

THE *MELIPO* TRADITION IN THE MANDAR COMMUNITY OF MAJENE REGENCY: AN ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the form of implementation of melipo tradition in Mandar community and the perspective of Islamic education regarding the implementation of melipo in Mandar community. A qualitative research was employed with surveys, in-depth interviews, and documentation as data collection methods. The results of this study showed that the implementation of melipo in Mandar community is carried out at certain times, starting from the second day after the funeral until three or seven days later. Apart from that, melipo is carried out by several people, such as the priest (who will pray), family, and neighbors or friends, while carrying certain objects required for melipo. The perspective of Islamic education regarding the implementation of melipo in Mandar society is in line with the Al-Qur'an, hadith, and the views of Muslim clerics or scholars. It can be seen from the educational values contained in the melipo tradition, such as the world is not an eternal place; no one can escape death; grave is humans' last residence; Zuhud is the authenticity of life in the world; bringing up feelings of humanity, creating a sense of empathy, getting rid of arrogance, avoiding being greedy or covetous; unity is very important; helping is urgently needed; brotherhood between people needs to be maintained; praying for those who have preceded; and reflection on attitudes and behavior.

Keywords: *Melipo Tradition, Mandar Society, Islamic Education Perspective*

INTRODUCTION

Islam was introduced in Indonesia, especially in the land of Mandar, which was somewhat different from what it was introduced in Mecca. Even though the Mandar community previously believed in a culture where Mandar society is used as a

character-building tool in the cultural value system adhered by the community (Burhanuddin, Afiah, and Askarullah, 2023), the Islamic preaching clerics succeeded in gaining the community's sympathy so that Islam could be accepted without prior conflict (Olcott, 2023). One of the reasons for this success was that the clerics prioritized

tolerance and respected the local culture. Among the principles upheld in order to achieve success is "*as long as the local culture does not contradict or violate the Sharia, then there is no harm in maintaining it*".

One of the traditions in Mandar society that Sharia is able to tolerate is melipo tradition. Melipo is a grave pilgrimage starting from the second day after a person's death until several days later to recite prayers or verses from the Al-Qur'an with the intention that the reward for reading them will be given to the person whose grave is visited.

Melipo is not only limited by visiting and praying for families who have just buried, but also has procedure that has been going on since time immemorial. This procedure contains of Sharia and cultural elements. These two elements combined into one activity are interesting to study because, on the one hand, the activity is religious teaching (Islamic law), on the other hand, it is culture. Therefore, it is necessary to see the synergy between the two which can run peacefully in society without questioning the cultural aspects that are coming with the Sharia.

The objectives of this research are to analyze the form of implementation of Melipo in Mandar community and to describe the views of Islamic education on the implementation of *melipo* in Mandar community.

There are three expected benefits from this research. *First*, it can be a basis for conducting further research. The truth value of research results is relative, means that the truth is not absolute; it is opened to study and analyze based on a certain approach. *Second*, the results of this research will be contributed as reading material in libraries which is expected to become additional literature for students, lecturers, and the general public who are writing related to the *Melipo* tradition. *Third*, it is expected to provide additional information about the *Melipo* tradition for anyone who has the opportunity to read this research.

Literature Review

In relation with previous studies regarding the traditions of the Mandar community, the following are several writings and research that have been carried out, including: First, a

research entitled "The Values of Islamic Religious Education in the Implementation of the Burial Puyang Rie Dinding Pilgrimage Tradition" (Mirdad, Helmina, and Admizal, 2022) shows that people believe of the Puyang Rie Dinding tomb is a strategic location to pray, although some people do not agree with it. Furthermore, the research results also reveal that when a person has already fulfilled his wish by praying in there, he must fulfill the vows or *nazdar* that were said during the pilgrimage. When a person visits the tomb, the promise goes in line with the act of paying his *nazdar*. Apart from that, local people consider this practice to be permitted in Islam. The Puyang Rie Dinding grave pilgrimage tradition has unique characteristics. One Islamic religious education aspect is moral education towards Allah, His Messenger, and oneself, which is also reflected in grave pilgrimage tradition at the Puyang Rie Dinding tomb. This research also discusses about grave pilgrimage. However, the difference lies in the grave pilgrimage traditions studied.

Second, a research entitled "Grave Pilgrimage, Marpangir, Mangan Fajar: Traditions of the Angkola and Mandailing Community in Welcoming the Month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr (Siregar, 2020)" explains the acculturation between Islam and local culture of the Angkola and Mandailing community in welcoming the month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. The findings of this research show that Islamic religious rituals and local traditional values still go hand in hand in the Angkola and Mandailing Islamic communities, which can be seen in grave pilgrimage tradition. Grave pilgrimage is a tradition or a custom that has existed since ancient times and is usually carried out repeatedly every year, especially before the month of Ramadan. Marpangir will be present in the afternoon before entering the month of Ramadan, and Mangan Fajar will be present at dawn before the Eid prayers.

Third, a research entitled "Grave Pilgrimage Traditions: Motives and Activities of Pilgrims at Sacred Graves (Mirdad et al., 2022)" examines the activities and motives of pilgrims at the Grave Pilgrimage Tradition

ceremony at the Puyang Muaro Danau, Mande Rubiah, and *Sheikh* Burhanuddin Cemetery. The practice of visiting graves is a tradition that has existed for a long time; it is even indicated that this tradition existed before the arrival of Islam. Even though eras and times have changed, the tradition of visiting graves has not been eroded by the changes over time; the interest and intention of pilgrims to visit existing graves continues and is even getting busier with the findings that the grave pilgrimage tradition, both the activities and motives of pilgrims to several graves were found to be different.

Three previous studies discussed about grave pilgrimage. However, this research is different from those previous studies as this research is conducting the melipo tradition, which is a grave pilgrimage tradition typical to the Mandar community and it has never been studied before.

Conceptual Framework

People believe that what is known as a cemetery is just a path or method shown by both religion and local community traditions. Even without being buried, if someone dies, the life will certainly continue until the grave or the realm of *barzakh*. Many people died but were not buried, for example, burned as in the Ngaben (corpse burning) event in Bali, mummified in (ancient) Egypt, kept in a coffin, kept in a certain place or house as was done in Toraja, and died because wild animals swallowed them, such as sharks, snakes, crocodiles, tigers, leopards and the like. In spite of the fact that these people do not have a proper grave to visit, the family's prayers are still needed.

In general, for those who died normally, without being attacked by wild animals or burned, mummified, and the like, it was normal for them to be buried in the ground and given a gravestone. The purpose of giving this gravestone is to make it easy to recognize and distinguish it from other graves and, most importantly, it is easier to visit.

There are several forms of grave pilgrimage carried out by people in several places: *First*, pilgrimages before the start of the holy month of Ramadan are common in Muslim communities. This moment is used to visit his family, who were already residents of

the *Barzakh* realm, as well as clean and repair his grave. A similar statement says that what pleases a grave expert is when he is visited by the people he loves while living in the world (El-Rasheed, 2023). He felt happy because he brought his needs in the form of prayer and saw the faces of the people he loved again. Naturally, many families maintain this tradition.

Second, the Hajat pilgrimage or what is called a pilgrimage to fulfill a wish means that the person has made a wish in line with the hope that something will happen, either to themselves, their family, loved ones, or their property and business, for example, "if I graduate as a soldier then I will make a grave pilgrimage to the grave of *Sheikh* Abdul Mannan or KH. Muhammad Tahir Imam Lapeo." After achieving what he wanted to graduate as a soldier, he went on a grave pilgrimage. This kind of grave pilgrimage is meant to express wishes by visiting a grave of a sheikh or cleric who is believed to be sacred and whose prayers have been answered during their lifetime with the intention that all the wishes will be delivered to Allah. It is done as a *tawassul* or taking blessings from the cleric in the hope that Allah will grant the wishes or aspirations (Zakariya, 2022).

Third is a grave pilgrimage to visit the grave of a cleric in commemorating the day of his death. It is found in Pulokalapa, Karawang, West Java. The grave of a great cleric named *Sheikh* Quro is located there where the grave is visited by many pilgrims from the surrounding areas, such as Subang, Bekasi, Purwakarta, Jakarta, Cirebon, Bandung, Bogor, and other areas (Nurrahmah, 2014). The unique thing here is that every year, a tradition to make a grave pilgrimage is carried out using dhikr and *tawassul*.

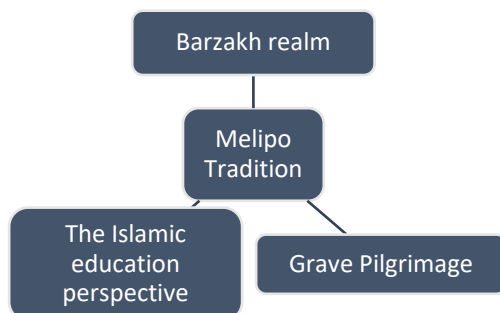
Fourth is a grave pilgrimage while doing the act of solitude. The uniqueness of this pilgrimage is that it is not only visiting and praying but also staying at the grave being solitude (a kind of *i'tikaf*) for one to several nights. It can only be done if the grave is located on the side of the mosque. Most charismatic clerics, such as *kiyai* and *sheikh*, are buried next to the mosques they built. This kind of grave pilgrimage is found at the grave of Sunan Gunung Jati in Cirebon. Sunan Gunung Jati is one of the clerics in Wali Songo who has spread Islam in Java and is famous for his sacredness (Gazali, 2015).

Making a grave pilgrimage to the grave of a cleric or *kiyai* who is believed to be sacred is considered by a handful of people to have a positive impact on their lives. It is believed that the blessings of a cleric or shaikh or *kiyai* will be no different as they lived in this world and in the afterlife. By expecting to have this blessing, it is normal for the pilgrims are willing to sacrifice material, time, and energy to make a grave pilgrimage, even in a distant place. What is considered as a blessing included sustenance and even intercession (Fitriani, 2022).

From the information above, it can be emphasized that people's belief in the existence of afterlife encourages them to always keep the relationships, not only of the hope that the deceased are always to be cared for but also with the people in the world. There are still a handful of people who expect blessings from the grave of the deceased, such as saints, sheiks, and clerics who are known for their sacredness and acceptable prayers while living in the world.

The following is an overview of the conceptual framework of this research:

Picture 1. Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research with a phenomenological approach regarding the melipo tradition in Mandar community of Majene Regency, West Sulawesi. Research data was obtained from the results of semi-structured interviews with sources or informants and key informants are from community leaders in Majene with a good understanding of the *Melipo* tradition. Apart from that, research data was also obtained by conducting participant observations by blending in to the community and witnessing their activities directly, especially those related to the *Melipo* tradition.

The data collection was executed through data analysis steps. *First* step is data condensation that is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and changing field notes, interview transcripts, and other empirical findings. *Second*, the data presentation is an organized collection of data or information that allows conclusions and actions to be drawn. Third, the conclusions will be drawn.

DISCUSSION

Forms of Melipo Implementation in the Mandar Community

Melipo is a grave pilgrimage with methods and terms are based on the traditions from Mandar community. *Melipo* is not only making a grave pilgrimage, but it is rather visiting a family who has just moved into a better place, called *barzakh* realm, but still needs help from the family. The needs of the deceased are no longer what was needed while still living in the world; rather, it needs to be in a form of prayer.

The *Melipo* is carried out by the bereaved family starting from the second day after someone's death (Syahrudin, 2022). However, there will be no *Melipo* activities if the burial of the body has not been carried out. Even then, the *Melipo* is not carried out on the day of the funeral but starts on the second day and so on after the funeral.

If someone passes away, the news will be spread to the family, both near and far, as well as neighbors, even if they do not have relation to the deceased. It shows that people will be very helpful and cooperative in helping the family of the deceased by putting up a white flag, putting up a tent, preparing chairs around the house for the mourners, preparing water for the corpse. Other than that, making a gravestone, digging a grave, and making boards to cover the grave (Muntar, 2022). Apart from that, other residents assisted the family by giving them of money inside an envelope (Najamia, 2022a). Some came with other types of aid, such as rice, fish, glass water, cakes, sugar, coffee, tea, and so on (Najamia, 2022).

The neighborhoods, especially for mothers and daughters, spontaneously come to provide labor assistance, such as helping the hosts to cook and serve food. Some will cook and boil water to provide coffee or tea for those who

work at the bereaved house and guests who come to provide assistance or mourners.

Imam or priest of the area will immediately make a visit at the moment the news is spread as a moral responsibility to his congregation or residents in order to handle everything related to carry the body to the grave. Morally and culturally, the neighborhood priest also takes part in bringing the body to the burial place. In fact, the priest is the most important person as he is expected to give speech and prayers for the deceased after burial (Harun, 2022).

At the moment the body was put in the burrow, people around the grave recite verses from the Al-Qur'an. Generally, one person is asked to recite as the minimum number and four people maximum. The commonly recited surah is Surah Yasin (Jamiat, 2022). Furthermore, it depends on the people which surah is easy to read. The intention of reciting Al-Qur'an is to send prayers for the deceased in the realm of *barzakh*. Therefore, before starting to recite, the readers are informed about this intention (Anwar, 2022).

After completing the funeral and installing the gravestone, the priest takes a position next to the grave while sitting facing the grave and then reads the *talqin* and prayers for the deceased. The pilgrims around also listen to the priest's prayers (Ridwan Talib, 2022).

Some families also plant trees or flowers that can live for a long time on the graves. When this was asked to Muhammad Talib, he answered, "If we want to plant a tree on a grave, we should intend, "Ya Allah, if so and so experiences the torment of the grave because of his sins, I ask that You ease his torment as long as this tree is still alive." (Mahmuddin Hamal, 2022). It is common to find people who plant living trees on graves after the funeral is done.

The procession accompanying the corpse is a series of Melipo activities. Certain objects must be brought at the time the corpse was taken to the cemetery, which must be brought again when carrying out melipo activities on the second day, and so on.

Many people escort the corpse to the cemetery, including family, friends, neighbors, and the general public who come to mourn. Before leaving for the funeral, the family has arranged the division of tasks from the bereaved home to the cemetery. The division of tasks consists of the gravestone

bearer and the flag bearer. The flag is a piece of white cloth and is written in Arabic, *inna lillahi wainna ilaihi raji'un*.

Water carrier. The water that is brought to the grave is intended to be poured on the surface of the grave. At funeral ceremonies for noble families, the water container used is a piece of fresh or wet bamboo measuring about half a meter long. However, along the way, such bamboo was not always found easily, so some of them used golden kettles.

Pe'imba' bearer. The *Pe'imba'* referred to a fan. In the tradition of funeral of the Mandar nobility, *Pe'imba'* must be present. When the body was lowered into the burrow, those assigned to carry the *pe'imba* moved it around like fanning people in hot weather.

Flower bearer. The flowers are pandan leaves cut into small pieces mixed with several other types of flowers to be scattered on the surface of the grave after the corpse is buried. The purpose of scattering flowers is to spread a pleasant aroma around the cemetery.

Carrier of the Al-Qur'an. The Al-Qur'an is brought at the funeral with the intention that it can be read when the body has begun to be buried. The readers of the Al-Qur'an had previously been told that the prayers will become reward to be given to deceased.

Six people carrying umbrellas. Umbrella is a typical feature in funerals for the Mandar nobility. A new cloth is placed on top of the umbrella, which is given to those who are given the task of carrying it. These six umbrellas are always taken every time the grave is visited. At the end of the Melipo activity, the umbrella and cloth are given to those who carry them at all times.

Some people are building coffins. Several people made companion coffins. In the burial traditions of noble families, the coffin is not only made for the corpse, but there are also other coffins called companion coffins. Inside there sits one person from the family close to the deceased, a child or relative. The position of this coffin is behind the corpse coffin.

Four readers of the Al-Qur'an. Some people water the graves. One person brings a mat for the priest to sit on when reading the *talqin* and prayers. One or two people are assigned to put envelopes filled with money into the pockets of Al-Qur'an readers as the act of gratitude. Three people were on duty in the burrow to put the corpse into the grave and cover it with boards and bury it. Several

people on the edge of the burrow were tasked with filling up and raising the ground; Raising burial grounds is not merely a tradition that occurs in society, but has occurred since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

One person installs the pole or gravestone. Next, the priest reads the *talqin* and prayers. Before reading the *talqin* and prayers, the priest first waters the grave. This is also appears as a tradition in society. However, it is a sunnah that was demonstrated by the Prophet, peace be upon him. as narrated by Ja'far bin Muhammad:

عَنْ جَعْفَرَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَشَّ عَلَى قَبْرِ ابْنِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ. رواه الشافعي.

Means: *from Ja'far bin Muhammad, his father was the Prophet, peace be upon him. watering the grave of his son, namely Ibrahim (HR. Syafi'i).*

Meanwhile, the reading of the *talqin* and prayers by the priest is at the end of all funeral processions for the deceased. In society, after the funeral is done, the priest then sits in the place provided to recite *talqin* and prayers. In connection with this, there is follow as history:

عن عثمان كان النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا فَرَغَ مِنْ دَفْنِ الْمَيِّتِ وَقَفَ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالَ: اسْتَغْفِرُوا لِأَخِيكُمْ وَسَلُّوا لَهُ التَّيْبِيتَ فَإِنَّهُ الْآنَ يُسْأَلُ (رواه أبو داود والحاكم).

Means: *From Uthman (said), Prophet, peace be upon him. When he had finished burying the body, he stood up (in his place) and said: ask your brother for forgiveness and ask him to resolve, because he is now being questioned (HR. Abu Dawud and Al-Hakim) (Al-Azadiy n.d.).*

The mourners then returned to their homes, except for the family, relatives, and neighbors who felt an act of moral responsibility to clean up everything that was left at the bereaved home.

The next day, as the second day after the funeral, is the first day to carry out *Melipo* activity. Before leaving for the funeral, at the funeral home, the family has arranged everything regarding to *Melipo* activity. Previously it has been told that the priest would read the prayer during the *melipo* activity. Therefore in the morning, the priest visited the funeral home to join the family of the deceased in preparing the grave pilgrimage.

The things that families should prepare to do *Melipo* activities are as follows:
Al-Qur'an

Usually, the family prepares the Al-Qur'an if the priest does not bring any. However, in general, it is the priest who prepares it. The Al-Qur'an is read at the grave with the intention that all the rewards from reading it will be given to the deceased. In general, the surahs read during *Melipo* are Al-Fatihah, Yasin, and/or Al-Mulk.

When they arrived at the cemetery, the priest delivers a greeting. After arriving at the grave of the deceased, the priest again said a special greeting to those who were visited. The Lafadz that is said is a greeting as usual in Islamic teachings is:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ إِنَّا وَإِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَاجِفُونَ نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ.

Means: *May salvation continue to be upon you, O inhabitants of the graves from among the believers and Muslims, and indeed, God willing, we will follow you.*

After that, the family who was assigned to bring the mat immediately put it next to the grave then invited the priest to sit on it to pray or read the Al-Qur'an.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِحَقِّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَوْلَاهُ مُحَمَّدٍ أَنْ لَا تَعَذِّبَ هَذَا الْمَيِّتَ.
Means: *O Allah, I beg You by the rights of Muhammad and Muhammad's family, do not punish this corpse (in the grave).*

One kettle filled with clean water

The water in the kettle is intended to be poured over the grave. The *lafadz* that was read when poring the water was Surah Al-Kautsar (Syahrudin, 2022).

Umbrella

If the *Melipo* activity is carried out for a king or noble family, then what is prepared to be taken to the funeral is an umbrella with a new piece of cloth placed over it. This umbrella is always carried by those who are assigned.

Usually, those assigned are close family members who are considered to have the opportunity to come at any time during the *Melipo* activity. The assigned person can take the umbrella and bring the clothes after the *Melipo* process has been completed. The time required for new graves is sometimes for seven days in a row and three days in a row, and for the old graves, only once after each Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayer. Some do it before the Ramadan while cleaning the

graves from the bushes that grow on them (Saul, 2022).

As for the implementation of *Melipo* at old graves, the umbrella is no longer carried. What is brought is only water and what is done is praying and/or reading verses from the Al-Qur'an.

Flower

The flowers are pandan leaves cut into small pieces mixed with colorful flowers, including Bougainvillea flowers and other types of flowers, intended to be scattered on the grave. The purpose of scattering these flowers is with the intention that the fragrance of the flowers can be fragrant. However, it is just a culture that is actually does not give any influence to the deceased (Rahmania, 2022).

After each *Melipo* activity, those involved in the assignment to take on certain roles or tasks, including those who participated (without being given a specific task), are required to return to the deceased's family home to enjoy the meal that has been prepared. However, before enjoying it, the priest first prayed with the intention that the deceased in realm of *barzakh* would also enjoy the meal. The meal that will be enjoyed was not food served at home, but from God thanks to the prayer of the priest. This is done every time until the *Melipo* activities are completed.

Views of Islamic Education on the Implementation of *Melipo* in Mandar Community

Islam is the basis for implementing the practice of sharia, placing the Al-Qur'an in the highest position, and then followed by hadith and the results of the cleric's *ijtihad* or the thoughts of Muslim scholars. Based on these considerations, below are the basics concerning *Melipo* activities in the context of grave pilgrimages.

First, in QS. Al-Takatsur (102): 2:

حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

Means: *Until you enter the grave.*

The word *zur*, which is related to *dhamir muttasil* above, etymologically means pilgrimage or visiting graves. However, in the context of this verse, it is not understood as a grave pilgrimage as is generally understood in society. In the context of this verse, it is

understood as "a person entering the grave" which was unexpected, because he was lulled by the glamor of worldly life.

The verse above describes people who are careless about the afterlife as a real life. He is said to be negligent because of the luxurious lifestyle until he is lulled into a thinking that what he is proud of in this world will be abandoned when entering the grave. The reasons for being proud of the above are because of the possession of a lot of wealth, children who are successful in various fields, many followers, glory in the form of rank and position, and various other kinds of pride. All of this can be a trigger for someone to be careless about their life after entering the grave.

Although etymologically the word *zur* means grave pilgrimage or visiting graves, in the context of the verse above, it is not meant for grave pilgrimage as understood by the general public, especially not in the context of pilgrimage in the sense of *Melipo*.

Second, in the hadiths we also find a lot of information that can be used as a basis for visiting graves, one of which is in the Hadiths of Muslim History:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ فَزُورُوهَا.

Means: *In the past, I forbade you from visiting graves, so (now) do it.* (HR. Muslim).

Based on the hadith above, the prophet once forbade his people from visiting graves. However, after going on for some time, he asked to do it. This means that there are benefits in carrying out grave pilgrimages, both for the pilgrim and the deceased.

Third, based on the views of Muslim scholars or scholars. The majority of scholars view visiting graves as sunnah for both men and women. It is common knowledge among Muslim scholars that although the Prophet forbade it because of certain considerations, he later permitted it because of certain considerations, too. Because of this, friends, both men and women, made pilgrimages during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Aisyah, RA. for example, the Prophet permitted her to visit the grave of her brother, Abdurrahman. However, if the presence of women on the pilgrimage is feared to cause slander, then it becomes prohibited (Al-Jaziry, 2011).

The slander referred to the condition when a woman is unable to control her feelings while at the graveside and does prohibited things, such as hitting her face, tearing her clothes, hitting the surface of the grave as a sign of resentment at the departure of her husband or child, parents, and other family members, and then it becomes haram (forbidden).

Furthermore, according to Sayyid Sabiq, several actions of the living people are very useful for people who have died, such as send prayers, alms, fast, hajj, do the prayers. Reading the Al-qur'an specifically given to deceased (Sabiq, 1999).

Ibn Hajar Al-Haitamiy as quoted by Sheikh Zainuddin ibn Abd 'Aziz ibn Zainuddin Al-Malibariy said the following:

أَنْسُ مَا يَكُونُ الْمَيِّتُ فِي قَبْرِهِ إِذَا زَارَهُ مَنْ كَانَ يُحِبُّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا
Means: *What really makes a deceased person happy in his grave is when he is visited by the people he loved while living in this world.* (Al-Malibariy n.d.)

He added that the happy feeling was caused by being able to meet and see his loved ones again and bring the gifts he hoped for in the form of prayers and reading verses from the Koran.

In connection with the information above, the following are the results of interviews with informants regarding the valuable lessons learned in implementing *melipo*. He added that the happiness was caused by being able to meet and see the loved ones once again, was gifted prayers, and was read verses from the Al-Qur'an.

In relation with the information above, the following are the results of interviews with informants regarding the valuable lessons learned in implementing *melipo*, as follows:

The world is not an eternal place

Based on information from Mr. Muh. Talib (environmental priest), he said that *melipo* is very beneficial for awareness because seeing the graves makes those who come to *melipo* realize that "this world is not an eternal place", sooner or later everyone will pass away as well (M. Talib, 2022).

In the educational context, the information from community leaders above shows that *melipo* activities have an influence on the awareness of those who take part in them. After seeing the graves, it was able to awaken

the awareness that all humans will experience the same thing as those who passed away first.

No one can escape death

This information was given by Mr. M. Arief Pawangngari (former KUA, Sendana District) that the implementation of *melipo*, which is often carried out by the Mandar community, contains educational values that gives a realization that "no one can escape death." *Melipo* means visiting a grave with the intention of pilgrimage and praying for the deceased and giving the reward of reading the Al-Qur'an (Pawangngari, 2022).

Graves are ultimately the last residence of humans

Based on Mr. Asri Aminuddin's statement, *melipo* has great benefits because it contains educational value which makes people aware that "in the end, the grave is the last residence of humans." He added that if all this time the residence was a luxurious house, sitting in luxurious chairs, eating delicious meals all the time, and sleeping on soft mattresses, then when it comes the time to finish our job in this world, all of that was left behind and in the end the grave became the final residence. Does it have facilities that make it comfortable, *wallahu a'lam*, it all depends on one's good deeds while living in the world (Aminuddin, 2022).

Asceticism in worldly life

This information was given by Mr. Rahmat Talib who said that *melipo*, which has become a tradition in Mandar community, indirectly provides education to anyone who does it. It is because when someone enters the cemetery, the graves of people who had been with before, such as parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts, friends and other family members are now in *Barzakh* realm. This means that everyone in the end will enter the *Barzakh* realm because nothing is permanent in this world. All the wealth accumulated during life on Earth is eventually abandoned. If that is the case in living in this world, "we are actually living in asceticism". Do not be greedy or covetous for this world because everything will disappear at any time, or sooner or later, we will be the ones who leave it (Rahmat Talib, 2022). The culture and diversity of noble cultural values

possessed by the Indonesian nation is a means in building its people's character (Syukur, Gudang, and Rahmat, 2022).

Brings up a sense of empathy

Every normal human being must have feelings of humanity in seeing other people with the same rights to live. Normal humans psychologically have a sense of empathy for each other that what other people feel is possible to feel it too. He can perceive that a grief experienced by another person is also possible to happen to himself and his family at another time. This information was given by Aco during an interview. In his statement, he said that when we mourn and participate in *melipo* activities, we can feel the grief experienced by the families left behind, especially if the person who passed away was the only one who provided economic support for his family. The wife previously only managed what her husband gave her, so that after her husband passed away, the situation turned around and there was no longer any income coming in. At the end, it was the wife who had to live and learn to earn money to support the livelihood and the children (Kifli, 2022).

Get rid of arrogance

Get rid of pride is one part of the wisdom gained when participating in *Melipo* activities. This was conveyed by Mr. Sahran during an interview. In his statement, it was said that the *Melipo* visited the graves of family or friends intending to visit them and pray for them. That's where we can learn the valuable lesson that what we can be proud of in this life is that nothing stays with us forever because everything leaves us by the time. Rank, position, wealth, popularity, and everything they have that sometimes makes people proud and even shows the impression of arrogance, is ultimately abandoned because the time has come to enter the realm of *Barzakh*. Carrying out *melipo* activities encourages us to reflect, even for a moment, so that whatever we have is not worth being overly proud of because it is all temporary. By doing such reflection, it can get rid of the pride that sometimes appears in a person's heart (Sahran, 2022).

Avoid being greedy or covetous

One of the lessons of participating in *melipo* activities is "avoiding greed and

covetousness." This information was given by Mr. Muh. Jufri Sökkori during an interview. In his statement, he said that there are enormous benefits obtained when we participate in *melipo* activities because there are several lessons that can be learned. One of which is that it makes us "avoid being greedy or covetous of worldly possessions" which is sometimes obtained unreasonably. He added that from the day the corpse was buried until the end of the *melipo* activity, every moment we saw the gravestones will arise a thought that the world we live in today is temporary stopover place. There comes a time when that place will be abandoned along with everything it has ever acquired and owned. If in the end it is abandoned, then why should be greedy and keep it excessively (Sökkori, 2022).

Unity is very important

One of the awarenesses that arises when facing death, whether in family or neighbors, is awareness of the "importance of unity." This was conveyed in Mr. Muh. Albi during an interview. He emphasized that from the day of death until the days of the *Melipo* activities, that was the time when unity is felt important because handling everything related to the care of the corpse to the funeral and *Melipo* activities is impossible to do alone without involving other people. We need the people around us to provide help. Some of them need ideas, energy, suggestions, material donations, and so on. At this time we must also realize that being kind to everyone is a necessity and even an obligation because there are times when they are needed (Albi, 2022). Religion always includes a set of rituals or practices or a set of beliefs in which the beliefs on the rituals have been socially organized and implemented by the community members or the community segments (Mustolehuddin et al., 2022).

Helping each other is very important

The statement given by Mr. Mahmuddin said that in *Melipo* activities it was felt that "helping each other is very important" because the departure from the bereaved home to the cemetery involves many people. Many things are done and it requires the help of other people, including the help of the priest or teacher or *ustadz* who will be give and read prayers to the deceased every day

during the *Melipo* activity period (Mahmuddin, 2022).

The brotherhood between people needs to be maintained

When we are involved in the funeral process taking a part in *Melipo* activities, we are able to see a lot of work being done to help the bereaved family, starting from giving donations, assistance in providing food, drinks, or snacks, digging grave holes, delivering the corpse, and many others. All of these activities can make all parties aware that "brotherhood between people needs to be maintained" because when brotherhood is broken, everyone will be reluctant to provide help when it comes the time a disaster or grief happened to a member of a community. This information was given by Mr. Dilman during an interview (Dilman, 2022).

Pray for those who have preceded

According to Mr. Husain, a valuable lesson that can be learned when involving in *Melipo* activities is to pray for people who have preceded or people who have passed away before. He continued his statement that at first we see the priest was praying or reciting verses from the Al-Qur'an for the deceased, it was normal because it was done normally. Furthermore, for those who were witnessed that will be psychologically touched realizing that everyone at that place, or outside the place, will also experience the same thing as the deceased starting from being buried until receiving prayers from the priest (Husain, 2022).

Muhasabah

One of the lessons that can be learned when involving in *Melipo* activities is *muhasabah* that is evaluating oneself by reflecting on what deeds have been done during the life opportunities given by God in the world. By seeing the grave before his eyes, a person will ask himself, "Am I ready if one day I am called like this person who has just been buried? Do the good deeds outweigh the bad deeds?" Are the good deeds carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Shari'ah? and there are many more questions that arise when someone performs *muhasabah* (M. Talib, 2022). Based on the information from religious and community figures above, it can be emphasized that in the

public's view, *Melipo* is very important and it contains many benefits, all of them can be used as valuable lessons.

CLOSING

The form of implementing *Melipo* or grave pilgrimage based on the traditions of the Mandar community has its own uniqueness because it is somewhat different from the pilgrimage of other ethnic groups. The *elipo* activity for the first time was not carried out at any time, but had a separate time starting from the second day after the funeral until three or seven days later. It is carried out by several people such as the priest (who would pray), family, and neighbors or friends, while bringing certain objects required for this activity, such as the Al-Qur'an, a mat, a kettle filled with clean water to pour on the grave, an umbrella, and fragrant flowers.

The Islamic education perspective on the implementation of *Melipo* in Mandar community uses the Al-Qur'an, hadith, and the views of Muslim clerics or scholars as benchmarks for its implementation. To find out whether the implementation of *Melipo* is in line with or contrary to the benchmarks used, information is provided by the public or informants who are directly involved in its implementation. Information obtained from informants is that *Melipo* contains educational values because many valuable lessons can be learned, such as the world is not an eternal place, no one can escape death, the grave is ultimately the last residence of humans, asceticism in worldly life, arising the feelings of humanity, bringing up a sense of empathy, getting rid of arrogance, avoiding greed or covetousness, unity is very important, helping each other is needed, brotherhood between people needs to be maintained, praying for those who have preceded, and *muhasabah* on attitudes and behavior.

Research on local culture from the perspective of Islamic education needs to continue to be encouraged so that people know the boundaries of religion (Islam) in culture and the boundaries of culture in religion. Ordinary people need enlightenment about Islam through many methods, including research results because there are still those who feel guilty if they do not perform it while it is a tradition. In addition, there are still some who consider it is a tradition while it is sunnah. After this research, it is hoped that

there will be a lot of further researches, not only because of job needs or demands, but also in the means of educational purpose. Therefore, every time a likeable research is carried out, it is a mandatory to involve students as assistant researchers or research members.

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