

# Wolio

## 1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Wolio or Butonese, Wolio is an Austronesian language spoken in Bau-Bau on Buton Island, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. Also known as Buton, it is a trade language and the former court language of the Sultan at Baubau. Today it is an official regional language; street signs are written in Wolio using the Arabic script. (2)

Malayo-Polynesian

Nuclear MP

Celebic

Wotu–Wolio

Wolio–Kamaru

Wolio (2)

The language situation is complicated. Two main groups of languages can be distinguished: the Bungku-Mori Group, which is closely related to the languages of southeast Sulawesi, is used on the island of Kabaena, in the north and northeast of Buton, and in the area of Rumbia/Poleang on the mainland of Sulawesi, and the Buton-Muna Group is used in the other part of the former sultanate. To the latter group belong four languages or subgroups of languages. The first is the Wolio language. Wolio is the language spoken in the center of the former sultanate by the nobility (kaomu) and the second estate (walaka), who lived mainly in the center (Kraton Wolio), and some villages in the neighborhood. It is still spoken in that area, including the present capital of the kabupaten, Baubau (5)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): wlo (1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Buton Island, Southeast Asia, Southeast Indonesia 5°3'S 122°53'E (2)

1.4 Brief history: The Wolio (also known as the Baubau, Butonese or Butung) primarily live on the island of Buton, around the city of Baubau, but can also be found on Muna, located in the SE Sulawesi province. Their ancestors were immigrants from Johor, Malaysia at the beginning of the 15th century, who also founded the Buton dynasty. In 1540, the sixth king became a follower of Islam. He reshaped the kingdom to become a sultanate and set himself up as the first sultan. The sultanate of Buton lasted until the death of the last sultan in 1960. With his death, the Buton sultanate ended its formal reign, though the influence of Buton is still felt throughout all of the islands in the region. The Wolio are at the heart of the culture of Buton. Buton today is known for its production of asphalt and is currently being explored for oil and other minerals. Many people have moved to other islands to find work. At present, some Wolio people live in the areas of Maluku and Papua. They speak the Wolio language, which is from the Wotu-Wolio language cluster that includes the following languages: Kalao, Laiyolo, Kamaru, Wotu. Arabic is also understood by some and its script is used in religious writings and older written materials in the Wolio language. (3)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: According to their own tradition, migrants from Johore established the kingdom of Buton, probably in the beginning of the fifteenth century. The kings (raja) had relations with the Hindu kingdom Mojopahit on Java and probably were also Hindu. The sixth raja converted to Islam in 1540, and so became the first sultan. Under his reign the whole kingdom was formally converted to Islam. It is clear from western records that Buton lay at a strategic point on the route from Java and Makassar (South Sulawesi) to the Moluccas, the heart of Indonesian spice production.

Especially in the first half of the seventeenth century it was difficult for Buton to maintain its independence in the power struggle between the two Indonesian sultanates of Makassar and Ternate (North Moluccas), in which the Dutch East India Company, VOC, also played an important role. In 1613 Buton entered into the first contract with the VOC, during a meeting between the fourth sultan, La Elangi, and the first Governor-General, Pieter Both. With this contract Buton sought support for its independence from Makassar and Ternate. Only after the sultanate of Makassar had been subjugated by the VOC in the years 1667-1669 did Buton become free from this power struggle. From then on Buton formed part of the territory administered under the Pax Neerlandica.

During the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries the sultanate of Buton managed to remain an independent kingdom. The government of the Netherlands-Indies was not really powerful enough in the nineteenth century to intervene effectively. But this changed at the beginning of the twentieth century. A new contract was imposed in 1906, which stated that the government could interfere in the sultanate's internal matters. Although it was "self-governing," Buton was then definitely part of the colonial system. The foundations were laid for entirely new sociocultural and economic developments, especially in connection with government, education, health services, and the economy. It was one more step toward complete integration in the sociopolitical system of the Indies, and after 1949 in the state of Indonesia. This integration, or incorporation, culminated in 1960 with the dissolution of the sultanate a few months after the death of the last sultan. (5)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): The island is largely covered by rainforest and is known for its wildlife. It is one of only two habitats of the anoa, a type of buffalo (2)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 25,000 to 35,000 (1990). Population total both countries 25,000 to 35,000 (1)

At the beginning of the twentieth century approximately 50 percent of the settlements counted less than 500 inhabitants, 35 percent between 500 and 1,000, and 15 percent more than 1,000 inhabitants. (5)

## 2. Economy

## Wolio

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): main crops grown are corn, dry rice, and cassava (4)
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: fish (4)
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Nets, spears, traditionally fishing methods are favored, but some newer technologies are slowly being implemented (2)
- 2.4 Food storage: No records found
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: Seafaring is considered men's work, along with ironworking, boat building, brass and silver manufacturing, and most of working the fields. Pottery, weaving, preparing meals, doing domestic work, and managing the family's money are the women's primary jobs. (4)
- 2.6 Land tenure: Traditionally, rights to the land around the villages belonged to the community, and formally to the sultan. Every household had the right to use a part of this land, which was distributed by the village council. When the land was abandoned for a long time, it again became fully communal land. In accordance with present Indonesian law, land tenure rests with the individual. Most Butonese still have rights to land; only the descendants of former slaves, who became free after 1906, may still be landless. (5)
- 2.7 Ceramics: industrial arts involving, for instance, brass, pottery, and silver, still exist (5)
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: No records found
- 2.9 Food taboos: None
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Canoes and fishing boats, one of which is called the Butonese Lambo, integrates traditional features and European hull designs (3)

### 3. Anthropometry

- 3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): No records found
- 3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): No records found

### 4. Life History, mating, marriage

- 4.1 Age at menarche (f): No records found
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): early 20s (13)
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f): 4-6 (13)
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): 2-4 years (13)
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): early 20s (13)
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Marriage, as prescribed by Allaah, is the lawful union of a man and woman based on mutual consent. Ideally, the purpose of marriage is to foster a state of tranquillity, love and compassion in Islam, but this is not always the case. Islam discourages divorce but, unlike some religions, does make provisions for divorce by either party. (12)
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Today, most Wolio marriages are monogamous (having one spouse). (4) Polygynous marriages occurred especially among the kaomu and the walaka. The sultan, in particular, had many wives, for reasons of state integration. Most marriages today are monogamous even though Islamic law allows polygyny. (5)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: include the betrothal, the determination of the bridal dowry known as the hantaran agreed upon by both the parents' of the groom and the bride (2)
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: Property is usually divided equally among the surviving children. Some goods, however, such as the keris (a ceremonial knife), are inherited only by men, and others only by women. The house is usually inherited by the child who stayed with the parents, after marriage, to care for them; usually this is the youngest daughter. In the kraton, more elaborate rules of inheritance existed than in the villages. (5)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: No records found
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: The Islamic views on homosexuality are formed from the writings of the Qur'an and various Hadith narrations. It is not only a sin, but a crime under Islamic law (2)
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Endogamy is preferred among traditional Wolio and Butonese people, but exogamy is more and more the norm (5)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized? No
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows"): Both father and mother participate in rearing the children. (4)
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? No
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: The punishment for rape in Islam is same as the punishment for zina, which is stoning if the perpetrator is married, and one hundred lashes and banishment for one year if he is not married. (11)
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin) : In some villages marriages to second or third cousins are preferred, in order to keep possessions within the family. (5)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? No, premarital touching is taboo in most cultures around the area, most likely including Wolio, and the Butonese and predominantly monogamous as of recently (5)
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: None
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Father
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: No records found
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: None
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): None
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? No records found

## Wolio

4.24 Joking relationships? No records found

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: bilateral, usually favoring the female side (10)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: The Quran gives specific rules regarding incest, which prohibit a man from marrying or having sexual relationships with: his father's wife (his mother, or stepmother), his mother-in-law, a woman from whom he has nursed, either parent's sister (aunt), his sister, his half sister, a woman who has nursed from the same woman as he, his sister-in-law (wife's sister) while still married, his niece (child of sibling), his daughter, his stepdaughter (if the marriage to her mother had been consummated), his daughter-in-law. (2)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? The wedding ceremony proper is usually held on a weekend, and involves exchanging of gifts, Quranic readings and recitation, and displaying of the couple while within a bridal chamber. (2)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Take the name of the man (5)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?): Inside the community is preferred (5)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Although parents are involved in the arrangement of the marriages, the young people are free to choose their partners. (4)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: None

### Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: No records found

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Warfare with neighboring states ended after the Pax Neerlandica was established in the second half of the seventeenth century. In the past, internal conflicts might arise from disputes over succession to the position of sultan, or over the misbehavior of the sultan or high office holder (5)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: No records found

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): See *Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death*

4.18 Cannibalism? None

### 5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 100 – 500 inhabitants per village (5)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Stay in one area year round (5)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): The former sultanate included four small vassal states ( barata ) which had their own ruler and council ( sarana ) but which had to pay tribute to the sultan and to support him in conflicts. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the influence of the Buton state in the internal affairs of the principality of Muna was very weak. In the area that fell directly under the sultan and the sarana Wolio (the council of the state Wolio, or Buton), the people were organized in villages ( kadie' ) that were more or less autonomous regarding internal affairs; each had its own sarana, which operated under the supervision of one of the members of the sarana Wolio. The kadie' had to support the sultan and the sarana Wolio with contributions of money, food, and manpower, according to written regulations. With the incorporation of the sultanate into the state of Indonesia the whole society is now organized according to general state laws. The two kabupaten are divided into several subdistricts ( kecamatan ). The head of the subdistrict ( camat ) is an appointed official. The head of the regency ( bupati ) is chosen by the council of the kabupaten and appointed by the government. The subdistricts are divided into villages ( desa ), with a chosen village head ( lurah ), recognized by the government. In several villages in the Buton area an official of the office of the subdistrict was appointed as village head. In some villages the traditional village council ( sarana kadie' ) is still functioning alongside and in cooperation with the "modern" village administration, as was the case in 1981 in the village Rongi. In other villages the traditional organization has completely disappeared. The present villages consist of one or more former kadie'. The Indonesian government provides a wide range of services including school, police, courts, health services, tax collection, and registration of vital information. (5)

5.4 Post marital residence: After marriage, the couple lives with the bride's family until the husband can build his own house (4)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Warfare with neighboring states ended after the Pax Neerlandica was established in the second half of the seventeenth century. In the past, internal conflicts might arise from disputes over succession to the position of sultan, or over the misbehavior of the sultan or high office holders. Sultans could be dismissed by the representatives of the walaka (the siolimbona ), who also had the right to choose the sultan. Since the incorporation into the colonial state in 1906, conflicts were suppressed first by the colonial power and then by the state of Indonesia. (5)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): No records found for Wolio, but in many parts of Indonesia PDA between opposite sexes before marriage is taboo (5)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No records found

5.8 Village and house organization: The residence pattern was either very concentrated or very dispersed. Both types were the result of the threat of attacks of pirates who ravaged the islands of the sultanate. In 1980 50 percent of the villages in the kabupaten of Buton had between 1,000 and 2,000 inhabitants, 32 percent less than 1,000, and 18 percent more than 2,000 inhabitants. In the kabupaten of Muna the percentages were respectively 63, 17, and 20. Baubau, the capital of Buton, had 17,879 inhabitants and Raha, the capital of

## Wolio

Muna, 13,593 inhabitants. The houses in the villages on the islands are raised off the ground about 1.5 meters and are often sturdily built with barks and planks, a few windows, and a roof of small planks, atap (sago palm leaves), or corrugated iron. (5)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): None

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? No records found

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: In the former sultanate four classes were distinguished: 1) the kaomu, from whom the sultan was chosen and for whom certain positions were reserved; 2) the walaka, who also belonged to the ruling elite: the representatives of the walaka chose the sultan; 3) the *papara*, the inhabitants of the villages, living in rather autonomous communities; and 4) the *batua*, slaves, usually working for the kaomu or the walaka. After 1906 the slaves became free, but only slowly has their position improved. During and after the struggle for independence (1945-1949) the distinction between the different classes was no longer as socially and politically acceptable, but informally it continued to play a role, especially with marriages. Clearly distinct socioeconomic classes are not (yet) present in Butonese society. Thanks to the widespread education system, considerable social mobility exists. (5)

5.12 Trade: From time immemorial the Buton people have been renowned as the seafarers of the Eastern Archipelago. They were traders and transporters, using their *praus* with a carrying capacity of up to about 50 tons. The slave trade was very important for Buton in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the beginning of this century the total number of praus in the sultanate was estimated at 300. In 1981 the island of WangiWangi, one of the Tukangbesi Islands, had 220 sailing praus registered, 150 of which were still in use. A decline in use of sailing praus was paralleled by the increase in motorized sailboats, of which 37 were registered on that island, with a capacity varying between 10 and 20 tons. Because of mobility in Butonese society and the lack of economic opportunities in the area, many Butonese migrate to other parts of Indonesia, especially to the Moluccas. This is in part seasonal migration for the gathering of cloves on the Moluccan islands. (5)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? See *Social organization*

## 6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: No records found

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Traditional healers (*pande'* or bisa in Rongi) still play an important role, especially in villages that are isolated from the capitals of the subdistricts (kecamatan), where at present there are clinics (*puskemas*) with modern medical personnel. The traditional healers usually find supernatural causes for the illnesses and prescribe prayers, offerings, or other rituals to neutralize these causes. The Butonese had an extensive knowledge of medicinal herbs and leaves. (5)

6.2 Stimulants: None

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): In the Muslim towns and villages the main Muslim holidays are celebrated, although in the villages knowledge of these ceremonies is less than complete. In the center, most of the ceremonies contain elements of traditional Butonese religion. In the capitals and the Christian villages, the Christian feasts and ceremonies are held in the way that is usual in Indonesian churches. (5)

6.4 Other rituals: No records found

6.5 Myths (Creation): Muslims believe that Allah (God) created the heavens and the earth in perfect harmony and balance, and that He continues to reign over His creation. Muslims find no conflict between this belief and current scientific theories regarding the creation of earth. (7)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): industrial arts including brass, silver, and pottery. Wolio is becoming more and more just a language of written word so literary art is very prominent (8)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: No records found

6.8 Missionary effect: The first Indonesians to adopt Islam are thought to have done so as early as the eleventh century, although Muslims had visited Indonesia early in the Muslim era. The spread of Islam was driven by increasing trade links outside of the archipelago; in general, traders and the royalty of major kingdoms were the first to adopt the new religion.[citation needed] Dominant kingdoms included Mataram in Central Java, and the sultanates of Ternate and Tidore in the Maluku Islands to the east. By the end of the thirteenth century, Islam had been established in North Sumatra; by the fourteenth in northeast Malaya, Brunei, the southern Philippines and among some courtiers of East Java; and the fifteenth in Malacca and other areas of the Malay Peninsula.[citation needed] Through assimilation Islam had supplanted Hinduism and Buddhism as the dominant religion of Java and Sumatra by the end of the 16th century. At this time, only Bali retained a Hindu majority and the outer islands remained largely animist but would adopt Islam and Christianity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (2)

6.9 RCR revival: No records found

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: For Muslims, funerals follow Muslim rites mixed with some traditional elements. On the one hand the Butonese Muslim knows and more or less believes Muslim teachings about the last day (*hari kiamat*) and the weighing of the good and the bad, going to heaven and hell. On the other hand there is still a strong belief in reincarnation, and many Butonese can tell into which child a grandfather, grandmother, or other deceased relative has returned. (5)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? None

6.12 Is there teknonymy? None

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): Islam is dominant in this area, although in the southern part of Muna there lives a small number of Christians (Roman Catholics), and in the regions (kecamatan) of Rumbia and Poleang, among the roughly 40,000 inhabitants Protestant Christianity is dominant. Because of the way Islam was adopted by and disseminated from the center to the villages, the knowledge of Islam in the villages is rather limited. It was the policy of the elite to spread the religious knowledge to the villages in a limited way, so as to keep them dependent. In the center itself Islam was accepted in

## Wolio

the form of mysticism, or Sufism, which flowered in the beginning of the seventeenth century in Aceh, and from there apparently influenced Buton. Probably Sufism was rather in accordance with the Hinduistic beliefs that preceded Islam here. One remarkable feature of this Sufism in the center of the sultanate Wolio was a belief in reincarnation, which still exists in the present Buton, especially in the center. In the villages the belief in reincarnation was not very strong and was considered to be an official part of Islam as disseminated from the center, according to J. W. Schoorl. Nowadays a more orthodox form of Islam is disseminated throughout Indonesia, via instruction in the state schools by official teachers, and by the provision of sermons ( *chotbah* ) to all the villages for reading during the Friday service.

Various supernatural beings play a role in village life, including guardian spirits of houses, praus, and villages; harvest beings; possession spirits who cause illness; and helpful spirits who provide guidance. The spirits of deceased kin, the *arwah*, still play an important role in the life of the Butonese. They can help their still-living relatives, but can also cause illnesses when they are disturbed by the behavior of these relatives. (5)

### 7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: None

7.2 Piercings: No records found

7.3 Haircut: No records found

7.4 Scarification: None

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): None

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: During this Wedding Ceremony, yellowish oil, extracted from henna leaves is applied on the fingertips of the couple by friends and relatives. It announces their forthcoming unity.

The Inai is a Malay word for henna, a plant used as dye for the Berinai ceremony. "Ber" in Bahasa Malay means "wear", thus Berinai means "to wear" or "to put on" henna as a form of temporary skin decoration for the ceremony. (9)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: In some Islamic marriage ceremonies men will also receive the henna application, but it is most commonly reserved for the bride (9)

7.8 Missionary effect: Education is highly valued for both boys and girls in Wolio society. This emphasis on education has caused their literary art to flourish, resulting in the writing of books and long poems, which have become a part of Wolio culture (4)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: None

### 8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: None

8.2 Sororate, levirate: None

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): Cousins in the first, second, third, and sometimes fourth degree are distinguished by special kinship terms. In most villages marriages with the first cousin are forbidden, except for the nobility. (5)

### 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

During the Sultanate period, the residents conducted trade and communicated with both China and Majapahit Kingdom, on Java Island. Interestingly, the first ruler who governed this region was a queen and the last ruler was a king. It was the last ruler, King Laki Laponto, who became the first Buton Sultan. (6)

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