

Socio-Cultural Analysis on Death Rites: Case Study of Ritual Death of Kempo People, West Manggarai, Flores-Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

All humans are bound to die. However, death is not the last phase of human life. Death is a transition. Every transition is marked by certain rituals. Almost all cultures practice death rituals. This research specifically aims to describe death rituals according to the tradition of Orang Kempo in West Manggarai. The method used is qualitative with instruments of observation, in-depth interviews, and Focused-Group Discussion (FGD). Based on socio-cultural analysis, the results of this study show that first, death is a separation event. The separation causes sadness. There is a feeling of loss. However, socially, the separation creates social shocks both in the family environment, and the village. This is because one of the social functions played by the deceased while still alive cannot work. The death rite in this context plays several roles. Firstly, it honours the deceased. Second, comforting the people left behind by the deceased, Third, social reconsolidation both in the family environment, as well as at the village level so that the social functions left by the deceased continue to run. Thus, social order in the family and village is maintained.

Keywords: Socio Cultural Analysis, Ritual Death, Kempo People, West Manggarai, Indonesia, SDG 16.

INTRODUCTION

Death is a universal fact. All human beings must leave the world. This certainty is reflected by Heidegger in his book entitled *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 2001). Heidegger asserts that the end of human existence is death, being towards death. Death is not a possibility, but a certainty. The death that Heidegger meant by that statement was the cessation of man's relationship with the material world.

In a theological approach, death is not the goal of human life. Death is the passage from temporary to eternal life. Christian theologians from the Roman Catholic tradition such as Karl Rahner and Thomas Aquinas, for example, recognized life after death. Rahner (1987) states "Death is the only life path that truly does not die again...". Then Thomas Aquinas (Pasnau, 2002) also recognized that death is the separation of the soul from the body, and the soul cannot be damaged or destroyed.

The belief in life after death is also believed in Islam. Islam teaches that the goal of human life is an eternal abode with external existence, the Divine Substance (Vitkovic, 2018). Hinduism also believes in life after death. Hindu sacred texts describe the soul's journey after death (Veenat, 2021). Buddhism does not explicitly teach the immortality of the soul. The focus of Buddhism is the four noble truths of birth, sickness, old age, and death. Buddhism has the concept of rebirth after death (Tsomo, 2006).

In short, there is a general trend that religion teaches life after death. In this case, death is not the end of human life and human life will continue. Death is perceived as the transitional phase in human life from the mortal material

world to eternal life. Death on the one hand is understood as the natural destruction of the body and on the other hand the transition of the inanimate soul to eternal life.

The view of life after death is not fundamentally universal in absolute terms. This is shown by the diverse views of the human psyche both in philosophy and in culture. The diversity of views can be categorized into two conflicting groups. On the one hand, some think that the soul is eternal and timeless, but on the other hand, some think that the soul is impermanent. The soul will die along with the dead body. However, despite the opposition, in general beliefs and religions often assume that the soul is sacred and eternal (Van, 2020).

Different views on life after death are a matter of man's attempt to solve the mystery of his life. Another problem is that death is always passed through certain rituals. The practice of death rituals is very old and even known from the Homo Neanderthal era (Nielsen, et. al., 2020). Homo Neanderthals buried the dead in caves. The cave is a special place for the burial of the dead. Burial reflects an attachment to the dead and a desire to keep them physically and metaphorically close and safe after they die. Homo Neanderthals also decorated their bodies by painting them in red and black. This body decoration is arguably at least symbolic and may also involve ritual behaviour.

Death ritual vary greatly from one religion to another (Rashid, 2020), from one culture to another, from one faith to another. This diversity follows ethnic groups that are also diverse. Indonesia, for example, is a nation consisting of various ethnic groups. Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics (bps.go.id) based on the 2013 census released 633 major ethnic groups of Indonesia. Each of these ethnicities has various death rites.

Briefly, diverse religions, beliefs, and cultures have beliefs about the immortality of the soul. Death in this context is the transition phase from temporary life on this earth to eternal life. This transition is initiated through death rites. Death rites are performed by bereaved families and community members. The death rites are unique. Every religion, belief, and culture have different death ritual from one another.

This research article shows the uniqueness of the death rite of the Manggarai Tribe-Flores. Generally, the people of Manggarai, Flores are considered as one ethnic group. All Manggarai people use the Manggarai language, having the same cultural expressions such as *caci* dances, marriage rites, death rites, and various other initiation ceremonies. But even so, the Manggarai tribe has sub-tribes. Each sub-tribe has a unique intonation of cultural expression between one sub-tribe and another. This subtribe is real in self-identification. For example, there are Ata Kolang (Kolang People)", Ata Ruteng (Ruteng People), Ata Cibal (Cibal People), Ata Manus (Manus People), Ata Lembor (Lembor People), Ata Boléng (Boléng People), Ata Bajo (Bajo People) and so on. Ata in the Manggarai language means person. The information behind the word ata shows the origin of the place/village which is the center of social and cultural identity which in this study is treated as a sub-tribe of Manggarai.

This study describes the uniqueness of the death rite practiced by one of the Manggarai sub-tribes in the western part of Manggarai. Administratively, the government is included in West Manggarai Regency. The sub-tribe referred to is Kempo, or referred to by outsiders as "Ata Kempo"

Previous Research

Rites in General

Gennep (1960) wrote that human life is a series of transitions from one age to another, from one occupation to another. In each phase of this passage, some rituals or ceremonies allow individuals to move from one position to position, from one occupation to another, or from one place to another. An individual cannot go from one stage to another without going through certain rituals.

Rite or ritual is one of the most widely known terminology in the social sciences. Even this term is very common in everyday life. Sociologically, rites or rituals can be categorized as social acts. As a social act, rituals have public, sacred, and wise characteristics (D'Orsi & Dei, 2018). Rites or rituals in this case are different from ordinary and daily actions that are routine.

Etymologically, the term rite comes from the Latin word "ritualist" which is generally defined as an action by a religion, or tradition of a community, or by a political law. The action was felt to have social benefits. More technically, ritual can be defined as, "a highly symbolic act that has transcendental value to a particular event or life experience (Mwandayi, 2011).

Rituals are very important for human life as social beings. Rituals are affirmations of group identity and subjective emotional expressions associated with the transcendental meaning of a life event. Rituals are symbolic of initiation. Initiation is one of the most significant spiritual phenomena in the history of mankind. The rituals practiced in each initiation are the first step for a change in one's social status. Once a person's rituals are no longer socially the same (Eliade, 1975). Meanwhile, Durkheim (1995) asserts that rituals are essential to awaken, maintain or recreate certain mental states of a group. Ritual, Durkheim insists, is a product of collective thought. Therefore, rituals are always social. In Durkheim's frame of mind, ritual can be interpreted as a social fact (Durkheim, 1982). Every social fact is external, coercive, and objective. Social facts determine how an individual behaves. Thus, rituals

are social actions that are external, objective, and coercive. Each member of society will perform a particular ritual as he moves on to the next phase of his life.

Anthropological studies of rites (Kottak, 2008) explain that rituals are different from other types of behavior. Rituals are formal, stylized, repetitive, and stereotyped. Rituals are usually performed at certain places and times. Ritual is categorized as a social act. Participants who participate in a ritual declare their beliefs and moral requests to maintain social order. Kottak explains that all rites consist of three phases of passage: separation, liminality, and incorporation.

In the separation phase, people withdraw from the group and begin to move from one place to another or one status of another. Then the liminality phase is a crucial phase in which a person has left a place or status but has not entered a new place or status. The final phase, incorporation, is the phase in which people re-enter a new place or social status.

Meanwhile, the sociological study of rites has also come to the attention of sociologists interested in symbolic interactionist approaches. This approach understands rite as a social process that can be observed at the micro level. This micro-level rite can be found in the description of Erving Goffman and Robert Wuthnow (Turner, 1998). Goffman explains that rituals are important for (a) the mobilization of individuals to participate in interactions. In addition (b), ritual is also a medium of awareness of a relevant rule against irrelevance, transformation, use of resources, and speech. Ritual (c) serves to guide participants during the interaction, and (d) helps them correct violations and incidents that occur in an interaction.

According to Wuthnow, ritual is "a symbolic-expressive aspect of behavior that communicates something about social relationships. Rituals are often in a relatively dramatic formal way. Rituals have a moral function: to dramatize collective values and demonstrate individual moral responsibility for those values. Thus, according to Wuthnow, rituals serve to maintain moral order. Such rituals can be embedded in normal interactions as well as in more elaborate collective ceremonies, and rituals can also be performed privately or publicly. But the key point is that ritual is the basic mechanism for maintaining moral order.

In addition to having a moral function, Wuthnow also shows that rituals have a controlling function to overcome uncertainty in social relations governed by moral order codes. Rituals are often used to control various basic uncertainties such as lack of clarity in values, vagueness in key symbols, or uncertainty in key social relationships. Thus, ritual is concerned with choice, the use of authority, and ambiguity in expectations to overcome such uncertainties.

The above brief description shows that rituals have a fundamental role in social life. Rituals have a variety of functions in social life. First is psychological functioning. Rituals can evoke, maintain or recreate certain mental states of a group. Second, the affirmation of social identity. Rituals reaffirm the identity of an individual in a particular group. The third is moral function. Rituals serve to reaffirm collective values. Thus, through rituals, social order is strengthened and restored. Fourth, rituals also have a controlling function to overcome various kinds of insatiability faced by an individual in his social interactions.

Death Rituals

Daniell (1997) describes death as passage and incorporation. On the one hand, death means, the soul leaves the body. The soul is immortal, and the body is mortal. Then on the other hand, after moving away from the mortal body, the soul merges with the immortal body. He described an immortal body as imperceptible, genderless. The soul itself can never die and its life is independent of the mortal body. The soul is not affected by any disease or bodily disorder and even if the disease causes death.

The rite of death is not an individual experience in which an individual experiences the separation of the soul from his body. Death rite are also social events, in which living people express their beliefs, views, and feelings towards the event of death. Jebadu (2023) writes that all ethnic groups that practice cults to ancestral spirits believe that the deceased live forever. This belief is expressed through a death rite. So, death rites are related to death events and at the same time related to social life.

Mwandayi (2011) revealed that each community group with its own culture has a tradition of death rites. The Shona people of Africa, for example, view death as the separation of the body from the soul. The body is seen as matter undergoing a new decomposition with nature. Meanwhile, the soul is immortal. Therefore, death is the separation of the soul from the body.

In short, the rite of death is concerned with the passage of the soul from the mortal body and the incorporation of the soul with the immortal body. In addition, psychologically, for those who are still alive, the rite of death symbolically expresses the deepest thoughts and feelings about a very important life event. Socially, death rites are symbolic means of expressing beliefs, thoughts, and feelings about death.

Death sociologically always causes social shocks. Because every individual has a social role in society in general and the family in particular. A functional approach intellectually rooted in the contributions of Emile Durkheim saw society as one social system (Wallace & Wolf, 2006). Another functional approach describes society as a living

organism made up of parts. Each part has a specific function (Schaefer, 2006). Every part of an organism contributes to the survival of that organism. Society is an organism consisting of functions that are played by each individual.

Based on this functional approach, a person's death is interpreted as a threat that disrupts the social system, or the survival of the organism. Radcliffe-Brown (Palgi and Abramovitch, 1984) says that a person's death constitutes "the partial destruction of social cohesion" until a new equilibrium is established. Hertz (Moris, 1989) describes death as an external force that attacks society and shakes it; death destroys the individual, causing serious problems for society. Morris further described that the impact of an individual's death on a group varies greatly according to the position of the deceased person in society. The death rite in this context functions, firstly so that the same disturbance does not occur, and secondly to reconstruct disrupted social roles, thus recreating social cohesion, social balance, or terminologically often referred to as social order.

Wolfelf (2016) in his article entitled "Why is the funeral ritual important?" explains that death rituals are symbolic activities that help us, with our family and friends express our deepest thoughts and feelings about very important life events. Funeral rites help us understand the reality of death, bear witness to the life of the deceased, and encourage expressions of grief in a way consistent with cultural values.

Death rites do not merely symbolize views, beliefs, or feelings surrounding death. The death rite is also an arena for social status performance. Abramovitch (2008) explains that death rites have become central to social life. Many societies use death rites as a social arena through which they indicate power and social status. Of course, the social status in question is the social status of the deceased and the social status of the surviving family. The higher a person's social status, the higher the cost of death rites.

Reactions and Expressions to Death

Reactions to death are very diverse. Every society has its traditions and customs. Huntington & Metcalf (1979) in their report on the customs of the Nyakyusa people, in Tanzania when family members died, formulated three categories of Nyakyusa people. The three categories are family, village, and village leader. Therefore, as soon as death occurs, a death message must be sent to all families, villagers, and village leaders (chiefdom). On the one hand, if any party is ignored or uninformed then the neglect is considered an insult. Humiliation will cause anger. Then, on the other hand, if any family member, village, or chiefdom has received a message, but freely does not want to be present to mourn the deceased, then his action will be considered a serious violation of social relations. Participating in death ceremonies in the Nyakyusa tradition is a must. Because, if you are not involved in the ceremony, you will be accused of being the cause of death.

Upon hearing the news of the death there were many reactions shown by family members and the public. These reactions are usually symbolic and public i.e. shown to others. These reactions can be categorized into three groups of reactions, namely crying, singing, and dancing. Each society in this context has its customs. These habits can differ from one community group to another. Malinowski, in his article *Magic, Science and Religion* (Robben, 2004) writes that as soon as death occurs, the body is bathed and decorated. After that, the mourning period begins. The period of mourning is expressed by lamentations of grief that are sometimes conventional, dramatized, and performed in public.

In the Nyakyusa community of Tanzania, as reported by Huntington & Metcalf, two expressions are shown. Both of these expressions are based on gender. The women would mourn the dead, and the men would perform dances. The women begin their lamentation ceremony at the time of death and continue until the end of burial activities three or four days later. The owners of the deceased, the family of the deceased, spend most of their time inside one of the houses that are the center of the lament. Then the other women sit wailing outside the house or they wail around the deceased, then move outside the house. The main role of the men is to perform dancing ceremonies. The dance was led by young men wearing special costumes, leg bells, and cloth skirts, all holding spears and jumping wildly. The dances performed are a form of respect for the deceased.

Stages of Death Ritual

Moris (1989) in his book entitled, "Burial and Ancient Society" wrote that the rite of death is a rite of passage (passage). In this regard, there are three stages of rites of passage, the rite of passage. The three stages are (1) rite of separation, (2) rite de merge, and (3) rite of aggregation.

The first stage of the death rite process is the rite of separation. At this stage, the participants, whom we call initiands, move from their original social role to the mourner, then the deceased moves from a person to a corpse, and then the soul separates from the body. Then in the second stage, rite de-merge. The rite de merge places the initiands in an extraordinary position and is frequently associated with pollution and/or reversal of roles, dress, and behaviour. (This rite places initiands in an extraordinary position and is often associated with positions and/or multiple roles, dress, and behaviour).

Last is the rite of aggregation. In this third stage, initiands enter a new stable state through aggregation. The mourners returned to social life but without the deceased. His corpse, in the end, was buried; and his soul can join the ancestors.

Finally, death rites are first interpreted as cultural mechanisms to control external forces such as death that can disrupt social systems or social order. The rite of death is the cultural mechanism through which living people continue to carry on with their lives without having to be disturbed by the event of death.

METHOD

Research Methods and Approaches

This article was developed based on qualitative research methods. Creswell (2007) explains several reasons qualitative research is used. First, because the problems and issues want to be explored more deeply. Second, because the researcher wants to understand the problems and issues in more detail. Third, the researcher wants to strengthen individuals in sharing stories, hearing their voices, and minimizing power relations. Fourth, because they want to write literature in a flexible style conveyed by history, theatre, or poetry without formal academic restrictions. Fifth, Qualitative research wants to understand the context of an issue and problem more broadly and deeply, and the six qualitative studies are aimed at developing an existing theory.

Based on Creswell's description, a qualitative approach was used in this study for the reason of wanting to understand more deeply and in detail the death rites practiced by the Kempo People in West Manggarai Regency, Flores-Indonesia. Then, another reason is to understand the context of the death rite being practiced. The research approach used is an ethnographic approach. An ethnographic approach essentially describes and explores the values, beliefs, and cultures lived by a single group of people. The ethnographic approach consists of two categories, namely realist ethnography and critical ethnography. Realist ethnography focuses on objective research data. Critical ethnography focuses on the symptoms of power inequality in culture. This research takes the category of realist ethnographic research.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in three ways, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and focused group discussions (FGDs). The author made several observations. The first is the observation of the death ritual process of Mr. Rudolf Ruman. The second is the death ritual for Maria Magdalene Nggejang and the third, the death ritual of Yakobus Baru. All three died in 2012. Then the four death rituals are for Martina Namun who passed away in 2022. In all four deaths, the author was actively involved in the ritual process of their deaths.

In addition to observation, this study also used in-depth interview techniques, in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with two people who served as customary spokespersons in the rites of death. The interview is done by asking open questions such as how the burial process of the dead is according to the tradition of Ata Kempo, then what rites are obligatory, and why these rites must be passed. The interview process is recorded, then transcribed back in the form of a word file for later categorization and analysis. Then the last technique of data collection is done with "Focus Group Discussion" or FGD. FGD is conducted based on information obtained through in-depth observation and interviews. FGD is used to derive the broader context of death rites practiced by the Kempo people.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Obituary:

Announce the death (Nggalak)

The news of death is an important early stage in the tradition of the death rite of the Kempo people. Before information technology developed as it is today, the obituary was delivered by a messenger. The news of this death in the Kempo tradition is called nggalak. Nggalak is a javelin that in daily use is used for hunting. Hunt deer or wild boar.

There is a difference between people carrying nggalak to hunt and messengers of death. A person who wants to hunt carries a javelin (nggalak) with the sharp end of the javelin made of iron facing forward or towards the ground. While the messenger of death carries it in a backward or upward position. Everyone who encounters him can clearly distinguish whether he is out hunting or a bearer of obituaries. When he meet such a person on the street, he would be asked, "who died"? Meanwhile, if you encounter a person who carries a javelin (nggalak) with the sharp tip of the front person will ask, "where do you want to hunt?" or "where did you go hunting from?"

The messenger of death is not a random person. He was a chosen one. There are indeed no special conditions to be a messenger of death. However, he must be a grown man sent. The social interaction of the Manggarai people in general, or the Kempo people in particular revolves around two main currents of relations. The first current is in-group and the second is out-group. The in-group is the messenger and the out-group is the recipient of the message.

First, In-group. The In-group consists of three domains of social groups. First, the nuclear family consists of a father, a mother, and children. Second, extended family. The extended family is called 'batu'. Batu is made up of families that belong to the same lineage. Third is the village. The village is called b  o (Lawang, 2004). According to Lawang, there is one other terminology that refers to b  o, namely golo. The people of Manggarai in general or Kempo in particular live in the unity of b  o or golo. B  o or golo is the center of life and the basis of the social identity of the Manggarai community in general. B  o is a social, cultural, and economic space, of the nuclear family and the 'batu'.

The three main groups have their own leaders and the extent of their authority is also different. B  o is led by tu'a golo, the batu is led by the tu'a batu, and the nuclear family by the head of the family. The head of the family in the Manggarai dialect of Kempo is Am  . Tu'a golo is the leader of all villagers consisting of batu groups and nuclear families. Tu'a batu leads the nuclear families that are joined in 'batu'. Usually come from the same lineage. The am   leads a family consisting of his wife, children and everyone who lives in the house with the nuclear family. All leaders; Tu'a Golo, Tu'a Batu and Am   are men.

The center of the social identity of the Manggarai people in general or the Kempo in particular is the b  o. For example, Rudolf Ruman is from Nara village, so he will be called Nara people. Although he lives in a place far away or outside Nara village. Rudolf Ruman's wife from another village is also referred to as Nara, even though she is from another village. Martina Namun, for example, comes from Siru Lembor. After Martina Namun married to Rudolf Ruman who came from Nara, she was referred to as Nara. To become a Nara, Martina Namun had to follow certain passage rituals. Usually, this ritual is carried out when the newlyweds are brought by their husbands to their hometown. Usually, if the death occurred in his native village, a messenger would be sent by one of the leaders. It can be sent by tu'a golo or tu'a batu or Am  . But if the death occurred outside the village, the messenger was usually assigned by Am  .

Second, out-group. The main out-groups in the context of obituaries comprise three important social groups. They are all recipients of the death message brought by the nggalak. The first group, in the Manggarai language with the Kempo dialect, is called in  -am  . In   means mother and am   means father. This terminology has both social and spiritual significance. Socially, in  -am   is a social status with a specific social role. In addition, spiritually, they are recognized as givers of life. The symbol of this gift is to approve their daughter to marry a man who will then go to her husband's village. So the woman is a symbol of life in the tradition of the Kempo people. For example, Martina is originally from Siru Lambor, and married to Rudolf Ruman from Nara Kempo. The parents, brothers, 'batu, and even members of the village of Martina Namun originated referred to as In  -Am  . The In  -Am  , especially the parents of Martina Namun is first and foremost the news of death delivered by a messenger (nggalak).

The second group in the Manggarai language of Kempo dialect is called Wo  . Wo   consists of (1) the family (nuclear or extended family) of the deceased's sister if the deceased is a man. (2) The family (Nuclear or extended family) of the daughter of the deceased. The third group is the nuclear family whose stay is separate from the deceased family member. Usually, the nuclear family is the first group to know the news of the death. For they are the ones who provide all the necessities for the death ceremony. They provide tents and various equipment for all the affairs of the death ceremony. Those who plan when burials take place and the timing of other death rites after burial rites. In addition, they also prepare to welcome in  -am   and wo   who will visit the funeral home.

The death of a family member in this context is not only experienced as the loss of a family member but also the loss of a batu and a village member. There is no death of an individual who did not deal with the tu'a golo representing the village. Sociologically from the functional tradition, the death of an individual is considered a disturbance or threat to a social system in society, in this case, a disturbance to the nuclear family, extended family (batu), and village (b  o). Thus, the death rite that is lived after the delivery of the obituary involves these three social groups.

Today, interrupted by advances in information technology, the role of nggalak is no longer functioning. Its role has been taken by information technology. As soon as the death occurs, the news is immediately spread through various social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. On the one hand, information technology accelerates obituaries, but on the other, it shakes all existing traditional roles, statuses, and authorities. There is a feeling of disrespect when news of the death is only conveyed through WhatsApp messages or other social media platforms.

Weeping (Lorang)

Lamentation is an important procession when mourning the dead in death rites in almost all cultures. As soon as an individual dies, members of the house mourn him very emotionally, in high voices and some even tear their clothes and hair. The nuclear family members surrounded the corpse, stroking his body while wailing. While wailing they talked to the corpse, as if the corpse was listening to them. While crying they talk about their fate in the future, about the kindness they have received from people who died while alive, or they also express regret because there are many things they have not done together and various other topics.

The wailing voice of the nuclear family has a social function. The voice also simultaneously gives information to nearby neighbours. Usually, hearing the wailing sound, the neighbours poured in. They also joined the nuclear family in wailing around the body. And so on, one after another people came with wailing.

The group most responsible for this lament is usually women. They would continue to wail around the corpse. Others usually help bereaved families work in the kitchen such as cooking and preparing drinks, while momentarily joining in wailing around the body. While at the same time, men generally take care of other jobs outside the home such as building tents.

There are two wailing patterns. The first pattern of lamentation is spontaneous. This spontaneous lamentation usually occurs in ordinary mourners. They are the nuclear family and the closest householders. Mourners usually mean acquaintances, friends, and neighbours of the deceased. The second pattern organized lamentation. Usually, this second pattern is done by *iné-amé*. After getting official information about death, the *iné-amé* group came at the same time. When they arrived at the funeral home, they did not immediately enter the funeral home. They started wailing from outside the house, or even at the gate of the village. There is usually a wailing guide. The guide began to wail and then followed by others. Hearing their wailing, the nuclear family in the house responded to them also with wailing. While walking into the funeral home, they kept wailing. When they reached the body, they wailed with the grieving nuclear family. Other people, usually the women who were around the corpse also wailed with them. After finishing wailing, the *iné-amé* wrapped the corpse in the traditional cloth they had prepared in advance from home. There is a kind of traditional prayer or greeting when *iné-amé* wraps the body. In essence, they pray for the deceased to go to eternity freely.

Ritual of "Tokong Mbakung"

Burial of the dead in the tradition of the Kempo people does not have to take place on the day he dies. He can be buried the next day or a few days later. He/she will only be buried when all the nuclear family has been present and agreed on the day of his/her burial. Before arriving on the day of burial, family, relatives, and neighbours will stand guard around the body or the funeral home. Some were inside the house around the body, some outside the house. In the Manggarai language with the Kempo dialect, this vigil activity is called *tokong mbakung*. *Tokong* means to stand guard and *mbakung* means a body or coffin that has been filled with the body of a deceased person.

Influenced by Christian tradition, there are joint prayer activities around the bodies of the dead. After praying together, some of those in the house spent time telling stories. They told about a shared experience before the person died. Usually what is told is good and funny things. These funny stories give comfort to bereaved families. Meanwhile, some others are outside the house that has set up tents. They gamble by playing cards. There is something unique that some of these profits from gambling are set aside for the bereaved family. Gambling in this case is just a means of filling time to be able to accompany and comfort the bereaved family together.

The grieving host or family provides food for all those who join the vigil. Therefore, some animals are killed to serve while on guard. The type and size of animals provided depend on the ability of the bereaved family. But the most prevalent animal is a pig. Before the pigs are slaughtered, there is a rite of slaughter. In this rite, a traditional spokesperson speaks to the spirits of the deceased. The essence of this ritual is to tell the spirits of the deceased that for his/her *tokong mbakung*, the family slaughtered a pig or other animal. This pork will be served to everyone who participates in *tokong mbakung* until the sun rises the next day.

The ritual performed during the *tokong mbakung* shows the belief of the Kempo people that the spirits of the deceased are still around their bodies. He/she heard wailing and talking. He pays attention and supervises all the behaviour of people around the body or funeral home. Based on that belief, each family member behaves in such a way as to give the impression to the spirit of the deceased, that they care about him.

Following the looking-glass self-theory of Charles Horton Cooley (Schaefer, 2006), based on this belief, each family member presents himself before the spirit with various rituals known to the spirit before he leaves his body, then imagines how the spirit evaluates his attitude, then based on that imagination he builds confidence whether his attitude is well received by the spirit. The more positive his imagination is, the stronger his belief that spirits will help him in his social life in the future. In addition to receiving evaluations from spirits, he also received attention and evaluation from all other surviving families. Thus, every expression displayed gets attention not only from the spirit but also from other relatives who are around the body.

Burial (Boak)

Digging the Grave

The exhumation of the grave is an important stage in the burial rites of the Kempo people. There are several activities before the soil for burial is dug up. The first stage in the Manggarai language of the Kempo dialect is called the léka tanah event. The léka tanah event begins with the search for one type of wood called waka wood. The Waka wood will be used to measure the length and width of the grave area to be excavated based on the body size of the deceased. In addition, waka wood is used to beat the ground where the place for digging the grave is carried out.

People looking for waka wood must be experienced people. He can distinguish waka wood from other types of wood. According to the tradition of the Kempo people, not everyone can take the initiative to find it. The person who seeks the wood must be the one sent specifically to look for it. He was sent by the head of the family, tu'a batu, or the head of the village, tu'a golo. After finding the waka wood, he returned to the field house to report to the one who ordered him to look for the waka wood.

After receiving the waka wood, tu'a batu or tu'a golo calls family members or villagers. He held deliberations to discuss the exhumation of the grave. In the deliberation, tu'a batu or tu'a golo appointed one person to carry the waka wood to the location of the grave. He who received the waka wood was also the leader for the grave excavation. To the appointee, the tu'a batu or tu'a golo conveys that he is responsible for performing the wégo waka ritual. Wégo" means to beat or whip. So wégo waka means to hit the surface or whip the ground with waka wood.

"Wégo Waka"

The wégo waka ceremony is called léngkang tanah. An earthen whip is the beating of the soil where the grave soil will be dug. Léngkang tanah is done four times using waka wood by the leader who has been delegated by tu'a batu or tu'a golo before. While doing the land, he said a prayer to God as the owner of life. God is the belief of the Manggarai people in general, also the Kempo people are called Mori (n). The suffix (n) refers to possessive information that God is the owner of life (Verheijen, 1991). After the léngkang tanah ceremony, the slaughter of sacrificial animals is carried out. The type of animal sacrifice depends on the ability of the bereaved family. But usually, the animal sacrificed is a chicken. Blood from the sacrificial animal was splashed around the grave excavation site. After that, the grave was dug directly. As the exhumation of the grave progresses, the person assigned to perform the wégo waka returns to the funeral home and conveys to the elders who sent him that the excavation has already begun.

The grave must be exhumed on the same day the body will be buried. If the grave has been dug, but there is a delay in burial, then the gravel pit must be guarded. It must not be abandoned. Therefore, it must be confirmed in advance that the burial ceremony must be carried out on the same day as the exhumation of the grave.

The léngkang tanah or wégo waka ritual reflects the belief of the Manggarai people that the land where someone is buried has a soul that owns it. Therefore, the léngkang tanah or wégo waka ceremony has several meanings. First, léngkang tanah or wégo waka is a notification to the spirit that a person's body will be buried in that place. Secondly, it is hoped that the spirits that inhabit the ground for burial can accept the body. This wish is accompanied by the offering of sacrificial animals. The animal sacrificed is a rooster.

Burial (Boak)

Before the burial ceremony, the nuclear family members left behind stood around the coffin. Each family member delivered a farewell phrase. Usually, this parting phrase contains expressions of apology for mistakes that have been committed, containing the hope that the deceased will leave safely for eternity. In addition, there is also a wish that he who died will take care and care for those who are still alive. After saying goodbye, the coffin was closed and nailed. The closing and nailing of the coffin are carried out successively by members of the nuclear family, tu'a batu, tu'a golo, iné-amé, woé, and other family members.

After the coffin was nailed, the slaughter of sacrificial animals was carried out. Usually, the animal that is sacrificed is a chicken. While the coffin was being lifted, a chicken was sacrificed at the door of the house. Chickens are considered transport animals that are believed to be used by the deceased to an eternal place. The chicken was cut by a customary spokesman. Before the chicken is cut, the spokesperson (tu'a golo, or another trusted person) conveys a message to the soul of the deceased. The essence of the message is that today you are facing God (Mori), we support you with a chicken that flies you to God.

The color of slaughtered chickens is red-orange or cepang in the Manggarai language with the Kempo dialect. The blood of slaughtered chickens is allowed to fall to the ground. After the chicken is slaughtered, the coffin is lifted and paraded to the burial site. At the burial site, the body was immediately buried. Today influenced by Christian tradition, before the coffin is buried there is a ceremony of blessing the burial ground based on Christian

customs. While some people go to the grave, others go to the main water source. In the Manggarai language with the Kempo dialect, it is called waé pu'u. They went to wash the clothes he was wearing when he died. The procession of the road to the water source follows the order; At the front of the row was a man carrying a machete, followed by mothers carrying the clothes of the deceased. Before washing, the man carrying a machete conveys a kind of request from the spirit of the deceased person that the day his clothes are washed. We ask that all bad things be brought with this flowing water, and all good things be left behind, after saying these words, mothers take their clothes. Then go back to the funeral home.

The burial ritual is the initial stage of the separation ritual. The body is separated from the house where he lived if he lived to a new house (cemetery). The cemetery is the new home for the deceased. In addition, burial rituals also separate the dead from those who are still alive. Funeral rituals are only physical separation. While his spirit is believed to still live with his relatives who are still alive. It is believed that the separation of the spirits from their relatives will occur during the keti kembung ritual on the eighth day which in Manggarai language is called wié alo. Wie means night, alo means eight.

Post Burial: Rites of Liminal, Separation, and Reconsolidation

The Fourth-Night Rite: "Wéntar Locé"

The rite on the fourth night after the burial rite is a liminal rite. On the one hand, his body has been buried, but on the other hand, his spirit is still with his family at home. His spirit has not really left the family and joined his ancestors. This condition is called liminal space. After the body was buried, the family and villagers for four nights continued to gather. They pray for the dead. They stood guard while playing cards. The household equipment used from the time the person dies until he buries him must not be moved. Even the house where the body was laid before being buried should not be tidied up and cleaned. Likewise, the mattress where the body was laid before being buried also cannot be moved and cleaned.

At that place where the body was laid before burial, a candle was lit. At mealtimes (morning, afternoon, and night), the family serves a plate of food and places it around the candle. It was as if a dead person was still there and ate the dish. The place should not be left empty. There is always someone or several people standing guard around, both day and night. The person on guard should not be replaced until the fourth night rite. The home of the bereaved family should also not be cleaned. The person on guard was also not allowed to bathe for four days and four nights.

When the fourth day arrived, the house where the body was buried was cleaned. This rite is called Wéntar Locé. Wéntar means throwing away dirt, and locé is a type of mattress woven from endemic leaves called réa leaves. Locé can be used for sitting and sleeping. Before the wéntar locé ritual is carried out, an animal sacrifice is made first. Usually, the animal sacrificed is a red-orange chicken. In this ritual, the traditional spokesperson conveys to the spirit of the deceased that on this day, the mat used to lay the body and all the sleeping equipment used during the family's mourning period are tidied up and cleaned.

The Eighth-Night Rite: Ketí Kembung

The ketí kembung rite is in principle a rite of separation. Separation between people who have died and people who are still alive. After the fourth-night rites, there is the eighth-night rites. On the eighth night, the grieving family performs the ketí kembung ritual. Kéti means disconnection and kembung means longing. Longing is more meaningful sorrow. Thus, ketí kembung means the end of the period of sorrow. There are three stages of the ritual in the ketí kembung rite, namely the pales jinak, ketí kembung, and angkos rituals.

First, the pales jinak ritual is a cross-shaped symbol (+) depicted on a sheet of areca nut (see the following picture). This symbol is placed between a house and a cemetery or a settlement and a burial complex. The pales jinak ritual is performed in the morning before sunrise. Palas jinak is a symbol of separation (separation). Separation between two worlds of life. The world of humans lives in the mortal world and the world of those who have died in eternal life. There is a belief that when spirits see the (+) image, they realize that their world is different from that of their living relatives.



Pales Jinak (author's documentation)

Second, the k  ti k  mbung ritual is carried out in the afternoon before sunset. This ritual is carried out at the village gate or between the grave and the house where the palas jinak was previously placed. All members of the bereaved family are required to attend this ceremony. This ritual can also be attended by other residents.

The materials needed for the k  ti k  mbung ritual are red, white, and black yarns. Then, there are also two types of wood that must be prepared, namely kol   and mali wood. Kol   means going back and mali means taboo. The Kempo society believe that if the spirit of a deceased person sees kol   wood, it will return to its new place in the spirit world. And then when he/she looks at mali wood, it will become a taboo to pass by that wood. The two woods are planted side by side. One on the left, and one on the right. Three colored yarns are tied between the two pieces of wood. One end of the thread is tied to one piece of wood, and the other end of the thread is tied to another piece of wood as shown in the following picture.

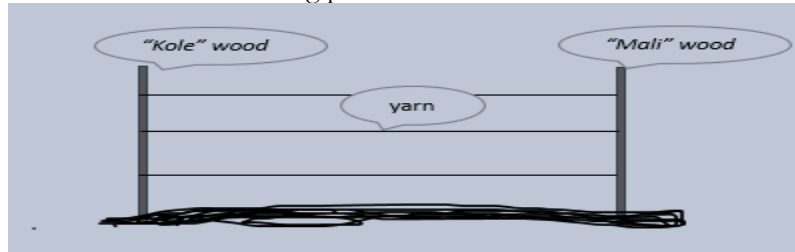


Illustration of thread installation between Kol   and Mali wood

Other materials used during the k  ti k  mbung ritual is one boiled local chicken egg. Then there is whiting, betel leaf, betel nut, and tobacco. These ingredients are placed on top of a container made of leaves. The leaves that are commonly used are banana leaves. In addition, in the k  ti k  mbung ritual, a black chicken is also prepared as a sacrifice. All the families sat cross-legged around the materials and faced the graveyard complex. Then the black cock is sacrificed over the ingredients available on the banana leaf. Chicken blood on all these ingredients. Then the sacrificed chicken is thrown forward towards the grave.



K  ti K  mbung ritual for Martina Namun
(author's documentation April 2022)

After the slaughter of the sacrificial chicken, the customary spokesperson delivered a message to the spirits of the deceased. The essence of this message is to convey to the spirit of the deceased person the purpose of the k  ti k  mbung ritual and its status. The spokesperson of the custom said that this afternoon was a k  ti k  mbung ritual. The spokesman said there was a separate dwelling between the spirits of the deceased and the surviving relatives. So the k  ti k  mbung ritual is a separation ritual.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that until before the keti kembang ritual, the Kempo people believed that the spirits of people who had died were still with people who were still alive. The spirits of people who have died have not really separated from people who are still alive. The passage of the spirits of people who have died from the world of people who are still living is marked by the rite of keti kembang. So starting from the burial rituals to the fourth-night rituals (wentar loce) is a transition period, a period in which the spirits of the dead live in a liminal phase. On the one hand, the spirits of the dead have not completely joined the ancestors in the world of eternal life, and on the other hand, they also do not really live together with the living in this mortal world. In this liminal phase he is still in the midst of his relatives and watching their behavior. He actually separated from his family after the keti kembang ritual. The keti kembang ritual, on the one hand, is interpreted as a ritual of separation of the spirits from their living relatives, and on the other hand, it is also a ritual of incorporation of the spirits with their ancestors in the spirit world.

Based on the description above, researchers can conclude that before the *kéti kémbung* ritual, the Kempo people believed that the spirits of the deceased were still with the living. The spirit of the deceased has not been truly separated from the living. The passage of the spirit of the deceased from the world of the living is marked by the rite of *kéti kémbung*. So starting from the burial ritual to the fourth-night ritual (*wéntar locé*) is a transitional period, a time when the spirits of the deceased live in the liminal phase. On the one hand, the spirit of the deceased has not completely joined the ancestors in the world of eternal life, nor does he live with the living in this mortal world. In this liminal phase he is still among his relatives and watching their behaviour. He was completely separated from his family after the ritual of *kéti kémbung*. The *keti kembang* ritual on the one hand is interpreted as a ritual of separation of spirits from their living relatives, and on the other hand also means a ritual of incorporation of spirits with their ancestors in the spirit world.

Third, the *angkos* ritual. After the *kéti kémbung* ritual, the next ritual is *angkos*. *Angkos* is basically a reconsolidation ritual. The *angkos* ritual is reconsolidation of the power to continue life in the future. Losing a family member to death certainly creates a social imbalance. One force in the family is now gone. Therefore, in this *angkos* ritual, all those left behind rebuild solidity to face a new life in the future without him/her who has died. This ritual is attended by all members of the immediate family of the deceased person. In addition, the *angkos* ritual are also attended by *iné-amé*. In short, *angkos* is a ceremony performed for living people. The ritual of *pales jinak* and *kéti kémbung* is carried out outdoors. While *angkos* ritual are carried out inside the house, the world of living people.



Angkos ceremony in the house (author's documentation)

The *angkos* ritual is a reconsolidation ritual for the surviving family. The surviving family returns to their usual routine of life. However, because a family member has passed away, their lives are now in disarray. To overcome this, it is necessary to reconsolidate the relationships within the family. Consolidation embraces the new zest for life of all family members. If there were divisions before, then through the *angkos* ritual, the relationships are restored. Thus, the next life can be faced better.

Kélas Rite

The *kélas* ritual is the culmination of all death rituals in Kempo. The *kélas* ritual marks the completion of the death ceremony. The *kélas* ritual is an obligation that must be fulfilled by the family left behind. In a looser sense, the *kélas* ritual looks like a party. The period of mourning has indeed passed and now family members and villagers rejoice. All the family, the nuclear family, the *iné-amé*, and the villagers attend the *kélas* ritual. In short, the *kélas* ritual means that social reconsolidation between family members and villagers is back to normal.

The timing for the *kélas* ritual is uncertain. *Kélas* can be performed on the eighth day, along with *keti kembang*. But it cannot be done before the eighth-day ritual. *Kélas* rites may also be performed on the days after the eighth-day ritual. It can be done a few months after the day of *keti kembang* ritual, or even a few years afterwards. Time for *kélas* depends heavily on the readiness and agreement of the bereaved family.

The *kélas* ritual involves extended families grouped under two social identities namely *woé* and *iné-amé* and nuclear family and extended family according to patriarchal lines (male lineage of one common lineage). *Woé* is a group of female lines. They are children, nephews, cousins, and sisters of the bereaved family. While *iné-amé* are the in-laws of a man (husband) who died or the father and mother of a woman (wife) who died.

Grieving families will welcome the arrival of the two social groups customarily. They were welcomed at the funeral home. The two-family groups (*iné-amé* and *woé*) will stay in two different houses that have been prepared by the nuclear family. *Iné-amé* sleeps in the same house as the nuclear family. While *woé* sleeps in different houses around the nuclear family house.

The culmination of the *kélas* rite is to slaughter a buffalo, or other animal such as a pig or cow, according to the family's ability. However, usually, buffalo have a higher value than other animals. Slaughter of buffalo or sacrificial animals is carried out in the morning. This is the culmination of all ritual. After that, the women took a place in the kitchen to cook and serve food during the day.

Kélas Rite has several main objectives. First, for the spirits of the deceased. The Kempo people believe that kélas will make the spirits of the deceased leave peacefully towards eternal life. Second, for bereaved families, kélas is an opportunity to create reconciliation. It could be conducted if the deceased is alive, and there are family conflicts. At the time of kélas, all family members gathered. Then at that time, the family reconciles to face life in the days to come better. Third, kélas is also an opportunity to settle all customary debts that may not have been settled while the deceased was alive. The final part of the kélas rite is influenced by Christian tradition, followed by a mass attended by guests.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the findings and discussion of the research above, several points can be used as a conclusion of this study. First, the series of death rites described above show that the Kempo society believe in life after death. The human spirit does not die at the same time as the dead body. Death in that context is understood as a passage. First, the transition from the material world (body) to the spiritual immaterial world. Second, the passage from the mortal and temporary world to the immortal and immortal world. Third, death is also understood as a passage from attachment to family in the mortal world and to attachment to the rest of the eternal world.

Second, the transition is released with a wailing. Lamentation contains two dimensions, namely psychological and sociological dimensions. Lamentation in this context is part of an important death ritual. Psychologically, lamentation is an emotional expression. People feel sad about the event of death. Then sociologically, lamentation indicates disturbed social ties. Such social ties are disrupted by death. Death in that context is a social disorder that threatens social integration or solidity. The expression of lamentation will be more profound when the deceased is an individual who has an important role in the family, batu atau beo. Their loss as well as the disruption of the social system in society both at the level of nuclear family, batu (extended family), or béo (villagers) . The disturbance creates uncertainty for those left behind to face their future after the death of family members, batu and béo.

Third, death rituals show respect for the deceased. Tributes are paid to all his services during his lifetime with his/him family, batu, or beo, and the wider community. This perspective is particularly prominent when the deceased individual is a highly respected person either in the family, batu, béo or the wider community.

Fourth, death rituals as shown by Manggarai culture in the customs of the Kempo people especially as described above indicate where the spirits are after the person dies. This place for spirits can be explained in two phases of existence. The first phase is the liminal phase. This phase begins at the time the individual dies until the death ritual is held on the eighth-day ritual. On the eighth day, a kéti kémbung ritual is held. Before the ritual, the spirit of the deceased was still amid the family, batu, or béo. Before the ritual, the spirit of the deceased was treated as he/she would normally still live with his body. It is fed at the same time as the living person. The second phase is the separation phase. After the ritual of kéti kémbung, the spirits of the deceased are completely in a different world with their families, batu, and béo. The soul of the deceased perfectly reunites with his ancestors in the world of eternal life.

Fifth, after giving the kéti kémbung ritual, the next rite is the angkos ritual. Angkos ritual is a ritual related to family reconsolidation. In this ritual, family members forgive each other. There is a belief that if family members disagree or conflict, then the spirit will not calmly live in its eternal place. This condition will interfere with everyday family life. The soul of the deceased will disturb their life in the form of sickness or failure. Therefore, the angkos ritual is important. Sociologically, angkos reinforces the solidity of family members to face the life to come. The angkos ritual is commenced with a ritual of rearranging the space in the house such as making the bed, sweeping the bedroom that was used by the deceased and the funeral home as a whole, and washing all the clothes left by the deceased. The perfection of the angkos ritual is a kélas ritual. At this kélas ritual, all customary debts are discussed and settled.

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