

E'e i Rombo

A story in the Kulisusu language of Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia

This story tells about the digging of the well in Rombo. Even today this important event in the history of the village is commemorated with festivities held every three years.

	Kulisusu [vkl]	Indonesian [ind]	English [eng]
1	A'ai, 6o cula-culangku a'ai, io cula-culano, kando awao io e'e i Rombo ario.	Cerita saya ini adalah ceritanya waktu mereka mendapat air di sana di Rombo.	This story of mine is the story of when they found water down there in Rombo.
2	Io e'e i Rombo ario, nahina ndokekeo.	Sumur itu di Rombo tidak digali.	The well at Rombo hadn't been dug.
3	Io e'e ario, ndo'amala'akono, saluwu-luwuo manusiano Rombo.	Sumur itu diamalkan semua orang di Rombo.	The well down there, all the people of Rombo got together to do it.
4	Ndo'amala a'iso, ndototoro umamala a'iso, ndo'amala a'iso, io saluwu-luwuo manusia.	Sambil beramal, sambil duduk beramal, sambil beramal, itu semua orang.	When they worked, when they got together to work, when they worked, it was all the people.
5	Ndo'amala, kei mopii oleo, ndopeforungiako io sawu.	Sambil beramal, kalau panas mata hari mereka berpayung dengan sarung.	As they were working, if the sun was hot, they shaded themselves with sarongs.
6	Ah, i tontono sawu a'ai, io mia mompanga, ri'ikomo inaa'o pempanganano, mia monsoso, ri'ikomo inaa'o tabakono, kando amala a'iso picu laela.	Di bawahnya sarung itu, orang yang makan sirih, di situlah disimpan tempat sirihnya. Orang yang merokok, disitulah disimpan tembakaunya, lalu beramal selama tujuh hari.	The people who chewed betel, there under the sarongs was where they stored their betel chewing paraphernalia, while the people who smoked, there it was that they kept their tobacco, and they worked until seven nights had passed.

7	Kahuno picu laela ndo'amala a'iso ndowungkahimo.	Sudah hari kedelapan mereka beramal, kemudian air itu dibuka.	On the eighth day that they had been working, they opened it.
8	Ndowungkahio a'iso, [ii,] ndo'awao ndo'ontohomo io e'e, imemalimo io e'e.	Dibuka itu, ditemukan air, mereka melihat air, sudah menjadi air.	Opening it, they found it, they saw water, it became water.
9	Jadi, ri'iso a'iso, ri'isomo kando molihi, io membalino cina inai kalihindo ndolensemo, ndongibimo, io tama ndopomaanimo ndopangarumo.	Jadi di situ, itulah sehingga mereka gembira. Yang perempuan, gembiranya menari tarian <i>lense</i> dan <i>ngibi</i> , yang laki-laki main silat.	Therefore then and there, that's why they were glad. The women were so glad that they danced the scarf dance and the shuffle dance, while the men danced the war dance and the mimed-combat dance.
10	Jadi, ri'isomo kando janji'o, tolu ta'u tolu ta'u bendo peringatiomo, hinaako ndoperingati imosio e'e arua.	Jadi di situlah dijanjikan bahwa setiap tiga tahun mereka akan memperingati. Kalau tidak diperingati, akan kering air itu.	Therefore at that time they promised every three years they would commemorate that event, but should they not commemorate it then that well down there would dry up.
11	Sampe oleo a'ai, tolu ta'u'ako ndoperingatiomo.	Sampai pada hari ini, setiap tiga tahun mereka memperingati.	Until today whenever it is three years they commemorate it.

Notes concerning the text

Because rainwater seeps directly into the porous limestone landscape of the Goram peninsula, there are no streams in the area, therefore wells are an important feature of daily life. The village of Rombo is located approximately five kilometers south of the town of Ereke. The village has a single well around 30 meters deep. The well is located at latitude 4° 49' 26.10" S and longitude 123° 10' 59.48" E.



1. *e'e* literally 'water,' in context it can also mean spring, well, river, pool, lake, etc.

4. In this sentence the storyteller appears to be circling around. It could probably be deleted without harm to the development of the story.

6. *picu laela* 'seven nights.' Kulisusu people count 'nights' rather than 'days.' For an unknown reason, the storyteller uses the term for 'night' borrowed from Arabic *laylat*, rather than the native word *alo*.

10. *peringati*, from Malay *memperingati*. Some suggest using the stem *pehawaki* instead.

11. This triennial celebration is called *poriwanga e'e*. The verb *moriwanga* means to play music in a gong and drum ensemble, which is the traditional accompaniment to native dances. In addition to Rombo, the neighboring village of Kampo Entaa also holds a *poriwanga e'e* celebration every three years.

Information about the text

This story was told by La Tunde on 15 March 1996.

It was recorded by David Mead on magnetic cassette tape, and converted to digital format in September 2002.

Transcription and Indonesian translation by La Jaru and La Nduke, Kampo Entaa village, March 1996.

English translation by David Mead, March 1996.

Information about the author

La Tunde was born and lived his entire life in Rombo village, northeastern Buton Island, southeastern Sulawesi. At the time he told this story, La Tunde was around 65 years old. La Tunde is a native speaker of Kulisusu as were both his parents. He also speaks Indonesian.



< La Tunde, March 1996

Interlinearized text

1. *A'ai, bo culacula-ngku a'ai, io culacula-no,*
 this FUT story-1SG.GEN this ART story-3SG.GEN
ka=ndo awa-o io e'e i=Rombo ario.
 and=3PL.NOM encounter-3SG.ACC ART water at=Rombo that.down
2. *Io e'e i=Rombo ario, nahina ndo=keke-o.*
 ART water at=Rombo that.down NEG 3PL.NOM=dig-3SG.ACC
3. *Io e'e ario, ndo='amala-'ako-no,*
 ART water that.down 3PL.NOM=do_good-APPL-3SG.ACC
sa=luwu~luwu-o manusia-no Rombo.
 one=INTS~all-3SG.ACC people-3SG.GEN Rombo
4. *Ndo='amala a'iso, ndo=totoro um-amala a'iso,*
 3PL.NOM=do_good that 3PL.NOM=sit PTCP-do_good that
ndo='amala a'iso, io sa=luwu~luwu-o manusia.
 3PL.NOM=do_good that art one=INTS~all-3SG.ACC people
5. *Ndo='amala, ke=i mopii oleo,*
 3PL.NOM=do_good if=3SG.NOM sick sun
ndo=pe-borungi-ako sawu.
 3PL.NOM=MIDDLE-shade-APPL;INS sarong
6. *Ah, i=tonto-no sawu a'ai, io mia mom-panga,*
 ah at=under-3SG.GEN sarong this ART person PTCP;ANTIP-chew

- ri'iko-mo* *i=naa-'o* *pempangana-no,*
there-COMPL 3SG.NOM=store-3SG.ACC betel_paraphernalia-3SG.GEN
- mia* *mon=soso,* *ri'iko-mo* *i=naa-'o* *tabako-no,*
person PTCP;ANTIP-suck there-COMPL 3SG.NOM=store-3SG.ACC tobacco-3SG.GEN
- ka=ndo* *amala* *a'iso* *picu* *laela.*
and=3PL.NOM do_good this seven night
7. *Kahu-no* *picu* *laela* *ndo='amala* *a'iso*
sufficient-3SG.GEN seven night 3PL.NOM=do_good this
- ndo=wungkahi-o-mo.*
3PL.NOM=open-3SG.ACC-COMPL
8. *Ndo=wungkahi-o* *a'iso,* *[ii,]* *ndo='awa-o*
3PL.NOM=open-3SG.ACC this 3PL.NOM=encounter-3SG.ACC
- ndo='onto-ho-mo* *io* *e'e,* *membali-mo* *io* *e'e.*
3PL.NOM=see-3SG.ACC-COMPL ART water become-COMPL ART water
9. *Jadi,* *ri'iso* *a'iso,* *ri'iso-mo* *ka=ndo* *mo-lihi,*
therefore there that there-COMPL and=3PL.NOM STAT-glad
- io* *membali-no* *cina* *inai* *kalihi-ndo*
ART become-3SG.GEN female who NMLZ-glad-3PL.GEN
- ndo=lense-mo,* *ndo=ngibi-mo,*
3PL.NOM=scarf_dance-COMPL 3PL.NOM=shuffle_dance-COMPL

- io tama ndo=pomaani-mo ndo=pangaru-mo.*
 ART male 3PL.NOM=war_dance-COMPL 3PL.NOM=mimed_combat_dance-COMPL
10. *Jadi, ri'iso-mo ka=ndo janji-'o,*
 therefore there-COMPL and=3PL.NOM promise-3SG.ACC
- tolu ta'u tolu ta'u be=ndo peringati-o-mo,*
 three year three year FUT=3PL.NOM remember-3SG.ACC-COMPL
- hina=ako ndo=peringati*
 NEG=MODAL 3PL.NOM=remember
- i=mosio e'e arua.*
 3SG.NOM=dry_up water that.down.distant
- Sampe oleo a'ai, tolu ta'u='ako ndo=peringati-o-mo.*
 until day this three year=MODAL 3PL.NOM=remember-3SG.ACC-COMPL

Additional commentary

After listening to the story told by La Tunde, Hasmudih (Guru Hamudi) provided additional commentary about the opening of the well in Rombo. Here are his comments. An English translation follows.

Sejarah sumur Rombo

Mula-mula para orang tua dulu, mereka beramal selama tujuh hari tujuh malam. Pada waktu itu setelah tujuh hari tujuh malam, mereka buka. Setelah mereka buka, sudah dilihatnya air. Bukan main gembiranya mereka. Setelah kelihatannya airnya, mereka berjanji kalau selama tiga tahun tidak diperingati akan kering kembali. Jadi cara peringatannya yaitu pada waktu dilihatnya air pada waktu itu mereka yang beramal tadi ada yang *ngibi*, ada yang *lense*, dan ada yang silat dan ada yang *pangaru*, dan ada yang diselingi dengan gendang pada waktu itu.

Perempuan makan sirih, yaitu sedia sirih dan bagi laki-laki merokok *leta* (rokok dengan daun enau sebagai pembungkusnya), sedia rokok *leta*, dan tempatnya mereka satukan yaitu bikin meja-meja. Di atas meja-meja itu, mereka simpan sirih dengan rokoknya, dan mereka kasih berdiri satu lembar kain, untuk tempat berlindung, yaitu di sebelah timur. Jadi di atas meja-meja tadi, karena meja-meja itu dibuat dari kayu potongan maka dibuat tutupnya taplak dan di atas taplak itu ada semacam asbak (dulu disebut *toba*) maka di dalam itu disimpan rokok dengan sirihnya. Sebagai pengganti asbak sekarang ini.

Jadi pada waktu itu, setelah diperingati, mereka bawa bekal bagi orang yang dari Bone Lipu Atas. Itu mereka simpan bekalnya di atas meja-meja sebelah selatan. Mereka bikinkan. Dan yang jaga satu orang. Dan kalau dari Bone, mereka bikin sebelah barat sumur, dan kalau yang dari Lipu di sebelah utara mereka bikin meja-meja. Juga baru disimpan bekalnya, lalu mereka nonton acara kegembiraan.

In English:

History of the well at Rombo

Originally the elders long ago worked together for seven days and seven nights. At that time after seven days and seven nights, they opened it. After they opened it, they saw water. How happy they were! After they saw the water, they promised that if during three years they did not commemorate it, the well would go dry again. Therefore the way of commemorating it is (the same as) when they saw water at that time when they worked together: there are those who dance the shuffle dance, there are those who dance the scarf dance, there are those who dance the war dance, and there are those who dance the mimed-combat dance, and there are those who accompany on drums at that time.

The women chewed betel-nut, that is they provided betel, while the men smoked hand-rolled cigarettes using dried sugar palm leaf as wrapper. The place where they gathered everything were tables. On top of the tables they placed their betel-nut and cigarettes, and for shade they erected a sheet of cloth, that is on the east side (of the well). Therefore on top of the tables, because those tables were made of wood, they made a covering for the table, and on top of the tablecloth a kind of container (formerly called *toba*), so inside of it they stored their cigarettes and betel-nut. Today it is replaced by an ashtray.

Therefore at that time, following the commemoration, those from Bone Lipu Atas bring provisions for themselves. Those provisions they store on tables on the south side. They make it, and one person watches over

it. And those from Bone they make theirs on the west side of the well, and those from Lipu they make tables on the north side. Having stored their provisions, they then watch the festivities.

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