

Islamization of arabization? the arab cultural influence on the South Sulawesi muslim community since the islmization in the 17 th century

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20495885&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

ABSTRAK

This paper explores the influence of Arab culture on the culture of Bugis Makassar, the two major ethnic groups in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, particularly after their Islamization in the early 17 th century. The paper argues that since then, the ongoing process of Islamization in the region has also brought a continuous flow of ideas and cultural practices from Mecca to Indonesia by means of the hajj pilgrims, Arab traders, and the establishment of Islamic educational institutions that emphasized the teaching and use of Arabic language in education. These factors, among others, have facilitated a cultural inflow which enabled cultural practices borne of West Asia (Middle East) to be integrated into local customs and beliefs. The paper particularly depicts the most observable forms of Arabic cultural integration, acculturation, and assimilation into the Bugis Makassar culture such as the use of Arabic in Islamic schools and religious sermons, the Arab style dressing by religious scholars, teachers, and students, the wearing of the hijab (head cover) by women, and the change of peoples names from local into Arabic. By utilizing the historical and anthropological approach, this paper investigates this dynamic process of adaptation and integration of a foreign culture that first came through the Islamization of a local culture, exploring the role of an Islamic missionary and educational institutions in mediating and maintaining such cultural integration processes.