

## Theological Interpretation of the *Ke'o rado* Ritual for the Cultivation of the Christian Faith Among the Ngadhanese, Flores, Eastern Indonesia

Paskalis Lina<sup>1</sup>, Fransiskus Dose<sup>2</sup>, Petrus Cristologus Dhogo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi Widya Sasana, Malang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Hochschule für Philosophie, München, Germany

<sup>1,3</sup>Institut Filsafat dan Teknologi Kreatif, Ledalero, Indonesia

### Abstract

The *ke'o rado* ritual is a rite of reconciliation and purification for those who have had a tragic death (*mata golo*) in the Ngadhanese, Flores, Eastern Indonesia. The primary purpose of this article is to interpret the meaning of the *ke'o rado* ritual and its theological implications. This paper is a qualitative descriptive study and participatory observation using a literature review and key informant interviews. The study found no official confirmation from the Catholic Church authorities in Ngada that *ke'o rado* contradicts Christian doctrine. However, some Ngada people consider that the ritual is contrary to the teachings of the Christian faith regarding salvation in Christ and thus should be abandoned. In contrast, this paper concludes that the *ke'o rado* ritual must be observed since it has theological significance and can be brought into dialogue with the teachings of the Christian faith.

**Keywords:** *ke'o rado* ritual, *mata golo*, Ngada people, purification, Christian faith

## Introduction

The Ngada community is an ethnic group adhering to Ngada culture in Ngada Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. It appears that the majority of followers of the Ngada culture identify as Catholic adherents in the Ngada Regency based on statistical data. Together with the So'a and Riung ethnicities, they represent 178,332 or 90,70% of 192,154 (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Ngada, 2020). Thus, Catholicism is the religion embraced by the majority of the population of the regency. Ngada is part of the ecclesiastical territory of the Archdiocese of Ende. Catholicism has been in the Ngada area since 1915 and has been the religion of the Ngada people (Camnahas & Madung, 2013).

Although the people of Ngada Regency are Catholic, they continue to practice their ancestral cultural heritage (traditional religion) as well as practicing Christianity. One practice that is still performed is the *ke'o rado* ritual. This is a special ceremony held when a family member dies unnaturally or tragic death (*mata golo*) which is different from natural death or *mata ade*. For the Ngada, tragic deaths are deaths caused by unexpected and traumatic events, such as being hit by a car, being killed, drowning, falling from a tree, working accidents, falling on a tree, etc. In short, all bloody deaths are caused by some kind of person or by something. The Ngada believe that the soul of the deceased and the members of their family will not experience peace and reconciliation until this *ke'o rado* ritual is performed. They are constantly filled with fear and anxiety and feel unsafe. Therefore, the *ke'o rado* is the only way to restore peace and reconciliation by ushering the deceased to their final resting place and thus bringing healing and protecting all the members of the family (tribe) from similar tragedies of death in the future. As such, after the tragic death of a family member, this ritual must be performed as soon as possible.

In terms of time, the *ke'o rado* ritual lasts for three days. All the stages are very important and must not be skipped. Each stage is always accompanied by an invocation (*keku*) to determine the cause of the unnatural death and the ancestors' wish for a solution. Throughout the ritual, certain symbols and signs must be closely observed since they indicate the appropriate process and that the desired solution has been found. This ritual is generally associated with reconciliation with the ancestors (*ebu nusi*), who have been neglected by tribal members due to their disloyalty to traditional norms, as well as with the challenge of evil spirits (*polo*), believed to be responsible for the unnatural death of the deceased.

The Catholic Church itself has never formally banned the practice of the *ke'o rado* ritual. This can be seen as an indication of the Church's appreciation of the heritage and richness of local religions and cultures, as taught in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 1965, art. 34; *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, art. 58; *Jebadu et al.*, 2021; *Nostra Aetate*, 1965, art. 2; *J. Paul II*, 1990, art. 5; *Paul VI*, 1975, art. 20). The relationship between the message of salvation and human culture is evident in all these teachings. The universal Catholic Church always invites her children to listen to the Word of God (the Gospel) in the context and realities of the local culture. This point of view is in line with the thought of Sigurd Bergmann. For him, the main point of contextual theology is to be open to God's self-revelation in the different places where people find themselves. God continually reveals himself in different contexts (Bergmann, 2003). Of course, Ngada culture can also be a context for theology. The church must constantly learn from her bride, Jesus Christ, who loves and embraces all people until they reach salvation, which is complete union with God. This point was already mentioned in the Second Vatican Council in 1964: "The Church does not wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not concern the faith or the good of the whole community; rather, she respects and encourages the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Whatever in the way of life of these peoples is not inseparable from superstition and error, it studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact" (SC,

art. 37). This is also repeated by Pope Francis (2013) in his teaching, for example in *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 20. The Church must go out and abandon any notion that local cultural practices and traditions are contrary to the teachings of the Christian faith (EG, 20). The Church must recognize that artificial traditions and cultures are not necessarily evil.

Tradition and culture often have noble values that are worthy of preservation, and such values can be seen in the practice of the *ke'o rado* ritual of the Ngada people, which is still being practiced today. To keep the Christian faith alive, Church authorities, on the one hand, must continue to emphasize the importance of being critical of cultural values and practices that are contrary to it. On the other hand, they must also engage in inculturating practices that cultivate an appreciation of the faith. To do so, they must be familiar with the local cultural tradition. Unfortunately, while the existence of this *ke'o rado* ritual in the process and procedure of praying for the salvation of the souls of the deceased and all the family members left behind has not been legally recognized by the Church authorities, the majority of the Catholic priests who work in the Ngada area are not at all familiar with the *ke'o rado* ritual and its theological significance. This is partly due to the lack of research and studies as well as the lack of theological publications on this ritual. The only field research that has been carried out on this ritual was that of Susanne Schröter, a German anthropologist, from 1994 to 1998 (Schröter, 1998). As a result, the ritual of the *ke'o rado* has not been integrated as part of the worship service. It takes place at a separate time from the celebration of the Eucharist. Although these two rituals appear to be distinctively different, they both aim to bring salvation and peace to the deceased and their survivors.

A proper understanding of the existence of the *ke'o rado* ritual and its relationship to the issue of tragic death (*mata golo*) is imperative so that the *ke'o rado* ritual may not be ignored or even abolished, with the result that only the Eucharist will be celebrated for the deceased. The authors feel it is necessary and urgent to emphasize this last point, especially in the light that among the younger generation of Ngada, there is also a tendency to eliminate the cultural heritage, namely this *ke'o rado* ritual. They believe that celebrating the Eucharist has become the most appropriate ceremony for the deceased and the bereaved. The authors intend to encourage the preservation of the *ke'o rado* ritual and to give a theological explanation for this reason.

By addressing these problems, the authors hope to accomplish the objective of this paper. Here we are doing a theological explanation and critical analysis of the *ke'o rado* ritual in the Ngada Flores community. *Ke'o rado* is a ritual of breaking the curse or a ritual of removing all evil, which causes misfortune and even death. This ritual is carried out so that the soul of the deceased is truly clean and experiences peace in eternity, and that all family members left behind experience peace or are free from fear and worry about curses. At first glance, the principle or purpose of this ritual is almost the same as Catholic teaching about death. The Catholic Church believes that death is the result of crimes (sins) committed by humans. Sin must be blotted out so that one can enter eternal life with pure chastity. The remission of sins was done perfectly by Jesus Christ Himself with His death on the cross. This action occurs specifically in the reception of the sacrament of repentance (reconciliation) and forgiveness which is the moment of breaking the curse of sin on human life. On this basis, the research question is whether the *ke'o rado* ritual can be integrated into the traditions and beliefs of the Church, as a contribution from the cultural treasures of Ngada? The practice of restoration and reconciliation in culture can be a means to better understand the practice of reconciliation and purification in the Christian faith tradition.

## Method

The research method used for this paper is a qualitative descriptive study and participatory observation. In essence, although the literary sources of this paper are mainly drawn from reviews of field research and publications by foreign and local scholars, the authors also draw some implications from their participation in and observation of the *ke'o rado* ritual itself in 2015 and 2019. At these times, the authors conducted interviews with several traditional leaders who led the *ke'o rado*, and subsequently discussed with them the meaning behind the rites. Data were also collected by interviewing family members who were grieving following the unnatural death (*mata golo*) of one of their family members, as well as community leaders and pastoralists. The research sites are concentrated in two (2) parish areas, namely Mataloko Holy Spirit Parish and Were Holy Family Parish, Archdiocese of Ende. This in-depth interview was conducted to find out their responses to the *ke'o rado* ritual. All interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed according to the questions asked. The researchers use a contextual theological approach, especially the anthropological model. According to Bevans, the anthropological model is centered on the values and goodness of anthropos, the human person (Bevans, 2002). Therefore this model will be used to compare and interpret all the experience, literature review, and interview data. This comparison is included in this article.

## Results and Discussion

### *Some concepts of tragic death in various cultures and according to the Ngadhanese: a comparison*

Many cultures distinguish between natural, prepared death and tragic death. Generally, natural deaths are perceived as normal, but tragic deaths are always a source of fear and anxiety and raise many questions that require urgent and immediate responses, especially by the bereaved family. Ekore and Lanre Abass, who conducted research on death from the perspective of psychology in the African culture, have stated, citing the opinions of Dancy and Davis, that when a death occurs, there are always different experiences and effects for the bereaved family. The extent of the impact depends on the nature of the death itself, whether the death was sudden and tragic (unexpected death), or whether the death was natural (expected death) (Ekore & Lanre-Abass, 2016). There is always a great deal of psychological stress and anxiety for the family following a sudden and tragic death. For this reason, a solution has to be found to restore harmony through special ceremonies or rituals.

Victor de Waal explained that death rituals are about our need to manage those moments, those stages of our lives that are perceived as perilous, when we're about to cross that threshold from our familiar state into something completely different and as yet unknown (Papan-Matin, 2010). Furthermore, Sjaak van der Geest, who studied good and bad death among the Kwahu-Tafo community, a rural town of south Ghana, found that for the local community, a good death was a peaceful death. Peace means that the dying person has finished all business and made peace with others before dying and is at peace with his or her death. It also refers to the manner of death: not by violence, accident, or terrible disease, not by dirty means, and without much pain. The funeral ceremonies for both types of death are different (van der Geest, 2004).

On Flores, other cultures besides the Ngadhanese also perform special rituals for those who die tragically. This all stems from the same belief that the souls of those who die tragically are the result of ancestral curses or extended family's mistakes and sins. All these mistakes need to be searched for and found so that a ceremony can be held immediately to restore, cleanse or reconcile. The aim is that the soul of the deceased can rest in peace and that similar events will not happen to other family members

in the future. This is where the role of the living family members and the performance of rituals as suggested by Pamidi Hagjer becomes very important, especially for the release of the souls of the deceased so that they can experience eternal peace. He wrote: "When a person dies, the living have a responsibility to ensure that the *beseh* is transported to the *damra* (afterlife) as smoothly and efficiently as possible; all the subsequent rituals serve the same purpose, and although many people play different roles, they are all united by this end goal" (Hagjer, 2022). Hagjers' concept confirms why the *ke'o rado* ritual is performed by the Ngada people. *Ke'o rado* is made up etymologically of two terms, namely *ke'o* and *rado*. *Ke'o* means to cut. The equivalent of the word *ke'o*, which has a similar meaning, is *ki'u* or *po'i*. However, the word *ke'o* is more commonly used in connection with the ritual of atonement for tragic deaths (*mata golo*). *Ke'o* in this context means to cut the line of *mata golo* so that it doesn't infect other family members. The word *rado* means to throw. Concerning the *mata golo*, the word *rado* refers to the act of getting rid of all that is evil that has caused the unnatural death of a member of the family (Schröter, 1998).

Rituals similar to *ke'o rado* can also be found in other cultures around the world, particularly when it comes to dealing with tragic deaths. Robert Hertz, a French anthropologist who researched several places in Sarawak, found several specific rituals related to the deceased's soul. According to him, all of them stem from a belief in the relationship between the dead and the living family, the transition of the spirit, which gives life to the body to the afterlife, and the relationship between this living spirit or soul and the living (Hertz, 1960). The purpose of the ritual is to maintain the relationship between the deceased and the rest of their family. Therefore, the spirits may rest in peace.

A study by Enjeung Ko and others on the concept of death among elderly Mexican Americans found that death rituals were performed because of a belief in a spiritual world beyond the human world that controls human life and a belief that death was a necessary part of life that served to lead a person to a new life. Cultural values and traditions also support the concept of unnatural death (Ko et al., 2013). In contrast, traditional Hawaiian society believes everyone has full *mana* (divine power). This divine power is stored in the bones at the time of death. The *iwi* must be buried in the ground for the *mana* or divine power to be released. For this reason, classical Hawaiian society disposes of the dead in several ways (Pentaris, 2013). There is a similar belief in the Ngada community. People who die tragically must go through the *ke'o rado* ritual. Unlike people who die naturally, they must be buried uniquely and in a particular place. They need to go through several steps to get things right. According to Jebadu and others, Indonesian society believes that the souls of the recently dead are not separated from the living world. The soul is still attached to the family and requires their prayers. This means the soul needs purification to enter a new life (Jebadu et al., 2021).

Susanne Schröter, who conducted field research during 1994-1998 in Ngada on death rituals, found that the ritual of *ke'o rado* was devoted to someone who passed away tragically (*mata golo*). *Mata golo* results from adverse influences or curses that will continue to occur and take victims if the *ke'o rado* ritual has not been carried out (Schröter, 1998). In the belief of the Ngada people, the corpse of someone who died tragically is not allowed to enter the residence. According to Schröter's research, the corpse was still filled with evil spirits (*polo*) and had not been purified. The dead person cannot be buried alongside people who died naturally for the same reason. They must be buried in a particular cemetery. Still, in Schröter's record, the *ke'o rado* ritual is separate from the liturgy and Christian worship. It is still seen as a ritual that is not at all Christian. Therefore, Schröter concludes that the Christian faith does not fulfill two key elements that must exist in every religion, namely spiritual security for the souls of the dead and the battle against evil forces (Schröter, 1998).

The concept of dark forces or evil spirits (*polo*), according to the Ngada people, was studied by a German anthropologist, Paul Arndt (1886-1962). According to Arndt, there are various names for spirits according to the Ngada people. Good spirits are usually called ngébu. He is the village's guardian spirit, looking after the animals and fields. Then there is Nitu, also known as the earth or water spirit. Nitu could be a spirit that disturbs humans. At the same time, the evil spirit is known by several names, namely *ibu ngiu* (a creature that is hostile to humans), *noa* (a spirit with tiny body size), *ula* (an evil spirit that has no place to live and wanders to trouble humans) and *wéra-polo* (spirit of evil that can take on the form of animals to harass, occupy or kill humans) (Arndt, 2007). However, the most common depiction of evil spirits in connection with tragic deaths (*mata golo*) and the ritual of *ke'o rado* is *wéra polo*, or *polo* for short which can also be referred to as *suanggi*. According to Susanne Schröter (1998), this polo can be seen both as a human and an evil spirit. This evil spirit (*polo*) causes tragic deaths and creates fear for the family members left behind (Arndt, 2009). However, Alexander Jebadu's research also found that even though the spirits were evil, they still could not face the power of the God-Duumvirate, which in Ngada culture is known as *Dewa Zeta-Ga'e Zale*. It's just that God, who is known by that name, does not provide direct help to humans who are in danger and are in danger of death. As a result, he required the assistance of many other intercessors (Jebadu, 2019).

This depiction of God and the forces of evil further emphasizes the urgency of the *ke'o rado* ritual as a moment to ask for God's intervention. This is for the survival of families and tribes as well as the salvation of the souls of those who have died. Without the ritual of *ke'o rado*, the family would always be in constant fear and anxiety. The tragic death of a family member would perpetuate the curse on the whole family. In line with Schröter's research, Emanuel Suka emphasizes the importance of cleansing and reconciliation ceremonies in the ceremonial process for those who died tragically (*mata golo*). Although he does not mention the *ke'o rado* ritual, Suka sees that a peace or reconciliation ceremony must begin with the search for the cause of death and be accompanied by symbolic reconciliation. After reconciliation, all family members and all community groups present hold a communal meal to express gratitude. During and after the banquet, all food and any items left over from the banquet must be thrown away. Known as *se da ze'e* (dispose of everything unfavorable), the act is also symbolic of the belief that the evil things that cause the death of a family member have been removed from future generations (Suka, 2016).

From the review of sources above, it is clear that despite some minor differences, related comparative research and studies demonstrate how vital the *ke'o rado* ritual is for the souls of those who have tragically perished, as well as for the survival of family and tribal members. Although the *ke'o rado* ritual is often viewed as merely a component of the family's purging and healing process and is still restricted to a customary cultural practice distinct from Christian ideas, upon a close look and when examined in further detail, the *ke'o rado* ritual can be seen as more than just a ritual of purification or reconciliation. Despite its often perceived terrifying aspect, the *ke'o rado* ceremony has a profound theological significance. For the Ngada, the meaning of *mata golo* develops into a cultural treasure that aids in their comprehension of the safety of their sadly deceased family members (*mata golo*) and the connection between that and their surviving relatives. The research presented in this paper aims to fill in the blanks about the significance of this *ke'o rado* ritual.

### ***The phases of the ke'o rado ritual and its meaning***

According to research and informant interviews, the *ke'o rado* ceremony is typically performed right after the burial of the dead. Funeral rituals are typically held at a traditional house of the deceased

or a funeral home. Still wearing the same outfit from the tragic death, the deceased is placed in a wooden or bamboo casket. The door to the house must be shut, and the *mali* (leader), who will preside over the ceremony, will start the entire series of funeral ceremonies and *ke'o rado* rituals as follows:

First Phase: *Keku* (screaming)

*Keku*, which means 'exclamation or cry,' is a series of questions addressed to the deceased by the ceremonial leader. This call is made from the traditional residence or funeral home, through the journey to the burial site and the performance of the *tibo* (divination). The ultimate goal of this call is to determine the tragic cause of death quickly. Whether the death was the result of negligence on the part of the deceased, or something else, like violence or evil spirits (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022). The following *keku* formula is for a person who has died as a result of drowning.

<i>Kabu eee...</i>	(the name of the victim)
<i>Kau de mara molu</i>	You're drowning
<i>Da pu'u apa</i>	What reason
<i>Da lobo apa</i>	Why what
<i>Kau da nangu talo gho</i>	Because you can't swim
<i>Da polo duki gho</i>	Or because of being suppressed by the devil

Second phase: *Pa'i tibo* and *zi'a ura manu – ngana*

It is customary for the leader (*mali*) to conduct the *pa'i tibo* and *zi'a ura manu-ngana* ceremonies on the evening after the funeral. This is done to confirm the wish expressed in the *keku* to find out what happened there that led to the tragic death. As part of this activity predictions are made. Two popular types of divination are *zi'a ura manu* or *zi'a ura ngana* and *pa'i tibo*. In *pa'i tibo*, pieces of young bamboo (*tibo*) are placed in the fireplace and burned just long enough for them to split. This can then be interpreted as either a confirmation or a denial of the questions that were previously asked. Usually, *zi'a ura manu* and *zi'a ura ngana* rituals require someone skilled enough to examine the veins of ritually slaughtered chickens or pigs. If the second prediction is found to be incorrect, *pa'i tibo* is given priority.

The bamboo is a symbol of the body of the ancestors. Getting in touch with them is the first step in the process of divination itself. They need to agree on the ritual of the expected restoration of *ke'o rado*, as well as on each of the individuals who were previously designated to preside. *Zi'a ura manu/ngana* and *pa'i tibo* are used as a means of communication between the dead and the living until the *ke'o rado* ritual is complete. The main focus of this first stage is the identification of the main cause of *mata golo*. A common question used to conclude an identification is "*polo punu kau go lobo apa*" (*Polo* - evil spirit, tell me what causes it). This question comes after a series of previous questions to the ancestors. Everyone in the tribe, including the ritualist, waited with great anticipation to hear the ancestors' answer. In contrast to the request made to *Polo* - the demon / evil spirit - this expectation is different (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022; Schröter, 1998). The questions will be listed in the following order of priority:

<i>Kami dia we tana</i>	Now we ask
<i>Miu ma'e da dela</i>	You are the ancestors
<i>Punu mumu</i>	Say it with your mouth
<i>Poza lema</i>	Say it with your tongue
<i>Wi punu da kedhi banga</i>	Tell the kids
<i>Ano zuwu</i>	Who keeps looking
<i>Ano kede ano denge</i>	Those who remain loyal to listen

In addition to the greetings addressed to the ancestors, the following questions were also asked of the evil spirits (*polo*):

*Polo punu kau go lobo apa*      *Polo*, tell me what caused it.

As is evident from the expression above, the Ngada people still have a strong belief in the active involvement of their departed ancestors in the daily function of their lives. This is particularly true when they encounter a liminal experience, such as *mata golo*. Why does *mata golo* take place? Only the ancestors know the reason. After all, it was these ancestors who always took care of the family, and they are now permitted to question the living family members about *polo*, the activity allegedly responsible for the *mata golo* (Schröter, 1998).

During this phase, either individually or collectively, the ritual's leader is in charge of exposing the shortcomings of the tribe members. The error-finding process is typically presented to ancestors as rhetorical questions that they can either accept or reject. Mistakes are frequently connected to transgressions of established customary norms, such as the steps involved in constructing a traditional home, or transgressions of the law of marriage, such as incestuous marriages. All tribe members are required to swear in ritual language to repent and adhere to the true law if the wrong is known, a custom that their ancestors left behind. A banquet together marks the end of the first stage.

Third phase: *ema tana ine*

This position can be seen as a gesture of welcome for everyone in attendance. This ceremony was held the next day after it was determined why a person had to go through *mata golo*. In the past, the *ke'o rado* ritual (*sega ringa*) was initiated by everyone in attendance donning traditional attire. A ritual known as *ema tana ine* (father asks mother) is also performed to greet all the married couples within the tribe. A solution must be found as soon as all living and deceased family members who still have connections to the deceased come together. This is done so that the deceased person's soul can take part. A "*tobo muku*," or banana stem was also fashioned into a representation of the deceased and hung from a bamboo stick outside the traditional home (*sa'o ngaza*). Then, with singing and several traditional calls (*keku*), they all pleaded for the ancestors' presence (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022; Schröter, 1998). The calls were as follows:

<i>Ine...ine</i>	Mother...Mother
<i>Miu ulu nga tutu toro</i>	Your head is bound with red cloth
<i>Ine miu da gesso apa?</i>	Mother, what is the reason for this?
<i>Ine...ine</i>	Mother...Mother
<i>Go bhara da ike beke</i>	white chains on the chest
<i>Da moe de, da moe de</i>	why, why
<i>Ine...ine miu punu si</i>	Mother...Mother, reveal, please
<i>Miu po si</i>	Speak, please
<i>Kami wenga to'o</i>	We want to start
<i>Miu posa si</i>	Speak, please
<i>Miu punu si</i>	Reveal, please
<i>Kami nenga dhuju puru pu'u</i>	We want to finish everything

These words represent the female ancestors' wish to explain to all tribe members the main reason behind this tragic death (*mata golo*). There is hope for recovery and peace now once the cause has been found. In addition to this *ema tana ine* ceremony which is made to the female ancestors, several

inquiries are also made of male ancestors (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022; Schröter, 1998). These include the following:

<i>Ema...Ema</i>	Father...Father
<i>Kami ta da toro</i>	We are wearing the red scarf
<i>Kami wenga keo wenga rado</i>	We want to carry out the <i>ke'o rado</i>
<i>Ema...ema</i>	Father...Father
<i>Le bhara da ike beke</i>	The white chains on the chest
<i>Da wa'i da lau</i>	Someone is lying there with outstretched legs
<i>Dia da tuka lenga zeta</i>	with the belly upwards
<i>Mai si</i>	Come on
<i>Kita wenga penga ke'o, penga rado</i>	We want to carry out the <i>ke'o rado</i>
<i>Kita nga penga podhu</i>	Let's sit together
<i>We ulu mogo</i>	Put our heads together
<i>Kita wenga dhoru</i>	We want out
<i>Kita wenga keo wenga rado</i>	We want to hold a <i>ke'o rado</i>
<i>Mai si</i>	Come on

The reason behind this petition is the same: to allow the male ancestors to explain what led to a tribe member's unnatural death (*mata golo*) (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022; Schröter, 1998). The ritual's leader concludes by making the following declaration to the male and female ancestors:

<i>Ine...ine</i>	Mother...Mother
<i>Sa susu mite</i>	You black chicken
<i>Kau ngodho...kau ngodho</i>	Come here...come here
<i>Ema...ema</i>	Father...Father
<i>Sa lalu toro</i>	You red cock
<i>Kau ngodho...kau ngodho</i>	Come here...Come here

The appearance of natural signs, such as butterflies or birds is perceived as confirmation and viewed as symbols that their requests have been granted. Then a group of men who attend the ceremony will leave right away and will head to the forest or a location some distance from the traditional house that was chosen the previous evening based on prophecy to bury the *tobo muku* (banana trunk), also known as the "*tane tobo muku*." As they move toward the forest or a predetermined location outside of the village, men carry "*tobo muku*" and yell the repeated words: *kau bani - kau bani*. The *mata golo* is exhorted in this speech to fight the evil forces that killed him (*polo*) bravely (*bani*). A few signs and symbols, like butterflies, will start to appear after this dramatic confrontation. It will be captured and destroyed if this butterfly-like symbol manifests so that it can no longer interfere with or contact the soul of the person wearing the *mata golo* (Schröter, 1998).

This part of the ceremony is concluded by invoking the soul of the *mata golo*: You who are in the reed tuft -- who are in the red reed -- answer me with a word (*kau da lau witu bhau, lau keru toro, kau talo nga'o sewiwi*). It implies that the owner of the soul is still in the world. This idea is based on the notion that, just as the body cannot be immediately transported to its final resting place, neither can the soul be transported to its final resting place after death. The restlessness of the wandering soul is now united with the "*tobo muku*", and together they finally find a safe place under the earth. The phrase "*da lau witu bhau - lau keru toro*" is a reference to a comfortable place in the wilderness, far from any habitation. After the ceremonies, the men return to the traditional home (*sa'o ngaza*) where the women are waiting with food that is prepared and ready for serving.

Fourth phase: *Bhara pa* and *Bhara zo* stages

As soon as the designated group of men returned from the forest and entered the traditional house (*sa'o ngaza*), the ceremony of *bhara pa* and *bhara zo* began, a final attempt to confront the *polo* that had entered. Typically, reed branches are brought from the forest and tied at the ends with eggshells surrounding the stove (fireplace). This arrangement represents the evil forces that are held back and released back into the forest after the ceremony. After receiving the ancestors' permission, a tribe member begins to play with a piece of crushed bamboo (*regha*). The beating of the *regha* slowly produces a rattling sound. For the safety of everyone who is part of this ritual confrontation with evil spirits, the rattling sound cannot be stopped until it is over.

After this, the door of the traditional house is closed to prevent anyone else from entering or leaving the house. Those in the *sa'o ngaza* began to sing short songs, each addressed to *polo* and the soul of the deceased. The lyrics of the songs are usually a mockery of the people and even an insult to *polo*. They would stand up one by one and, after singing for a while, would begin to dance while holding a machete (*sau*) in their right hand. As a sign of renewed optimism and shared support for a peaceful future, only men make up the dance group. The *bhara pa* and *bhara zo* materials (reeds placed around the fireplace) are immediately removed after dancing and singing. The men will once again rush out into the forest and destroy anything that they believe to have been contaminated by the forces of evil. It is a ritual cleansing. Any negative energies or forces are expelled from the house (Schröter, 1998).

Fifth phase: *Ike Pebha* and *Wela polo*

On the third day, these two ceremonies were performed by mutual agreement. *Wela polo* and *ike pebha* both mean killing a *polo*. One or the other may be chosen and performed as agreed. At the *Ngadhu*, *Bhaga*, and before the *Sa'o*, the *ike pebha* ceremony is performed (Lina & Sudhiarsa, 2022; Schröter, 1998). Sacrifices and the following prophecies accompany most of the rhymes in this ceremony:

<i>Dia go ike mu dhenga</i>	Let's tie tightly
<i>Pewa mu dhenga</i>	Bind tightly
<i>Kami wenga tana</i>	We will ask
<i>Dia kami wenga le kezu pu'u</i>	We will tear out the root of the evil
<i>We luli mema</i>	We will talk here
<i>Kami we gugu gazi</i>	We will hunt him
<i>Bodha we mara pugu</i>	Until he stumbles
<i>Bodha we dhuju</i>	Until we have caught him
<i>Ng'i go tobo golo</i>	Because of this dead body
<i>Kami bodha we luli</i>	We have to recover it
<i>We wela mata</i>	will kill him
<i>Kau gubhu sewidha</i>	You of the same roof
<i>Lenga sewidha</i>	The same bamboo roof
<i>Wi la'a wela polo</i>	Go to kill the <i>polo</i>
<i>Gazi bodha we mata golo</i>	He must die the <i>mata golo</i>
<i>Sama ne'e X...</i>	exactly like X...
<i>Ma'e re Ma'e weje</i>	Don't deny, cheat not
<i>Kami wenga wela</i>	We will kill

*Wela polo* is a dynamic ritual. It involves dancing and lots of movement. The men dashed through the village and into the forest, shouting war cries to symbolically kill supernatural beings (evil forces), with a *sau* (sword) in their right hand. On their return to the village, they will have one or two women with them who will have spears and shields (*gili*). By the time the group has entered the

traditional home, the conflict is over. They will dance and jump over the *sau*. This is used to ward off evil forces before entering the traditional house. The *sau* (sword) has to be struck over and over with another *sau* until there is a spark or a tiny flash of light. The elimination of the evil power (*polo*) is represented by the passing and striking of the *sau*.

The ancestors (Kumi Toro and his followers) are called to the stage after the *ke'o rado* ceremony. They can then return to their traditional home. The traditional house was then quickly and safely locked. Hides and bones from the offerings and the *wuli* ((a necklace made of sea conch as big as a baby's hand, which is arranged regularly by means of a rope about 50 cm long) represented by the maize cob must be disposed of immediately. All of these items have been used in the ritual of *ke'o rado*. Its location in the forest is unknown. This ceremony is called *se'a kula loka took* (Schröter, 1998). According to Emanuel Suka, this ceremony is also known as: "*se de ze'e*" (get rid of or throw away the wrong). This means throwing away in one of the designated places all leftover food and any tools or equipment used in the *ke'o rado* ritual (Suka, 2016). After this series of *ke'o rado* rituals, everyone present was sprinkled with coconut water. Coconut water, especially for the *mata golo's* close relatives, is considered a blessing and a means of purification.

### ***The meaning of ke'o rado ritual***

From the discussion on the *ke'o rado* ritual above, there are at least two meanings that can be found. First, the Ngada Flores people understand that the human soul does not perish, but remains alive and has a relationship with all living members of his family. From their view of *mata golo* and the need for the *ke'o rado* ritual, this belief is clear. The souls of people who have died from *mata golo* must be reconciled with their ancestors and family members or tribesmen. The Ngada people also believe that their ancestors, whether male or female, have always looked after and nurtured them throughout their lives. Respect for ancestors, for example in the *ke'o rado* ritual, is shown by calling their names. An expression that signifies the belief that their souls live together with all the members of the tribe.

Second, the Ngada people also believe that the tragic death called *mata golo* is the result of a crime or mistake committed. This was done by the person who died or by all members of the tribe or his family in the past. Especially in the case of *mata golo*, the Ngada Flores people try to find out the main cause of death. For them, *mata golo* is caused by certain offenses against their ancestors, so they too get angry and allow evil spirits to cause chaos. That error must be sought and found through the ritual of *ke'o rado*.

Based on the two reasons above, the ritual of *ke'o rado* that is carried out is aimed at bringing the soul of the person who died tragically to a peaceful place. The place is believed by the people of Ngada Flores to be a place where there is no longer any evil power. For that, the *polo* (evil spirit) must be killed and destroyed, as shown in the *wela polo* ceremony above. Another goal is to rebuild harmonious relations with the ancestors. *Mata golo* is read as ancestral anger toward surviving family members, who no longer pay their respects to them. The ancestors also allowed evil spirits to attack their living family members until they died tragically (*mata golo*). The *ke'o rado* ritual is expected to reopen the door of forgiveness from the ancestors to living family members. This will guarantee the peace of the soul of the deceased. This belief must be emphasized, namely that forgiveness of sins and reconciliation are necessary guarantees for the peace of the soul of a person who has tragically passed away. This is also necessary to help those left behind live in peace.

### ***Theological implications for the cultivation of the Christian faith***

The theological questions that still need to be answered by the Catholic church are whether a person who tragically died was a person who was possessed by evil forces (evil spirits) due to mortal sin so that he had not been released before the implementation of the ritual of *ke'o rado*, as understood by people. What's wrong? Why is the ritual of *ke'o rado* so significant for the salvation of the souls of those who died unnaturally and also for the hope of peace for the bereaved family in the future? From the perspective of the Christian faith, how can this *ke'o rado* ritual be understood theologically? All these questions will not be answered before examining the meaning of the *ke'o rado* ritual and its role in the framework of the teachings of the Christian faith. These questions are often ignored by those who adhere to the Catholic religion because they believe that the truth of the Christian faith in the salvation of souls has been manifested in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Everyone who dies in faith in Christ will surely enjoy eternal salvation.

However, salvation, as something free from God, still requires human effort. This is where the ritual of *ke'o rado* can be interpreted broadly. A person who died tragically (*mata golo*) and his family's suffering due to fear and anxiety describes the human condition which Gerald O'Collins calls a *homo dolens* reality (suffering human). Suffering can be caused by sins and mistakes made in the past, both by family members and by the individual, which now have to be carried by a person who has died unnaturally, as well as the suffering of the family due to the loss of a member, which must be accompanied by fear and anxiety. From a cultural perspective, *ke'o rado* can alleviate their suffering and fear. Although, from a theological perspective, this ritual is completed by the personal presence of Jesus Christ who by His suffering approaches all human beings, especially those who suffer, God showed his solidarity with people who suffer and who die anywhere and anytime by having his body hang on the cross. In keeping with the Jewish cultural views of the time, He did this under the condition of dying as a cursed person. Christ died as an innocent victim, which in the words of René Girard (1986) is like a 'scapegoat', which indicates the innocence of the victim and the injustice of the condemnation. With that was born the phrase, '*ubi dolor, ubi Christus* (wherever there is pain, there is Christ). So the ritual of *ke'o rado* can be culturally believed to be a way of liberation, purification, and reconciliation. However, this ritual is even more perfected from the perspective of *homo dolens*, God who is involved and in solidarity with the suffering of human beings and provides deliverance, namely Jesus Christ (O'Collins, 2011).

From the perspective of Christian theology, death does have a strong relationship with human sin. Genesis 2:16; 3:19 and the letter of St. Paul to Romans 5:12 clearly state that death is the result or wages of sin. Sin itself leads a person to death (Rom 6:16). Furthermore, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) taught that death was a consequence of Adam's sin (Pranadi, 2019). This teaching confirms what the Ngada people have understood about someone who dies unnaturally and also about living as a believer. Death must be caused by sin, which in the context of the Ngada people may be caused by past sins. These sins may be sins that have not been cleansed through the *ke'o rado* ritual, and may also include personal sins. Sin affects relationships in the family and can even be a threat to the safety of the family. The ritual of *ke'o rado* is primarily intended for the soul of the deceased to be cleansed and reconciled so that they can rest in peace. Furthermore, the ritual of *ke'o rado* can be interpreted as breaking the curse of sin for all family members left behind. So the *ke'o rado* ritual has a theological meaning as an effort to purify and free someone from the curse of sin. From the perspective of Christian theology, the breaking of the curse of sin occurs through the reception of the sacraments, especially the sacrament of forgiveness of sins.

At every stage of the *ke'o rado* ritual, the deceased, his/her family, and the evil spirit (*polo*) face off. The Ngada people believe in unnatural deaths as a result of the influence of evil spirits that enter their families or tribes. This is because of mistakes or transgressions that have not been cleansed through the *ke'o rado* ritual. Nonetheless, it is still often understood as a result of ancestors' anger because their existence is forgotten or because of the neglect of customary norms and laws. As a result, the ancestors allowed the evil spirit (*polo*) to enter and disturb the comfort of all family members to the point of tragic death (*mata golo*). This concept can be used as a way to understand Christian teachings about the influence of dark forces (devils) on human life and how that concept is applied theologically to the devil's actions and how they affect humans. Johanes Robini Marianto explains that humans become possessed by the devil's power as a result of the sinful situations and actions they create. This is also because of the power of the devil. It takes advantage of man's weaknesses and tempts him to turn away from God. In addition, humans who bind themselves to worldly forces, apart from God, will also be easily controlled by evil spirits (devils). The result of this demonic power is that humans are increasingly out of control. He is inclined to sin, which is evil in the sight of God. Is it true that God is meant to be powerless against the power of the devil in humans?

The teachings of the Christian faith clearly show that the Spirit of God in man cannot be defeated by anything, including the power of sin and the devil. In the experience of sin and suffering, God 'ostensibly' allows the devil to tempt and dominate man, but in all of this God has a specific purpose for man. God wants humans to repent and use their freedom to rely on God in everything (Marianto, 2014). This explanation can help the Ngada people to understand the presence of an evil spirit (*polo*) which is seen as a bearer of curses and the cause of death and fear in the family. However, Geoffrey Gorer, as quoted by Federica Manfredi, explains that death is the most painful tragedy for individuals, therefore society must create tools to think about and manage it. Culture must provide the means to manage what is happening (Manfredi, 2022).

*Ke'o rado* is the practice of restoring the body of the deceased to free them from demonic forces (*polo*), and to bring about reconciliation between living families and ancestors who are offended by family customs. Indeed, ancestors cannot be equated with God in Christian beliefs. However, the *ke'o rado* ritual may also be read as a ceremony for the restoration and purification of bonds that have been damaged by sin and transgression. This context is similar to the teaching of the Christian faith about the sacrament of baptism as a purification ceremony from the influence of sin. It also emphasizes the sacrament of repentance as a time of forgiveness and reconciliation between sinners and God. More than that through the sacrament of reconciliation sinners experience God's infinite mercy. Mercy here, as written by Luis F. Card. Ladaria Ferrer, S.J., is not a form of God's tolerance for sin, but rather a 'medicine' that strengthens us to return to Him (Ferrer, 2020).

The Catholic Church recognizes that all humans will perish of sin, except Mary the mother of Jesus, who was born without original sin. The implementation of the *ke'o rado* ritual assures the Ngada people that the souls of those who passed tragically have rested in peace. The curse of sin has been removed from him, and he will no longer 'infect' the living members of his family. In any case, the souls of those who have passed away in the Christian faith still have to undergo purification and cleansing in purgatory. This is before they achieve eternal salvation and eternal peace. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1030, purgatory is the state of those who die in friendship with God and who are assured of eternal salvation. However, they still need purification to enter heaven. This catechism concept emphasizes the importance of dying in friendship with God (O'Callaghan, 2012). But purgatory

here means more than a place. Pope John Paul II in a 1999 general audience referred to purgatory not as a place, but as an existence. A process of purifying the soul toward perfection (Pasulka, 2015).

Thus, the *ke'o rado* ritual that has been practiced traditionally should be complemented by the teachings of the Christian faith. These teachings should be about the importance of praying continuously for the souls of the dead, especially those who died tragically. The goal is that they too experience the process of cleansing from all sins and can enter God's eternal family. The ceremony of receiving the sacrament of confession and celebrating the eucharist after the *ke'o rado* ritual can be an act that completes the whole process of the *ke'o rado* ritual so that it gives strength to the Ngada people who experience the tragic death of their family member (*mata golo*). The Catholic church is not here to shift and erase cultural heritage but rather to bring it into the light of the gospel and faith. This is for the sake of human salvation. In this study, the authors consider how the *ke'o rado* ritual can prepare people to receive complete forgiveness and purification in Jesus Christ.

Finally, one of the themes that still needs to be studied more deeply is the issue of divination, which is also an instrumental part of this *ke'o rado* ritual. Efforts to find the reason for the ancestral curse that resulted in the tragic death were carried out with *pa'i tibo* and *zi'a ura manu/ngana*. Concerning this practice of divination, the Catechism of the Catholic Church no. 2116 writes, "All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone" (P. J. Paul II, 2002). The Catholic Church sees divination as a practice contrary to the Christian faith. Because everything related to the future is only in God's hands. However, from our research, the practice of divination is still ongoing among the people and is an integral part of various rituals, including this *ke'o rado* ritual. Apart from the question of right and wrong, we prefer to see this kind of reality as a fact of pluralistic beliefs that really took root in Indonesian society long before the arrival of institutional religions. Therefore, as Otto Gusti N. Madung and Winibaldus S. Mere have pointed out, '...religious truth is considered as something that can be expressed in different ways. Such a recognition of the plurality of expressions of the truth has contributed to the building-up of a society which is tolerant not only toward social and cultural differences, but also toward anything that is spiritual and mystical' (Madung & Mere, 2022).

## Conclusion

The *ke'o rado* ritual in the Ngada community has a very deeply religious and theological meaning. This ritual is especially meaningful for the souls of people who have tragically passed away, and for all members of their families left behind. By performing the ritual of *ke'o rado*, the Ngada people believe that the soul of the person who died tragically has been cleansed of all curses and evil things. This soul can now rest in peace. Furthermore, all surviving family members may hope to feel peace and tranquility in their lives. The *ke'o rado* ritual which means a purification and liberation ceremony can also be interpreted theologically from the perspective of the Christian faith. This is about the influence of sin and evil on human life. Sin distances a Christian from the Triune God he/she believes in. Therefore, sin needs to be released through baptism, receiving the sacrament of confession, and also various other sacraments in the church. If the power of evil (*polo*) can destroy human life through death and be cleansed of its influence again through the ritual of *ke'o rado*, then the God who believed in

Christian beliefs is different. He never wanted humans to experience destruction. Instead, He has the power to cleanse and forgive sinful humans through His infinite love and mercy. With this, the implementation of the *ke'o rado* ritual for people who died unnaturally can be further strengthened by the belief in faith in God. This belief has the power to release sinful humans who have died under the influence of evil and give them eternal rest. This research is an attempt to integrate the Ngada people's cultural understanding of the *ke'o rado* ritual with Christian faith beliefs. We hope that more and more researchers from Ngada will study other Ngada cultural treasures to meet the teachings of the Christian faith.

### Acknowledgment

We would like to thank all those who have assisted us in this research on the *ke'o rado* ritual. In particular, we would like to thank our key informants and parish priests from the Holy Family Parish of Nazareth in Were, and the Holy Spirit Parish in Mataloko which belong to the Archdiocese of Ende, and all the families who have experienced the tragic death of a member of their family (*mata golo*) for sharing their struggles and provide very useful information for this research. We would also like to thank Josef San Dou and Joan Crist (Chicago, Illinois, USA) and Bill Burt (Australia) for their reviews and suggestions for this paper.

### References

- Ad Gentes. (1965). *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ecumenical Council of Vatican II)*. Dominican Publications.
- Arndt, P. (2007). *Agama Orang Ngadha: Kultus, Pesta dan Persembahan (Vol.II)*. Puslit Candraditya.
- Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Ngada. (2020). *Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Kecamatan dan Agama (Jiwa), 2018-2020*. Ngadakab.Bps.Go.Id. <https://ngadakab.bps.go.id/indicator/27/180/1/jumlah-penduduk-menurut-kecamatan-dan-agama.html>
- Bergmann, S. (2003). *God in Context: A Survey of Contextual Theology*. Aldershot and Burlington.
- Bevans, S. B. (2002). *Models of Contextual Theology (Faith and Cultures Series)*. Logos Publication.
- Camnahas, A., & Madung, O. G. (Eds.). (2013). *...ut verbum Dei currat - 100 Tahun SVD di Indonesia*. Penerbit Ledalero.
- Ekore, R., & Lanre-Abass, B. (2016). African cultural concept of death and the idea of advance care directives. *Indian Journal of Palliative Care*, 22(4), 369. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0973-1075.191741>
- Ferrer, L. F. C. L. (2020). Foundations and Theological Implications of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. *Periodica*, 109, 429–446. [https://www.iuscangreg.it/pdf/PCPM\\_Ladaria\\_Relazione\\_Sacramento\\_Riconciliazione.pdf](https://www.iuscangreg.it/pdf/PCPM_Ladaria_Relazione_Sacramento_Riconciliazione.pdf)
- Francis, P. (2013). *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*. Vatican Press.
- Gaudium et Spes. (1965). *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in Modern World (Ecumenical Council of Vatican II)*. Dominican Publications.
- Girard, R. (1986). *The Scapegoat* (Y. Freccero (Ed.)). The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hagjer, P. (2022). Dimasa Rituals of Death and Mourning in Contemporary Assam. *Religions*, 13(1), 82. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13010082>
- Hertz, R. (1960). *Death and the Right Hand*. The University Press.
- Jebadu, A. (2019). Fakta Praktik Ilmu Hitam di Flores dan Daya Ilahi Air Berkat. *Jurnal Ledalero*, 18(1), 61. <https://doi.org/10.31385/jl.v18i1.152.61-85>

- Jebadu, A., Raho, B., & Juhani, S. (2021). The Kélah Ritual of The Manggaraians in Flores-Eastern Indonesia and Its Theological Significance For Roman Catholics. *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage*, 10(2), 193–219. <https://doi.org/10.31291/hn.v10i2.622>
- Ko, E., Cho, S., Perez, R. L., Yeo, Y., & Palomino, H. (2013). Good and Bad Death: Exploring the Perspectives of Older Mexican Americans. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 56(1), 6–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2012.715619>
- Lina, P., & Sudhiarsa, R. I. M. (2022). Mata Golo, the Ke’o Rado Ritual, and The Death of Jesus Christ on The Cross in the Perspective of the Ngada People in Central Flores Indonesia. *Journal of Asian Orientation in Theology*, 04(01), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.24071/jaot.v4i1.4483>
- Madung, O. G. N., & Mere, W. S. (2022). The Discursive Perspective Of Liberalism Versus Multiculturalism. *International Journal of Indonesian Philosophy & Theology*, 3(2), 71–84. <https://doi.org/10.47043/ijiph.v3i2.31>
- Manfredi, F. (2022). In between Birth and Death, Past and Future, the Self and the Others: An Anthropological Insight on Commemorative and Celebrative Tattoos in Central Italy. *Religions*, 13(1), 46. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13010046>
- Mariato, J. R. (2014). *Demonologi & Eksorsisme: Perspektif Teologi Katolik*. Yayasan Santo Martinus De Porres.
- Nostra Aetate. (1965). *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Ecumenical Council of Vatican II)*. Dominican Publications.
- O’Callaghan, P. (2012). Christ our hope: an introduction to eschatology. *Choice Reviews Online*, 49(05), 49-2616-49–2616. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.49-2616>
- O’Collins, G. (2011). *Rethinking Fundamental Theology*. Oxford University Press.
- Papan-Matin, F. (2010). *Beyond Death*. BRILL. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004174139.i-246>
- Pasulka, D. W. (2015). Heaven can wait: purgatory in Catholic devotional and popular culture. *Choice Reviews Online*, 52(10), 52-5286-52–5286. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.189839>
- Paul II, J. (1990). *Redemptoris Missio (RM) (Mission of the Redeemer)*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Paul II, P. J. (2002). The Catechism of the Catholic Church. *Ethics & Medics*, 27(8), 4–4. <https://doi.org/10.5840/em200227816>
- Paul VI. (1975). *Evangelii Nuntiandi (EN) (the Proclamation of the Gospel in Modern World)*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Pentaris, P. (2013). Culture and Death : A Multicultural Perspective. *Hawaii Pacific Journal of Social Work Practice*, 4(1), 45–84.
- Pranadi, Y. (2019). Kematian dan Kehidupan Abadi: Sebuah Eksplorasi Dalam Perspektif Gereja Katolik. *MELINTAS*, 34(3), 248–271. <https://doi.org/10.26593/mel.v34i3.3459.248-271>
- Schröter, S. (1998). *Death Rituals of the Ngada in Central Flores, Indonesia*. *Anthropos*, Bd. 93, H. 4./6.
- Suka, E. (2016). 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). *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6, 36–40. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:217702675>
- van der Geest, S. (2004). Dying peacefully: considering good death and bad death in Kwahu-Tafo, Ghana. *Social Science & Medicine*, 58(5), 899–911. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2003.10.041>