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Full Length Research Paper

The indigenous Oromo peacemaking ritual: The case of Tajoo among Waayyuu Oromo of Arsii, Ethiopia

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This paper tries to reveal Tajoo ritual, which is performed annually in Arfaasaa (spring) as a New Year celebration by Waayyuu Oromo of Arsii. The data for this study were collected through participant observation, interview, focus group discussion and secondary sources. As revealed by the study, Tajoo is a ritual celebrated commonly by the whole community of Waayyuu Oromo on Hinikkaa (the first day of Oromo calendar). Passing through different steps the ritual is concluded by sacrificial activities for Waaqaa (approximately God in English) and prayer to Him for peace, fertility and prosperity and declaration of Tajoo law. The findings of this paper indicate that Tajoo ritual has real significance in intercommunity peace-building and sustaining social solidarity, integration and re-integration. Therefore, using this indigenous institution as input is vital in future policy formulations in the country as peace issues are central to the realization of sustainable development.

Key words: Tajoo ritual, peacemaking, Arsii Oromo, indigenous, symbolism.

INTRODUCTION

Arsii Oromo, the largest in *Bareentuu* group of the Oromo¹ confederacies, is divided into two main branches: *Sikkoo* and *Mandoo*. These groups have settled across larger territory. In fact, they inhabit expansive settlement area in comparison with other Oromo groups. *Waayyuu* is one of main sub-branches of *Mandoo* moiety, which collectively called *Waayyuu shanan* (five *Waayyuus*). This paper focused on sub-branch of *Waayyuu* which inhabit *Adamii Tulluu Jiddoo*, *Kombolchaa* district around *Baattuu* town in central Rift Valley area of East *Shawaa* Zone of Oromia National Regional State in south central part of Ethiopia.

Arsii Oromo of the study area are followers of

traditional religion which is a belief in *Waaqa Gurracha*.² Some of them also follow Islam and Christian religion. However, the Islam and Christian religion is not deep rooted in the society's tradition.

There are different kinds of rituals performed at different times and places by the Arsii Oromo depending on Oromo calendar. Some of these rituals are *Tajoo*, *Ateetee*, *Boorantichaa*, *Wodaajaa*, *Falaa*, *Hanqiftuu* (*Hulluuqqoo*), *Wobaxaa* etc. This article focuses on *Tajoo* ritual, which is performed as a marker of Oromo New Year. The ritual takes place yearly at *Malkaa* (ford) through sacrifice and libation in the hope that *Tajoo*

¹ The Oromo is the largest nation in Ethiopia. They reside in Ethiopia and Northern Kenya, speaking Eastern Cushitic of Afro Asiatic language family.

² *Waaqa Gurraacha* can loosely be translated into English word 'Black God'. *Waaqa Gurraacha*, for the Oromo, is the creator of universe, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent.

brings about peace and harmony in the society as a whole.

Ritual performance is common feature of human life. According to Schirch (2005, p.1) to study humanity, is to study ritual...to ponder the future of humanity is... to consider the future of ritual. The author also suggests that peace building should be thought of as a stage that must be constructed to engage people's emotions and feelings to capture their imagination and interest. Peace building and conflict resolution (such as principled negotiation), practitioners need to rely more on ritual.

Folklorists study rituals because their complexity and dramatic qualities make them dense with meanings: they are significant expressions of a group's traditions, beliefs, values, and identity. Because rituals are so important in making the process of folklore visible, we want to focus in depth on this complex category (Sims and Stephens, 2011, p.99).

Tajoo is a very important ritual performances in Oromo culture in general and Arsii Oromo in particular. *Ayyaan-laakkooftuus* (Oromo time-reckoners) determines and sets the exact date of the ritual, which varies from year to year. The *Gadaa*³ leaders facilitate the ceremony by mobilizing the community to attend the ceremony. On the day of celebration, new law is set and announced; previous laws could be ratified, and conflicts are resolved by *Shanacha Gadaa* (*Gadaa* councils). Such and other related relevant aspects and outcomes of the ritual attracted the attention of the present researcher.

On the other hand, there are some existing studies, which attempted to highlight the southern, central and western Oromo ritual performances. These include the work of Legesse (1973) on the Borana *Gadaa* system, Bartels (1983) on Oromo religious rituals, Kelbessa (2001) on Oromo rituals in conserving environment, Gemechu, (2007) on ritual in blood price payment (*Guma*), Badhaasoo's (2000) and Qashu's (2009) researches on some wedding ceremonies are worth mentioning. Moreover, ateetee, *siinqee*, *qanafaa* and *rakoo* were studied by Deressa (2002), whereas, *siinqee* institution was studied by Kumsa (1997). These works did not touch the *Waayyuu* sub branch of Arsii Oromo, which is covered by this study. In addition, none of these researches discussed about *Tajoo* and its role in peace making and social integration. Therefore, to fill these gaps, this study focuses on indigenous Oromo peacemaking and social integration ritual focusing on *Tajoo* among Arsii Oromo. The paper intended to investigate the role of *Tajoo* ritual in peace-building and social integration, to define *Tajoo* ritual from the perspective of Arsii Oromo, to identify activities related to *Tajoo* ritual, to identify the participants in *Tajoo* ritual, to

explore the roles of participants in the ritual and to explore changes and continuities undergone in the ritual.

The research can be the basis for the future studies related to peace making rituals like *Tajoo*. The result of this research can also serve as an input in policy formulation in the country concerning peace building and social integration in the effort to achieve sustainable peace and social integration in the country.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The concept of ritual

According to Sims and Stephens (2011), a ritual is a particular type of tradition that many folklorists study as a distinct category of folklore. Rituals are habitual actions, but they are more purposeful than customs; rituals are frequently highly organized and controlled, often meant to indicate or announce membership in a group. Most rituals bring together many types of folklore: verbal such as chants, recitations, poems, or songs; customary, such as gestures, dances, or movements; and materials, such as food, books, awards, clothing, and costumes.

In addition (Myerhoff (1977) cited in Sims and Stephens (2011) defines rituals as performances that are repeated and patterned and frequently include ceremonial symbols and actions. Perhaps most significant to our recognition of rituals is a frame that indicates when the ritual begins and ends.

However, for Schirch (2005) ritual includes a wide collection of activities, which may be religious or secular, traditional or modern, formal or informal, forming or transforming, and destructive or constructive.

Types of ritual

The most common and widely held rituals include those related to important events such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Some rituals are practiced by an entire community or within a large geographic area, and many are related with a particular culture or ethnicity. The authors suggest that as with other folklore texts, categories overlap, and elements of each kind of ritual may be related to elements of other kinds. The labels we suggest are meant to help illustrate and describe the many situations in which rituals are performed and have meaning (Sims and Stephens, 2011). According to these authors, the following are major types of ritual.

Rites of passage rituals

Rites of passage mark notable dates or stages in a person's life. Most rites of passage occur at times of

³ *Gadaa* is indigenous Oromo democratic governance system. It is system of generation classes that succeed each other every eight years in assuming political, military, judicial, legislative and ritual responsibilities.

change or transition: birth, puberty, entering adulthood or coming of age, marriage, and death. In some groups, rites of passage involve fasting, body modifications, or ingestion of ceremonial foods or substances; in others, ceremonies are not as elaborate and are embedded within group interactions (Sims and Stephens, 2011).

For Gennep, these kinds of rituals have three stages: separation (preliminal), transition (liminal), and reincorporation (postliminal), when a person who has gone through a ritual returns to society with a new status (Gennep, 1960, cited in Sims and Stephens, 2011, p. 114). Rites of passage are practiced in all cultures. But the events celebrated vary from culture to culture. Coming-of-age rituals are a particular type of rite of passage that acknowledges the transition from childhood to adulthood. These rituals occur around the time of puberty and frequently involve extended community participation.

Initiation rituals

Initiation rituals express a person's entrance into membership of a certain group. Groups with initiation rituals are usually well defined, with clear hierarchies and structures, perhaps even laws or rules of conduct. Some initiation ceremonies and rituals are private and secret; others are open to the public. Examples include sorority and fraternity initiations or ceremonies, and inductions into occupational or honorary societies. Rituals may include reciting promises or pledges, performing humiliating acts to prove one is willing to do anything to belong, or being presented with ceremonial artifacts or clothing that show others one is a member (Sims and Stephens, 2011).

Among the Guji Oromo, the initiation ceremony is known as *lagubasa* (liberating ceremony) and it involves testing the youth in skills, knowledge and morals required of adulthood. When entering the *raabaa* grade, a person attains adult status and legitimacy to have authority with intricate social roles and responsibilities (Tadesse, 2013).

Naming rituals

According to Sims and Stephens (2011), there are many rituals associated with naming that ranges from a public presentation of an infant within an informal gathering of a family group to elaborate ceremonies in which names are bestowed by religious or community leaders. Among some groups, a child's name might be the same as or a

variation of a respected elder's or might be chosen to convey aspects of a particular ethnicity or culture, and rituals might be held to solidify those traditions. A seemingly simple act like giving a name to a baby may be a crucial element in forming identity and taking one's place in society and may be so important that groups express the value of the naming process through formal procedures. While names and traditions associated with them are important in most groups, some groups have developed rituals that concretize their importance through actions and performances.

Similarly, Tadesse (2013) states that, *gubbisa*, naming ritual, like any other Gadaa rituals, is performed once in eight years and all men who are in *Gadaa* generational grade would give a common name to all of their children. The ritual is led by *Abbaa Gadaa* and involves slaughtering of a bull, prayers and performances of folksongs.

Ritual in conflict resolution

Rituals for Turner (1957 as cited in Dejene, 2007, p.13) are social drama that resolves crises by dramatizing the advantages of values and social arrangements. It is performed in response to the breach of law during times of social conflicts to restore the social order. Through rituals, social values are given sacred authority.

According to him, the drama of dispute settlement passes through four phases: (1) the breach of peace (2) the crises that result from the breach (3) the practice of resolving the crises and (4) the re-establishment of the unity of the groups. Although rituals may solve concrete conflicts, they do not extinguish contradictions, which continue to exist at a more basic structural level. For Turner, the effect of a ritual is a result of the performance that stimulates an emotional response and thereby transforms perception.

A conflict-resolving ritual transformation occurs in two ways. The first is resolving conflicts that occur between two or more people in order to reinstate a sense of mutually agreed-upon justice (redressive). The second is restoring stability, order, and harmony to social relations (reconciliation) (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 1999, p.163). Ritual offers an opportunity to interact in a space where the conflict seems to have no currency and where the social structures that often cause conflict no longer operate. People are reminded of their relationships and their shared desire for peace (Schirch, 2005). Schirch also suggests that there are some topics, issues, and feelings that can be communicated only through rituals.

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This is the case as individuals learn and communicate each other by doing. Peace building should emphasize ritual action and nonverbal communication rather than focusing solely on rational discussion. Through ritual, humans try out new ways of being together and create a new reality for themselves.

In the same way, *Gondoro* tradition has complex ritual procedures and strong symbolic representation of purification of the 'curse' and reconciliation of conflicting individuals/groups between the Guji Oromo and the Gedeo in Ethiopia. The tradition is performed not only as a mechanism of purifying the 'curse' from the guilty but also as a method of conflict resolution. Through the ritual processes, the guilty person and his clan would be reconciled with the relatives and clan members of the offended. The tradition works both in resolution of inter-personal as well as inter-group conflicts (Asebe, 2007).

For Bartels (1994), "peace making is always concluded with prayers and rituals of reconciliation with *Waaqa*, God". The Oromo believe that, whenever people enter into conflict with one another, they also enter into conflict with God. Bartels reported the Oromo saying: "*Waaqa* does not hear our prayers if we are not at peace with each other". God is said to be happy when humans (and all of his creatures for that matter) are at peace; God hates conflict (Bartels, 1994, cited in Tenna, 2013).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, qualitative research paradigm is used. Since ritual in peacemaking and social integration is the central point of the study, ethnographic methods of data collection were used to collect, analyze and interpret the data.

Ritual studies are ethnographic, drawing heavily on participant observation and interviews. It is also doggedly comparative, committed to charting cross-cultural similarities and differences (Schilderman, 2007). In field research on ritual, observation and interview are the usual correctives against stereotyping, projecting, and other ways of misunderstanding data.

However, before arriving at a field site, it is crucial to know what one knows, to disgorge what one takes for granted. In short, self-knowledge, not just knowledge of the other, is essential to ethnographic research (ibid).

Therefore, three methods were used for successful accomplishment of this study: participant observation, interview and focus group discussion. These three methods contributed to the achievement of the goals of the study. In addition, the researcher also tried to search the existing documents on the subject or similar subjects that would help to focus on, understand and interpret the basic issues.

Cultural research demands participant observation of actual situations and live activities. It involves getting close to people and making them feel comfortable enough with the observer's presence so that one can observe and record information about the observed. The main advantage of participant observation is its directness: it enables researchers to study action as it occurs. The researcher does not have to ask people about their behavior and the actions of others: he/she can simply watch as individuals act and speak. This in turn enables the investigator to collect data first-hand, thereby preventing contamination of the factors standing

between him and the object of the research (Russell, 2006).

Tajoo ritual is celebrated mostly in January and February depending on Oromo calendar. The 2014 *Tajoo* ritual took place on February 5. The current researcher attended and observed all pertinent ritual events and celebrants from the beginning to the end. The researcher took notes, captured pictures and recorded audio while the ritual activities were going on.

In-depth interview was a method of qualitative data collection which the researcher applied to generate relevant data. The researcher purposefully selected the *Gadaa* leaders and eleven elders depending on their knowledge, experience, and social responsibility. During interview, the researcher and co-data collector recorded audio data, took notes and photo of the participants after securing their consents.

Focus group discussion was also used to gather relevant data for this paper. Focus group discussion is usually exploratory in nature and is used to discover the underlying sentiment or attitudes toward the topic under discussion. It is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest.

It is useful for the researcher in identifying normative issues, terms, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, interpretation, from a group of individuals (Russell, 2006). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the researcher selected two groups each constituting eight individuals reasonably depending on their experience and knowledge. This includes *Gadaa* leaders of *Waayyuu* Oromo and eight elders.

Decisions were made earlier on ethical issues with concerned bodies. The voluntary nature of participation and the right of the participants to withdraw from the study at any time were clearly explained to them at the beginning of the study. Explanations were given regarding the issues of confidentiality, anonymity, and potential uses of the findings. Finally, qualitative methods of data analysis were used to analyze data. Interpretation and description were used for the data that have been collected through participant observation, interview and focus group discussion.

RESULTS

The concept of *Tajoo* ritual

In defining the term *Tajoo*, it is important to know the concept *ayyaanaa*. In this sense, the term *ayyaanaa* means day which is determined by Oromo time reckonings, *ayyaana-laakkayuu*. The name of particular *ayyaanaa* or the day on which the *Tajoo* ritual is celebrated is known as *Hinikkaa*. *Hinikkaa* means *ayyaanaa Waaqaa*, literally means God's Day. *Tajoo* performed on the day of *Hinikkaa* to celebrate *Waaqaa's* Day. Therefore, *Tajoo* means the ritual performed on the day of God. *Tajoo* is exclusive to Oromo for the Non-Oromo do not participate in the ritual. However, sometimes Non-Oromo and Non-Arsii Oromo clans such as Silte, Marako, Meskana, Gona and Sodo⁴ may participate through their representative elders to present cases of conflict, which can be addressed on the

⁴ Silte, Marako and Meskana are neighboring groups of *Waayyuu* of *Arsii* from non-Oromo groups, Gona and Sodo are from non-Arsii Oromo groups neighboring *Waayyuu*.

occasion of *Tajoo* ritual. The day of *Tajoo* is considered as the marriage day of *Waaqaa* (God), when all humans should celebrate the wedding.

It is one of the *Waaqaa's* ceremonies, held annually. Historically, *Tajoo* is the ritual, which brings the people together. It is considered ceremony of peace and rain that is celebrated for herd and community alike. *Tajoo* is sometimes considered as libation ceremony (*dhibaayyuu* or *muudaa*) which means anointment, and it refers to prayer period for the Oromo. It represents the idea of loyalty to the ideals of religion, sustainable socialization and human harmony. Information from the field attested that *Tajoo* belongs to the whole of 'Black' Arsii, '*Tajoon ta Arsii gurraachaati*'. According to *Waayyuu* elders, black Arsii means the strongest, the purest and the native Oromo, who do not fear enemy, who fear only *Waaqaa* and who keep secret, whose heart is seen only by *Waaqaa*.

Actors and procedures of *Tajoo* ritual

Data from the field indicated that culturally, *Tajoo* ritual belongs to all followers of indigenous Oromo religion⁵. The entire Arsii Oromo can participate in it. In *Tajoo* ritual, everybody has her/his own role. All libation materials like *ciicoo* (milk container), other feasts as well as *siinqee* (ritual stick) are brought by women. Elders with *Gadaa* leader facilitate the way to sacrifice of the sacrificial animals and keep the schedule of each activity intact and make sure that everyone gets informed as well as discharges his/her responsibilities for the libation to take place. Adults keep sacrificial cattle and bring *xiribbaa* (small wooden peg).

Gadaa leaders are the most important actors in *Tajoo* ritual. They announce essential information to the community from the very beginning. They facilitate the ritual by maintaining different steps which the actors have to pass through. These are *qixxee*, *tolfannoo*, *dullacha golgaa*, *cirri eedduu*, *malkaa booreessuu*, *xiribbaa dhaabuu* and *seera tumuu*. Even though translating these activities into English would not do justice for it possibly distorts the meanings the following section attempts to explain their concepts.

Qixxee

Qixxee is the assembly held at different levels for different purposes. For the purpose of *Tajoo* ritual, a *Gadaa* leader organizes *qixxee* (meeting) to discuss how the ritual would be conducted. It is held at kraal of *Gadaa* leader or at kraal of *hayyuu* (famous elder). All representatives of *Waayyuu* clans avail themselves and

participate in *qixxee* to hear the responsibility of their respective clans in *Tajoo* ritual. Time reckoners also participate in *qixxee* and inform the exact date of the *Tajoo* ritual. On that assembly, a *Gadaa* leader announces the date of the ritual publically. Responsibility is given to every clan on *qixxee* to prepare necessary items for the ritual.

Tolfannoo

Tolfannoo is precondition for *Tajoo* ritual and symbolizes driving out enemies and evils from the region. It is performed on the *jalabultii* (eve) of *Tajoo* at a place called *Haroo Booramoo*, which also known as *Dirree Yaa'aa* (meeting place). On this day, people go to *Booramoo* on their horses' back and sacrifice grayish-brown and nearly black he-goat. At *tolfannoo* ceremony, they also perform *laallee*; etymologically it is related to *ilaallee* (we have observed). It marks the exorcising of enemies or cleanses the ancestors from evils. To perform *laallee* all participants climb uphill and point their spear, and *siinqee* (women's ritual stick) to the direction of the enemy, mostly to the southwest. Arsii Oromo used to curse saying "*dhidhimii bitaa aani or bitaa bu'i, Waaqni bitaa si haa buusu*", which means get lost to the south direction, may God get rid of you to the south.

Dullacha Golgaa

For the Arsii Oromo, sacrificing an old cow is believed to clear all wrong actions and pacifies the society. Therefore, in the morning of *Tajoo* ritual (before going to *malkaa* (ford) for the ritual) people sacrifice *dullacha golgaa*, an old cow to clear the road to *Tajoo* ritual. This sacrificial is arranged in someone's house as per the decision of the clan assembly, which is decided during the initial meeting.

Women bring an old cow to be sacrificed and they tie it to the tree while the prayer goes on steadily. They also go around the cow eight times to symbolize the period of one *Gadaa* class, singing and praying for peace and fullness. Before sacrificing an old cow, the elder women bless the celebrants by moving her hand over the back of the cow gently. According to *Waayyuu* elders, woman is believed to be closer to *Waaqaa* because she is humbler, weaker; softer and innocent than male counterparts. Therefore, she is thought to be unfit for a fight. That is why the society thinks *Waaqaa* will listen more to women than to men. Thus, what a woman blesses is believed to be blessed; what she curses is believed to be cursed.

Cirri Eedduu

Cirrii in Oromo refers to oxpecker and *eedduu* means

⁵ A religion based on belief in one God known to the Oromo as *Waaqaa*, which according to the Oromo is the creator of the entire universe.

keepers. The two together means oxpecker keeper. Therefore, *Cirri eedduu* are people who cherish the materials of *Tajoo* ritual, which are kept on the bank of the river until libation. These cultural materials are *ciicoo* (milk container), *siinqee*, and others with cultural foods and drinks like *miccira* (Oromo cultural food, which is prepared from mixture of butter and flour of barley), *surree* (Oromo cultural food which is prepared from mixture of butter, honey and flour of barley), *caccabsaa* (Oromo cultural food, which is prepared from mixture of butter, pepper, honey and flour of wheat), *marmaaree* (Oromo cultural food, which is prepared from mixture of butter, honey and flour of wheat), milk and honey mead. Women bring all these materials and they put them at riverbank till libation time.

They are collectively known as *meeshaalee woyyoomaa*; sacred materials. *Cirri eedduu* oversee birds, flies, children, and dog from eating (spoiling) these sacred cultural materials. If these materials are damaged by children or dogs, it is considered as breach of law; and if foods and drinks are spilt out and chipped the law could be also broken. *Waayyuu* Oromo equate keeping oxpecker away from their cattle (which pecks the back of cattle) with *cirri eedduu*, who keep sacred materials on the *malkaa* (ford).

Malkaa Booreessuu

Malkaa booreessuu is done by moving sacrificial animals into the river and turn round them in the river to make the river turbid. The act is the symbol of rainfall, which floods and gets the soil water soaked, thereby ensuring peace and fertility for the society. To symbolize this, they go around the sacrificial animals. All participants in the ritual somberly watch when youngsters drag the sacrificial animals around in the river, males say, *Waaqni roobe Waaqni roobe!* Literally means, 'Rain is raining!' 'Rain is raining!' While females are ululating. After stirring the river, the participant's rash to *Odaa* (sycamore tree) shade to symbolize escaping from the coming heavy rainfall. They run hastily while reciting '*hitit, hitit... roobni nu dhaanee beenaa mana seennaa*', literally means let us go home; the rain is pouring on to us. *Hitit, hitit* is a reaction which someone says when feels serious cold.

Xiribbaa Dhaabuu

Xiribbaa is a small wooden peg made from *mi'eessaa*, *xaaxeessaa* (*Premna resinosa*) and *ejersaa* (*Olea europaea*) trees for different purpose in Arsii Oromo. The Arsii stake into ground this small peg for different purposes in different rituals. Data from the field showed that *Xiribbaa* indicates ownership of a certain land, keeps away evil deeds from the society, and warrants the

continual living of the people on their land. For the purpose of *Tajoo* ritual, it is be erected on the shore of river by *Gadaa* leaders and *cidha baaftuu* (people of ceremony) after sacrificial animals stirred in the river and turbid it (Figure 1).

All *Gadaa* classes should participate in the erection of *xiribbaa*. If anyone of the classes is absent, it is believed that bad luck would occur up on the entire community in general and that *Gadaa* class in particular. Ultimately, it signals failure of the ritual, as a result of which *Waaqaa* may harm the community. Thus, all *Gadaa* classes should be present on time to erect *xiribbaa*. *Xiribbaa* hammered first by *Gadaa* leader in power. Subsequently, all representatives of *Gadaa* class beat it according to their seniority.

Planting *xiribbaa* to the ground at *malkaa* is among rules and regulations of *Tajoo*. This is because the sacrificial animals are not tied to other pole on *Tajoo* ritual, but only to *Xiribbaa* after *Malkaa Boreessuu* ceremony (making the stream turbid). Erecting *xiribbaa* is believed to safeguard against any eviction from community's land, migration and calamities like earthquake, endemic disease, drought and etc (Figure 2).

Making and amending law during *Tajoo* ritual

At the end of *Tajoo* ritual, *Gadaa* leader orders the *murtii biyyaas* (lawyers) to declare the law of *Tajoo* ritual as well as other laws. *Waayyuu* ratified *Tajoo* laws on *Tajoo* ritual every year. *Tajoo* law is declared only on *Tajoo* ritual day. Because Arsii Oromo believe that *Tajoo* law is considered as the law of *Waaqaa* that have to be amended and made on the day of *Waaqa*. They amend some laws because of global, national as well as local political, economic and social factors. For instance, they have amended and reduced *gumaa* (blood price payment) from hundred heads of cattle to fifty because of changing livelihood from the former pastoralist to agro-pastoralist. They also permit market place for the non-Oromo neighboring groups.

Changes and continuities in *Tajoo* ritual

Tajoo ritual performance was forbidden by respective Ethiopian colonizer regimes of Oromo country. Haile Silassie regime outlawed the ritual and established Ziway Town, changing the place name from *Baatuu* to Ziway. During the *Derg* regime, people performed *Tajoo* ritual secretly. Later, *Derg* prohibited holding rites at rivers like *Malkaa Garbii*, *Deemsisaa*, *Lakkoolee*, *Waamichaa*, *Dambii*, *Waafiiqoo*, *Baatuu*, *Gootuu* and *Malkaa Tajoo*, which were sacred places for *Waayyuu* for different religious and secular rituals. *Tajoo* ritual was revitalized in 2007 in collaboration with *Waayyuu Gadaa* leaders and



Figure 1. Malkaa Booreessuu. Source: fieldwork, photo captured by Lenin Kuto during Malkaa booreessuu February 5, 2014.

Adami Tulu Culture and Tourism Bureau. Unlike in the past, the arrangement, performance, and or law enforcement for *Tajoo* ritual is largely determined by local government officials. The district officials facilitate it; sometimes, they even fix the date of ritual, forced people to repeal ritual laws, for instance the *laallee* ritual. There are frictions between elders and local administrative on the performance of *Tajoo* ritual.

DISCUSSION

Although rituals are common features of human life, harmony is inherent in Oromo ritual and ceremonial activities for proper administrative, religious, moral, political and legal functions. For the Oromo, *nagaa* is an essential key to an orderly universe and societal well-being that humans must obey.

As stated in literature review, rituals for Turner are

social drama that resolves crises by dramatizing the advantages of values and social arrangements. Through rituals, social values are given sacred positions. Similar to this, *Tajoo* is dramatized and symbolically signifies the advantages of sustain peace, harmony, integration and reintegration among Arsii Oromo.

Legesse (2000) states that, among the Oromo, the concept of peace goes beyond the human domain. Peace is a pervasive and sustained concern in moral life. The long blessings that are given daily by Oromo elders are prayers for peace. The theme of peace is everywhere. Thus, the Oromo believe that everything must be at peace for societal well-being and development.

As portrayed by this study, Arsii Oromo believe that all things in the universe are interconnected. The divine and the secular are inseparable, and the activities, ceremonies, and rituals of day-to-day life are intended to secure balance in the universe. Peacemaking is inherently spiritual in that it illustrates on ceremony, prayer, ritual, and



Figure 2. *Gadaa* Leaders erecting *xiribbaa* February 5, 2014. Source: fieldwork, Photo captured by Lenin Kuto.

the supernatural to restore balance, harmony, and peace to the humanity.

Similarly, Tenna (2013) states that, the Oromo term *nagaa* literally means peace, but a definition that includes everything that it implies is yet to be given. Observations of Oromo ritual and ceremonial activities suggest that peace is the harmony of things or parties involved in certain relations; brings harmonious relations between different parts of the human and cosmic orders. For the Oromo, peace is understood as one of the necessities of life. In the absence of peace, even the fulfilment of basic necessities cannot be adequate for the preservation and development of human life.

Similar to Tenna's study, *Tajoo* ritual is also an institution or mechanism of peaceful social integration. It maintains peaceful social relationships. People in conflicts between themselves do not present on *Tajoo* ritual days unless they resolve the quarrel before the ritual. Therefore, *Gadaa* leaders order the representatives of each clan to identify and resolve minor and major conflicts at *qixxee* (assembly). Elders settle the conflicts between individuals, family, neighbor, inter-clan or intra-

clan levels.

According to Aguilar (2005, p. 58), "Oromo rituals recreate, enact, and maintain the social order [which] symbolically expresses the cosmological order. Prayers link the earthly part of the cosmological order with the divine one."

In line with this, *Tajoo* ritual has various roles politically, socially and economically for the society. The ritual especially builds peace and integration among participants. Arsii Oromo believe that when *Tajoo* is performed, it ensures all success. When *Tajoo* is performed improperly with a breach of its rules and regulations, all things would go wrong. Generally, the Arsii Oromo used to believe that with the performance of *Tajoo* ritual, the whole Arsii would be land of peace, love and prosperity.

Arsii Oromo believe that participating in *Tajoo* ritual with dispute even in heart would cause harm from *Waaqaa* (God). Consequently, people who have conflicts between or within members of the society should inform and resolve their conflicts ahead of ritual since restoring and perpetuating peace in the community is one of the

essential preconditions for performing *Tajoo* ritual's.

In addition to this, on the day of *Tajoo* ritual (before libation period *Gadaa* leader announces the following, "Those among you who have differences, and those who divide yourself in hate, forgive each other and give each other the kiss of peace before going to river for libation. Do not get us involved in dispute with *Waaqaa* (God); today the eye of *Waaqaa* is on all of us." After that, individuals who are in disputes forgive one other and reconcile. If there are major conflicts, such as inter-clan and intra-clan, two parties bring the issues to *Gadaa* leaders. Then *Gadaa* leaders discuss and give solution before libation time. It is not postponed to another day because that day is *Waaqaa's* day, when the peace should prevail.

Resolving cases of conflict also entails between the Arsii and non-Oromo neighbors, such as Marako, Silte, Gona, Maskana and Sodo through *Gurraachaa* institution.

Gurraachaa institution, entrusted to oversee the issues of conflicts between Arsii Oromo and non-Arsii people. It serves as peacemaking and social integration institution between Arsii and other non-Arsii groups.

According to Arsii elders, *Gurraachaa* institution settle major conflicts over looting cattle, duels over borders and pasture/grazing lands. As a result, these groups practice intermarriage, set up common market, use common grazing land, and share sources for drinking and watering their livestock. Some of them also use common law. For instance, the Marako is using Arsii Oromo traditional law through *Gurraachaa* institution.

Conclusion

The important symbols and values of the people are used, provoked, communicated, or expressed in rituals. *Tajoo* ritual plays an important role in the peacemaking process, social integration and reintegration. It helps to link people to the past, present and future. Generally, according to Arsii Oromo elders through the performance of *Tajoo* ritual, harmony is established between all things in the universe. Overall, this study fairly argued that *Tajoo* ritual has real significance in intercommunity peace building and sustaining social solidarity, integration and re-integration. *Tajoo* ritual has broad concepts and meanings, which still need further investigation. For instance, the historical backgrounds of the ritual, the concept of Oromo New Year, associated with *Tajoo*, but which have been overlooked in Ethiopian studies demands further investigations. Therefore, to illustrate, preserve and conserve the indigenous culture and knowledge more and deep research and investigation is required.

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Full Length Research Paper

Alchemic transformation of human creation

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This study aimed to analyze the changes in human being in terms of alchemy. The process of human being goes through three stages. The first stage is the germinal period, the second stage is the embryo period, and the third one is the fetal period. Alchemy creates new things through three alchemical stages: nigredo (black), albedo (white), rubedo (red). This research attempts to figure out whether there is any relationship between the beginning of life and the stage of transformation in alchemy. The results show that the stone in alchemy is regarded as a zygote. It contains the prima material for human being. The human heart and soul are intrinsic in gene, which can be scientifically found. Scientific studies already proved that new changes take place when chemical reactions occur. The physical changes in the human body can be embryologic. The research explains how the mind, body and soul are different, and how these three are integrated to form a human being. The results of this study seem to increase the understanding of the psychological development of the human being. In addition, the understanding scope in Jung's perspective in human creation and psychology will be extended.

Key words: Alchemy, nigredo, albedo, rubedo, human creation, transformation.

INTRODUCTION

"Its association with the invisible forces of the psyche was the real secret of the magisterium. In order to express this secret the old masters readily resorted to allegory" (Jung, 1968 p. 276).

Jung saw the stone has its own secret. The researcher concerned the zygote as the stone. This study focuses on the transformation from a zygote to a human being. This mysterious process goes through three stages. The first

stage is fertilization, the second stage is the integration with mother's body through implantation, and the third one is the transformation into a human figure, which can be explained as the stage of transformation in alchemy.

Alchemy is the work to find the unique spirit through transformation. The researcher saw the power of one's heart and soul in a zygote which brings transformation turning into human. Jung elaborated heart and soul as a similar psychological symbol as lapis in alchemy. Very few

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people know how heart and soul is formed and where it begins. However, we want to know who we are. Humans still do not have a clear idea of who they are. The heart and soul are something that we can explore.

By considering these views, the researcher believes that the creation of life cannot be simply viewed from a scientific perspective. The researcher has done research on child development and child psychology for 30 years. It was difficult to find the previous studies using the alchemical approach to human being. It was also difficult to find any existing research on scientific basis on human creation in the psychological perspective. Most researches on human creation discussed creation myths and prototypes. Therefore, the researcher here attempts to shed light on the psychological meaning in the scientifically discovered and proven developmental journey from a zygote to fetus.

The Stone in alchemy is regarded as a zygote that contains the genes to form a human. Jung indicated that “gene is the essence to represent autonomous trait and existence, which gives us answer to what the gene is”. In other words, the human heart and soul are intrinsic in gene, which can be scientifically found. Scientific studies already proved that new changes take place when chemical reactions occur. The researcher attempts to figure out whether there is any relationship between the moment of forming a child’s psychology and the beginning of life. That is, the researcher tempted to know what phenomena happen in the human psyche and soul’s realm psychologically rather than scientifically. The physical changes in human body can be embryologic. However, the embryologic approaches cannot explain our mind and spirit. The researcher is interested in how the mind, body and soul are different, and how these three are integrated to form a human.

This study therefore aimed to analyze the changes in human creation in terms of alchemy. The results of this study seem to increase the understanding of the psychological development of a human being. In addition, the understanding scope in Jung’s perspective in the human creation and psychology will be elaborated.

DISCUSSION

Overview of alchemical Idea: History of alchemy

It can be said that C.G. Jung’s interest in alchemy started when he left S. Freud. While both had different viewpoints and Jung tried to understand unconsciousness in his own way, he naturally moved to study alchemy. Jung could not accept Freud’s opinion on unconsciousness, and he was reminded of the concept of collective unconsciousness that existed transcendently beyond personal

unconsciousness. In those days, Jung had a dream about the Crusades of the 12th century appearing as ghosts and he could not understand what it meant. Later he found that the timing corresponded to not just the event of Crusades in the 12th century, but also that of beginning of research on alchemy and the Holy Grail.

Around 1926, Jung had an important dream about alchemy, where he reached a place similar to a castle an Italian duke. Upon his entering the garden, the door closed and someone told him that he is now stuck in the 17th century. Without understanding the dream, he encountered *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, a famous alchemy book from China, by Wilhelm in 1928. The book gave him the vague idea that research on alchemy in the Western world would be needed. Jung started to be convinced that study on collective unconsciousness is essentially linked with alchemy (Jaffe, 2007).

As study on collective unconsciousness deepened, Jung also paid attention to the issues of groups and the world. So, he started to work on cultural phenomenon, especially about religious issues. He wrote a thesis, “Psychology and religion” in 1940, but the issue and relations between Christianity and alchemy had been covered by a research for Paracelsus, a doctor from Switzerland. Jung’s work in 1944 attempted a viewpoint of the philosophy of religion on alchemy.

While studying Christianity, Jung saw an illusion of green statue of Jesus Christ – one smaller than the actual size. The green gold he saw was the soul of the world that alchemists found in inanimate objects or minerals, not just in humans. It is called anima mundi (soul of the world) or fillus macrocosmi (son of world) in alchemy, and is same as Anthropos (human), as the universals which were believed to fill the whole world.

In 1951, Aion demonstrated Jesus Christ in two perspectives – one was Jesus of Nazareth while the other was the symbolic figure of Christ. So Jung explained Christ, which is the symbolic being, Anthropos, as a complete form of personality with the concept of Selbst in his psychology. Jung completed his last work in his life, *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (Secret of union) in 1955 which attempted union of the two fields of alchemy and psychology of unconsciousness.

Basic concepts of alchemy

Alchemy here means the Middle Age alchemy with Gnostic traditions inherited secretly outside of traditions of Middle Age Christianity. Alchemy has only been known as a kind of a secret art of making gold or immortal potion from mere steel or copper. Alchemists always worked in the shadow to avoid exposure of their works, and their

skills have been inherited to only a highly limited number of people, and related records are filled with symbols so that uninitiated people can never understand them.

According to Jung (1968), "Alchemy, as is well known, describes a process of chemical transformation and gives numberless directions for its accomplishment" (p. 228). Since alchemists in the medieval times applied Gnostic teachings as their theoretical background, their views on the world and universe were identical to those of ancient people. They tried to discover traces of God related with the creation of the world, or the world of Gods even. So, while studying certain objects, Alchemists conducted their own tasks of finding vapor or actual objects, believed to be nearby the target objects. They believed that all types of minerals in the world had a soul; therefore, they thought that the transformation of objects involved both, psychological and material processes.

Alchemy is about revealing the existence of an unknown soul, and the alchemist plays the role of providing all possible efforts to reveal the soul, while being capable of starting a relationship with the world of God. Such processes work secretly in the circulation of nature and within the mysticism of oneself. Therefore, finding a psychological center through nature is an important part of alchemy, but the problem is that each person has a different psychological center as well as different goals.

Alchemical stages of transformation

Alchemy is the process of chemical interaction and the process of discovering soul in material things; such processes of transformation by chemical interaction occur along with the psychological transformation. As science advances, and width and depth of scientific thinking increase, an understanding of human psychological thinking also deepens. The chemical action in the process where sperm and eggs meet and combine may be the initial process of creating human psychology. DNA, which is a genetic factor, contains both the maternal and the paternal characteristics. No one knows what will be combined. Psychological traits are dormant in the chemical association by the scientific process in an embryological perspective. The original matter that forms the transformation into a human is created. The original matter is a bisexual and a philosopher's stone. This brings and creates conversion, and has a spirit. Here, the expression that it has a spirit implies its psychological traits. There are three stages of transformation in alchemy, which are Nigredo, Albedo, and Rubedo.

Jung (1968) is of the opinion that "The nigredo or blackness is the initial state, either present from the beginning as a quality of the prima materia, the chaos or

massa confuse, or else produced by the separation (solutio, separatio, divisio, putrefactio) of the elements" (pp. 230-231).

It attempts changes of the human life while it transforms materials by manipulating hardships, death and marriage of materials. Essence of this process lies in the blackening which is linked with the rituals of hardship, death and rebirth. Prima materia corresponds to the concept of black, or the initial state with no division, as it has the shape of chaos with no clear boundary, form or limit, while being the bisexual, or hermaphrodite that contains everything. It has potentials as a seed or an egg for division into diverse forms. This stage is same as the one where unconsciousness is activated and torn to tatters in psychological terms, same as Jesus Christ being dead right before resurrection, or same as the moment before the sperm and egg unit die together. Death of sperm and egg contains pain of themselves. The chemical action in the process where sperm and eggs meet and combine may be the initial process of creating human psychology. DNA, which is a genetic factor, contains both the maternal and the paternal characteristics. No one knows what will be combined. Psychological traits are dormant in the chemical association by the scientific process in an embryological perspective. The original matter that forms the transformation into a human is created. The original matter is a bisexual and a philosopher's stone. This brings and creates conversion, and has a spirit. Here, the expression that it has a spirit implies its psychological traits. The next stage is albedo.

From this the washing (ablutio, baptisma) either leads direct to the whitening (albedo), or else the soul (anima) released at the "death" is reunited with the dead body and brings about its resurrection, or again the "many colours" (omnes colores), or "peacock's tail" (cauda pavonis), lead to the one white colour that contains all colours. (Jung, 1968, p. 231- 232).

As Jung said, whitening is the dawn state. In the phase of blackness, matters are associated and turned into various colors, and when they are completely associated, they turn white. Whiteness is one and yet it includes multiple things. Our body is one, but our soul includes both the maternal and the paternal line. Alchemists succeeded to this level. They discovered the white stone, that is, the philosopher's stone. The word philosopher connotes the concepts of wisdom and thought. This indicates that it is a combination of body and soul. It is the combination of an alchemist's soul and matters. The alchemist's soul is projected in the matters, resulting in the integration of a single thing. The elements torn to pieces in the phase of blackness become one through death. This is decomposed, not leaving anything. A completely empty space manifests a new possibility.

This is a combination of souls, the process in which something changes. What included the infinite possibilities in the previous stage is now changing into finite possibilities.

Albedo stage is important as union of souls occurs here. The body only cannot constitute a human, and its union with a soul means the birth of a real human. The death of a sperm and egg, and the implantation of a new fertilized ovum in the mother's womb means incarnation of the soul, or the Trinity. It signifies the transformation by symbols ultimately. The next stage is rubedo:

Not till the rubedo is it sunrise. The rubedo then follows direct from the albedo as the result of raising the heat of the fire to its highest intensity. The red and the white are King and Queen, who may also celebrate their 'chemical wedding' at this stage (Jung, 1968, p. 232).

'Rubedo' is the stage where all polarities are united to become a new being, such as union of masculine and feminine things like king and queen in myth and folk tale, bright and dark substances and noble and vulgar matters. It is the final stage of alchemy where the stone of the philosophers (Lapis philosophorum), son of microcosm or anthropos (human) is born. The stage where fertilized ovum combines with the mother and grows into a human is along with the projectile behavior of the mother. Fertilized ovum as a hermaphrodite gives birth to the son of microcosm by uniting with the mother. The stages of alchemy so far show that chemical interactions bring forth transformation.

Alchemic transformation of human creation

As this research aims to learn about human creation from the perspective of alchemy, so it covers the processes of alchemy regarding this.

Alchemic transformation in Germinal Period

Every alchemist has own experimenting material, and it goes for the parents that create human. They called it the "Prima material" (Jung, 1952, 1966, 1968) in alchemic terms. It was believed by alchemists that it had the hidden essence such as truth or spirit by the alchemists. They also tried to find "anima mundi" (Jung 1952, 1966, 1968) that God imbued into materials in the form of seeds in the beginning, which is the reason the author views human creation from alchemic point of view. The two prima materials of sperm and egg contained "anima mundi," the unawake soul and spirit. It is transcendental and prototype nature as the collective unconsciousness. Alchemists call prima material as "uncreated" as it is still not in a definitive shape. Men and women have to value

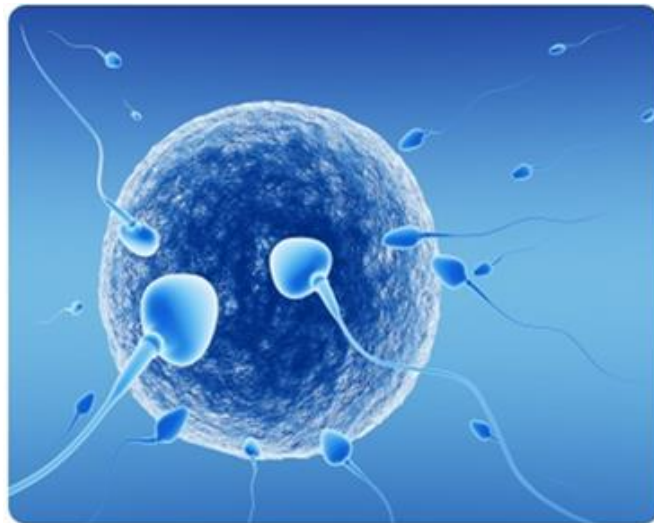


Figure 1. Fertilization.

their sperms and eggs. It is hoped this research helps with propagation of the idea of valuing sperms and eggs. Seed of life is the sperm, which has holy nature from alchemic viewpoint, and it will be born into a human through mystic transformations.

During the embryonic period of the human creation, the sperm and egg go through the chemical actions of "Calcinatio" and "Solutio." As in Figure 1, the heat from the sperm trying to penetrate into the egg and become one with it is the efforts, while the egg goes through the pain of accepting the sperm inside it. Being burned means to have the enormous cloud of smoke to reach the realm of God. The shape is gone after the pain of burning, and it faces the death of dissolution. Sperm and egg no longer have the old shapes and a new egg is created as one circle, which is the fertilized ovum. Without the death of the sperm and the egg, the union will not happen, and the ovum will not be born. Sperm and egg represent more than 50 experimenting materials such as water, stone, life-giving water, earth, sulfur, mercury and lead. Concepts of water and fire are also of significance along with those experimenting materials. The two are in the direct opposite and even form typical couple of polarities, but they are one at the same time.

The fertilized ovum, or the circle created from union of sperm and egg, is chaos and soul of the world, which is the godlike prima material, used for creating the world, and corresponds to the collective unconsciousness from analytic psychology. According to Chun-sim (2004), the blue dewdrops and black ones from the story represent male and female hormones respectively. Male hormones develop sperms and female hormones contribute to birth

of an egg, and both the sperm and egg have a similar shape to that of a dewdrop. Fertilized ovum gives birth to a person, and is an origin of life. A human is born from the ovum fertilized by union of a sperm and an egg.

“The chaos is a *massa confusa* that gives birth to the stone” (Jung, 1968, p. 325).

It is chaos because there is no other way to put it. It is chaos because there is no directivity and no concept. It is chaos because death and birth are repeated until sperm and eggs die and fertilized eggs are created.

Coniunctio of sperm and egg does not cause the polarities to go away, but rather forms the unity by integrating contradiction of the polarities. This reminds us of the simple truth that, without light, there is no darkness, and vice versa. Sparks from the moment sperm and egg meet takes holy meanings. The two burn themselves up and die to become one – the situation is chaotic in itself. The sperm and egg are sulfur and mercury, fire and water, the *prima materials* of fertilized ovum. Sulfur is made up of air and fire, while mercury is made of earth and water. All of these are used by God for creating the world in definitive shape. The pure materials before taking any form are called *prima materials* in alchemy. The sperm and egg are not in any shape, but they form the whole materials in the base of every object. The two cannot have any form before running into each other, so they can be considered as *prima materials* for creating a human.

Alchemists compared *prima materials* with everything from masculine and feminine matters, sky and earth, body and soul, chaos, microcosm and *massa confusa*. *Prima material* itself contains every color and has potential to be transformed into metal. There is nothing greater than metal, as it can conceive and give birth on its own. It even copies genetic factors. What repeats death and birth for itself is called *uroboros*.

Uroboros that shows up in when alchemists take part in the transformation process is *Mercurius*, God of transformation. It is a pure materia that expresses transformation of God related with the wish for a shape to expose *prima material*. The light inside of us is lit on our heart and the nature from the beginning by God. The existence of godlike properties in alchemy is *Mercurius*. *Uroboros* has *Mercurius*, God of transformation, in the inside as its *prima material*. *Mercurius* is the beginning and the end. Fertilized ovum is also the beginning and the end, thus it is *Mercurius* too.

Fertilized ovum contains the God of transformation. What is being separated is no longer sperm and egg, but a totally different being, which is called *blastocyst* in prenatal development. *Blastocyst* gets united with the mother's body through the 7-day journey inside it. Cell

division of fertilized ovum takes same number of days as God needed for creating the world. Like God created the world from chaos, it can be deduced that a human is created from chaos. To obtain an understanding of the essence of life, it is necessary to adopt the story of God's creation. The essence of life cannot be understood with just science. It must be explained based on a philosophical or religious understanding. In other words, God created the world as well as humans.

A fertilized ovum is an egg made from union of sperm and egg. Once a sperm enters into the egg, a certain barrier is formed to keep other sperms from entering. The one inside the egg is left with the core in the head only, which unites with the core of the egg to form a new cell body. This process is fertilization, and it is the moment when the gender of the fetus is determined. A new life is born through such material fusion of fertilization, according to child development psychology. Billions of people on Earth have all different intelligence, appearances, and characters. Why are there such difference physical and psychological conditions? “Developmental psychologists say that the differences are derived from the genetic traits of the parents, physical/psychological state of the mother and environment” (Kyung, 1989. p. 12).

Sperm and egg, the *prima materials*, represent the state and mass of chaos, which contains the soul of the world and corresponds to *Mercurius* of chaos. Fertilized ovum is *Mercurius*, God of transformation. It is a pure material. It is the beginning and the end.

Alchemic transformation in embryo period

The 8 weeks from implantation of fertilized ovum on the womb wall is called *embryonic period*. The ovum is the result of the process of union of opposite poles, of which process includes combination, marriage, union and mating. The united result gets darker until it dies, from death, calcification, decomposition, blackness to purging. It is done by whitening, recombining the soul lost upon death with the dead body, or transferring multiple colors to white that contains all colors. The first prime goal of whitening, or the white water, is achieved in the process. White is the state of the moon, and the state of silver or moon has to be boosted to the state of the sun. Whitening is the dawn.

The fertilized ovum appears to be in the round shape, but goes through dramatic transformation in the *embryonic period*. This is where *Mercurius*, the god of transformation, shows an enthusiastic activity. The creation of something begins from the completely combusted nothing. It is the beginning of all possibilities. Development from the egg to tadpole is similar to that

from the ovum to the embryonic period. Same goes for the birth of larva from an egg, which is embodied in a circle and its outward transformation, cannot be identified, but it still has the features of the wholeness, of containing everything inside. Movement of embryo can be told by its outward transformation in diverse shapes. Fertilized ovum with cell division will have a soul through fusion with the mother, while its internal functionality will be improved as the potential form is materialized into a clear form. It is no longer a mass of chaos, but the unifiable arrangement of universal material.

Conjunction is an important action in alchemy, and the ultimate action sought by the alchemy. Psycho-spiritually, this refers to the proper combining of remaining elements of our being. Fertilization is in the chaotic state when it bears a microcosm, or the state of death. Transformation of fertilized ovum requires fire. Conjunction of fertilized ovum with mother is the alchemy of fire that acts for the combining of sperm and egg. It is the point when chemical actions of fertilized ovum such as burning, dissolution and separation occur, followed by conjunction. Transformation point of the fertilized ovum means fermentation that brings forth changes with the size and shape. Fertilized ovum cannot be born into a human without combining with the mother, and it has to meet the mother to be a true human and to have a human soul. Coniunctio with the mother enables the Trinity with soul as in Figure 2. The mind relates with activation of death, coldness and wind. The word 'mind' contains the transcendence of death.

As umbilical cord functions as a bridge between embryo and mother, it has the symbolic meaning of the bridge. Bridge is structure and pathway, a linking of opposing sides of a landscape often separated by a void. The latter may take many forms: the depths of river, lake or waterfall; a chasm in the earth, the gap between two people, given differences in language, personality or goals; the mythologized breach between heaven and earth, conscious and unconscious, time and eternity (Ronnberg, 2010).

Since the ancient days, the mind has been naturally understood in connection with materials like wind and air, but modern theories focus on the activation of mind also brought up the issue of inactivation of materials that contradicts with activation. This leads to the deadly polarization of life (activation) and death (inactivation), meaning that mind is contradictory with the nature, which is the premise of the Christianity.

The Genesis of the five books of Moses has two parts about the scene where God creates a man. The first part (*Genesis* 1:1-2:4) is about Elohim the Creator making the first human. He starts the world with light, makes organisms on earth, and then works on the human looking like him. He even makes both man and woman



Figure 2. Trinity

simultaneously and lets them to rule the world. The first human in this story looks after the Creator and can rule over other creations. In the other part (*Genesis* 2, 4b-25), another creator called as Yahweh builds earth and sky, then makes the first human. As there is the stream of water on earth, he makes a form with mud, breathes into it to make the first human breathe too. The Creator also built Garden of Eden in the east where he allows Adam to live in, while he creates a woman with his rib to mate with him. In the Bible, humans are made from mud, but still have the authority as the self of the Creator. He is the first human as an intelligent being and a hermaphrodite.

It is worthy to introduce the Rose Garden from Jung's 'Psychology of Transference' that he wrote in 1946 where he depicts alchemy with a series of pictures of the king and the queen going through conjunction and transformation. In the pictures, the king represents masculine principle while the queen stands for feminine principle or each of the two symbolize opposite elements such as consciousness and unconsciousness. In the second step, the two go into the bathtub to wash themselves and get fused along with the process of alchemy. It corresponds to the process of fusing two principles of prima material into one as it gets washed

and purified in early stage of alchemy. Coniunctio herein is not complete yet. Both king and queen face death after coniunctio, and a small figure of a person ascends into the sky. Death here is for regeneration. Consciousness regresses to unconsciousness, to chaos or the black stage (nigredo). Then raindrops fall on the dead body of the king and the queen that purifies them. The small figure returns from the sky to wake them up, and the king and the queen wakes up in one body, which is the second coniunctio (albedo).

This process of death and union of the king and the queen in the Rose Garden happens in prenatal development too. Sperm and egg unite to face death, then become one (nigredo). Fertilized ovum unites with the mother, faces death, and gets reborn. Fertilized ovum uniting with the mother enters the new transformation (albedo). Embryonic period is where the mother conceives an egg, or holding it warmly to incubate it. Incubation matches fermentation of alchemy. Embryonic period is the stage of soul, and is expressed with white containing everything inside. It is having the soul left from death returning to the body, and Jung considered this step the most important part in alchemy. The embryonic period means the work of the Trinity where body and mind take soul. The womb of the mother holds the embryo.

Alchemic transformation in fetal period

A new creation occurs along with the two transformations from the implantation to the embryonic period. From the 9th week, fetus grows up and starts to take a human form, and it is the period when growth accelerates. The inactive existence floating on the amniotic fluid starts to react to tactile stimulus to have separate motor skills and develop into a complex being. As placenta and amniotic fluid develop, fetus is provided with oxygen and nourishment umbilical cord.

All organs and their functions are developed in the fetal period. The baby fetus obtains life and gets nourished through interactions with the mother's body. The cycle of boosting, division and coagulation is repeated in this period. Coagulated matters bring forth increase from the forms, and cell division also incurs increase. Alchemy is about giving birth to the stone of the philosopher from prima material. Prenatal development is creating a human from fertilized ovum that was made from union of sperm and egg. As with alchemy, prenatal development enables the birth of Anthropos, the first human being. Fetal period provides strong elements of water and fire to both mother and baby. The moon in the white stage goes through dawn and turns into the sun. As the light of the dawn appears, the moon and the sun take balances. The

white queen and red king unite to give birth to the stone of the philosopher, microcosm and Anthropos. Powerful light of the sun will surround the baby, which will endeavor to maintain the life. The fetal period is the red stage, the rubedo stage.

The red stage has exaltation (or purification), coagulatio and augmentatio, and the chemical actions from the black and white stages – burning, division, separation, fusion and fermentation – keeps happening as well.

The fetus inside the mother's body plays and eats inside the amniotic fluid and excretes, while turning into a being. It becomes a complete person through the process of having bones, muscles, heart, digestive organs, head and neck, eyes and central nerve system. Amniotic fluid plays an essential role in the birth of a human. Mythology has water to represent circulation, as well as process to make the transformation of rebirth. Philosophy symbolizes what kind of realization that water brings to human life.

All works of alchemy are done in a container, which represents the womb of mother. Container represents soul in alchemy, while same goes for the womb too. Embryo united with the mother has soul, which is same as that a container used for alchemy has soul. Confinement of soul inside prima material means conscious aspect of the soul the separation from the unconscious soul while being confined in unconsciousness. But actually it is the state where unconscious and conscious souls are not united. When the alchemist's works are completed, the souls are united into dark unconscious and bright conscious sides. Union here means regeneration, and such transformations are circulated over and over. Regenerated soul is held inside the material again. It is believed that such actions form collective unconsciousness.

Jaffe (1989) said "The primordial image of the spirit as another, higher god who gave to mankind the *krater* (mixing vessel), the vessel of spiritual transformation. The *krater* is a feminine principle which could find no place in Freud's patriarchal world" (p201).

The fetal period is the last step of creating a human. The fetus in this period has soul, thus is a complete human. Spiritual exchange with the mother awakens the divine nature of the fetus, saves it and develops it into a holy existence, which is why we say the fetus in the womb represents one's self and God. The womb is important as such transformations occur therein. Research on the mother's body is excluded here, but its meaning is necessary to take a look as a container of alchemy is the womb. As the stone of the philosopher is made by washing the base material with pure water in the container and turning it into white, a human who entered the water of life and the stage of new spiritual realization can make the stone of the philosopher in the inside. Snake is sacrificed as a tribute, and also is another symbol of the alchemist that handles the tribute. He has

to conduct the transformation by himself, and has to destroy the base material to make the stone of the philosopher.

Conclusion

As has been seen above, this research attempted to explain the human creation from the alchemic perspective. Human creation is divided into germinal period, embryonic period and fetal period. Alchemy has three stages of black, white and red, each stage has chemical actions of burning, dissolution, separation, union, fermentation, boosting, coagulation and increase. Generally alchemists offer 7 chemical actions except increase. The result was that stages of human being correspond to those of alchemy – germinal period matched the black stage of alchemy, embryonic period matched the white stage, and the last fetal period matched the red stage. Chemical actions at each stage generally include burning, dissolution, separation and union, while others may or may not occur.

All works of alchemy is done in a container. The container represents soul in alchemy. While the alchemist's works are completed, the souls are united into dark unconscious and bright conscious sides. Union here means regeneration, and such transformations are circulated over and over. Regenerated soul is held inside the material again. It is believed that such actions form collective unconsciousness.

The study has limitation of explanation about the pregnant mother. It is inevitable as prenatal development happens inside the mother's body, so there is a minimal description that the womb represents a container of alchemy. Further studies would be needed for symbolic meaning of mother's body as well as relations between the mother and prenatal development.

Also it is supposed that there will be more alchemic meanings in the birth process of a baby, which also requires more researching. Upon completing this research, it was realized that the conscious of unconsciousness happens through deep introspection which transforms the

life into an enriched one.

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Conflict of interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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