ISLAMIC CEMETERIES IN PATANI

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FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to be able to present this special monograph and to say a few words in connection with its publication. This monograph is one of the many publications of the Malaysian Historical Society. It focusses on the cemeteries of Patani, Thailand. The appearance of this monograph will be able to fill a particular gap in the studies on the ancient Muslim cemeteries found in the Malay world. This is due to the fact that ancient Muslim cemeteries in Malaysia and Indonesia have already been studied and written.

I believe that this study is very important in many ways. It recognises that history can be studied not only from documents but also from artifacts and monuments. More precisely, the past can be recreated from a study of artifacts and monumental remains. In these groups of shaped stones, metals and wood, there are indistinct but recoverable messages which can be deciphered. It is not for me to judge to what extent Mr. Wayne Bougas efforts in writing this monograph have been successful. Personally I am convinced that it is a worthwhile effort. It will not only serve the students of history but also art historians, archaeologists and anthropologists. Therefore, this monograph is published for almost everybody irrespective of whether they are scholars or laymen.

It is hoped that it will form a valuable contribution to the understanding of the socio-religious aspects of the history of the Muslim-Malay society in Patani.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere appreciation to all those involved in making this publication possible.

Thank you.

Hamdan Tahir

Tan Sri Datuk Hj. Hamdan Sheikh Tahir
Chairman,
Executive Committee
January 1988.

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W.A.B.

December 1987

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to describe and explain Islamic cemeteries as they are found in Patani, South Thailand. The book will focus on those structures or items, i.e. walls, pavilions, tombstones, etc. that one might encounter while visiting a cemetery in Patani. The book will also attempt to explain how each evolved and came to be part of Islamic cemeteries there.

The first chapter of the book examines how the people of Patani perceive death and the hereafter. Their perceptions of death have been shaped over the centuries by three major religions — Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and ancestor worship. Concepts of death derived from these three religions have played a major role in shaping cemeteries as they are known today. In one sense it could be said that cemeteries are simply a material expression of these beliefs. The second chapter of the book explains how cemeteries are named in Patani and suggests that this system of naming originated in Aceh, North Sumatra and spread to Malaysia and Patani. The third chapter forcuses on the location of cemeteries. It will be seen that cemeteries are normally located on the outskirts of a village or outside a city's walls. Types of graves, patterns of arrangement, depth, and possible symbolic meanings of the grave are discussed next. Tombstones, their number and position on the grave, their shape, the materials from which they are made, the motifs and inscriptions found on them and the various functions they serve will also be examined. The book then examines the structures found in cemeteries. It will be seen that structures found there basically fall into two categories: those associated with royalty and those associated with Islamic holy men or saints. Chapter seven surveys the variety of plants found in graveyards and suggests they symbolize the Garden of Eden or Paradise. Finally, the reasons why people visit cemeteries in Patani will be examined. This sheds light on another set of items found in cemeteries: the paraphernalia brought and left there by visitors during various rites.

Patani was chosen as the site for this study because of its long and rich Islamic past. Indian traders most likely introduced Islam into the area as early as the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. In the late 15th century Patani's royal house converted to Islam (Bougas, 1986:95). After the fall of Melaka in 1511 Patani became one of the major Islamic trading states in Southeast Asia. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Patani known as a cradle of Islam, became a centre of Islamic scholarship and learning. As a result of this rich Islamic heritage, Patani provides the researcher with examples of Islamic cemeteries spanning a five hundred year period of history. Some graveyards like *'Kubo Barahom'* are extremely old dating back to the 15th century or earlier. Another cemetery *'Kubo Dato'* has been in continual use since the

1500s, providing invaluable data on how cemeteries have evolved in Patani. The researcher is also helped by the fact that the Patani river basin contains a very large number of cemeteries located in a relatively small and easily accessible area. Approximately sixty graveyards were visited in this survey.

Another reason for carrying out this survey in Patani is that Patani, for all its importance as a centre of Islamic culture in Southeast Asia, has been largely ignored by Malay and Islamic studies in the area because of its location in Buddhist Thailand. It is hoped that this study will help spark renewed interest in Patani.

Finally, this book is not an exhaustive study of Islamic graveyards in Patani. It should be seen as an introduction or guide to the structures and items found there. It is hoped that this book will stimulate similar studies of Islamic cemeteries in Java, Sumatra, India, and the Middle East, for it is believed that comparisons of cemeteries in these areas can give valuable insights into not only early Islamic mortuary art but also into how and by what means Islam was spread to and through insular of Southeast Asia.

1
CONCEPTS OF LIFE, DEATH, AND THE HEREAFTER

The forms that cemeteries have taken over the centuries in Patani are directly related to the everchanging perceptions of death and the hereafter held by its people. These perceptions were shaped by three major religions and tradition: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and ancestor worship. The forerunners of today's Malay speaking peoples and this includes the inhabitants of Patani, were ancestor worshippers. By the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. these peoples had been Indianized, adopting Hindu and Buddhist forms of worship, on the Malay peninsula and by the 14th century they had been converted to Islam.

The introduction of each new system of beliefs did not necessarily imply a clean break with the past. Ancestor worship was not simply replaced by Indian concepts, nor Indian beliefs by Islamic ones. Each succeeding tradition had to adapt itself to the preceding one, preserving elements of the past, while introducing new concepts of its own. The result is that perceptions of death in Patani are a composite of all four traditions.

It should be noted that this process of cultural adaptation and assimilation was not unique to Patani. Concepts of death throughout the Indonesian archipelago were a blend of beliefs taken from ancestor worship, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Comparisons of beliefs or cemeteries between Patani and other places in insular Southeast Asia are, therefore, quite appropriate.

Perceptions of death and the hereafter will now be outlined tradition by tradition. The outline, where possible, will point out what concepts were lost, preserved, or added as the people in Patani were Indianized and were converted to Islam. How these perceptions actually manifested themselves in cemeteries will be dealt with in later chapters of the book.

Finally, it should be emphasized that cemeteries are not simply religious beliefs given material expression. Political, economic, and other cultural factors, it will be seen, have also played a major role in determining the form cemeteries have taken.

Ancestor Worship

It is very difficult, in fact almost impossible, to describe attitudes towards death that existed in Patani before the arrival of Indian religions. No physical remains nor written records have survived from this early period of Patani's

history. What we must do is carefully examine current religious beliefs, eliminate what is definitely Indian and Islamic, and assume that the remainder represents what has survived of the system of beliefs that existed prior to Indianization and Islamization. If we also compare these beliefs with perceptions of death in other societies in the archipelago which have not been Indianized or heavily influenced by Islam, we can begin to tentatively reconstruct the system of beliefs that may once have existed in Southeast Asia and Patani before Indianization. These two approaches suggest that ancestor spirits played a dominant role in the lives of people in Patani. Ancestors were a link to previous generations and were a connection to the Gods who created mankind. They were ever-present, influencing events for better or worse. They were the guardians of *'adat'* or customary law and because of their proximity to the soil, they exerted tremendous influence over its fertility.

Ancestors were either protective or harmful depending upon the circumstances of their deaths and their treatment after death: 'Individuals with no offspring to provide offerings for them, or who died a violent death as a result of murder, warfare, violent accident or betrayal might become malignant spirits causing sickness and misfortune. Spirits of individuals who died honourably might also be harmful if not treated properly. A litany of obligations for a bereaved family demanded costly and difficult offerings to ancestors. Failure to meet any obligation could bring disease and infertility to humans, animals, and plants' (Feldman, 1984:35).

Funeral rites in Patani most probably centred on integrating the soul of the deceased with those of his ancestors. These rites may have featured a double burial, in other words, the corpse was stored in a temporary tomb or grave and then at some later date the last rites were administered and the remains permanently buried. This interval between death and final interment allowed the corpse to decompose and eventually reach a skeletal condition. A purifying corpse was considered unclean and polluted. As long as the body of the deceased remained in such a state, his soul would not be accepted into ancestral ranks. Only after the skeleton was clean, at the time of the second funeral and burial, could the soul depart for the Land of the Dead. The journey there was often a difficult one. There were mountains to be climbed and rivers and seas to be crossed. The journey may therefore have been facilitated in special ceremonies by priests or priestesses whose own soul substance left their bodies and accompanied the soul of the deceased to the Land of the Dead.

Souls were not simply escorted to heaven and then forgotten in Patani. 'There is a tacit understanding in most religions that the dead are present concurrently in their tombs and in some spiritual realm' (Eliade, 1976:41). In Patani, family ancestral spirits were thought to descend on the houses of their living kin, and the souls of chiefs or warriors who had once founded or protected a village were thought to descend from the heavens to participate in important village functions. This bi-locality is a source of power, since it enabled ancestral spirits to move between man and the Gods. Death did not sever the ties between the living and the dead. Bi-locality enabled them to communicate and function as a single community.

The spirits of particular individuals were most probably contacted through a medium. A medium was usually some object closely associated with the deceased during his lifetime. His corpse or bones may serve as mediums. Objects used by the deceased or images made in his likeness might also serve as mediums (*The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:247). Humans could also be mediums. It was commonly believed that a spirit might take possession of a living human being and speak through him.

Specific obligations to benevolent ancestors were ponderous. Offerings included a bit of the first harvest. More prestigious offerings included domesticated animals — usually chickens, pigs, and water buffalo. The natural outcome of such sacrifice was a feast.... Virtually all feasting, even that at weddings, was dedicated to ancestors. The largest feasts, however, occured at funerals where usually all known relations, present and past, were either physically or ritually present (Feldman, 1984:36).

In summary, the dominant belief-system in the Patani before Indianization... 'was one of deep ritual concern for the propitiation of the dead. The most striking feature of this system was the continuing involvement of the dead with the living. The ritual expression of this belief in the continuing interaction of the dead with the living was elaborate feasting of the dead....' (Reid, 1985:15).

Hinduism and Buddhism

Many traditional societies in the Indonesian archipelago underwent extensive Indianization between 400 A.D. to 900 A.D. Archaeological investigations have unearthed evidence of this early Indianization in Patani. 'Aerial photography has made it clear that at least three moated sites are located between the villages of Ban Prawae and Ban Wat, 14 kilometers southeast of present day Patani. These moated sites and at least 30 mounds in their vicinity cover an area of about 12 square kilometers. Some of the architectural pieces, sculptures, miniature *stupas,* and bricks were made in styles that correspond with early Dvaravati styles of Central Thailand and the Gupta styles in India. This had lead scholars to date the earliest occupation sometime between the sixth to eighth century A.D.' (Welch, 1986:3).

Although Hinduism and Buddhism were introduced into Patani, ancestors worship continued. In fact new methods for summoning ancestors were borrowed from India. In South Thailand the *Manora* dance drama was introduced from South India most probably via Java. The Southern Thai form of the dance probably evolved in the Indianized state of Sating Pra (9th-11th centuries A.D.) near present-day Songkhla and spread throughout the area including Patani. Today the *manora* is still a popular means of summoning spirits among the Buddhists of Southern Thailand.

The pantheon of Hindu dieties was also introduced with ancestors serving as intermediaries between these gods and the living. The Indian gods associated with fertility and cultivation were held in particularly high regard.

According to Indian belief, Indra, Lord of Mount Meru, the cosmic abode of the Gods, was the controller of the weather and the master of the thunder-

bolt. He slew the serpent demon Saktimana who in Indian mythology often took the form of a cloud or mountain. In slaying the serpent-cloud-mountain demon with his thunderbolt Indra released the water held within the monster and thereby fertilized the earth. 'Malay legends associate the slaying of Saktimana with a prince who descended from the sky and whose coming improved the rice crop' (Winstedt, 1950:51). Indianized Malay rulers claimed descent from such a prince and often considered themselves incarnations of the God Indra.

Indianized societies like Patani abandoned burial in favour of cremation. Traditional practices such as storing the body until the bones were clean, secondary burial, and conducting the soul to heaven survived albeit in Indian terms. The decomposition of the body, for example, was now achieved more swiftly by the purifying fires of the cremation towers and another rite, known as *'mukur'* in Hindu Bali and held 42 days after the cremation, helped convey the soul of the deceased to the appropriate heaven alloted by its caste' (Covarrubias, 1972:384).

Bi-locality and community between the living and the dead also survived in Indianized forms. After the *'mukur'* ceremony in Bali, for example, a soul received the name *'Dewa Yang'*, literally a 'God' and was alloted a resting place in the family temple to protect the household (Covarrubias, 1972:383). When summoned from the heavens it would descend to its seat in the family temple. In Java, dead kings were worshipped as incarnations of Indra or, Vishnu or Siva. Their spirits were thought to descend on temples containing their ashes and statues of the gods made in their likeness. Their ashes and cult statues recall the bones and wooden images used as mediums in ancestor worship.

Indian religion viewed 'life and death as two facets of a single never-ending cycle. The Hindu universe was a closed circuit: nothing new could be produced except by destroying or transforming something else. To attain more life, the life of a victim must be extinguished.... In cremation rites an individual actually sacrificed himself on his funeral pyre in order that he might be reborn. Death regenerated life' (Parry, 1982:74).

Indian religion also viewed death in cosmic terms and this was perhaps its greatest contribution to perceptions of death in insular Southeast Asia. A recurrent theme in Hindu religious thought is the homology which exists between the body and cosmos (Parry, 1982:76). Both are governed by the same laws, constituted of the same elements, and divided into three parts. the universe consists of the heavens, the world of a man, and the underworld. The human body is composed of a head, torso, and feet. In Indian thought the body and cosmos are so closely associated that the body is often thought of as the universe in miniature. The birth, death, and rebirth of any one individual is often equated with the cyclical destruction and regeneration of the cosmos which Indians believe is cyclically created and destroyed in fire. These beliefs are given symbolic expression in cremation rites. In cremation the individual, like the cosmos, is destroyed and reborn in flames. This metaphor is reinforced by the fact that cremation towers in both Buddhist Thailand and Hindu Bali symbolize Mount Meru and the cosmos. As Meru

is engulfed in flames and the universe destroyed, the corpse is consumed and the soul released. 'Since the body is the cosmos, the last rites become the symbolic equivalent of the destruction and rejuvenation of the universe' (Parry, 1982:76).

'The association of death and birth is a common phenomena. Everywhere in the traditional world death is, or was, considered a second birth, the beginning of a new spiritual existance. This second birth, however, is not natural like the first biological birth, that is to say, it is not given, but must be created' (Eliade, 1976:38). Indian religion facilitates or creates this second birth by ritually reenacting the creation of the universe during cremation rites.

The Hindu God most closely associated with birth and death was Siva. The Hindu perception of life and death as two facets of a never ending cycle is clearly seen in his dual nature. In one manifestation, Siva is the source of all life, the synthesis of the creative and generative powers in nature.... Siva is the mountain, the lingga, the father of all humanity, all phallic symbols.... The reverse form of Siva is Kala, Lord of Darkness, born out of Siva to destroy the world (Covarrubias, 1972:290).

Islam — Classical Views

Islamic traders from the Middle East could be found in the ports of island Southeast Asia as early as the 11th century. Islamic tombstones have been found in Java and Champa (Vietnam), for example, bearing the dates 1082 A.D. and 1025 A.D. respectively (Fatimi, 1963:40 & 43). Islam, however, only began to take root and spread among local populations during the 14th to 17th centuries. Pasai in North Sumatra was probably the first Islamic state in the archipelago. The tombstones of Sultan Malik as-Saleh, the first Muslim ruler of Pasai, bear the date 1297 A.D. Islam spread from west to east moving across the islands. Pasai played a major role in the conversion of Melaka in 1411. Patani's royal house most probably converted around 1500. The north coast ports of Java like Tuban and Demak next embraced the faith. The rulers of Makassar only converted to Islam in the opening years of the seventeenth century.

Islam introduced a linear approach to life and death. An individual was born, lived the fixed term of his life *(ajal)* alloted by Allah, and died. He then was thought to exist in the grave or elsewhere awaiting resurrection. This period between death and resurrection is known as *'barzakh'*. At the end of the world he will be resurrected with all mankind, judged, and rewarded with Heaven or sentenced to Hell for eternity.

Muslim views regarding the *barzakh* are far from consistent. Traditionally most Muslims felt that reward and punishment for one's action actually began in the grave prefiguring the final dispensation of Judgement Day. The rewards and punishments of the grave were traditionally associated with the Angels of Death, Mungkar and Nangkir. After burial, these angels descended and ordered the dead person to sit up and questioned him about the tenets of his faith: who was his God and who was God's prophet. If the deceased answered correctly, he was allowed a glimpse of paradise and the rewards yet to come. If he failed the test, he either experienced the fires

of Hell or was beaten by the Angels with iron rods. 'With few exceptions, it was thought, each individual will undergo some kind of torment in the grave, slight or heavy, dependent upon the particular configuration of his or her life' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:45).

For Indonesians and Malays with their concern for the well-being of ancestral spirits, 'the primary concern after burial was to ease the torment of the grave *(siksa kubur)* experienced by the deceased's soul and to release it from early debts and spiritual sins, and to deliver to it as much of the pleasure of the grave *(nikmat kubur)* as possible' (Bowen, 1984:24). Easing the torment of the grave was achieved in a number of ways. During the funeral ceremony a *'talqin'* or 'instruction', for example, was read by the *imam* for the benefit of the deceased. The *talqin* provided the deceased with the answers to the questions the Angels of Death would momentarily put to him. Another way to ease the punishment of the grave was through good works. 'According to the Muslim belief in Aceh, one can perform for the benefit of the dead good works which are not obligatory thus making over to the dead the rewards *(pahala)* which God has appointed to such works' (Hurgronje, 1906:1:428).

Prayers, recitation of the Koran, and the giving of alms *(sadaqah)* were and still are typical examples of good works. 'Prayers said at funeral rites generated merit and transmitted it to the deceased in Highland Aceh. Texts were chosen which praised God and mentioned his name, thereby pleading him to reduce the suffering and excuse the sins of the dead. Thus the Koranic verses, *Al-Ikhlas,* and the *Al-Fatihah,* which contains the essence of the entire Koran, i.e. God's words, were frequently recited' (Bowen, 1984:25). Pre-Islamic feasting of the dead was transformed into a pious act for the benefit of the deceased. The food at these Islamic feasts or *'Kenduri'* in Patani was no longer offered to the soul of the deceased and departed ancestors, but to the guests attending the funeral services and as such was now considered a form of *sadaqah* or alms.

Finally in Patani and elsewhere friends and relatives of the deceased or *'lebai'* (religiously learned individuals) would stay by the grave, day and night, for seven to forty days to recite prayers and to read the Koran on the deceased's behalf asking God to pardon his sins *(ampun dia).* In Patani this rite is known as *'tunggu-kubo'* or 'guarding the grave'.

Classical Islam does not present a clear picture of the human condition after the period of punishment in the grave has ceased. Traditions vary. One for example, maintains that 'after punishment in the grave individuals fall into an unconsciousness (including their souls) until the day of resurrection. The spirit is connected to its body in a way not unlike the condition of earthly life, but resembling the condition of sleep' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:49). Another however, says that God allows the soul to revisit its former body on the 3rd, 5th and 7th day after death to see and lament its decaying condition. Still others hold that at death the soul immediately leaves the body and ascends to Heaven, but at God's command it returns to the corpse to endure the punishment of the grave. After seven to forty days punishment in the grave, the souls of the faithful are thought to go to Paradise and those

of the damned to Hell to await final judgement (Smith and Haddad, 1981:58). Other scholars, however, say the soul does not necessarily remain in heaven until Judgement Day: The people of the Sunna agree that the spirits of the dead return sometimes (when God wishes) to their graves, and that is particularly likely to occur on Friday's eve' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:55).

A close examination of death rituals among Malays and Indonesians indicates which of these varied Islamic traditions actually found acceptance in the archipelago. Among the Acehnese, for example, the seventh day after death marked the final separation of the body and soul; the grave, not the body, then became the home of the soul. On the 40th or 44th day the soul was said to have left for the *'awang-awang'*, a place that lies somewhere between heaven and earth (Bowen, 1984:28). In Patani the soul is also thought to have left the body on the seventh day and the grave on the 40th or 44th day after death.

The ability of a soul to return to its grave in Islamic tradition enabled traditional concepts of bi-locality to survive. The soul's closeness to Allah and its ability so to speak to move between this world and the next allowed it to assist the living in time of need. 'Any grave in Highland Aceh, for example, might be visited with a request to help cure an illness by interceding with God, since a soul was closer to God than a living person' (Bowen, 1984:28). However, it should be noted that this is not Islamic doctrine.

Some people in Southeast Asia believed that an extremely pious individual could become a saint or *Wali*. This individual was thought to be blessed by God with special privileges and powers. His closeness to god enabled him, for example, to perform miracles *(kramat)*. Saints could transport themselves across distances, prophesize the future, bring victory in battle, and even raise the dead. 'While living, a saint's active help might be requested and given for various purposes, in as much as nothing was too difficult for his miraculous powers; the removal of some blight or plaque from the fields or flocks, the healing of human ailments were all within his province. A saint could continue to perform miracles even after his death, since he was nearer to God and was more fully charged with supernatural influence than he was during his lifetime. The local centre of a saint's influence than he was during his lifetime. The local centre of a saint's influence after his death was his tomb' (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1935:66). Petitioners normally visited a saint's grave to seek his favour and blessing or to request his intercession on their behalf.

It should be remembered, however, that what is accorded a saint is not worship. A saint cannot in himself answer prayers or grant requests put to him. His power comes from God. 'The Quran and the Sunnah recognize intercession on the part of those favoured by Allah, and the orthodox Sunnis say there is no cult of saints beyond the permissible seeking of their help as mediators with God' (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1935:63).

In Malaysia and Indonesia traditional, pre-Islamic centres of power and magic were incorporated into the cult of saints so that local medicine men, shamans, kings, and village founders were regarded as *'kramat'* or sacred upon their death. As saints, 'all the wonders performed by such individuals

were essentially now a manifestation of God's Omniscience, their power ultimately coming from Him. The spread of these cults throughout the archipelago was instrumental in promoting Islamic monotheistic ideas among Malay peasants' (Hassan, 1985:75).

Islam — Modernist Views

Islam is a dynamic faith and its history could be seen as a series of reforms. Such attempts at reform have sometimes split the Islamic community between those who remain loyal to the old ways and those seeking change. The latest reform movement centred on Cairo at the turn of the last century as Islam attempted to come to terms with modern Western thought and institutions. Those who remained faithful to centuries old ways were termed 'traditionalists', while reformists were called 'modernists'.

Differences between these groups cover a broad range of issues. How these divisions developed and why, however, are not the subject of this study. The focus here is on their different approaches to death. The traditionalists tend to support classical Islamic views that allow for a continuing relationship between the living and the dead. The modernists, however, deny its very possibility.

The modernists believe that 'the moment of death itself breaks the ties between the deceased and the community at large. Once the soul has left the body, the person can no longer hear instructions read to him, and his fate in the grave can no longer be altered nor merit increased by the performance of feasts or prayers' (Bowen, 1984:35). The only good works that may benefit the deceased are those which he performed in his lifetime. 'There is nothing the living can do on the dead's behalf other than to pray to God to treat his soul with compassion' (Bowen, 1984:35). Death then for the modernist is primarily 'a passage from this world to the next. Funerals rites delete the *talqin* and emphasize the break between the living and the dead. After death, the living have very little to do with the dead. The modernist view thus denies the living their accustomed avenues of recourse in the case of illness or poor crops. The gravesites are deprived of this power as executors of fortune over the land and its inhabitants. The dead are no longer treated as members of the community' (Bowen, 1984:36).

2
NAMES OF CEMETERIES

I will now describe how cemeteries were traditionally named and suggest that this system of naming most probably evolved in North Sumatra and spread to Malaysia and Patani with Islam. I will also discuss type of names used today.

Cemeteries were traditionally named after individuals buried within their grounds. The particular individual after which a cemetery was named may have been the first person buried there; he may have been the person who donated the land for use as a cemetery, or he may simply have been the most prominent individual buried there.

The names of cemeteries have traditionally taken the following form:

'Kubo' plus [*'Toh'*] plus — The actual name of deceased —
[*'Tok'*] Kin terms
Titles
Occupation
Physical Characteristics
Point of Origin

'Kubo' is the Patani dialect variant of the standard Malay word: *'kubur'*. This term is derived from the Arabic *'qubur'* meaning grave.

'Toh' or *'Tok'*, as it is sometimes spelled, is the short form of the word *'Datok'* meaning 'respectable elderly person' (Othman, 1984:30). *'Datok'* or *'Toh'* is a title often given by Malays to real or legendary personages or beings for whom respect is felt (Annadale, 1906:74). Today the title *'Datok'* is conferred by Malay Sultans in recognition of meritorous service (Othman, 1988:139).

The honorific *'Toh'* shows the high regard in which the dead were traditionally held in Patani. That the dead stood in a superior or hierarchical relationship to the living is seen in their control over fertility and the fact that saints and other *kramats* served as intermediaries between a petitioner and God. This hierarchical relationship can be schematized as follows:

Allah
|
Spirit
|
Jago (Guardian)
|
Petitioner

A petitioner, through a guardian of a grave (*'Jago'* in Patani), addresses an ancestral spirit or saint who in turn intercedes with God. God responds directly to the petitioner by either denying or granting his request (Weissing, 1978:96).

This hierarchical schematic also reflects social organization among the living and explains why it may be difficult for many to go straight to God. The Sundanese in West Java, for example, (and this applies in Patani as well) find it difficult to approach someone whose status is much higher than their own: tension is created by too great a power differential. In going straight to God the petitioner is skipping two intermediary or buffer levels which puts quite a social distance between himself and God (Weissing, 1978:97). People feel more comfortable working through intermediaries, in this case, ancestral spirits or saints.

'Toh' is sometimes followed by the actual name of the deceased, but more often by a kin term or title by which he was commonly known; his occupation or a particular physical characteristic might be mentioned. Sometimes *'toh'* is simply followed by the name of a region or town denoting the area from which the deceased had originally come.

The following cemetery names, for example, are found in Patani:

Kubo Toh Wa'Mad (Wan Mohammed)
Kubo Toh Sahaw (Issac) (Ishak)

Kubo Toh Wan (father)
Kubo Toh Ayah (father, ancestor)

Kubo Toh Rajo (king)
Kubo Toh Nik ('Nik': a title in Patani)

Kubo Toh Bidan (midwife)
Kubo Toh Pake ('Pake': individual learned in Islamic doctrine known as 'Fikh')
Kubo Toh Lidah Hitam (the man with the black tongue)
Kubo Toh Serban Kuning (the man wearing the yellow turban)

Kubo Toh Jawa (the man from Java)
Kubo Toh Bangkok (the man from Bangkok)

Such names were used because the true identities of individuals had been lost in time.

A similar system of naming cemeteries is also found in Peninsular Malaysia and more importantly Aceh. In the west coast states of Malaysia the word *'makam'* meaning 'grave' or 'tomb', however, is substituted for *'kubo'*, so that the following type of names are encountered: Makam Toh Sayah, Makam Toh Janggut, and Makam Toh Gendu (Skeat, 1900:69). In Malaysia, this system of naming is usually applied by local residents to *kramat* graves (Othman, 1984:30). In Aceh the term *'kubur'* is retained, but in its Acehnese form: *'kubu'*. *'Toh'*, however has been replaced one of either two honorifics: *'Tuan'* or *'Teungku'*, so that the following names for cemeteries are found:

'Kubu Tuan di Kala', the *'tuan'* whose grave is near the kala trees, and 'Kubu Teungku di Bukit', the Teungku whose grave is situated on a hill (Hurgronje, 1906:2:297).

Ancient royal cemeteries in Aceh and Patani actually bear the same name. The oldest known royal cemetery in Patani containing the remains of Sultan Ismail Shah is known as 'Kubo (Toh) Barahom'. The royal cemetery in Aceh where Sultan Iskandar Muda (d. 1636) is buried is known as 'Kubu Poteu Meureuhom'. Both *'Barahom'* and *'Meureuhom'* are corruptions of *'Marhum'* — a word of Arabic origin used in the death names gives to royal kings personages and translated as 'The Late.....'. One of Patani's famous queens, for example, Raja Biru (d. 1616) upon her death was given the death name 'Marhum Tengah', 'the late queen who was in the middle'. This name is explained by the fact that in life Raja Biru was the second (middle) of three sisters who ruled Patani.

Similarities in naming cemeteries in Aceh, Malaysia, and Patani suggest that the system of naming cemeteries after individuals was developed in Aceh and spread to Malaysia and Patani. Pasai in the northern part of Sumatra was first converted to Islam at the end of the thirteenth century. Pasai in turn played a key role in the conversion of both Melaka and Patani. It seems only natural to conclude that it also introduced its own particular way of naming cemeteries. Whether Pasai originated this system or adopted it from the Middle East or India, however, is not known.

While most cemeteries in Patani are named in the tradisional pattern (50 out of 60 visited), 'recently' established cemeteries are not. In one village the new cemetery is simply called *'Kubo Besar'* — 'The Big Cemetery'. Elsewhere recent graveyards are often simply referred as *'Kubo Wakaf'*. *'Wakaf'* is a word of Arabic origin indicating the land was 'donated' by someone for use as a public cemetery. It is not known why the traditional system for naming cemeteries has been abandoned.

3
LOCATION OF CEMETERIES

Cemeteries or graves in Patani are generally located:

1. On ancient coastlines
2. On the edge of a village
3. Outside a city's walls
4. Near the grave of a saint or *kramat*
5. Near a mosque
6. In isolated spots
7. Where warriors have fallen in battle
8. Where the 'white blood' of royalty has spilled to the ground
9. On sacred pre-Islamic sites.

On Ancient Coastlines

The most prominent geographical feature of the Patani river basin is a series of alternating ancient coastlines and lagoons paralleling the present coast. This pattern has profoundly influenced the location of settlements and rice fields. Villages are located on ancient beaches which are high and protected from flooding, but unsuitable for cultivation, while rice is cultivated in the fertile soil located between the sanddunes in depressions that were once ancient lagoons. Cemeteries are generally located on the sandbars in association with villages. The people of Patani rarely bury their dead in fertile soil that can be used for planting. The fact that sandbars where cemeteries are located can and do support fruit and rubber trees explains why old cemeteries have been planted over today with these trees. Examples of graveyards situated on sandbars are Kubo Yare (Zakaria?) Ma Kuching, Kubo Tok Bare, and Kubo Tok Bado. All three are located near Kampong Take. Unfortunately many of the sandbars and associated cemeteries near modern day Patani are being destroyed. The sand is being used by the construction industry for building purposes.

On The Edge of A Village

Patani Malays traditionally buried their dead in family plots near the village. Two of the oldest known Islamic cemeteries in Patani, Kubo (Toh) Barahom and Kubo Nang Chaye', for example, contain the graves of a single royal fmily known as the 'Inland Dynasty' which ruled Patani from it founding until the mid-seventeenth century (Wyatt, 1970:1:11). Peninsular Malays and the Acehnese also followed the same practice and bury their dead in family plots near settlements (Othman, 1988:24).

Family burial probably originated in the Middle East and spread with Islam to Southeast Asia. Burying the dead in family plots near the village may, however, have evolved from or at least been reinforced by earlier pre-Islamic practices in which ancestral remains were placed in a family grave or tomb near the settlement.

Eventually Muslims in Patani and elsewhere began burying their dead in communal or public graveyards. These communal cemeteries, which were really nothing more than a collection of family plots, were almost always

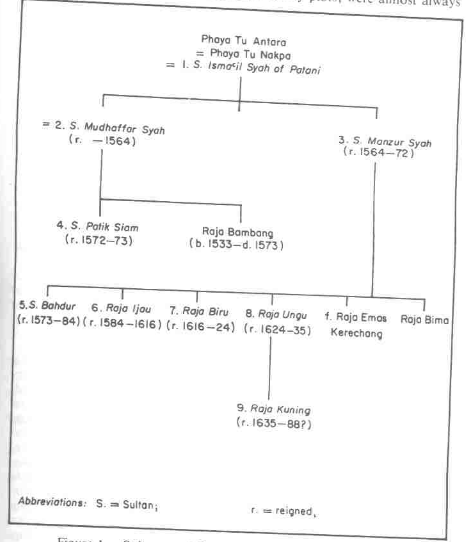


Figure 1. *Sultans and Queens of The Inland Dynasty.* (adapted from Wyatt & Teeuw).

located on the outskirts of villages. Sometimes two or more villages shared a single cemetery. Individuals were almost buried in a communal graveyard near the village where they lived. Communal burial outside the village was again probably introduced from the Middle East or India. Communal burial reflects the importance that Muslims place on brotherhood, solidarity and sense of community. Not only do Muslims live together, they are also buried together. In Islam 'The concept of *Umma'* (community) embraces the dead as well as the living. In the Friday prayer, for example, during the bidding prayer, the *Imam* bids the congregation pray for the 'Muslim men, Muslim women, the believing men, the believing women, the living amongst them and the dead, reminding the beholder that the concept of *'umma'* embraces its dead as well as living members' (Dickie, 1978:47).

Many cemeteries in Patani are not situated near villages. The villages with which they had been associated have moved to new locations and the cemeteries have been abandoned. Modern highways, for example, have replaced rivers as the principle avenue of communication and travel in Patani with the result that many of the villages that were once located along the east bank of the Patani River, have moved from the river's side to a location along or near the new highway that connects Patani with the Provincial Capital of Yala. Cemeteries associated with the old sites along the river have simply been abandoned.

Sometimes villages themselves have completely disappeared leaving only cemeteries to attest to their existance. Kampung Pasai, for example, was populated by merchants who had come to Patani from Pasai. Sheikh Said, who converted Patani's royal family to Islam, is said to have resided there. Today nothing remains of Kampung Pasai except a single ancient well (beside Highway 42 near Kg. Kresik) and a nearby graveyard known as *'Kubo Tok Pake'* which is believed to contain the remains of Sheikh Said. *'Pake'* or *'Fakih'* is derived from the Arab *'Fakh'* meaning 'law'. The title *'Toh Pake'* was applied to the religious teachers and advisors of Patani's early Islamic kings.

Outside A City's Walls

Cemeteries were normally located outside Patani's ancient walls. It is difficult to reconstruct what Patani must have been like in the 17th century since it was destroyed by Thai forces around 1790 and ultimately abandoned. The *Hikayat Patani,* oral tradition, and investigations of the site suggest that Patani followed the structure typical of coastal city-states in insular Southeast Asia at that time: 'The morphological structure of coastal cities was dominated by the living quarters of the prince, which was generally separated from the merchantile town and built according to particular rules: The palace, or *'kraton',* as well as the square, *'alun-alun'* were in accordance with the directions of the compass. The main roads were at right angles to the *alun-alun.* A concentration of religious (mosque) and administrative functions (*kraton* and dwellings of the aristocracy) were found here. The central mosque was usually located on the west side of the square. The various groups of the populace lived in separate wards, sometimes surrounded by pallisades, in some cases the whole city was enclosed by pallisades or even walled' (Nas, 1986).

Patani seems to have followed this general pattern. The city was dominated by a royal palace or citadel known as 'Kota Raja'. This citadel covered a large area, was walled and aerial photos suggest, possibly surrounded by a moat. It is not known where exactly the central mosque was located — perhaps west of the citadel, in the area today known as Kampung Kresik, where ruins of an ancient brick mosque now stand. The merchantile sector, known as *'bandar'* or 'city' was centred west of the citadel and divided into *kampungs* of Javanese, Gujeratis, Chinese, and Malays etc. The city was so dense that 'a cat walking from Payung as far as Kuala Aru did not have to descend to the ground but could simply make its way over the roofs of the houses' *(Wyatt, 1970:2:184)*. These *kampungs* probably resembled the tightly packed fishing villages that dot the Patani coast today. A large cemetery was located on the eastern edge of the town. The *Hikayat Patani* notes that 'four royal persons were buried (in this cemetery) in the eastern part of the town, on the edge of the village of Datuk Wang Kebudal' (Wyatt, 1970:2:170). This complex today is known as 'Kubo Barahom' and 'Kubo Nang Chaye'.

The same urban pattern was repeated again in Patani in the late 19th century under the 'Cabang Tiga' Dynasty. Tengku Putih (r. 1856—1881), the 3rd 'Cabang Tiga' ruler, located his capital at a fork in the Patani river known as 'Cabang Tiga'. He erected a stone wall around his palace and the homes of the aristocracy. This compound, known as *'kota'*, was orientated to the cardinal points. The central mosque was located outside and east (not west) of the compound, and the royal cemetery, Kubo (Toh) Ayah, was situated approximately 200 meters east of the royal compound and mosque. The cemetery incidentally predated both the *'kota'* and the mosque.

Royal cemeteries were often situated outside city walls in Indonesia and Malaysia. The 17th century kings of Gowa (Makassar) were buried on a small hill outside the walled city and citadel of Sombu Opu. The Sultans of Yogyakarta in Central Java are buried outside of the city at Kota Gede and Imogiri. The kings of Johor are buried at Kota Tinggi, a short distance from the ancient capital, Johor Lama (Othman, 1988:114—118).

Burial outside the city walls was most probably introduced from the Middle East. There and in India 'the common man was satisfied with a small corner in the public graveyard the *'qabristab'*, usually situated outside the city gates' (Taploo, 1977:142).

Near The Grave of A Saint

Cemeteries in Patani often formed or grew up around the grave of a famous saint or *wali*. Kubo Datok, for example, which is located on Cape Patani and which has been in continual use since the mid-16th century, grew up around the grave of Patani's most famous saint, Toh Panjang.

Tuan Besar, the founder of the Cabang Tiga Dynasty, who reigned from 1845—1856, was buried west of Toh Panjang's shrine. Individuals living in *kampungs* along Patani Bay requested burial at Kubo Datok up until World War II. The practice stopped during the 1950's when it was thought best that individuals be buried in the villages where they lived. It is not known

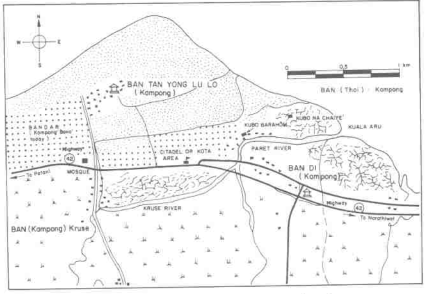


Figure 2. Patani: *Ancient Sites and Modern Landmarks.*
Note modern Patani is six kilometers west of the ancient site which is located ner present day Kampong Kresik (Kruse).

Figure 3. *Cabang Tiga Complex.* Late 19th century.
The Kota or Palace area is still aligned to the cardinal points at this late date. Kubo Ayah Cemetery is located due east of the mosque and palace complex.

whether this shift away from burial near a saint originated with the modernists or not.

During his life a saint was thought to exude *'baraka'* or 'blessing'. It was believed that after death this blessing continued to eminate from the saint's grave (Dickie, 1978:44). The belief that mere physical contact with a saint, living or dead, whether with or without his knowledge, might draw his blessing, accounts for the desire of individuals to be buried near him. This blessing, it was thought, could reduce the suffering of the grave and punishment in Hell.

The practice of burying someone near a saint originated in the Middle East and spread to India and eventually Southeast Asia. In Istanbul, for example, the biggest cemetery is that beside the tomb of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, a martyr and Companion, who, belonging to the first generation of Muslims, saw the Prophet with his own eyes (Dickie, 1978:46).

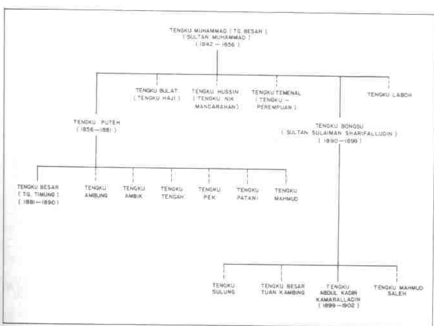


Figure 4. *Cabang Tiga Dynasty*
1842—1902

Near A Mosque

Some cemeteries in Patani are located near a mosque. Graves are usually located on the north, south, or west sides of a mosque. Unlike the Middle East, graves or tombs are never located within the mosque itself. In Patani, the graves associated with a mosque often contain the remains of the individual who had the mosque constructed, the architect who built the mosque, or the *imams* rest in the cemetery beside their mosque in Kampung

Side. Sometimes even kings, the *rajas* of Legeh in Narathiwat Province, for example, are buried near a mosque. Today, commoners and peasants are also laid to rest near mosques.

Burial near a mosque is also encountered in Indonesia. Sunan Ampel and Sunan Giri, two of the nine *Walis* who introduced Islam to the Javanese, are buried near the mosques they built. These and other saints were normally buried on the western side of the mosque built in association with their shrines. 'West' is considered a place of honour among Muslims of Southeast Asia since it is the direction of Mecca towards which all prayer is directed.

In Patani and elsewhere mosque were not built with a 'memorial function' in mind. According to James Dickie there are three basic types of mosques: congregational, collegiate, and monastic. Congregational mosques are built for congregational and community prayer. A collegiate mosque or *'madrasa'* combines educational, residential, and prayer facilities into one structure. The monastic mosque was built for use by monks. Each could contain a tomb or a grave. 'Even where it was intended to receive a body, with a sepulchral chamber, or in the rarer instance where a mosque had grown up around a tomb already in existance, the funerary function is always secondary. What is vaguely known as a tomb mosque is properly either a congregational, collegiate, or monastic foundation with an ancillary funerary function' (Dickie, 1978:43).

When asked why people like to be buried near a mosque, most informants in Patani answered that it is more advantageous to be buried near a mosque because the dead buried there will receive more prayers. They explained that on Fridays, Muslims go to the mosque for prayer. As they approach the mosque, they pass by the cemetery and remember the dead there. They pray to God to reduce the punishment of the grave and to pardon the sins of all Muslims buried there. People seldom visit graves located far from a mosque, perhaps once a year on *Hari Raya Idil Fitri*. This means that individuals buried there will receive fewer prayers.

Remote, Isolated Burials

In Patani, individuals who died strange or premature deaths, those, for example, who were murdered, executed, or stricken by smallpox, were often buried in isolated, remote areas or in a special section of a larger cemetery.

This practice evolved from animistic, pre-Islamic beliefs regarding death. Patani Malays traditionally believed that the human soul was made up of several elements: the *'semangat'*, *'nyawa'*, *'roh'* and *'badi'*.

> 'Semangat, according to Patani peasants, is the soul that is present in all organized things, guiding and coordinating their actions. It can be found in humans, animals, trees, and even ore deposits.... At death most people believe the 'semangat' disappears with the disintegration of the body.... The 'nyawa' is the breath of life. It is that aspect of the human soul that distinguishes man and higher animals from the 'non-living' rest of creation. It is that part of man that goes to heaven or hell after death. Its presence is life, its absence non-life.... Patani Malays believe the 'roh' is the most individualized aspect of the soul. It seems that the portion accruing to each person becomes distinctive and is involved in establishing his individual identity' (Endicott, 1970:49—76).

Another part of the soul substance was *'badi'*. It co-existed with *'semangat'* and *'nyawa'* in a dormant state during life, but after a violent or unnatural death, it was thought to remain near the corpse. The *'badi'* could harm the living and seek revenge especially in the case of murder victims. The *'badi'* was thought to lose its power if it could be separated from the corpse. This separation could be achieved by destroying the corpse. In Jalor, a district in Patani, the corpse of a murdered man, for example, was formerly 'cast forth to be eaten by vultures or crows. Now with the spread of Islam, it is buried in the jungle, or some waste place or if in a cemetery in the part furthest from human habitation' (Endicott, 1970:71).

The grave of Datok Panjang, Patani's most famous saint, is the best example of isolated burial in Patani. Skeat summarizes his story as follows:

> This most famous of the Patani saints was one of the earliest preachers of Islam in these parts, but one day he was ordered by the local Raja to assist in the casting of a big copper cannon, or as some say a bronze gun. He had already received the copper but before the moment of casting arrived a foreign merchant unluckily paid him a visit and pressed him to let him have some copper. Unthinkingly he did so, without intending any harm, since he had calculated that there would be enough and to spare. Being taxed by the Raja with peculation, he heroically admitted his fault and was promptly condemned to death. One of his pupils was ordered to carry out the sentence, but refused, whereupon both were garroted and the bodies thrown in the river Patani, which at the time escaped to the sea by a mouth somewhere near Jering. But instead of sinking as they should have done the two corpses stood upright in the river and proceeded to float downstream against the flood-tide and upstream against the ebb — a disturbing of sight for the murderers, but a sure proof of divine recognition of the saint and his companion. After various vicissitudes, the remains of the two were interred at the present spot, where their gravestones have continued to travel either nearer or further away from each other, in a highly uncanny manner (Wyatt, 1970:2:227).

I believe that the two were executed and that their bodies were thrown in the river in order to destroy the body and weaken the *'badi'*, but that when this failed they were buried far from the city, on the isolated and remote Cape Patani, where their *'badis'* could harm no one especially the Raja who had them murdered.

Where Warriors Had Fallen in Battle

Isolated graves are also located where warriors have fallen in battle. Some of the most beautiful and oldest tombstones in Patani, known as *'Batu Aceh'*, (Othman, 1987), can be found on five lonely graves at Kampung Samala. These tombstones, according to tradition, mark the final resting place of five members of Patani's nobility who were killed in battle against Thai forces. Villagers say that their heads were taken as trophies, a Thai practice much feared by Muslims, since the head on the corpse could not be pointed towards Mecca according to custom. No one today knows who these warriors were or when they died, but the particular style of tombstone used on their graves most probably dates from the early 17th century.

Othman postulates that the Acehnese followed a similar practice and thinks that a number of isolated graves in Kedah and Perak, Malaysia are actually the final resting places of Acehnese troops killed in battle, which suggests

that this practice may have been introduced into Patani from North Sumatra (Othman, 1985:224).

Where The White Blood of Royalty Has Soiled to The Ground

Patani royalty and nobility were thought to have 'white blood' perhaps inherited from their primordial ancestor who descended from the heavens to establish the dynasty. The *Hikayat Patani*, for example, states that a certain Chau Paya An Tiwa *(Indera?)*, the founder of the Inland Dynasty, 'was the king who had descended from heaven, and it was his descendants who possessed the realm of Patani and who had white blood in their veins' (Wyatt, 1970:2:197).

Sometimes tombstones were erected on and the term *'Kubo'* applied to plots where no one is buried, but where the white blood of kings or nobles had been shed, perhaps in battles, and spilled to the ground.

The following story about a certain Patani noble, Datuk Puyut, and his campaigns against the Thais in 1791 illustrates this point:

> Datuk Puyut was living at Kampung Gahong when the Thais attacked. He and his followers fought at Gahong, but were forced to retreat to 'Tanah Batu' where he was seriously wounded. He was eventually taken to Puyut and finally to an area south of his palace, known today as 'Tanah Berani' — 'Land of the Brave', since it was here that he and his troops stood fast and fought to the death. Although the Malays were defeated and many taken prisoner to Bangkok, Datuk Puyut himself survived, lived to an old age, and was buried according to many somewhere in the mountains of Narathiwat Province in Patani.

Datuk Puyut's descendants claim that he had white blood and that tombstones were erected where his blood spilled to the ground at Tanah Batu and Puyut. Both sites, they say, are today called 'Kubo Dato', are considered *'Kramat'* and still visited by petitioners seeking his aid, although many say he is actually buried in Narathiwat.

On Sacred Pre-Islamic Sites

In Indonesia, Islamic cemeteries are sometimes located on sacred pre-Islamic sites which were somehow in popular belief associated with ancestors. The graveyard of the kings of Tallo near Makassar, South Sulawesi, are located within the grounds of an old 16th century fortress. The village cemetery at Galesong, South Sulawesi, is also on the foundation of an old fort that once guarded the southern approach to Makassar. Although no evidence was found during this survey linking cemeteries with pre-Islamic sites in Patani, this does not preclude the possibility that such linkage exists. The practice is so common, in fact, in Indonesia, it is difficult to believe that it was not followed in Patani. Archaeological excavations in Patani may one day validate this supposition.

4
THE GRAVE

Islam reintroduced burial in Patani. The dogmatic basis of burial in Islam is the Koran. 'For that God intends man to bury his dead is clear from *Sura* V:31, which deals with the first time man confronted the problem: when Cain had killed Abel he could not think of what to do with the corpse. Then God sent a raven scratching up the ground, to show him how to hide his brother's naked corpse. He said: 'Woe to me! Am I not able to imitate this raven and thus hide my brother's naked corpse?' (Dickie, 1978: 44).

Types of Graves

There are two basic types of grave in Patani: The *'Liang Lahad'* (Arabic: *Lahd,* Malay: *Lahad*) or 'chambered grave' and the *'Liang Kubur Lurus'* or 'shaft grave'. In the *'Liang Lahad'* grave a great square hole is dug in the ground and then a chamber is hollowed out in one of its sides to form the real tomb in which the body is laid, so that the earth, which is afterwards thrown into the grave, covers it on one side only and not above (Hurgronje, 1906:1:422). In the *'Liang Kubur Lurus'* type grave a large rectangular shaft is dug and a small trench hollowed out the length of the bottom of the grave to receive the corpse. Which method of burial is used is determined by the nature of the soil. The chambered grave is used in hard, firm soil, while the shaft grave is employed when the soil is too loose to form the chamber characteristic of the *'Liang Lahad'.* The loose and sandy soil of Patani favours the shaft grave.

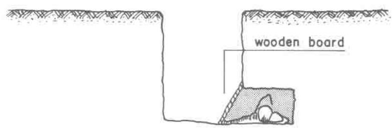
Types of Coffins

The nature of the grave in turn determines the type of coffin used. Hurgronje describes three types of Malay coffins: 1) the *'papan sa-keping'* (simple plank), 2) the *'karanda'* (a plain oblong plank box, the bottom of which has been replaced by plaited bamboo, and 3) the *'long'* (a three-sided box with the sides buldging, both ends open and no bottom (Hurgronje, 1906:1:422).

The *'papan sa-keping'* coffin is used in conjunction with the *'liang lahad'* type grave. The plank on which the body was carried to the cemetery, seals the corpse in the *'lahad'* and is buried in the grave. The *'karanda'* and the *'long',* however, favoured in Patani because of the sandy nature of the soil, are employed with shaft graves.

All three coffins were designed to achieve three basic aims: 1) They allow the corpse to rest on the earth, 2) they allow the deceased to sit up in the

LIANG LAHAD:



LIANG KUBUR LURUS:

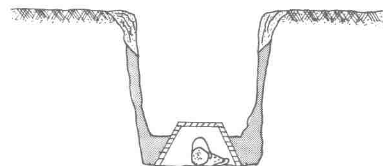


Figure 5. *Types of Graves.*

grave to answer the questions posed by the Angles of Death, and 3) they protect the corpse from being hit by falling earth as the grave is filled.

Patani Muslims and Malays in general prefer that their dead be buried in the earth in a most literal sense. The corpse must actually come in contact with the earth. The contact between the corpse and earth is a poignant symbol of man's birth, death, and rebirth or resurrection at God's will. This symbolism is made explicit in the following quotation taken from Javanese burial rites: 'I (Allah) made you from earth, and I am returning you to earth, and I will take you out of the earth once more' (Padmasusastra, 1979:264). The same quotation, Koran (20:55), is also found on old tombstones produced in Aceh: 'From the earth did We create you, and into it shall we return you, and from it shall We bring you out again' (Othman, 1985:153).

In the Middle East a grave must be constructed in such a manner that the corpse can sit up. 'A vault, no matter how simple, is indispensible, for the body must be able to sit up and reply to the Angles of Death, Mungkar and Nangkir, who interrogate it the first night after burial' (Dickie, 1978:45). In Patani and island Southeast Asia, the corpse is not thought to sit up, but

rather it revives momentarily, and still lying upon its side, raises itself to a listening position by reclining upon its hand (Skeat, 1900:406). The vault, *karanda*, and *long* allow the corpse to achieve this position.

Malays and Indonesians are abhorred if earth should strike the corpse. All three types of coffins are therefore constructed in such a way as to protect the corpse from falling earth. Informants in Patani said that it was not good for soil to be directly thrown on the corpse when the grave is filled, since the dead body must be treated as if it were still alive. In Aceh, 'earth was handed down to those inside the grave from above to cover the coffin. It was done slowly and carefully, for if by mishap a cloud of earth should fall noisely on the coffin, it is regarded as a token that others will follow, i.e. that there will soon be a death in the same house' (Hurgronje, 1906:2:427). Such efforts to protect the corpse arose from classical and Middle Eastern Islamic beliefs which held that the dead were cognizant of what goes on around them.

Grave Alignment

The most distinguishing feature of Islamic cemeteries in Patani and insular Southeast Asia is their alignment. In Patani all Islamic graves are aligned in a north-south direction with the deceased's head to the north and his feet to the south, the corpse lying on its right side so that it may face *'Kiblat'*, the West, Mecca, and ultimately the sacred *'Kaaba'*. This rigid alignment of graves is explained as follows:

> The Muslim world is spread out like a gigantic wheel with Mecca at the hub, with lines drawn from all the mosques (and graves) in the world forming the spokes. These lines converge on a city and within that city on a point. The city is Mecca, and the point is the Kaba at its center. Mecca, the birthplace of Muhammad, is Islam's holy city and the goal of the pilgrimage. The Kaba, a hollow cube of stone, many times rebuilt, the original of which goes back beyond the time of Muhammad, is the 'axis mundi' of Islamic cosmology. It is diagonally oriented, with its corners facing the cardinal points of the compass. It is the centre of the world, because it is the primordial symbol of the intersection between the vertical axis of the spirit and the horizontal plane of phenomenal existance. Graves, like mosque, operate liturgically and are, architecturally speaking, expressions of the horizontal axis. Bodies are buried at right angles to the 'kiblat' in such a way that they would face Mecca if turned on their side. Thus the believer enjoys the same physical relationship with the 'kiblat' both in life and death (Dickie, 1978:16 & 45).

The north-south alignment of graves in Southeast Asia also fitted in very well with pre-Islamic notions of the cosmos and the cardinal points. In the Indianized states of Southeast Asia, including Patani, a square or a rectangle, aligned to the cardinal points symbolized the universe. Cities, palaces, and temples were all planned accordingly. Aligned to the cardinal points, each was a miniature universe. To produce a square or rectangle aligned to the cardinal points was tantamount to creating order out of chaos, to reproducing the cosmos. There is no direct evidence, but the actual digging of a grave aligned to the cardinal points, may once have been taken as a symbol of creation and rebirth by Patani Malays.

It has already been said that Patani Malays traditionally buried their dead in family plots and that public cemeteries were little more than a collection

of such plots. There are no hard and fast rules regarding the arrangement of graves within these plots, but two basic patterns do emerge: a) linear and b) parallel rows.

Graves arranged linearly are situated one next to the other in a row running from west to east. In the past the most important individual was often buried in the western most grave of the series because it was closest to Mecca. The idea, that the western most grave in a series was the best, evolved in the Middle East: 'The Kiblat wall (of a tomb) for example, being closest to Mecca, was thought to have more 'baraka' (blessing) than the others and graves tended to crowd against it, leaving the centre of the tomb empty' (Dickie, 1978:31). The same notion is also at work in the mosque. 'Prophetical Tradition insists on the priority of the first row, that is, the first row of worshippers enjoy greater proximity to the source of blessing because it confronts the wall nearest Mecca' (Dickie, 1978:36). The further one stands towards the back of a mosque, and the further one is buried toward the east in a series of graves, the further one is from Mecca, and the less desirable one's position.

Graves in Patani have traditionally been arranged in this linear pattern: Kubo (Toh) Barahom, Kubo Nang Chaye', Kubo Marhum Tanjung, Kubo (Kubo) Ayah at Cabang Tiga, and Kubo Tengku Sulaiman at Jalor all follow this pattern. Kubo Ayah illustrates the respect and reverence given to the western most graves of a series in Patani. The two Sultans, Tengku Besar (d. 1890) and Tengku Bungsu (d. 1899), for example, occupy the two most western plots. Not everyone can be buried on the most western in a series of graves. Location in a series in Patani is also determined by time of death. Simply put, the rule most generally followed is that the next in the line is the next family member to die.

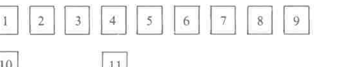
In Java family graves are not only arranged in linearly but also in parallel rows. One generation is buried at the feet of the next with the northern most or furthest row occupying the position of most respect:

1st Generation ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2nd Generation ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3rd Generation ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

The cemeteries of Javanese Kings and *Walis* combine this principle with height. Located on a hill side, the graveyard consists of a series of steps or plateaus. The grave of the king or *Wali* is the highest or most remote. A visitor must ascend through a series of levels containing the graves of members of the nobility and the royal house before arriving at the King's tomb. Makam Sunan Giri near Surabaya is an excellent example of a cemetery laid out according to these principles.



1. Tengku Bungsu (Sultan Sulaiman d. 1899) 4th Raja of Patani.
2. Tengku Besar (Tengku Timung d. 1890) 3rd Raja of Patani.
3. Raja Muda (name unknown).
4. The wife of Sultan Sulaiman.
5. Tengku Biru, grand daughter of Sultan Sulaiman and daughter of the Raja Muda.
6. Tengku Haji Besar (brother of Sultan Sulaiman).
7. Unknown.
8. Child of Tengku Haji Besar.
9. Unknown.
10. Wife of Raja Muda.
11. Unknown.

Tengku Bungsu and Tengku Besar, both Sultans, are buried in the western most graves.

Figure 6. *Linear Grave Arrangement: Kubo Ayah, Patani.*

Figure 7. *Linear Arrangement of Graves at Kubo Ayah.*

This pattern of grave arrangement — parallel rows with the furthest and or highest occupying the position of most respect — is definitely pre-Islamic and is based on the layout of Hindu temples in East Java and Bali where the innermost compound is considered the holiest. Compare the temple floor plan of a typical Balinese temple in Fig. 8 with the layout of Sunan Gunung Jati's cemetery at Cirebon. In both cases the visitor ascends along a horizontal axis to the furthest and innermost compound. Just as the final courtyard contains the pagoda-like Meru where Gods or ancestors descend, so the highest compound contains the saint's shrine. It too is covered with a pagoda-like roof recalling the Meru at Balinese and Javanese temples.

Parallel grave arrangement is also found in Patani. Rows, however, are not necessarily associated with generations, nor is the northern most the most sacred. These factors may have played a more significant role in grave arrangement in the past. Today, however, time of death and availability of land within the family plot seem to determine where any one family member will be buried. The royal cemetery in Kelantan, Kubo Langgar, is the finest example of parallel and linear burial.

Grave arrangement is also determined by the type of blood relationship that existed between individuals. In Patani, for example, a wife's grave is often located on the right side of her husband. The wife of the first king to convert to Islam, Sultan Ismail Shah, is buried on his right side in Kubo Barahom. If through some tragic circumstance, a husband and wife perish at the same time, they may be buried together in the same grave. Children

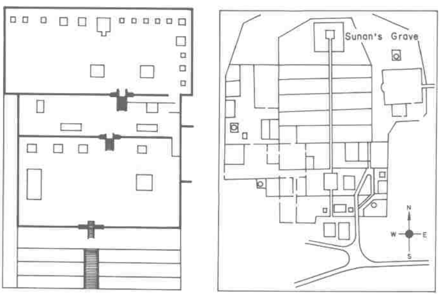


Figure 8. *Floor Plans of Balinese Temple and Sunan Jati's Shrine, Cirebon.* Note that the Sunan's grave is the highest and furthest back in the complex.

are sometimes buried between parents, and if a woman dies in childbirth, she and her infant may also be interred together.

Depth and Size of Graves

The depth of graves vary from area to area. In Patani a grave was usually dug to the height of the digger's head; some, to be more precise, say his ear. In Aceh diggers stopped when the rim of the grave was level with their chest, and in Java graves were dug to a depth equal to the height of an average adult person with his hand stretched up (Padmasusastra, 1979:263). It is said that in some parts of Terengganu women are buried deeper than men because they had sinned more, but this does not seem to be the case in Patani.

Graves in Patani were traditionally wide and long enough to accomodate two diggers, the *imam,* and the corpse. Under the supervision of the *imam* the corpse was laid to rest facing Kiblat. The vault was either sealed, the top of the *karanda* closed, or the *long* positioned. 'As the grave was filled up, the grave-diggers, who were forbidden to shovel in the soil themselves, treaded down the earth and levelled it, and they were not allowed to leave the pit until it is filled up to the top' (Skeat, 1900:405).

Contents of Graves

A grave in Patani normally contains the remains of one individual. Sometimes, however, according to Patani informants, more than one person may be buried in a single grave. It has already mentioned that husband and wife, and mother and child can under certain circumstances be buried together. In addition, several generations may be buried in one spot: perhaps a grandfather, followed by his son and grandchild. The new grave is simply not dug as deep, or if the original occupant's bones are encountered, they are reverently moved to one side, and the new corpse is buried.

Graves in Patani not only contain human remains, but they sometimes contain the remains of animals, specifically cats. The small grave beside that of Tok Pake at Rahman contains, so I am told, his cat. This does not seem so strange if we remember that cats were probably the Prophet's favourite animal (Dickie, 1978:30) and that they were often associated with saints. They appear in old manuscripts depicting graveyards in the Middle East and they are still a common sight in cemeteries there today (Dickie, 1978:30).

5
TOMBSTONES

Number and Arrangement

Islamic graves in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Patani are usually marked by two gravestones, as nearly identical as possible, one situated over the head and the other over the feet or sometimes located over the waist. The tombstones, in turn, are often connected by a third element. This connection takes a number of forms. In Aceh a single stone, known as a *'batu badan'* (body stone) connects the head and footstones. In Java *'chandi'* or temple-like structures known as *'jirat'* or *'kijing'* support both tombstones. In the Philippines, the connection in some places takes the form of a boat. In Patani these connectors usually form a rectangular structure made of wood, brick, stone or cement (known as *'kacapuri'*) that encompass the tombstones and grave.

These forms — double tombstones and a horizontal connector — originated in the Middle East and were introduced into Southeast Asia with Islam. Six combinations of tombstones and connectors evolved in the Middle East and India:

1) The most important structure on an Islamic grave was originally, not the tombstones, but a recumbent stone laid over the vault (Dickie, 1978:45). This stone was known as a *'shahid'* or 'witness' because the inscription on it testified to the identity of the occupant (Dickie, 1978:45). This stone often stood alone, raised on a plinth.
2) The *'shahid'* was sometimes accompanied by a headstone,
3) a footstone,
4) The *shahid* and a footstone. In time and in some areas the *'shahid'* diminished in size and the tombstones grew in importance. Tombstones came to carry the epitaph leaving the recumbent element free for Koranic verse.
5) Eventually pairs of stones (without *shahid*) one over the head and the other over the feet appeared.
6) Finally, in some locations only a simple headstone is used. The dominant pattern in Southeast Asia consists of a head and footstone optionally accompanied by a recumbent element or connector. A search for places in the Middle East and India where these two patterns evolved or predominate may provide clues as to where Muslims who introduced Islam into Southeast Asia originally came from.

Double tombstones and a recumbent connection emphasize the horizontal character of a grave. Islamic graves are, remember, an expression of the horizontal axis symbolizing man and his world. The Kaba, on the other hand, represents the vertical axis and divine. The alignment of all Muslim graves with the kaba thus symbolizes the union of the horizontal and vertical planes and the union of man and God in death.

It is not know why the two gravestones are situated one over the head and the other over the feet or waist or why they are usually identical. An explanation for the position of the stones, however, may be found in the dualist conceptions of the universe once held by peoples in the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia. The universe according to these beliefs exhibited a basic duality: heaven — underworld, life — death, day — night, awake — asleep, male — female, head — foot, fontanella — navel, etc. This notion could account for the placement of the stones over the head and feet or over the fontanella and the navel.

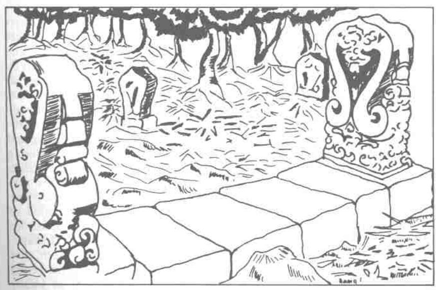


Figure 9. *Head and Foot Stones with Recumbent Element*
(Batu Badan)
Sunan Giri's Shrine, East Java

Sometimes graves are marked by more than one set of stones. Extra tombstones may indicate that more than one individual has been buried in the grave or it may indicate that the grave is *kramat* or sacred. The tomb of Tok Panjang is decorated with two large polished granite stones and two magnificent quartz rocks. These rocks were donated by the Raja of Jering at the turn of the century, perhaps in conjunction with the fulfillment of some vow he had made to the saint.

Finally, tombstones are sometimes spread far apart. Again, this special placement indicates that a grave is *kramat*. The most famous example again in Patani is the tomb of Tok Panjang: His tombstones were thought to travel either nearer or further away from each other in a highly uncanny manner (Wyatt, 1978:2:227). This lengthening of graves is not unique to Patani or Malaysia. The phenomena is also found in India which suggests that it may have originated there and spread to Southeast Asia: There is a special class of tombs, in Northern India, for example, which are called *'naugaza pir'*, that is, 'tombs nine yards long where the giants rest' (Titus, 1922:139). These graves, like those of *kramats* in Malaysia, also grow in length.

Types of Tombstones

I have categorized tombstones in Patani according to the type of materials from which they are made. Tombstones are generally made of the following: sandstone, quartz, river stones, granite, marble, cement, and wood.

Materials can help date cemeteries, since the type of material used for tombstones changed over time. Intricately carved sandstone gravemarkers are the oldest in Patani dating from the 16th century. Quartz and river stones have been in continual use since the late 17th century if not earlier. Granite tombstones became popular in the 19th century and were only replaced by cement markers after World War II. Wood was probably used during all periods, early examples, however, have not survived Patani's tropical climate.

Tombstones and the materials from which they were made also provide a glimpse of Patani's political and economic fortunes. Monumental tombstones made of sandstone or granite appeared during periods of strong and stable government, while natural stones and wood were employed during times of decline. Intricately carved sandstone tombstones known as *'Batu Aceh'*, for example, were imported by royalty during Patani's golden age, 1500—1700, when the kingdom became a major political and economic power in insular Southeast Asia. The 18th century, however, was a period of economic decline, civil war, and political chaos. After a series of disastrous wars with Bangkok, Patani was eventually incorporated into Thailand. Although monumental tombstones continued to be produced in Aceh, they were no longer imported into Patani at this time. Cemeteries during this period were characterized by stone and quartz tombstones as well as locally produced wooden markers which have not survived. The grave of Raja Kuning (d. 1688), unlike that of her three sisters, was marked by quartz, suggesting that the decline had begun as early as the end of the 17th century. By the mid-1850's some semblence of political stability had been restored to the area under the Cabang Tiga Dynasty (1842—1902). Monumental tombstones reappeared on royal graves. These were made of granite, probably imported from Penang or Singapore.

Sandstone: Batu Aceh

The oldest surviving tombstones found in Patani belong to a class of tombstones known as *'Batu Aceh'*. The earliest known examples are the tomb-

stones of Sultan Malik-as Saleh of Pasai, North Sumatra who died in 1297 A.D. The *Batu Aceh* found in Patani were most probably produced in North Sumatra and imported to Patani as ship ballast during the 16th and 17th centuries. They were used solely by royalty and nobility.

That Patani should import its tombstones from Aceh is not surprising. The *Hikayat Patani* attributes the conversion of Patani to Islam to a group of merchants from Pasai living in Patani. According to the *Hikayat*, a certain Sheikh Said miraculously cured Patani's king of a painful skin disease, where upon he converted to Islam. A pair of *Batu Aceh* marks the king's grave at Kubo Barahom today. It only seems natural that Sheikh Said would introduce the type of tombstone from Aceh with which he was most familiar.

In Patani, *Batu Aceh* are found in the coastal areas. That *Batu Aceh* are concentrated along the coast stems from the fact that it was the coastal peoples who were first converted to Islam. The *Hikayat Patani* states that during the reign of Sultan Mansur Shah (r. 1564—72) Islam had spread as far inland as Kota Maligai (Wyatt, 1970:2:155). Since Kota Maligai is only 14 kilometers (from the coast, it would seem that Islam was confined to the coast for quite some time after Sultan Ismail Shah's conversion.

Examples of *Batu Aceh* can be found in the following cemeteries: Kubo Barahom near Kresik, Kubo Dato on Cape Patani, and Kubo Tok Jawa at Kampung Balai Dua. The most beautiful specimen are found in a small unnamed cemetery in Kampung Samala.

***Batu Aceh* — Shapes**

Traditionally, *Batu Aceh* have two basic shapes: the slab and the pillar (Othman, 1988:25). The slab was originally the oldest form. *Batu Gujarat* from India and 11th century Islamic tombstones found in Champa are thin slabs. Both male and female graves are marked by slab type *Batu Aceh* at Kubo Dato in Patani.

The slab has been and still is the traditional shape of tombstones in East Java. Sex distinctions there are indicated by the top edge of the tombstones. A raised edge (︿) indicates the deceased was male, while a flat edge (——) indicates the deceased was female. This method of distinguishing sex was directly imported from India: 'In India, men's graves are distinguished from those of ladies by arched ridge stones along the top, while the later are left flat. This ridge stone represents a pen box indicating a lettered person' (Taploo, 1976:88).

Square, prism-shaped, and cylindrical tombstones evolved later in Aceh perhaps between 1520—1606 (Othman, 1984:11). These pillar forms may have originated in the Middle East and spread to Aceh. This definitely seems to be the case with the eight-sided stones that became popular in Aceh and Malaysia in the 1700's. In the Middle East, a square traditionally symbolized the world of man and the circle eternity and the divine. An octagon symbolized the transition from square to circle and from physical existence to a spiritual one, from life to death, and so became an apt symbol for tombs and tombstones. *Batu Aceh* Othman Types I, J, K depicted in Fig. 10 have a square base, octagonal body, and a circular top.

Over time in Patani and Malaysia broad, rectangular tombstones with thin sides, in other words, a slab, were used to mark female graves while pillar type stones (cylindrical, square, and prism-shaped) were employed to indicate the deceased was male. How or why this pattern developed is not known.

Batu Aceh are normally divided into three parts: an intricately carved crown, a stem decorated with Arabic inscriptions, and a base covering a root which anchors the tombstone in place. This tripartite division is indicative of Indian thought and design and suggests that *Batu Aceh* were initially produced in a period of transition when traditional (Indian) concepts and designs were still in vogue and when Islam was just beginning to take root.

According to Indian belief the universe was divided into three sections: the heavens, the world of man, and the underworld. This principle was expressed architecturally in the vertical arrangements of temples, palaces, and even cremation towers. In India and Indianized Southeast Asia, these structures were divided into three parts, each symbolizing a section of the cosmos. The base was associated with the underworld, the middle section with man, and their tiered roofs with the heavens.

It is not known when or where this tripartite design was first applied to tombstones. It may have originated in India, but it could have just as easily evolved in an Indianized society like that found in 13th century Pasai. Only a thorough investigation of early Islamic tombstones in India will provide the answer.

Nor it is known whether early *Batu Aceh* were meant to actually symbolize the cosmos and by implication regeneration and rebirth or whether the shape was based on traditional motifs, still employed in 13th century Aceh but devoid of their original symbolic meaning. The former seems more likely given the context in which these tombstones were used.

Batu Aceh — Motifs

The most common motifs found on the crowns of early *Batu Aceh* are Mount Meru and the Lotus (Othman, 1988:84). These are not Islamic but rather Indian in origin and are ultimately derived from funerary art associated with Brahman and Buddhist cremation rites.

The Indian perception of death as a cosmic event was incorporated into early Islamic funerary art and is made explicit in the cosmic symbolism found on *Batu Aceh*. Man's death in Indian terms, it should be remembered, is actually a rebirth, and this rebirth is ritually assisted by reenacting the destruction and regeneration of the cosmos in cremation rites. As the cosmos, the cremation tower, is destroyed and symbolically regenerated, so too the body is destroyed and the soul reborn to a new existence. In an Islamic context these cosmic motifs simply symbolize the rejuvenating and regenerative powers of nature. The Meru and lotus symbolize man's rebirth with God.

The same Indian cosmic symbolism has survived in Islamic wedding ceremonies. 'In Malaysia *'gunung-gunung'* (mountain) motifs are associated with the royal sitting in state of the bride and bridegroom: 'The back of the dais on which the bridegroom and the bride sit in quasi-royal state at the wedding reception represents a mountain and normally has a cosmic tree as

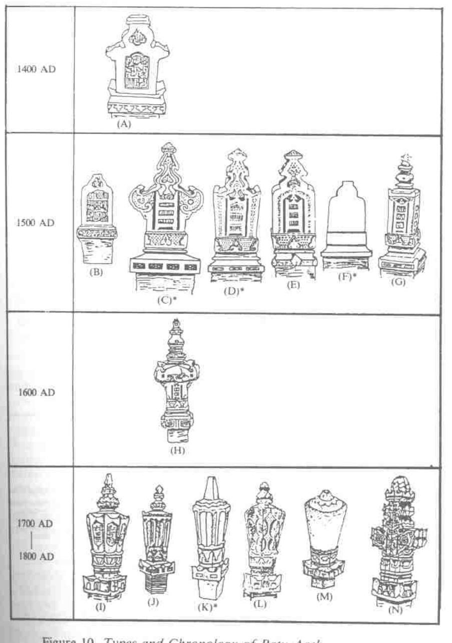


Figure 10. *Types and Chronology of Batu Aceh*
(Taken from Othman 1988:33)
Types marked with an asterisk are found in Patani.

its main feature of decoration' (Linehan, 1951:100—101). The appropriateness of the Meru motif at weddings becomes clear when one considers that a wedding is an initiation and like any initiation it consists of the death of a previous state and a 'rebirth' into a new phase of one's existence. The central importance of Meru and tree motifs at weddings also stems from the fact that on another level they also symbolize the creative powers in nature and are basically symbols of fertility.

Flowers are another common motif found on *Batu Aceh*. The crowns of some *Batu Aceh* actually resemble open blossoms. In Patani, the grave of Sultan Ismail Shah's queen is marked by a pair of ancient *Batu Aceh* (Fig. 11) resembling flowers sprouting out of the earth. This particular design seems to have been introduced from the Middle East. In Turkey, for example, 'if the deceased were a woman, the headstone was carved in imitation of a flower' (Dickie, 1978:45). The petals, interestingly enough, again exhibit Indian influence, since they symbolize Mount Meru and its four surrounding peaks.

Another common design found on *Batu Aceh* is the *'Mihrib'* (Malay: *Mihrab):*

> In its simplest form, a mosque is a building erected around a single horizontal axis, the 'kiblat' which passes invisibly down the middle of the floor and issuing from the far wall, terminates in Mecca. Prayer can be construed as use of the horizontal axis by which one relates oneself to the vertical axis of the Kaba. At the point where the 'kiblat' axis meets the far wall of the mosque, an indentation is produced, a directional niche called the 'mihrab'. The Mihrab takes the shape of an arched niche mostly framed by one or more columnettes. The Mihrab is the visual as well as the liturgical climax of the mosque where the imam stations himself to read the congregational prayer (Dickie, 1978:34).

The *Mihrab* eventually became the central feature of every mosque and divested of its liturgical significance, figures as a design motif throughout

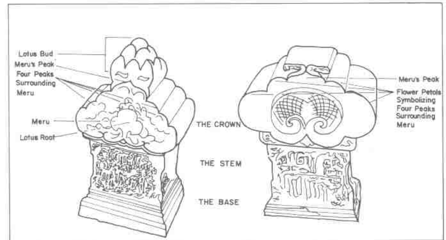


Figure 11. *Motifs on Batu Aceh — Kubo Barahom, Patani.*

Islamic fine arts from textiles to tombstones (Dickie, 1978:34). While some tombstones in Indonesia are actually shaped like a *'Mihrab'*, those of Maulana Malik Ibrahim (d. 1419) in East Java, for example, are not. *Mihrab* designs are also found on the body of some of the *Batu Aceh* but in the form of panels containing Arabic inscriptions (Othman, 1988:95-96).

***Batu Aceh* — Inscriptions**

One hundred and nine of the surviving *Batu Aceh* in Peninsular Malaysia are inscribed. These inscriptions are placed in the frame-like panels resembling a *'mihrab'* on the body of the tombstones. The inscriptions are usually in three, four, or five lines and each is separated by raised bands. The inscriptions are in Arabic and are either in late Kufic or more frequently Naskhi script (Othman, 1985:176).

Inscriptions are classified according to the type of information they contain:

Nature of the Information	No. of Stones
Biographical Data	7
Quotations from Koran	38
Shahadah	41
Sufic Poems	6
Quatrain (a four lined stanza)	1

Source: Othman, 1985:129.

Sixteen *Batu Aceh* have been found to date in Patani. None unfortunately contain any biographical information. After the fall of Melaka in 1511 biographical data disappeared from *Batu Aceh* found in Peninsular Malaysia, while still continuing in Aceh itself (Othman, 1985:144). This suggests that *Batu Aceh* in Peninsular Malaysia were originally ordered and inscribed for particular individuals, but that after Melaka's fall and the resultant disruption in traditional trade and communication patterns, the ordering of personalized tombstones became impossible in Malaysia. *Batu Aceh* were now 'mass produced' in Aceh, exported to Malaysia like other trade ware, and purchased on site. Since none of the *Batu Aceh* found in Patani contain biographical data, it would therefore appear that they were produced after 1511 and were not purchased on an individual order basis.

Twelve of the *Batu Aceh* in Patani contain the *'Shahadah'* or Islamic profession of faith. Two more are simply inscribed with the word 'Allah', which is simply a shortened form of the *Shahadah* (Othman, 1985:144). The final two stones contain inscriptions from the Koran.

The *Shahadah* is obviously the most popular inscription found on *Batu Aceh* in Patani. Fourteen of the sixteen stones display it. The *Shahadah (La Ilaha illallah Muhammad ar Rasul ullah:* There is only one God Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet) is actually a testimony to the oneness of God

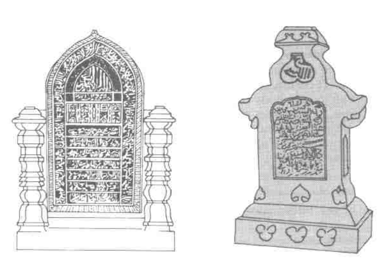


Figure 12. *Tombstone of Maulana Malik Ibrahim (East Java) and Tombstone of Sultan Muhammad I Shah, Pahang, Malaysia.*
Both exhibit *Mihrab* designs, the former in its shape, the latter in the panel on its body.

and the status of Muhammad as his Messenger. Its importance is explained as follows:

> 'Islam, frequently translated as 'submission' (though 'unconditional surrender' comes nearer the semantic content of the word in Arabic), is a contractual relationship between man and God, whereby man acknowledged the overlordship of God, a recognition that logically entails his own vassalage or slavehood. The terms of the contract are spelled out in the Koran, which is not only a charter for the individual intent on his own salvation but a constitution for the state. The Koran is a book of law, and it is also the Criterion, al-Furqan, whereby man is enabled to distinguish right from wrong, lawful from unlawful, ritually pure from ritually unpure. Entry into this contractual relationship with one's Creator is by means of pronouncing the Shahadah, 'attestation of faith', whereby one becomes 'mukallaf, or subject to ritual obligations and all the rest of Islamic Law' (Dickie, 1978:16).

The *Shahadah* is commonly recited in Islamic ceremonies attending death. It is read, for example, to a dying man. The *'talqin'* recited at graveside, reminds the deceased that there is only one God Allah and that Muhammad is his Prophet so that he will be able to answer the questions put to him by the Angels of Death. At the close of the burial service the *'imam'* also repeats, by way of doxology, the *'tahalil'* (the first line of the *Shahadah: la ilaha illa llah),* in company with the rest of the assembly' (Skeat, 1900:407). Finally, the *Shahadah* is recited during the ritual feasts *(kenduri)* held for the dead on the 1st, 3rd, 7th, 40th or 44th, and 100th night after death.

Recitation of the *Shahadah* at funeral rites serves two purposes: First, in the case of a dying man or the soul of the deceased, the *Shahadah* is the key to salvation. By reciting it an individual proclaims he is a Muslim and he wishes to share the Paradise with God. Non-believers will be consigned to hell. Second, recitation of the *Shahadah* is a form of good work. By reciting it at burial services and during funeral feasts the living can make over the reward which god has appointed for its recitation to the dead. By repeating the *Shahadah* the living can reduce the torment of the deceased in the grave.

Inscriptions like the *Shahadah* on tombstones serve two basic purposes: 1) They provided visitors to the grave with a set of prayers which when recited would reduce the suffering of the deceased in the grave and 2) they spell out, so-to-speak, the prayers recited by the tombstone itself on the deceased's behalf, for there is a general belief in Aceh and in Patani, at least, that tombstones themselves are able to pray. In Aceh, for example, 'it's believed that tombstones will continue to say the *'tasbeh'* forever on the deceased's behalf. The *'tasbeh'* is an expression of praise to God and its recitation earns merit for the deceased' (Bowen, 1984:27). In Patani, quartz tombstones without inscriptions, are also thought to pray for the dead.

The custom of inscribing tombstones with the *Shahadah* or Koranic verses did not originate with *Batu Aceh*. The *Shahadah*, for example, is found on Islamic tombstones in Champa (South Vietnam) dated 1025 A.D. (Fatimi, 1963:46). This predates the earliest known *Batu Aceh* by almost two hundred years.

Sandstone — Graves of the Queens

During its golden age Patani was ruled by four queens: Raja Ijau (1584—1616), Raja Biru (1616—1624), Raja Ungu (1624—1635) and Raja Kuning (1635—1688?) (Wyatt, 1970:I:11). The first three queens were sisters and the fourth, Raja Kuning, was most likely the daughter of Ungu. All were named after the colours of the rainbow.

The graves of the first three queens are marked by sandstones gravemarkers. These graves are located in today what is known as 'Kubo Na Chaiye'. This small cemetery is actually part of a larger burial complex located east of the ancient capital that also includes Kubo Barahom.

The cemetery takes its name from a title once applied to the queens:

> 'The King of Siam referred to Raja Ijau by the title 'Pra Nang Chau Ying', meaning 'Her Majesty the Female Raja'. This title over time became permanent so that female rajas who occupied the throne of Patani after Raja Ijau were always referred to by this title given by the King of Siam. This title became increasingly well-known so that the Malays of Patani themselves called their Raja in accordance with what she was called by the king of Siam' (Syukri, 1985:23). Na Chaiye is actually a corruption of the Siamese title Nang Chau Ying.

The three queens are buried one next to the other. It is not known who is buried in which grave, although tradition places either *Ijau* (green) or *Biru* (blue) in the central position. For convenience sake, it will be assumed that Ijau is buried in the centre. While the stones on the other two graves are

broken or partially buried, Ijau's tombstones are well preserved and clearly visible.

The tombstones on her grave resemble what is known in Buddhist Thailand as *'Bai Sema'* stelae. These stelae commonly adorn temple and palace walls and indicate that the enclosed areas were sacred. *Bai Sema* type stelae were also used as boundary markers and commemorative stones. The *Bai Sema* design is definitely of Indian origin and it has been suggested that this pattern or similar ones may have evolved from the reverse *'kala-makara'* (monster) pattern found over entrances to Hindu and Buddhist temples in Thailand and Indonesia.

Similarities in design between *Bai Sema* type markers and Ijau's tombstones suggest that early Muslims in Patani adopted traditional stones based on Indian designs originally used as boundary and commemorative markers and employed them in an Islamic context as tombstones. This is not an unusual phenomena. 'At the beginning Muslim art in India was totally dominated by Hindu forms and building materials. Temples were converted to mosques or Hindu buildings were dismembered and stone pillar mosques erected from the spoils' (Grube, 1966:165). A similar process seems to have been at work in Patani.

Ijau's tombstones are rather unique in Patani, since only a few other tombstones there exhibit this style. The form, however, is quite common in East Java. The earliest examples are found at Trowulan on the grave of Putri Champa and probably date to the mid-fifteenth century. Fig. 13 contains more examples found at Sunan Giri's shrine near Surabaya dating to the 16th century. The scarcity of these stones in Patani and their large numbers in East Java suggests that this form of tombstone may have originated there and spread elsewhere.

Quartz

The most prevalent type of tombstone found in Patani is a natural, uncarved rock containing quartz crystals. Quartz tombstones have had a long history in Patani. The grave of Raja Kuning (d. 1688), located near Kubo Barahom, is marked by quartz stones. Quartz rocks also adorn most *kramat* graves. Tok Panjang's tomb, for example, has a set of quartz markers. Old cemeteries which have been abandoned and are now overgrown are usually fields of quartz stones. Quartz tombstones are still used today, although they have lost popularity since World War II and have been replaced by tombstones made from cement.

My informants in Patani told me that, before the war, peddlers brought quartz stones down from the mountains to the villages where they were sold before *Hari Raya Idil Fitri* at the end of the Muslim fasting month. This was the day on which tombstones were traditionally set in Patani. The stones were slung at the ends of a pole and carried over the shoulder of the peddler. They sold for approximately 30 to 60 Baht a pair. This was considered expensive. Such substantial prices may have been due to quarrying and transportation costs and suggests that quartz may have originally have been limited to individuals of means. Today quartz rocks are sold at roadside stands and run about 300 Baht per pair.

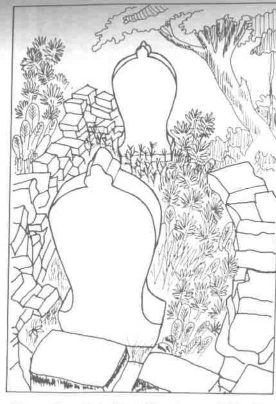
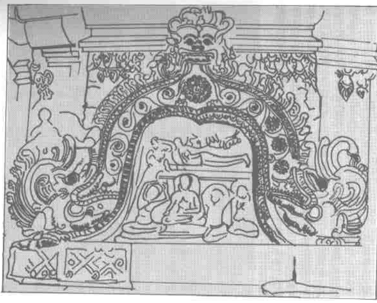


Figure 13. *Raja Ijau's Tombstones* Kubo Na Chaiye, Patani.



Kala-makara arch, Wat Mahathat, Sukhothai.

Bai Sema

East Javanese Tombstones

Note the similarity in shape between Ijau's tombstones and the 'kala-makara' arch, the Bai Sema stone, and ancient tombstones from East Java.

The popularity of quartz in the past stems from the fact that Patani Malays believed quartz stones were actually alive and growing. The local names by which quartz rock are known suggest that the rock is alive: *'Batu Hidup'* (living rocks), *'Batu Tumbuh'* (rocks that grow or sprout) and *'Batu Bunga'* (flower or flowering rocks). Because quartz rocks are 'living creatures', Patani Malays, believe they are capable of giving thanks to God and have the ability to pray. Set on a grave, quartz stones could therefore pray on the deceased's behalf and were much preferred to normal stones which were dead and incapable of earning merit for the departed.

The popularity of quartz stones may also be attributed to the Malay's attraction to objects or individuals that are unusual, strange, or abnormal in some way. Such objects or individuals were thought to possess special power:

> 'Coconuts without the normal 'three eyes' are supposed to protect one from bullets. The ugliest dogs are the most formidable, the so-called good parts being for the most part a mere list of deformities. Persons with deformities have similar unnatural power. Persons with black birthmarks covering part of their face are sometimes believed capable of causing changes in the weather and of killing by a curse' (Endicott, 1970:90).

Their scarcity and their ability to grow would definitely place quartz in a special or unnatural class of rock. Quartz rocks were most probably thought to have special properties and powers and much prized before the arrival of Islam and their use as tombstones in Patani. Examples of quartz stones can be found in the following cemeteries in Patani: Kubo Dato on the cape, Kubo Yare Ma Kuching near Kampong Take, and Kubo Rajo at Baan Pulo Tok Rajo.

River Pebbles

'Batu Sungei' or *'Batu Kali'* (smooth, rounded river stones) are also used as tombstones in Patani. They are not as widely distributed nor nearly as popular as quartz stones. They usually mark very old graves and many are found at Kubo Dato on the cape. The fact that the Acehnese also use river stones as gravemarkers suggests that the practice may have originated there and spread to Patani. The popularity of these rocks as tombstones stems from the fact that this type rock was already considered special and sacred before the arrival of Islam. River stones in Champa, for example, were used as *linggas* in villages in the worship of Siva (Mus, 1981:163). The fact that *Batu Sungei* are rare and difficult to obtain in delta regions like Patani may also explain why they were prized and sought after as tombstones.

Granite

Granite tombstones became exceedingly popular in Patani in the second half of the nineteenth century during the Cabang Tiga Dynasty. At Kubo Dato, the grave of Sultan Muhammad or Tengku Besar (d. 1856), the founder of the Cabang Tiga Dynasty, is adorned by a monumental granite kacapuri and set of tombstones. The royal cemetery at Kubo Ayah where Tengku Timung (d. 1890) and Sultan Sulaiman (d. 1899) are buried also contains a spectacular collection of granite *kacapuri* and tombstones.

It is difficult to find monumental granite tombstones in Patani prior to the Cabang Tiga Sultans. In Kelantan, however, there are a number of granite *kacapuri* and tombstones dating to at least the 1790's. The tomb of Long Ghaffar (d. 1794) at Limbat, Kota Bharu, Kelantan, for example, contains a beautiful granite *kacapuri* and pair of tombstones. Since Tengku Besar of Patani was actually a Kelantanese prince, installed by the Thai king as Sultan of Patani, it is highly probable that the tradition of monumental granite gravemarks was introduced to Patani from Kelantan during his reign.

Figure 14. *Monumental Granite Tombstone,* Kampung Kresik, Patani.

The royal tombstones found at Kubo Dato on the cape and at Kubo Ayah are beautifully carved with flower motifs. Sometimes the entire tombstones has become a lotus bud or water-lily. The sides of the *kacapuri* were also decorated either with aquatic plants or verses from the Koran. Whether these plant motifs still symbolized the generative powers of the cosmos is not known. Patani villagers today are unable to explain why these motifs are found on tombstones. By the mid-1850's the lotus perhaps may simply have become a decorative motif devoid of symbolic content.

Skeat and the Patani Malays themselves often call attention to the Chinese character of the carving on these granite tombstones. 'On landing we went straight up to the village and passed the private burial ground of the Patani Rajas (Kubo Dato on the cape). The Royal Tombs were mostly of massive granite, but there was unmistakable evidence of non-Malay craftsmanship, probably that of some Chinese firm in Singapore. The tomb of Raja Toki

Figure 15. *Granite Tombstones* Kubo Ayah, Patani.

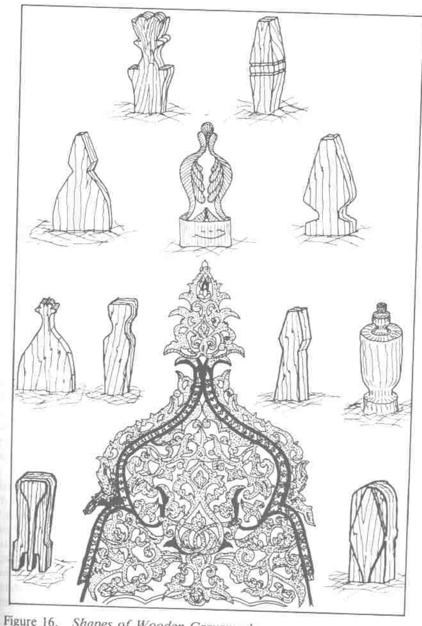


Figure 16. *Shapes of Wooden Gravemarkers.*
Note similarity of some shapes with *mimbar* (pulpit found in a mosque) produced in Aceh. Both *mimbar* and tombstones are probably based on *'gunung'* or mountain motifs.

who is buried at Kresik, and whose grandfather was Chinese, showed exactly similar influences' (Skeat, 1953:27). Informants say that such stones were imported from either Singapore or Penang. They may, however, have been produced locally by Chinese craftsmen, since the late 19th century saw an influx of Chinese into Thailand and Patani. Not all granite tombstones were monumental. Smaller ones are depicted in Fig. 15. These were most likely based on wooden prototypes and again date to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Granite tombstones are no longer produced or used in Patani today.

Marble

The grave of Sultan Sulaiman, the second to the last of the Cabang Tiga rajas, is adorned by a beautiful white Italian marble *kacapuri.* The tombstones, unfortunately, have been stolen and probably resold in Malaysia. The grave of Tengku Sulaiman (d. 1920) of Jalor in Yala Province is also marked by a marble *kacapuri* and a pair of tombstones. Marble was rarely used in Patani and only appears briefly at the beginning of this century.

Wooden

The oldest gravemarkers in Patani were probably made of wood. Early examples have not survived Patani's tropical climate. What these early wooden markers were like can only be inferred by looking at wooden gravemarkers still used today and by examining stone, granite, and cement markers which were most probably based on wooden prototypes. Fig. 16 shows common types or wooden gravemarkers still found in Patani today. It is not known what, if anything, these varied shapes symbolize. It is possible that some planks exhibit *'gunung'* or mountain motifs like those found on *Batu Aceh.* Compare these wooden gravemarkers with the back of the *'mimbar'* or 'pulpit' produced in Aceh which is also shown in Fig. 16. The design of this *mimbar* is based on the shape of a Malay ruler's throne symbolizing Meru. The similarity in shape between the *mimbar* and wooden gravemarkers suggests that at least some of the wooden markers have been carved with the *'gunung'* pattern in mind.

In the past wooden gravemarkers were used by the lower classes. They were not purchased, but hand-carved and sometimes painted by the relatives of the deceased. Traditionally only one type of wood was used *'Kayu Chengal'.* This is a very hard and enduring wood which is also used in the construction of palaces. Today, wood is rarely used to mark graves. The use of wood is, in fact, looked down upon since it indicates that the deceased was either extremely poor and could not afford cement markers or that he was not respected or liked by his surviving relatives who did not wish to purchase more expensive tombstones to mark his grave. Cement is now preferred and has replaced wood among the poor.

Cements

Cement tombstones have been gaining in popularity since World War II. One informant in Patani, now age 62, told me that when he was a child only

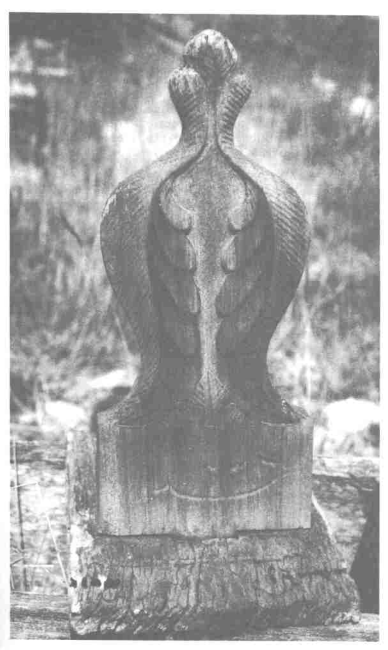


Figure 17. *Wooden Gravemarkers. Kubo Ayah, Patani.*

stone and wooden markers could be found. Cement markers, he said, are new. Fig. 18 contains a selection of cement markers commonly found in Patani. These were all produced locally in *kampungs* along with other cement items normally used by villagers. Note that flower motifs are still popular. This may be due to the emphasis Islamic art has traditionally placed on floral patterns. Biographic data is also encountered on some of the cement stones. Epitaphs are generally written in *'Jawi'*, that is, Malay written in a Perso-Arabic script. The information is kept short and consists of the name and date of death of the deceased. The paucity and brevity of epitaphs on cement tombstones is perhaps explained by the following saying in Patani: Anyone who reads what is written on a tombstone will have a short life.

Figure 18. *Cement Tombstones*
Note the flower motifs.

Living Trees a Gravemarkers

According to informants people in Patani who knew Islam well prefer to plant living *'jarak'* trees at the head and foot of a grave unaccompanied by tombstones. It is a relatively recent practice, which, they say, is gaining in popularity. This practice is derived from one of the stories told about the Prophet Muhammad: 'The Prophet was walking by a graveyard when he realized that two people buried there were being tortured. So he cut off shoots from a tree and placed one on each grave to cool them off' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:45).

Functions of Tombstones

Tombstones serve a variety of functions. They 1) mark the location of a grave, 2) witness who is buried there, 3) emphasize the horizontal axis of the grave and its alignment with the Kaaba, 4) symbolize the regeneration powers of the universe and rebirth, 5) pray for the dead, 6) reflect social organization and class distinctions. Tombstones placement also substituted for secondary burial and tombstones in some areas actually served as mediums for contacting the dead.

With the introduction of Islam, double interment that so characterised funeral rites in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Patani became an impossibility. The dead were only buried once and that was normally on the day of death. Traces of secondary burial and associated ritual, however, survived in the rites surrounding the placement of tombstones which in Aceh and Patani normally took place on the 40th or 44th day after death. A comparison between burial rites and the ceremonies attending tombstone placement indicates that the later was, in fact, symbolically equivalent to a second burial and that tombstones substituted for the corpse. The *Adat Raya-Raja Melayu* points out the following similarities between burial and tombstone placement. Both burial and tombstone placement, for example, commence with the firing of cannon. The procession to the graveyard is identical in both cases. The tombstones, in fact, are actually carried on the *'raja-diraja'* palanquin that once bore the body of the king forty days previously. In a funeral, the body is next buried, in the placement ceremony, the tombstones are set. The *talqin* is read for the deceased, while prayers are said over the tombstones. Both ceremonies conclude with the firing of cannon (Sudjiman, 1983:251).

That tombstone erection replaced secondary burial is also reflected in Acehnese *Adat* or customary law. In Aceh, the relatives of the deceased cannot press their claims to interfere with the upbringing of the children against the widow until after they have seen the erection of the deceased's tombstones (Hurgronje, 1906:I:432). This is explained by the fact that traditionally death was not felt as an instantaneous destruction of the individual. Rather, death was a long process that was only completed when an individual's soul departed for the hereafter. The second burial assisted in this departure, signified the deceased was now dead, and released relatives from mourning obligations. With the arrival of Islam tombstone placement on the 40th or 44th day after burial came to assume these functions. Relatives must wait for the placement of stones before pressing their claims because

it, like the second burial, signified that the deceased was dead. In other words, his soul has departed for the hereafter. They could do nothing while he was still alive.

The substitution of tombstone placement for secondary burial most probably originated in Aceh and spread to Malaysia and Patani where it was readily accepted.

In some areas of Indonesia and Malaysia Islamic tombstones served as mediums for contacting the dead. It should be remembered that in Pre-Islamic times, the corpse, bones, and images of the deceased were originally used for this purpose. It has already been pointed out that tombstone placement substituted for secondary burial and that in these rites tombstones replaced the corpse. It should, therefore, not be surprising that tombstones were used to communicate with spirits. In South Sulawesi, a Makassarese, when visiting a grave, will place his right hand on the headstone as he speaks to or prays for the deceased. Patani Malays do not follow this practice today; perhaps it never existed in Patani or more likely it has been lost in time.

Modernist Views

Modernists in Patani believe that tombstones are not necessary. In fact, according to their perception, the erection of tombstones is not an 'Islamic' obligation or duty. They do not discourage the use of tombstones, they would, however, like to see graves simply marked. Patani modernists say that according to Islam all men are equal in death. Large or ornate tombstones, indicating class distinctions, are therefore particularly frowned upon. They cite the burial of the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia as most appropriate. According to their accounts he was buried in an unmarked grave in the desert.

6
STRUCTURES

'It is clear that early Muslim doctrine condemned any architectural glorification of tombs. The use of stone, burnt bricks or mortar on graves was forbidden. The *'taswiyah al-qubur'*, or 'equalization of tombs (with the surrounding ground)', was felt to be the most appropriate expression of equality of all men in death' (Grabar, 1976:8). Building up tombs was also associated with ancestor worship in Arabia. This was strictly prohibited: Muhammad called it idolatrous, derived from Christian and Jewish habits; it also ran contrary to the monotheistic belief of Islam (Taploo, 1976:84). Despite these prohibitions, the 10th and 11th centuries saw the growth of commemorative funerary structures throughout the Islamic world, especially in Egypt and Iran. 'The overwhelming majority of these early mausoleums served either to emphasize Shiite holy places (i.e. the graves of holy men) or to glorify princes from smaller dynasties' (Grabar, 1976:8). During the 14th and 15th centuries Islam and its concepts for the glorification of royal and saintly graves were introduced into Southeast Asia. Today almost all structures found in graveyards in Patani evolved from local efforts to adorn the graves of kings and saints according to these Islamic principles.

The following types of structures are today found in cemeteries in Patani:

Kacapuri
Platforms
Walls
Pavilions
Shrines
Rumah Wakaf
Rumah Tunggu Kubo

Kacapuri

It has already been shown that Islamic graves in the Middle East were often characterised by a recumbent element, known as a *'shahid'*, that was erected over the vault and which served to emphasize the horizontal nature of the grave and its alignment with Mecca.

We have seen this recumbent element assumed a number of varied forms in Southeast Asia. In Aceh, a single stone, known as *'Batu Badan'* or 'body stone' connected the head and footstones. In heavily Indianized Java, this element was known as a *'jirat'* or *'kijang'* and was sometimes constructed in the form of a *'chandi'* or temple. This seems quite appropriate since the

ashes of a cremated king were traditionally deposited in a temple in pre-Islamic times. In Malaysia, 'graves had a wooden framework placed around the *'batu nisan'* (tombstones), made of four planks set on edge and mortised together. These planks were called *'dapur'* which meant the outer portion enclosing something' (Hough, 1940:46).

In Patani all horizontal structures associated with a grave, are called *'kacapuri'*. These basically consist of four walls set around the grave which support, encompass, or connect the tombstones in some manner. The grave itself is normally left uncovered, but sometimes a *kacapuri* is 'roofed'. This top stone, however, is normally characterized by an oblong opening allowing access to the grave itself. The motive behind the uncovered grave and the hole in the top slab of the *kacapuri* was the classical Islamic conviction that a grave not exposed to rain or dew was unblessed. This belief was probably based on the beautiful Koranic passage: 'He it is who sends the winds as tidings of his impending mercy, until, when they carry a heavy cloud to a dead land. We give the land to drink thereof (Surah VII:57)' (Dickie, 1978:45).

Kacapuri in Patani are made of wood, brick and mortar, stone, or cement. In Kelantan the term, however, is only applied to wooden structures, which suggests that the more permanent construction materials were used later and the designs based on wooden prototypes. The oldest surviving *kacapuri* in Patani, set on the grave of Datuk Puyut, is made of sandstone, and dates to *circa*. 1800 A.D.

Kacapuri were originally restricted in use to royalty, nobility, or important religious figures. Only in the last forty years have villagers begun to adorn their graves with cement *kacapuri*. This is probably indicative of a larger democratization process whereby the prerogatives of the rich and powerful have been appropriated by the masses.

The term *'Kacapuri'* derives from old *'Kawi'* (Javanese). It literally means 'glass palace'. It is normally translated into standard Malay as a *'pagar'* or fence and is generally used to refer to a fence found within a palace or *'kraton'*. Perhaps royal graves were initially, individually walled, enclosed by a fence or *kacapuri*, to protect and adorn the graves as well as to indicate the power and status of the individuals buried there.

Platforms

The tombstones of kings, nobles, and saints were often elevated on platforms in Patani. A typical platform was constructed by erecting a rectangular brick wall around one or more graves. This wall was then covered with a plaster made of lime, sand, and powered brick. The area within the walls was filled with earth or sand and the tombstones were erected on this enclosed mound.

The graves of Sultan Ismail Shah, the first king to convert to Islam, and his wife are raised and so are the graves of Patani's three queens. Nothing, however, remains of the surrounding, retaining wall, except some scattered bricks encountered by modern gravediggers. Only the earthen mounds topped with tombstones survive.

The earliest surviving platforms date from the 19th century. Fine examples of these are found at Kubo Tok Baza (also known as Kubo Tok Pake) near Kampung Bunga, Kubo Tok Pake near Kampung Pake in Rahman District. The platform at Kubo Tok Baza marks the location of Sheik Said's grave. The platform at Kubo Tok Pake (Rahman) covers the remains of yet another religious teacher who is believed to have converted the inhabitants of Rahman to Islam. The large platform at Kubo Tok Nik is located directly behind the palace of the Rahman's rajas and contains the remains of the royal family that administered Rahman in the second half of the nineteenth century. The walls of this platform have been beautifully embedded with Chinese porcelain plates as decoration.

The elevation of royal graves is also a common occurence in Malaysia and Indonesia. In both places graves are not only located on platforms, but on natural hilltops and mountains as well. The royal graveyard of Melaka, for example, was located on what today is known as 'Bukit St. Paul' or 'St. Paul's Hill'. Sultan Gunung Agung of Yogyakarta is also buried on a hill, at Imogiri, 18 kilometers south of the city. Elevated burial whether on a platform, hill or mountain most probably evolved out of a complex blend of animistic, Indian, and Islamic beliefs.

Before the arrival of Indian religions and Islam, Indonesians believed the land of souls was under the earth and they looked upon chasms and caves as being passages leading to it. But in time many came to believe that the land of souls was located on earth on a mountain or in a valley. The Tenggerese (in Java), for example, believe the Land of the Dead is located on Mount Bromo (*The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:245). The Makassarese as well believe that the souls of their ancestors dwell on Gunung Bawang Karaeng. The association of death with height may have been one of the factors which lead to elevated burial.

Mountains, hilltops, and platforms may also have symbolized Mount Meru. Meru was the cosmic mountain at the centre of the universe. Traditional polities mirrored this cosmos. Indianized kings, for example, lived in palaces representing Meru situated at the symbolic centre of their kingdoms. They sat on thrones carved in Meru's likeness. In death their bodies were cremated in funeral towers and their ashes placed in temples symbolizing the cosmos. Perhaps this cosmic/Meru symbolism survived the coming of Islam in the artificial 'mountains' or platforms erected over a king's grave.

Classical Islamic cosmology also operated on a vertical axis. Heaven, for example, was divided into seven layers with God seated above the topmost layer. The souls of the faithful were thought at the moment of death to slip from the body and accompanied by angles ascend through the seven layers to God who then pronounced their fate and returned them to their bodies in the graves. Ascent/descent concepts such as these lead to the belief that the higher one went the closer to God one became. Holy men like Sunan Giri and Sunan Muria in Java were therefore buried on hilltops because high places were considered close to God (Prijotomo, 1984:50). Their physical closeness to God also reflected their spiritual intimacy with the divine.

Finally, traditional methods of indicating status and rank in society may

also account for the erection of platform over graves. In many parts of Southeast Asia including Patani 'relative status of individuals within society was traditionally given expression in spatial arrangement; in other words, where people were located in space provides an image of the sacred order. On ceremonial occurences, for example, the highest status person's head must be the highest, and around him are arranged in tiers which become lower and lower and more and more peripheral, the nobles who are increasingly his inferior' (Errington, 1983:200). Thai Kings giving audience thus traditionally sat above their assembled nobles. Even today when the Thai monarch annually gives out university diplomas, he is positioned on a stage or platform raised higher than the graduates. Indonesians still show respect by bowing as they walk past a superior. The bow elevates the superior and lowers the subordinate. Just as a living king then literally lives on a higher plane than his subjects, so too in death a Sultan's grave is elevated above those of his nobles and subjects, either on a simple platform or on a hillside, indicating his higher social status.

Walls

Royal graves are almost always walled in Patani and these walls are called *'kota'* by local residents. The oldest walled cemetery still in existence is that of Tengku Mohammad Besar on the cape, Kubo Ayah in Cabang Tiga and the grave of Tengku Sulaiman at Jalor.

Earlier royal cemeteries may also have been walled. At Kubo Barahom and at Kubo Na Chaiye ancient bricks and large rectangular stones have been found which nearby villagers say formed the foundation of old walls that once enclosed these cemeteries. Present day villagers have taken it upon themselves to gather up some of these bricks and pile them one on top of the other to construct new walls around the graves of the kings and queens buried there. The tradition of enclosing royal graves has in this small way survived in Patani.

Walls not only protect graves but like platforms indicate the status of the individuals within them. Relative status, was traditionally expressed in spatial arrangement. One's place, in other words, literally defined one's status. A king's place, for example, was the palace. He and his court were traditionally defined as those individuals who lived within the citadel. Commoners were those people who lived outside the walls.

These concepts were given linguistic expressions. Royal residences in Central Java, Bali, South Sulawesi, and Patani were called the 'inside' or 'inner'. 'In Central Java, the ruler's palace was the *Dalem,* the 'inside'. In Bali, the inner core of the core of royal lineages, the *Puri Gede,* was often referred to as the *'Dalem',* while the secondary royal houses were called *'jero',* a word which also means 'inside' or 'within'. Commoners, by contrast, were called 'outside people'. In Luwu, South Sulawesi, the court was *laleng batta,* 'within the walls', (*laleng* is a cognate of *dalem*) and the members of the court were *to marilaleng,* 'people located inside' (Errington, 1983:199). In Patani the site of Datuk Puyut's palace today is known as *'Kampung Dalem'.*

Figure 19. *Granite Kacapuri* Kubo Ayah, Patani.
Note the oblong opening in covering slab to allow rain to fall on the grave. Also note the two tombstones carved in the shape of 'lotus' buds.

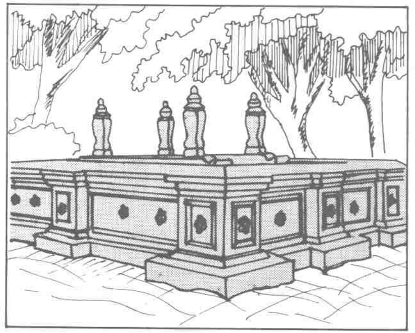


Figure 20. *Graves of Sultan Mahmud Syah and Sultan Muhammad Syah,* Kampung Melayu, Pulau Tiga, Malaysia.
(Taken from Halim *Tempat-tempat Bersejarah Perak,* 1981:35).
The tombstones are elevated on a platform.

Finally, in the Ayuthayan period of Thai history, he who physically occupied the palace was literally the king. Efforts of usurpers were thus directed toward gaining control of and occupying the palace.

Death often mirrors life. A living king resides within the walls of his palace or *'kraton'*. In death he is also buried within walls of his tomb. A king, in short, can be defined as that particular individual who lives and who is also buried within walls. His graveyard is actually a palace of sorts. In Patani, in fact, identical terms are applied to both palace and royal cemetery: *'Kota Raja'* or 'wall/city of the king'.

The practice of erecting walls around royal graves probably originated in Aceh. 'Royal tombs there are called *'Kandang Poteu'* or 'Tombs of our Lords'. This name appears to have been specifically applied to the tombs of kings in Aceh from the fact that royal graves are surrounded by a stone wall *(kandang)'* (Hurgronje, 1906:2:300). Royal cemeteries enclosed in walls were eventually introduced into Patani and the Acehnese term *'Kandang Poteu'* may have found it way in Patani Malay as *'Kota Raja'*.

A series of graves within a larger cemetery may also be set off from the rest by a walled enclosure. It should be remembered that a communal

cemetery was nothing more than a collection of family plots. Sometimes plots belonging to important or powerful families were protected by walls.

Only one of all cemeteries visited in Patani contained these small compounds, Kubo Ayah at Cabang Tiga. This extremely limited distribution suggests that they were a late development and examplify the spread of what was once a royal prerogative to the nobility and palace officials. Another, although unlikely explanation is that earlier examples have simply not survived.

Walls are still erected today but solely around public cemeteries and simply to protect them. They prevent grazing animals, for instance, from defiling graves. In smaller *kampungs,* the cemetery is often ringed by barbed wire and entered through a single gate.

Pavilions

The graves of the rich and powerful were sometimes covered or sheltered by pavilions. In Patani these pavilions were locally known as *'atap'* or *'baza'.* The earliest examples in Patani date to the mid-nineteenth century and are found over the royal graves at Langgar, Kubo Ayah and over Tengku Sulaiman's tomb at Jalor. The grave of Tengku Muhammad Besar on the cape and the graves of the Jering Rajas (19th century) at Kresik were also at one time sheltered, but the wooden superstructures have all rotted away and only the plastered brick supports remain. Pavilions are still being built today. A new one was recently constructed over the ancient grave of Tok Pake at Kampong Tok Pake in Rahman.

The custom of erecting pavilions over royal graves and the graves of important religious figures in Patani derives directly from the Middle Eastern practice of constructing domed structures over the graves of kings and saints. 'In the Middle East and India the domical structure was adopted as the most common form over holy spots and tombs, not because of its precise funerary attribute, but because of its general meaning as a sign of veneration.... Centrally-planned (domed) buildings were erected over a tomb or holy place in order to emphasize and program, as the case may be, the holiness, the glory, the wealth, or power of the individual buried there' (Grabar, 1976:8).

Initially Indonesians and Malays did not adopt the dome to adorn their mosques or tombs. Instead they employed their own indigenous equivalent of the Middle Eastern dome: the pagoda-roof, decreasing in size from the bottom to the top. This form normally found on temples, palaces, and over gates, like the dome it substituted for, was a symbol of honour and veneration.

Pagoda roofs are found, for example, on mosques in Demak and Banten and over Sunan Giri's shrine in East Java. The finest example of a tiered roof structure in Patani is the 200-year old mosque at Kampong Teluk Manok in Narathiwat Province. No pagoda pavilions, however, are found over graves in Patani. Tiered roof structures that may once have sheltered royal or holy graves in Patani simply have not survived. Fig. 21 illustrates the type of structure now found over graves there.

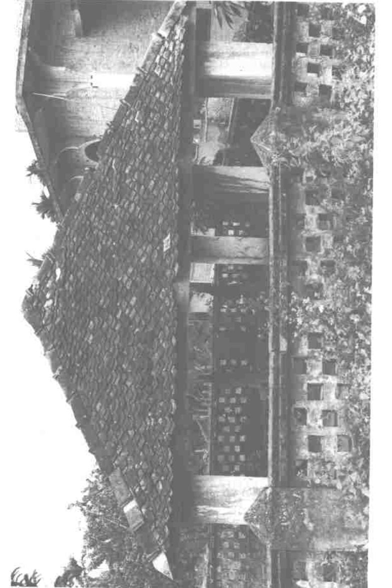


Figure 21. *Pavillions.*
The top pavillion covers the grave of Sunan Giri in East Java. The bottom pavillion is also located in the sme complex. The pavillion pictured in the center shelters the grave of Tengku Sulaiman (d. 1920) at Jalor, Patani. Also note the wall around Tengku Sulaiman's grave.

Saintly Shrines

In Patani like Aceh 'most of the saints tombs lie bare and exposed; they are seldom cleaned and are distinguished from those of ordinary mortals only by the votive offerings which are laid thereon' (Hurgronje, 1906:2:293). The graves of minor *kramats* in Patani are sometimes, however, enclosed by a wooden fence. While such wooden fences may have been a common occurence in the past, only four were encountered during this survey. They were all constructed in the same style and only enclosed *kramat* graves. The oldest and most beautiful examples were found at Kubo Tok Rajo near Kampung Pulo Tok Rajo. Another protects the grave of Tok Bare at Kampung Take. When asked the purpose of these fences, informants replied that they had not been erected to keep animals off the graves, rather the purpose of a fence, was to let people know that someone important was buried there. A fence, I was told, indicated that a grave was a place of worship (*'pujo'* or *'puja'* in standard Malay). Individuals make special visits to such graves to seek the *kramat's* intercession or favour.

Datok Panjang's tomb is the most elaborate in Patani. His tomb is based on Middle Eastern and Indian models as the following comparison shows:

'A typical Middle Eastern shrine consists of a plot of ground, the front part of which constitutes a court, possibly 20 feet square and generally surrounded by a wall' (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:66). Beyond the court is the tomb or *'maqam'* (Malay: *Makam*). The *maqam* is a small white building covered by a dome

Figure 22. *Fence Protecting Tok Bare's Grave,* Patani.

or *'qubba'*. It may have grated windows, a grating overhead, and even a grated door (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:66). The location of the entrance to the *maqam* varies from country to country, but in India it is usually located on the southern side of the *maqam,* so that visitors are forced to enter at the feet of the deceased as a sign of respect. The entrances are normally low, so that on entering the maqam one is forced to bend over and in so doing once again pay respect to the saint. The grave of the saint is located in the *maqam* proper. It may either be quite plane or somewhat elaborate. The recumbent stone is often replaced by a wooden catafalque, known as a *'tabut'*, which is a duplicate of the Islamic coffin, frequently magnified on a scale corresponding to the moral stature of the deceased' (Dickie, 1978:45). The *'tabut'* is usually covered with a green or white cloth known as a *'kiswa'*.

Offerings are left for the saint within teh *maqam.* Articles of apparel or rags torn from them are attached to the grating of the tombs and *kiswa* or placed upon the grave. This stems from the belief that those pilgrims who leave in contact with the saint articles which have been closely associated with their persons are supposed to be under his influence and to share in his efficacious influence *(Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:67).

Trees or groves are sometimes associated with a shrine. These plants are thought to be the property of the saint. Articles of clothing torn into small rags are again attached to the tree with the similar motive of obtaining the saint's blessing.

'In the court of the saint there is sometimes found a spring forming a pool or fountain. It may be a mineral spring, possibly a hot spring, in which case it is connected with the healing powers of the saint, and to drink or bathe, as the case may be, will cure disease, remove sterility, etc., provided the good offices of the saint can be secured' (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 1935:67).

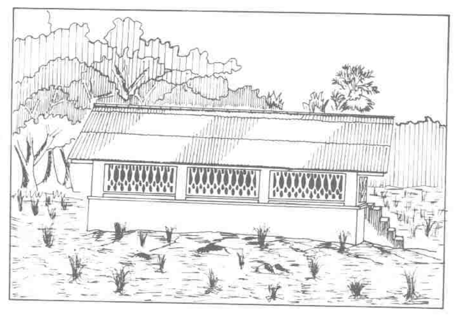
While Datok Panjang's shrine contains no walled courtyard, the tomb or *maqam* proper closely resembles Middle Eastern models. The present structure was built in the 1940's and replaced an earlier edifice described by Skeat. The new building is painted white and consists of a low, plastered-brick, retaining-wall, topped by eight large columns supporting the roof. The areas between the large roof supports are decorated with small pillars producing a grating effect reminiscent of Middle Eastern *maqam.* A low entrance is located in the southern wall forcing pilgrims to bow as they enter the tomb at the feet of the saint.

The graves of the saint and his pupil are covered by a white mosquito net, derived perhaps from the Middle Eastern *kiswa.* The approach to Datok Panjang's shrine is lined with shrubs and these are most probably the local equivalent of the trees or groves found near shrines in the Middle East.

Petitioners in Patani have not left small rags attached to the grating or plants surrounding the tomb. Instead, they have attached small pieces of cloth to stakes forming small pennons or *'panji'* as they are known, and these have been implanted around the saint's grave.

A well near the approach to the shrine substitutes for a natural spring. Its waters are thought to possess healing power and mothers bring their sick children there to bath.

Not all structures at Datok Panjang's shrine were based on Middle Eastern



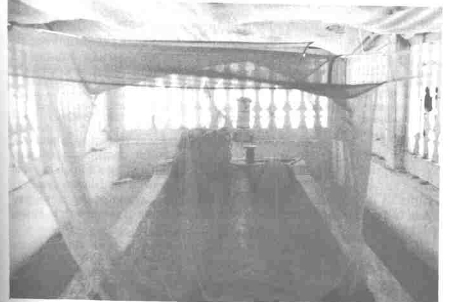


Figure 23. *Tok Panjang's Shrine.*

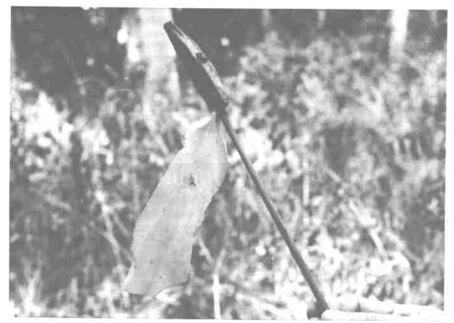


Figure 24. *Panji.*

and Islamic models. Skeat, writing in 1899, for example, describes as *'balai hantu'* or 'spirit hall' located near the entrance of the shrine:

> 'The hall had no roof, though it seemed there must have been a roof once. It consisted of a two-storied audience hall for the reception of spirits and a ladder, also for their benefit, leading up to the top story, a sick man who had recovered in consequence of a vow discharged in the manse would sit with this *balai* close behind him, while his soul ascended the soul steps *(tangga semangat)* to partake of the rice deposited there in a special container used for holding rice dedicated to Datok Panjang' (Skeat, 1953:29).

Balai hantu and associated concepts are in no way related to Islam. The practices Skeat describes are derived from animistic concepts, previously discussed, which held that all creatures were animated by a life giving soul known as *'semangat'*. The presence of *balai hantu* in an Islamic cemetery testifies to the endurance of animistic beliefs that predated the coming of Islam. It should be noted that no *balai hantu* are found in graveyards in Patani today.

Rumah Wakaf

Almost all cemeteries in Patani contain wooden pavilions known as *'rumah wakaf'*. These structures have been donated *(wakaf)* by pious individuals for the community's use. A *rumah wakaf* consists simply of a raised wooden platform covered by a roof supported on wooden beams. *Rumah wakaf* are usually found on the periphery of cemeteries and today serve as resting places for visitors.

In the past, however, a *rumah wakaf* was the focal point for important annual *'kenduri'* given for the benefit of the dead. 'Feasts for the benefit of any given deceased person were only held during the short period after his death. In Aceh, this period is even shorter than elsewhere, consisting of only 100 days. In Java there are further commemorations on the first two anniversaries and the 1000th day. In the end, however long the interval, the deceased is personally forgotten, but is included in the ranks of 'ancestors' or 'spirits of the departed', occasionally commemorated at odd times according to the fancy of individuals, but as a rule during a single month in the year set aside for the purpose' (Hurgronje, 1906:1:221).

Traditionally, ancestors were honoured at the beginning of the agricultural season. After the arrival of Islam, these rites eventually became associated with the 8th month of the Islamic lunar calendar or *'Bulan Shaban'*. Islamic Southeast Asians followed Indian Muslims in honouring their dead during this month in contrast to Saudi Arabians who dedicated the 7th month to commemorating the dead. In Java, the 8th month is known as *'Bulan Arwah'* or 'Month of Souls', while in Aceh it is locally known as the 'Month of Rice Feasts', since every family must hold a rice feast in honour of its ancestors during this month (Reid, 1985:19). The honouring of ancestors also became popularly associated with the rituals and feasts which ended the fasting month *(Bulan Puasa) on Hari Raya Idil Fitri*. Today, Muslims in Southeast Asia generally concentrate their visits to family graves in the last few days of the 8th month, and the first days of the 10th starting with *Hari Raya Idil Fitri*. In Patani, tombstones are normally purchased and set and graves cleaned on or around this day.

In Patani, feasting in honour of the dead was traditionally postponed to six days after *Idil Fitri* until *'Hari Raya Ne'* (*'Ne'* means 'six' in Patani Malay). Informants explained that it was sometimes difficult to predict when *Hari Raya Idil Fitri* would fall since it depended upon the appearance of the moon. This uncertainty made it very difficult to prepare huge feasts. Since *'Hari Raya Ne'* was easily predictable, always coming six days after *Idil Fitri*, feasting became associated with it in Patani.

In Aceh, *kenduri* for all souls were almost always held at home, but in Patani and in Java these feasts could be held at the cemetery. On *Hari Raya Ne* in Patani, for example, villagers prepared food and assembled at the graveyard. After it was blessed by pious individuals and prayers said for the dead, members of the community exchanged and ate the food they had made. These feasts were normally held in the *rumah wakaf* on the edge of the cemetery.

Annual feasts were also celebrated at the shrines of saints. These feasts were normally held on what was thought to be the anniversary of the holy man's death. 'In India these celebrations were called *'urs'* which literally means 'wedding', because in death a saint's soul was wedded or united with God. In Aceh and Patani these anniversary feasts were often held at the shrine and most probably centred around the *rumah wakaf*. Hurgronje notes, for example, that in Aceh on the 18th of the sixth month, one of the three principle *kenduris* is held in the *'deah'* (prayer house) at the tomb of the great saint Tengku Anjong (Hurgronje, 1906:1:219).

Figure 25. *Rumah Wakaf.*

Figure 26. *Rumah Tunggu Kubo,* Kubo Bado, Patani.

Rumah Tunggu Kubo

In Patani orthodox Muslims believe that the soul leaves the body after seven days. Relatives of the dead will remain at the gravesite during this seven day period to accompany the deceased. This practice is known as *'tunggu kubo'* or 'guarding the grave'. Patani Malays explain that just as anyone feels strange in a new house, the dead person needs time to adjust to his new surroundings, the grave. The family can facilitate this adjustment by remaining near the deceased. The sound of the familiar voices will comfort him in the grave. During their seven day stay at graveside relatives will pray to God to relieve the pain and suffering of the deceased in the grave. Individuals who 'wait on a grave' may return home to bath or eat, but at no time during the seven day period may the grave be left unattended. Upon completion of the rites individuals are recompensed with gifts for their services. Typical gifts such as mats, cloth, or money are considered *'sedekah'* or alms.

While in the cemetery, family members stay in a small structure known as a *'rumah tunggu kubo'* to protect them from the heat and rain. *Rumah tunggu kubo* are often small and portable so that they can be easily moved from grave to grave. When asked whether or not a *rumah wakaf* could be used as a *rumah tunggu kubo,* the answer was no. A *rumah tunggu kubo,* it was explained, must be situated as close to the grave as possible. A *rumah wakaf* at the edge of the cemetery is simply too far away. Sometimes, however, a *rumah wakaf* is constructed in such a way that it is portable and in this case, since it may be moved from grave to grave, it can substitute for a *rumah tunggu kubo.*

Islamic modernists in Patani say that *rumah tunggu kubo* and associated practices are not Islamic. The dead are precisely that-dead; they cannot possibly hear the comforting voices of grieving relatives. An individual will be saved through his own good works, and not through merit generated through prayer or alms given by his close kin.

Modernist Views

In Patani today many of the structures described in this chapter are in a sorry state of disrepair and their very existence threatened.

Attitudes in modern Islam are not conducive to the upkeep and restoration of ancient tombs. Some modernists in Patani refer to the doctrine of *'Taswiyah al-qubur'* previously mentioned, stress the equality of all men in death, and condemn any architectural glorification ofgraves. The following quotes expressed by modernists in Patani illustrate their attitudes towards building up graves:

> Certain individuals have made their graves special, but this is not done according to Islam.... It is not good to display wealth or love for someone through a grave.... Ideally in an Islamic cemetery no distinctions should be made based on class, social status, or wealth.... Sometimes people break the prohibitions Islam has set against monumental graves. Look at the royal cemeteries in Malaysia now. Before in Saudi Arabia there were many graves like those of the Malay Sultans, but these have all been destroyed except for Muhammad's grave. In Malaysia *'adat-istiadat'* (traditional or customary law and practices) is still respected.

The sad state of many structures in Patani's cemeteries is also due to political developments within the kingdom. Patani was incorporated into Thailand in 1902. Abdul Kadir, the last king of Patani, fled to Kelantan where he eventually died. Over the next thirty years the Malay nobility of Patani was stripped of its traditional sources of revenue and power. Today no royal house or noble class as such remains to maintain the tombs of their forebearers.

7
PLANTS AS GRAVEMARKERS

Plants abound in Southeast Asia's Islamic cemeteries. The flowering *'Kemboja'* tree is perhaps the plant most frequently encountered in graveyards. Othman notes that it is found in Aceh (Othman, 1985:53). Marsden writes that it was popular in other parts of Sumatra as well (Skeat, 1900: 397). It commonly shades graves in Patani. Kubo Ayah at Cabang Tiga, for example, contains several. Finally, Javanese cemeteries are easily recognised from a distance by the dense *Kemboja* trees planted over the graves providing shade and a pleasantly scented atmosphere for mourners.

This particular plant is also associated with death in Buddhist Thailand. There it is known as the 'tree of sorrows' and is frequently found in *'wat'* (temple compounds) next to *'chedis'* containing the ashes of the dead. Its beautiful white and scented flowers recall the Buddhist mourning colour: white. It is highly likely that this tree was borrowed and incorporated into Islam because of its association with death in Buddhism.

Other plants commonly found in cemeteries are: *'jarak', 'kuda-kuda'* and *'puding'* trees. Banyan or *'Beringin'* (Javanese) trees are also found in very old cemeteries (Othman, 1985:53). Wild *marjoram* is also sometimes planted in graveyards (Skeat, 1900:397). In Patani flowering and fragrant plants like the *kemboja* and *jarak* are preferred.

In Aceh, trees were generally planted as temporary grave markers, and were later replaced when proper tombstones were set. The Malays in Peninsular Malaysia plant trees, side by side with temporary wooden grave markers. In Patani today, *jarak* trees are planted without any tombstones whatsoever.

In the broadest sense, trees planted in cemeteries symbolize the cosmos, the regenerative powers of the universe, and ultimately rebirth. 'The cosmos is a living organism, which renews itself periodically. The mystery of the inexhaustible appearance of life is bound up with the rhytmical renew of the cosmos. This is why the cosmos is imagined in the form of a giant tree. The mode of being of the cosmos, and first of all its capacity for endless regeneration, are symbolically expressed in the tree' (Eliade:148).

In Indonesia and in the Malay world the tree as cosmic symbol par excellance finds expression in the *'Kayon'* (tree of life) shadow puppet of the shadow theatre. Its power for regeneration is illustrated by the fact that the *kayon* puppet, at the beginning of the performance, is twirled and twisted above the other puppets in order to bring them to life perhaps with ancestral spirits (Bosch, 1960).

On another level, the trees in a cemetery symbolize the Garden of Eden. Originally man was immortal and lived in paradise with God. But Adam sinned, was expelled from Eden, and lost his immortality. In death, however, man symbolically returns to Eden to be rejoined with God. The concept of the cemetery as Eden and garden originated in the Islamic Middle East.

In Persia and India Paradise Gardens consisted of two water channels intersecting each other at right angles to form a cross, thus dividing the garden into quarters. The channels symbolized the four life giving streams of paradise, fertilizing the four cardinal points of the universe. The cross joined by the intersection of the water channels symbolized the meeting of humanity with God in death (Taploo, 1977:145). The tomb situated at the intersection of the channels also symbolized the transition from material to the spiritual world at death. 'The square plinth covering the grave represented the material universe and man, the dome stood for the circle of eternity and God, while the octagonal walls of the tomb proper symbolized the transition from one to the other by the deceased (Dickie, 1978:47).

The water channels in these gardens were often lined with cypress and fruit trees. The cypress is a slow growing tree capable of reaching great age and

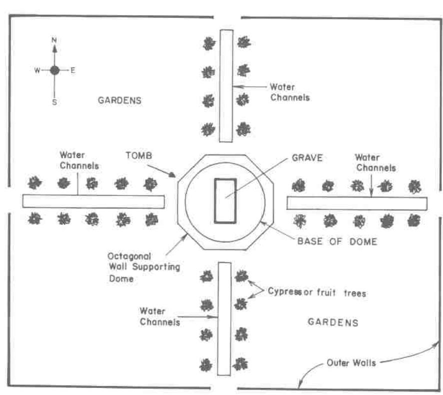


Figure 27. *Garden Tomb.*

thus symbolized eternity, while the fruit trees symbolized both death and immortality' (Taploo, 1977:146).

That these gardens were conceived of as Paradise is made clear in an inscription found over the gate of Akbar's garden at Sikandra, India: 'These are the Garden of Eden, enter and dwell there for eternally' (Dickie, 1978:47).

Islamic cemeteries in Southeast Asia do not exhibit the regularity and formalization of Persian and Indian gardens. Axial, intersecting channels, for example, are not found. The Garden of Paradise was expressed simply in the planting of trees. The *kemboja* and other blossoming plants found in Patani's cemeteries, like the fruit trees in Indian gardens, not only symbolize death and immortality, but also Eden where man and God are joined for eternity.

8
VISITING CEMETERIES

This chapter explains why Muslims in Patani visit cemeteries and examines some of the rites, and paraphernalia, if any, associated with these visits.

People in Patani visit cemeteries for one of the following reasons: 1) to attend a burial; 2) to visit family or loved ones buried there. This is known as *'ziarah kubo';* 3) to seek intercession of a saint or *kramat* on their behalf; 4) to seek the blessing of ancestors at critical moments or stages in life; 5) to attend annual feasts given in honour of the dead; 6) to clean graves or set tombstones on *Hari Raya Idil Fitri; 7)* to practice magic; and finally 8) to rob graves.

Burial

Muslims are encouraged to attend and assist in funeral service of relatives, friends, and neighbours. We have already discussed these rites and most of the items associated with them, i.e. coffins, tombstones, etc. Two additional items, not yet discussed, will be examined here: the *'usongan'* and the *'kurungan'*. Both items are associated with the *'liang lahad'*, burial and the *'papan sa-keping'* type coffin. The corpse was placed on a *'papan sa-keping'*, or simple plank, which in turn was set on top of a bamboo bier or *'usongan'*. The corpse was then covered and protected by a wicker-work cage or *'kurungan'* made of split bamboo. The *kurungan* in turn was covered by a mat, carpet or cloth. This whole complex was then transported to the cemetery. The mat or carpet was normally donated to the local mosque, the *papan sa-keping* was used to seal the cavity containing the corpse and buried in the grave, and in Patani the *'kurungan'* was placed over the grave, and the *'usongan'* was simply discarded at graveside. Annadale encountered these *'kurungan'* on graves in Patani in the early 1900's: 'an elaborate tent-shaped frame of white cotton threads, stretched over twigs, was carried over the bier and deposited on the grave' (Annadale, 1903:17).

Hurgronje describes a similar, yet slightly different phenomena in Aceh: 'If a child dies unmarried, also sometimes in the death of young married couple, or a woman in childbirth, the custom is to bear the body to the grave in a sort of ark, the frame of which is made of wood or bamboo, entirely surrounded by a cloth covering. This ark, which is usually prepared by women is called a *'jeunadah'*, after burial it is set on top of the grave' (Hurgronje, 1906:1:425).

A single person, newlyweds, and a mother who died in childbirth have not lived complete lives. They have died prematurely with the result that their

souls might become terrifying and harmful spirits. The ark that Hurgronje describes may have some magical purpose, perhaps to prevent these dangerous spirits from leaving the gravesite. The *kurungan* in Patani, however, are not restricted to any particular type grave. Their principle function, informants say, is to protect the corpse during the funeral procession to the graveyard.

Ziarah Kubo

'Whether the visiting of graves is permissible or not in Islam is debatable. It has been subject to varying interpretations in the long history of Islam but on the whole has been sanctioned and is recommended in the four major schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Certainly it is a time honoured custom to visit the tombs of loved ones, to pray for them, distribute alms in their name, and in general to affirm the memory of the deceased in the mind and hearts of the living' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:186).

Patani Malays believe that Muhammad originally forbade people to visit graves, but that he changed his mind and allowed visitations, because by visiting a cemetery, he felt, the living would become aware of their mortality and ultimate fate. What was forbidden by the Prophet, they say, was the worship of idols, commemorative stones or tombs, in a graveyard.

In Patani it is permissible to visit a cemetery at any time, although most people prefer to go on Friday mornings. The practice of visiting graves on Fridays was established by Muhammad: 'The Prophet urged the visiting of the dead in the graveyard, particularly on Fridays, as the dead know and appreciate it' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:51). In Kelantan, and perhaps at one time in Patani too, Thursday evenings, *Hari Raya Haji* and *'Malam Nispu Shaban'* are also considered auspicious times to visit the dead. Visitations at these times are explained by the classical Islamic belief that spirits of the dead sometimes return (when god will it) to their bodies in the grave' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:55).

Upon entering a cemetery in Patani, a visitor will greet all those buried there with the traditional Muslim greeting: *'Asalam muallaikum'* — 'Peace be upon you'. This practice may step from the Islamic belief that the dead are indeed conscious of their surroundings: 'The dead person knows of the visits of the living to him and gives greetings' and 'No man visits the grave of his brother and sits near him but that the deceased is sociable and greets him' (Smith and Haddad, 1981:51). After greeting the dead, the visitor next asks God to forgive the sins of all those buried within the cemetery. All the dead benefit from this short prayer, even those whose graves have not been visited in years. The visitor then proceeds to the grave he wishes to visit. After optionally cleaning or strewing flowers over the grave, he prays *(doa)* to God asking Him to pardon the deceased, release from his torment in the grave, and provide him with happiness: *'Tuhan maaf sama dia.... Minta pada Tuhan supaya orang ini jangan disiksa.... Supaya orang mati dapat selamat'*. After these prayers the visitor departs.

In some parts of Malaysia, such as Kedah, individuals ritually wash themselves after leaving a cemetery. This bathing cleanses the visitor of any bad or unwanted influence he might have picked up in the cemetery and taken

home. This symbolic break with the dead achieved through bathing has its roots in Malaysia's animistic past. 'A common method of separating oneself from the soul is bathing. Bathing in general is a means of getting rid of something unpleasant, something ominous, especially something in connection with the dreaded soul. Among the Olo-Ngaju in Borneo this bathing takes place in a curious way. After the burial the relatives of the dead person sit down in a boat, which is upset in the river, so that they all fall in the water. Among some tribes this rite has been reduced to a partial bathing' (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1935:241). Although found in Malaysia, bathing upon departing a cemetery is not practiced today in Patani.

Nazar

Individuals also visit the graves of saints or *kramats* to seek their intercession or blessing and to fulfill vows *(nazar)* made to them once requests have been granted.

A petitioner in Patani, for example, may visit a saint and seek his assistance in recovering stolen goods. He will promise *(nazar)* to hold a *kenduri* at the saint's grave if the lost articles are found. If the goods are eventually recovered, the petitioner will attribute this good fortune to the saint's assistance and soon return to the shrine to hold a small *kenduri* fulfilling his vow. All manner of requests are addressed to saints in Patani. A saint or *kramat* may be asked to cure a sick waterbuffalo, grant a barren couple a child, guarantee success in some business venture, or even help extract an individual's car from police impoundment.

Vows also vary. Petitioners, for example, may vow to bath at the saint's well, hold a *kenduri* in his honour, repair his tomb or simply burn incense at his shrine. It is customary at Tok Panjang's shrine, for example, for a petitioner to vow to release a goat provided his wish is fulfilled. These animals are sold by the local *imam* and the profits go to the unkeep of the village mosque. The freeing of animals is most probably derived from Buddhist 'merit-making' traditions. In Thailand, for example, birds and fish are also released at Buddhist temples.

The following description of a visit to a saint's tomb in Aceh also applies to Patani except that processions to a saint's grave are not accompanied by an orchestra:

> 'Some flowers and incense, a little cotton stuff for covering the tombstones, some yellow glutinous rice and then an animal for sacrifice are brought to the tomb, whence a few withered flowers or a fragment of old cloth from the tombstone are taken away for charms. Processions to the tomb are generally accompanied by an orchestra, though this is really most unbefitting a religious ceremony. According to the popular notion the saint only enjoys the immaterial essence of the flowers and food offered him. The teaching of Islam on the other hand rejects this theory and will only admit the view that the distribution of food to the living is a pious work, the recompense of which is communicated to the saint. According to both, however, it is essential that the food be partaken of by living people, and preferably those who have some repute for piety, such as Teungkus and Leubes. Thus when an offering of food is made, one or two Teungkus are generally of the company, unless the tomb is furnished with regular attendants such as a watchman' (Hurgronje, 1906:2:294).

The flowers and incense in these rites function basically as 'communicators'. 'Their main purpose is to make contact with or attract spirits' (Endicott, 1970:142). Other traditional Malay communicators were drums (hence orchestral processions) and candles. 'The smoke and the smell of incense, the fragrance of flowers, the light of candles, and the sound of drums, all have the ability to penetrate across space to wherever spirits may be' (Endicott, 1970:142).

Rites of Passage

Graves are traditionally visited at stages in the life cycle. In Aceh, for example, a young boy will visit the graves of his ancestors before his circumcision. A bride there will also visit the tombs of her parents and grandparents on the eve of her marriage (Hurgronje, 1906:1:432). Traces of this practice still survive in Patani, where newly-weds often visit the graves of their parents either before or after their wedding.

Magic

Sometimes individuals go to a cemetery to practice black magic. In Java, the fingers of babies who had died in childbirth are particularly prized by thieves, so their graves must initially be guarded. The bones of murdered man are highly sought after in South Sulawesi. Evidence from Kelantan suggests that the black arts may once have been practiced in cemeteries in Patani as well. An 18th century Kelantanese prescription for obtaining a shaman's power, for example, advises a 'would-be shaman and his companion to sit one on the head and one on the foot of the grave of a murdered man. They must burn incense and make believe to use paddles shaped from the midrib of a yellow coconut palm, calling the while on the murdered man to grant magical powers. The landscape will come to look like a sea and an aged man (probably Lukman al-Hakim, the father of Arabian Magic) will appear and duly grant the request' (Winstedt, 1951:125).

Robbery

Finally, and all too frequently and unfortunately, some people in Patani rob graves and in so doing destroy them. The same story is heard from village to village. Someone has a dream that treasure is buried in a certain abandoned cemetery. The dead there usually have no known living descendants. Using a local medicine man or *'bomo'* to placate any hostile spirits or ghosts, the grave is opened and destroyed. All these stories have the same ending: nothing was found. The frequency of the occurence, however, makes one wonder if indeed nothing is ever discovered.

SUMMARY

In concluding this book I would like to return to the religious and cultural traditions which played a major role in shaping cemeteries in Patani.

It is surprising just how thoroughly 'Islamic' Muslim cemeteries in Patani are. Most everything found in graveyards in Patani can be traced to some Islamic concept borrowed from the Middle East or India. The north-south alignment of graves, double tombstones with optional recumbent element, the linear arrangement of graves with the western most occupying the position of honour, the glorification of princely and saintly tombs, even the planting of *kemboja* trees, all were derived from Islamic concepts.

Islamic cemeteries throughout Southeast Asia were all based on these same Islamic principles, and this commonality of concepts helps to explain in part the similarities found in Islamic cemeteries throughout Southeast Asia.

Indigenous, pre-Islamic elements, however, survived and influenced the form cemeteries took. Islamic concepts were often realized or expressed in indigenous forms. Since many of the societies in Southeast Asia with which Islam came into contact, had been highly Indianized, these forms were basically derived from Hinduism and Buddhism. The pagoda roof symbolizing Meru initially substituted for the dome. Sungei Batu, previously used as *linggas* in Siva worship, and *Bai Sema* type commemorative and boundary markers were employed as tombstones. *'Kijing'* in Java resembled *chandis*. Cemeteries were even laid out in a manner resembling the floorplan of Hindu temples in Java and Bali. The most important graves were located at the northern most end of a graveyard and sometimes elevated above others. Indian cosmic symbols of death and rebirth appeared on tombstones. And the *kemboja* tree, traditionally associated with death and Buddhist compounds in Thailand was, for example, incorporated into Islamic cemeteries as symbols of the Garden of Eden.

In societies where Indian influence was less, traditional 'animistic' forms were used to convey Islamic concepts. In South Sulawesi, for example, traditional symbols of death and rebirth — human images with enlarged sexual organs and copulating couples — appeared on the tombs of the early Islamic kings of Jeneponto. And in the Philippines, the recumbent element of tombs took the form of a boat. These indigenous forms, whether Indian or traditional, explain in part the great variety and diversity of tombstones and structures found in Islamic cemeteries in Southeast Asia.

Cultural traditions also shaped cemeteries. Traditional societies in Southeast Asia were hierarchical. Relative status was defined, in part, by place, so that a king and his nobility literally lived on a higher plane and resided within a walled citadel as opposed to the general populace living

outside the walls. These ideas found expression in cemeteries. Royal graves were elevated on platforms and kings were buried within walled compounds.

Religious and cultural traditions continue to shape cemeteries today, in ways that often seem contradictory. Developments in modern Islam, on one hand, are seemingly leading to simpler graveyards in Patani. Strict adherence to the prohibition against erecting structures over graves and a strong belief in the equality of all men in death among modernists in Patani has produced in some instances graveyards devoid of monumental tombstones and structures of any kind, with graves marked by natural stones or *jarak* trees. On the other hand, certain prerogatives of the aristocracy have over the last fifty years been appropriated by the common man. The result of this democratization process is that more and more graves are being adorned with monumental tombstones and (cement) *kacapuri,* items that were once restricted to the upper classes.

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