

Role of Women According to Ancient Text Perspective and Bugis Community Historical Context (Finding Relevance in the Modern Context Society in South Sulawesi)

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Abstract—The traditional ancient manuscripts of the Bugis in South Sulawesi both *I La Galigo* manuscript and *Lontarak* can be traced to find how the role and gender were in the practice of kingdoms history. This paper aims to analyze gender perspectives in some ancient manuscripts and its history as well as to find its relevance to modern society today in South Sulawesi. This study is library research that uses documents as a primary and secondary source. The results of this literature study show that there is important relevance of gender roles in understanding the position of men and women in this millennial era.

Keywords—gender, ancient manuscripts, modern

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of men and women in discourse is commonly analyzed through gender studies even though it is uncommon, but it still remains relevant this day. There are still many discussions that have to be studied with various analyzes so that they will be able to enrich written treasures and the analysis of dominant gender.

The concept of gender is a social and cultural construction that differentiate the treatment between male and female, which can have a tendency to both side women and men so that the gender does not become a fundamental issue [1]. However, because of the recent tendency, women are considered as "second class," so that it is often gender studies focuses to women only [2].

The importance of gender studies and research is inseparable from understanding gender bias. Gender bias is seen as the source of gender inequality which is a social and cultural construction displays differences in social status, roles, and functions between men and women in society [3].

In the term of status, role and function between two sexes, where the domination of male includes many aspects, such as deciding number of children, society issues, education, industry, health, culture, politics, military, and the issue of belief [4].

Every nation consists of a variety of ethnicities, languages, and religions which has its own uniqueness and different ways to understand the status, role, and function of men and women. The *Bugis* society in South Sulawesi as an example with a long history of its peculiarities practically as

well as in understanding the status, role, and function between men and women which is considered as a necessity and mutual.

In the development of history and culture, the different status, role, and function between men and women of the *Bugis* community are mostly written in ancient manuscripts, even in very small number. All existing ancient manuscripts did not aim to provide an explanation and the gender discussion and discourse that currently develop had never been thought before. Most of the explanation only tends to discuss the values of social, cultural, political, economic and other values [5].

The ancient manuscript that would be analyzed in this paper is *I La Galigo*. The opinions will be taken according to some experts. In addition, many *Lontarak* which is a record of the virtues that must be interpreted by the *Bugis* to know more about their culture. *I La Galigo*, for example, although it adopted the term used by Anhar Gonggong [6], it applies much "interpretation of images" to approach it. At least what can be gained from *I La Galigo* is inseparable from the interpretation of the times. One of the interesting interpretations of images in the context of gender analysis in *I La Galigo* is the role of togetherness between men and women in determining various things in life.

The *lontarak* used in this study uses several *Pappaseng* in which the values of virtue are expressed. However, it is a little bit of gender bias from the perspective of the household, politics, and culture. These traditional texts are important to be analyzed to understand the gender relations in the *Bugis* society in South Sulawesi

Besides the traditional texts, historically, the kingdoms of South Sulawesi shows the role of women which is so important especially in both political aspects and socio-cultural processes. Andi Ima Kesuma [7] considers that the role of women in making genealogical relationships is very important in providing harmonization between various kingdoms in South Sulawesi. The political analysis which is named the "*Politik Ranjang Bugis*" (Bugis Bed Politics) can be traced through genealogical relations between the kingdoms in Sulawesi.

This paper prioritizes the discussion of the status, the roles and the functions of women in the texts and historical

which has been discussed earlier. Besides that, an analysis of the relevance of the status, role, and function of women in the dynamics of modern life is also needed.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach used in this study is a qualitative approach that emphasizes descriptive and searches for meaning from reality. The method used in this research is library research. This literature research, according to Hart [8] emphasizes the efforts of researchers to use resources in a professional and observant way, from making research records to work bibliographies. Several documents used in this study are in addition to several primary sources while using secondary sources such as published books, research results, and scientific journals.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Gender perspective in Manuscript *I La Galigo and Lontarak*

Sureq Galigo is a mythical book that is considered by Bugis society as historical events that become a reality. This story tells the lives of the gods from heaven until seven generations. So the experts of *I La Galigo* put this literature as the longest work in the world [9].

Only a few perceptions of the *La Galigo* story will be presented in this part, as an illustration, to analyze how women get a position, status, and role. According to Nurmaningsih [10], the character who initiated the story of *Galigo* as a human being was *Patotoqé* who consecrated *Wé Datu Palingéq*. The couple gave birth to a son named *Batara Guru (La Togeq Langiq)* who consecrated *Wé Nyilliq Timoq*. This couple then had a son named *Batara Lattuuq* who consecrated *Bélaé La Urung Mpressi*. From this marriage, she gave birth to a son *Sawerigading* who married *Wé Cudaiq Daéng Risompae Punnabolaé Rilatanété* (from the Chinese kingdom). From this couple "*I La Galigo*" was born.

In the *Lagaligo* epic, the term female is identical to a word *awiseng* or *makkunrai* which in everyday life is seen as *belo jajareng* (house decoration) or *ati goari* (content of back). Women's status in this epic was expected to be *mulu jajareng* for their husbands (carrying out household) and *tanrere alebirena aroane pawekke engngi* (maintaining the dignity of their husbands) [11].

In almost all traditional societies, women are preferred as the guardian to run a good household. Besides, women existence is an honor if they are able to become a household who support and regulate their family life. This is because women are ones who understand most of their offspring as what *Datu Palingéq* did to his son *Batara Guru* in *Sureq Galigo*.

All names are listed in the manuscript, both men and women have a role even though their roles are not always exactly the same. Davies [12] explains that sometimes there are tasks that are solely for women such as caregivers. On the other hand, there is also a situation where there are tasks that are solely for men (like cockfighting) while the roles for *Bissu* and palace office are generally women.

Related to marriage, Nurmaningsih [10] explained that polygamy is one of the interesting topics in *Galigo*. But at this time it was no longer considered as harassment for

women, but it is a very high honor for them. It can be proven that all children born by many mothers and one father get fair treatment.

The *Galigo* manuscript also gives an illustration of women's courage. Nurmaningsih [10], explained:

The Galigo manuscript as told has shown the greatness and ability of women in various categories. For example, the ability of Datu Palingéq who came during the battle of Sawérigading with Letté Warani which resulted in the separation of earth and sky. The role of Datu Palingéq, in this case, give the order to his ladies dump the kencana letter down which contains the message, "O people who are in the war field, you truly show your ignorance because the one you are against is your own brother."

The courage, the ability and the strength of the woman were shown on the battlefield, as played by *Wé Tenripekka* in the story of *Mangngaruq*, namely when *Sawérigading's* proposal was rejected by *Wé Cudaiq*. This epic also tells about the courage of the masked female *Karaéng Tompok* to fight against her husband [10].

There are many stories about the courage and firmness of women written in the *Galigo* manuscript. Besides the above story, there are also a number of names who have courage such as *Wé Tanrijekka* and *Wé Tenrilokkae* who were influencing their husbands to overcome the disputing of *I Wé Cudaiq* application. There is also name *Wé Tenrirawé* who maintain *adat* (custom) when she exiled, and other miraculous stories of women which describes their status, role and function in *I La Galigo*.

In the past, the status, role, and function of women in the Bugis community are able to be gained either in *I Lagaligo* or in *Lontarak*. Macknight [6] explains about *lontarak* as follows: first, *Lontarak*, means either writings or books (literature), manuscripts found in South Sulawesi; Secondly, writing of *Lontarak* was written by the martyrdom of the Gowa Kingdom called *Daeng Pamatte* in the 16th century and heavily influenced by the sound and letter of *Sansekerta* (traditional letter of Java). *Daeng Pamatte* is the first harbormaster of the Gowa Kingdom under the reign of the 9th King of Gowa *Karaéng Tumapakrisik Kallolongna*.

One type of writing from Bugis *Lontarak* is *Pappaseng*. *Pappaseng* is a collection of family legacy or wise people who were inherited and memorized from generation to generation. Furthermore, *pappaseng* is written or recorded in *lontarak* and used as a heritage. Therefore, *Pappaseng* (Makassar: *Pappasang*) is one type of writing and type of Bugis *lontarak* literature [11].

Only a few examples of *pappaseng* are presented in this section. In *Pappasenna, Nené Allomo ri Sidenreng* explained "*Want orowane nassipa 'makkunrai, makkunrai mui asenna* (when a real man acted like a girl, he will be named as a woman) [13]. It can be interpreted that basically there are differences / regions which certainly cannot be equated between men and women, even though they also have the same area.

In line with the explanation above, *Pappasena Arung Bila* (last will of Arung Bila) describes four kind acts of a man that they can be called like a woman, and he would not be thought as men. They are lazy, weak or fragile, ignorant,

and young [13]. This message is undebatable and what they view in the *Pappaseng* about a woman is not all right.

One characteristic of women is they are too emotional so that men and women must always be careful. This is explained as follows: "What is meant of women's acts, angry without knowing the source and favor asking for consideration" [13].

Women who are too powerful in the household, the kingdom, even in the state can also damage the order of those nations. In this case, *Pappasenna Karaeng MatowaE* [13], explained that *Karaeng MatowaE* said, there are three things that a country is almost collapsing: first, if the king is unfair; second, if the king does not require to be reminded; third if the king obeys the opinion of women.

There are four characteristics that described the existence of women in a pile note of *Andi Palloge Petta Nabba* [14], namely: *Empa'i sipa'na makkunraie*: 1) *saya* (has similar character); 2) *Massipa 'tau sugii* (character like a rich person); 3) *Massipa 'anana'i* (character like child); 4) *Massipa asui* (character like a dog).

Machmud [14] translated these characters as follows:

- The common character of a king is that his will is absolute.
- The desire for rich people is usually always fulfilled, so people have to fulfill their request according to their ability.
- A young child is quickly offended or angry, but easily persuaded, so persuade him/her if he/she is angry.
- Do not do things that are contrary to the interests or those that are not liked.

In addition, there are some characteristics where mothers position, title, and profession are highly respected in the *Bugis-Makassar* tradition and culture. A mother must maintain her purity, piety, and intelligence. A mother must always update her knowledge. A mother is very important to read books every time to improve her awareness and vision [11].

B. Gender Perspectives in South Sulawesi Community in term of Historical Practices

As an illustration of women exists in the 19th century was explained by Thomas Stanford Raffles [15], that "*Bugis Makassar women occupy positions that are more honorable than that thought. They have not violent acts, break someone's privacy or forced labor*".

Another example, where the women social status of Bugis is quite high, is socially able to relate to a figure as *Colliq Pujié*. She is one of Bugis women who lived in the 19th century who was a writer and statesman. In ancient manuscripts, Bugis women are called brave (*materru*) and wise (*malempe nawa nawa*) [11].

The existence of women in the royal period can also be noticed in the context of the giving of inheritance, which according to customary law, in the nobility family the inheritance of women same as boys, because the women also have the right to sit in government. While the child was born from a noble father but her mother is not a noble, so she has

no right to accept the inheritance. They only get gifts from their relatives or from their father which is in *Bugis* language called "*Pammase*" [16].

Besides the existence of women with their social status, roles and functions as previously described, in the political world, their role is used as a genealogical glue as explained earlier. This practice continues to this time in making a relationship, where the kinship system of *Bugis-Makassar* arranged on the basis of blood and through marriage. The relationship of *Makassar* is so close that if there is an event they always involve as many family members and relatives as possible, especially in birth ceremonies, deaths and so on. The role of *pammanakan* is clearer in term of *siri*' [17].

Strong geological relationship causes peace between kingdoms which cannot be separated from the presence of women. A small example, in the Luwu Kingdom that is precise to *King Luwu II*, is *Anak Aji, son of Simpuru Siang*. Aji's child married a daughter from Majapahit named *We Tapaccina* (similar to Chinese faces). According to Andi Ima Kesuma [7], the existence of "*politik ranjang*" (bed politics) is intended to establish friendship and kinship with a much larger kingdom.

In addition, marrying women from the outside kingdom contributed a large number in South Sulawesi either from noble family or from ordinary people. In this case, there is a famous woman called *We Ummu Datu Laromong* (Luwu) Daughter of *Datu Luwu Matinroe ri Tompo Tikka*, who was the first consort of *La Patau Matanna Tikka (XVI King of Bone)* [7].

La Patau Matanna Tikka is one example that has often been highlighted in strengthening family ties by using "*politik ranjang*" (bed politics) involving many women. It is explained by Kesuma [7], that *La Patau Matanna Tikka* besides being married to *Datu Larompong*, and *Imariama Karaeng Patukangan* who are daughters of *Sultan Abdoel Jalil Raja Gowa Tumananga ri Lakiung*, where both became the king's main consort. It is also reported that *La Patau* still has wives recorded in *Lontarak 18* (eighteen) women, who are married subsequently.

Refers to Andi Ima K [18], if it is analyzed in depth at least there are several objectives of Genealogy politics, as follows:

- It is viewed from a family function; it is important to increase the number of offspring, especially with other kingdoms.
- In terms of politics, it is done to strengthen relations between both kingdoms in Sulawesi and other island or one island and other island or even abroad.
- The existence of this relation causes them to be united to face enemy together
- When there is a conflict between both kingdoms, it can be overcome by relationship approach

C. Analysis of Gender Value Relevance in Modern Society in South Sulawesi

Referring to Caglar [19] there are various problems that concern on gender studies, namely: first, the occurrence of marginalization; second, the occurrence of subordination;

third, negative (stereotype) labeling; fourth, violence; fifth, longer (double burden) domestic work.

Referring to this concept, it must be analyzed based on the discourse development in the social and cultural environment of the local community. In line with this, feminism discourse does not use monolithic grand-theory so that feminism can be articulated in a variety of contexts in time, space and as socio-cultural [20].

Although it is undeniable that traditional society uses irrelevant terms and characters with the understanding of contemporary society such as some examples above. However, a few traditional concepts and understandings are very relevant to the role and function of women. That should be preserved in this modern era, such as:

- Although modern society is characterized by the role of women who no longer only work as housewives, their presence as career women sometimes abandons completely their role as housewives who are psychologically needed by their children. Therefore women in South Sulawesi must also be able to understand their roles and functions in accordance with their culture.
- An honor of household is certainly not only in the hands of women but also men.
- In the division of inheritance by *adat* (tradition), in South Sulawesi women actually, have a much better position compared to traditional women in other regions. So this is important to be preserved.
- The role of women can be a determiner of national development. This can be proven in their role as a genealogical union in the kingdom era.
- Women are described as weak psychologically, but in fact, in South Sulawesi, they are historically are tenacious, courageous, and wise people.

A lot of existence of women's life has been revealed in ancient manuscripts and its historical journey which certainly cannot be identified shortly, but it requires a long and in-depth study. What is described in this paper is only part of a little example of how the status, role and function of women in past time in South Sulawesi, especially in the *Bugis* society. There are still many relevant things that should be internalized by women in the current era.

IV. CONCLUSION

Indonesia Gender analysis which emphasizes ethics and emic interpretations are not only in line with universal values but also provides a local form of the social and cultural system. The status, role, and function of women are located so that the interpretation that develops also cannot be separated from the values adhered to by people in certain ethnic groups.

Bugis in South Sulawesi with a very long history has its own character how to interpret the status, role, and function of women both in practice and conceptual understanding. The history journey has also brought changes to the development of the role of women in various fields that can be identified both in ancient manuscripts such as *I La Galigo*,

and *Lontarak*, one of which is *Pappaseng*, as well as practices in the course of history itself.

Of course, we will not get sufficient information about the understanding of women, especially in ancient manuscripts because of the limited themes especially with regard to gender. Negative house and political problems are often the dominant concern, so it is difficult to find other aspects that are currently being warm to the present.

Nevertheless, there are many things from the status, roles, and functions of the past women that can be internalized and adapted to the current conditions contained in the ancient texts and the history of the journey so that it needs to be analyzed properly. When values are relevant, they can have a practical value other than the value of education and as an identity. However, when it is not relevant, it is enough to be part of a long historical record.

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