaceful, grand family reunion. Theologically, this local narrative resonates strongly with the biblical affirmation in Romans 6:8, "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him". Through the lens of Christ's resurrection, death has been conquered, and eternal life is definitively guaranteed (Rom 6:23). It is this theological basis that alters how mourners perceive death: it is no longer a black hole of despair, but a gateway to total restoration (*maya-maya*).

Randy Alcorn argues that heaven is not an alien utopia distant from human reality, but a true home filled with God's presence and the complete restoration of all earthly traumas.³⁸ He writes that "humanity's deepest longings will be fulfilled in heaven, because there we will see God face-to-face and live in perfect peace."³⁹ When mourners hear the *retteng* lyrics illustrating that the deceased is now *torro maelomo lolo'* (dwelling there well and relaxing), a cognitive reconstruction occurs that reduces their existential anxiety. Successfully visualizing the deceased in a peaceful state in heaven helps the mourners release grief guilt and eases the completion of Worden's final task. This eschatological hope proves that *retteng* is not merely a poetry of lamentation, but a humanistic grief counseling instrument; it treats the wounds of the present by offering the certainty of a beautiful future in Christ.

Expression of Blessings

As a concluding element of the ritual structure, *retteng* does not leave the mourners immobilized in an emotionally shattered state. At this point, the psychological intervention is directed toward helping the bereaved family fully complete Worden's fourth task: placing the memory of the deceased in a healthy locus, then reorienting themselves toward the future. This crucial transition from mournful lamentation to the restoration of life is mediated through the articulation of communal blessing (reintegration) in the following verse:

Ke den upa' tapoupa' (If there be blessings, let them be our blessings)
Kepada kita massola nasang (To all of us who are gathered here)

³⁷ Veen, *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*, 75.

³⁸ Alcorn, *Heaven*, 17.

³⁹ Alcorn, *Heaven*, 25.

Paraya tapoparaya (Grace, let it be our portion)
Angganta angga mairi' (Every single one of us present)⁴⁰

The declaration of blessing (*upa'* and *paraya*) proclaimed inclusively for all present (*massola nasang, angga mairi'*) carries profound psychological and pastoral impacts. Blessing here is not merely cliché verbal consolation or momentary emotional encouragement. Theologically, this expression is a proclamation of God's active grace descending to embrace human suffering, while affirming the promise of salvation that transcends death. Through this verse, *retteng* asserts that the space of sorrow is not left isolated; it is reached by divine comfort that restores. In the experience of grief, blessing reminds us that God is not distant from suffering, but present with those who mourn. As Matthew 5:4 states, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." The blessing is an acknowledgment that grief is not isolated but within the reach of divine consolation.

William Barclay emphasizes that the blessing of comfort is not an escape from harsh reality. On the contrary, it is an honest recognition that, amidst radical weakness due to loss, God's love is never absent from accompanying His people. In the pastoral ministry of grief, this utterance of blessing operates as a ministry of presence. It is the spiritual and physical presence of the community surrounding the mourners that touches the deepest spaces of trauma, thereby opening internal compartments for the healing process to begin. Barclay describes the blessing as "a sign that God never abandons His people, even in death."⁴¹ In funeral liturgies, the blessing is often pronounced as a conclusion, affirming that the deceased rests in God's peace and that those who mourn do not walk alone. John Stott, in his pastoral reflections, states that the blessing in grief is "a reminder of hope beyond death."⁴² Stott emphasizes that words of blessing spoken by church ministers are not merely symbolic but bear the power to awaken faith and inner peace. In pastoral care, the blessing is part of the ministry of presence—a physical and spiritual presence that touches the soul of the mourner and opens a space for healing.

Liturgically, the blessing in a consolation service functions as a closing gesture directing the congregation toward eschatological hope. Jürgen Moltmann calls the blessing "a prophetic act affirming that death is not the end, but the beginning of life in God."⁴³ In this context, the blessing is not only for the living but also an affirmation of faith in the eternal destiny of the deceased.

⁴⁰ Veen, *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*, 79.

⁴¹ William Barclay, *The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer for Everyman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 42, 45.

⁴² John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 253.

⁴³ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London, UK: SCM Press Ltd, 1996), 56.

The *retteng* blessing, with the expressions *upa' dipoupa'* and *paraya dipoparaya* (both meaning blessings belong to us all), within mourning is a theological act merging liturgy, pastoral care, and spirituality. The blessing serves as a bridge between sorrow and hope, between loss and the promise of eternity. In the blessing, the church declares that God's love endures even in the face of death, and that those who mourn can find true consolation in the promise of eternal life.

Ke den upa' tapoupa' (May the blessings be ours)
To kita massola nasang (All of us who are here)
Paraya tapoparaya (Joy is our portion)
Angganta angga mairi' (All of us who are present)⁴⁴

In the Christian tradition, blessing is not simply a beautiful word, but a theological act with spiritual and pastoral power. When someone experiences grief, blessings become a means of comfort, connecting human suffering with God's love and presence. Blessing in this context is not only emotional encouragement, but also an affirmation of the promise of salvation and eternal life offered in Christ.

Theologically, blessing is an expression of God's active grace that touches human life. In the context of grief, blessing reminds us that God is not far from suffering, but rather present in its midst. As Matthew 5:5 states, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth", blessing is an acknowledgment that grief is not isolated but within the reach of divine comfort.

William Barclay emphasized that the blessing of consolation is not an escape from reality, but rather an acknowledgment that in weakness and loss, God's love remains at work. He called the blessing "a sign that God never abandons his people, even in death."⁴⁵ In funeral liturgies, the blessing often concludes, affirming that the deceased is in God's peace, and that those who grieve do not walk alone.

John Stott, in his pastoral reflection, states that blessing in grief is a "reminder of hope beyond death."⁴⁶ He emphasizes that the words of blessing spoken by church ministers are not merely symbolic, but contain the power to awaken faith and inner peace. In pastoral care, blessing is part of *the ministry of presence*, a spiritual presence that touches the soul of the bereaved and opens up space for healing.

Liturgically, the blessing in the consolation service serves as a closing gesture that points the congregation toward eschatological hope. Jürgen Moltmann calls the blessing "a prophetic act that affirms that death is not the end, but rather the

⁴⁴ Veen, *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*, 79.

⁴⁵ Barclay, *The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer for Everyman*, 42, 45.

⁴⁶ Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 253.

beginning of life in God.”⁴⁷ In this context, the blessing is not only for the living, but also a confession of faith in the eternal destiny of the deceased.

The blessing of *the retteng*, with the expressions *upa’ dipoupa’* and *paraya dipoparaya* (both meaning blessings belong to us all), in mourning is a theological act that combines liturgy, pastoral care, and spirituality. It serves as a bridge between suffering and hope, between loss and eternal promise. In the blessing, the church proclaims that God’s love remains, even in the midst of death, and that those who grieve can find true comfort in the promise of eternal life.

Lament as a Healer of Grief from a Christian Perspective

From a Christian perspective, lamentation is not merely an expression of sorrow, but a profound spiritual practice that opens a space for emotional healing and the hope of faith. Lamentation, as reflected in the Psalms and the Book of Lamentations, provides believers with a means to present their suffering to God—not as an empty complaint, but as a faith-filled dialogue that acknowledges the reality of pain, including grief, while continuing to trust in God’s love and restoration. The Book of Lamentations, for example, traditionally attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, is a response to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Within it, the Israelites not only express their sorrow but also acknowledge their sins, seek forgiveness, and hope for renewal. Lamentation thus functions as a bridge between suffering and hope, between brokenness and God’s promise of restoration. In this context, lamentation becomes a transformative process guiding the soul from darkness into the light of hope.

Christian theologians, such as Claus Westermann, emphasize that lamentation is a form of prayer and an essential dimension of spiritual life. Westermann asserts that “lament is the most honest form of communication with God, because it does not hide suffering but confronts it directly before God.”⁴⁸ From both spiritual and pastoral perspectives, lamentation also functions as a means of healing. When believers are granted space to lament openly within the community of faith, they not only articulate their sorrow but also experience solidarity and comfort from the body of Christ.

In a contemporary context, lamentation becomes increasingly relevant as a response to loss and crisis. Christian theologians and counselors, such as Shelly Rambo, emphasize the importance of a “theology of trauma” that recognizes wounds as part of the faith narrative.⁴⁹ Lament, in this sense, is not merely an emotional

⁴⁷ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 56.

⁴⁸ Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1981), 267.

⁴⁹ Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 45.

expression but also a theological act connecting human suffering with the suffering of Christ, paving the way for holistic healing—emotional, spiritual, and social.

Meanwhile, in Torajanese culture, *retteng* constitutes a form of lamentation literature containing words of comfort, cooperation, and respect for others, particularly within the context of sorrow. These poetic sentences are not only expressions of grief but are also therapeutic for mourning and reinforcing social bonds.

In pastoral ministry for the bereaved, the church can certainly provide a place for lament throughout the grieving process, from the passing of an individual until their funeral. This can be implemented within worship services, support groups, or counseling services, thereby becoming a place where grief is processed spiritually. This aligns with pastoral approaches emphasizing the importance of presence, listening, and acknowledging suffering as the first step toward recovery. In this pastoral approach, *retteng* can be understood as a form of spiritual care rooted in Torajanese culture. Pastoral workers who comprehend the meaning of this poetry can utilize it as a gateway to accompany grieving congregants with a contextual and empathetic approach. *Retteng* functions as a bridge between Christian faith and local wisdom, where messages of comfort and hope can be linked to the Gospel narrative regarding the hope of resurrection and eternal life. Pastoral ministry is not alien or detached from culture; rather, it is integrated with and enriches the spiritual experience of the mourner.

4. Conclusion

Cultural lamentations such as *retteng* possess a dual function that operates hand-in-hand: liturgical and therapeutic. It is not merely a passive poem or mourning song, but an active spiritual narrative connecting the mourner with the community, tradition, and God. Through its lines of lyrics, *retteng* teaches eschatological values regarding the fragility of life, the certainty of the afterlife, and the blessing of restoration rooted in the Christian faith. Lest this local richness stop at being a theological discourse, it can also be organically integrated into the formal funeral liturgy structure of the Church. The church is called to continuously unearth the theological meaning of local cultures like *retteng*, so that pastoral ministry becomes more relevant, touching, and deeply grounded.

Acknowledgments

The authors have no individuals or institutions to acknowledge.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Author Contributions

The author confirms sole responsibility for the entire research process, including study conception, data collection, analysis, and manuscript preparation.

Ethical Approval and Consent

This study was approved by the Institute for Research and Community Service of Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Toraja through the issuance of Ethical Clearance number 46/LPPM/IAKN-T/LoEA/V/2026, dated May 22, 2026.

References

- Abineno, J. L. Ch. *Pelayanan Pastoral kepada Orang Berduka*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991.
- Alcorn, Randy. *Heaven*. Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004.
- Barclay, William. *The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer for Everyman*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.
- Butler, Robert N. "The Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged." *Psychiatry* 26, no. 1 (February 1963): 65–76.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1963.11023339>.
- Gasong, Dina. "Implementasi Kearifan Lokal Singgi' Dan Retteng Dalam Sastra Lisan Toraja: Kajian Hermeneutik." *Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 3, no. 3 (December 2017): 651–65.
<https://journals.ukitoraja.ac.id/index.php/jkip/article/view/96>.
- Gibson, Faith. *The Past in the Present*. London, UK: Health Profession Press, 2004.
- Hadiwidjono, Harun. *Iman Kristen*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1992.
- Hollan, Douglas W., and Jane C. Wellenkamp. *The Thread of Life: Toraja Reflections on the Life Cycle*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996.
- Jonathan, Kefas, Muryati, and Gidion Hery Susanto. "Teologi Ratapan dan Pemulihan: Pendekatan Teologis Terhadap Rasa Duka dalam Kehidupan Kristen." *Matheo : Jurnal Teologi/Kependetaan* 11, no. 2 (November 2021): 233–45.
<https://doi.org/10.47562/matheo.v11i2.409>.
- Kessler, David. *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*. New York: Scribner, 2021.
- Koubi, Jeannine. *Rambu Solo', "La Fumée Descend": Le culte des morts chez les Toradja du Sud*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1982.

- Krell, David Farrell. *Of Memory, Reminiscence, and Writing: On the Verge*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Lartey, Emmanuel Y. *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World*. London, UK: Epworth Press, 2006.
- Mantasia Tips. *Terharu! Ma' Retteng Sebelum Penguburan Alm.Ely Pamalingan Sarungallo Di Obyek Wisata Kete'kesu'*. 2023. 08:57.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8tXEWVAUEA>.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. London, UK: SCM Press Ltd, 1996.
- Niftrik, Gerrit Cornelis van, and B. J. Boland. *Dogmatika Masa Kini*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2008.
- Nooy-Palm, Hetty. *The Sa'dan-Toraja: A Study of Their Social Life and Religion: II: Rituals of the East and West*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 1979.
- Pattison, Stephen. *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Pusbang Gereja Toraja. *Rambu Solo' Dan Persepsi Orang Kristen Tentang Rambu Solo'*. Rantepao: Pusbang Gereja Toraja, 1996.
- Rambo, Shelly. *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Salebu' Makaruen. *Ma'Retteng Di Lolok Batu Tadongkon||Seni Budaya Adat Toraja*. 2021. 11:50. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L40FPqv2ZO4>.
- Sandarupa, Stanislaus. "'The Voice of a Child': Constructing a Moral Community through Retteng Poetic Argumentation in Toraja." *Archipel* 91 (2016): 231–58.
<https://doi.org/10.4000/archipel.316>.
- Stott, John. *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Tammu, J., and H. van der Veen. *Kamus Toradja-Indonesia*. Rantepao: Jajasan Perguruan Kristen Toradja, 1972.
- Tangdilintin, L. T. *Toraja Dan Kebudayaanannya*. Rantepao: Yayasan Lepongan Bulan (YALBU), 1975.
- Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New Brunswick, US: AldineTransaction, 2008.
- Veen, H. van der. *The Sa'dan Toradja Chant for the Deceased*. S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966.
- Westermann, Claus. *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*. Translated by Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1981.

Worden, James William. *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*. 4th ed. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2009.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (CC BY SA).