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Indonesian Literature and Sasak Culture of Lombok: An Intertextual Study and Its Impact on National Culture

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This study explores the intertextual relationship between Indonesian literature and the Sasak culture of Lombok, analyzing its influence on the broader cultural landscape of Indonesia. Utilizing qualitative methods, including literature review and library research, this paper examines how the rich traditions and narratives of the Sasak people have been reflected, adapted, and integrated into Indonesian literature. The study emphasizes the cultural exchange between regional and national identities, highlighting the role of Sasak cultural elements in shaping Indonesian literary works. By exploring key literary texts and their connections to Sasak traditions, the research reveals the dynamic interplay between local culture and national identity, offering insights into how regional cultural expressions contribute to the diversity of Indonesian literature. The findings suggest that Sasak culture, with its unique customs, beliefs, and artistic expressions, not only enriches Indonesian literature but also strengthens the cultural fabric of the nation. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the importance of regional cultures in shaping national identity and highlights the significance of intertextuality in understanding the complex relationship between literature and culture.

1. Introduction

The Sasak people, indigenous to the island of Lombok in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, possess a rich cultural heritage deeply rooted in traditions, oral histories, and artistic expressions. Their culture, characterized by unique customs, rituals, and literary forms, has played a significant role in shaping the local identity of Lombok. However, despite the cultural richness of the Sasak, its influence on the broader scope of Indonesian literature and national identity remains underexplored. This research seeks to address this gap by examining the intertextual relationship between Indonesian literature and Sasak culture, and how these interactions contribute to the national cultural landscape.

Indonesian literature is a diverse and dynamic field that reflects the plurality of cultures within the archipelago (Yusup & Munawaroh, 2023). Yet, the representation and influence of regional cultures, particularly that of the Sasak, in shaping this literary landscape have not been adequately studied. The Sasak culture, with its distinctive oral traditions such as *pantun*, *seloka*, and *syair*, offers a wealth of material that has the potential to enrich Indonesian literature. However, existing studies have largely focused on more dominant ethnic groups, leaving a research gap in understanding how lesser-known cultures like the Sasak influence the broader national literature.

While there have been studies on the cultural contributions of various ethnic groups in Indonesia, research specifically exploring the intertextuality between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature is sparse. Most literature studies emphasize Javanese or Balinese influences, overlooking the contributions of smaller ethnic groups such as the Sasak. This research aims to fill this gap by offering a detailed analysis of how Sasak cultural elements have been incorporated into Indonesian literature, thus contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the nation's literary and cultural diversity.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to recognize and document the contributions of the Sasak culture to Indonesian literature. As globalization and modernization continue to influence cultural expressions, there is a risk that the unique cultural identities of smaller ethnic groups may become marginalized or lost. By examining the intertextual relationship between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature, this study seeks to preserve and highlight the cultural contributions of the Sasak people, ensuring that their influence is acknowledged within the broader national context.

Previous research on Indonesian literature has predominantly focused on the contributions of Java, Bali, and Sumatra, leaving the cultural narratives of smaller groups like the Sasak relatively unexplored. Studies that have addressed regional influences often do so in a

comparative context, yet few have delved deeply into how these influences manifest within the national literature. This study builds upon existing literature by shifting the focus to the Sasak people and exploring their specific contributions to Indonesian literary works.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the intertextuality between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature, a relationship that has not been thoroughly investigated in prior studies. By exploring this connection, the research provides new insights into how regional cultures influence and shape the national literary canon. This study also introduces a fresh perspective on the cultural exchange between local and national identities, particularly through the lens of intertextuality, which has not been widely applied in this context.

The primary objective of this research is to analyze how Sasak cultural elements are reflected in Indonesian literature and to understand the implications of this intertextuality on national identity. The study aims to:

1. Identify and analyze key Sasak cultural elements present in Indonesian literary works.
2. Explore the ways in which these elements contribute to the diversity of Indonesian literature.
3. Examine the role of intertextuality in the cultural exchange between regional and national identities.

The benefits of this research are twofold: academically, it contributes to the field of Indonesian literary studies by filling a significant research gap and offering new perspectives on the cultural dynamics within the literature. Practically, it serves to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the Sasak people by highlighting their contributions to the nation's literary and cultural identity.

This research is essential for a more inclusive understanding of Indonesian literature, one that acknowledges and celebrates the rich cultural tapestry woven by diverse ethnic groups across the archipelago. By focusing on the Sasak culture, this study not only enhances our comprehension of Indonesian literature but also contributes to the preservation of a unique cultural identity within the broader context of national heritage.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing library research and literature review methods to explore the intertextual relationship between Indonesian literature and the Sasak culture of Lombok, and to examine its influence on the broader cultural landscape of Indonesia. The methodology is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of how Sasak cultural elements are reflected and integrated into Indonesian literary works, thereby contributing to the national identity.

This research is qualitative in nature, focusing on the interpretation and analysis of textual data. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for exploring complex cultural phenomena and intertextual relationships, as it allows for a detailed examination of how cultural elements are represented, adapted, and transformed within literary texts. This study specifically employs an intertextual analysis to investigate the connections between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature.

The data for this study is derived from secondary sources, primarily consisting of literary texts, academic articles, books, and other relevant publications. The primary texts analyzed in this study include Indonesian literary works that incorporate or reference Sasak cultural elements. Additional sources include scholarly articles and books on Sasak culture, intertextuality, and Indonesian literature, which provide the necessary context and theoretical framework for the analysis.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study is conducted through a comprehensive review of relevant literature. This includes identifying and gathering literary texts that feature Sasak cultural elements, as well as academic works that discuss the cultural and literary significance of the Sasak people. The selection of texts is guided by their relevance to the research objectives and their contribution to understanding the intertextual relationship between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature. Key themes, motifs, and cultural references are identified and documented during the data collection process.

Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis in this study follows a qualitative and interpretative approach, with a focus on intertextual analysis. The analysis involves several steps:

Textual Analysis: The selected literary texts are carefully examined to identify and interpret

Sasak cultural elements, such as traditional motifs, narratives, symbols, and linguistic expressions. This step involves a close reading of the texts to uncover how these elements are integrated into the broader context of Indonesian literature.

Intertextual Analysis: The study applies intertextual theory to explore the relationships between the identified Sasak cultural elements and other texts within the Indonesian literary canon. This analysis seeks to understand how Sasak traditions and narratives influence and interact with broader literary themes, and how they contribute to the construction of national identity through literature.

Comparative Analysis: Where relevant, the study compares the representation of Sasak culture in different literary texts to identify patterns of influence, adaptation, and transformation. This comparative analysis helps to elucidate the ways in which Sasak culture is both preserved and reinterpreted within Indonesian literature.

Thematic Analysis: Finally, the study conducts a thematic analysis to categorize and synthesize the findings, highlighting key themes and insights that emerge from the intertextual and comparative analyses. This step involves identifying the broader implications of the research for understanding the role of regional cultures in shaping national literature and identity.

Through these methods, the research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the intertextual connections between Sasak culture and Indonesian literature, offering new insights into the cultural dynamics that shape Indonesia's national literary landscape. The findings are intended to contribute to the academic discourse on the importance of regional cultures in the construction of national identity and the preservation of cultural diversity within literature.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents the key findings from the intertextual analysis of Indonesian literature and Sasak culture, highlighting the ways in which Sasak cultural elements are reflected and integrated into the broader context of Indonesian literary works. The analysis is structured into several thematic points, each addressing different aspects of the research.

Representation of Sasak Cultural Elements in Indonesian Literature

1. **Traditional Narratives and Folklore:** Several Indonesian literary works incorporate Sasak folklore and traditional narratives, reflecting the rich oral traditions of the Sasak people.

These stories, often centered around themes of heroism, moral lessons, and local wisdom, are adapted into the broader context of Indonesian literature, contributing to the preservation and dissemination of Sasak culture.

2. **Linguistic Expressions:** The use of Sasak language and dialects in Indonesian literary texts serves as a powerful tool for cultural representation. Certain literary works integrate Sasak idioms, proverbs, and unique linguistic patterns, which not only enrich the narrative but also highlight the linguistic diversity within Indonesian literature.
3. **Religious and Ritual Practices:** The influence of Sasak religious beliefs and ritual practices is evident in specific literary texts. The depiction of traditional Sasak ceremonies, such as Perang Topat (a rice cake war ceremony), and their symbolic meanings are interwoven into the narrative, illustrating the deep connection between literature and cultural practices.

Intertextual Connections Between Sasak Culture and Indonesian Literature

- 1) **Adaptation of Cultural Motifs:** Sasak cultural motifs, such as wayang Sasak (a traditional shadow puppet performance) and gendang beleq (a traditional Sasak drum ensemble), are adapted in Indonesian literature, creating a fusion of local and national cultural expressions. These motifs often serve as symbols of resistance, identity, and heritage within the literary works.
- 2) **Integration of Sasak Philosophies:** Sasak philosophies, such as Patut Patuh Patju (the traditional Sasak philosophy of life), are intertextually woven into the moral fabric of Indonesian literary characters. These philosophies influence the development of character arcs and the resolution of conflicts, showcasing the depth of Sasak thought within the narrative structure.
- 3) **Cultural Syncretism:** The intertextual analysis reveals instances of cultural syncretism, where Sasak and other regional cultures blend within Indonesian literary works. This blending reflects the fluidity of cultural identities in Indonesia and underscores the role of literature in fostering a sense of national unity through diversity.

Influence of Sasak Culture on National Identity

Cultural Preservation and Continuity: The incorporation of Sasak cultural elements into Indonesian literature plays a crucial role in the preservation of Sasak heritage. By embedding these elements in a national literary context, the cultural identity of the Sasak people is preserved and passed on to future generations, ensuring its continuity.

Contribution to National Cultural Diversity: Sasak culture's inclusion in Indonesian literature contributes to the overall cultural diversity of the nation. The distinctiveness of Sasak traditions, when represented in national literature, enriches the cultural tapestry of Indonesia and promotes an appreciation for regional differences within the broader national identity.

Shaping National Literary Canon: The integration of Sasak cultural elements into Indonesian literary works challenges the dominance of Javanese and Balinese influences, offering a more inclusive representation of the nation's literary heritage. This shift helps to reshape the national literary canon to better reflect the multiplicity of cultural influences that define Indonesia.

Comparative Analysis of Sasak Influence Across Different Texts

Consistency of Cultural Representation: Across various literary texts, there is a consistent portrayal of Sasak cultural elements, suggesting a deliberate effort by authors to highlight the uniqueness of Sasak culture. This consistency reinforces the cultural significance of the Sasak people within the national context.

Variations in Cultural Interpretation: While there is consistency in representation, there are also variations in how Sasak culture is interpreted and adapted. Some texts emphasize the exoticism of Sasak traditions, while others focus on the philosophical and moral aspects, reflecting different authorial perspectives on the role of regional cultures in national literature.

Impact on Reader Perception: The varying representations of Sasak culture in literature influence how readers perceive the Sasak people and their contributions to Indonesian culture. Positive portrayals enhance cultural appreciation and foster a sense of pride in regional identities, while more critical representations may prompt discussions on cultural preservation and the challenges faced by minority groups.

The Role of Intertextuality in Cultural Exchange

Facilitating Cultural Dialogue: Intertextuality serves as a bridge between Sasak culture and the broader Indonesian literary tradition. By drawing connections between texts, intertextuality facilitates a cultural dialogue that allows for the exchange of ideas, values, and narratives across different cultural groups.

Creating New Cultural Meanings: Through intertextual connections, Sasak cultural elements acquire new meanings and significance within the context of Indonesian literature. This process of reinterpretation and recontextualization enriches both the source culture and the national literature, contributing to the evolution of cultural identity.

Enhancing Literary Creativity: The intertextual incorporation of Sasak culture stimulates literary creativity by providing authors with a diverse set of cultural references and motifs to explore. This creativity, in turn, leads to the production of innovative literary works that reflect the dynamic interplay between regional and national identities.

These findings underscore the significant role that Sasak culture plays in shaping Indonesian literature and national identity. By examining the intertextual connections between Sasak traditions and literary works, this study highlights the importance of regional cultures in contributing to the richness and diversity of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

The analysis of Indonesian literature through the lens of Sasak culture from Lombok reveals a profound intertextual relationship that enriches both the literary works and the understanding of national culture. The incorporation of Sasak cultural elements, such as traditional narratives, linguistic expressions, and religious practices, into Indonesian literature, not only preserves the uniqueness of the Sasak heritage but also integrates it into the broader context of Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape.

Representation of Sasak Cultural Elements

Sasak folklore, rich in moral teachings and local wisdom, has been adapted into several Indonesian literary works, reflecting the deep-rooted oral traditions of the Sasak people. These narratives, which include tales of heroism, spirituality, and social values, contribute to the national literature by introducing readers to the cultural specificities of the Sasak community. The use of Sasak language and dialects within these texts further emphasizes the linguistic diversity of Indonesia, allowing the literature to serve as a medium for the preservation of regional languages that are often overshadowed by the national language, Bahasa Indonesia.

Intertextuality and Cultural Integration

The adaptation of Sasak cultural motifs, such as the Wayang Sasak and Gendang Beleq, into Indonesian literature demonstrates the dynamic interplay between regional and national cultures. These cultural symbols, often used to represent identity, resistance, and tradition, are not merely aesthetic additions but carry significant cultural weight within the narratives. The intertextual connections formed between Sasak culture and the broader Indonesian literary tradition highlight how literature serves as a conduit for cultural exchange, allowing regional identities to contribute to the formation of a national cultural identity.

Influence on National Identity

The intertextual integration of Sasak cultural elements into Indonesian literature has a dual impact: it preserves the cultural heritage of the Sasak people and enriches the national cultural landscape. By embedding Sasak traditions in literary texts, these works help to shape the national identity, emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity within the nation. This incorporation challenges the dominance of more widely recognized regional cultures, such as Javanese and Balinese, and underscores the value of lesser-known cultures in contributing to the richness of Indonesia's cultural fabric.

Cultural Syncretism and Literary Innovation

The blending of Sasak cultural elements with other regional cultures in Indonesian literature reflects a process of cultural syncretism, where distinct cultural practices and beliefs merge to form new cultural expressions. This synthesis is not only a testament to Indonesia's cultural plurality but also a source of literary innovation. Authors draw on the diverse cultural heritage of the nation to create works that are both representative of regional identities and reflective of a unified national culture. The intertextuality observed in these texts fosters a sense of national unity while respecting and celebrating the unique contributions of each cultural group.

Impact on Reader Perception

The portrayal of Sasak culture in Indonesian literature has a significant impact on how readers perceive and appreciate this regional culture. Positive depictions of Sasak traditions and philosophies can foster a greater appreciation for the diversity of Indonesian culture, while critical or exoticized portrayals may lead to a deeper discussion on cultural representation and preservation. Through literature, readers are invited to explore the cultural richness of Lombok and its influence on the national narrative, enhancing their understanding of

Indonesia as a nation built on the coexistence of diverse cultural identities.

The intertextual relationship between Indonesian literature and Sasak culture from Lombok is a vital element in the ongoing process of defining and understanding Indonesia's national identity. By integrating Sasak cultural elements into the national literary canon, these works not only preserve the cultural heritage of the Sasak people but also contribute to the broader discourse on cultural diversity and national unity. The findings of this analysis underscore the importance of recognizing and valuing the contributions of all regional cultures in the construction of a truly representative and inclusive national culture.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the intertextual exploration of Indonesian literature and Sasak culture from Lombok reveals a dynamic and reciprocal relationship that not only preserves and showcases the unique cultural heritage of the Sasak people but also significantly enriches the national cultural narrative. By weaving Sasak traditions, language, and symbolic motifs into the fabric of Indonesian literature, these works contribute to the broader discourse on cultural diversity, national identity, and cultural integration. This study underscores the importance of acknowledging and integrating the diverse cultural expressions of Indonesia's many ethnic groups, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and representative national culture.

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