

The Symbolic Meaning of Death Ceremonies in Gorontalo From The Perspective of Karl Jaspers

Nazar Husain Hadi Pranata Wibawa, Septiana Dwiputri Maharani,
Hardono Hadi

Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta

Abstract

The focus of this article is to examine the symbols used in funeral ceremonies from Gorontalo in the perspective of Karl Jaspers' human philosophy. This research is a library research supported by field research. Literature research uses library data collection methods, while field research uses observation, participatory, interview. Data analysis uses interpretation, historical, heuristic and reflection. The research finds interpretations and reflections on the symbolism of the ceremonial tradition showing that it is not only a chiffer, but a chiffer that gives the power of revelation to other chiffers and unites them in Divine reality. The tradition illustrates that every element of reality, history and culture is interrelated and reveals elements of the same divinity, uborampe and media in ceremonies are symbols towards the Transcendent and play a role in life. The symbols used in the tradition illustrate that every divine power and element in the entire cosmos is in the unity of divinity.

Keyword: Tinilo Pa'ita, Death Ceremonies, Karl Jaspers

Makna simbolik upacara kematian di Gorontalo perspektif Karl Jaspers

Abstrak

Fokus artikel ini adalah mengkaji simbol-simbol yang digunakan upacara kematian berasal dari Gorontalo dalam perspektif filsafat manusia Karl Jaspers. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian pustaka yang didukung dengan penelitian lapangan. Penelitian kepustakaan menggunakan metode pengumpulan data kepustakaan, sedangkan penelitian lapangan menggunakan observasi, partisipatif, wawancara. Analisis data menggunakan interpretasi, historis, heuristika dan refleksi. Penelitian menemukan interpretasi dan refleksi terhadap simbolisme tradisi upacara tersebut memperlihatkan bahwa tidak hanya merupakan sebuah chiffer, tetapi chiffer yang memberi daya revelasi kepada chiffer-chiffer lain dan menyatukan dalam kenyataan Ilahi. Tradisi tersebut menggambarkan bahwa setiap unsur realitas, sejarah dan budaya saling berkaitan dan merevelasikan elemen-elemen dari keilahian yang sama, uborampe dan media-media dalam upacara merupakan simbol menuju yang Transenden dan berperan dalam kehidupan. Simbol yang digunakan dalam tradisi tersebut menggambarkan bahwa setiap daya dan elemen keilahian di seluruh wilayah kosmos berada dalam kesatuan keilahian.

Kata Kunci : Tinilo Pa'ita, tradisi kematian, Karl Jaspers

Author correspondence

Email: nazarhusain@80@gmail.com

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A. Introduction

The implementation of the death tradition in Indonesia is carried out in various ways, for example in Tengger the tradition of death is known as the "entas-entas" ceremony¹. The Dayak tribe carries out a tradition of death ceremonies to honor the spirits of their ancestors.² The funeral ceremony in Tana Toraja is known as "rambu solo".³ The people of Gorontalo also have a tradition of death ceremonies, one of which is singing the *Tinilo Pa'ita* poem. *Tinilo* is a poem that contains advice to comfort the bereaved family, praise and prayers addressed to the deceased.⁴ *Pa'ita* comes from the Arabic *faata-yafuutu-fautan* which means the disappeared spirit, while *Tinilo* means poetry.⁵

Tinilo Pa'ita is a rhythmic poem sung in a distinctive tone and in Gorontalo language. The verse is recited during a ceremony to commemorate the fortieth day of someone's death. The words in *Tinilo Pa'ita* are comforting to a grieving family. In addition, this poem is also used as a tool to spread the teachings of Islam in the Gorontalo area. Gorontalo people believe that someone who has died will be raised higher than people who are still alive, they are imaged as having a higher life.⁶

Researchers are interested in *Tinilo Pa'ita* as the object of research, because it is the only script used during the implementation of the death tradition in Gorontalo and still survives from ancient times until now, but the younger generation today does not have the ability to understand the text well. The *Tinilo Pa'ita* manuscript is in the old Gorontalo language and written in Arabic script, which contains many teachings on human relations with God and becomes a complete human figure.

¹ Iswatun Iswatun, "Upacara Kematian Pada Masyarakat Tengger: Telaah Filosofis Terhadap Upacara Kematian Di Desa Sapikerep Kecamatan Sukapura Kabupaten Probolinggo," 1997, vii.

² Falentinus, "Tradisi Upacara Kematian Suku Dayak Tunjung Di Desa Barong Tongkok Kecamatan Barong Tongkok Kabupaten Kutai Barat," *Universitas Malang*, 2004, vi.

³ Tumirin Tumirin and Ahim Abdurahim, "Makna Biaya Dalam Upacara Rambu Solo," *Jurnal Akuntansi Multiparadigma* 6, no. 2 (September 3, 2015): 175, <https://doi.org/10.18202/jamal.2015.08.6014>.

⁴ Nani Tuloli, *Nilai-Nilai Budaya Dalam Sastra Gorontalo: Suatu Orientasi Sastra Dan Filologi, Pidato Ilmiah Pada Dies Natalis XXX FKIP Unsrat Di Gorontalo*. (Gorontalo: FKSS IKIP, 1983), 14.

⁵ Ellyana Hinta, *Tinilo Pa'ita Naskah Puisi Gorontalo: Sebuah Kajian Filologis* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 2005), 5.

⁶ Hinta, vii.

The selection of the character of Karl Jaspers as a formal object in this study is relevant to the material object of *Tinilo Pa'ita*. The selection of the formal object of the philosopher Karl Jaspers who incidentally came from the Western world used as a knife for Tinilo Pa'ita's analysis did not contradict the material object studied by the researcher. Karl Jaspers explained that by building a relationship with *Transcendence*, humans can find existence. Human existence is always directed at *Transcendence*. The term Transcendence is used by Karl Jaspers to refer to divinity. Arguments about human existence are always directed at Transcendence, showing that the character is a theist. The divinity argument described by Karl Jaspers can be used to look at the divinity of the *Tinilo Pa'ita* text.

Based on the background stated above, this study will explore the meaning of symbols in the *Tinilo Pa'ita* ceremony from the perspective of Karl Jaspers. This article is the result of library research using library data collection methods, while field research uses observation, participatory, interview. Data analysis uses interpretation, historical, heuristic and reflection.

B. Biography of Karl Jaspers.

Karl Theodor Jaspers is a very influential figure in the twentieth century, this philosopher figure is the son of Carl Wilhelm Jaspers and Henriette Tantzén. Karl Jaspers attended the Gymnasium in Oldenburg, from 1892 to 1902.⁷ Karl Theodor Jaspers mentions in one of his works entitled *Lebensbeschreibung In Briefwechsel 1945–1968*, he was born on February 23, 1883 in Oldenburg, lived in the Protestant confession, Karl Jaspers' education took place without the church, but also without the hostility of the church. Karl Jaspers explained that as a child the priests were very friendly with children, including Karl Jaspers. Both parents live happily in raising the character sang.⁸

The metaphysical stages of Karl Jaspers have the characteristics of thinking that are somewhat different from other existentialist figures. He started his career

⁷ Filiz Peach, *Death "Deathlessness" and Existenz in Karl Jaspers' Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 30, <http://universitypublishingonline.org/edinburgh/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780748630912>.

⁸ Karl Jaspers, "Lebensbeschreibung," in *Briefwechsel 1945–1968*, ed. Karl Jaspers, K. H. Bauer, and Renato de Rosa (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 1983), 1–7, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-68884-3_1.

as a psychiatrist. One of his most important works during that phase was *Die's Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* (1919). This work marked his transition to the field of philosophy. Jaspers' work entitled *Philosophie* (1932) consists of three volumes showing Jaspers' orientation to the field of philosophy. In 1947 he wrote *Philo-sophische Logik*, one of the most monumental philosophical works of 1103 pages.⁹ Although Jaspers was influenced by many great philosophers, such as Plotinus, Bruno, Spinoza, Schelling, and Kant, according to his admission there are only three philosophers who provided great inspiration in developing his thinking, namely Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and the leading sociologist Max Weber.¹⁰

Karl Jaspers has various educational backgrounds, his philosophy shows a broad range, which covers various fields such as psychology and psychopathology, politics, the influence of technology on humans and humanity. Karl Jaspers experienced an interest in matters of understanding and studying personality. This is shown in the opening of one of Karl Jaspers' works: "What is essential in the concrete decisions of personal fate remains hidden".¹¹

Karl Jaspers was motivated to better understand what is hidden behind concrete decisions that are personal, human views on the world vary. Karl Jaspers was appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg and has since been better known as a philosopher who came out with his own mind.¹²

C. Philosophy of Karl Jaspers

1. Transcendence

Karl Jaspers introduced the concept of "there is something that surrounds it (*das Umgreifende*). Although *das Umgreifende* cannot be an object, it is the subject of what humans think when humans want to philosophize.¹³ *Das Umgreifende* remains dark for consciousness, because it cannot be objectified. it always only manifests itself but can never be apprehended as an

⁹ Joko Siswanto, *Sistem-Sistem Metafisika Barat* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1998), 127.

¹⁰ Joseph M. Bochenski, *Contemporary European Philosophy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982).

¹¹ Karl Jaspers, *Psychologie Der Weltanschauungen* (Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 1925), 59, <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=c5513d2fddfaeb1317995e36f3c961b8>.

¹² Fuad Hassan, *Berkenalan Dengan Eksistensialisme* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1992), 105.

¹³ Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy*, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1969).

Object. If man were to grasp it, man would not be able to grasp it, for the *das Umgreifende* is constantly retreating to the horizon; in the case of everything that man can know he can only know. within the human horizon/sight.

Jaspers explains that *das Umgreifende* is not a subject but as an individual consciousness that is inward. *Das Umgreifende* is also not a person who embodies so that it cannot be used as a generally accepted concept or target of thought. *Das Umgreifende* is an abstract vital urge. With this vital urge, humans can become a 'existing' reality. Jaspers also wants to state that *das Umgreifende* is not an object because *das Umgreifende* is not a 'finished product' that can be known and understood, so 'presenting' *das Umgreifende* in life with the subject-object dichotomy is very inappropriate; moreover, knowledge, understanding, contemplation, and human appreciation of *das Umgreifende* are always not. Although *das Umgreifende* is neither a subject nor an object but can be used as material for thought; it means that *das Umgreifende* only seems to be an object in thought, not a fact that can actually be made a sensory object. No device is sufficient to objectify *das Umgreifende* unless it can only be objectified in philosophy.¹⁴

2. *Chiffer - Chiffer.*

The attainment of Transcendence can only occur through symbols, Karl Jaspers calls it the *Chiffer*. Man must read *Chiffer* to understand the language of Transcendence. *Chiffer* is a text of Transcendence and the language of Transcendence. The whole reality that surrounds humans is *Chiffer*.¹⁵

According to Jaspers, humans who exist experience a limit situation (ultimate situation) which in turn leads humans to be able to read symbols (*Chiffer*). The world of symbols or *Chiffers* mediates between "existence" and "Transcendence". Anything can be a *Chiffer*, meaning to be a "shadow", "echo"

¹⁴ Win Usuluddin, "Filsafat Ketuhanan Karl Theodor Jaspers Dan Relevansinya Bagi Perkembangan Pemikiran Keberagamaan di Indonesia" (Yogyakarta, Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2018), 176.

¹⁵ Yakobus Ndonga, "Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah Dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia" (Yogyakarta, Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2019), 74.

or “trail” of Transcendence: nature, scripture, history, mysticism and so on. However, Chiffer - Chiffer speaks most strongly in borderline situations.¹⁶

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Strictly speaking, in religious language, Transcendence in this sense is God. Faced with this Transcendence, humans as limited persons feel that they stand before a Person with absolute superpower (absolute *bermacht*) who greets, gives orders and demands. Nevertheless, for Jaspers one thing remained: Whatever man might say about God, He remained unrecognizable and identifiable. Jaspers philosophy is willing to obey the prohibition to take a picture of God. For him, it is enough to know that God exists, not how God is. Jaspers said: That God exists is enough. Being sure of this is the only thing that matters. Everything else will follow. It is only in God that there is emptiness, truth, stability of 'being' alone, there is tranquility, there is the place of origin and destination for humans who are nothing in themselves, and how the human condition is currently only in existence. relationship with the Foundation.

Karl Jaspers argues that the original *Chiffer* cannot be interpreted. *Chiffer* and transcendence can only be translated in the new Chiffer. Chiffers have a special feature that other symbols don't have; symbols represent something they can find. Chiffer is a symbol where what is symbolized is not outside the *Chiffer*. A Chiffer is the language of Transcendence.¹⁷

Chiffer is the communication of the soul. Chiffer produces two-way motion, motion in the upward direction causes reality to rise because it acquires a transcendental value, motion in the downward direction produces

¹⁶ Yohanes Slamet Purwadi, “The Shadow of Death, The Shadow of Immortality,” *Extension Course Filsafat (ECF)* 0, no. 2 (May 30, 2016), <http://journal.unpar.ac.id/index.php/ECF/article/view/1998>.

¹⁷ Hamersma, *Tokoh-Tokoh Filsafat Barat Modern.*, 56.

the real presence of Transcendence reality.¹⁸ Communication takes place on one side to show the dimension of existence. Chiffer communication can penetrate realities unreachable by other forms of communication.¹⁹ Chiffer communication can fully reveal inner experience, soul communication always contains a secret aspect. Chiffer cannot be formulated in speculative language. Chiffers in genuine relationships can only be experienced and heard.

Chiffer relates to two aspects, namely content and form. The aspect of content is always related to existence, through *Chiffer* participating in the existence of Transcendence. Being in the *Chiffer* brings about the self-fulfillment of the subject. Karl Jaspers *Chiffer* early called it the universal image *Chiffer*. This *chiffer* is usually in the form of general images such as the eternal mother and the great father, while *Chiffer* then gives the image of special figures such as prophets and so on²⁰.

Chiffer's universal image depicts a universal vision and desire to transcend reality, such as Dei in Augustine's thought, nirvana in Hinduism, heaven in monotheist religion, while *Chiffer* then orients to a more individual and concrete image.²¹ Based on the shape of the object, *Chiffer* can also be classified into *Chiffer* which is an empirical reality and *Chiffer* which is man-made. The existence of the world and all creatures in the world is the original *Chiffer* while man-made is the conception, ideals and works that represent the original *Chiffer*.²² Man-made *chiffers* can be further classified into *chiffers* that are created from clear images, through myths, and *chiffers* that are conceptually speculative²³. Each *Chiffer* always stores elements of transcendence, so that readers gain access to Transcendence. Karl Jaspers classifies *Chiffer* in three groups, namely three transcendence languages.

First the original language of Transcendence. This language is a mystical experience of encounter with Transcendence in the phenomena of

¹⁸ Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 40.

¹⁹ Ndona, "Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah Dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia," 58.

²⁰ Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 1969, 1:62.

²¹ Ndona, "Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah Dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia," 65.

²² Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 1969, 1:53–63.

²³ Jaspers, 1:62.

reality and history that is elevated to Chiffer. This experience begins with a sense of amazement at a phenomenon, this becomes a human stimulus to find out more deeply about the phenomenon.²⁴

Both languages of common communication, human mystical experience are translated in the new Chiffer in the form of myths, stories, monuments, script art. This chiffer becomes a medium for the public to understand the original revelation. Myth partakes in the perfection of Transcendence. Every myth contains an element of Transcendence. Art as acif is able to translate mystical experiences of revelation. Art has the power to bring an exclusive, unique and unrepeatable mystical experience of revelation into concrete situations. Art can aid the reading of the Chiffer and unite the disparate Chiffers in divine reality. Art can give speculative thoughts to the unseen, art is in the realm of mysticism and existence, between eternity and time, art provides space and provides possibilities for humans to explore freedom.²⁵

Third, the metaphysical speculative language of speculative thought cannot reach the mystical experience of revelation. Speculative thought must pass through the Chiffer medium contained in language. Speculative thinking is needed to explore the language in Chiffer and discuss it rationally so that it can be understood widely. Karl Jaspers called the speculative metaphysical language with other names the original language of Transcendence and absolute truth. Speculative rational language must be placed as a Chiffer which is constantly open to reinterpretation and produces new Chiffers.²⁶

To get *Chiffer*, interpretation is needed. Interpretation of *Chiffer* to find the figurative meaning contained in Chiffer. The process of interpretation often aborts the meanings found to arrive at the real meaning, namely the original sound of Transcendence. Interpretation must be carried out endlessly so as not only to find the soul of the object, but to reveal the presence of the reality of Transcendence.²⁷

²⁴ Ndonga, "Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah Dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia," 75–77.

²⁵ Ndonga, 76–77.

²⁶ Ndonga, 81–83.

²⁷ Karl Jaspers, *The Parenial Scope Philosophy*, trans. R. Manheim, & Kegan Paul, 1950, 54.

D. The position of *Tinilo Pa'ita* in Gorontalo literature

Gorontalo regional literature is dominated by oral literature. Oral literature is widely used in traditional events of the Gorontalo community. It can be said that a number of Gorontalo oral literatures are *Tuja'i*, *Dikili*, *Tinilo*, *Palebohu*, *Tanggomo*, and others.²⁸ As an ethnic group that has an oral tradition, it is not surprising that in Gorontalo there are many varieties of oral literature. According to *Tuloli Tinilo*, is a kind of rhyming rhyme, the number of lines is four in each stanza. *Tinilo* contains praise, entertainment, prayers, history, invitations, and more. *Tinilo* is a variety of literature in the form of poetry and is sung together in traditional ceremonies. The traditional ceremonies in question are (1) the hair cutting ceremony (*aqikah*), which in the Gorontalo language is called *hundingu*, (2) the marriage ceremony or marriage, and (3) the forty-day death anniversary ceremony which in the Gorontalo language is called *Tinilo Pa'ita*. (poem used to replace the tombstone).²⁹

E. Stages of the death ceremony in Gorontalo

In the context of funeral ceremonies, the implementers consist of traditional stakeholders and syarak officials. The stages in the traditional funeral ceremony consist of three phases, namely (1) preparation, (2) funeral, (3) after the funeral.³⁰ Another entertaining activity is *dulialo* or *takziah*, which is giving advice and messages to grieving families to stay patient, as well as making donations, materials in the form of food, compensation funds, and forms of games. Currently the form of *dulialo* which is in the form of a game is rarely found and carried out by the local community. In spirit prayer activities or *hileyiya* there is also a custom of *tahlilan*, or spirit prayer called *aruwa*. In

²⁸ Supriyadi, "Pemanfaatan Sastra Lisan Gorontalo Sebagai Materi Otentik Dalam Pembelajaran Keterampilan Berbicara," in *Memperkuat Peran APROBSI Dalam Mewujudkan Kemitraan Dan Pemberdayaan Program Studi Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia Yang Mandiri*, vol. 1 (Seminar Nasional, Bekasi: Asosiasi Program Studi Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia (ABROPSI) bekerja sama dengan Metabook, 2016), 963.

²⁹ Nani Tuloli, *Ragam Sastra Lisan Gorontalo* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Universitas Indonesia Press, 1991).

³⁰ Vita Alfanikmah and Zulkarnain Mistortoify, "Tradisi Tinilo Pa'ita dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Gorontalo," *Panggung* 30, no. 1 (2020): 58, <https://jurnal.isbi.ac.id/index.php/panggung/article/view/1143>.

the implementation of the spirit prayer, there are several devices that are slightly different from the tools provided in hileyiya activities on other days;

a) *Baki Lobohu* (coal place)

The lobohu tray/coal place is a place of fire that is usually used in the implementation of the spirit prayer, the lobohu tray/coal place is one of the parts when the spirit prayer takes place. This coal holder consists of 1 cup of water, embers, frankincense, and a coal holder and then put together in a tray.

b) Candle flowers (white paper flowers)

Candle flowers are flowers made of oil paper, white parlak, or white cloth that will be placed at the four corners of the tomb. This means as a marker of the grave and a benchmark for the width of the grave, and this candle flower is required to exist, this is based on ancient history that the old people used to use it as a marker to know that there is a grave in that place, but this candle flower is placed on when the funeral is over, and will be removed and replaced with rambe flowers (blue paper flowers). The meaning of the symbol on this candle is included in the meaning of the symbol in the scope of philosophy because philosophy can be seen as an attitude towards life and the universe regarding all causes, origins and laws.³¹

c) *Bakohati* (cake stand)

Bakohati is a blue cake place in which there is money and cakes which are then prayed for after which they are distributed to the mourners who come. Bakohati has a pentagon shape, this shape is taken from the basic pillars of Islam which consist of five. *Bakohati* has a meaning, namely the place where the heart is located, which means consoling the heart for those who are grieving. It is about the size of a conical fist. Cardboard base. The color is blue.

³¹ Sri Wulandari, "Makna Simbolik Dalam Tahlilan Masyarakat Gorontalo Di Desa Panggulo," *Universitas Tadulako Palu* 5, no. 1 (2020): 86.

Bakohati will be distributed to people who come for 40 days of prayer. Bakohati intends to remind the beautiful memories of the deceased with the aim of maintaining a good relationship between guests and the family of the deceased/deceased. Bakohati that is distributed has two types. White Bakohati will be given to the leader of the country. The blue color will be given to guests with different amounts.³²

d) Tolangga *Lo Pa'ita*, tombstone stretcher

Tolangga lo pa'ita, tombstone stretcher is where the tombstone is placed. This tombstone stretcher has been decorated with a dome, wrapped with blue and white oil paper. This tombstone stretcher means as the last stage for the deceased, or as a last sign of respect, because later the tombstone will be placed on it, the tombstone that has been decorated like a bride symbolizes the figure of the person who has died. the symbolic meaning of *tolangga lo pa'ita* is included in the symbolic meaning.³³

The headstone stretcher is a building resembling a mosque, above it is given an umbrella resembling a dome. The decorations used in this stretcher match the gender of the person who died. If the deceased is a woman, the meaning of the decoration will be made to resemble the traditional Gorontalo clothing for women. In the stretcher is also placed a tombstone which will later be taken to the tomb.³⁴ The goal is to form belief and faith by the Muslims, that the living will surely taste death, in fact humans will return to Allah swt. and only to Him ask for perfection.³⁵

Each ritual has a philosophy related to the transitional period of human life on earth. Such as the level of one's position and also the color of one's life. White which means holy, has become the guidance of Islam in every death. It is the same with the blue color of the sky, which means the greatness of the Creator, who turns a person on and off. Through such a

³² Rizal Darwis, "Tradition of Hileyiya: The Interaction Between Religion and Traditions in Gorontalo in Sociology of Islamic Law Perspective," *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion* 22, no. 1 (June 1, 2015): 60, <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v22i1.141>.

³³ Wulandari, "Makna Simbolik Dalam Tahlilan Masyarakat Gorontalo Di Desa Panggulo," 87.

³⁴ Alfanikmah and Mistortoify, "Tradisi Tinilo Pa'ita Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Gorontalo," 59.

³⁵ Darwis, "Tradition of Hileyiya," 60.

form, the relation between religion and local culture in the Gorontalo community can be seen. Live in harmony and peace that is very strong without friction. The people of Gorontalo prioritize a sense of kinship, tolerance, prioritize collective cooperation in various matters.

e) *Pa'ita*, tombstone

Pa'ita or tombstones are grave markers. In the past, the people of Gorontalo used tombstones made of living stones (river stones) in the river. The Gorontalo people believe that a living stone can glorify at any time, and the stone will enlarge, so that the marks on the grave will be there throughout the ages. The people of Gorontalo have a rule in laying tombstones, the tombstone will also be decorated like a bride wearing traditional clothes, before being decorated the tombstone will be wrapped with a white cloth. Women's tombstones are dressed in traditional clothes and headdresses (*bili'u*), and men's tombstones are dressed in traditional clothes and headdresses (*makuta*). The rambe flower is a blue paper flower that will be placed on the four sides of the grave.³⁶

f) *Pala'u & Toyopo*

Pala'u and *toyopo* are foods that will be prayed for during *tahlilan*. *Toyopo* contains 1). *Atupato* (rhombus), 2). *Tutulu* (cucur) cake, 3). *Putito yilahe* (boiled eggs), 4). *Tilinanga* meat (fried meat), 5). *Lutu* (banana). While *pala'u* contains 1). White rice, 2). Brown rice, 3). Yellow rice, 4). Knees and eggs. *Pala'u* will be placed opposite the priest while the *toyopo* will be placed next to the *tolangga lo pa'ita* / tombstone stretcher to be prayed for. *Toyopo* means as the last food or the last meal for people who have died, in *toyopo* there are five kinds of food symbolizing the five pillars of Islam that are prescribed. *Pala'u* means the origin of life because it is found in *pala'u*. White rice symbolizes male parents, yellow rice symbolizes female parents, when male parents meet female parents, they become eggs, the eggs themselves symbolize children. As time goes by, the child will grow

³⁶ Wulandari, "Makna Simbolik Dalam Tahlilan Masyarakat Gorontalo Di Desa Panggulo," 87.

and develop, so it is symbolized by brown rice, while bananas are symbolized as lust.³⁷

g) *Wobulo*/ blue dress

This blue shirt or *wobulo* itself is the clothes that mourners will wear to the funeral home. This blue shirt is specifically used for 40 days of *tahlil*. The blue color on this shirt symbolizes the distant sky, so the blue shirt has the meaning that the family's sorrow has begun to disappear, and the spirit of the deceased person is farther away from the family left behind like a sky that is far from our reach.³⁸

F. Chiffre-Chiffer at the funeral of *Tinilo Pa'ita*

The symbols in *Tinilo Pa'ita*, in various forms, such as structure, spatial orientation, icons, actions, mantras, rituals and so on, in Karl Jaspers' perspective are *Chiffer* Divinity. The ceremony to commemorate 40 days by chanting *Tinilo Pa'ita* requires equipment in the form of a *polutube* or censer, embers, *totabu* or incense, a cup of water, white cloth, *rica* or chili, salt, *tiliyah* and yellow rice. The people of Gorontalo believe that the activities and series of ceremonies are activities related to the transcendent. Karl Jaspers explains that the Transcendent is the unknown. Divinity is more of a persona. Divinity makes all personalities possible.³⁹

The symbols in *Tinilo Pa'ita* in Karl Jaspers' perspective are *Chiffers*. *Tinilo Pa'ita* as *Chiffer* has a meaning that goes beyond the physical dimension. The symbols and contents of *Tinilo Pa'ita* represent Transcendence, *Sang Ada*, which is absolute and underlies existence in the beliefs of the Gorontalo people. The symbols and contents in *Tinilo Pa'ita* as *Chiffer* translation require more interpretation work to find the metaphysical dimension, namely the Divine in the symbol elements in *Tinilo Pa'ita*. Researchers interpret the elements of symbols as access to the mystery of reality to reveal the voice or divine elements that are revealed.

³⁷ Wulandari, 88.

³⁸ Wulandari, 88.

³⁹ Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 70.

The symbols and traditions contained in *Tinilo Pa'ita* in the philosophical faith of Karl Jaspers can bring together reason and divine guidance. Karl Jaspers describes Chiffer-Chiffer as a philosophical faith. This faith exists in many cultures and in all ages. On this basis different religions can meet each other. Philosophical faith is a tradition that can be found in Plato and Plotinos, in Kant. This faith is based solely on reason. This faith is God's guidance, a possibility that must be examined by man himself.⁴⁰

The symbol and tradition in the *Tinilo Pa'ita* manuscript is the Chiffer. The reading of the writings of the transcendent cannot be read in general, it is only existentially interpreted. Every human being has a different ability to read Chiffer. Those who had a thorough understanding of existence, he would be able to grasp the Chiffer deeply. On the other hand, humans who do not have awareness and understanding of existence, are only superficial in interpreting the signs of the transcendent.

The people of Gorontalo carry out the 40-day spirit prayer tradition. A series of 40-day death ceremonies is provided, one of which is named *bakohati*. *Bakohati* is a container for filling coins and pastries. It is about the size of a cone-shaped fist made of blue cardboard. *Bakohati* means displaying symbolic tools and food. Something that has meaning and form of communication of human approach to God, who creates, inherits, maintains, and determines. *Bakohati* is made with blue color selection. Color selection of the sky symbol. The people of Gorontalo believe that the highest divinity is in the sky. The sky, for most traditional societies, is a living object, animate and has a community that inhabits. The dynamics of celestial life appear in meteoric phenomena. The power of celestial revelation is most visible in the horizon as the whole celestial realm, with infinite height, eternity and absoluteness.

Mircea Eliade found a similar appreciation in many primitive tribes. The names given to the supreme divinity of many tribes are associated with the sky, such as *Ilo*, the supreme god of the Maori people, meaning the highest peak; *Uwoluwo*, the supreme god of the Negro Akposo, which means the one on high;

⁴⁰ Jaspers, 2:70.

Anu, the supreme god of the Babylonians, who also represented the sky; *Deus* in ancient Greek beliefs, meaning dwelling in the sky; *Tengri*, the supreme god of the Mongolian faith; and *Tien*, the supreme god of Chinese society.⁴¹

Bakohati who translates the mystical experience of the ancestral revelation of the Gorontalo people into physical objects. bakohati, as a symbol of the mystical experience of revelation, represents the element and vision of Transcendence. Bakohati, as an object of translation, on the one hand has the power, because it makes an exclusive, personal and unique mystical experience of revelation that can be known by many people and passed on to many generations. Bakohati in white and blue depict the height of the white sky and mother. The attainment of the expression of wonder of the color of the sky is a language towards the transcendent. Expression of amazement according to Karl Jaspers is categorized as a second language. It has elements of divinity and is truly in the flow of the divine mystery, which in the ascending way penetrates to the divine plane, and in the descending way presents (wirklich) Transcendence.

Bakohati and other instruments in the ceremony, on the other hand, as a place of translation cannot reach the totality of the mystical experience of exclusive, personal and unique revelation. Each object of translation has a distinctive structure, which can both represent and limit, so it cannot cover the totality of the mystical experience of revelation. Bakohati in its form is the embodiment of deep and total religiosity. It is manifested in the shape of a bakohati with five seals that describe the pillars of Islam.

The highest divinity is believed to be the owner or ruler of the sky, at least dwells in the sky, and manifests His power through meteorological phenomena, such as breathing wind, sounding thunder, and expressing anger through storms and lightning. The association of the highest divinity with the heavenly bodies is not meant to identify them with the highest divinity.⁴² This formula clearly describes the existence of not identifying but space. Meteoric objects, because they belong to divinity. Jaspers also confirmed the same thing. Heaven is not

⁴¹ Ndona, "Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia."

⁴² Ndona, 181.

Transcendence but a space for Transcendence to manifest itself.⁴³ The phenomenon of the sky shows the infinite height, eternity, absoluteness and wholeness of the other; and become a space of manifestation of infinity, absoluteness, eternity and the vastness of Transcendence. The sky through light and rain reflects the Transcendence that determines the fate of life on earth.⁴⁴

Transcendence does not make the whole totality of divinity reachable and revealed. Dimensions bring out many elements of divinity, and at the same time bring people into a greater mystery. Every revelation of the divine element in a series of 40-day ceremonies with the accompaniment of reading the Tinilo Pa'ita script still leaves a mystery as the biggest part. The revealed parts are small elements, which in the language of Thomas Aquinas are sparks of divinity, which stimulate the experience of *tramendum* (terrible, thrilling) and *facinosum* (interesting, enchanting), and lift the soul of the subject to an infinite space and enter into the depths of mystery. Divine, which cannot be reached and fully revealed. Humans, within the limits of the culmination of thought, describe the two sides of experience and the elements of divinity into known objects, through associative, metaphorical and polarizing processes. All the symbolism in Tinilo Pa'ita, including the symbolic expressions in the episode Tinilo Pa'ita.

Tinilo Pa'ita represents Transcendence, which is absolute and infinite, which transcends the sky that envelops the entire cosmos and is involved in life. The depiction of the Transcendence in the Tinilo Pa'ita tradition approaches Jaspers' thoughts on Transcendence. Symbols and oburampes in the execution of 40 days on the one hand represent absolute and infinite divinity, far beyond the heavens, because they are inaccessible. Symbols present elements of divinity in the tradition. The presence in the *chiffer* makes the uborampe in the ceremony unable to be fully revealed and always keeps the mystery as the biggest part.

Interpretation and reflection on the symbolism of the ceremonial tradition shows that it is not only a chiffer, but a chiffer that gives revelatory power to other chiffers and unites in divine reality. The tradition illustrates that every element of

⁴³ Harry Hamersma, *Filsafat Eksistensi Karl Jaspers* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1985), 35–36.

⁴⁴ Ndona, “Revelasi Ilahi Pada Peo Jawawawo-Keo Tengah Dalam Perspektif Metafisika Simbol Karl Jaspers: Sumbangan Bagi Penguatan Religiusitas Masyarakat Katolik Indonesia,” 182.

reality, history and culture is interrelated and reflects elements of the same divinity, *Bakohati* and stretcher in the form of an umbrella symbol towards the Transcendent and envelops the entire cosmos and plays a role in life. The symbols used in the tradition illustrate that every divine power and element in the entire cosmos is in the unity of divinity. thereby portraying the natural monistic faith of the Gorontalo people as the One.⁴⁵

This symbolism justifies Jaspers' assertion that human existence can only be attained in relation to Transcendence.⁴⁶ The understanding of the existence of the Gorontalo people, of course, is not exactly the same as the description of the existence of Jaspers which emphasizes individual freedom in self-realization. Existence, for the people of Gorontalo, is more about existence and survival. Existence and survival, for Gorontalo people, can only be achieved in the human relationship with God.

G. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that as the answer to this research, Gorontalo's culture of death in the form of *Tinilo Pa'ita* and the media used in the 40-day commemoration ceremony are symbols representing Transcendence. The symbol and content of *Tinilo Pa'ita* as *Chiffer* finds a metaphysical dimension, namely the Divine in the symbolic elements of *Tinilo Pa'ita*. Symbolic elements as access to reality to reveal the divine element that is revealed. The media and symbolization used in the implementation of the spirit prayer activities become a mystical experience of revelation, it describes the elements and vision of Transcendence. Media, as objects of translation, on the one hand have the power, because they make an exclusive, personal and unique mystical experience of revelation known by many people and passed on too many generations.

⁴⁵ Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*, Works in Continental Philosophy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 106–7.

⁴⁶ Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 1970, 2:7.

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