

# THE RITUAL OF BISSU SEGERI

## The Function of *Mappalili* as Social Transformation

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### A. Background

History of local communities or indigenous religion in Indonesia has a grim time particularly the local community in South Sulawesi. Since Indonesian independence day, especially after the 1950s, they always get pressures from the state and others. The independence of Indonesia, which ought to be a turning point of freedom of expression and speech, instead became a disaster of their existence in this country. As minority, most of their rights, especially in a political and economic, are pressured and controlled by the state. In fact, when the Dutch and Japan colonized Indonesian, they everlastingly promoted the discourse of *adat* (culture) revitalization, although it is not easy to separate those revitalization from the absence of political issues. *Adat* is regarded as cultural heritage which is very effective in the developing Indonesian civilization. Then, the Dutch and Japan government formed *adat* co-operations to strengthen their colonization. The Japan government also regarded that the golden age ancestors of Indonesia cannot be separated from the role of *adat* law and civilization inherited from generation to generation. Hence, Japan tried to encourage the intellectual, politicians and cultural observer of Indonesia to look back on their *adat* (tradition) as a source of inspiration (Bourchier, 2010: 129).

Actually, in the early years of the independence of Indonesia (1945-1950), the issues of the local or indigenous communities are still important in our

political debates and government discussion. The role of the local communities and *adat* were considered as effective way to develop the new country. The government seeks to provide equal access to all the inhabitants of Indonesian without looking of their ideology background and their tribe. But, after the 1950s, the government and politicians were not care any more about local and the *adat* communities. In fact, most of Indonesian laws relating to the important role of *adat* in society was removed by the government. Those removal as respons after the state release the emergency situation of this country no. 1/1951 (Bourchier, 2010: 130).

Furthermore, the conditions and the role of local communities or *adat* in indonesia is erratic. In new order era, their condition are getting worse. The local communities existing in Indonesia, particularly in South Sulawesi, are banned by the state and forbidden in society. They are accused of as an adherent of communism and atheism. Those ideologies are reputed threatening unity of Indonesian. Pressures from the state caused the local community disappear in society. However, some of them are still survive, such as: *ammatoa* in Bulukumba, *aluk to dolo* in Toraja, *cikoang* in Selayar, *to lotang* in Sidrap, *to balo* in Barru, Bissu in Pangkep and others.

Through “the development program”, new order government launched a movement of modernization that is tried to scrape and remove the influences of the local community in Indonesia. The idea of modernization could be seen from the agendas “Pembinaan Sosial masyarakat Terasing dan Pembinaan Sosial Komunitas Adat Terpencil” (building the alienated societies and the *adat*

communities) (Maarif, 2012). Those statements are very political terms in that time. Its meant that alienated societies and the *adat* communities need to be coached and omitted their teachings and influences in society. So, the ideology in societys being unity, namely Pancasila.

One of local communities in South Sulawesi which is the victim of discrimination and still survive until now is the Bissu community in Pangkep. Bissu is one of the local community or indigenous religion everlastingly facing discrimination from the state and Islam. Pressures, sacrilege, and scolding are coming alternates. In old order era, the kingdom system is removed and replaced with the republic system. Then, the role and the power of the king was being insignificant in society. It affected also on the existence of Bissu. The state did not care anymore about the presence of Bissu in society. At the earlier time of new order era, the repent operation (*operasi taubat*) intensified by the state to remove the influences of Bissu in society. Bissu considered as atheist adherent and communism advocates. Communism is the enemy of state and the government on early new order era. Communism and atheism regarded as an ideology that threatens the existence of the republic of Indonesia. Bissu also was accused by religious leaders practice *syirik* (shirk to the God). Character of Bissu (*calabai*) is considered breaking the nature creature of God. Then, Bissu and their rituals also are regarded as unmannerly shirk, which is should be banned in Islam.

In 1998, the new order was fallen down. Reformation all aspects of life is inevitable in this country. Reformation unlock freedom of thinking and action in society. Most of ideologies which have been banned in the new order era are free

to spread their influence in society then. One of them is about revitalization the role of local community or adat role in society. In 1999, resurrection of local community or adat role got serious attention from the government. The process of decentralization become a trigger the emergence of movement resurgence of local community and adat role. Decentralization provide opportunities for local government to manage and develop their territorials. Then, the local governments concern and pay attention seriously about the issues of local community and adat role to strengthen their political power in society. In addition, the idea of revitalization of local community and adat role fully supported by the central government through Kepres (president decision) number III year 1999 on the coaching the social welfare of alienated societies or adat communities. Reformation brought a expectation for the existence of Bissu in Segeri. The discourse of local culture and adat raised and glowed in Indonesian society. Bissu is regarded as cultural heritage and a forebear assets that is very valuable, especially for tourism. Then, Bissu was politisized. Their ritual becomes commodity as entertainment and chance to mobilize a mass in election.

Now, the presence of Bissu in South Sulawesi, especially in Pangkep, was both accepted and refused by the society. Most of society in Segeri support them and others condemn their presence. Ones advocating Bissu assumed that the presence of Bissu is very important to perform a ritual *mappalili*. Ritual *mappalili* is believed to increase the food production. While people who refuse it, mostly from religious leaders. They looked at negative character Bissu that *calabai* and assume that ritual Bissu is behavior of shirk. The state also missed out to protect

Bissu rights. Hence, it is normal if they choose to live driven away in South Sulawesi and Indonesia to avoid conflict with the state and Islamic leaders. Now, only one Bissu living in Segeri. However, Bissu everlastingly do ritual *mappalili* as response to show their identity and their existence in society.

Indeed, religious leaders do not support the existence of Bissu and its rituals in society. The dispute between Bissu and Islamic leader always happen. Religious leaders always try to ban the influence of Bissu and its rituals. However, Bissu also everlastingly perform their ritual as a resistance or respons. That ritual also is an expression of their presence in the society. Moreover, Bissu try to negotiate with the people surround him. Such as: involving people in commite of *mappalili*, praying at the mosque, performing the haji and others. Thus, their ritual is accepted by society. In fact, the people believed the effectiveness of their rituals for agriculture.

### **B. Bissu and *Tomanurung***

The story of Bissu in the Bugis society intimately connected with the concept of *tomanurung* (the first person, Batara Guru, handed down by the God to the Earth) in South Sulawesi. The concept of *tomanurung* is very popular in South Sulawesi. Almost all ethnic groups in South Sulawesi have concept of *tomanurung*. The presence of *tomanurung* on the Earth is made up of two episodes. The first period occurred in the land of Luwu for seven periods of government. In the second period, almost all areas in South Sulawesi have a different version, such as *tomanurung* in Bone called *matasilompo'e* (people who can see at the glance) or *mattasi' lompoE* (people having extensive sea),

*Simpuruksiang* in Luwu, *Petta Sekkanyili* in Soppeng and Princess of *Tamalate* in Gowa (Mattulada, 1998: 27-47).

The first period of *tomanurung* is a couple of the royal family of Dewata, who became the origin of the human beings on the earth. The concept of *tomanurung* is the oral tradition that has been booked and widespread in almost all areas in South Sulawesi. People believe that *tomanurung* was the first person who live upon the earth and be the origin of human life in it. According to Latief, cultural observer, the concept of *tomanurung* also made kind of tradition in Bugis, Makassar and other tribes in South Sulawesi (Latief, 2004: 19).

Batara Guru handed down from the sky together with Bissu, called *matteru ri ale lino* and was unknown of his/her sex. The Bissu taught Batara Guru and served as his adviser on the earth. Mujahiduddin, cultural observer, estimates that Bissu has already existed and have settled in *boting langiq* (the upper world) before handed down into the earth. The Bissu was a connector between Dewata in there (Mujahiduddin, 2004: 54).

The duty of the first Bissu is putting *tanrang* (norms of live) and rules of *adat* for human life. After explaining *tanrang* and *adat* rules, then Bissu back to the upper world. In the Bugis terminology, it is called *mallajang* (vanished). The Period of Bissu Dewata on the earth was replaced by an ordinary man who is regarded as his/her successor. That is why, one of the requirements to be a Bissu is the presence of spirit Bissu Dewata who dwelt in upper world. So, the Bissu inauguration will be implemented if the spirit of Bissu Dewata already presents inside body a *calabai* (Mujahiduddin, 2004: 54).

### **C. Who is the Bissu?**

Bissu is ancient Bugis priest, before world religion (Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism) spread widely in South Sulawesi. Bissu terminology derived from Bugis language “bessi”, which means holy people. They are called holy because they do not suffer menstruation, do not have the breast, and do not bleed (Adham, 2009: 403). The main duty of Bissu is to give lesson and guidance to *tomanurung* and his sons in regulating human life and other creatures existing on the earth. Bissu also taught procedures for worship and rituals that should be done by human being when they wanted to worship to Dewata (Mujahiduddin, 2004: 54).

Before Indonesian independence, Bissu was the highly respected figure within the Bugis society. The Bugis believed that Bissu can communicate directly with Dewata. So, they are connector between human world with the world of Dewata. Bissu are also able to communicate with the of human ancestors who had died. Mujahiduddin (2004, 75) cited hamonic that Bissu can recognized the condition of human being, who are still living and was dead. They have knowledge about the past and can foretell the present and the future. The knowledge of Bissu is outside dimensions of time and also bounded with its origin place in the upper world (the world of Dewata). That specialization made Bissu believed by the king as caretaker ritual in the palace, for example: *memmana lolo* (birth ritual), *mappabbotting* (marriage), *amatengeng* (death) and other life cycle ritual (Latief 2004: 66; Yauri, 2008: 332). Bissu also performed ritual relating to the public interest such as ritual *mappalili*, *mappanoq/massorong* (an offering to

Dewata living below the earth), and ritual *mappaenreq* or an offering to Dewata who lives above the earth (Mujahiduddin, 2004: 91).

Biologically, Bissu are men. However, their behavior and character similar to women in daily life. They are categorized as *calabai*. *Calabai* is a Bugis terminology that means those men who behave as women. According to Halilintar latief (2004: 38) *calabai* terminology is derived from two syllables; *cala/sala* and *bai/baine*. *Sala* means wrong or not, *bai/baine* means women. So *calabai* is not female. Zainal, researcher of *calabai*, explained that the word of *calabai* is familiar in the ear of society after the independence of indonesia. Precisely, when the Bugis people know and use indonesian language. According to him, *calabai* is derived from the word *cala/sala* means wrong. The *bai* means making love. So, *calabai* is wrong in conduct coitus or making sex, because they ( *calabai* ) having sex through oral sex and anal sex (Zainal, 2008: 33).

#### **D. Becoming Bissu**

There is no provisions and an agreement written on the book on how become a Bissu, but it is inherited from generation to generation. The requirement was kept and preserved by the leader of Bissu *puang matowa* and *puang lolo* (Syamsuddin, 2010: 24). At the first time, all Bissu from *calabai*, because Bissu Dewata -the first Bissu handed down to earth- is *calabai* having not clearly sex orientation. Former *puang matowa* Bissu Segeri, Puang Saidi, stated that all Bissu is *calabai*, because just *calabai* is regarded as a perfect of human being and can communicate with Dewata. Bissu is considered to be perfect person because they

can combine elements and character of men and women in her body (Syamsuddin, 2010: 75).

Although Bissu are categorized as *calabai*, but, not all *calabai* could be a Bissu. Only those who have been inaugurated and ready to obey the rules of Bissu and Bugis *adat*, are regarded as Bissu. Some people categorizes or even characterizes *calabai* in Bissu similar to *waria* or transvestites in Indonesian language. Indeed, sometimes people identifies *calabai* with *waria*. However, a writer think that it is not true at all if *calabai* in Bissu are also categorized as *waria* in Indonesian language. Characters of *calabai* who have been inaugurated are different with *waria* or transvestites in general. Hence, Bissu categorized at least three types of *calabai* in Bugis culture, to distinguish between common *calabai* with the Bissu namey *calabai tungke'na lino*, *paccalabai* and *calabai kedo-kedonami*. Bissu categorized as *calabai tungke'na lino* always maintain their behavior and appearance in society. They are not a flirt, do not like to wander off or gadded in the night, do not like having sex with the opposite sex or of same-sex and always behave politely in society. *Calabai tungke'na lino* is most highest and honorably *calabai* (Latief, 2004: 39).

The second kind of *calabai* is *paccalabai*. *Paccalabai* is kind of *calabai* coquettish, like to wander off in the night and like teasing men and women. We can see them in the streets and in many places. mostly they like to peddle their body to wreak their eve flesh. *Paccalabai* can not control their flesh. So, they can have sex with man and woman. The third *calabai* is *kedo-kedonami*. Basically they are man behave as *calabai* to hoodwink and beat women (Latief, 2005). By

making categorization of *calabai*, the Bissu want to show that not all *calabai* must be categorized as negative and must be pulled in religion (Ad 'ham, 2009: 409).

All *calabai* can become a Bissu if they can adhere the rules of Bissu and get blessing from Dewata. Because Dewata blessing is the first step to become Bissu. If a *calabai* has received a call or blessing from dewata, they reported to *puang matowa* that they want to be Bissu. Actually *puang matowa* also knows if someone is recalled by Dewata to be a Bissu. The knowledge is acquired by dreams. After reporting to *puang matowa*, *calabai* starts to learn about Bissu rules and Bugis culture at the *bola arajang* (house of heirloom). In this period, a candidate of Bissu is required to live and apprentice in *bola arajang*, while learn to *puang matowa* and other Bissu. The length of an apprentice depends on the ability and skill of *calabai* to understand the lessons and the rules (Latief, 2004: 45; Syamsuddin, 2010: 72).

After passing declaration, a Bissu candidate was ordered to fast during a few days. Usually a week to 40 days. At that moment, a lot of abstinence and prohibition that should be avoided by the Bissu candidate. They are forbidden to wander off, should control their eve flesh and always perform good behavior. After fasting time, *puang matowa* lead the annual or process of *irebba* to become a Bissu. The candidates should be purified before *irebba* process. They should washed and then was packed with the white cotton, like a dead body. After that, a Bissu candidate was laid in *timpaqlaja* (in the attic top front of a house) and also laid a barrel-shaped containing water over his/her head. *Timpaqlaja* was kept opened, so Bissu candidate can see the sky. In this condition, a Bissu candidate

*mattinja'* (intend or pray) during a few days, usually three days while the other Bissu chanted and hit kettledrum and dance until the last day of irebba procession. On the last day, barrel-shaped above the head of Bissu candidate is pierced with a spear by *puang matowa* until the water moisten the body of Bissu candidate. That is the end procession of *irebba*. The *irebba* process is the final stage to be a Bissu (Mujahiduddin, 2004: 64; Makkulau, 2008: 32).

#### **E. Bissu of Segeri**

At the first time, the amount of Bissu Segeri for about 40 people. They all come from Bone, but after many years their number is getting decreased. There are many Bissu died and also resigned for some reason such as mindset changing, fear of *irebba* procession or being fired. Saharuddin, one of the descendants of Karaeng Segeri, estimates that only about 16 Bissu now. Whereas, in the first time they are 40 Bissu. Now, they live driven away in Pangkep and other regions in South Sulawesi.

The number of Bissu Segeri is getting decreased because of the absence of regeneration and the recruitment system is not clear. Many old Bissu do not have successors when they die. Many *calabais* are eager to become Bissu, but they do not have the the capacity to be a Bissu showed by their negative behavior. Moreover, Saharuddin, Bissu Segeri observer, explains that there are many *calabais* come when ritual *mappalili* is performed. But, not all *calabai* could be a Bissu. Only those who are *malebbi* (charisma) and ready to obey the rules Bissu can become a Bissu.

The other factor is the provisions and regulations that are very tight. Bissu should not be married and not allowed to have sex with men and women because they are the choice from Dewata. In addition, there is no subsidy from the government particularly in performing their ritual. According to Puang Upek, Bissu Segeri leader, that Bissu had not acquired life assurance from the government just like in past (when Karaeng Segeri was the authority). The dignity and position Bissu also began to be less respected within the society today. People more respected the *ulama* (Islamic priest) than Bissu.

#### Economy of Bissu

Bissu is one of the kingdom official and their position similar with the king, even exceeding him because Bissu inaugurated the king (Latief, 2005: 469). Their daily needs are guaranteed by the kingdom, including in ritual needs. The Bissu were not married, so they are not burdened economically for their families. The Bissu believe that their group consisting 40 people) as a big family though they are not from one ancestor. Emotionally, title and position of Bissu bind them as one family. The similar character, duties and responsibilities as a guard of *arajang* and ritual responsible made them feel like being in the family itself.

Bissu should preserved and fulfilled their daily needs. One way to fulfill all their daily needs comes from *galung arajang* (heirloom ricefield) and a *bola arajang* (heirloom house) as dwelling house. *Galung arajang* is one of revenue source and income for Bissu. *Galung arajang* is cultivated by the people and the outcome is divided with Bissu. The income from *galung arajang* not only funds the Bissu, but it also funds the ritual needs. The distribution system of this

funding is based on the Bissu stratification. *Puang matowa* get more and then followed by *puang lolo* and other Bissu (Latief, 2004: 83).

*Bola arajang* is built on *tana arajang* (heirloom land) and becomes Bissu's property. *Galung arajang* in Segeri named "La Mallaongi" and wided about 5 hectares. Location of *galung arajang* near to the *bola arajang*. However, since *puang matowa* Sanro Berlian died in 1979, *galung arajang* was taken over by the state and some people who claimed it. So, after Sanro Berlian died, there is no longer a source of funding for the ritual cost and for daily needs of Bissu living in *bola arajang*. Furthermore, they must stand alone for their daily needs to survive and for the ritual continuity (Latief, 2005: 482).

#### **F. Sad Stories of Bissu**

Bissu ever had hard experience and darkness time, especially after the independence of Indonesia. The Bissu was very suffering when the troops DI/TII hold the purification operation in South Sulawesi and the surrounding area. This operation started from around the 1950s to 1960s. The activity of Bissu was considered contradictive to Islamic teachings. In some areas, many Bissu and *calabai* were burned or forced to repent and become a normal human (Latief 2004: 79-80). The equipment of ritual was burned and threw into the sea or the river. This condition forced Bissu hiding in the forest for several years and also hiding in the society houses. In Segeri, Islamic purification movement was done by Ansor consisting of student and the youth of *nahdatul ulama* (NU). In the 1950s and 1960s, Ansor performed the Islamic purification operation or repent operation. *Bola arajang* and Bissu rituals are one of their targets.

When old order was replaced by the new order, the politic situation was still unstable and chaotic. The war of ideology intensively occurred in the government area and society. New government also intensively performs *operasi taubat* (the repent operation) against all system of beliefs disturbing the peaceful life and sovereignty of the republic of Indonesia, such as: atheism and communism. The operation also impacts on the existence of Bissu's ritual which is regarded as deviate behavior and supporting atheism and communism. The Bissu and their rituals are also considered as kind of *bid'ah* (heresy) by the religious leaders. The Bissu character and psychology broke the nature of God that only creates men and women. Many Bissu are forced to become a male genuine and behave as a man. They also forced to repent and follow one of formal religions in Indonesia. The teachings of Bissu are regarded as heresy and wrong. This is a darkness story of Bissu in new order era where many Bissu are afraid to show their identity in public including in Segeri.

Today, the existence of Bissu in Bugis society seems to be unknown by the young generation. In fact, many of old generation also do not know about Bissu and do not know more about Bugis culture. The Bugis society do not care more about Bissu especially after they followed Islam. Bugis society tends to eliminate Bissu from the society because the characters of Bissu considered as deviate. Bissu is identical with *calabai* which is regarded as deviate behavior in society. The Bissu behavior is regarded as a negative reflection for the young generation. Nevertheless, the people of Segeri and governments try to revive an institution of culture and Bissu community as heritage of their ancestor. Bissu get honorable

place in the the public because Bissu played an important role in social life such as leaders in the ritual of *mappalili*.

### **G.Mappalili Ritual**

*Mappalili* is a annual ritual which is still performed by Bissu. *Mappalili* perform once a year and become a sign the paddy season in Segeri. Usually, *mappalili* perform in October or November, when the rainy season is began. The purpose of *mappalili* is making harvest succesfully. So, the people of Segeri still believe that the success and the failure of their harvest depend on the successfully of *mappalili* performed by Bissu (Rahman, 2003: 518; Makkulau, 2007: 57).

*Mappalili* is considered as one of the rituals to worship Dewata, as well as a kind of respecting and thankfulness people to *arajang* that is sent by Dewata on the earth. The existence of *arajang* in Segeri becomes a symbol of prosperity and welfare for the society. Hence, people must kept them to avoid the drought and famine in their village. The government and people offer a lot of the offering (*sesajian*) like a food and fruits as expression of thankfulness to Dewata, in *mappalili* ritual. The offering to Dewata sometimes known in Bugis language with the term *mappaenre'* (raise something), it means offering *sesajian* to Dewata who dwelt in the sky. Sometimes called *mappano'/massorong* (dropped something/pushing something), it means to offer *sesajian* to Dewata under water or under land (Syahrir, 1996: 42).

*Mappalili* is also regarded as manifestation of religious emotion having the character of witchcraft and sacred known only by of sacred persons namely Bissu. When *mappalili* is performed, Bissu always makes contact and direct interaction

with Dewata, so they know all desire and Dewata needs. To interact with Dewata, Bissu should make sure that all kinds of ritual needs, fixtures and a ritual tools in *mappalili* is fulfilled. In addition, all the rules and procedures of *mappalili* should be running well. *Puang matowa*, Puang Upek, explain that when conducting *mappalili*, Bissu everlastingly associated with Dewata. Hence, before interacting with Dewata, the requirement should be fulfilled, such as the offering of fruits, sirih leaf, dupa (burning incense), leaves and flowers of coconut, and other equipment that should be provided. *Songkolo'* (rice) four colors is one of important ritual equipment.

#### **H. The Time of *Mappalili***

*Mappalili* is usually performed at the beginning of rainy season in Segeri, in October or November every year. Saharuddin, an informant, explains that sometimes *mappalili* is performed in three of time considered as good time in Bugis culture, namely: *asera ompo* (date 9 according to Bugis calendrical) or *asera temmate* (date 21) and *parawalinna* or *paccapureng keteng*, between *maompo* and *de' namaompo* (the last day in month). This calendar is based on the Bugis calendar system that is calculated in accordance with the condition or the shape of the moon. To determine that calendar, Bugis people usually see the shape of the moon in the sky. This calendrical system is still used by many Bugis people, especially those who lives in the village to determine the days considered as good day to start a job or everything.

In the past times, the time of *mappalili* was decided by Bissu, without intervention from other people, even from the royal family. Before deciding the

time of *mappalili*, *puang matowa* Bissu made interaction with Dewata to get blessing. So, the ritual time was based on the will of Dewata. However, today the time of *mappalili* ritual adapted to the rainy season and the schedule is set up by the state. So, when the rainy season is coming, the government officers arranged the committee who is responsible in the implementation of *mappalili*. The committee consisting of the elements of society and government apparatus. They tried to arrange the time of *mappalili* based on vacant time of the government.

### **I. The Bissu Today**

Today, Bissu lives driven away in South Sulawesi, even there is Bissu lives in Balikpapan, Kalimantan. Only one Bissu lives in Segeri, near from *bola arajang*, his/her name is Puang Upek. Puang Upek is leader of Bissu Segeri. He/she was born in Segeri and his family also live in Segeri. He/she has been lived in *bola arajang* to get knowledge about Bissu rules and Bugis culture, since he/she was a child. Puang Matowa Bissu Segeri, Puang Upek, stated that:

There are many Bissu still joining him to perform *mappalili* ritual in Segeri. They are: Uwa Nure', Juleha, Uwa Matang, Puang Saidi, Ummase and Uwa Sompo. Puang Saidi and Ummase were died. That Uwa Nure photo on the wall. He/she is at Balikpapan, Kalimantan now. Uwa Nure' often come here, if we have event. Moreover, if I call him to come, surely he have time to come here. But, I should be responsible for his/her plane charge and other charge. Uwa Matang live in Kanaungan, Jambu Mente street. Uwa Sompo and Juleha live in Pangkajene.

It is very difficult to meet Bissu who is living driven away. Only one times in a year they meet each other when there is *mappalili* ritual or request from the government and the public to perform a Bissu dance in front of public. When *puang matowa* Sanro Berlian was still alive, the Bissu lived together in *bola arajang*. Their daily needs was guaranteed by the government. However, since

*puang matowa* Sanro Berlian died in 1979, Bissu community seems to have lost their leader. They live separately far from *bola arajang* and Segeri.

### **J. People's Responses Against Bissu Tradition**

Since Islam is followed by the majority of Segeri society, exactly after Indonesian independence in 1945, The *dai* (Islamic preacher) and religious leaders always try to prevent people from deviates behavior (*syirik*) or all the activity considered breaking the Islamic teachings, including the activity of shirk done by Bissu. After the independence of indonesia, at least two shirk operation or purification movements had been established by Ansor from NU in the 1950s and 1960s and in old order era.

In addition, when DI/TII revolted again the government in South Sulawesi, the issues of *syirik* activity done by Bissu also widespread in Segeri society. Thus, when the opposed movement again the Bissu appeared in society, there were many people who related it with the purification movement of DII/TII. In fact, according to Saharuddin, 81 years old, (informan from Segeri) and H. Dali, 66 years old, (informan from Bontomate'ne ), during that period, the presence of DI/TII troops operation was not seen in Segeri. The involvement of DI/TII in Segeri in the fifties and sixties was less powerful because the purification movement are widely known to be conducted by Ansor (youths student of NU).

The purification movement was pioneered by Ansor at that time categorized all the activity considered as deviating from Islam or shirk behavior that appeared and developed in society including the shirk activity done by Bissu at *bola arajang*. Ansor confiscated all the objects which are reputed as sacred object in

society. They burned and dumped it in the river and the sea. Ansor also tried to destroy *bola arajang* which is regarded as a source of shirk activity in Segeri. However, this movement is not able to destroy *bola arajang* because it has divine power. Even, they cannot chase away the Bissu there. The real results of this operation are many sacred objects belonging to society are taken, burned and dumped in the river and the sea including some *arajang* and precious objects around *bola arajang*.

The second shirk activity operation in Segeri, occurring in the 1980s. A number of Islamic institutions made an operation againsts deviating activity according to Islamic teachings in society. However, *bola arajang* and Bissu was not the main target of this operation. The concentration of this movement is public houses. Many objects considered as sacred and magic in society are burned and dumped in the river and the sea. This movement appeared as response of Ansor and religious leader who saw the rise of shirk activity in society at that time.

Today, the local government has determined Bissu as a cultural heritage which should be maintained and revitalized. Nevertheless, the hatred againsts Bissu always appeared in society as well. The religious leader and the citizens who feel their religious understanding more true than others, still refused their presence in society. The refusal can be seen from their attitudes and response against Bissu. The religious leaders stated that they receive the presence of Bissu as human beings but the character of Bissu is still considered as deviating from islamic beliefs and *bola arajang* is regarded as a center of shirk activity.

#### **K. The Respons of Societty who Accept the Existence of Bissu**

Nowdays, Segeri society, that is predominantly *sunni* and affiliated to *nahdatul ulama* (the big muslim organization in Indonesia) had received the presence of Bissu and its rituals in their village. The mindset changing in society made them tolerant to Bissu especially the member of Ansor. First, Ansor tends to purify which is supported by religious leaders, who is affiliated to DII/TII. But, after reformation era, Ansor and Segeri society start accommodating Bissu values and culture. The mindset changing is caused by the level of understanding and knowledge of a community which starts to open with the issues of differences and tolerance. Many of those are educated men in the big city. When they returned to their hometown in Segeri, they are accustomed to the difference and tolerance issues such the existence of Bissu.

Furthermore, Segeri Society believes in sacred power possessed by Bissu. The immune power or sacred power possessed by Bissu can be witnessed by the people especially those watching *mappalili*. We can also see it from the enthusiasm and public confidence to be involved in the *mappalili* ritual done by Bissu. They won't start planted rice if the Bissu has not performed a *mappalili* ritual yet. H. Mami, informant from Bontomate'ne, explains that the people don't want to plant rice before *arajang* go down to rice field. Bissu is commander when the people will plant the rice. They (Bissu) was responsible to perform a *mappalili* ritual. Since the ancient time, *mappalili* is always performed continually every years. Rosmini, an informant who always involves in a *mappalili* ritual, also said that the people are not brave go down to the rice field before *mappalili* ritual is conducted.

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