Mata Golo Cultural Rite  
(An Ethnographic Study on Lolo Tribe Customary Community in Ratogesa Village of Golewa Tengah Sub District of Ngada Flores Regency of Nusa Tenggara Timur)  

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Abstract  
Lolo tribe community knows two types of dead: Mata Ade and Mata Golo. Mata Ade is the dead due to medical disease while Mata Golo is the one due to accident, suicide/murdering. The objective of research was to explain the procedure and the meaning of mata golo cultural rite in Lolo Tribe Customary Community in Ratogesa Village of Golewa Tengah Sub District of Ngada Flores Regency of Nusa Tenggara Timur. The result of research showed that Lolo tribe conducted mata golo rite as the form of purification to be secured from unluckiness, evil, polo (devil), and other evil spirits’ effect.  

Keywords: Lolo Tribe Community, Mata Golo cultural rite, Self-Purification  

INTRODUCTION  
The problem of death is an integral part of human beings, because every human being cannot live forever. Human age is limited by God. The perception on death has been suggested by scholars. Clifford Geertz defines death by categorizing the meaning of death into three versions. Firstly, Islam version concerns the concept of everlasting recompense. Secondly, a perfect concept indicates that individual’s personality disappears after he/she has passed away and nothing is left but dust. Thirdly, the perspective on reincarnation, when someone dies, his soul will get into an embryo in the being-reborn attempt (Yusuf, 2009: 120).  

An individual’s death can be experienced in many ways. Wisnu Murti suggested that human death is due to four factors:  
a. The used up age  
b. The used up age because of the birth-inducing deed and supporting deed  
c. The used up age and as the consequence of deed (action)  
d. Disconnected by accident, disaster or misfortune (Wisnumurti, 2012: 32).  

Lolo Tribe/Clan is one of hundreds tribes living in Ngada Regency, Flores Island, in the center of Nusa Tenggara Timur Province. Lolo Tribe is one of tribes in Ngada with different social-cultural background. Some customs, habit, and languages are very different but some other are similar. In Ngada ethnic communities, particularly Lolo Tribe, a number of traditional rites are still alive related to human life cycle from birth to death. Those rites include birth, death, new land opening, marriage, harvesting, customary house building rites, and so on.  

Death rite is the special theme addressed in this article. Lolo Tribe views death as ‘Dewa da Enga or Nitu da Ni’. Dewa is the power above the good (Dewa Zeta) who gives life and death. Nitu is the power under the evil (Nitu zale) that can pull out the human soul compulsively. For that reasons, there are two types of death among Lolo tribe community. Firstly Mata Ade is the death due to medical disease. Secondly, Mata Golo is the unreasonable death due to accident, suicide or murdering. This community believes that custom is ancestor’s heritage that cannot be ignored. Custom is the regulation used to govern the relationship between human beings and the Supreme Being (God) or between one human being and another and between human being and his/her environment.  

METHOD  
This study was a descriptive qualitative research. This research was taken place ethnographically in Ngada, Nusa Tenggara Timur for six months in 2015. This research focused on revealing the meaning and the objective of mata golo cultural rite implementation.  

DISCUSSION  
Mata golo Ritual Process  
Lolo tribe community has a distinctive way of holding death rite due to accident, suicide and murder. In the case of an individual passing away due to accident, suicide and murder, the first step taken as the form of
implementing the rule is that the corpse is not allowed to be brought into home or sa'o (customary house). For example, when an individual dies because he/she fell down the tree (roba kaju): The corpse would be raised from the happening place with the clothes still put on his/her body and having arrived at the house yard, the corpse would be put on the wooden or bamboo couch prepared in the house. This corpse is not allowed to be brought into house because it is mali golo (unreasonable death). In addition, the local community believes it as the rule that should be done to prevent the similar accident from being transmitted to other members of family or the descent of house/customary house.

Figure 1. Victim of vehicle accident
: the wooden or bamboo couch on which the mali golo corpse is put
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015.

The procedure of rite in Mata Golo culture is as follows:

a. Keku (scream)

Keku is the questions in the form of screams. Keku starts from the funeral home, along the road, to the grave and it is conducted during tibo process. Keku is only done by mali or the trusty. For example: Kaju e…..kau da bodu puu zeta tolo nio da pu'u apa, da mode da lima ghese gh o ot polo dhedo gh o (The name of victim is Kaju … you have fell down the coconut tree, what is the cause, is this due to your less strong hold or due to satan’s action).

Figure 2. The victim’s uncle and sister get out of home as the sign that the keku event will begin immediately.
Source: The ritual leader does keku (screams)

The mata galo funeral is different from mata ade one. The members of tribe dying in golo manner will be buried in the funeral separated from those dying normally. Mata galo funeral is usually conducted behind the settlement or in the edge of ravine.

Figure 3. Mata golo funeral process, mata golo grave, mata ade grave.
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015.

b. Pa’i Tibo

Tibo is the event conducted to look for the cause of the victim’s death. The objective of this event is to find out the cause of the victim’s death.

Supporting tools in Tibo rite are:
1) Corn seed (the corn is not taken haphazardly but it is elicited from the road or the one fell down on the road far away from crowd). The corn is put on wait and mixed with one type of plant, the size of which is similar to the corn’s size, helping the corn preserving process.
2) When bamboo is used, the young bamboo or fur is needed.

Figure 4. Corn seed serves as the means of looking for tibo and the means of calculating.
3) **Ma‘e pesu** (don’t expel flatus)

c. **Ja‘i Laba Polo** (Satan Dance)

   *Ja‘i laba polo* is intended that satan has won because he has taken the victim’s soul and the family accompanies the satan’s winning. *Ja‘i laba polo* particularly accompanies the victim’s body symbolized using banana stem to be returned to the last resting place. This dance is also done when the corpse is delivered to the last resting place.

   ![Figure 5. *Ja‘i laba polo* toward the funeral](image)

   Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

   

d. **Soka Golo**

   *Soka golo* is the rite to confirm the satan’s winning that has successfully taken the victim’s soul. This rite is performed with a dance called *saka golo*. This rite aims to return the *tobo* and to relieve the victim, in addition to legitimizing the satan’s winning.

   ![Figure 6. *Soka golo* event in funeral place](image)

   Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

   

e. **Peaceful Rite**

   Ideally, there should be a solution to every problem, accompanied with the reconciliation. It also occurs in *mata golo* event. *Malis* often reconcile symbolically with the one colliding and victim’s family. The reconciliation is intended to prevent hostility from occurring between the one colliding and the victim’s family.

   In reconciliation rite, there are some requirements to be met. Here are materials and tools that should be prepared in reconciliation rite:

   1) 6 pieces of *Wako* (a like-coarse grass forest plant) (as the spear)
   2) Not-castrated piglet
   3) Small bamboo in 2 or 3 m size (separating the victim’s family and the one colliding)
   4) *Kuali* (wide-mouthed clay pot)
   5) Three stones (hearth) and fuel wood
   6) *He‘a tua* (cleaned coconut shell serving as drinking container)
   7) Arrack or white *moke* (*tuak* /water from sugar palm tree)

   ![Figure 7. *Poke Wako* (*wako war/throw*), hand shaking/reconciliation, slaughtering piglet, *geu he‘a tua* (exchanging the glass of *tuak* from coconut shell), eating together without rice in reconciliation rite.](image)

   Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

f. **Buffalo slaughtering Event**

   Culturally, buffalo is the highest-valued sacrificed animal in the tribute to ancestors and God. Buffalo is
dedicated as the manifestation of expectation for the security in the family left. The buffalo is an absolute condition for the tribute that cannot be replaced with other animals.

Figure 8. Event procession inside house before buffalo slaughtering, buffalo slaughtering in mata golo event, the activity of cutting the meat to be cooked.
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

g. Eating together
Mata golo is considered by local people as the victim’s bad luck and will be experienced by family as well. For that reason, the family should recover itself by holding mata golo cultural rite with buffalo sacrifice. The local community will be convinced by the families who invite them to eat together. In this way, the family will be reaccepted as the members of society without defect.

Figure 9. Eating buffalo meat together
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

h. Se De Ze,e (Dispose every bad thing)
Se De Ze,e is the purification rite. The residual food collected for three successive days and entire residual food material or supporting tools such as heath, wood, kitchen dust, rice, cooked rice, meat, bone, wooden or bamboo couch on which the corpse is put, etc are disposed to the place specified by mali. The disposal of event residues is called cleaning (purification). Through this disposal, it is believed that, the family has been freed from the victim’s bad luck bond or other bad effect related to the victim’s death.

Figure 10. Preparation and the process of disposing entire residual food and tools used in mata golo rite (the disposal location is in the steep ravine with about 100m-depth, in Rodha, Golewa Selatan Sub District, Ngada Regency)
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

Figure 11: Monument of mata golo symbol
Source: Research Documentation, December 2015

CONCLUSION
Lolo tribe community holds on tightly their ancestor’s heritage culture. Mata golo cultural rite is a customary ritual process that had been implemented since the old generation. Mata golo rite is held when there is accidental (golo) death event. The objective of Mata golo cultural rite implementation is to clean the members of tribe from any evil caused by the evil power or Nitue Zale.

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