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THE SACRED SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL WISDOM IN THE *BASAPA* RITUAL OF MINANGKABAU

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Abstract

The extraordinary enthusiasm of the people attending the *Basapa* tradition event was generally reasonable because they respected those who had contributed to spreading Islam in Minangkabau and again there were several sacred things attached to Sheikh Burhanuddin so that it became an attraction for pilgrims to attend the rituals carried out every year in the month of Safar. *Basapa* is a ritual in the form of a simultaneous pilgrimage at the tomb of Sheikh Burhanuddin in Ulakan. Although the cleric figure of Sheikh Burhanuddin of the Tariqa Syattariah congregation, at the *Basapa* event, those who attended were not only followers of the Syattariah congregation but also the Muslim community in general. The formulation of the problem, namely: What is the background of the development and procession of the *Basapa* ritual in Ulakan and why the *Basapa* ritual became sacred in Ulakan, so that it was attended by many people in general from various parts outside the province of West Sumatra. This type of research is included in qualitative descriptive research, as for the systematic series of this research, namely: data sources, data collection techniques and data processing and analysis techniques. The result of the research is that mass pilgrimages occur at the *Basapa* Ritual which is considered sacred to its followers. The resultant attractive-consolidative *Basapa* ritual provides reconciliation from various socio-cultural aspects, especially giving the value of cultural inclusiveness to Minangkabau Islam and the sacredness of local wisdom or local wisdom from the *Basapa* tradition initially based on a religious dimension, but in its improvement, it became a local convention which in the end became a single ethnic identity.

Keywords: Sacred Value, *Basapa* Ritual, Sheikh Burhanuddin, Nagari Ulakan.

INTRODUCTION

Culture permeates the daily lives of ordinary people, particularly within the campus community. It constitutes an integral aspect of national life, contributing to the unique identity of a nation. Across Indonesia, a country renowned as the Emerald Equator, diverse cultural characteristics thrive within each ethnic group across its myriad islands, encompassing Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. Each region boasts distinct cultural traits and practices.

West Sumatra, in particular, possesses its own cultural identity, characterized by the Minangkabau ethnicity. The Minangkabau culture is deeply intertwined with Islamic traditions. Central to the philosophy of this ethnicity is the principle of "adat bersandi syara', syara' bersandi kitabullah," signifying the inseparable bond between custom, Islamic law (shari'at), and the Qur'an. Essentially, this encapsulates the Minangkabau people's commitment to integrating Islamic principles into every facet of their lives, from trade, livelihood, worship, agriculture, and education to legal matters. It underscores their unwavering adherence to Islam as their guiding faith throughout their existence. This steadfast commitment underscores the profound religious and cultural values upheld by the Minangkabau people.

Culture in Minangkabau or the West Sumatra region manifests through traditions closely intertwined with religious rituals, exemplified in Ulakan, Padang Pariaman Regency. One such tradition is the *Basapa* ritual, observed by the local community to seek blessings from Sheikh Burhanuddin, a key figure in the propagation of Islam in Minangkabau. It is acknowledged that individuals approach Sheikh Burhanuddin with diverse desires and requests pertaining to worldly and spiritual matters.¹

The *Basapa* tradition is important and interesting to study. It is important because it uncovers new information that may not have been previously identified, leading to a more complex understanding of the tradition's existence. This deeper understanding can contribute to the theoretical conception of the development of Sufism and tarekat studies. Additionally, the *Basapa* tradition is interesting to study because it provides social and economic benefits to the residents in the area where the tradition is practiced.²

¹ Prasetya, "Tinjauan al-'Urf terhadap Tradisi Koin Badarah (Di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakih Kabupaten Padang Pariaman)", *Skeipsi*, UIN Sjech M. Djamil Djambek, 2020, h. 02.

² Amril, Neneng Kapitri, Endrika Widdia Putri & Efendi, "Haul Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan in the Basapa Tradition of the Ulakan Community of Padang Pariaman", *Jurnal Al-Qalam*, 40(1), 2023, 87–98, h. 88.

The *Basapa* tradition has become somewhat contaminated with elements of animism and dynamism. This is evident in certain practices within the tradition. For instance, some pilgrims take water from a large shell near the tomb of Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan and a handful of sand from his grave, believing these objects possess special properties. They are thought to serve as remedies for fever, enhance intelligence, or ward off supernatural beings. Despite the clear statements from the Tuanku (Kiai) who manage the tomb, asserting that these beliefs are unfounded, some people continue to adhere to them.³

Basapa is a ritual pilgrimage to the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin in Ulakan. Although Sheikh Burhanuddin belongs to the Syattariah Order, attendees of the *Basapa* event include not only followers of the Syattariah Order but also the broader Muslim community.⁴ The *Basapa* ritual comprises two main events: *sapa gadang* and *sapa ketek*. *Sapa gadang*, occurring on the Wednesday after the 10th day of the month of *Safar*, attracts pilgrims from outside West Sumatra, including regions like Aceh, Riau, Jambi, and even Malaysia. Conversely, *sapa ketek*, held a week after *sapa gadang*, is attended mainly by pilgrims from the Padang Pariaman area⁵ Despite being the second event, *sapa ketek* draws crowds similar to *sapa gadang*, with participants coming from various provinces in West Sumatra, including devout individuals, public officials, and other groups.

The remarkable enthusiasm surrounding the *Basapa* ritual largely stems from the reverence for Sheikh Burhanuddin, who played a significant role in spreading Islam in Minangkabau. Additionally, there are sacred elements associated with Sheikh Burhanuddin that attract pilgrims to participate in the annual ritual held during the month of *Safar*. Interestingly, the term "*Basapa*" (in Minangkabau language) or "*Bersafar*" indirectly refers to an activity carried out during the month of *Safar*. While some may perceive ritual activities during *Safar* as a means to ward off bad luck, the *Basapa* ritual in Ulakan, Padang Pariaman Regency, serves to commemorate the death of Sheikh Burhanuddin, which occurred in the month of *Safar*. Given this context, it is intriguing to analyze the historical background and procession of the *Basapa* ritual in Ulakan and explore why it holds sacred significance in Ulakan, attracting participants from various

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Gusni Susanti, "Eksistensi Tradisi Basapa bagi Masyarakat Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman", *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa*, 2018, h. 48.

⁵ Prasetya, "Tinjauan al-'Urf terhadap Tradisi Koin Badarah... h. 04.

regions outside West Sumatra.

This study adopts a scientific approach, aiming to provide a clear analysis of the subject matter by employing a symbolic anthropology approach within the postmodernism paradigm, utilizing Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory.

The postmodernism paradigm emerged in the 1980s as a response to the certainties of modernism that upheld popular culture.⁶ Within anthropological theory, postmodernism offers insights directed toward the study of culture, revealing the iconic or original identity of culture through a cultural perspective.

Geertz's interpretive approach within the postmodernism paradigm elucidates belief systems and their connection to cultural identity. Cultural behavior is intricately linked with beliefs and traditions.⁷ The cultural interactions within each ethnic group give rise to performative expressions of beliefs through various rituals and social relations, imbued with symbolic meaning that reflects social behavior within a cultural context.⁸ Geertz's perspective subtly challenges the arrogance of anthropology and critiques the positivistic understanding prevalent in the field. Today, Geertz remains a highly influential figure in anthropology, as his interpretive approach has paved the way for postmodern anthropological discourse.⁹

The primary source of Geertz's theoretical framework on religion emanates from his article entitled "Religion as a Cultural System," which employs a subject approach termed cultural dimension analysis. Geertz perceives religion as an integral component of a cultural system, defining culture as "patterns of meaning embedded in historically transmitted symbols, a system of inheriting conceptions expressed in the form of symbols." Within this cultural context, religion furnishes sacred symbols designed to synthesize various aspects of social life, including ethos, rhythm, character, quality of life, morals, aesthetics, mood, and worldview—a comprehensive order of ideas that shapes humans' understanding of reality.¹⁰

Symbolic anthropology facilitates cross-cultural field research, particularly at

⁶ Graeme Burton, *Pengantar untuk Memahami Media dan Budaya Populer* (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2008), h. 49.

⁷ [Saiful Anwar Matondang](#), [Yuda Setiawan](#), *Teori Kebudayaan Interaksi Lokal dengan Wisata Regional dan Global* (Medan: Perdana Mitra Handalan, 2015), h. 29.

⁸ *Ibid.*, h. 40.

⁹ Alan Barnard, *History and Theory in Anthropology in History and Theory in Anthropology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), h. 163-164.

¹⁰ Sindung Haryanto, *Sosiologi Agama* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2015), h. 81.

locations where major traditions intersect. This symbolic culture is elucidated further as a pattern of meanings or ideas embodied in symbols through which individuals comprehend and express their awareness of life.¹¹ Clifford Geertz posits that human adaptation to the environment unfolds within a system of symbols and meanings. Anthropological investigations link rituals with performing arts as forms of worship directed towards deities and magical entities. Rituals endeavor to elucidate the relationship between human existence and religion, with drama serving as a ritualistic expression of religious beliefs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research falls within the realm of qualitative descriptive research. Sukmadinata asserts that qualitative descriptive research aims to delineate existing phenomena, encompassing both natural occurrences and human constructs, while prioritizing the delineation of characteristics, qualities, and interrelations among activities. The rationale for employing qualitative descriptive research stems from the desire to comprehensively depict these phenomena.¹² The systematic progression of this research encompasses the following stages: Data sources, which entail library research with data acquired from scholarly works relevant to the subject matter of this paper. Written sources are accessed through literature comprising books or articles pertinent to the research focus. Data collection techniques employed involve library-based methods devoid of observational components. Furthermore, for theoretical contextualization and comparative analysis, secondary data is utilized via literature reviews concerning issues pertinent to the research problems.

Data processing and analysis techniques are integral to research, involving the compilation of data for interpretation. Analysis commences at the outset of the research endeavor, as both the process and its resultant products are under scrutiny. The data collected during the research are subjected to qualitative analysis.

To unveil the distinctive features of processed data, a specific approach is essential. This entails employing an ontological, epistemological, and axiological hermeneutic approach, which involves textual analysis to reveal the essence of the subject, juxtapose different perspectives, and reflect upon the values embedded within the

¹¹ Santri Sahar, *Pengantar Antropologi* (Makassar: UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2015), h. 113.

¹² Virgilius Bate Lina, Berty Sadipun, "Nilai-nilai Kearifan Lokal "Ka Po'o" Pada Masyarakat Ende Lio sebagai Dasar Pendidikan Karakter", *Jurnal Sosial Budaya*, 18(2) 2021, 108–113, h. 110.

content.¹³

Thus, all acquired information is collated and examined as a comprehensive dataset, scrutinized according to the researcher's interpretive capabilities. The collected data are then grouped, classified, and analyzed based on insights derived from the cultural values inherent to the community, as manifested in the *Basapa* ritual. The process of data processing and analysis is conducted inductively, employing comparisons with existing theories and relating findings to the research subject, thereby culminating in a comprehensive conclusion. Subsequently, these conclusions are expounded upon in the ensuing narrative.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS

Description of Nagari Ulakan

Ulakan is the designation for a *Nagari* situated in the lowest administrative tier of Ulakan District, within Padang Pariaman Regency. *Nagari*, functioning as a customary law society unit, embodies customs and cultural practices rooted in noble values that have evolved since ancient times. *Nagari Ulakan*, as the most basic administrative division, is demarcated by boundaries: it is bordered to the north by *Nagari Pauh Kamba*, *Ulakan Tapakis* sub-district; to the south by *Nagari Tapakis*, also within *Ulakan Tapakis* sub-district; to the west by the Indonesian Ocean in *Ulakan Tapakis* District; and to the east by *Nagari Taboh Gadang* within *Ulakan Tapakis* District.

Socio-Cultural aspects play a significant role in the nomenclature of *Nagari Ulakan*, with local lore recounting it as a relatively newer settlement compared to its surrounding areas. Its prominence rose when Sheikh Burhanuddin assigned four of his companions to study in the *surau* he constructed in the area. Traditional leaders and community figures of *Ulakan* affirm that it has long been recognized as an outlying region of the Minangkabau kingdom's center, particularly since the arrival of Sheikh Burhanuddin in the 17th century AD or 12th AH. The appellation "*Nagari Ulakan*" gained traction after Sheikh Burhanuddin's efforts to propagate Islam and establish the *surau* as centers for Islamic education within the Minangkabau realm during that period.

The tomb of Sheikh Burhanuddin is located in *Nagari Ulakan*, Korong Manggopoh Dalam, Kecamatan *Ulakan Tapakis*, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. Specifically, the tomb

¹³ Mawaidi, Darmiyati Zuchdi, "Islam dan Paradoks (Budaya) Carok di Madura: Tinjauan Ontologi, Epistemologi, dan Aksiologi", *Jurnal Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam*, 9(2), 2021, h. 678.

is situated alongside the main road connecting the city of Padang with Padang Pariaman. The tomb of Sheikh Burhanuddin is quite simple, marked by two gravestones made of andesite. This tomb is surrounded by the graves of his disciples, forming a complex that includes the tomb of Sheikh Burhanuddin along with those of his followers.¹⁴

Sheikh Burhanuddin was a prominent Islamic scholar who spread Islam in West Sumatra or Minangkabau. He propagated Islam by establishing *surau*, which served as centers for Islamic learning and practice. These *surau* became gathering places for his disciples, especially those from the Syattariyah order, who came to listen to Sheikh Burhanuddin's teachings on Islam. Due to his significant contributions, his tomb has attracted many pilgrims, particularly those from the Syattariyah order, in what has become known as the *Basapa* tradition.¹⁵

Brief History and Performance of the Basapa Ritual

Oman Faturahman posits that *Basapa* is a ritual encompassing a simultaneous pilgrimage to the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin in Padang Galundi Ulakan, Pariaman. Tuanku Bagindo Firdaus, the Imam of Ulakan *surau*, articulates that the purpose of *Basapa* is to commemorate the demise of Tuanku Sheikh Burhanuddin, recognized as the teacher of the Syattariyah congregation and the most effective disseminator of Islam in Minangkabau. Furthermore, it aims to foster camaraderie among Syattariyah congregations in Minangkabau.¹⁶

Basapa constitutes one of the religious rituals practiced by the Syattariyah tarekat Muslim group. This ritual occurs annually, every Wednesday following the 10th day of the month of Shafar, at the tomb of Sheikh Burhanudin in Ulakan. Sheikh Burhanudin, a protégé of Abdurrauf Singkili, introduced the teachings of the Syattariyah tarekat to the Padang Pariaman region. Sheikh Burhanudin passed away in the month of Shafar 1111 H. Consequently, he is revered as a pivotal figure in advancing the Syattariyah version of Islamic teachings in Minangkabau.¹⁷

The *Basapa* ritual was inaugurated by the devotees of Sheikh Burhanuddin around

¹⁴ Jamal Mirdad, Helmina, & Iril Admizal, "Tradisi Ziarah Kubur (Motif dan Aktifitas Penziarah di Makam Yang Dikeramatkan)", *Khazanah*, 12(1) 2022, 64–79, h. 74.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Afdhal Halim, "Tradisi Basapa di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis Kabupaten Padang Pariaman Sumatera Barat", *Skripsi*, Medan: Universitas Sumatera Utara, 2018, h. 74.

¹⁷ Syahril, & Del Marjoni, "Jejak Perjuangan Syekh Burhanudin dalam Mengembangkan Ajaran Islam di Kabupaten Padang Pariaman". *Tarikhuna*, 3(1), 2021, h. 96.

1316 AH/1897 AD. Initially, pilgrimages to the Ulakan tomb occurred without fixed dates. However, two scholars among Sheikh Burhanuddin's successors, namely Sheikh Kapalo Koto Pauh Kamar and Sheikh Tuanku Kataping, undertook consultations with various scholars and adherents of the Syattariyah Order. Their objective was to establish a unified schedule for the pilgrimage to the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin. Subsequently, it was unanimously agreed upon that the pilgrimage would take place regularly on every Wednesday after the 10th of Safar.¹⁸

Following the consensus on implementation, *Basapa* was exclusively overseen by religious scholars, traditional leaders, intellectuals, and the local community, with the appointment of a Qadhi to manage the execution of *Basapa*. However, presently, the responsibility for *Basapa* has shifted to the Padang Pariaman Regency Government, intending to utilize the *Basapa* ceremony as a tourism asset to generate revenue for the region. Nonetheless, in practical terms, traditional leaders, known as *ninik mamak* of Ulakan village, play a pivotal role in its execution.¹⁹ The *ninik mamak* hold customary rights over the grave area of Sheikh Burhanuddin and orchestrate the organization of *Basapa* activities by establishing committees dedicated to overseeing this religious endeavor.²⁰

The *Basapa* agenda comprises several components, including the collective pilgrimage to the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin to offer homage and presents. The proceedings typically commence with the recitation of prayers, particularly al-Fatihah for Sheikh Burhanuddin, followed by prayers for Sheikh Abdurrahman and Khatib Majolelo, and concluding with prayers for all deceased Muslims. This is followed by the recitation of the last three surahs of the Qur'an thrice, *tahlilan*, and additional prayers.

Following the *Basapa* ritual, participants engage in personal prayers based on their individual preferences. Some choose to adorn the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin with lime, while others collect soil from the grave, believing it to carry blessings and medicinal properties. Additionally, some gather shell water from the tomb complex to apply to their heads or take home. Another practice involves collecting the water used to cleanse the stone upon which the teacher's honor was commemorated, evident by the lingering red

¹⁸ Rahmi Ediyanti, Sumartono Mulyodiharjo, & Zumiarti, "Etnografi Komunikasi Basapa Di Ulakan Tapakis Kabupaten Padang Pariaman", *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekotrans & Erudisi*, 1(1), 2021, 38–51, h. 9.

¹⁹ Adri Febriyanto, "Sinkretisme Dalam Upacara Basapa di Makam Syekh Burhanuddin", *Project Report*, Padang: Universitas Negeri Padang, 2000, h. 38–39.

²⁰ Ediantes, "Ritual sebagai Sumber Penciptaan Film Basapa di Ulakan" *JURNAL EKSPRESI SENI*, 18(1) 2016, 1–179, h. 22.

hue on the stone. These actions are imbued with reverence and gratitude towards the teacher, with participants citing reasons for the ritual that are intertwined with seeking blessings and demonstrating respect.²¹

According to their belief, blessings are perceived as an overflow of merit originating from Sheikh Burhanuddin, leading to salvation in both worldly life and the hereafter. This concept is likened to a glass of water continuously filled until it overflows, symbolizing the anticipated abundance of blessings from Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*. Importantly, they do not seek directly from Sheikh Burhanuddin, but rather beseech Allah, recognizing Sheikh Burhanuddin as a conduit to Allah due to his esteemed status and the noble nature of the ritual prescribed by religion. The use of limes, soil from the graves, and shell water are regarded merely as symbolic tools in accordance with Islamic law, signifying their reliance on Allah's grace through reverence for the teacher. Ultimately, they seek permission from Sheikh Burhanuddin for the dissemination of his knowledge and also to intercede on their behalf in prayer.

Following the *Basapa* ritual, participants engage in obligatory prayers performed collectively, with some congregating in mosques or their respective congregation *surau*. Subsequently, they perform the *Buraha* sunnah prayer, a two-rakat sunnah prayer intended to dedicate its rewards to Sheikh Burhanuddin, who imparted Islamic religious knowledge to them through his teachings. This prayer is conducted with the hope that the religious knowledge bestowed will bring benefit and goodness to him.

After the *Buraha* prayer, participants engage in individual dhikr according to the teachings of the teacher. Among Shattariah Tareqa adherents, dhikr takes the form of "tahlil" dhikr, wherein the phrase "la ilaha illa Allah" is recited three times, each repetition totaling 70,000 times. The first set of repetitions is dedicated to the teachers up to the Prophet, the second to the parents who have facilitated their existence in this world, and the third to oneself as a form of redemption from hellfire.²²

Sacred Values of Basapa Ritual

Based on religious perspectives, territory is often dichotomized into sacred and profane realms. The profane domain is typically disregarded, considered mundane, and lacks sanctity. Conversely, elements commonly viewed as profane can hold profound

²¹ Halim, "Tradisi Basapa di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis... h. 102.

²² *Ibid.*, h. 105.

sacred significance within a religious context. This dichotomy is not problematic, as the universality of this concept is inherent in human nature, even though the specific manifestations may differ from what is conventionally perceived as ordinary.²³

Religious behavior, as a phenomenon, consistently unveils the essence of sacredness. The sacred holds intrinsic value in human existence, as individuals inherently seek non-materialistic values in life. Throughout history, from ancient to contemporary societies, the sacred remains paramount. Human nature is drawn to values transcending materiality, with the sacred serving as a fundamental aspect of human experience.²⁴

The *Basapa* process begins with the arrival of the congregation or pilgrims in the morning. Upon arrival, they proceed directly to the surau (rooms provided for the *Basapa* ritual) where they rest. According to Datuak Palimo, there are 100 surau available for the congregation or pilgrims from various locations. The pilgrims then perform congregational prayers at the Grand Mosque of Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan before returning to their respective surau to engage in various religious activities such as remembrance and prayer.²⁵

As Sheikh Burhanuddin is revered as a sacred figure, the term "sacred" in this context denotes a holy individual endowed with abilities surpassing those of ordinary people. The term "keramat" can also be understood as signifying an auspicious person, someone who exerts magical and psychological influence on others. Consequently, Sheikh Burhanuddin's persona evolves into a myth and serves as a foundational element for his disciples in shaping and interpreting *Basapa* as a religious ritual intricately linked to his existence.

The sacred stature attributed to Sheikh Burhanuddin is believed to emanate from within him. Evidence of this can be found in an incident involving the Tapakis River, where the water reportedly turned murky following an episode in which Sheikh Burhanuddin, distraught over the theft of his pet while bathing in the river, expressed his frustration. Despite his anger, no one admitted to the theft.²⁶

Another narrative recounts Sheikh Burhanuddin's journey back from studying in Aceh, during which he purportedly traversed the sea using a *lapiak pandan* (pandanus

²³ Naila Farah, "Makna Ritual Maulidan Bagi Masyarakat Buntet Pesantren Kecamatan Astanajapura Kabupaten Cirebon.", *Jurnal Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam*, 8(2), 2020, h. 415.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, h. 416.

²⁵ Amril dkk, "Haul Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan in the Basapa Tradition of the Ulakan... h. 92.

²⁶ Febriyanto, "Sinkretisme Dalam Upacara... h. 40.

mat). Upon reaching Angso Island, he continued his journey to Pariaman Beach, anchoring the pandanus mat there.²⁷

The local community surrounding the grave of Sheikh Burhanuddin upholds the belief that gathering sand from his tomb can have healing properties, contingent upon the intentions and beliefs of those participating in *Basapa*. Individuals harbor diverse desires in life, ranging from acquiring a home, starting a family, to achieving recognition or awards. Consequently, when these desires are fulfilled, individuals often express their gratitude by engaging in acts of charity, such as giving alms or feeding the poor.²⁸

The *Basapa* ritual encapsulates the essence of local wisdom, as it not only serves as a sacred activity but also incorporates objects imbued with sanctity, revered by the worshipers who partake in the event. These objects include *Kemenyan*, utilized to commence prayers or “*bertahlil*” by burning it on coconut husks or pegs. *Mantawan* involves pilgrims offering various items, such as drinks, at Sheikh Burhanuddin's tomb in hopes of receiving blessings. The collection of tomb sand is believed to tap into the unseen power emanating from Sheikh Burhanuddin's spirit. *Kimo* water, obtained from seashells, is used to cleanse the feet before entering the tomb, reflecting the historical soil floor. *Batu ampa*, a flat stone linked to Sheikh Burhanuddin's history in Aceh, holds similar significance. The water from the *ampa* stone is believed to possess healing properties, akin to *Kimo* water, and is often combined with potpourri and slices of orange for additional benefits.

Placing offerings, known as *Sesajan*, involves carefully arranging small foods, objects, flowers, and decorative items. These offerings are not only presented to fulfill vows previously made but also to honor and serve the spirit of Sheikh Burhanuddin.²⁹

Views on *Basapa* vary within the community, reflecting differing perspectives on the significance of religious traditions. In the Pariaman region and its environs, the observance of Islamic holidays often emphasizes ceremonial aspects rather than the intrinsic essence of the occasion. For instance, during the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday, Pariaman traditionalists are renowned for their practice of *bajamba* (communal eating from a large container) and *lamang* (*lemang*). The systematic veneration of religious

²⁷ Halim, “Tradisi Basapa di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis... H. 69-70.

²⁸ Nidya Sonia & Erianjoni, “Remaja dalam Tradisi Basapa (Studi Kasus di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis Kabupaten Padang Pariaman)”, *Culture & Society: Journal Of Anthropological Research*, 1(3) 2020, h. 184.

²⁹ Halim, “Tradisi Basapa di Nagari Ulakan Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis... H. 92-98.

scholars is ingrained in the religious behavior of the populace in Ulakan and Padang Pariaman district as a whole.

However, modernist and fundamentalist Muslims may perceive such practices as erroneous or *bid'ah* (innovation in religious practice), lacking comprehension of the event's true essence. Instead, they view these traditions as excessive and illogical. Many modernist Muslims may misinterpret pilgrimages to Sheikh Burhanuddin's grave as an act of supplicating to the deceased, rather than understanding the deeper spiritual significance underlying such visits.

Religion often intersects with personal interests, a phenomenon that can be analyzed from sociological and anthropological perspectives. From a sociological standpoint, religion is regarded as a social reality, while anthropologically, it is perceived as an integral component of a society's cultural system. This dynamic is evident not only in Minangkabau society as a whole but also in specific religious practices such as *Basapa*. Within *Basapa* activities, individuals draw upon various religious guidelines or interpretations as a means of seeking inner peace and tranquility. These guidelines serve as pathways or methods through which individuals navigate their spiritual journeys and find solace amidst life's complexities.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of the *Basapa* tradition within the Ulakan community is not solely attributed to the local community or the surrounding Padang Pariaman Regency. Rather, its origins extend beyond West Sumatra, encompassing various regions, including Malaysia. The *Basapa* Ritual garners significant mass pilgrimage, revered as sacred by its followers. This widespread participation underscores the ritual's attractiveness and its consolidative role. The *Basapa* ritual serves as a unifying force, fostering reconciliation across diverse socio-cultural dimensions. It notably contributes to the inclusiveness of Minangkabau Islam, embracing cultural diversity within its practice. Moreover, the ritual yields positive outcomes for cultural preservation and economic prosperity within the surrounding community. By attracting pilgrims and fostering cultural exchange, *Basapa* bolsters local economies and promotes the preservation of cultural heritage.

The sacredness inherent in the local wisdom of the *Basapa* tradition initially stemmed from its religious dimensions. However, as the tradition evolved, it transitioned into a consensus of local customs, eventually coalescing into a distinct ethnic identity.

While the original meaning of each object may have been non-functional, their significance transformed during the course of the rites, imbuing them with mystical-functional attributes such as luck, healing, and wealth. Followers of the *Basapa* tradition place faith in the blessings bestowed upon these objects, viewing them as tangible manifestations of their belief in an invisible connection between the objects and the tombs. Despite logical studies indicating the implausibility of inanimate objects exerting meaningful influence, believers maintain their conviction in the efficacy of these sacred items.

Based on the provided information, it is evident that Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory offers an approach to understanding culture through the lens of ethnic cultural agency. According to this perspective, cultures possess inherent clarity and significance, independent of the need for overarching generalizations or grand theoretical frameworks. As a result, additional cultural insights emerge distinctly, cultivating a singular cultural identity. This approach underscores the uniqueness of each culture, highlighting differences without necessitating elements of continuity or coherence between cultures.

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