

'To Take Each Other':
Bugis Practices of Gender, Sexuality and Marriage

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This thesis is the original work of the author
except where otherwise acknowledged.

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To my parents, husband, and son.

Abstract

This thesis is an ethnography of Bugis marriage. It is concerned with aspects of gender, sexuality and marriage in a bilateral, highly competitive, hierarchical society.

I examine the fundamental concept of *siri'* in relation to gender socialisation, courtship, the importance of kinship and status in marriage, how sexuality is regulated between the sexes, sex within marriage, and the dynamics of marriage, divorce, and reconciliation. The analysis considers how Islam combines with local custom (*adat*) in everyday practices, and how Bugis cultural specificities are affected within the national ideology of contemporary Indonesia.

This ethnography explores an interpretation of Bugis social and sexual experience through examination of the construction of gender identities and how they are manifested in marriage. The thesis explores the complementarity of gender for the Bugis. Despite the ideal of feminine passivity, I demonstrate that women exercise agency in a number of circumstances, including how they manage the sexuality of their husbands, defending *siri'*, the arrangement of marriage, remarrying, money management, divorce, and violent situations. I also examine the practices of illegal marriage (*kawin liar*) and illegal divorce (*cerai liar*) at local and personal levels. I analyse local and national debates on the legitimisation of what is popularly known in Indonesia as 'marriage based on religion' (*nikah secara agama*) as part of the examination of Bugis marriage and marital relations.

My thesis contributes to the understanding of Bugis notions of sexuality, gender and social location, and how these interact with *siri'*. I explore how and why violence occurs within marriage. I use a combination of informal interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions as well textual analysis of traditional manuscripts and incorporation of oral traditions.

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Preface

In the text, terms in languages other than English are rendered in *italics*. Each is followed by an indication of its language and then by an English gloss of its meaning, or vice versa. Most of these words are Bugis (Bug.), or Indonesian (Ind.), but some are Arabic (Ar.) and Makassar (Mak.). Where many terms from one language, usually Bugis, are used in quick succession, only the first is identified.

Like other Austronesian languages, Bugis employs a wide variety of affixes, especially prefixes. It is often easier to recognise basic meanings and cognates by stripping off these affixes. For example, *madduta* (Bug.: to delegate) from *ma-* and the noun *duta* (delegation); *mabbainé* (to marry) from *ma-* and *bainé* (woman).

There is no agreed form of rendering the glottal stop, which has an important role in Bugis. I prefer to use an apostrophe ('), but others used (q) or (k), especially in final position. A glottal stop before certain consonants is written as a double consonant. It also omits inter-vocalic glides, though these are commonly shown; thus *ia*, not *iya* and *ua*, not *uwa*. As is now usual, I render the pepet as 'é' and the strong vowel as 'é'; thus *maringngerrang* and *maéga*.

In addition, 'tau' and 'to' are two different words of similar meaning to describe person. Thus *to*, not *tau*. The title, such as *Pak* (for *Bapak*), *Ibu*, or *Hajj* is written in italics when it first mentions. Any foreign term in titles or subtitles is underlined.

Except for the names of well-known figures and individuals names in newspaper, all personal names are pseudonyms. All place names are real.

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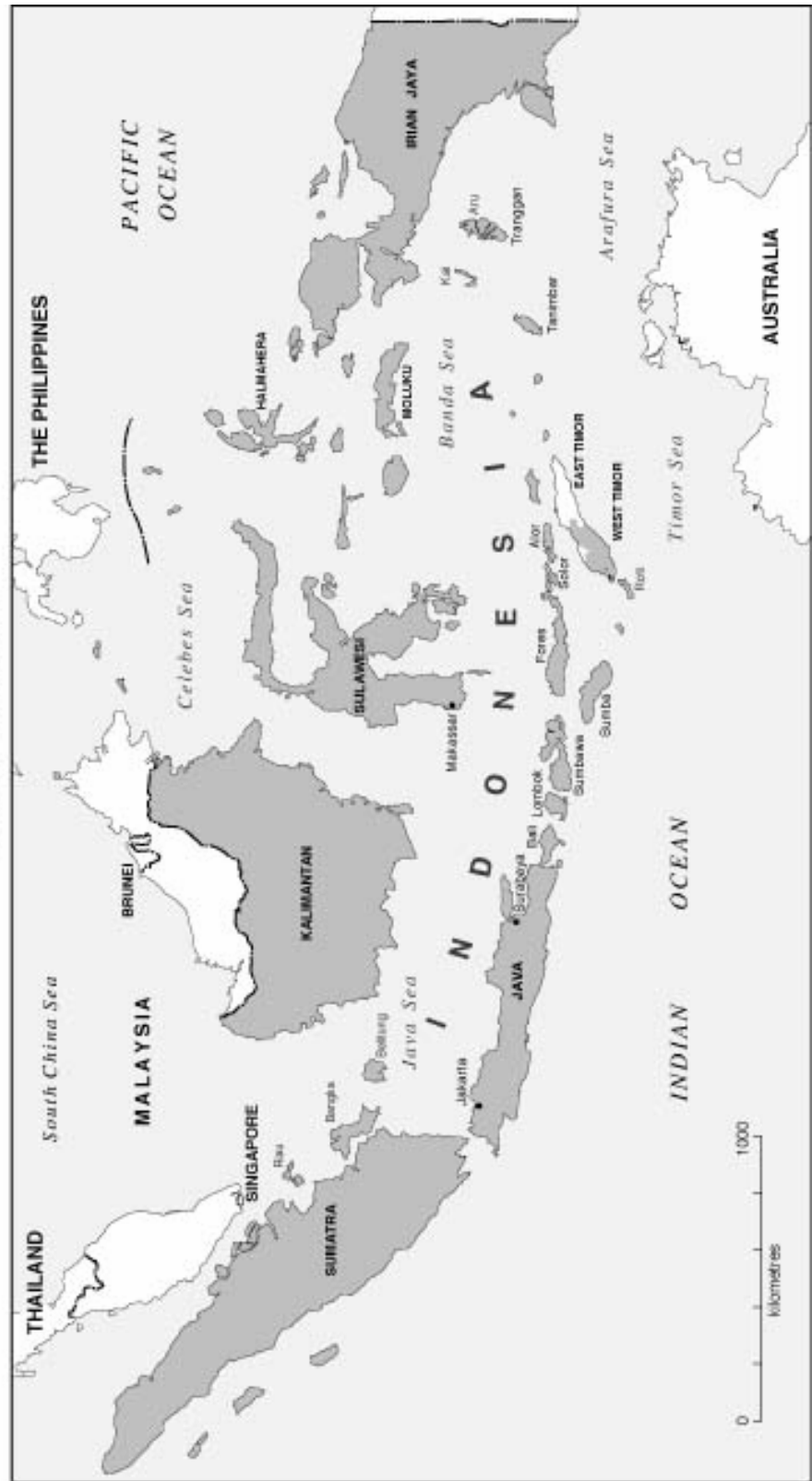
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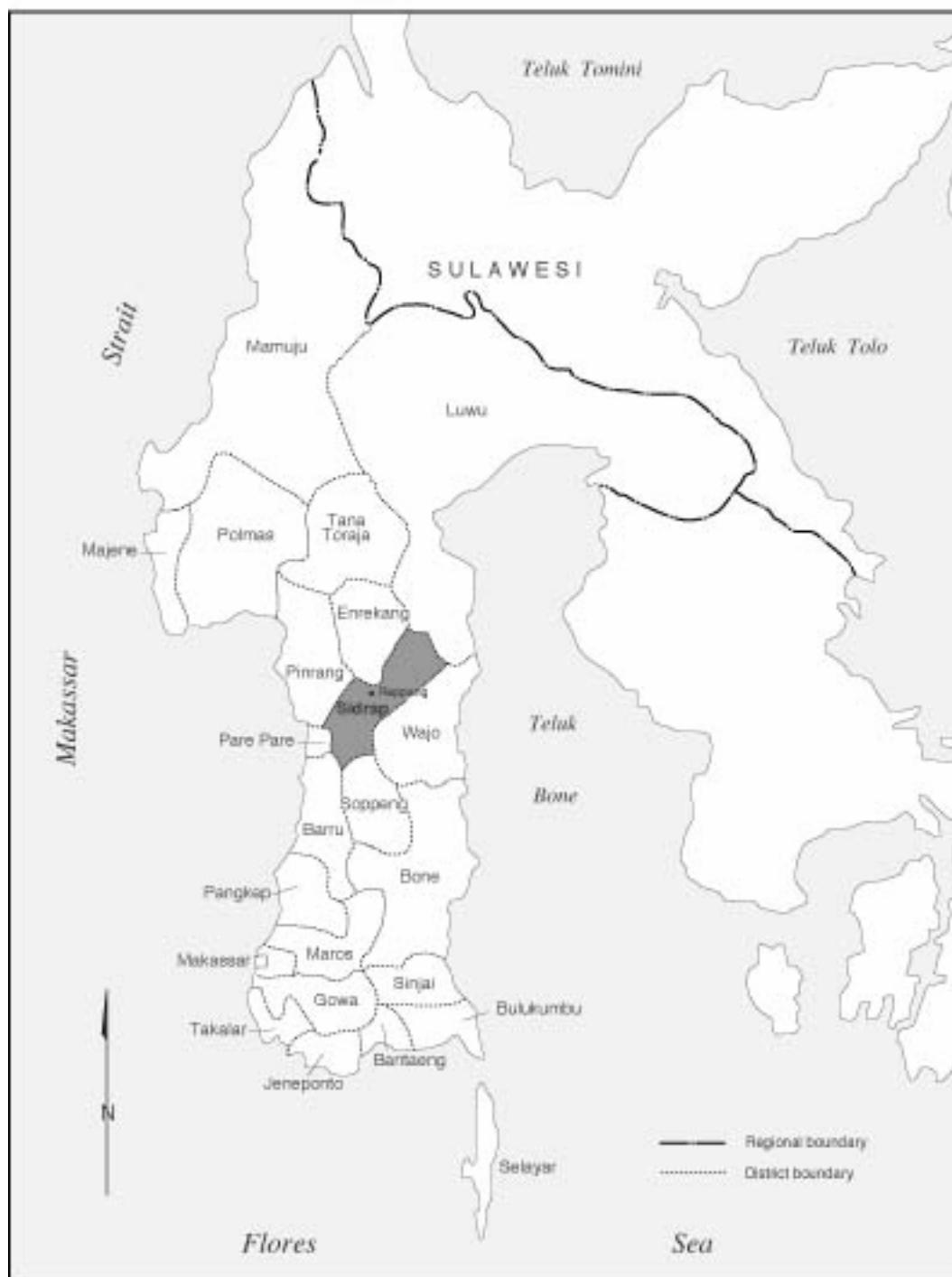
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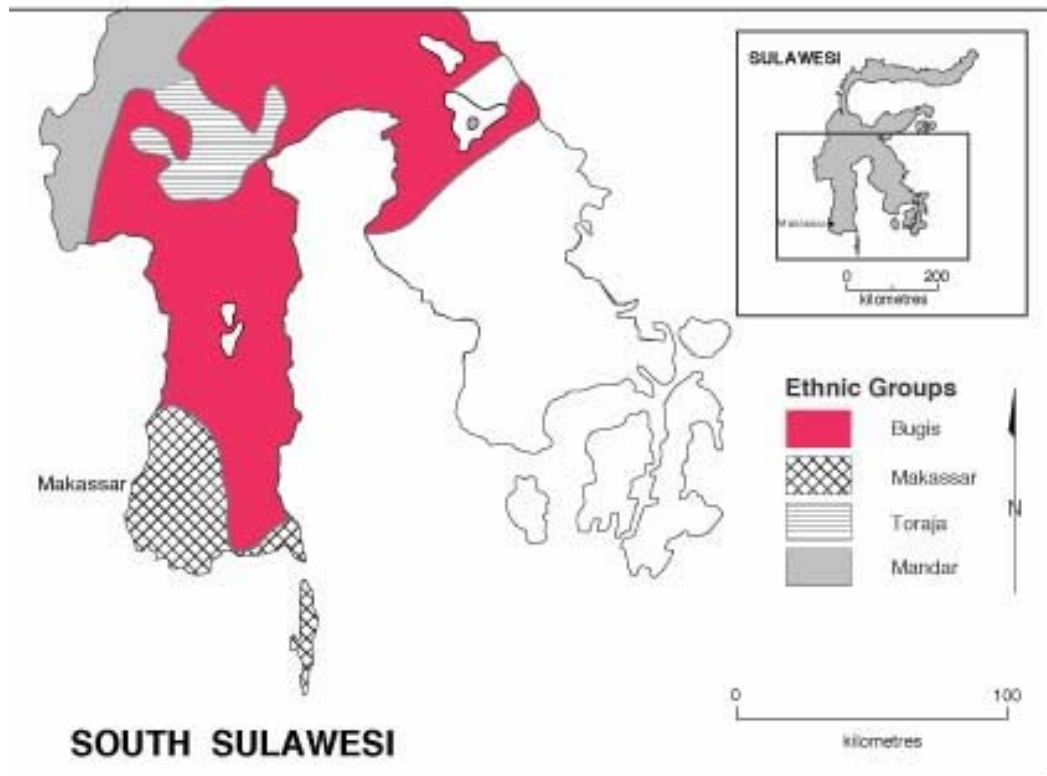
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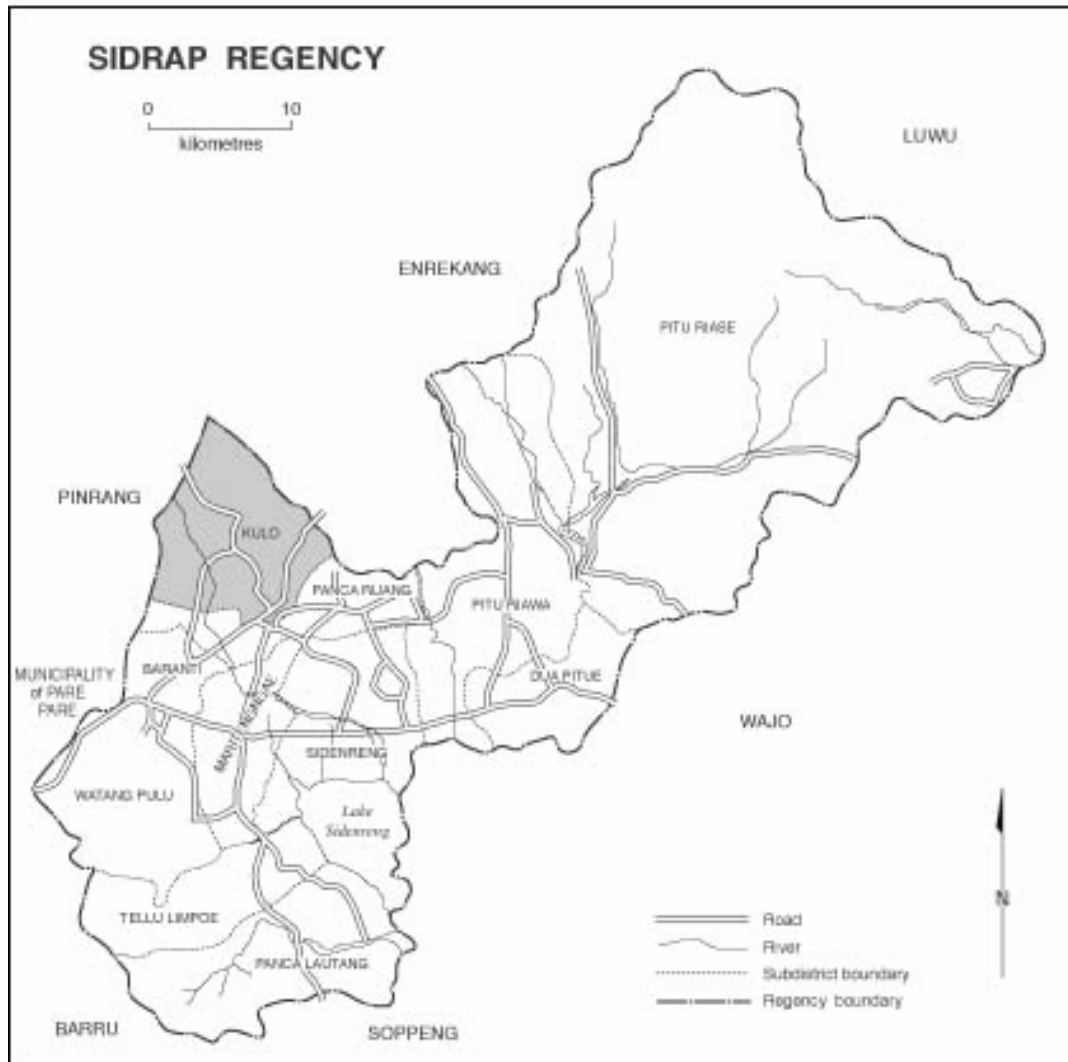
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Map 1.3 South Sulawesi by Ethnic Group



Map 1.4 Sidrap Regency and Subdistricts



Map 1.5 Kulo Subdistrict and Villages

