

# WHEN PRINCESS RUNDUK TURNED TO STONE: A TALE OF LOVE, BETRAYAL, AND THE CHARM OF SIBOLGA'S ORAL LITERATURE

*(Ketika Putri Runduk Menjadi Batu: Kisah Cinta, Pengkhianatan, dan Pesona Sastra Lisan Sibolga)*

Suyadi<sup>1</sup>, Zaim Dzaky Sanjaya<sup>2</sup>, Musfepial<sup>3</sup>, Rahmat Muhidin<sup>4</sup>, Derri Ris Riana<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>[suya014@brin.go.id](mailto:suya014@brin.go.id), <sup>2</sup>[zaim.dzakysan@gmail.co.id](mailto:zaim.dzakysan@gmail.co.id), <sup>3</sup>[musf001@brin.go.id](mailto:musf001@brin.go.id),

<sup>4</sup>[rahmatmuhidin2573@gmail.com](mailto:rahmatmuhidin2573@gmail.com), <sup>5</sup>[derri.ris.riana@brin.go.id](mailto:derri.ris.riana@brin.go.id)

<sup>15</sup>Center for Research on Language, Literature, and Community, National Research and Innovation Agency, <sup>2</sup> University of North Sumatra, <sup>3</sup> Research Center for Manuscripts, Literature, and Oral Traditions, National Research and Innovation Agency, <sup>4</sup> Language and Literature Preservation Research Center, National Research and Innovation Agency

**Abstract:** *The legend of “Putri Runduk” is one of the treasures of oral literature of the people of Sibolga and Central Tapanuli in North Sumatra Province, Indonesia, which is rich in cultural, moral and historical values. The story tells of Princess Runduk, a beautiful queen of the Barus Kingdom, who was forced to flee to Mursala Island after her kingdom was attacked by King Janggi of Europe. During her escape, Princess Runduk left behind her beloved handmaiden, Sikambang Bandahari, who mourned the princess's departure with sorrowful verses. These lamentations became the origin of the “Sikambang” art form, a coastal tradition combining music, dance, and poetry. The tale of Princess Runduk is laden with messages of loyalty, sacrifice, and resilience. When King Janggi tried to impose his will, the princess chose to drown herself in the sea, turning into stone to preserve her dignity. This legend serves not only as entertainment but also as a tool for moral education and social cohesion in Sibolga’s multiethnic society. In the context of diversity, the story teaches tolerance and respect for differences, particularly in a community composed of various ethnicities and religions. Using a sociological-literary approach, this study reveals how oral literature, such as the Legend of “Princess Runduk”, plays a role in strengthening unity amid diversity. This oral tradition serves as a medium for preserving local identity while fostering social harmony in the face of modernization and globalization. Thus, the story of “Princess Runduk” is not merely a relic of the past but also an inspiration for building an inclusive and culturally rich future.*

**Keywords:** *Diversity; Oral Literature; Princess Runduk; Sibolga; Sikambang*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity, languages, and regional literature. One form of this richness is oral literature, which serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of educating values, preserving cultural identity, and strengthening unity in a multicultural society. However, amidst the currents of globalization and modernization, the existence of oral literature faces serious challenges, including threats to its preservation and the shifting values of local wisdom (Hariadi, 2016; Saefuddin, 2015). This phenomenon also occurs in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli, where oral literature such as Sikambang and the legend of Putri Runduk are beginning to be marginalized by the dominant culture and external influences.

Previous research by Saefuddin (2015) on Banjar regional literature and Hariadi (2016) on the role of regional literature in maintaining diversity has revealed the potential of local literature as a social glue. However, both studies have not touched on the context of coastal communities in North Sumatra in depth, particularly in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli. Furthermore, studies on strategies for maintaining oral literature in the context of diversity are still rare, even though this region has unique socio-cultural dynamics and is vulnerable to conflict, as reflected in the bomb terror incident in 2019 that disrupted social harmony (Suyadi, 2020; 2025).

As cutting-edge research, this study aims to fill this gap by focusing on strategies for preserving oral literature in an effort to strengthen diversity in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli. This research specifically examines the legend of “Putri Runduk” and the Sikambang tradition as representations of oral literature that live within the community. The research problem raised is "How can the strategy of maintaining oral literature strengthen the diversity of multicultural communities in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli?" Therefore, the purpose of this research is to describe and analyze the strategy of maintaining oral literature (especially the legend of "Putri Runduk" and Sikambang) and its contribution in strengthening social cohesion and diversity in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli.

Theoretically, this study uses the sociology of literature approach developed by Wellek and Warren (1995) and a multicultural perspective (Tilaar, 2007). The sociology of literature theory is used to analyze the relationship between literary texts (oral literature) and the social context of society, while multiculturalism helps understand how oral literature plays a role in maintaining diversity and preventing conflict. This approach was chosen because it can reveal the function of literature not only as an aesthetic expression, but also as a social instrument that shapes identity and mediates intergroup relations. Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of interdisciplinary literary studies, but also provides practical recommendations for stakeholders in formulating policies for preserving oral literature and strengthening diversity in multicultural areas.

## ***B. METHOD***

### **1. Approach**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply explore the strategies for preserving oral literature and its role in cementing diversity in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the narrative, contextual, and holistic characteristics of the data, and aims to understand phenomena naturally within a multicultural setting (Creswell, 2023).

### **2. Location and Time of Research**

The research was conducted in Sibolga City and Central Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, for five months (July–December 2019). The location selection was

based on the region's rich oral literature (such as the legend of "Putri Runduk" and the art of Sikambang) and its complex diversity dynamics.

### **3. Types and Sources of Data**

The data in this study consists of: (1) Primary data: obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants (traditional figures, cultural figures, artists, and community members who carry out traditional practices), participatory observation of the Sikambang performance and rituals related to the legend of "Putri Runduk" as well as documentation in the form of audio-visual recordings and photographs; and (2) Secondary data: in the form of oral literary manuscripts, historical archives, books, journals and other supporting documents relevant to the research focus.

### **4. Data Collection Techniques**

- a. In-depth interviews: conducted in a structured and unstructured manner with 15 key informants selected purposively based on their knowledge and experience of oral literature and local culture.
- b. Participatory observation: researchers are directly involved in cultural activities, such as Sikambang performances, traditional ceremonies, and community activities related to the preservation of oral literature.
- c. Document study: analysis of oral literary manuscripts, historical records, and cultural archives to supplement field data.

### **5. Data Analysis Techniques**

Data were analyzed interactively using a thematic analysis model (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with the following steps:

- a. Transcription and data organization: all interview and observation data were transcribed and categorized based on research focus.
- b. Data coding: identifying patterns, themes, and key concepts that emerge from the data.
- c. Thematic analysis: grouping codes into major themes such as: preservation strategies, the function of oral literature, and its impact on diversity.
- d. Interpretation: connecting findings with the theory of sociology of literature and multiculturalism to answer the problem formulation.

### **6. Data Validity**

Data validity is maintained through:

- a. *Source triangulation*: comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents.
- b. *Member check*: confirming data interpretation with informants to avoid bias.
- c. *Long-term involvement*: researchers spend considerable time in the field to understand the context in depth.

## **7. Research Ethics**

This research adheres to the principles of academic ethics by disguising the identities of informants, seeking informant consent, and respecting local cultural values during the research process. With this method, this research can provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of oral literature in strengthening diversity and the strategies that can be developed to preserve it.

### ***C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION***

#### **1. Oral Literary Expression in the Legend of “Putri Runduk” and the Art of Sikambang**

This research has successfully identified and documented various forms of oral literary expression still alive in the communities of Sibolga and Central Tapanuli, with a focus on the legend of "Putri Runduk" and the art of Sikambang. The legend of "Putri Runduk" is not just an ordinary folktale, but rather a cultural narrative containing profound philosophical values about love, sacrifice, loyalty, and resistance against injustice.

The legend of "Putri Runduk" tells of a beautiful queen from the Barus Kingdom who was forced to flee to Mursala Island after her kingdom was attacked by King Janggi from Europe. In her escape, Putri Runduk left behind her beloved lady-in-waiting, Sikambang Bandahari, who then mourned her departure with sad poems. These laments became the forerunners of the Sikambang art form.

As one of the treasures of the Sibolga community's oral literature, this legend not only serves as an entertaining story, but also reflects the social complexity, cultural values, and power relations within the coastal communities of North Sumatra. Through a sociological approach to literature—which emphasizes the relationship between literary texts and the social realities in which they were born and received—this legend can be read as a social document that records societal structures, collective values, and the conflicts inherent in a multicultural society.

The legend of "Putri Runduk," through a sociological literary approach, reveals that this oral literary text is not merely a fictional story, but a reflection of the social structure, collective values, and power dynamics within the coastal community of Sibolga. This text records and reproduces prevailing social values, while also serving as a tool for affirming cultural identity within a multi-ethnic society. As Wellek and Warren (1995) argue, literature is viewed as a social institution that both reflects and shapes reality. The legend of Putri Runduk clearly illustrates how coastal communities interpret relations of power, gender, and resistance to foreign domination.

Sociologically, the legend of Princess Runduk represents a hierarchical yet egalitarian coastal society in the face of external threats. Princess Runduk is depicted as a ruler with complete autonomy over her territory: "The princess who rules on Mursala Island as her

royal seat." However, when facing the invasion of King Janggi from Europe, she does not act alone; she interacts with her ladies-in-waiting and bodyguards, demonstrating that leadership in coastal communities is not absolute, but rather involves deliberation and collective support. This aligns with sociologist Emile Durkheim's view of mechanical solidarity in traditional societies, where social bonds are built on shared values and interdependence.



**Figure 1. Mursala Island, the legend of Princess Runduk and Sikambang**  
(*special doc.*)

The conflict between Princess Runduk and King Janggi also reflects the tension between local values and foreign powers seeking domination. King Janggi arrives arrogantly and wants to impose his will: "I am King Janggi from Europe, tell your Princess, I want to marry her and make her the empress of my country's decoration!" The word "decoration" here indicates the symbolic objectification and oppression of women as well as a representation of cultural colonialism. Meanwhile, the response of Princess Runduk's guards—"if you want our Princess, step over our dead bodies first"—demonstrates resistance to foreign domination and the protection of community dignity.

The values of loyalty and sacrifice in this legend are also worth examining from a gender sociological perspective. Princess Runduk is portrayed as a strong and sovereign woman, yet at the same time, she is also trapped by traditional expectations regarding loyalty to her husband (Datuk Itam) and a willingness to sacrifice to maintain her honor. When she chooses to throw herself into the sea, her act is seen not only as a form of resistance but also as sublime self-sacrifice—a theme that often appears in literature as a justification for women's suffering.

Furthermore, this legend demonstrates how oral literature serves as a tool for transmitting social and moral values to the next generation. The message conveyed is clear: "it is not good to act arbitrarily towards others even if we have power." This message is relevant

in the context of Sibolga's multiethnic and multireligious society, where respect for differences and rejection of violence are essential values for maintaining social cohesion.

In terms of narrative structure, the legend of Princess Runduk utilizes metaphors and symbols closely related to the lives of coastal communities. The islands formed from items brought by Princess Runduk—such as Tarika Island (made from an iron), Baka Island (made from a basket), and Panjang Island (made from a shawl)—not only convey a magical-realistic content but also reflect the intimate relationship between humans and nature. Coastal communities view nature not simply as a resource, but as part of their collective identity and history.

The persistence of this legend in Sibolga society demonstrates that oral literature is not a dead artifact, but rather a living tradition that continually adapts to changing times. It serves as a means of affirming cultural identity amidst the onslaught of globalization and modernization. As Raymond Williams argued in "Culture and Society" (1959), culture is not static, but is constantly contested and reinterpreted by its people.

Thus, the Legend of Princess Runduk is not just a story, but also a medium for understanding social dynamics, cultural resistance, and survival strategies of coastal communities in facing changes and external threats.

Sikambang art developed as a form of cultural expression inspired by the legend of “Putri Runduk”. Sikambang comes from the name of a lady-in-waiting of Putri Runduk named Sikambang Bandahari. One day Putri Runduk went sailing from Lobu Tua to Mursala Island (Central Tapanuli) accompanied by Sikambang Bandahari. Throughout the journey, Sikambang always chanted poems while hitting the walls of his boat, the following is a poem sung by the young man “pulo banamo haram dewa/tampek malape layang-layang,/ biar diancam samo sewa/jangan diputus kasih sayang//” (island named haram dewa/place to release kites,/even if threatened with rent/don't break off love//) which later became known as Sikambang which was sung vocally.

This performing art is a combination of music, dance, and poetry presented in the form of rhythmic pantun. In general, the people of Sibolga and Central Tapanuli recognize *sikambang* as a type of art in coastal communities. Sikambang art is a stage art that exists on the West coast of Sumatra Island in general. This art is characterized by advice, rhythmic songs, and is in the form of dance with four dancers in pairs and a man who sings. Based on observations and interviews with local artists and cultural figures, Sikambang has a performance structure consisting of:

- a. Opening: usually begins with the shout "Maule..... Kambang!!!" as a tribute to Dayang Sikambang.
- b. The core part: consists of various dances such as the Handkerchief Dance, Umbrella Dance, Scarf Dance, and Children's Dance, each accompanied by special verses.
- c. Conclusion: usually ends with moral messages and life advice.

The most popular and well-known poem is *the Kapulo Pinang Song* (see: <https://youtu.be/Wv36WbO8Cs0?si=1kurKwIjDJhWYf2L>) which is based on the Payung Dance, describing the story of an engagement after love is established between two people to get married. To show his affection for the girl he loves, he gives him the umbrella of his lover. Until one day when the husband wanted to leave his wife to go sailing to earn a living in another country by using a ship carrying merchandise from Poncan Island to Pinang Island.

*Kok berlayar ka pulo penang* (Why sail to Pulo Penang?)

*Ambil aluan si timur laut* (Take the northeastern route)

*Kok berlayar hati indak sana* (Why is my heart sailing away?)

*Ai mato sepanjang laut* (Tears along the sea)

*Pulo penang ainyo dare* (Pulo Penang has hard water)

*Banaklah batang lintang bulintang* (There are lots of lattice rods)

*Pulo penang dunianyo kare* (Pulo Penang, the world is tough)

*Bayaklah dagang pulang barutang* (Many traders come home and get debt)

Music is an important element in the art of Sikambang. The origin of the sikambang musical instrument is the sound of the waves and the blows of fishermen's oars on the edge of the boat. As time progressed, fishermen also created a drum called the sikambang drum. Until now, the art of Sikambang was formed through a combination of several musical instruments, namely the sikambang drum which functions as mat (tempo), the batapik drum which functions as a rhythmic harmonizer of the sikambang drum, the violin and accordion function as the melody carrier of the song, the singkadu (a type of small flute) functions as the melody carrier, and the carano (a type of bowl) functions as the mat (tempo) determiner.



**Figure 2. Sikambang art originates from the legend of "Putri Runduk" (personal doc.)**

In its historical development, the story of the origin of the sikambang art has two versions. *The first is that* the sikambang art began in the Mursala Islands when Queen Putri Runduk fled from her enemies. At that time, along with the arrival of foreign traders and governments to Barus, the beauty of the empress became even more famous. Several kings, amazed by the news, then intended to capture Princess Runduk. These kings included King Janggi of Sudan and King Sanjaya of the Mataram Kingdom. The two great kingdoms deployed their war forces to achieve two possibilities: to control the Barus Kingdom and to obtain the empress of the Barus Kingdom.

During the war, King Sanjaya of Java successfully conquered the Barus Kingdom. King Jayadana was killed, and his wife, Princess Runduk, was captured. Princess Runduk was deliberately captured because she refused to be married amicably. This was due to religious differences between the two: King Sanjaya was Hindu, while the Jayadana Kingdom was known as an Islamic Kingdom. This difference also made Princess Runduk refuse. However, King Janggi secretly and suddenly attacked Sanjaya's troops, causing panic and destroying Gugu City and the royal palace. The battle was won by King Janggi, so a group of loyal royal guards and ladies-in-waiting secured Queen Princess Runduk from Raja Janggi's kingdom to Mursala Island.

In the long chase, Princess Runduk finally gave up hope and jumped into the sea, disappearing without a trace. At that moment, one of her loyal servants, Sikambang Bandahari, a young man who was assigned to the royal household, wailed bitterly. He mourned the loss of his master, lamented the brutality of the oppressive kings, and regretted his own inability to protect Princess Runduk. This prolonged lamentation became the origin of the coastal Sikambang culture in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli.

*Second*, it is said that the art of Sikambang originated from a fisherman who was fishing around the Mursala Islands. At that time he heard the strains of a song that touched his feelings so that the fisherman fell silent to listen to the strains which were finally carried to the land of Jago-jago Village. Then the fisherman sang again the strains of the song he had just heard while fishing on Mursala Island and other neighbors heard the fisherman's song. Then they asked the fisherman who was singing the strains of the song, "what song and who is the singer?" Then the fisherman said that when fishing on Mursala Island he heard the song there but he did not know who the singer was.

The sikambang culture is used in traditional ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, circumcision ceremonies, *turun karai* (going down to the ground), welcoming ceremonies, coronations, entering a new house, inaugurations, and art performances/performances. Sikambang art is generally never used in religious ceremonies and idolatry, only intended for ceremonial events. Sikambang is a combination of songs and dances that symbolize the life of the community who are fishermen/seafarers.

The art of Sikambang generally represents all the arts that apply to the coastal communities of West Sumatra, starting from Meulaboh in Banda Aceh, continuing to Tapanuli, Minangkabau, and Bengkulu. In addition to the West Coast, Sikambang also occurs on the East Coast of the Nias Islands and Telo Island. Coastal songs are pantuns that respond to each other, containing advice incarnated feelings, satire and affection according to their traditions. The coastal nature creates such a way, so enchanting that fishermen are lulled into sleep. The gentle ripples of the waves and the occasional large wave, make the dance movements weakly graceful or suddenly jerking hard. People who live (originating) in Tapaktuan, Singkil, Sorkam, Barus, Singkuang, Mukomuko, Natal, and Pariaman are the main supporters of the preservation of Sikambang from generation to generation.

## **2. Strategies for Preserving Oral Literature in a Multicultural Society**

This research identifies various strategies used by the people of Sibolga and Central Tapanuli to maintain and develop their oral literature amidst the challenges of modernization and globalization. One of the main strategies identified is through both formal and non-formal education. Several schools in Sibolga have incorporated local content on coastal culture into their curriculum. Siti Zubaidah, the principal of SMP Negeri 1 Sibolga, has written a local content book on Pasisi culture that is used in schools. Furthermore, various poetry, pantun, and Pasisi dance competitions are regularly held to attract the interest of the younger generation.

*"We hold cultural competitions to spark young people's interest. We ask art teachers to pay attention to Pasisi music and create musical notation so that future generations can learn,"* said Siti Zubaidah in an interview.

Another important strategy is the documentation and digitization of oral literary manuscripts. Several local cultural figures have undertaken documentation efforts by creating a Pasisi language dictionary, recording Sikambang performances, and even making a film depicting the lives of the Pasisi people. Digitization efforts have also begun by disseminating cultural content through social media and digital platforms.

Sikambang and the legend of "Putri Runduk" are also integrated into economic and tourism activities. The local government regularly showcases Pasisi art at guest receptions and major events. Mursala Island, the setting for the "Putri Runduk" legend, is being developed as a cultural tourism destination attracting both domestic and international tourists. The legend of "Putri Runduk" and the art of Sikambang play a crucial role as a medium for character education in the multicultural communities of Sibolga and Central Tapanuli. The values embodied in this oral literature, such as tolerance, loyalty, courage, and respect for differences, indirectly shape the character of a community that values diversity.

In the context of a society comprised of various ethnicities (Coastal Malay, Toba Batak, Mandailing, Minangkabau, Nias, Chinese) and religions (Islam, Christianity, Buddhism),

oral literature serves as a shared platform accessible and appreciated by all groups. As one informant put it: "In Sikambang, we don't see any differences. Everyone can enjoy and learn from its messages." Sikambang and the legend of "Putri Runduk" also serve to unify the cultural identity of the multi-ethnic coastal community. Although the people of Sibolga are ethnically diverse, they find a common identity through their shared coastal cultural heritage. This aligns with the concept of "imagined community" proposed by Anderson (2006), where diverse communities can imagine themselves as one through shared culture and traditions. Interestingly, oral literature also serves as a subtle and effective means of conflict resolution. In some cases, Sikambang performances are used as a means to reconcile disputing parties, conveying messages of peace through poetry and rhymes. This approach is effective because the message is conveyed indirectly and artistically, thus avoiding resistance from the conflicting parties.

### **3. Challenges and Obstacles in Preserving Oral Literature**

Despite various strategies, the preservation of oral literature still faces many challenges. Globalization and modernization have had a significant impact on the younger generation. Many young people are more interested in global popular culture than their own local culture. As one informant put it: "Young people now prefer dangdut and K-Pop over Sikambang. They consider Sikambang old-fashioned and unmodern."

The regeneration of oral literature practitioners and enthusiasts is also a serious problem. Many Sikambang artists are aging, while the younger generation's interest in learning and continuing this tradition is very limited. This is due to various factors, including the perception that traditional arts are not economically viable.

Institutional support from the government and relevant agencies remains limited. While some preservation programs exist, they are often unsustainable and poorly integrated. Budget allocations for cultural preservation are also very limited compared to other sectors. Based on research findings, an ideal model can be formulated for the preservation of oral literature in the context of diversity.

#### **Integrative-Holistic Model**

This model emphasizes an integrative and holistic approach, where the preservation of oral literature is not the sole responsibility of one party but involves various stakeholders, including the government, the community, academics, and the private sector. This model encompasses four main pillars: education, documentation, revitalization, and innovation.

#### **Multicultural Education Based on Oral Literature**

Oral literature is integrated into a multicultural education curriculum that focuses not only on knowledge transfer but also on character building and an appreciation of diversity. This approach aligns with Freire's (1970) concept of "critical pedagogy," where education serves as a tool for building critical awareness and social transformation.

## **Sustainable Cultural Ecosystem**

A sustainable cultural ecosystem is needed, where oral literature is not only preserved but also creatively developed to maintain its relevance in the contemporary context. This includes the development of creative products based on oral literature, local cultural festivals, and integration with the creative and tourism industries.

Theoretically, the findings of this study make an important contribution to the development of sociological theory of literature, particularly in understanding how oral literature functions as a social tool in multicultural societies. This research strengthens the thesis that literature not only reflects social reality but also actively shapes that reality through the values and messages it contains. Practically, this research provides concrete guidance for stakeholders in formulating policies and programs for the preservation of oral literature. Practical recommendations include:

- a. Development of local content curriculum based on oral literature;
- b. Training for teachers and educational staff on oral literature teaching methods;
- c. Establishment of a center for documentation and research on oral literature;
- d. Development of creative products and tourism based on oral literature; and
- e. Strengthening institutions and networks between stakeholders.

## **4. Research Limitations**

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study focused only on two forms of oral literature (Sikambang and the legend of "Putri Runduk"), so the findings cannot be generalized to all forms of oral literature in Indonesia. Second, the study was conducted over a limited period (five months), preventing long-term changes and developments from being observed. Third, access to several key informants was limited due to various location and time constraints. Based on these limitations, further research agendas that can be recommended include:

- a. Comparative research on oral literature in various regions in Indonesia.
- b. Longitudinal research on changes and developments in oral literature in the context of globalization.
- c. Research on the effectiveness of various strategies for preserving oral literature.
- d. Research on the contribution of oral literature to peace building and conflict resolution.

Thus, this research not only provides an in-depth understanding of the role of oral literature in cementing diversity, but also paves the way for further research that can contribute to the preservation and development of Indonesian oral literature in the future.

## ***D. CONCLUSION***

Based on the research results and discussion outlined above, it can be concluded that oral literature, particularly the legend of "Putri Runduk" and the art of Sikambang, plays a strategic role in cementing the diversity of the multicultural communities in Sibolga and

Central Tapanuli. The legend of "Putri Runduk" serves not only as a cultural heritage but also as a medium for conveying universal values of loyalty, courage, sacrifice, and tolerance that are relevant to the context of a pluralistic society.

*First*, this research successfully identified various effective strategies for preserving oral literature, including: (1) integration with formal and non-formal education systems through local content and extracurricular activities; (2) documentation and digitization of oral literature manuscripts to ensure their sustainability; (3) revitalization through integration with the tourism and creative economy sectors; and (4) innovation in performance forms to remain relevant to the tastes of the younger generation without losing their cultural essence. *Second*, oral literature has proven to act as a social glue, uniting various ethnic and religious groups in Sibolga and Central Tapanuli. Through the mechanism of shared cultural experiences, people from diverse backgrounds can find unity in an appreciation of their shared cultural heritage. The multicultural values embodied in oral literature also serve as a strength in building social harmony and preventing conflict. *Third*, the main challenges faced in preserving oral literature are the impact of globalization, minimal regeneration, and limited institutional support. However, this research shows that with an integrative approach involving all stakeholders, these challenges can be overcome.

Theoretically, this research enriches the body of sociological studies of literature by demonstrating how oral literature not only reflects social reality but also actively shapes it through its cultural values and messages. The findings also strengthen the concept of multiculturalism by demonstrating how diversity can be managed through cultural media. Practically, this research provides a concrete model for developing policies for preserving oral literature that can be adopted by other regions with similar characteristics. The resulting policy recommendations cover aspects of education, documentation, revitalization, and the development of a sustainable cultural ecosystem. Thus, it can be concluded that oral literature is not merely a legacy of the past, but a living tradition that continues to evolve and adapt to changing times. Its preservation serves not only to preserve cultural treasures but also to strengthen the foundations of diversity within Indonesia's diverse society. The legend of "Putri Runduk" and the art of Sikambang have proven that oral literature can bridge the past with the present, tradition with modernity, and diversity with unity.

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