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**The Study of Islamic Law About The Deceased Muslim
And Its Cultural Symbols In Sumpur Kudus,
West Sumatera**

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Abstract. Every living thing dies. The death of a person leaves an obligation for the living to perform some rituals for the deceased. The rituals have been regulated in such a way according to Islamic Sharia (law). Nevertheless, the practices could not be separated from the local traditions and customs. Their influences can be seen through various symbols used in the rituals for the deceased, as found in Sumpur Kudus, West Sumatra. The community has been using many symbols in carrying out the various rituals for the dead, such as kain unduang-unduang (a kind of white cloth stretched above the grave), parian (a bamboo tree that is used as a water container), payuang panji (an umbrella protecting the dead body along the way to the grave) and daun sicerek (a plant used for fragrance). The people stated that, in general, these symbols contain a deep affection of the living towards the deceased. The type of the study was field research with a qualitative approach. The data was gathered by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation study. The analysis was done descriptively by data reduction, display, and verification (drawing conclusion). The result showed that the Sumpur Kudus community is a Muslim community that does not ignore Islamic law in the organization of their deceased. These symbols serve as tools to show affection of the living towards the deceased. The symbols do not only serve as symbols of affection, but they are also laden with the belief that contain transcendental values.

Keywords: Cultural Symbol, Custom, Deceased, Islamic Sharia

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Abstrak. *Setiap makhluk hidup akan merasakan mati. Kematian seseorang meninggalkan kewajiban bagi yang masih hidup untuk melakukan beberapa kewajiban (ritual). Kewajiban itu sudah diatur sedemikian rupa menurut (hukum) Syariat Islam. Meski demikian, praktik tersebut tidak terlepas dari tradisi dan adat istiadat setempat. Pengaruhnya dapat dilihat melalui berbagai simbol yang digunakan dalam pelaksanaan kewajiban, seperti yang ditemukan di Sumpur Kudus, Sumatera Barat. Berbagai macam simbol telah digunakan masyarakat dalam melaksanakan kewajiban terhadap orang yang telah meninggal, seperti kain unduang-unduang (sejenis kain putih yang direntangkan di atas kuburan), parian (pohon bambu yang digunakan sebagai wadah air), payuang panji (payung yang melindungi jenazah di sepanjang jalan menuju kuburan) dan daun sicerek (tanaman yang digunakan untuk pengharum). Umumnya masyarakat menyatakan bahwa secara umum simbol-simbol tersebut mengandung rasa kasih sayang yang dalam terhadap si mayat. Jenis penelitian adalah penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi. Analisis dilakukan secara deskriptif dengan reduksi data, penyajian, dan verifikasi (penarikan kesimpulan). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat Sumpur Kudus adalah komunitas Muslim yang tidak mengabaikan hukum Islam dalam penyelenggaraan jenazah mereka. Simbol-simbol yang mereka gunakan semata-mata tidak hanya bermakna cinta dan kasih sayang terhadap mereka yang telah meninggal tetapi juga sarat dengan keyakinan yang mengandung nilai-nilai transendental.*

Kata Kunci: *Adat, Hukum Islam, Jenazah, Symbol Budaya*

Introduction

Islam calls all Muslims to always remember death, because God (Allah) states that every living soul will face death. God reminds us in sura Ali Imrân (3): 185 that everyone shall taste death, and only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full, and whoever is removed away from the fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing). In other suras, like in sura az-Zumar (49): 42, it is also affirmed that only God is able to bring death and revive the living soul. In order to face the coming of death, everybody is always reminded to repent for all the sins committed while living in the world. In this tradition (hadith), Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) often reminds everyone to remember the thing which

will terminate the joy of life – death.¹ From the postulates, it is known that Islamic teachings educate all Muslims to remember that one day all animate life will die, because death is something that must be faced.² With the recall of death, Muslims are expected to realize and prepare for the hereafter.

Death is a calamity, which raises responsibility for the living to perform rituals for the deceased. It is stated in many hadiths, among which is a hadith narrated by Abi Hurairah, that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reminds us that the rights of a Muslim over other Muslims are five: to answer the salâm, to visit the sick, to deliver the deceased, to fulfill invitation, and to pray for the person who sneezes.³ This hadith confirms that completing the rituals for the deceased is an obligation of every Muslim. The obligation is fardhu kifâyah, which means that if it has been completed by some Muslims, then the sins of other Muslims, who did not join in the practice, have been aborted.⁴ Even so, whenever there is a death, Muslims usually gather to help perform rituals for the deceased without needing to be informed or invited formally.⁵

The rights and obligations in the rituals for the deceased are two interrelated items. The right of the deceased is the obligation for the living to perform the rituals immediately. The rights and obligations cover four tasks: bathing, enshrouding, performing salah (praying), and burial.⁶ The experts of Islamic sharia agree that the four rights are part of the obligations for all Muslims living surrounding the dead. The Islamic sharia has arranged the rituals for the dead in such a way, but it is still influenced by the variety of cultures in which the deceased lived. Every Muslim community in Indonesia have various traditions and use many different symbols as part of rituals surrounding death.

¹ Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Kahlaniy, *Subul al-Salâm*, Vol. II, Beirut: Dâr Al-Fikr, 2001, p. 88.

² Ernawati, "Kontribusi Kebermaknaan Hidup Bagi Sikap Individu Terhadap Kematian," *Konseling Religi: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam* 5, No. 2 (2014).

³ Al-Bukhâriy, *Sahîh al-Bukhâriy*, Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 2010, p. 148.

⁴ Wahbah al-Zuhailiy, *al-Fiqh al-Islâmiy wa Adillatuh*, Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 2011, p. 1483.

⁵ Adynata, "Studi Hadis-Hadis Mukhtalif Tentang Mengumumkan Kematian (Al-Na'y)," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 3, No. 1 (2015)

⁶ Ibnu Qudâmah, *al-Mughniy*, Volume III, Cairo: Dâr al-Hadîs, 2004, p. 185-186.

Kusuma revealed that the tradition of Palangkaraya people is to wait three days at the tomb even though it is not regulated in Islamic law.⁷ Usually the nuclear family does this although some people still do it on the 1000th day in Madiun.⁸ In some communities, they read al-Qur'an as a reward for the deceased and pray to Allah to forgive their sins. The Acehnese have a tradition of rah ulei in sacred graves, Latifundia calls it makam kuna (ancient tomb).⁹ They pray using the medium of the spirit of a good person buried in the tomb. Arifin does not consider the tradition in accordance with Islamic law.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Jamaluddin assessed the tradition in a different way.¹¹ The traditions of the Kuantan people who come to the mainly sacred graves, pray at the grave so that God forgives their sins and the sins of those who are buried. This will further strengthen their faith and faith in God. Likewise, according to Setiawan, the pilgrimage to the grave is not only to further ensure that every living person will die,¹² but also to commemorate the person who has left and release his longing.¹³ Like other regions, Suwito described that the death tradition carried out by Wong Islam Java (Javanese) as including a banana tree sapling with the same number of children as the deceased before delivering the body to the grave.¹⁴ These are some of the traditions that prevail in the midst of Indonesian Islamic society when a person dies. A similar tradition is also carried out by the people of Sumpur Kudus, Sijunjung Regency, West Sumatera.

⁷ Kusuma, W., "Motivasi Masyarakat Palangka Raya Dalam Pelaksanaan Tradisi Menunggu Kuburan Dalam Tinjauan Hukum Islam," *Jurnal Studi Agama dan Masyarakat* 11, No. 2 (2015).

⁸ Muhammad Ghafar, Pryla Rochmahwati & Mukhibat, "The Harmony of Catholics and Muslims in the Commemorating the 1000th Day of Death Tradition: An Ethnographic Study in Bandungan Saradan Madiun," *Al-Tahrir* 18, No. 2, (2018), p. 265-281.

⁹ Effie Latifundia, "Situs Makam-Makam Kuna di Kabupaten Kuningan Bagian Timur: Kaitannya dengan Religi," *Kapata Arkeologi* 12, No. 1, (2016), p. 59-70.

¹⁰ Muhammad Arifin & Khadijah Binti Mohd Khambali, "Islam dan Akulturasi Budaya Lokal di Aceh (Studi Terhadap Ritual *Rah Ulei* di Kuburan dalam Masyarakat Pidie Aceh)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 15, No. 2, (2016).

¹¹ Jamaluddin, "Tradisi Ziarah Kubur dalam Masyarakat Melayu Kuantan," *Sosial Budaya: Media Komunikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial dan Budaya* 11, No. 2 (2014).

¹² Murtiningsih, "Hakikat Kematian Menurut Tinjauan Tasawuf," *Intizar* 19, No. 2 (2013).

¹³ Kodrat Eko Putro Setiawan, "Nilai Religi Pada Puisi Ziaroh 1," *Indonesian Language Education and Literature* 3, No. 2 (2018), p. 131-142.

¹⁴ Suwito, Agus Sriyanto & Arif Hidayat, "Tradisi dan Ritual Kematian Wong Islam Jawa," *Ibda' Jurnal Kebudayaan Islam* 13, No. 2 (2015).

Based on the background stated above, this study is focused on the various traditions carried out by the Sumpur Kudus community in dealing with and organizing bodies from the first day of death until the next days afterwards. The activities are analyzed from the perspective of Islamic law.

Symbols in the Order of Life

The word symbol comes from the Greek word *sym-ballein*, meaning throwing together an object or action associated to an idea. Other sources also mention *symbolos*, meaning the signs or features telling something to someone. Symbols usually occur based on metonymy, which means the name of other object associated or attributed to, and metaphors, which means the use of other word or expression to refer to other object or concept based on certain similarity between the two.¹⁵ From these ideas, it can be understood that symbol is a form that marks something else other than the embodiment of the symbol itself.

Morissan explains that Susanne Langer proposed a theory of symbols containing a number of concepts and provided a standard or benchmark for the tradition of semiotics.¹⁶ According to her, symbols are very important in philosophy since symbols are the cause for the existence of knowledge and understanding of human beings. Human feelings are mediated by a number of concepts, languages, and symbols, since they need them. Symbols work in a more complex way by allowing a person to think (instrument of thought) about something which is separated from the immediate presence of a sign. Symbols become central to human life, and humans have the ability to use symbols; so that the need for symbols is as important as the need for food, water, and rest. For example, Muhammadiyah did not take the elements and content of Javanese culture for granted. This movement tried to undermine some obsolete elements of Javanese culture and to rationalize and modernize some other elements. Dreaming of the past which prevailed in Javanese society was replaced by the idea of progress, while mysticism was substituted by activism. This movement also tried to simplify the excessive symbolism in the Javanese community, to change Javanese dependence on some spirits to *tauḥîd*.¹⁷

¹⁵ Alex Sobur, *Semiotika Komunikasi* Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2009, p. 155.

¹⁶ Morissan, *Teori Komunikasi Individu Hingga Massa*, Jakarta: Kencana, 2003, p. 15.

¹⁷ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Revealing the Neglected Missions: Some Comments on the Javanese Elements of Muhammadiyah Reformism," *Studia Islamika* 12, No. 1 (2005), p. 125.

Symbols have, at least, several functions: first, symbols allow people to connect to the material and social worlds because with symbols they can give names, create categories, and remember objects encountered. Second, symbols improve the ability of people to perceive the environment. Third, symbols improve thinking ability. Fourth, symbols improve the ability of people to solve problems. Fifth, the use of symbols allows people to transcend time, space, and even their persona.¹⁸ Based on that, symbols can be distinguished in several categories. Firstly, universal symbols, which are associated with arketipos, like sleeping symbolizes death. Secondly, individual symbols, that can usually be interpreted in the overall context of an individual's work. Thirdly, cultural symbols, which are underlined by a particular culture, such as Taman Mini Indonesia Indah as the miniature representation of Indonesia.¹⁹

All the cultural meanings are created by using symbols, because meaning can be stored in one or some symbols. Dienaputra stated that the visualization of the symbol undergoes and incredibly dynamic development in both element and sense of form. There are several factors which cause the coming out of visual dynamics on political parties symbols such as the experience of national history, culture built up in the society and the improvement of design technology. The dynamics of the element of form show a visual reality that the moon and the star which are usually regarded as the representation of Islamic political parties are not always used by Islamic political parties and they are not only used by them as their symbols as well.²⁰ Suharto stated that the macan kumbang (a tiger in a cage) is a visual language that is full of messages and values. In the context of Javanese Islam, the tiger is a wild creature as a symbol of wild lust that has to be caged and chained. Disciplining the passions become an important theme of macan kumbang message.²¹ Baehaqie stated that jenang mancawarna (multicolored jenang) is known as jenang pepak (complete jenang), a name of jenang in a celebration offerings of Javanese community. Javanese community have unique perspective of multiculturalism as reflected in the four colours of jenang. The colours have semiotic-meanings

¹⁸ Murodi, *Komunikasi antar Budaya di Era Budaya Siberia*, Jakarta: Kencana, 2012, p. 92.

¹⁹ Alex Sobur, *Semiotika...*, p. 157.

²⁰ Reiza D. Dienaputra, "Transformasi Visual Lambang-Lambang Partai Politik Islam (1955-2004)," *ITB J. Vis Art and Des* 3, No. 1 (2009), p. 89.

²¹ Suharto, "Makna Religious Islam dalam Seni Ukir Macan Kumbang," *Ibda' Jurnal Kebudayaan Islam* 10, No. 2 (2012), p. 255.

that people ought to be aware and respect to different thinking of his connections who are bound in the kiblat papat lime pencer (east, west, north and south).²²

Cultural knowledge is more than a collection of symbols. All symbols, either in the form of a word spoken, a material object, a gesture, a place of worship, or a particular event, are parts of a symbol system. A symbol becomes an object or event that points to a meaning. In this case, the power of a religion, particularly Islam, lies on the ability of its symbols to formulate the belief of the place where the values are formed and built.²³ Islam and the culture of its people introduce many symbols used in worship and muâmalah (livelihood). For example, the Kaaba is a symbol which is used to indicate the Qibla (direction in salah (daily prays)) and to unify all Muslims all over the world. Tabut is the name given to the commemoration of Muharram as it is observed in Bengkulu, Indonesia. The basic tradition connected with its observance have their origins in Muslim India. However the tabut has, over the course of its development in Bengkulu, absorbed and incorporated various local elements. Recently the tabut festival has come to be seen as a symbol of local Bengkulu culture.²⁴ There are also other symbols that characterize Muslims, such as veils, symbols on the flags of certain countries, mosques and musallas which reflect the meaning that wherever there is a mosque or musalla, there must be Muslims. A mosque is a cultural product which is related to a system of ideas and community activities. The elements architecture Great Mosque of Surakarta have similar visual characteristics with a traditional Javanese (joglo). The creation of architectural elements of the mosque have some educational values of local wisdom such as the value of truth, moral, aesthetic and religious.²⁵ A mosque is not only as the symbol of syi'ar Islam for praying but also as something which has wider role. It is a creation of Islamic cultural value. A mosque is born from the knowledge which is inspired from spiritual values.

²² Imam Baehaqie, "Jenang Mancawarna: Sebuah Simbol Multikulturalisme Masyarakat Jawa," *Jurnal Komunitas: Research and Learning in Sociology and Anthropology* 6, No. 1 (2014), p. 180.

²³ Yusri Mohamad Ramli, "Agama dalam Tentukur Antropologi Simbolik Clifford Geertz" *International Journal of Islamic Thought*. Vol. I, Bangi: 2012, p. 62.

²⁴ R. Michael Feener, "Tabut: Muharram Observances in the History of Bengkulu," *Studia Islamika* 6, No. 2 (1999), p. 92.

²⁵ Esterica Yunianti, "Estetika Unsur-Unsur Arsitektur Bangunan Masjid Agung Surakarta," *Catharsis: Journal of Arts Education* 4, No. 1 (2015), p. 15.

Therefore, it reminds and guides Muslim to come back to God.²⁶ The Cheng Ho Mosque is one of the ethnic Chinese cultural identities in contemporary Indonesia. Currently, it is not only as a place of worship for Chinese Islam, but also as a religious tourism destination as well as new media to learn about Islamic Chinese cultures in Indonesia.²⁷ Syam stated that the religion identity is an important dimension for all societies. The meaning of communication symbol in a family with different religious is due to language, rituals, national days, food and dress.²⁸ A relatively new Islamic symbol is the introduction of the international halal label on food, beverage, cosmetics and medicine packages. The word of halal only exists in Islam, but it has become a worldwide symbol as the manifestation of the religious belief in consuming foods, beverages, cosmetics, and medicine, which had been difficult to know if it was halal. Therefore, there are many cultural aspects, like the use of symbols in the rituals, are found, even in Sumpur Kudus, West Sumatera Indonesia.

The Territory of Raja Ibadat (Sumpur Kudus)

Administratively, Sumpur Kudus is one of the districts in Sijunjung. In Minangkabau history, Sumpur Kudus is included in Luhak (domain) Tanah Datar. In the legend, the formation of three Luhaks in Minangkabau was the achievement of two Minangkabau governance experts, Datuk Ketumanggungan and Datuk Perpatih. The three luhaks are Luhak Tanah Datar, Luhak Agam, and Luhak 50 Kota. These three luhaks were formed after the death of the King Minangkabau in 1680 AD, who was replaced by three kings ruling each of the luhak. The three kings were Rajo Nan Tigo. Rajo Alam, who was based in Pagaruyung; Rajo Adat, who was based in Buo Lintau; and Rajo Ibadat in Sumpur Kudus.²⁹ Rajo Alam was the most prominent king among the three. As the name implies, Sumpur Kudus is known for its Minangkabau community and strong Islamic teachings in the history of Rajo Ibadat in this region.

²⁶ Aulia Fikriarini Muchlis, "Masjid: Bentuk Manifestasi Seni dan Kebudayaan," *El-Harakah* 11, No. 1 (2009), p. 1.

²⁷ Choirul Mahfud, "The Role of Cheng Ho Mosque, The New Silk Road Indonesia-China Relations in Islamic Cultural Identity," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 8, No. 1 (2014), p. 23

²⁸ Nia Kurniati Syam, Arifin Syatibi and Moh. Jibril Imperial Day, "Simbol-Simbol dalam Komunikasi Keluarga Beda Agama," *Mimbar* 31, No. 2 (2015), p. 419.

²⁹ Chairul Anwar, *Hukum Adat Indonesia Meninjau Hukum Adat Minangkabau*, Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1997, p. 52.

In the present context, Sumpur Kudus is one of the districts in Sijunjung, West Sumatra. Geographically, this district lies between 0°-26° SL and 100°-54.29° EL, with a moderate climate, and 380 meters above sea level. To the west and east of Sumpur Kudus, there are hilly and mountainous areas; part of which has been used for agriculture. Oral tradition indicates the name Sumpur Kudus came from the words of sumpah kudus (literally, holy oath) and the sempurna kudus (literally, perfect holy). Sumpur Kudus has a unique history: the center of the King Ibadat government, the center of the Padri movement, and the central government of the Emergency Government of the Republic of Indonesia.³⁰ Although it is known as the territory of King Ibadat, the life of the society cannot be separated from the Minangkabau customs, so that the implementation of custom and religion cannot be separated. The tie is seen in various religious rituals, including in the lengthy rituals for the deceased.

The use of cultural symbols in the main religious rituals, especially in the rituals for the deceased, is obviously seen in Indonesian societies. As in the West Sumatra areas, which are dominated by Muslim communities, the daily practices of Islamic teachings are accompanied by the use of certain symbols which are sometimes difficult to understand. Sumpur Kudus is one of the areas which uses many symbols in the rituals for the deceased. All of the residents are Muslims and known as religious followers. For example, the people always burn frankincense at every du'a (prayer, supplication) in every residence, either in mourning or in celebrating du'as, like after Eid. Other symbols are also used in the rituals for the deceased. For example, after the dead body is buried, the grave is equipped with various items which shows that the new grave is different from the other graves. The items are the fence with a span of white cloth on it, or the grave is roofed in such a way that it resembles a small house. At the head of the grave, an umbrella is opened and a parian (bamboo water container) is hung. There are still many other symbols used in the rituals for the deceased, starting from the first day until the 110th day after the death, and is celebrated annually in a simple ceremony.

On the other hand, advances in technology and information have also penetrated the district. For example, sophisticated mobile phones are used by all citizens of various ages, parabolic antennas for digital televisions that

³⁰ Noviyanty Awaluddin, ed., *Kerajaan Minangkabau dalam Pusaran Badai Zaman*, Padang: Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, UPTD Museum Adityawarman, 2015, p. 31-32.

have at least 10 national television channels and many world television channels are in almost every house. This exposes society to, at least, two circumstances. First, the use of sophisticated technology with unlimited usage can affect patterns of life, attitude, thinking, and societal behavior. Secondly, the existence of technology positively provides various facilities for people to receive religious teachings, especially Islam, which are broadcast every day on many television channels. However, this situation does not seem to influence the use of symbols and traditions in their rituals for the deceased.

In Sumpur Kudus, if a person dies, the rituals for the deceased should start immediately. The process covers the community activities in handling the dead, the rituals (bathing, enshrouding, performing salah for the deceased, and burying), and others after the burial activities. In principle, the rituals do not contradict the provisions of Islamic Sharia, but they are also coloured by various activities using certain symbols and are lengthy. Next, the activities are described in accordance with the order performed by the community of Sumpur Kudus. Firstly, *mandi kubau* (kubau bathing). Once somebody is confirmed dead, his/her family members immediately bathes the dead body. This is called *mandi kubau*. This bathing is not yet a part of the rituals for the deceased preceding the enshrouding. After the *mandi kubau*, the dead body is dressed in clean clothes and placed in a specific place in the middle of the house facing Qibla. The people say that the main purpose of this bathing is to clean the dead body so that every bad thing which can cause disgrace (gossip in the community) is removed.³¹ It will maintain the pride of the deceased, especially if the deceased had long illness and had many blemishes on the body. In addition, the *mandi kubau* is also aimed for keeping the self-esteem of the family by preventing people to talk about the family neglecting the deceased while she/he was still alive.

Secondly, the second bathing before enshrouding. After the news of the death spreads, the villagers immediately arrive bringing rice. When the moment comes, they prepare to bath the dead body. The parties involved are not only immediate family but also neighbors and distant relatives. There is no practice against the provisions of the *sharak* (Sharia) until this step. While the body is being bathed, the family members are preparing the shrouds, usually led by a tribal *ulama* (Islamic leader), in a different room. During the observation, it was noted that not everybody is eligible to tear/cut the shroud;

³¹ Interview with Sudirman Tuangku Kuniang, Local Religious Leader, Sumpur Kudus, August 15, 2018.

only someone who is *dituakan selangkah* (literally, considered a step elder) and considered qualified in religious matters. The tearing is preceded by a certain prayer led by the tribal ulama. In an observation, there was a young man that tried to tear the shroud without being preceded by the elder. He did not manage to do it even with the help of a sharp scissors. Then the tribal ulama took over and prayed before starting to tear the shroud. After that, the ulama handed the young man the shroud to continue cutting until the shroud was ready to be used for the bathed dead body. Thirdly, the dead body is prayed for and buried. After the dead body is dressed with the shroud, the community performed *shalah jenazah* (a specific *shalah* for the deceased) together at the house of the deceased. The *shalah* is mostly performed in house rather than in a mosque or *musalla*, unless the house is close to a mosque. This is due to the distance of the mosque/*musalla* from settlements. In a different site, the residents prepare a grave. Usually, the people are buried in a *pondam* (the burial complex) of tribal graves, because each clan has its own burial complex. This grave is fenced with bamboo. The people of Sumpur Kudus call it *manyasak kubua* (fencing the grave).

According to the community, the fence is needed to protect the grave from animals roaming around because cattle are not caged and roped in this *nagari*, except at night; they are deliberately left out by the owner. At the top of the grave, a stone is plugged on the head position. The stone, having a typical and unique shape and pattern, that has long been a river rock, is usually taken from *Batang* (river) *Sirukam* in Sumpur Kudus. Around the stone, *kencur* (*kaempferia galanga*, commonly used as a cooking spice) and *sicerek* (*clausena excavata*) are planted. After the dead body is buried, one aspect that must be hastened as someone dies has been completed. There are still some other rituals in the tradition of the Sumpur Kudus community completed within the next 110 days and continued annually.

The Routine Activities after the Burial

The processions after the burial takes place within 110 days, started from the first day after the burial to the 110th day. Within this span, symbols are always used. On the first day, the activity undertaken is *pengajian bersama* (a joint recitation) by the community. *Sura Yasin* is widely recited. Before the recitation, frankincense is burnt on the embers provided in a dish, which is called *api do'a* (the prayer fire) by the community. The recitations take a maximum of 15 minutes and is closed with a prayer reading. This activity is conducted at night of the death from 9 pm to 10 pm. On the second day, the day after the deceased is buried, the women of close

relatives and neighbors come to dry the paddy of the deceased family. The purpose is to make it easier for the family to provide rice to serve the mourners who will start visiting on the third day until the next 110 days.³² In the evening, the joint recitations keep continuing for approximately 15 minutes. The activities are closed with a prayer reading accompanied by the burning of frankincense. The special event starting on the second day is the arrival of one of the nearest family members to pray every morning. It is done continually until the seventh day. The person in charge of this prayer is not decided regularly, only those with spare time will pray. However, on the seventh day, a special person is appointed to pray at the house daily until the 110th day. The third day is called *manigo ari*. The activities on this day are the same as the previous days. In the morning, there is the prayer by the *api do'a*. In the evening, the mourners gather and perform the joint recitation. After that, they are served dinner by the family. The activities are closed with praying together. On the fourth, fifth, and sixth days, there are no special activities, except the coming of one of the close relatives to lead the prayers every morning. The space is used by the deceased family to prepare everything necessary for holding the prayer on the seventh day. The seventh day is called *manujua ari*. On this day, the routine activities like in the previous days still occur, such as praying every morning, recitation, and praying together in the evening. However, the seventh day seems to be a very special day for the deceased family. The family holds a ceremony which is more or less similar to the *walimatul'ursy* (the marriage feast). The family prepares at least one goat to serve visitors. Some of them are not specifically invited, those related to the *tali adat* (literally, custom ropes) and *tali darah* (blood lines). Other than these two groups, guests are invited by the deceased family.³³

Some traditional leaders state that *manujua ari* has shifted among ordinary people; some efforts have been done to leave this tradition. The effort fails because of its strong tradition entrenched and strengthened within the circle of *niniak mamak* (the leader of the clans). After all, it is difficult for people not to perform these rituals, especially *manujua ari*, because when somebody is reluctant and unwilling to do so, she/he will get a moral/social punishment in the form of gossip and exile.³⁴ This punishment is known as

³² Interview with Sarwin, Nuclear Family of the Deceased, Sumpur Kudus, August 15, 2018.

³³ Interview with Arjunaidi, Datuak Rajo Aceh Datuak Manti Godang *Nagari* (Leader of the Clan), Sumpur Kudus, August 22, 2018.

³⁴ Chairul Anwar, *Hukum...*, p. 147.

dibuang sepanjang adat (exiled/discarded along the custom/life). In addition, they are subject to customary penalties in the form of an obligation to pay fines as much as the expenses incurred in the activities of *manujua ari*. When the fines have been paid by a family member, all debts are considered paid off and all penalties are repealed, then the family members can return and be accepted in the society.³⁵ After the ceremony on the seventh day, only routine activities are carried out for the next days. One person of the family comes to pray every morning. In the evening, the nearest relatives do a joint recitation, or only the sura Yasin recitation (*yasinan*), *shalawat*. They are closed with praying together. These practices continue until the fourteenth day, the local people call it *manduo kali tujua* (two times seven days). The fourteenth day is better known as *maambiak janji* day (the day of taking the promise). It is not conducted in the home of the deceased family but at the *bako's* house, the house of the father's family.³⁶ Basically, there is no different activity done on the fourteenth day. Usually, family members and invited neighbors recite the Qur'an, *tahlil*, and *yasinan* together in the *bako's* house, and close with praying together. Then, the visitors are served dinner as usual. After the fourteenth day, there are no different activities other than the routines until the fortieth day after death. The commemoration of death on this fortieth day almost has a similar echo to *manujua ari*. The family invites friends and neighbors. The activities undertaken are the same routines as in the previous days. In addition to the day, the night activities are filled with *maulud* (*mawlid*), which is reciting together *sarofa 6*, *barzanji*, *yasinan*, and *tahlilan*. The activities will usually be closed with praying and end with a meal together which has been prepared by the family. Some people state that the same activities are also done in the commemoration of the forty-fourth day. Nevertheless, the *maampek pulua ampek ari* is not implemented thoroughly by the community.

After the fortieth day of commemoration, the routines are suspended for some time, except someone has been appointed to pray every morning. The activities are held again on the hundredth day. People usually call this activity *manyaratui ari*. The celebration is as great as the fortieth day. There is a considerable amount of funds required for this event because the invitation is usually spread throughout the village. Thus, at least one goat is cooked for this event. The guests come during the day. At night, only the

³⁵ Interview with M. Akhir Lo, *Datuak Magek Sondi Adat* (Leader of the Clan), Sumpur Kudus, September, 2, 2018.

³⁶ Interview with Arjunaidi, *Datuak Rajo Aceh Datuak Manti Godang Nagari* (Leader of the Clan), Sumpur Kudus, August, 22, 2018

closest relatives attend the routines. As usual, the event performs maulud, by reciting sarofa 6 (kitab kuning, which is commonly used in the suluk activities), reciting yasin (yasinan), and tahlilan. A group has been assigned to manage this maulud event. As it finishes, all members of the group are equipped with food called shadaqah. The society does not like to accept it as payment.³⁷ The family and relatives meeting held on this night is also used to prepare for the final celebration, which is the 110th day. On this day, there are two different activities held. Firstly, the routine activities of recitations performed on the evening. Secondly, after the recitations, there is a meeting to determine the event on the pondam, the grave complex. On the appointed day, joint recitations, tanam batu mijan (marking the grave with a large stone), and the joint meal are held at the grave. The meal is funded jointly by the people related by tali darah (kinship) and tali adat (custom). The dishes served always consist of chicken curry, rice, white flour porridge, and nisan (sweetmeat). The food composition is still preserved until today. Each jamba (a composition of several foods arranged in a large round-shaped container) with the four types of dishes is always equipped with carano containing siriah (betel), pinang (areca nut), gambia (gambir), and sodah (whiting), similar to the one used for a marriage proposal. According to the customary officials, the purpose of the jamba equipped with the carano is to show sayang lah baragiah, sakutu lah babolah (literally, love has been given, ally has been split). It refers to the deliberation as it was at the wedding by using the carano symbol. As in divorce caused by death, niniak mamak is also deliberate by using the same carano. The meeting is related to the issue of assets and debt of the deceased, kalau ado baagiah cari, kalau bautang samo dibaia, omeh topatan tingga, omeh pambao kambali.³⁸ The phrase has deep meaning; if somebody dies in Sumpur Kudus; before marriage, he brought harta bawaan (the property carried from his family), the property grows during his marriage then. After he dies, the harta bawaan is given back to his family, while the wealth acquired during the marriage belongs to his wife and children. If he has debt, both sources of the property are used to pay the debt. In that case, carano placed in the middle of the deliberation as the symbol of mediation to prevent disputes among family members during the talk on heritage.

In other words, the things which must be settled immediately as someone dies: the debts, will, and inheritance, are settled on the 110th day.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Interview with M. Akhir Lo, Datuak Magek Sondi Adat, (Leader of the Clan), Sumpur Kudus, September, 2, 2018.

All of these are settled in accordance with the terms and conditions of Islam and custom. Yet, not all dead people are treated this way; only married adults or those with custom titles. Hence, it is not applied to children or teenagers, because they do not deal with the above related issues that require both sharia and custom solutions. After the completion of the debts, will, and inheritance, the event is closed with praying together. This closing prayer is led by an officer who had been appointed on the seventh day as the one who prays every morning at the home of the deceased. This also marks the end of his duties as the reader/leader of prayer. With the end of this prayer, the procession and activities of the dead body for 110 days has ended. Basically, the procession for the deceased has been completed within 110 days. However, there is another commemoration of the death commonly done by the community. They call it *manopati bulan*. This event is only done by the closest family. The purpose is to commemorate the month/day of death of the deceased by reciting and praying together on the day and month of the death. When the praying is performed, the *api do'a* is always smoking at the corner of the room.

The Meaning and Role of Symbols in the Rituals for the Deceased in Islamic Law

The use of symbols in worshiping is a form of interpretation and understanding of a community on religious teachings. People should know the meaning and function of the symbols, likewise the people of Sumpur Kudus who use a lot of symbols in their rituals of worshiping, especially in the rituals for the deceased. The symbols have special meanings and roles in their lives. They are presented below by describing the meaning and role interpreted by society. Firstly, frankincense (*kemeyan*). Frankincense is the sap coming from a certain species of wood. The sap is easily obtained by the people of Sumpur Kudus because they live close to the forest in which the trees producing frankincense grow. Frankincense is also traded in the local market. According to a local ulama, and confirmed by the community, the frankincense actually comes from the tin wood that grows in heaven,³⁹ as God speaks of it in the Quran by the *at-tin* pronunciation in sura *at-Tin* (95): 1. Frankincense, about the size of a green bean, is used by putting it on a dish container over ashes and embers. The burning Frankincense produces smoke with a strong and distinctive smell. The people call this burning frankincense - *api do'a*. It keeps producing smoke during the joint prayer.

³⁹ Interview with Sudirman Tuangku Kuniang, Local Religious Leader, Sumpur Kudus, August, 15, 2018

When the frankincense is running out during prayer, the family members add some more. People believe that the use of frankincense accompanying prayer is a tradition from ancestors of Hinduism.⁴⁰ Frankincense was used for the transition from the custom of jahiliyah (Hindu) to the teaching of Islam; so that Islam was easily accepted. According to the community leaders, the use of frankincense accompanying prayers does not contradict the teachings of Islam. They argue that angels like the fragrant smell; and the burning frankincense smells fragrant. The frankincense fragrance becomes the signal to the angels that people are praying, especially for the person who has just died. Thus, the angels, as the mediators between man and God, can carry their prayers to God.⁴¹ Api do'a is commonly used in noble activities, such as in joint recitations and prayers, like when paying zakat after the harvest (which is called bakaua by the community), baby bathing, akikah (aqiqah), Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. It is also used in activities of condolence, such as the famine, plague, and rituals for the deceased, starting from the first day of the death until day 110th, and always repeated every manopati bulan. Thus, it is almost certain that every house in Sumpur Kudus holds frankincense for the api do'a. More moderate young people think that these things are no longer needed. However, the leaders of the community, both the religious and custom leaders, cannot accept this and still maintain the tradition. The sound of reformation is not really announced in this region.⁴²

Secondly, fences and roofs of graves. After the dead body is buried, the community immediately manyasak or fences the grave; some also plant a permanent tombstone. The main purpose of fencing is to protect from cattle, which are usually grazing freely around the village, stepping on the grave. The fence is equipped with a rumbia roof (the woven coconut leaves) or a zinc roof. The graveyard looks like a small house amongst the grave complex. The use of zinc for the roof is recent; it occurred within the last 10 or 15 years, during this time rumbia was more difficult to obtain and the durability of the zinc roof is much longer than rumbia. The community argues that the use of the roof is intended to reflect the high affection of the family members to the deceased. They say that graves equipped with zinc

⁴⁰ Interview with Abdurrahman Petosori. Local Religious Leader, Sumpur Kudus, October, 7, 2018.

⁴¹ Interview with Amran Datuak Nago Sati, Leader of the Clan, Sumpur Kudus, October, 7, 2018.

⁴² Zaim Rais, "The Minangkabau Traditional Response to the Modernist Movement," *Thesis*, Canada: McGill University, 1994.

roofs can protect the body from the rain and the heat of the sun.⁴³ In addition, the use of a zinc roof, depending on the finances of the family members, is also to appreciate the services of the deceased.

Thirdly, kain unduang-unduang. Kain Unduang-unduang is a kind of white cloth stretched above the grave. There is a different opinion among people about the origin and usefulness of the cloth. Some argue that this cloth is waste cloth used as the cover for the dead body whilst bathing him.⁴⁴ Others argue that the fabric is the unused shroud and people are not willing to reuse them. Some others say that they did intentionally buy the cloth separately from the shroud.⁴⁵ Like the name, unduang-unduang, people say that the cloth is useful as shelter for the deceased. This resembles the love and affection of the family to the deceased, just like when he provided shelter in the family during his life.⁴⁶

Fourthly, payung panji. Payung panji is the umbrella protecting the dead body along the way to the grave. After the burial, the umbrella is placed on the grave at the head position. In the old days, an umbrella was not used; a head cover (tuduang) made from pandan leaves was used instead. The time changes the tradition from tuduang into payung panji. The use of payung panji is intended to shelter the deceased in the mahsyar (afterlife) field and to accompany him to the heaven. It is also said that payung panji is one of the objects which is brought to the grave.⁴⁷ According to people, the objects which are usually brought to the grave are not brought back home. They are believed to cause disaster. In addition, most people believe that payung panji sheltering of the deceased is a form of love and affection of the family members. This affection is more visible when the deceased is a child; the umbrellas used are usually colorful, better qualified, and new.⁴⁸

⁴³ Interview with Syafi'iy, Nuclear Family of the Deceased, Sumpur Kudus, October, 10, 2018.

⁴⁴ Interview with Nini, Bundo Kandung (A Title Applied to Senior Women in Clan), Sumpur Kudus, October, 10, 2018.

⁴⁵ Interview with Nurhayati, Bundo Kandung, Sumpur Kudus, September 12, 2018.

⁴⁶ Interview with Bayar, Nuclear Family of the Deceased, Sumpur Kudus, October, 10, 2018.

⁴⁷ Amir M.S., *Adat Minangkabau: Pola dan Tujuan Hidup Orang Minang*, Jakarta: Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2003, p. 14-15.

⁴⁸ Interview with M. Akhir Lo, Datuak Magek Sondi Adat, Leader of the Clan, Sumpur Kudus, August 19, 2018.

Fifthly, parian. Parian is a bamboo tree which is made for a water container. In the past, people used parian to bring the drinking water from a well far away from home. After the water and buckets are easily obtained, parian is not used anymore, except for the traditional medical tools. In the Sumpur Kudus community, parian is still used in the rituals for the deceased. It is usually placed at the head of the grave. It is deliberately filled with plain water, either taken from a well or from the PDAM (Indonesian regional water utility company) pipes. The water is called aia talaqin (talaqin water) which is used to water the grave after it is cleaned. While watering the grave, the talqin prayer is recited: *sadaqallâhu sârahu wa baradallâhu madja'ahu wa ja'ala al-jannata masywâhu birahmatika yâ arhamarrâhimîn*. On this basis, the water inside the parian is called aia talaqin. The grave watering is done as many as seven mornings after burial (approximately one week). According to a local religious leader, by using the water, it is expected that the prayers are received by the deceased so that his soul is awoken when the dead body is touched by the water, and the deceased knows that the living maintain high affection towards him/her.⁴⁹ The water from the parian is used as the manifestation of affection of the heirs, by refreshing and bathing the dead body while reciting the above prayers.

Sixth, sicerek (*cluasena excavata*) and kencur (*kaempferia galanga*). Sicerek is a plant with a fragrant scent. In some parts of West Sumatra, such as Payakumbuh, Lima Puluh Kota, and Tanah Datar, sicerek leaves are mixed with several other plant species used for medicine. The disease treated with sicerek is usually associated with the ghaib (unseen) things, such as possessed, tasapo (disturbed by the evil spirits), jimbalang (shocked by the evil spirits), and palasik (the devil in the human form that sucks the infant's blood indirectly through the top of its head). The leaves which are widely used are the sicerek that grow above or around graves because they are considered more efficacious in treating disease. The people of Sumpur Kudus also use sicerek leaves for measurement in drying paddies, medication, and in the rituals for the deceased. When they dry a paddy, a sprig of sicerek leaf is used to measure the paddy's dryness. When the leaf has dried up, it means that the paddy is also dry and ready to pound into rice. Sicerek leaves are also used in the rituals for the deceased. When a house is passed by the dead body during the way to his/her grave, people insert a sprig of the leaf in their fence as a form/symbol of rejecting bala or

⁴⁹ Interview with Sudirman Tuangku Kuniang, Local Religious Leader, August, 15, 2018.

calamity.⁵⁰ Sicerek is also planted in the upper or lower part of the grave. Kencur is also usually found in the grave, which is usually used as a cooking spice. Seventh, carano. Carano is one of the Minangkabau customary objects which is used as a container for the custom objects used in the traditional ceremonies. The objects are siriah leaves, pinang muda, gambia leaves or sap, and sodah, which are used in the ceremony of marriage and welcoming guests, for instance. In Sumpur Kudus, carano with the same content is also used in the rituals for the deceased on the 110th day. A custom leader mentions that carano is meant as a prevention and mediator of family disputes, because a very sensitive issue related to the property of the deceased is discussed on the 110th day. There is usually possibility of dispute among the family members when the property, debts, and will are being discussed. After the custom leaders, niniak mamak barampek (the four pangulu, malin, manti, and dubalang), are sitting, carano must be there to reflect caro urang tuo or the way of the elders, the mediators.⁵¹ Thus, carano becomes a symbol for the parties who are facing each other to control emotion during the deliberation.⁵²

The Sacred Graves

The people of Sumpur Kudus believe that there are some sacred graves in this area. The keramat (sacred) term is based on the religious qualities of the people buried in the graves; the ulamas whose owned karomah (nobility) and other excellence during their lifetimes. They are known to be very close to Allah S.W.T, so the community makes them as the wasilah or mediator.⁵³ Among them are the graves of Gayek Kubang, Gayek Suduik, Gayek Sasak, Gayek Cimbatuang, Gayek Kubelu, Gayek Cumbio, and Inyik Tanario. Among these seven sacred graves, Gayek Bawah Kubang's grave is the site most widely used to perform various rituals of worshiping and other social activities. This grave has been renovated in such a way that it resembles the dome of a mosque. The community mentions that the graves always provide magical signs as an initial sign of certain phenomena in the region. For example, the graves can produce distinctive

⁵⁰ Interview with MR. Suanggi, Datuak Parpatiah Niniak/Rajo Nagari, Leader of the Clan, Sumpur Kudus August 16, 2018.

⁵¹ Interview with MR. Suanggi, Datuak Parpatiah Niniak/Rajo Nagari, Leader of the Clan, Sumpur Kudus August 16, 2018.

⁵² Interview with Arjunaidi, Datuak Rajo Aceh Datuak Manti Godang Nagari (Leader of the Clan), Sumpur Kudus, August, 22, 2018.

⁵³ Kafrawi Ridwan, ed. *Ensiklopedi Islam*, Vol. 5, Jakarta: Ichtiar Baru Van Hoeve, 1999, p. 195.

sounds or emit glittering lights as the signs of the beginning of the dry season, plague, rice pests, and other calamities, as experienced by some residents.⁵⁴ These phenomena increase the spirit of the Sumpur Kudus community to perform various activities, such as eating and praying together around the graves. The activities undertaken by the community in the sacred graves include:

- a. Praying together (always with the *api do'a*) as the dry season occurs.
- b. Performing *istisqa'* *shalah* (the *shalah* begging for the rain).
- c. Praying together when calamities of disease and pests plague cattle and paddies.
- d. Praying and eating together on Eid.
- e. Praying and committing *nazar* (vow), as well as the place to fulfill the *nazar*. For instance, a person takes a vow to feed orphans if he could make something. As he is successful, orphans are taken to the graves then treated with food in accordance with the vow.
- f. *Bakaua* is the tradition of the community of Sumpur Kudus to perform *syukuran* (thanksgiving) for the harvest. The activity held is usually cooking a variety of foods then praying and eating together.

The Symbols in Islamic (Sharia) Teachings

God has blessed human beings with a feeling of love and affection, either to the children, parents, wife, relatives, friends, as well as to animals and the environment. The feeling is very abstract and cannot be seen; it can only be felt, expressed, and manifested through certain symbols in accordance with the wishes and ways of a person to show it. Making certain symbols to show feelings of love and affection is not forbidden in Islam, as long as the symbols are not associated with a specific worship forbidden by the regulations of God and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is because the practices of worship have their own principles based on the detailed *dalils* (postulates). Principally, worship is prohibited until there is a postulate published containing an order to practice it. If a Muslim performs a worship that is not postulated in the *Qur'an* and *Sunna*, it is seen as a *bid'ah* (heresy) that must be corrected. The symbols used by the Sumpur Kudus community are basically regarded as not forbidden in the Islamic *sharia*, such as fencing a grave with wood and using *carano* on the 110th day. These symbols actually do not affect worship, likewise the symbols that essentially

⁵⁴ Interview with Sudirman Tuangku Kuniang, Local Religious Leader, Sumpur Kudus, August 15, 2018.

mean love and affection of the living for the dead. However, using frankincense in prayers has been agreed upon by the ulama's as a bid'ah, which should be corrected. God states in the Qur'an that it is obligatory to pray directly only to Him; God will grant it, because God is very close to servants (sura al-Baqarah (2): 186). On this basis, there is a view that frankincense should not be used as the intermediary between men and God.

Conclusion

There are at least nine symbols used by the Sumpur Kudus community in carrying out the rituals for the deceased and afterwards. These symbols contain certain meanings and roles in the understanding of the people. Among the symbols, there are some of the Hindu relics and there are other traditions of the local community. In general, these symbols serve as tools to show affection of the living towards the deceased. The symbols do not only serve as symbols of affection, but they are also laden with the belief that contain transcendental values. For example, people believe that the graves equipped with zinc roofs will protect the deceased from the rain and heat, even if the deceased is deep underground and does not require the protection a roof provides. The use of payung panji is meant to shelter the deceased in the mahsyar field (life after death) and to accompany him to heaven. The use of water in the parian is expected so that the prayers are received by the deceased and his soul is awakened when the water touches his body and then he knows that the people who are still alive maintain their love and affection. The fence of the house passed by the deceased on the way to the grave must be inserted with a sprig of sicerek which is understood by the community to function as a form of protection against calamities. These are a part of the examples of the meaning of using of symbols in the rituals administered for the deceased in Sumpur Kudus society.

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