

EXPLORING *PULUNG GANTUNG TALI PATI*: A STUDY OF MEMORY AND TRAUMA ON SUICIDE BY SELF-HANGING

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Abstract: *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati* is a Javanese novel written by Iman Budhi Santosa, an Indonesian poet, and writer. The novel narrates a character who traces the myth of death by body hanging in Gunung Kidul, a regency in the Yogyakarta Special Region, Indonesia. This research aims to uncover death caused by hanging oneself through a memory and trauma study approach. Through this research, the research also tries to find out the causes and consequences of death caused by hanging suicide in public memory. As a result, this paper discovers; firstly, *pulung gantung* becomes part of memory and belief about suicide by entangling the neck with a rope and hanging himself in a higher position. Secondly, *pulung gantung* brings disaster to people and the area where the body falls. Thirdly, suicide creates traumatic memories, as well as a disgrace to the family and community in which it occurred. Fourthly, the narratives that reveal a different side of the suicide causes give the possibility that this novel tries to immerse new memories in readers in an attempt to break the chain of myths about suicide.

Keywords: Death, literature, memory, myth, *pulung*, trauma

1. Introduction

Death, wherever it takes place, is always individual, personal, and full of various meanings. Social aspects, changes in technology, religion, culture, experience, race, and collective memory contribute to how people perceive and understand death. In a religious context, for example, death is a certainty; it cannot be rejected as a sign of someone's end of life in the real world. Death becomes normal. On the other hand, death due to suicide is considered unnatural to the general public. Death caused by suicide is not a new phenomenon. Since ancient times suicide has become a way to end life with various motives, whether psychological, social matters, as well as beliefs, such as offerings to Gods. No doubt, suicide has always been an endless discussion in various scientific fields; psychoanalysis, religion, psychology, sociology, and even in world literature, such as *The Bluest Eyes* by Toni Morrison and *The Love of a Good Woman* by Alice Munro (Munjid, 2019).

It is also undeniable that modern Indonesian literary works also discuss death as the main idea, such as Iwan Simatupang's *Ziarah* (prose, 1969), Subagio Sastrowardoyo's *Dan Kematian Makin Akrab* (poem, 1995), Chairil Anwar's *Deru Campur Debu* (poem, 1959), Ayu Utami's *Simple Miracles* (2014), the poems by Joko Pinurbo (*Keranda*, *Kain Kafan*, and *Kematian*), Leila Chudori's *9 Dari Nadira* (novel, 2009), and *Lenka*, a novel written by 17 authors of Sarekat Penulis Kuping Hitam, a group of students organized by Yusi A. Pareanom and A.S. Laksana in the Jakarta Arts Council Novel Writing Workshop on 2009. Death in modern Indonesian literature is interpreted from various perspectives. Death in Iwan Simatupang's *Ziarah*, for instance, presents a magical death because a person who, even famous, but along his lifetime was not very appreciated, when his death was heard, people would flock to offer sorrow to his death. Death in Joko Pinurbo's poetry is more of a sign of death as a way of returning to God and death has always been a part of a human that cannot be avoided. Meanwhile, in *9 dari Nadira*, death due to suicide is not solely the case of the individual perpetrator but influenced by the psychological condition of the closest people. Even more extreme, through *Lenka*, suicide becomes an attempt to gain autonomy and power over the body from other domination (Anggraeni, 2013, p. 48-50). The literary work above indicates that death in modern society is interpreted differently depending on the perspective and culture in society.

It is also common in Javanese literature. For the Javanese, Indonesia's most populous communities, death is regarded as *pepesthen*, a destiny, something that cannot be denied. But the Javanese consider suicide as a disgrace, taboo, breaking nature due to forcibly stopping life. Focusing on a Javanese literary work, *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati*, a novel written by Iman Budhi Santosa, a writer who is better known as a poet, this article examines death due to suicide by self-hanging through the

concept of memory and trauma. Besides winning and receiving an award as the best work in a Javanese novel writing competition from the Yogyakarta Special Region Cultural Service, a province cultural service in Indonesia, in 2017, *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati* was generated from the research of suicide cases in Gunungkidul, one of the districts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The change of research results into literary works presents assumptions regarding the possibility of adjustments to literary elements, such as characters, plot, point of view, conflict, and how sociological elements are presented in literary works. The main focus of this paper is on sociological elements in literary works, especially death in personal or collective memory and trauma caused by suicide. In particular, this paper seeks to answer the following questions. How is death by suicide constructed in personal or collective memory? How does suicide cause personal or collective trauma? How is the author's perspective on death due to suicide?

In answering research questions, this study uses Maurice Halbwach's concept of collective memory and Cathy Caruth about trauma. Maurice Halbwach's concept of memory is originated from Emilie Durkheim's ideas about collectivism or social facts combined with the concept of memory of the philosopher Henry Bergson. Halbwachs argues that memory is not truly individual, but rather is generated from social interaction, or collective interactions. In a community, a person immerses himself in his environment and identifies himself with the same thoughts and interests. The community provides a kind of framework (framework) for each individual to build memories. Meeting someone from the past, or with the same fate, will provide stimulation to remember because it revives the community associations they have, namely interactions and relationships with people in the past. Halbwachs emphasizes that memory is not stored in a person, either in whole or in part, but in the form of fragments of incomplete images in a collective which is then arranged together through stimulants that arouse each other (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 25). On the other hand, the collective memory is not present for granted, but rather it is a structured social process (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 22). From this idea appears that personal memory becomes an important element of collective memory formation. Relationality and interaction between personal memory are then going to give meaning to the past and creating a skyline that includes the entire perception of one's memory.

Personal memory as a result of social construction creates collective memory as long as the experience and knowledge have relevance to the community. Through this understanding, the intersection between collective memory and social framework suggests personal memory to grow and become collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 38). Without a social framework and the interaction of other social entities, personal memory will not be able to be part of the collective memory. In other words, collective and individual memory depend on each other. Collective memory will only be strong because of the bound of personal memory, specifically the similarity of personal memory with the community; on the other hand, every member of the community still has an intensity that varies with each experience (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 48). Then, personal memory is not completely closed and isolated. An individual must often attract others to evoke the memory of his own. Individual and collective memory, both, have almost thin, but distinct, borders on space and scope.

When the individual and collective memory intersect, even interplay, traumatic memory of a person or otherwise, traumatic memories that inhabit the collective memory, also affect each other. As an injury resulting from a traumatic event, traumatic memories are not easy to erase, especially memories about death. Death in the context of trauma becomes the peak of a person's inability to face the realities of life because of memories of traumatic events. Trauma is a response to extraordinary experiences or events from the past that causes mental injuries in uncontrolled repeated hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena (Caruth, 1995, p. 4; 1996, p. 11). The traumatic experience is a latency fact that is inherent in the experience itself so that it does not forget the reality. Trauma is not just related to the occurrence of an event, but passing through its trauma; in other words, life after the traumatic event itself is a crisis (Caruth, 1996, p. 9).

Based on the theories above, Iman Budhi Santosa's work is further analysed using Gerard Genette's discourse analysis method. The use of this method of discourse analysis is based on the consideration that the narratological point of view of "experiencing I" and "narrating I" is closely related to the concept of memory, namely the idea of the difference between pre-narrative experiences on the one hand, and, on the other hand, narrative memory that creates meaning retrospectively (Erlil, 2012, p. 2--3). The position of the first-person narrator is always associated with individual memory

representations. It becomes an important point for exploring the construction of memory, both personal and collective memory.

Genette's basic concept of narratology, in general, is order, duration, frequency, mood, and voice. In this article, the main basis used relates to the idea of mood and voice. Mood relates to the position of the author, narrator, and characters in a story. Mood focuses its observations on the way the author arranges to present the narrator in the story; whether the narrator becomes the most important figure as a storyteller or even be outside the story. The narrator is then divided into four, namely (1) the narrator is the main character and tell his story; (2) the narrator is a minor character who tells the story of the main character; (3) the narrator is not an omniscient character; (4) the narrator is not a character who tells the story as an observer (Genette, 1980, p. 186). Meanwhile, the term perspective or point of view is replaced by focalization to see the narrator's position in the story. It relates to the question: who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective? Narrative focalization techniques are divided into three categories, namely zero or non-focalized, internal focalization, and external focalization (Genette, 1980, p. 189--190). Genette's idea likely provides ease of understanding "who speaks" so that the construction of memory and trauma can be understood comprehensively.

Pulung Gantung Tali Pati is opened with the death of Mbah Sumirah, Rini's grandmother, by committing suicide by tying *setagen* with the other end tied to a mango tree branch. *Setagen* is a long cloth usually worn around women's waists in traditional Javanese clothing, like a belt. Mbah Sumirah's suicide has become a hot topic for many people, not only in her village but also by other villagers in different villages. Suicide is considered abnormal and regarded as a disaster for the family and society. The story then develops starting from Rini's attempt to find the causes of suicide. Therefore, from this point, memory construction and trauma due to suicide in personal and collective memories are understood clearly.

1.1 Memory: *Pulung Gantung as a myth and a curse of death*

The cause of suicide is a big secret for everyone. The only sign that later becomes a myth is the appearance of *pulung gantung*, the tail light in the night sky resembling a shooting star as big as a coconut. *Pulung gantung* is believed to be a sign of disaster for the person or area where the light or object falls. Suicide by tying his neck and hanging himself from a higher place is a sign of disaster because of the *pulung gantung*. The description of the *pulung gantung* is as follows.

Mbah Ramelan karo ngasiran age-age ngadeg nyedhaki Pamuji. Kabeh ndangak mandhep ngalor. Ora ketang mung sedhela wong telu nyipati kedadeyan sing dudu sabaene. Ing langit sisih lor ana cahya abang mbranang gdhene kira-kira saklapa. Sawise mubeng ping telu wewujudan mau nyolorot mudhun arah tengah-tengah Dhukuh Watusipat. Terus ilang musna sanalika (Santosa, 2017, p. 8)

Mbah Ramelan and Ngasiran hurriedly stood up to Pamuji. All looked up to the north. Not only a moment the three of them witnessed an unusual incident. In the northern sky, there was a red-hot light as big as a coconut. After moving around three times the object slid down to the middle of Watusipat district. Then it disappeared suddenly (Santosa, 2017, p. 8).

Pulung gantung is a topic of long debate; it exists and does not exist. For Mbah Ramelan, *pulung gantung* is a sign that death will occur. On the other hand, for Pamuji, Mbah Ramelan's grandson, the light as big as a coconut that he saw was just an ordinary light and it had no meaning. These differences of understanding are based on different experiences; Mbah Ramelan had witnessed a similar phenomenon and three days after the incident, a person in the next village committed suicide by tying his neck and hanging him, while Pamuji had never experienced a similar incident (Santosa, 2017, p. 8-9). However, this incident caused the heart to be uneasy, all worried, sitting uncomfortable, and the mind wandering. For Pamuji and Ngasiran, the appearance of the *pulung gantung* was a new experience regarding the myth that caused tragedies.

Mbah Sumirah's death is the next event related to the existence of the *pulung gantung*. Mbah Sumirah was found hanging from a mango tree branch with her neck strangled by two connected green and black *setagen*, dressed in a full flower-patterned kebaya, a traditional blouse usually worn with a

sarong, hair neatly arranged, with sandals on her left leg, while her right sandal fell. Mbah Sumirah's death occurred not long after Mbah Ramelan, Ngasiran, and Pamuji witnessed a red light in the sky shooting down to the ground. The death of Mbah Sumirah strengthens the myth that *pulung gantung* causes death by hanging body.

By reading *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati*, it is found that Mbah Sumirah's death is the starting point for understanding the memory construction regarding the myth of *pulung gantung* and death due to suicide. In Ngasiran and Pamuji's memory, for example, the myth of *pulung gantung* is not constructed from the beginning. The memory construction changes after the death of Mbah Sumirah which was strengthened by Mbah Ramelan's statement regarding the relationship between *pulung gantung* and the discovery of Mbah Sumirah's body hanging on a mango tree. From this, it appears that personal memory is obtained from social events experienced personally. As a generation that is much younger than Mbah Ramelan who has witnessed *pulung gantung* not only once, Rini always does not believe in the myth of *pulung gantung* because she has no previous personal experience. One incident that later led Rini to believe in the existence of *pulung gantung* was the death of Srigati, Prasetyo's younger brother, a future sister-in-law. Srigati's death was preceded by the appearance of a red light the size of a large orange in the twilight sky which then shot down and suddenly disappeared (Santosa, 2017, p. 145--146)²⁴. Rini saw the glowing object in the sky directly with her own eyes. Not long after the appearance of the flaming object in the sky, Srigati was found dead with her neck hanging. The events experienced by Rini are similar to those experienced by Mbah Ramelan, Ngasiran, and Pamuji when they found Mbah Sumirah dead with her neck tied to a mango tree. Rini, Ngasiran, and Pamuji experienced personally witnessing the existence of *pulung gantung* followed by the discovery of dead people hanging themselves without any memory intermediaries. From this point, it appears that Rini's memory is constructed that the *pulung gantung* is a reality, not a myth.

Another thing that later becomes part of the collective memory and changes into belief is that people who die due to suicide are considered victims of *pulung gantung*. Many people believe that *pulung gantung* is a supernatural being that inhabits the mountains in the eastern region of the Yogyakarta palace. Some people believe that *pulung gantung* resembles a wild animal that will always eat humans if they are not immediately evicted from the area where the *pulung gantung* falls (Santosa, 2017, p. 32--33)²⁵. This narrative marks the existence of memory constructions regarding the *pulung gantung* in collective memory. The narrator clearly describes this by narrative sentences using the phrase *manut rasanane wong-wong* (based on people's opinions).

Furthermore, death caused by suicide is always remembered in the collective memory as a curse. Mbah Sumirah's death became a curse by the previous death, namely Mbah Wongso, Mbah Sumirah's neighbour, who died from hanging herself on the same tree where Mbah Sumirah was found hanging dead. People remembered that Mbah Wongso's death became a curse for the local villagers. The similarity in place of death on the mango tree was considered a strong relation in that death by suicide will invite the next death.

²⁴ *Ing langit sisih kidul kulon ana wewujudan abang mbranang kira-kira sajerk gulung gedhene. Bareng wis sawetara meneng ing antara mega lan semburate candhik-ala, wewujudan mau banjur nyolorot mudhun, terus ilang musna sanalika* (Santosa, 2017, p. 145--146).

In the southwestern sky there was a rosy appearance as big as an orange fist. After a moment of silence between the clouds and the evening lavender sky, the vision then shot down, then disappeared instantly (Santosa, 2017, p. 145--146).

²⁵ *Malah akeh sing percaya menawa pulung gantung kui wewujudan gaib sing "mbaurekso" tlatah pegunungan sakidul wetane kraton Ngayogyakarta iki. Ana maneh sing duwe penemu pulung gantung duwe aten-aten memper kewan galak. Yen bubar entuk "mangsan" ora dilungakake salah-salah bakal krasan manggon ing papan kono banjur liya dian njaluk korban maneh* (Santosa, 2017, p. 32--33).

In fact, many people believe that *pulung gantung* is a supernatural creature that "bethroned" in the southeast mountains of the Ngayogyakarta Palace. Other people also think that *pulung gantung* has similarities with wild creatures. If after obtaining "a target" is not immediately expelled, this creature is likely to feel at home in that place and then will ask for another victim in the next time (Santosa, 2017, p. 32--33).

1.2 **Mortality suicide: Between traumatic and the lackness**

Death due to suicide, on the one hand, in collective belief, is caused by the existence of *pulung gantung*. On the other hand, there are sociological factors that affect the occurrence of suicide. Interestingly, the novel *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati* narrates myths and the possibilities sociological factors as causes of suicide deaths. Death by suicide is a tragedy. However, it is not the death that is traumatic alone. It is precisely the effects of suicide deaths that cause trauma and have psychological effects on the families left behind. Moreover, suicide mortality occurs in Javanese families. Death by suicide is a disgrace.

Regarding the death of Mbah Wongso, the suicide committed by Mbah Wongso was not only a traumatic event but also created a psychological burden and trauma for Mbah Wongso's wife and Karsono, Mbah Wongso son. The following is the psychological burden felt by Mbah Wongso's wife and Karsono.

"Rumaos kula, tilare bapak sing ngayut tuwuh niku mboten namung damel sedhik kula sedaya, Mbak." Sawise meneng sedhela sajak mikir dheweke mbacutake. "Nanging ugi kados nilar sukerta. Damel repot tiyang kathah. Simbok lan kula rumaos isin dhateng tanggi tepalih ngriki, ngantos sepriki." (Santosa, 2017, p. 50).

"I feel, my father's death by suicide has not just made us sad, Ma'am." After a brief pause, looking thoughtful, he continued. "But it also leaves ugliness. Make bother many people. Simbok and I feel ashamed of our neighbours here, until now." (Santosa, 2017, p. 50).

The quotation above shows a difficult situation since the family has to face the reality of a family member's suicide. Apart from the traumatic moments that had been recorded in the memory for a lifetime, as narrated in the novel, Mbah Wongso's wife and children felt that Mbah Wongso's death triggered Mbah Sumirah's death in the same way; suicide by tying her neck and hanging from a mango tree. This is where the heavy burden is felt by Mbah Wongso's wife and Karsono. What's more, the villagers thought Mbah Wongso's family didn't immediately realize that suicide deaths should be treated special. Based on the narrative, the family and local villagers regarded Mbah Wongso's death as an ordinary death, so there was no special treatment, such as praying traditionally on the third or seventh day. This situation becomes a heavy burden for Mbah Wongso's wife and Karsono.

Besides Mbah Wongso's wife and Karsono, Rini also experienced the impact of the death of her grandmother, Mbah Sumirah, who died of suicide. The impact experienced by Rini tends to be due to her unacceptability of how the local villagers responded to the death of her grandmother. Because the death of Mbah Sumirah was considered to be disastrous for the villagers, the tree where the suicide was cut down and burned was not left to get rid of the badness (Santosa, 2017, p. 25--26). The clothes that were used daily, sandals, chairs, and some things belonging to Rini's grandmother were also burned. This event was far more dramatic and traumatic; death for everything. Death due to suicide is considered a way of dying that brings badness to the local villagers. The suicide mortality also constructs the collective trauma that they felt threatened by the next death. Therefore, special treatment is applied to people who died from suicide and their belongings. From the feeling of being threatened, the community then carried out activities walking around the village while hitting various objects, causing continuous noise to expel *pulung gantung* (Santosa, 2017, p. 32).

It is undeniable, based on *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati*, the *pulung gantung* is not the only reason for suicide. It is proved on some narratives. One of the roots of suicide is the inability to accept reality. The incident related to the inability to handle reality was the death of Kitri, the daughter of Mr. Bardi and Mrs. Salipah (Santosa, 2017, p. 105--107). Even though she was only an adopted child, Kitri got more love than Mrs. Salipah's biological son named Wijil. Because of her great love, Mrs. Salipah only agreed that Kitri would be married if her future husband had accepted to live together in the same house with Mrs. Salipah. Wagino was the only man who accepted Mbok Salipah's terms. Furthermore, Kitri married Wagino and had a daughter named Samini. They lived with Mbok Salipah for four years. In the story, Wagino is told to leave home suddenly without any reason and later Kitri was found to have committed suicide by tying her neck to a tree branch.

Kitri's death was not due to the *pulung gantung*. This was proven by Rini's question to the Village Head. The Village Head replied that no one had witnessed the existence of *pulung gantung*. From the

story, Kitri's death seems to have been caused by the fact that she had to separate from her husband, Wagino. Wagino, Kitri's husband, left home because the job application was accepted and had to stay in town. Meanwhile, Kitri did not want to live in the city where Wagino worked. Analyzing the events of Kitri's death with Caruth's idea that the traumatic subject will experience a crisis while living real life (Caruth, 1996, p. 9), it is likely that Kitri experienced a crisis while she saw the fact that her husband was not there. This fact allows Kitri to experience an inability to face a hard life without a husband.

Other deaths by hanging themselves were Sutyem and Pawiro Sabar. Sutyem died by tying her neck and hanging herself on wood in the kitchen. Sutyem's place of suicide was not far from the bed where her son was left behind. The reason for Sutyem's suicide was not known at all (Santosa, 2017, p. 121), likewise, with the cause of the death of Mr. Pawiro Sabar. Mr. Pawiro Sabar was found dead by hanging on his neck tied to a guava tree. There was only one clue before Mr. Pawiro Sabar was found in a lifeless condition. Previously, Mr. Pawiro attended a banquet at the meeting at the house of the Village Head. At the meeting, Mr. Pawiro seemed to eat so heartily that he looked full and belched repeatedly. From that incident, Mr. Pawiro became the topic of conversation for people who came to the meeting. Then, the people and Mr. Pawiro went home. Unfortunately, Mr. Pawiro was not found at home until the morning. The situation became uncertain when one of the neighbours found Mr. Pawiro dead with his neck hanging on a guava tree (Santosa, 2017, p. 125).

A similar case related to suicide by hanging neck is the death of Ponari, Ms. Karsih's son, when he was 21 years old (Santosa, 2017, p. 113--114). Ponari's death became a part of bad memories in the collective memory. Ponari's suicide caused his land and house to be considered a source of disaster in the village even though the death was not related to the existence of *pulung gantung*. The roots of Ponari's death became a secret that was never revealed. However, the villagers consider Ponari's death more due to his inability to endure deep shame and unacceptability of the reality of life. The villagers noted that since Ponari was a child, Ponari was often ridiculed and called as "*anak genderuwo*", "devil's son", simply because no one knew who the father of Ponari was. Therefore, Ponari was always bullied. The bullying addressed to Ponari was inseparable from the uncertainty of Ponari's mother, Ms. Karsih, who was not married until the end of her life. Since Mbok Karsih was young, she has worked in the city but her job was undefinable and during that time she had pregnant twice. Ponari was one of her children. Chronological Ponari life into a consideration of the assumption that the incompleteness of the parents, in this case, the presence of the father, became the impetus Ponari deficient in life. The chronology of Ponari's life becomes a consideration for the assumption that the incompleteness of the parents, in this case, the absence of the father, drives Ponari's deficiency in life. Adopting LaCapra ideas about acting out, a situation in which the subject of trauma always turns the traumatic event and tends to get stuck on that occasion (LaCapra, 2014, p. 21), Ponari's death was caused more by the inability to deal with visual bullying that is always present in real life. Bullying is the most likely cause of Ponari's trauma. Besides the parental incompleteness, Ponari's inability to face this reality was resolved through suicide.

In line with Ponari's death, the death of Sumiyati, Pak Subandi's daughter, also marks a death that is not related to the existence of *pulung gantung* (Santosa, 2017, p. 121). Sumiyati was described as a fourth-grade elementary school student. As a student, Sumiyati had failed twice in passing the exam so that she could not move up to the next class. From Pak Subandi's story, Sumiyati felt ashamed and inferior, so she didn't want to go to school anymore. Unexpectedly and without any reason, Sumiyati was found lifeless in the morning with foam in her mouth as a sign that death was caused by drinking rat poison. Comparing Sumiyati's death with Ponari's, there are similarities in terms of the inability to face reality and the presence of a "lack side" in oneself. Sumiyati was unable to deal with bullying because she was unable to go to the next class. As a result, Sumiyati was so embarrassed that she felt inferior. The difference between Sumiyati and Ponari's death is how to do suicide: Ponari tied her neck and hung herself on a higher object and Sumiyati drank rat poison.

Based on the descriptions of various deaths above, suicide tends to be caused by the presence of trauma and the lack. The unknown cause of Mbah Wongso's death left trauma for the family, his wife, and his child. Sutyem's death was also without cause and her death only left deep sorrow for her relatives. Death of Kitri, Pak Pawiro, Ponari, and Sumiyati have similar backgrounds of death: 1) they are unable to face the realities of life; they become victims of gossip and bullying because of their inner deficiencies. In this context, suicide is not only influenced by personal psychological drives but is influenced by the social dynamics of the individual concerned. Suicide in any of the above events can be categorized as egoistic suicide; individuals are less integrated and do not play a role in social life to

encourage self-alienation and lead to suicide (Durkheim, 2000, p. 178--200). The tendency for people who are classified as selfish suicides is to get caught up in melancholia; people find it difficult to distinguish between absence and loss.

1.3 Breaking the believe of hanging-body suicide as a curse

Pulung Gantung Tali Pati shows a suicide case which is associated with the existence of *pulung gantung* and suicide caused by sociological and psychological conditions. This narrative cannot be separated from the narrator's point of view in telling the story. Voices from the narrator and the characters show certain views about suicide, whether associated with *pulung gantung* or suicide due to psychological and sociological pressure.

For example, when Mbah Sumirah committed suicide, there were two opinions: believed in the existence of *pulung gantung* and did not believe in *pulung gantung*. Rini became a person who did not believe in *pulung gantung*. Rini's figure becomes an illustration showing another side using a logical point of view. Rini's position in certain parts also becomes the mean for the presence of the narrator's ideas about *pulung gantung*. For example, in the following quote.

Rini mung kamitenggengen meruhi kahanan sing miturut panemune ora ketemu nalar iki. Ngapa wit pelem mau ndadak ditegor banjur diobong? Karepe sapa? Alasane apa? Gek pamrihe uga apa? (Santosa, 2017, p. 26)

Rini was silent watching the situation which she thought did not make sense. Why does the mango tree have to be cut down and then burned? Whose wish? What is the reason? Then what is desired? (Santosa, 2017, p. 26)

The quotation above is the narrator's voice in expressing Rini's disapproval of the treatment of people in response to the death of her grandmother. The narrator is outside the character of Rini. Through Rini's logical thinking, the narrator tries to present questions that invite readers to think. On the other hand, the narrator is also present and narrates other reasons for suicide beside the existence of *pulung gantung*.

The other side of Mbah Sumirah's suicide is also narrated to provide another perspective. Behind Mbah Sumirah's death, there is a narrative that shows a polemic between Mbah Sumirah and Margono, Mbah Sumirah's son, Rini's father (Santosa, 2017, p. 41--48). This polemic began after Mbah Wongso's suicide. The villagers asked Pak Margono to cut down the mango tree, where Mbah Wongso's body was hanging. Mbah Sumirah agreed to the villagers' request and also asked Margono to cut it down immediately. However, Mbah Sumirah's request was not immediately fulfilled by Margono for several days. Every time Mbah Sumirah asked Margono to cut down a mango tree, Margono always put off doing that. Until one night, Mbah Sumirah went to the bathroom but did not return to the room for a long time. Then, a search was carried out and they found Mbah Sumirah's body hanging on the mango tree, where Mbah Wongso had committed suicide.

Through the narrative, the narrator tries to present another perspective on the possible reasons for suicide from a logical point of view. Other suicides illustrated by the deaths of Sumiyati, Ponari, and Pak Pawiro, with the narrative of events from a logical point of view, also serve as means of comparing deaths with *pulung gantung* and deaths with psychological and sociological disorders.

Srigati's death is also a case to present another perspective of the suicide reasons. Srigati is narrated as a down syndrome figure. Srigati was unable to socialize like most people. She can only socialize with people who are able to give comfort to her. And, Rini is the only person who can serve Rini. Due to the closeness, Srigati hopes a lot that Rini can make all her wishes can come true (Santosa, 2017, p. 140--147). Before Srigati's birthday, Srigati wanted to stay at Rini's house. Unfortunately, Srigati's wish cannot come true because her parents made a scenario by informing that Rini was not at home. This had to be done because Srigati's parents didn't want to bother Rini and family. Such a situation seemed to make Srigati upset but she didn't show the sadness for other. One day, Srigati was reported missing, not at home, until evening. Unexpectedly, Srigati was found lifeless by the neck entangled behind the tomb. Srigati's death is a means of understanding that desire or instinct

of death can exist on every human being (Freud, 1961, p. 41). On other side, that incident reveals that suicide is not always caused by *pulung gantung*.

Srigati's death was more precisely caused by a psychological aspect, due to unfulfilled hopes. Although previously it is said that Rini witnessed the *pulung gantung* before Srigati was found dead, this incident did not necessarily reveal that Srigati died because of the *pulung gantung*. Two events, when Rini directly witnessed the *pulung gantung* and the discovery of Srigati's death, indicated that there was an attempt to narrate death from two different sides, between believing in *pulung gantung* and the logic of Srigati's death. It is just that, indeed, there is another side to Srigati's death that is not clearly revealed. However, in fact it all seems clear that Srigati's death was due to psychological pressure.

Narratives of figures who attempt suicide but fail to become another perspective to balance beliefs about disastrous *pulung gantung*. Mbah Ramelan is one of the figures who is narrated with personal experiences about suicide (Santosa, 2017, p. 58--59). Mbah Ramelan once attempted suicide when Rusmini, his daughter, was just born and his wife died when gave birth to Rusmini. Mbah Ramelan had a difficult time since he had a temporary job and had to act as father and mother to Rusmini. When Rusmini was not yet three months old, Mbah Ramelan suddenly had the intention of committing suicide to catch up with his dead wife, besides reasons because he was unable to bear the burden of life without a wife and had to act as both father and mother. The rope has been tied around the neck and ready to hang in the kitchen. However, the suicide attempt did not occur because little Rusmini suddenly cried loudly which brought Mbah Ramelan back to consciousness and thwarted the suicide. As if getting directions from the Lord, in that morning Mbah Ramelan was doing the Fajr prayer, worship obligatory for Muslims in the morning, for the first time. Afterward, the rope that was used for suicide was burned and the ashes were buried under a banana tree.

The narratives regarding Rini's perspective in dealing with the existence of *pulung gantung*, the other side of the cause of Mbah Sumirah and Srigati's suicide, and the failure of Mbah Ramelan's suicide attempting are an effort to present and immerse new memories for readers regarding the memory of the myth of suicide due to hanging. The narratives become a consideration from a point of view in dealing with myths or beliefs that have long been embedded in the collective memory.

2. Conclusion

From a series of readings of *Pulung Gantung Tali Pati*, it is concluded that, firstly, *pulung gantung* becomes part of memory and belief about suicide by entangling the neck with a rope and hanging it in a higher position. Suicide associated with the existence of *pulung gantung* is represented by the death of Mbah Sumirah and Srigati. The deaths of the two, Mbah Sumirah and Srigati, were preceded by the appearance of *pulung gantung*, a red light in the sky which then slid quickly to the ground. *Pulung gantung* brings disaster to people and the area where it falls. Secondly, not all deaths narrated in the novel are caused by the existence of *pulung gantung*, such as the death of Sumiyati, Ponari, Kitri, Sutyem, and Mr. Pawiro. Thirdly, suicide creates traumatic and traumatic memories, as well as a disgrace to the family and community in which it occurred. Fourthly, the narratives that reveal a different side of the causes of suicide give the possibility that this novel tries to immerse new memories in readers in an attempt to break the chain of myths about suicide.

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