

Journal of Research and Multidisciplinary

ISSN : 2622-9536 Print

ISSN : 2622-9544 Online

<http://journal.alhikam.net/index.php/jrm>

Volume 1, Issue 1, September 2018, Pages 10-17



Spirituality *bissu* Bugis Community District Pangkep South Sulawesi

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Abstract

Bissu is a trail of pre-Islamic Bugis tribal culture that still survives until now, which serves as the guardian of heritage objects *arajang*. *Bissu* are not transvestites or *calabai*, but people who are immune to sharp weapons, who are also able to communicate with the Gods by using *to Rilangi*.

The method used in this study is a qualitative method that starts with observation, location determination, sample determination, interviews, data processing and writing of research results.

The results of research on rituals *bissu* in Segeri, Pangkep Regency, illustrate that the local government continues to support the existence of *bissu* as the leader of the ritual *mappalili* that is conducted every year before going down the fields which ends with the dance ritual *maggiri* as the culmination of its existence as a preserver of regional culture as well as culture archipelago.

Keywords: *Tradition, Ritual, Culture*

A. Introduction

Religion is an important element that determines the identity of a society. Therefore, the acceptance of Islam as a Bugis religion is a very important event. The Bugis-Makassar people are among the Indonesians who are the most powerful and steadfast in their teachings of Islam, and almost all Bugis are adherents of Islam, except the small community *Tolotang* that adheres to indigenous beliefs, and also are hundreds of people who embrace Bugis Christianity in Soppeng.

Even though the Bugis are the majority of Islam, the Bugis Islamic reality is actually far more complex than the picture. On the one hand, Islam has become a part and is present in various aspects of Bugis life. This can be seen through their worship practices, the presence of madrasa educational institutions, pesantren, the presence of mosques, Islamic universities, and Islamic political parties, as well as various other forms of institutions. However, on the other hand, people who have had direct contact with the

Bugis community in South Sulawesi, both in the village and in the city, among ordinary people or nobility, of course have also witnessed various elements of pre-Islamic beliefs that remain. For example, community rituals, their belief in pre-Islamic myths, offerings to heirlooms and sacred places, and the presence of a number of priests *bissu* who are still active in war. This happened because the acceptance of Islam in the elite of South Sulawesi since the beginning of the Islamization process seemed to coincide with two opposing tendencies, namely the strong desire of the high aristocrats to maintain the singritism, and the tendency of merchants and sailors to implement the true Islamic teachings (Pelras, 2006: 210). This is what causes esoteric sinkretisme still found in the Bugis community, such as the tradition ceremony *mappalili* involving *bissu* in its implementation.

The designation *bissu* in this paper is aimed at Bugis groups who act as leaders in indigenous Bugis processions and spiritual traditions. They are known as preachers of ancient Bugis religion pre-Islamic with the nickname *bissu*. Their existence as a common thread for the continuation of the ancient Bugis oral tradition is one of the richness of the archipelago's cultural diversity. Manuscripts *La Galigo* reveal a lot about the existence of *bissu* in Bugis culture which is said to be a companion and complement the arrival of the main characters from the sky or from the earth. Its existence has existed since the classical Bugis era which can be traced in the longest epics of *La Galigo* (Kern, 1993: 7).

His role in society transcended the long history of the kingdom before the entry of Islam, until Islam developed in South Sulawesi. *Bissu* is not only needed by the royal elite and the rites of the time, but also its supporters outside the kingdom. The influence of *bissu* is very meaningful, as the leader of the *life cycle of the life cycle*, such as the ceremony of riding a new home, baby birth, death, and marriage. Even a king cannot be sworn in without the *bissu*. Not only that, *bissu* also served as basically *bissu* having the basic task of being a spiritual advisor and guardian of *arajang* which is a sacred object that is sacred. But more development further, the *bissu* not only served in the palace, but also carried out the celebration needs of the Bugis-Makassar community leaders who needed it. This situation is more intense when the palace is no longer the center of government and the cultural center of the Bugis people.

But in line with the development and increasingly strong influence of Islam, the role of *bissu* began to decline and experience a shift. However, in certain societies such as in the Bone region, Wajo and especially in the Sigeri Pangkep area, the tradition *bissu* is still preserved, even can be every year

a ceremony witnessed involving *bissu* and followers called *mappalili*, and ends with a *ma 'ggiri* (piercing the keris into the *bissu* body). This performance was still carried out with great enthusiasm and wisdom, and was followed by its supporters, and became a spectacle for other people.

B. Background The Problem

Bissu Bugis society is someone who has a male and female gender role, but he is not a transsexual as is assumed by the community. The *presence bissu* is a trace of pre-Islamic Bugis culture that remains until now. It has its own uniqueness that can only be seen in the area Bone, Wajo and Segeri. *Tari bissu* can be seen directly each year, namely in

November as a cultural atraksi done before descending the fields known as *Mappalili* and ends with *Maggiri*.

To be a *bissu* must go through a long process, his role also illustrates the uniqueness that other transvestites cannot do. The rolegroup *played bissu* by their Bugis culture is closely related to the status of their gender limitations. In Segeri Subdistrict, for example, *bissu* is known not only in its area but its performance in contact with the theater world has traveled beyond the country, namely the Netherlands, America, Italy, France, Singapore and other countries under the leadership of *Bissu Saidi*. However, after the passing of *Bissu Saidi*, the slow *growth issue* in Segeri and several years did not have a leader who could match the leadership of *bissu Saidi*. While in his own village, *bissu* is known as the arajang guard who lives in the royal house, and is sometimes positioned as a *sanro* (penobat) if there is no staging from the local government.

C. Problem Formulation The

Community *bissu* in Segeri, Pangkep Regency, still exists with all the activities that characterize it. Their existence has even become one of its own colors in Segeri, Pangkep Regency, which later always fills one of the diverse cultures of Pangkep with the performance *Mappalili* and ends with Dance *Maggiri*. Therefore, the problem raised is how resistance *bissu* in its rituals in dealing with the dynamics that occur in Muslim communities.

D. Methodology

Methodology used to obtain data relating to the results of writing is a method of collecting data qualitatively, by taking the following steps:

1. Location of the study

Location of the study in this study was Sigeri Subdistrict, Pangkep Regency, (Abdullah, 2002) and South Sulawesi. Which has an area of 111.20 km², there are two villages and 4 villages. Sigeri Subdistrict, Pangkep District is used as a research location because in this area the traditional ceremonies involving *bissu* described earlier are still being carried out until now. Even certain traditions are usually held every year, which is closely related to the activities of daily living (rite of life cycle) as the ceremony begins to descend into the fields, called (*palili*). Determination of this location cannot be separated from the population and research samples. The population in this study is the entire community of Pangkep Regency, especially the people of Segeri District. The research sample is community leaders, government, community (traditional / traditional actors) and traditional leaders and *bissu*.

2. Data Collection Techniques

This study was conducted using qualitative data collection methods that are flexible and open with its inductive analysis, so that the data collection process is a more dynamic activity. The technique of collecting the data in question are as follows:

a. Observation

Researchers in this case directly make observations with observations of the object and recorded in a systematic phenomenon to be studied, especially regarding the ceremony

tradition *bissu* still run by people related to the tradition of *the life* cycle beginning with birth, marriage, and death. Also other traditions that are still maintained by the supporting community such as rites down the rice field (*palili*). Traditions that are maintained are even preserved as cultural values of Bugis people that do not conflict with the values of the teachings of Islam.

The focus of observation in this study was the ceremony tradition *bissu* which domiciled in Segeri District, Pangkep Regency. A search will be carried out in the field to find out the dynamics of their lives in relation to religious practices and traditional ceremonies that are related to research. Observations are carried out in unlimited time intervals because it is very difficult to determine when their traditional ceremonies will take place. From the observations made, it is expected to find information about the behavior of the community in the implementation of the tradition carried out by *bissu* in Pangkep District which involves *bissu*, and is expected to find reasons so that the tradition *bissu* and followers continue to be carried out in the dynamics of society. Through observation, researchers learn the behavior and meaning associated with that behavior. This is based on the assumption that behavior is an expression of something deeper values and beliefs. One observation technique used is observation involved or direct observation, namely the involvement of researchers in the social world of traditional actors, allowing researchers to hear, see firsthand what they do. Observations are made by first setting the focus of observation in the place where the activity takes place. Observations also allow researchers to engage in discussions with participants or ask questions related to the event. Researchers will make observations on many things that involve traditional actors.

b. Interviews

Interviews are conducted on government, community leaders, traditional leaders, and the community (traditional supporters) and also *bissu* with several criteria according to research needs. Data collection strategies in this study using interactive methods, namely in-depth interviews. Data obtained from interviews are expected to be able to map the community's understanding of the teachings of the religion adopted and the traditional ceremonies they perform.

Researchers also prepared interview guidelines that were made before going to the field. Interview guidelines are made as flexible as possible and always experience development according to the dynamics of the interview material. Because it emphasizes the interaction and perspective of the subject under study, the most important techniques are in- *interviews* depth and participation (*participant observation*). Both of these methods are recognized as the main data collection techniques in collecting qualitative data.

c. Literature

In addition to previous data collection methods, information collection is also carried out through the literature related to the subject matter of the study. Data obtained through the literature is expected to complete the data obtained previously. The results of research related to this research were also used as a reference.

E. The results of Research

Bissu are concepts derived from *Lagaligo*, an oldest book that tells of Bugis culture, including history *bissu* in pre-Islamic kingdoms. One of the places *bissu* is in Segeri Subdistrict, a sub-district located in Pangkep Regency which is approximately 86 km from the city of Makassar, South Sulawesi. *bissu* This is only found in Bugis tribes who are uniquely related to gender issues, where Bugis culture recognizes five genders, *Calalai*, (female masculine dressed in men), *Calabai* male who has a female theme) explains the figure *bissu* which is not a type male and female sex, *calabai* or *calalai*, but humans who have sexual functions and roles that are different from the four types of gender above, he has a characteristic that is *transvestism* which is physically male but in daily life in carrying out its functions in institutions Bugis, they behave like women. Then called the fifth human gender. *Bissu* have introduced a ritual tradition which is performed by a figure *bissu* not found in other regions. The uniqueness of the ritual is its main attraction, and is considered to be the richness of the archipelago culture. status is *bissu* Honorable Different from the outside world view that considers *calabai* to be identical with homosexuals.

The existence of *bissu* in Segeri is closely related to the situation *bissu* in Bone Regency which is also found in South Sulawesi. *Bissu* can be found in three regions that still maintain their rituals, namely Bone Wajo and Segeri. Based on information and also sources from the existing literature that *bissu* in Segeri District, Pangkep Regency, originally came from the Bone region, where at that time the kingdom of Bone lost its inheritance be saved and if it is not found then the catastrophe will befall the kingdom. A group of ordered *bissu* where to look for the heirloom and finally found in Segeri. It turns out that the heirloom in question is a tool for plowing fields, namely *rakkala* (bugis language). After the discovery of the *scale*, *bissu* found it did not return to the Bone area because the Segeri people did not want to hand over the inheritance, so the *bissu* chose to live in Segeri and maintain the inheritance and finally they stayed. Arajang.

Bissu play a very important role for the kingdom, they at the same time become king's advisers and even at the time of the inauguration of the *bissu* king must also attend and take part in the event. All his needs are fulfilled by the kingdom and also live in the kingdom. They are not only as royal advisers but also as a guide to the king in choosing the right days in choosing the time to carry out an activity such as the right day to start going down the fields, wedding day and other days. In addition *bissu* also becomes a (sanro) healer. They are also known as immune people who are not touched by sharp objects.

The Community *bissu* in Segeri sub-district still upholds the tradition and role of maintaining and preserving classic Bugis cultural values. And is described as a demigod who has supernatural powers. In the ritual, that is at the *Maggiri*, a ritual of stabbing yourself after being possessed. They use relationships with the spirit world that enters them. *Bissu* are also considered to be pre-Islamic preachers of Bugis religion. They have their own language and are only understood by the community *bissu*. Its existence is considered as a common thread of the continuity of ancient Bugis customs and traditions that still exist today, although its existence is far different from existence *bissau's* the past.

In addition to royal events, the role of *bissu* is also very dominant in the event of *mappalili* or descending rice fields which are held annually. The ceremony is carried out

for 40 days 40 nights, then 7 seven days 7 nights and now the ceremony is conducted 1 day 1 night, reading spells which starts with *matteddu arajang* which is a kind of ritual performed by reading the incantation by asking the blessings of the Gods in the sky. According to the *bissu* this activity was carried out because only with the blessing of the Gods the farmers and the community could get good crops. Therefore, the *Matteddu Arajang program* is considered sacred by traditional communities, especially the community *bissu*. The group *bissu* was the decisive moment to start going down the field compared to agricultural experts. It seemed as if the public believed that it was not good to go down to the fields before these *bissu* held their ritual, *mappasili*. They are also known as people who are immune and are not tamed by piercing sharp objects, including piercing their kris.

Bissu understand its existence which is considered to have supernatural powers is a miracle revealed by the gods to him. Therefore they must be holy and not allowed to marry, must maintain their holiness. They are transvestites but not transvestites that can be found elsewhere or *calabai*. In the book of *Lagaligo bissu* is considered a holy man or descendant of the Gods. In the royal structure in South Sulawesi *bissu* was the spiritual and spiritual advisor to the kings. The ceremony that still exists today is the *Mapecta Sure and Massongkolo Bala*, which is a ceremony to ask for salvation for all citizens and royal leaders. program *Massongkolo Bala's* has been around since the existence of humans, and the leader of this event is the group *bissu*. In its history, *bissu*, which determines the time of the ceremony inspired by the revelation from God, is called in the term *eppa sulapa ipasabbi pole yawa pole yase*. Here *bissu* becomes the intermediary between man and God. *Bissu* in Segeri include the *bissu* community who are respected by *bissu* other in the Bugis area, and at the present time the leadership *bissu* led by *Bissu Nani* which is inaugurated by the local government in this case is the sub-district head of Segeri Andi Sadda attended by the local government, namely the council adat, tourism services, religious leaders and the surrounding community.

During the leadership *Bissu Saidi* That died in 2011, the existence of *bissu* was famous for leaving the country after its performances in the world of contemporary theater and performing in various countries such as the Netherlands, Italy, America, Singapore, France and guided by Rober Wilson. The *bissu* often get invitations to show events *Maggiri*, namely the *bissu* stab themselves with kris and are not touched in the slightest by the sharp objects. However, after the death of *Bissu Saidi*, which was held as *Puang Matowa*, the land of *bissu* slowly began to recede. This is because in the last few years no figure has been considered capable of replacing *Bissu Saidi* as a *Matowa Puang*. Some *bissu* who are still left feel unable to become leaders in their own community. Even so, the annual event, the *mappalili*, continued with the event, is *Maggiri* still held every year, which can be witnessed directly in November as an activity to preserve one of the cultures in Segeri. This means that the rituals performed by *bissu* are part of the richness of the archipelago culture, especially the culture of South Sulawesi.

There were concerns felt by *bissu*, namely when they could endure anxiety, especially the lack of desire to become *bissu* because they were considered to be not young. Likewise, life *bissu's* which has undergone a shift that originally lived in the kingdom, and all of his life's needs are fulfilled by the kingdom finally have to fulfill his own needs, so they cannot focus only on *bissu*. For that, besides being a *bissu*, there are also those who

work as *Indo Botting* or *bridaldo* not live in the kingdom, only one or two people *bissu* designers. They Live and guard *arajang*. As for the number of *bissu* left now, there are only 6 *bissu*.

However, in November 2017, the Segeri District government has installed a new *Powa Matowa* after some time not having a leader witnessed by the local government, adat council and tourism service and religious leaders. After several years there was a leadership vacuum, finally 50-year-old *Wa Nani* was sworn in and sworn to become the leader *bissu* and the title of *Puang Matowa* in Segeri. Previous *Wa Nani* is known as *bissu lolo*. The local government hopes that *bissu* the remaining will continue to carry out their activities and to stay in *Arajang* and maintain and become a preserver of the culture and can be passed on to the next generation.

Inauguration. *Wa Nani* as *Puang Matowa* is expected to bring changes and bring fresh air to the survival of life *bissu* in Segeri which will become a preserver of dance *maggiri* as a cultural asset not found in other areas, except Segeri, Bone and Wajo.

F. Conclusion

The existence of *Bissu* in Segeri is not only known by the Segeri community, but also known in various countries such as the Netherlands, Italy, America and Singapore. *Bissu* have their own uniqueness that is not found in other regions except the Bugis tribe. *Bissu* has introduced a unique ritual tradition and has its own value for cultural lovers, namely the *mappalili* tradition that is conducted every year in November, which is an event that is considered sacred led by a group of *bissu* before the community goes down the field, where the event is supported and attended by the government local including traditional council and religious leaders. *Mappalili* (down the rice field) introduces a ritual tradition that is performed by a figure *bissu* that is not found in other areas. In addition, other rituals are *maggiri* (stabbing the kris into the body) and do not cause them to be injured. The uniqueness of the ritual becomes its own attraction, and is considered to be a cultural wealth of the archipelago. Nevertheless, the role of *bissu* has undergone a shift in meaning. Because the performance is considered as part of that culture published for tourism, causing the ritual to have no meaning. Unlike the previous period, the presence of *bissu* was very honorable and had a high position for the kingdom, even they lived in *arajang* while now they live apart, and fulfill their own needs. The current existence of *bissu* is very different from the *bissu* that existed in the past, there has been a change caused by the influence of Islam and also the dynamics of people's lives that develop at all times, and ritual practices are only considered part of culture and have nothing to do with religion. In addition, the local government supports the ritual *mappalili* and continues to facilitate *bissu* in order to preserve the customs that are already considered as part of the culture.

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