



# Mission Sparks

Academic Journal of Asia Region

Seventh Edition



Healing Ministry from  
Loneliness, Hopelessness, Suicide

# **MISSION SPARKS:**

## **Academic Journal of Asia Region**

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# An Editorial Note

Mental health becomes a new awareness nowadays. It is not a new phenomenon in the society. There are massive campaigns on mental health in terms of mental illnesses, such as, people living with anxiety, bipolar, depression, schizophrenia, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder) and so on, become more familiar. We could find many vlogs in the YouTube or Instagram which share stories about mental illnesses. They share experiences and knowledge on handling and treating people living with mental illnesses.

This new awareness is a response to the social reality as there are many people or public figures who died by suicide around the world. It is a good sign that people start to be more aware to this reality in the society. People are more open about their mental illnesses.

The theme of the Mission Sparks 7<sup>th</sup> edition is “Healing Ministry from Loneliness, Hopelessness, Suicide.” is an attempt to bring ideas and thoughts dealing with the mental illnesses. What causes mental illnesses; how to treat people with mental illnesses and what should be the ministry of the in response to the different mental illnesses?

*Johanes Mardimin* wrote an interesting article on the phenomenon of suicide in Gunung Kidul, Central Java. Lost by suicide in this area is not only caused by poverty, sickness, breakups and frustration but beliefs on fate and nature. It is a real example on the complexity of suicide according to Javanese people. More causes on lost by suicide and mental illnesses and preventions are also presented by *Ki Yan-Mak* and *Leila Fernandez-Distajo* in their articles.

Healing could come from the local wisdom and tradition in the society. *Alokasih Gulö* and *Oinike Natalia Harefa* present the importance of this with respect to tradition and culture with regards to healing ministry based on their experiences in Nias. It is important as church leaders or theologian are often to take a wrong way in treating people who are grieving.

However, church is an important institution which should provide awareness in the society, including mental illnesses. *Fransisco J. Hernando* shares the experience of the United Church of Christ in the Philippine in their pastoral ministry through hospital services and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Through Clinical Pastoral Education pastors are trained to do pastoral care for people who are grieving which is presented in the article of *Nursini Sihombing*.

This edition presents the thought of *Jaharianson Saragih* about the exorcism as alternative on healing ministry. It is a very interesting thought. But this kind of method in healing ministry of the church remains controversial.

All articles in this edition show us the complexity of human mental health problems and how to deal with it. Socio-cultural and theological understanding, beliefs, tradition, social realities are several aspects that are important to see in dealing with mental illnesses. Hopefully this edition expands your perspectives about mental health.

Enjoy reading!

**Rev. Dr. Dyah Ayu Krismawati**  
Executive Secretary of UEM Asia Department and  
Chief Editor



# **FENOMENA BUNUH DIRI DI INDONESIA DALAM PERSPEKTIF PANDANGAN HIDUP ORANG JAWA: Menyingkap Dimensi Rasionalitas dan Irasionalitas Bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul**

**Dr. Johanes Mardimin<sup>1</sup>**

## **Abstrak:**

Dari waktu ke waktu, ada kecenderungan yang kuat bahwa, angka bunuh diri di seluruh dunia terus meningkat. Banyak orang berpendapat bahwa depresi akibat tekanan ekonomi, penyakit menahun yang tak kunjung sembuh, putus cinta, dan frustasi, sebagai faktor utamanya. Tetapi, kenyataan di lapangan menunjukkan bahwa, kasus-kasus bunuh diri bukan lagi menjadi monopoli orang-orang yang miskin dan yang mengidap penyakit kronis yang tak kunjung sembuh. Menurut pandangan hidup orang Jawa di Gunungkidul, ada faktor lain yang misterius sifatnya. Bagi

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sebagian warga masyarakat Jawa di Gunungkidul, bunuh diri—apalagi setelah kejatuhan *pulung gantung*—diyakini sebagai suratan takdir, sebagai nasib, atau sebagai kodrat, yang tidak seorang pun bisa melawan dan menolaknya. Anggapan seperti itu, sepertinya, terbentuk oleh keyakinan mereka bahwa dalam hidup dan kehidupan manusia, ada tiga hal yang dianggap misteri, yakni: *tibanning rejeki* (datangnya rejeki), *tinemuning jodho* (bertemuannya jodoh atau pasangan hidup), dan *tekaning pati* (tiba saatnya kematian). Artikel ini akan mengupas tentang bunuh diri menurut pandangan hidup Orang Jawa, dengan kasus-kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul sebagai basis amatannya. Hal ini sangat penting untuk dikaji secara mendalam, karena angka bunuh diri di daerah ini, dari waktu ke waktu, terus mengalami peningkatan.

**Kata-kata Kunci:** “bunuh diri”, “pandangan hidup”, “*pulung gantung*”, “kematian”, dan “takdir”.

## Introduksi:

Adalah suatu kenyataan yang tidak dapat disangkal bahwa, meskipun pola pikir manusia semakin rasional, angka bunuh diri tetap saja tinggi. Bahkan, dari waktu ke waktu, angka bunuh diri tersebut cenderung semakin tinggi. Berdasarkan data yang dirilis oleh Wikipedia, setiap tahun, di seluruh dunia, terdapat sekitar 800.000

hingga 1.000.000 orang meninggal dunia dengan cara bunuh diri.<sup>2</sup> Dengan angka tersebut, bunuh diri telah menempati urutan ke-10 penyebab kematian manusia.<sup>3</sup> Lebih mencengangkan lagi, di luar angka bunuh diri—yang disebut sebagai bunuh diri berhasil tersebut, setiap tahun, tercatat ada sekitar 10-20 juta kasus percobaan bunuh diri yang gagal. Kenyataan ini menunjukkan bahwa, rasionalitas dan irasionalitas itu, ternyata, berperspektif; bersifat relatif sesuai dengan perspektif siapa atau menurut perspektif yang mana. Artinya, dalam konteks percakapan ini, rasional tidaknya bunuh diri sangat tergantung siapa yang melihat, dan dari sisi mana dilihat.

Sementara ini, dalam perspektif umum (orang kebanyakan), tindakan bunuh diri dianggap sebagai tindakan yang tidak rasional (irasional). Pandangan ini didasarkan pada kecenderungan manusia untuk menyembuhkan penyakit yang dideritanya, membiasakan pola dan gaya hidup sehat, menghindari tantangan maut, bersikap selalu mensyukuri dan memohon kesehatan, dan lain sebagainya, yang kesemuanya itu dimaksudkan agar tetap hidup sehat sehingga dapat panjang umur (dapat berumur panjang). Itu semua merupakan bukti yang sangat kuat bahwa, bagi orang kebanyakan, hidup adalah karunia dan kesempatan yang harus dijaga dan tidak boleh disia-siakan. Tetapi, sebaliknya, dari perspektif penyintas (pelaku), tindakan bunuh diri merupakan—atau setidak-

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2 [https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunuh\\_diri](https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunuh_diri), diakses pada 24 Agustus 2019

3 Ibid., [https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunuh\\_diri](https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunuh_diri), diakses pada 24 Agustus 2019

tidaknya: dianggap sebagai—tindakan yang rasional, sebagai tindakan yang masuk akal untuk melepaskan beban hidup yang dirasa terlalu berat. Sebagai contoh: bagi orang-orang yang hidupnya terlalu berat menanggung rasa malu karena aibnya terkuak publik, atau bagi orang-orang yang tidak sanggup lagi menanggung beban hidup yang terlalu berat akibat kemiskinan yang menimpanya, dan/atau bagi orang-orang yang tidak tahan lagi merasakan penderitaan akibat penyakit yang diidapnya, bunuh diri adalah jalan keluar untuk mengakhiri penderitaan yang tak tertahankan lagi tersebut. Menurut pelaku dan—saya kira juga bagi sebagian pengamat [fenomena] bunuh diri, cara berpikir itu sangat rasional. Jika demikian, pertanyaannya kemudian adalah: apa itu rasional? dan sebaliknya, apa yang dimaksud irasional? Bagaimana sesuatu dianggap rasional atau irasional?

Kata *rasional* dalam Bahasa Indonesia, atau *rational* dalam Bahasa Inggris, dan *rationalis* (masuk akal) dalam Bahasa Latin, merupakan bentukan dari kata *ratio* (*ratio*) yang berarti akalbudi. Oleh orang kebanyakan, kata *rasional* diartikan “masuk akal”, “cocok dengan akal”, atau “menurut pikiran dan timbangan yang logis”, “dapat dipahami”, dan “dapat dipertanggungjawabkan”. Sedangkan kata *irasional* (*irational*) merupakan lawan katanya; yang oleh orang kebanyakan diartikan “tidak masuk akal”, “tidak cocok dengan akal”, atau “tidak berdasarkan pikiran dan timbangan yang logis”, “tidak dapat dipahami”, dan “tidak dapat dipertanggungjawabkan”. Bertitik tolak dari

pemahaman etimologis dan epistemologis tersebut, dapat dirumuskan bahwa sesuatu [akan/dapat] dikatakan *rasional*, jika hasil analisisnya mengandung rasio atau cocok dengan rasio, masuk akal, dapat dipahami, dapat dimengerti, dan dapat dipertanggungjawabkan secara nalar.<sup>4</sup> Dengan demikian, menerima sesuatu sebagai rasional berarti menerimanya sebagai sesuatu yang masuk akal, sebagai sesuatu yang tepat, atau sebagai sesuatu yang bersesuaian dengan tujuan yang diinginkan.<sup>5</sup> Sebaliknya, sesuatu [akan/dapat] dikatakan *irasional*, jika hasil analisisnya tidak mengandung rasio atau tidak cocok dengan rasio, tidak masuk akal, tidak dapat dipahami atau tidak dapat dimengerti, dan tidak dapat dipertanggungjawabkan secara nalar. Yang *rasional* dianggap bersifat *eksoterik* (dapat dimengerti oleh siapa saja); sedangkan yang *irasional* dianggap bersifat *esoterik* (“rahasia”)—yang hanya dapat dipahami dengan “kacamata batin”.

Sebagaimana tersurat dalam judul di atas, tulisan singkat ini akan mengkaji tentang fenomena bunuh diri di Indonesia dalam perspektif filsafat hidup Orang Jawa. Perspektif ini menjadi sangat penting, khususnya untuk menjelaskan kasus-kasus bunuh diri di Indonesia, dan lebih khusus lagi di Jawa, karena: (1) Kajian-kajian tentang

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4 Lihat Lorens Bagus, Kamus Filsafat, Penerbit PT Gramedia, Jakarta, 1996, hlm. 928; dan A. S. Hornby, E.V. Gatenby, dan H. Wakefield, The Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, Second Edition, The English Language Book Society and Oxford University Press, 1948, hlm. 408.

5 Lihat juga, Simon Blackburn, The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy, Oxford University Press, 2008.

bunuh diri yang dilakukan oleh para sarjana Barat, seperti Albert Camus—filsuf eksistensialis—and Emile Durkheim—seorang sosiolog—keduanya berkebangsaan Perancis, tidaklah memadai untuk membedah kasus bunuh diri di Jawa karena konteks sosio-kulturalnya berbeda; (2) Secara etnografis, jumlah penduduk Indonesia yang beretnik dan berpandangan hidup Jawa mencapai lebih dari 52% dari jumlah seluruh penduduk Indonesia; dan (3) Di Indonesia, jumlah kasus bunuh diri yang tertinggi terjadi di wilayah Kabupaten Gunungkidul dan di wilayah Kabupaten Klaten; yang keduanya berada dalam lokus yang sama, serta didominasi oleh kalangan masyarakat Jawa dan dari kalangan penduduk yang beretnik Jawa.

Sebagaimana dikemukakan di atas, menurut data yang ada, hingga tahun 2019, angka bunuh diri tertinggi di Indonesia terjadi di Kabupaten Gunungkidul, wilayah Daerah Istimewa Jogjakarta. Pertanyaannya sekarang adalah: mengapa dan bagaimana hal itu terjadi? Faktor-faktor apa dan/atau kondisi-kondisi seperti apa sajakah yang mendukung terjadinya fenomena itu? Untuk menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan itu, secara berturut-turut akan di-perbincangkan mengenai filsafat hidup atau pendangan hidup Orang Jawa, khususnya tentang hidup, kehidupan [sosio-kulturalnya], dan penghidupannya—termasuk di dalamnya: pandangan orang Jawa tentang kematian berikut hasil analisis bunuh diri sebagai salah satu cara untuk merenggutnya. Berdasarkan ketiga hal tersebut, tulisan ini akan mencoba untuk menguak mengapa angka bunuh diri

di Gunungkidul cukup tinggi, berikut alternatif solusi yang dapat ditawarkan. Namun, sebelum menguraikan itu semua, mungkin, akan sangat bermanfaat jika dikemukakan megenai fenomena bunuh diri di berbagai belahan dunia terlebih dahulu.

## Bunuh diri sebagai Fenomena Global

Fenomena bunuh diri bukanlah monopoli orang Indonesia. Kasus-kasus bunuh diri marak terjadi di mana-mana, hampir di seluruh belahan dunia. Menurut data *World Health Organization*, di 183 negara yang ada di dunia, semuanya didapati dan/atau menghadapi kasus bunuh diri. Sekedar contoh untuk kawasan Asia, misalnya, di China pernah terjadi lebih dari 2.900 orang melakukan bunuh diri massal dengan menenggak pestisida. Menurut informasi, bunuh diri massal tersebut dilakukan sebagai ungkapan kekecewaan atas merosotnya moralitas penduduk setempat, serta sebagai respons terhadap pertentangan antara generasi tua yang ingin mempertahankan nilai-nilai tradisional dengan generasi muda yang menginginkan kemodernan.<sup>6</sup> Di Korea Selatan, bunuh diri massal juga pernah terjadi. Pada 31 Agustus 1987, sebanyak 33 pengikut sebuah sekte keagamaan di Soul melakukan bunuh diri massal dengan cara saling membunuh secara ramai-ramai di loteng sebuah pabrik di

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6 Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung, Menyingkap Tragedi bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, Penerbit Salwa Press, 2002, hlm. iii.

Yongin.<sup>7</sup> Di Jepang, pada pasca-Perang Dunia Kedua, juga terjadi bunuh diri massal secara besar-besaran. Sebagaimana dilaporkan Dada Sathilla, pada 2 April 1945, sebanyak 140 warga Okinawa, Jepang, melakukan bunuh diri massal di Gua Chibichiri. Mereka melakukan bunuh diri massal untuk mempertahankan kehormatan—tidak mau ditangkap dan diperkosa tentara Amerika Serikat yang menginviasi Jepang kala itu.<sup>8</sup>

Di Amerika Serikat, yang dikenal sebagai negara adidaya, kaya, dan paling maju di dunia pun, juga menghadapi kasus-kasus bunuh diri; bahkan dengan angka kurban bunuh diri yang sangat tinggi. Seperti dikemukakan Darmaningtyas (2002), pada tahun 1990, di Tijuana, daerah perbatasan Mexico dan Amerika Serikat terjadi bunuh diri massal yang diikuti oleh 15 orang pengikut sekte yang tidak jelas asal-usulnya. Mereka bunuh diri dengan menenggak sejenis buah-buahan yang dicampur dengan alkohol. Bahkan, kasus bunuh diri di Amerika Serikat tidak berhenti pada kasus itu. Belum genap tiga tahun setelah peristiwa di Tijuana, pada 19 April 1993, di Waco, Texas, Amerika Serikat, sebanyak 86 orang pengikut sekte Ranting Daud atau Branch Davidian pimpinan David Koresh juga melakukan bunuh diri massal dengan membakar diri, ketika Biro Investigasi Federal (FBI)

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7 Ibid., Darmaningtyas, *Pulung Gantung*, 2002, hlm. iii, dan 172.

8 Dada Sathilla dalam <https://www.lifestyle.okezone.com>, pada 05 November 2017; diunduh pada 11 September 2019.

Amerika Serikat mengepung markas mereka. Dan lebih ironisnya lagi, empat tahun kemudian, peristiwa serupa berulang kembali. Pada 28 Maret 1997, sebanyak 39 orang pengikut sekte Heaven's Gate pimpinan Marshall Applewhite juga melakukan bunuh diri massal di sebuah rumah mewah di Runcho Santo Fe, California, Amerika Serikat.<sup>9</sup>

Di negara-negara di kawasan Eropa juga tidak jauh berbeda. Pada 5 Oktober 1994, di Kota Cherry, Distrik Valais, tepatnya di Barat Daya Swiss, sejumlah pengikut sekte tertentu juga melakukan bunuh diri massal dengan cara membakar diri. Menurut informasi, dalam peristiwa tersebut tidak kurang dari 48 orang yang berasal dari Swiss dan Kanada dinyatakan meninggal dunia dengan cara bunuh diri. Di kawasan Afrika, kasus-kasus bunuh diri juga terjadi di mana-mana. Pada 18 Nopember 1978, di Guyana terjadi bunuh diri massal di sebuah perkampungan kecil di tengah hutan di daerah Jonestown. Pada kasus tersebut terdapat 914 orang, termasuk pimpinan sekte Jim Jones, melakukan bunuh diri dengan menggunakan racun sianida. Pada 19 Maret 2000, peristiwa serupa terjadi lagi. Di kota kecil Kanungu Uganda Barat Daya, Afrika Selatan, tepatnya sekitar 320 km sebelah Barat Daya Ibukota Kampala, tidak kurang dari 253 orang pengikut Gerakan Pemulihan Sepuluh Perintah Allah melakukan bunuh diri massal di sebuah gereja.<sup>10</sup>

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9 *Ibid.*, Darmaningtyas, *Pulung Gantung*, hlm. 174-176.

10 *Opcit.*, Darmaningtyas, *Pulung Gantung*, hlm. 178-179.

Sementara itu, di kawasan Benua Australia, meski tidak sebesar yang terjadi di kawasan lainnya, kasus bunuh diri massal juga terjadi. Sebagaimana dilaporkan oleh VoA Asia Pasifik pada 11/02/2019, Australia telah merilis laporan tentang tingginya tingkat bunuh diri warga Aboriginal. Menurut Laporan tersebut, trauma dan kemiskinan antar-generasi diduga menjadi penyebab serangkaian bunuh diri anak muda Aboriginal di Australia Barat.<sup>11</sup> Bahkan, menurut laporan itu, pada pertengahan tahun 2019, angka bunuh diri suku Aboriginal di wilayah terpencil Kimberley, Australia Barat, mengalami peningkatan. Kasus ini cukup tinggi hingga menghentak dan menyita perhatian Pemerintah Australia, karena kenaikan pesat angka bunuh diri suku Aboriginal tersebut terjadi pada penduduk dengan usia yang masih relatif muda.<sup>12</sup>

Data-data kasus bunuh diri massal yang terjadi di berbagai belahan dunia yang dikemukakan di atas hanya-lah beberapa contoh kasus, yang sama sekali tidak merepresen-tasikan jumlah kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi. Dengan contoh-contoh kasus bunuh diri massal yang terjadi di berbagai belahan dunia tersebut, saya hanya ingin mengatakan bahwa kasus-kasus bunuh diri bukanlah monopoli suku bangsa tertentu, di negara tertentu, pada tingkat ekonomi tertentu, dan pada tingkatan kebudayaan tertentu. Kasus-kasus bunuh diri, ternyata, bukan monop-

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11 <https://www.voaindonesia.com>, 11/02/2019; diunduh pada Selasa, 10 September 2019.

12 <https://www.internasional.kontan.co.id>, 09 Mei 2019, diunduh pada Selasa, 10 September 2019.

oli penduduk di negara-negara yang secara ekonomi miskin atau relatif miskin; melainkan juga terjadi di negara-negara adidaya yang secara ekonomi sangat kaya, seperti Amerika Serikat, Jepang, dan Korea Selatan. Dengan demikian, secara singkat, dapat dikemukakan bahwa, kasus-kasus bunuh diri bisa terjadi di mana pun, kapan pun, pada suku bangsa mana pun, pada tingkat kemakmuran ekonomi yang seperti apa pun, serta pada tingkat kebudayaan yang bagaimanapun.

### Bunuh Diri di Indonesia: Gunungkidul sebagai Contoh Kasus

Meski tidak menduduki posisi atas dalam urutan negara-negara berdasarkan kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi setiap tahunnya, fenomena bunuh diri di Indonesia tetap saja penting untuk diperhatikan. Memang benar bahwa, jika dibandingkan dengan negara-negara lain di dunia, angka bunuh diri di Indonesia masih tergolong relatif rendah. Menurut *List of Countries by Suicide Rate, World Health Organization, 2016*, dengan tingkat bunuh diri 3.7 per 100.000 penduduk per tahun, Indonesia menduduki peringkat ke 159 dari 183 negara di dunia.<sup>13</sup> Sejauh ini, tidak atau belum ada data yang pasti tentang berapa kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi di Indonesia setiap tahunnya, termasuk di dalamnya berapa jumlah pelakunya, berapa

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13 Angka ini mengalami peningkatan dari tahun sebelumnya. Berdasarkan Suicide Rates Data by Country, World Health Organization, 2015, dengan tingkat bunuh diri 3.0 per 100.000 penduduk per tahun, Indonesia menduduki peringkat ke 172 dari 183 negara, <https://wikipedia.org>, diunduh pada 09-09-2019.

jumlah kasus bunuh diri [yang] berhasil, dan berapa jumlah kasus bunuh diri [yang] gagal. Namun, kalau kita melihat kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi di Kabupaten Gunungkidul, wilayah provinsi Daerah Istimewa Jogjakarta, misalnya, kasus-kasus bunuh diri di negeri ini akan nampak tinggi dan terasa memprihatinkan; apalagi kalau kita melihat trennya. Menurut data yang ada, angka bunuh diri di Indonesia, dari tahun ke tahun, persentasenya cenderung naik. Sebagaimana yang dilaporkan Desy Susilawati pada 16 Oktober 2018,<sup>14</sup> menurut WHO, angka bunuh diri di Indonesia, pada tahun 2010 adalah 1,8 per 100 ribu jiwa, atau sekitar 5.400 orang per tahun dengan perhitungan jumlah penduduk Indonesia sekitar 261,1 juta jiwa pada tahun itu. Angka itu, kemudian, meningkat menjadi 4,3 per 100 ribu jiwa atau sekitar 10.000 jiwa pada tahun 2012;<sup>15</sup> dan meningkat lagi menjadi 5,2 per 100 ribu jiwa atau sekitar 13.572 jiwa pada tahun 2016.<sup>16</sup>

Dalam lingkup yang lebih sempit, kalau kita melihat banyaknya kasus bunuh diri di Kabupaten Gunungkidul—yang menempati urutan teratas dalam kasus bunuh diri di Indonesia, besarnya jumlah kasus bunuh diri tersebut

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14 Lihat Laporan Desy Susilawati, dalam <https://www.republika.co.id>, Jakarta, 16 Oktober 2018; diakses pada 09-09-2019.

15 Lihat, Herman, WHO: Angka Bunuh Diri di Indonesia Capai 10.000 Per Tahun, <https://www.beritasatu.com>, Kamis, 11-9-2014; diunduh pada 15 September 2019.

16 Menurut data Biro Pusat Statistik, pada tahun 2016, jumlah penduduk Indonesia berkisar 261,1 juta jiwa. Sedangkan untuk mengetahui tingkat bunuh diri di Indonesia pada tahun 2016, lihat Desy Susilawati, Angka Bunuh Diri di Anak Muda Meningkat, Harian Republika.co.id, Jakarta, 16 Oktober 2018; dan lihat juga Laporan Danu Damarjati, di [detikNews.com](http://detikNews.com) pada Sabtu, 19 Januari 2019.

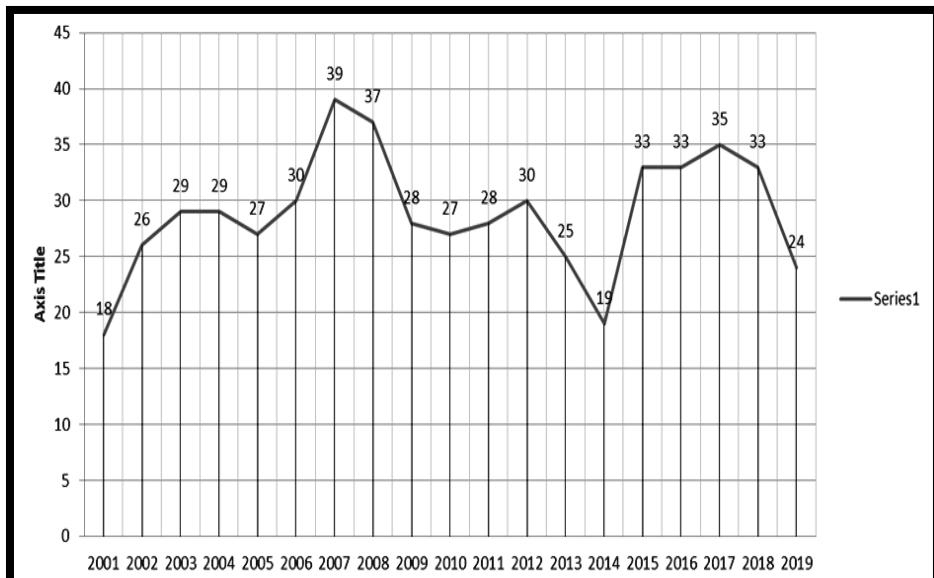
terasa lebih memilukan. Menurut data yang ada, hingga tahun 2019, angka bunuh diri tertinggi di Indonesia terjadi di Kabupaten Gunungkidul, wilayah Daerah Istimewa Jogjakarta. Tiap tahun, angka kematian akibat bunuh diri yang terjadi di daerah ini rata-rata 33 kasus. Pada tahun 2019, hingga minggu pertama September 2019, kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul tercatat sudah terjadi sebanyak 24 kasus.<sup>17</sup> Bahkan, pada Kamis, 05 September 2019, diberitakan, dalam satu hari terjadi dua kasus bunuh diri dengan cara gantung diri. Sebagaimana diungkapkan Jaka Januwidiastha dari Yayasan Inti Mata Jiwa (Imaji)—sebuah lembaga pemerhati kasus bunuh diri di Gunung Kidul, angka bunuh diri di Gunungkidul, sebenarnya, lebih dari yang diberitakan media. Sebab, ada sejumlah wilayah di daerah Gunungkidul yang memiliki kesepakatan untuk tidak mengungkapkan ke publik jika terjadi kasus bunuh diri dengan cara gantung diri. Selain untuk menghindari pemberitaan yang “miring” yang bisa menambah beban penderitaan keluarga pelaku bunuh diri, mereka beranggapan bahwa mati bunuh diri adalah kematian biasa.<sup>18</sup> Mereka yakin bahwa, kematian—apa pun dan bagaimanapun caranya—adalah suratan takdir (pepesthen) yang tak seorang pun dapat mengelaknya. Matriks berikut adalah data kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul yang terekspose ke

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17 Lihat Chandra Iswinarno, <https://www.jogja.suara.com>, Jum'at, 06 September 2019, diakses pada 06 September 2019.

18 Laporan Kontributor Julianto dalam Chandra Iswinarno, Hingga September 2019, Terjadi 24 Kasus Bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, <https://jogja.suara.com/read/2019/09/06/044500/hingga-september-2019-terjadi-24-kasus-bunuh-diri-di-gunungkidul>, diakses pada 06 September 2019.

publik terhitung sejak tahun 2001 hingga 05 September 2019.



Sumber: Diolah dari beberapa sumber: IMAJI Berjuang Cegah Kasus Bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, <https://www.starjogja.com>, 23 Januari 2019; Mutiara Kumasani, Latar belakang Sosial Pelaku Gantung Diri di Kecamatan Wonsari, 2018; <https://regional.kompas.com>, 01 Nopember 2018, diakses 12-09-2019; <https://krjogja.com>, 12-12-2018, diakses 12-09-2019; dan <https://jogja.suara.com>, 06 September 2018, diakses 12-09-2019). Catatan tambahan: Kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul pada tahun 2019 baru dihitung sejak Januari hingga 05 September 2019), serta tidak termasuk yang tidak dilaporkan dan tidak diekspos ke publik.

Kalau kita memperhatikan data di atas, sejak tahun 2001 hingga 05 September 2019 berjumlah 546 kasus; dengan rata-rata 29 kasus per tahun. Sepanjang periode tersebut, angka kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi di Kabupaten Gunungkidul terjadi pada tahun 2007 dengan angka kasus 39; dan diikuti tahun berikutnya dengan jumlah kasus 37; Sedangkan, angka bunuh diri tang terendah terjadi pada tahun 2014. Pertanyaannya adalah: mengapa pada tahun 2007 dan 2008 terjadi lonjakan angka bunuh diri di Kabupaten Gunungkidul?; dan sebaliknya, mengapa pada tahun 2014 angka bunuh diri di Gunungkidul relatif rendah dibanding tahun-tahun sebelum dan sesudahnya? Faktor-faktor apa sajakah, atau kondisi-kondisi seperti apakah, yang menyebabkan orang-orang di Gunungkidul melakukan bunuh diri? Saya kira, perlu penelitian tersendiri untuk menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan tadi.

Menurut hasil penelitian Darmaningtyas (2002) dan Mutiara Kumalasani (2017), yang menyebabkan mengapa banyak orang di Gunungkidul melakukan bunuh diri bukan semata-mata faktor ekonomi. Ada faktor lain; yaitu, apa yang mereka sebut sebagai *pulung gantung*. Berdasarkan temuan Kumalasani, jumlah kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul yang terbanyak terjadi di wilayah Kecamatan Wonosari yang justru merupakan sabuk utama perkembangan sosial-ekonomi Kabupaten Gunungkidul.<sup>19</sup> Tentu,

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19 Mutiara Kusumasani, 2018, Latar Belakang Sosial Pelaku Bunuh Diri di Kecamatan Wonosari, Skripsi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Jogjakarta, hlm 6-7.

temuan ini tetap masih bisa diperdebatkan, karena sulit disangkal bahwa, tidak semua penduduk di Kecamatan Wonosari secara ekonomi mapan atau hidup berkecukupan; sekali pun mereka berada di pusat perkembangan ekonomi Kabupaten Gunungkidul. Sejauh ini, setidaknya setahu saya, belum ada orang yang secara khusus meneliti profil para pelaku bunuh diri Gunungkidul, khususnya para pelaku bunuh diri di Kecamatan Wonosari pada tahun 2007. Profil pelaku bunuh diri yang pernah diungkap oleh Darmaningtyas hanyalah sepuluh kasus—yang tentu saja sangat jauh dari memadai.<sup>20</sup>

Dari segi usia, para pelaku bunuh diri di Gunungkidul didominasi oleh penduduk yang berusia di atas 45 tahun. Menurut data yang dukumpulkan Yayasan Inti Mata Jiwa (Imaji) sebagaimana dikutip Kumalasani (2018), sebesar 75 % pelaku bunuh diri di Gunungkidul berumur 46 tahun ke atas. Sedangkan, menurut jenis kelaminnya, para pelaku bunuh diri di Kabupaten Gunungkidul, dari tahun ke tahun, tetap didominasi oleh kaum laki-laki. Sebagaimana dikemukakan oleh Kumalasani (2018), sepanjang periode 2000-2014, dari 156 kasus bunuh diri di Gunungkidul yang tercatat, ada 114 kasus (73,08 %) bunuh diri yang dilakukan oleh kaum laki-laki; dan terdapat 42 kasus (26,92 %) bunuh diri berhasil yang dil-

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20 Lihat Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung, Menyingkap Tragedi bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, Penerbit Salwa Press, 2002, hlm. 249-278.

akukan oleh kaum perempuan.<sup>21</sup> Hal ini selaras dengan data yang dikemukakan Darmaningtyas (2002) bahwa, kasus bunuh diri di Indonesia selama periode 1994 hingga 18 Oktober 2001, dari 809 kasus bunuh diri yang diperiksa di Bagian Kedokteran Forensik PPKPH-UI/FKUI, 580 kasus (65,99 %) di antaranya dilakukan oleh laki-laki, dan 229 kasus selebihnya (26,06 %) dilakukan oleh perempuan.<sup>22</sup>

Dilihat dari teknis bunuh diri yang digunakan, sebagian besar pelaku bunuh diri di daerah Kabupaten Gunungkidul mengakhiri hidupnya dengan cara gantung diri. Dari 425 kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi di Gunungkidul sepanjang tahun 1980-2001, 335 kasus (sekitar 78,82 %) dengan cara gantung diri; dan 90 kasus (sekitar 21,18 %) dengan cara lainnya. Sejauh ini, cara bunuh diri yang dilakukan oleh warga masyarakat Gunungkidul, selain dengan cara gantung diri adalah melalui meminum racun (insektisida) dan terjun ke dalam sumur atau *luweng* (sumur alami).<sup>23</sup>

Terkait dengan cara-cara yang digunakan untuk bunuh diri di wilayah Kabupaten Gunungkidul tersebut, ada hal yang menarik untuk dikaji, yakni banyaknya kasus bunuh diri yang dihubungkan dengan keberadaan *pulung*

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21 Opcit., Kumalasani, 2018, hlm. 8-9.

22 Ibid., Darmaningtyas, 2002, hlm. 231.

23 Ibid., Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung, 2002, hlm. 241-242. Bandingkan dengan Kumalasani, Latar Belakang Sosial Pelaku Bunuh Diri di Kecamatan Wonosari, 2018, hlm. 11.

*gantung*; tanda dari langit yang berbentuk cahaya bulat berekor seperti komet, berwarna kemerah-merahan agak kuning dengan semburat biru yang meluncur dan jatuh dengan cepat di rumah atau di sekitar rumah orang yang [kemudian] bunuh diri.<sup>24</sup> Tetapi, ada juga yang mendeskripsikan *pulung gantung* berupa cahaya kemerah-merahan berbentuk seperti seutas tali, melayang-layang di angkasa, dan kemudian jatuh di rumah atau di sekitar rumah orang yang [kemudian] bunuh diri. Menurut kesaksian warga Gunungkidul sebagaimana dikemukakan Darmaningtyas, *pulung gantung* biasanya kelihatan dan jatuh di malam hari, berkisar pukul 21.00 hingga pukul 22.00, beberapa hari sebelum peristiwa bunuh diri terjadi.<sup>25</sup> Se-mentara itu, bagi orang-orang yang tidak percaya dengan hal-hal yang bersifat gaib akan cenderung mengatakan bahwa yang disebut *pulung gantung* dan diyakini bersifat misteri oleh warga masyarakat di Gunungkidul hanyalah peristiwa alam biasa yang dimitoskan dan digunakan sebagai pemberar perbuatan bunuh diri dengan cara menggantung. Pertanyaannya adalah: bagaimana pandangan orang-orang Jawa di Gunungkidul tentang hidup, kehidupan, dan kematian? Mengapa mereka begitu percaya dengan mitos dan hal-hal gaib seperti *pulung gantung*?

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24 Dr. Francis Wahono, Mitos dan Realitas Pulung Gantung, Kata Pengantar buku Darmaningtas, Pulung Gantung, enyingkap Tragedi Bunuh Diri di Gunung Kidul, Penerbit Salwa Press, Jogjakarta, 2002, hlm. viii.

25 Opcit. Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung, hlm. 257-258.

## Pandangan Jawa tentang Hidup, Penghidupan, Kehidupan, dan Kematian

*Kejawen*—istilah yang digunakan untuk menyebut Filsafat hidup atau pandangan hidup Orang Jawa, secara garis besar, dapat dipetakan menjadi dua aliran mainstream. Kedua aliran mainstream tersebut adalah aliran yang menyebut ajarannya sebagai *kaweruh kasunyatan*, dan aliran yang menyebut ajarannya sebagai *kaweruh kebatinan*. *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* mendasarkan ajarannya pada hal-hal yang bersifat nyata, *wadhag*, atau kasat mata.<sup>26</sup> Karena itu, para penganut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* cenderung menolak eksistensi berbagai hal yang bersifat *tan wadhag* (nir-kasat mata) dan tidak masuk akal. Sedangkan, *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, selain mendasarkan ajarannya pada hal-hal yang bersifat nyata dan kasat mata (*wadhag*), juga mendasarkan ajarannya pada hal-hal yang bersifat nir-kasat mata atau tidak nyata (*tan wadhag*). *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* menumpukan ajaran-ajarannya pada hal-hal yang masuk akal, yang cocok dengan rasio. Sedangkan, pada *Kejawen* aliran *Kawruh Kebatinan*, selain menumpukan ajaran-ajarannya pada hal-hal yang kasat mata dan masuk akal, juga menumpukan ajaran-ajarannya

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26 Wawancara dengan Ki Ragil Sardjono, Rabu, 04-09-2019. Ki Ragil Sardjono adalah seorang dalang (seniman wayang) berasal dari Kecamatan Wedi, Kabupaten Klaten. Ki Ragil Sardjono adalah salah seorang penganut ajaran Ki Ageng Soerjomentaram. Oleh kalangan tertentu, ia dianggap sebagai seorang Guru Ngelmu (ilmu) yang beraliran kaweruh kasunyatan.

pada hal-hal yang nir-kasat mata, yang bersifat *tan wadhag*—yang kadang kala terasa sama sekali tidak masuk akal.

Menurut ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, manusia hidup merupakan kehendak *Gusti Kang Mahaurip* (*Gusti Sang Mahahidup*, yaitu *Sang Suksma Sejati*)—yang dalam terminologi *Abrahamic Religions* disebut dengan istilah Tuhan atau Allah. Menurut *Kejawen* aliran *kaweruh kasunyatan*, *Gusti Allah* menitahkan atau menurunkan dan mengutus manusia ke dunia nyata, dan eksis sebagai makhluk, dengan *lantaran* (melalui) kedua orang tua. Karena itu, ajaran *kaweruh kasunyatan* menempatkan orang tua sebagai *Gusti Allah kang katon* (Tuhan Allah yang kelihatan—Allah yang kasat-mata). Mengenai diturunkannya manusia ke dunia nyata (ke alam nyata), ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* dan ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* (*Ngelmu Kebatinan*) sebenarnya tidaklah jauh berbeda. Keduanya sama-sama menganggap manusia sebagai makhluk yang istimewa, dengan dikaruniai pikiran dan akal budi. Bedanya, *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* tidak mengakui keberadaan segala sesuatu yang bersifat *tan wadhag* (tidak kelihatan atau nir-kasat mata), meski tidak secara konsisten.<sup>27</sup>

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27 Saya katakan tidak secara konsisten karena, di satu sisi, para penganut Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan menolak keberadaan hal-hal yang bersifat *tan wadhag* (nir-kasat mata) dan gaib—termasuk makhluk-makluk halus; tetapi, di sisi lain, Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan juga mengakui keberadaan *Gusti Allah* yang eksistensinya nir-kasat mata dan gaib.

Menurut filsafat hidup Jawa (*Kejawen*), baik pada aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* maupun pada aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, keduanya sama-sama menyakini bahwa *Gusti Allah* atau Tuhan Allah menitahkan manusia ke dunia sudah diperlengkapi dengan segala macam kebutuhan hidupnya. Mereka sangat yakin bahwa, *sakabehing kebutuhane uripe titah wus kasamektaake* (seluruh kebutuhan atau sarana yang diperlukan untuk hidup sudah disiapkan).<sup>28</sup> Karena itulah, Orang Jawa penganut *Kejawen* sangat yakin bahwa: “*Yen Gusti Allah isih maringi urip, mesti wis dicawisake kabeh saranane kanggo urip*” (Kalau Tuhan masih memberi hidup, pasti sudah disiapkan seluruh sarana yang diperlukan untuk hidup). Bahkan, orang Jawa juga berkeyakinan bahwa, Tuhan juga sudah memberikan perangkat-perangkat untuk mengaksesnya berupa akal, pikiran, dan ketrampilan. Jadi, menurut filsafat hidup Jawa, manusia dititahkan (diturunkan) ke dunia untuk *makarti* (berpikir dan berbuat atau melakukan sesuatu demi kehidupan, baik bagi dirinya sendiri maupun bagi sesama ciptaan lainnya) guna merealisasikan tugas dan tanggung jawab eksistensialnya.

Menurut pandangan hidup Jawa aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, di hadapan Sang Pemberi Hidup, setiap manusia diperlakukan sama. Sang Pemberi hidup yang menjadi *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi* (sebagai “Asal” dan

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28 Wawancara dengan Ki Ragil Sardjono, Rabu, 04-09-2019.

“Tujuan” atau “Alfa” dan “Omega”) memberi keadilan kepada setiap umat atau kepada setiap titah tanpa membedakan. Keadilan Tuhan bersifat mutlak, absolut, dan sama bagi semua umat.<sup>29</sup> Artinya, oleh Tuhan, setiap individu diberi hak, kewajiban, dan tanggung jawab yang sama. Menurut para pengikut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, selain diberi hak, kewajiban, dan tanggung jawab yang sama, setiap individu juga diberi kebebasan untuk bertindak atau berbuat dalam rangka mengaktualisasikan hak, kewajiban, dan tanggung jawabnya tersebut. Dengan demikian, yang membedakan antar-manusia di dunia adalah *pakarti*-nya (pikiran dan perbuatannya). Menurut para penganut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, segala sesuatu yang terjadi dan melekat pada tiap-tiap individu adalah *pakarti dan wohing pakarti* (pikiran dan perbuatan serta buahnya) masing-masing; dan tiap-tiap orang bakal *ngundhuh wohing pakarti* (menuai buah dari pikiran dan perbuatan) masing-masing. Jadi, menurut ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, setiap individu yang dititahkan (diturunkan) ke alam nyata sudah pasti dibekali satu paket kehidupan yang komplit dengan berbagai sarana yang diperlukan untuk hidup. Tetapi, semuanya itu tidaklah bersifat instan—mudah

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29 Dalam konteks ini bersikap adil tidak bersifat relatif seperti keadilan yang dipahami dalam dunia nyata, yang memaknai keadilan sebagai “perlakuan yang sama sesuai kesamaannya; dan perlakuan yang berbeda sesuai perbedaannya.”; dan bersikap adil berarti “memberi perlakuan yang sama sesuai kesamaannya; dan memberi perlakuan yang berbeda sesuai perbedaannya.” Lihat, Sunarso Hardjosuwarno dan J. Mardimin, Konsep Ketidakadilan dan Kemiskinan, dalam J. Mardimin (Ed.), Dimensi Kristis Proses Pembangunan di Indonesia, Penerbit Kanisius, Jogjakarta, 1996, hlm. 19.

didapatkan dan mudah dimanfaatkan. Setiap anak manusia diberi kewajiban untuk *mbudidaya* (mengusahakan) agar fasilitas hidup yang telah disediakan Sang Pemberi Hidup dapat diakses dan dimanfaatkan. Menurut mereka, *Manungsa [mung] wenang lan wajib mbudidaya; nanging, tetep Gusti Allah kang nemtoake* (Manusia hanya berhak dan berkewajiban untuk mengusahakan; tetapi, hasilnya tetap Tuhan Allah yang akan menentukan). Satu hal yang penting untuk dicatat dari ajaran aliran ini adalah keyakinan adanya jaminan dari Tuhan bahwa, *sapa kang gelem kumlawe bakale kemlamet* (siapa saja yang mau mengusahakan pasti akan mendapatkannya), dan *sapa kang nandur bakale ngundhuh* (siapa yang menanam akan menuai), karena semua yang dibutuhkan manusia untuk hidup sudah disediakan oleh Tuhan.

Sedikit berbeda dengan pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, menurut ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, setiap individu yang dititahkan, masing-masing, sudah digariskan jalan hidupnya. Akan seperti apakah kehidupan seseorang (kaya atau miskin; menderita atau bahagia), siapa pasangan hidupnya, akan hidup sampai umur berapa dan akan mengakhiri hidup (mati) melalui dan/atau dengan cara apa, dan lain sebagainya, semuanya sudah ditentukan oleh Tuhan. Menurut ajaran *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, “*manungsa urip mung sadrema nglakoni*” (manusia hidup hanya sekedar menjalani) apa yang sudah digariskan atau sudah ditentukan oleh Sang Pemberi Hidup; Sang Pemilik

kehidupan, yaitu *Gusti Allah kang murbeng dumadi* (Tuhan, Allah yang Mahakuasa)—yang disebut *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi* tadi. Itulah yang dalam pandangan hidup Jawa disebut “suratan takdir”, “kodrat hidup”, “nasib”, atau “*lelakon urip*” manusia. Karena semuanya sudah ditentukan dan digariskan, para penganut pandangan hidup Jawa (*Kejawen*) aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* berpendapat bahwa, “*lelakon iku adile mung [yen] dilakoni*”<sup>30</sup> (jalan hidup itu hanya akan sesuai kehendak Sang Pemberi Hidup [Tuhan] kalau dijalani); sebab, Tuhan sudah menggariskan dan menentukan semuanya. Sebagai buktinya, sebagaimana yang diungkapkan Ki Ageng Soerjomentaram: “seseorang bisa saja meniru tingkah laku orang lain; tetapi, tidak mungkin dapat meniru keberuntungannya.”. Itulah sebabnya, para penganut aliran ini berpendapat bahwa, “*ing salumahing jagad, ora ana kang patut dioyak mati-matian, utawa diselaki mati-matian*” (di dalam jagad raya ini, tidak ada sesuatu yang pantas dikejar mati-matian, atau disangkal mati-matian). Sebab, semuanya sudah digariskan; semuanya sudah ditentukan, dan manusia tinggal menjalani apa yang sudah digariskan.

Para penganut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* juga berkeyakinan bahwa, dalam hidup dan kehidupan manusia di dunia, terdapat tiga hal yang keberadaannya dianggap tetap misteri dan tetap sulit dimengerti. Ketiga hal tersebut adalah: *tibane rejeki* (datangnya rejeki atau

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30 Ki Manteb Soedarsono dalam Pakeliran Padat lakon Dewa Ruci; diunduh dari Youtube. 2019.

didapatkannya rejeki), *tinemune jodho* (ketemunya jodoh atau pasangan hidup), dan *tekaning pati* (saatnya mati, waktu kematian). Mengenai ketiga hal tersebut, *Manungsa mung wenang lan wajib mbudidaya; nanging tetep Gusti Allah kang bakal nemtoake* (Manusia hanya berwenang dan wajib untuk mengusahakan; tetapi [tetap] Tuhan yang menentukan); termasuk di dalamnya: perihal kehidupan dan kematian. Tentang kematian, para penganut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* berkeyakinan bahwa, *yen wis titi wancine [teka pesthine], digedhongone, dikuncenana, manungsa bakale tetep mati* (walaupun ditempatkan di ruang tertutup dan dikunci, kalau sudah tiba waktunya, kematian seseorang tetap akan tiba). Tidak ada seorang pun yang bisa menghindar dari kematian, kalau waktu yang ditentukan oleh Sang Pemberi Hidup sudah jatuh tempo.

Menurut pandangan hidup Jawa, hidup ini adalah dan hanyalah bagian atau penggalan dari “ziarah *sangkan-paraning dumadi*”, dari mana berasal dan ke mana kan kembali. Dalam terminologi *Kejawen*, kehidupan manusia di alam nyata ini adalah dan hanyalah laku *mulih marang mula-mulanira* (kembali ke asal-muasalnya)—setelah menjalani tugas dan tanggung jawab eksistensialnya. Menurut Orang Jawa, masa hidup ini amat singkat. Sangking singkatnya, orang Jawa sering mengibaratkan *Urip iki mung sawene wong mampir ngombe* (hidup manusia di alam nyata ini hanya selama waktu orang singgah untuk minum). Pertanyaannya adalah: kalau perjalanan hidup ini

hanya singkat, bahkan sangat singkat, mengapa ada orang yang masih ingin mempercepat atau mempersingkat kehidupannya dengan melakukan bunuh diri? Bagaimana pandangan Jawa tentang orang yang bunuh diri? Sebelum menjawab kedua pertanyaan tersebut, mungkin baik, apabila kita bahas dulu Pandangan Hidup Jawa tentang kematian.

### **Pandangan Hidup Jawa tentang Kematian dan Bunuh Diri**

Sebagaimana telah disinggung di atas, bagi pengikut pandangan hidup Jawa, kematian adalah sesuatu yang misterius. Artinya, tidak ada satu orang pun yang tahu dan dapat mengetahui kapan dirinya akan mati, bagaimana dirinya akan mati (dengan cara apa), mengapa ia mesti mati, dan ke mana jiwanya akan pergi setelah melewati peristiwa kematian? Tetapi, ada satu hal yang pasti diketahui, yaitu kepastian dirinya akan mati. Sepertinya, masalah-masalah yang terumus dalam pertanyaan-pertanyaan itulah yang membuat tema tentang kematian ini tetap dan selalu menjadi tema yang sangat menarik bagi para filsuf, terutama bagi para filsuf eksistensialis yang menjadikan kematian sebagai tema utama dalam pemikiran filsafatnya. Apalagi, kalau kita melihat hasil-hasil pemikiran mereka yang sangat spekulatif sifatnya. Pertanyaannya kemudian adalah: seperti apakah spekulasi pandangan hidup Jawa terhadap kerahasiaan kematian itu?

Ketika saya melakukan serangkaian wawancara terhadap sejumlah Sumber Informasi—yang saya pandang sebagai tokoh-tokoh spiritual—dalam rangka mengumpulkan informasi tentang hal ini, tidak ada satu pun Sumber Informasi (*Key Informan*) yang dapat menjawab pertanyaan di seputar kematian dan kehidupan setelah kematian dengan sepenuh keyakinan. Umumnya, jawaban-jawaban mereka masih *bias* identitas keagamaannya. Jawaban-jawaban yang mereka berikan umumnya cenderung mirip, bahkan hampir selalu sesuai dengan referensi teologis yang mereka miliki. Hal itu terjadi karena para penganut dan tokoh *Kejawen* yang tersisa, umumnya, juga mengaku beragama tertentu, sekali pun pada awalnya hanya sebatas memenuhi ketentuan politik yang berlaku.<sup>31</sup> Tetapi, pada akhirnya, tidak sedikit yang terkontaminasi juga. Sebagai contoh: jawaban yang diberikan oleh Sumber Informasi yang “beridentitas kristen” akan cenderung memberi jawaban yang mirip atau sesuai dengan ajaran Kristen tentang kematian.<sup>32</sup> Begitu juga, jawaban-jawaban yang

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31 Di Indonesia, secara politis, negara hanya mengakui enam agama, yaitu: Budda, Hindu, Islam, Kristen, Katholik, dan Konghucu. Baru sejak tahun 2006, ada pengakuan terhadap agama-agama lokal yang dikategorikan sebagai Aliran Kepercayaan. Setidaknya, para penganut Aliran Kepercayaan tertentu diperbolehkan menyantumkan keyakinannya dalam Kartu Tanda Penduduk.

32 Dari hasil wawancara saya dengan beberapa Pendeta, dalam komunitas Kristen pun, setidaknya, terdapat dua varian pendapat mengenai perginya jiwa manusia setelah melewati peristiwa kematian. Pendapat yang pertama berkeyakinan bahwa, setelah melewati peristiwa kematian, jiwa manusia akan pergi dan berada di suatu tempat yang dibayangkan penuh kedamaian. Di tempat itulah, jiwa-jiwa itu menunggu Kedatangan Jesus yang kedua, guna mendapatkan pengadilan. Dari sinilah masa depannya akan ditentukan, apakah ia akan tetap berada di tempat itu atau pindah ke suatu tempat yang diklaim dan disebut sebagai surga. Sedangkan, varian pendapat yang kedua percaya bahwa, setelah melewati peristiwa kematian, jiwa manusia akan kembali ke haribaan Tuhan di surga.

didapat dari kalangan orang Jawa yang “beridentitas Islam”. Umumnya, mereka juga cenderung memberi jawaban yang hampir sama dengan ajaran agamanya, bahwa setelah mati, jiwa manusia akan masuk dalam alam penantian—yang disebutnya alam kubur—untuk menunggu saat digelarnya “pengadilan terakhir”.

Namun demikian, dari relung-relung batin orang Jawa (penganut *Kejawen*) yang masih tersisa dan sedikit terbuka, dapat dicatat bahwa pandangan Jawa tentang kematian, sebenarnya, tidaklah tunggal. Ada beberapa pandangan tentang hal ini: Pertama, menurut pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, setelah mengalami peristiwa kematian, jiwa-jawa manusia akan kembali ke asalnya, *bali mulih marang mula mulanira*. Menurut para penganut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, *badan wadhag* (tubuh) manusia yang dulu “tidak ada” akan kembali “tidak ada”; sedangkan, jiwanya akan kembali ke *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi*, yaitu Sang Pemberi hidup yang sekaligus Sang Pemilik dan Sang Pemelihara kehidupan.<sup>33</sup> Kedua, menurut pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, ada dua kemungkinan perginya jiwa-jawa manusia setelah mengalami peristiwa kematian. Kemungkinan yang pertama, jiwa-jawa manusia akan kembali hidup dengan *badan wadhag* yang berbeda; dan kemungkinan yang kedua, jiwa-jawa manusia yang telah melewati peristiwa kematian akan melanjutkan ke-

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33 Opcit., Ki Ragil Sardjono, wawancara, 10 September 2019.

hidupannya di alam lain—yang disebut *Alam Kasuksman*; tetapi mereka masih tetap dapat “berkomunikasi” dengan manusia (jiwa-jiwa yang ber-*badan wadzag*).<sup>34</sup> Menurut pandangan *Kejawen*, baik aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* maupun aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan*, tubuh (*badan wadzag*) manusia hanyalah *sandhangane* jiwa yang hidup di alam nyata. Karena itu, tidaklah aneh jika ada salah satu varian dari *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* yang tidak [mau] menggunakan istilah “mati” dan “kematian” untuk menyebut peristiwa berpisahnya jiwa dengan, atau dari, raganya. Mereka menyebut peristiwa berpisahnya jiwa dengan raganya dengan istilah “*ngalih papang*” (berpindah tempat).<sup>35</sup> Lantas, bagaimana pandangan *Kejawen* tentang fenomena bunuh diri?

Seiring dengan berkembangnya dua kelompok mainstream dalam aliran *Kejawen*, juga terdapat dua pendapat mengenai bunuh diri ini. Menurut pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, bunuh diri merupakan *undhuh-undhuhan wohing pakarti* (sebagai tuaian dari pikiran dan perbuatannya)—yang umumnya dikendalikan oleh *grandhul pitu* (tujuh beban hidup), gejala kejiwaan yang mengendalikan napsu manusia. Ketujuh beban hidup yang mengendalikan napsu manusia tersebut adalah: 1. *Rasa Meri* (iri), 2. *Rasa Pambegan* (patah hati), 3. *Rasa Ungkul* (superioritas), 4. *Rasa Sumelang* (khawatir),

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34 Ki Adi Samidi Singawidjajprana, Wawancara, 20 September 2019.

35 Kesaksian Edy Suryatmo, 08-09-2019, atas pengalaman pribadinya ketika melayat salah seorang penganut Kejawen di salah satu perkampungan di lereng Gunung Merapi.

5. *Rasa Sujana* (curiga), 6. *Rasa Getun* (kecewa), dan 7. *Gegayuhan* (cita-cita, ambisi). Jika dalam diri seseorang terdapat salah satu atau beberapa di antara ketujuh *grandhul* tersebut yang dirasa terlalu berat membebani, orang yang tidak kuat dan tidak memiliki *adeg-adeg* (“pegangan”), umumnya, berkecenderungan atau akan tertantang untuk mempercepat “perjalanan hidupnya” dengan mengabaikan dan/atau tidak mau menikmati hidup dan kehidupannya.<sup>36</sup> Karena itu, *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan* membagi kematian ke dalam tiga tingkatan; yaitu: *mati nistha* (mati hina), *mati madya* (mati wajar), dan *mati utama* (mati luhur atau utama). Pertama, *Mati Nistha* (mati hina). *Mati Nistha* adalah peristiwa terpisahnya jiwa dengan raganya sebelum saatnya tiba. *Mati Nistha* adalah kematian yang disebabkan oleh kelalaian diri, baik disengaja maupun tidak disengaja, dalam merawat dan menjaga hidup. Kematian yang dikategorikan dalam *mati nistha*, antara lain, seperti: mati kecelakaan karena tidak berhati-hati atau ugal-ugalan di jalan, mati karena jatuh dari ketinggian, dan kematian-kematian akibat bunuh diri yang dipicu oleh *grandhul* pitu tadi. Kedua, *Mati madya* atau mati biasa (mati wajar). Yang disebut *mati madya* atau mati wajar adalah mati secara alamiah, mati karena usianya memang sudah tua, dan secara fisik memang sudah tidak mampu lagi untuk bertahan hidup. Secara manusiawi, *mati madya*, mati wajar, atau mati alamiah diyakini sebagai kematian yang sudah

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36 Ki Ragil Sarjono, Wawancara, 10-09-2019.

tiba saatnya untuk mati, dan dipercaya sudah sesuai kehendak Illahi; dan Ketiga, *mati utama*. *Mati Utama* adalah peristiwa terpisahnya jiwa dengan raga yang terjadi akibat perbuatannya untuk memperjuangkan kebenaran, keadilan, dan kemuliaan; yaitu kematian yang terjadi dalam rangka menegakkan ketiga hal tersebut. Kematian yang digolongkan mati utama, antara lain, kematian dalam perang untuk menegakkan kebenaran dan keadilan, untuk membela bangsa dan negara, dan cara-cara mati lain yang ditempuh untuk menegakkan kebenaran dan keadilan. Dengan batasan ini kematian para pejuang kemanusiaan, kematian para pejuang kemerdekaan, dan kematian para pejuang kebenaran dan keadilan pada umumnya dapat digolongkan sebagai *mati utama*. Dalam kehidupan bersama kita, *mati utama* dianggap sebagai cara mati yang paling baik atau paling terhormat.<sup>37</sup> *Mati utama* bukan monopoli para pejuang—yang dianugerahi gelar Pahlawan, tetapi juga bagi siapa saja yang memilih mati dalam hukuman daripada mengorbankan kebenaran dan keadilan yang diperjuangkan. Dalam konteks pemahaman seperti ini, kematian seorang pemikir seperti Galileo-Galilei yang memilih mati dengan menenggak racun untuk mempertahankan kebenaran teorinya dapat juga dikategorikan sebagai *mati utama*.

Pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* tentang fenomena bunuh diri, secara garis besar, tidak jauh

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37 Lihat lagi, Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung. Menyingkap Tragedi bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, Penerbit Salwa Press, 2002, hlm. 55-56.

berbeda dengan pandangan *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kasunyatan*. Bedanya, *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* hanya membagi kematian dalam dua kategori, yaitu: *mati karana Allah* (*mati lumrah*/mati dalam kewajaran) dan *mati kakehan polah* (banyak tingkah). Yang dimaksud *mati karana Allah* (mati lumrah/mati dalam kewajaran) adalah peristiwa terpisahnya jiwa dengan raga, karena raganya sudah menjadi renta dan karena itu tidak memungkinkan lagi untuk melanjutkan “hidup-bersama” jiwanya. Karena kerentaaannya itulah, maka wajar-wajar saja jika mengalami peristiwa kematian. Sedangkan yang disebut *mati kakehan polah* adalah terpisahnya jiwa dan raganya sebelum raganya menjadi renta. Kematian yang demikian dianggap mati sebelum waktunya. Mati karena kecelakaan, mati bunuh diri, mati dalam peperangan, dan lain sebagainya—yang terjadi sebelum waktunya dikategorikan sebagai *mati kakehan polah*. Mati karena perang dimasukkan dalam kategori ini, karena—menurut keyakinan mereka—Gusti Allah tidak pernah menghendaki adanya peperangan. Peperangan adalah ulah manusia; peperangan adalah pakarti manusia; dan bukanlah kehendak Allah. *Mati kakehan polah* adalah *undhuh-undhuhan wohing pakarti*, tuaian buah dari pikiran dan perbuatan.

Selain kedua pandangan di atas, ada satu varian lain yang berpandangan bahwa kematian, kapan pun waktunya, dan bagaimana pun caranya adalah *pepesthen*—kehendak Allah. *Manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (Manusia hanya sekedar menjalani). Menurut varian ini,

dengan mendasarkan pada keyakinan bahwa manusia hidup *mung sadrema nglakoni* (manusia hidup sekedar menjalani), kematian dengan cara apa pun—termasuk bunuh diri—dianggap sebagai “suratan takdir”, dan dianggap sebagai cara mati yang biasa-biasa saja. Sebab, semua yang terjadi pada hidup dan kehidupan manusia diyakini sudah digariskan atau sudah ditentukan oleh Sang Pemberi Hidup, yaitu Sang Pemilik Kehidupan sekaligus Sang Pemelihara Kehidupan. Dengan demikian, apa pun yang terjadi pada manusia tidak perlu dianggap aneh. Segala sesuatu itu normal-normal saja. Dengan ungkapan lain, menurut pandangan para pengikut *Kejawen* aliran *Kaweruh Kebatinan* varian ini, kematian—apa pun caranya—dipahami dan diyakini sebagai *pepesthen*, sebagai suratan takdir—sebagai lakon yang harus dilakukan, atau sebagai garis hidup yang mesti dijalani. Dalam konteks pemikiran seperti inilah, menjadi tidak mengherankan jika sebagian orang Gunungkidul beranggapan bahwa, perbuatan bunuh diri dengan menggantung diri setelah mendapatkan tanda dari langit berupa *pulung gantung* sebagai perbuatan “melaksanakan nasib”, “*nggenepi kodrat*” (“memenuhi kodrad/kehendak Illahi”), atau (“melaksanakan takdir”).<sup>38</sup> Itulah sebabnya, mengapa sebagian warga masyarakat Gunungkidul ada yang tidak sepakat jika masalah bunuh diri dengan cara menggan-

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38 Lihat Dr. Francis Wahono, Mitos dan Realitas Pulung Gantung, Kata Pengantar buku Darmaningtyas, Pulung Gantung, Menyingkap Tragedi bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul, Penerbit Salwa Press, 2002: ix.

tung atau apa pun caranya diungkap ke ranah publik sebagai suatu penyimpangan. Mereka berkeyakinan, semua kejadian sudah ada yang mengatur, dan *manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (manusia sekedar menjalani).

Penting untuk dikemukakan di sini bahwa, pandangan yang demikian diragukan oleh para pengamat yang cenderung mengedepankan akal sehat. Menurut mereka, ungkapan-ungkapan seperti *manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (manusia sekedar menjalani), *pati uripe manungsa kawengku ing kodrat* (hidup matinya mansia ditentukan oleh Gusti Allah), dan lain sebagainya hanyalah *pepuntoning panemu* (pendapat sebagai jawaban kebuntuan akal dan pikiran) atas berbagai persoalan eksistensial yang tak mampu dipikirkan dan diselesaikan secara manusiawi.<sup>39</sup> Singkat kata, ungkapan-ungkapan itu tidak lebih sebagai ungkapan-ungkapan penghiburan, agar kasus-kasus misterius yang dihadapi dan tidak dapat diselesaikan dengan nalar tidak berlarut-larut mengganggu pikiran dan perasaannya; serta tidak mengakibatkan luka batin yang berlebihan.

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39 Ki Adi Samidi Singawidjajaprana, Wawancara, 13 September 2019; dan Ki Joko Winarno, Wawancara, 22 September 2019.

## Refleksi dan Pendapat

Dilihat dari, atau dengan, perspektif ke-Jawa-an (pandangan hidup atau filsafat hidup orang Jawa), fenomena bunuh diri yang marak terjadi di Jawa— khususnya di wilayah Gunungkidul, nampak beberapa hal yang menarik dan penting untuk dikaji. Beberapa hal tersebut adalah: *Pertama*, dalam perspektif pandangan hidup atau filsafat hidup Jawa, dapat diidentifikasi dua dimensi yang terkait dan berpengaruh terhadap maraknya kasus bunuh diri di Jawa, khususnya di wilayah daerah Kabupaten Gunungkidul. Kedua dimensi tersebut dapat dikategorikan dan disebut sebagai dimensi material dan dimensi spiritual. Yang dimaksud dimensi material adalah berbagai faktor atau berbagai kondisi yang bersifat profan (bersifat *eksoterik*), seperti: kondisi ekonomi dan kesehatan pelaku; sedangkan yang dimaksud dimensi spiritual adalah berbagai hal yang bersifat *esoterik* yang terkait dengan masalah kejiwaan (kondisi psikologis) dan keyakinan pelaku yang sakral sifatnya. Dalam konteks ini, yang dikategorikan sebagai dimensi spiritual adalah berbagai kepercayaan, terutama yang terkait dengan hidup, kehidupan, dan kematian—termasuk di dalamnya kepercayaan adanya *pulung gantung* sebagai “penjemput kematian”. *Kedua*, adalah benar bahwa kondisi warga masyarakat di Gunungkidul banyak yang dililit masalah kemiskinan dan kehidupan warga masyarakatnya dalam tekanan ekonomi yang sangat berat; karena kondisi alamnya yang sangat tandus. Selain menyebabkan depresi bagi sebagian orang;

kemiskinan tersebut juga mengakibatkan banyak warga yang menderita penyakit kronis (menahun)—baik sakit fisik maupun sakit mental—tidak dapat “berobat” secara tuntas; karena beaya kesehatan tidak bisa mereka jangkau. Karena itu, tidak mengherankan jika banyak orang sakit yang tidak bisa berobat dan tidak tahan lagi merasakan penderitaannya lebih memilih untuk mengakhiri hidupnya. Tetapi, penting juga untuk dicatat bahwa, kasus bunuh diri yang marak terjadi di Gunungkidul bukanlah monopoli orang-orang yang secara ekonomi miskin, dan/atau orang-orang yang menderita penyakit menahun. *Ketiga*, bagi kalangan warga masyarakat Gunungkidul, keberadaan *pulung gantung*, dianggap sebagai fakta; karena dapat disaksikan dengan mata telanjang, dan kehadirannya bersifat *constraint*. Di Gunungkidul, telah banyak kesaksian soal ini. Karena itu, masalah bunuh diri—kalau dianggap sebagai masalah—menjadi pelik dan tidak sederhana untuk diatasi. Apalagi, selain terkait dengan kepercayaan yang sifatnya sangat pribadi, kasus-kasus bunuh diri selalu dilakukan secara sembunyi-sembunyi; dan sebagian warga masyarakat—dengan berpijak pada keyakinan bahwa hidup manusia *mung sadrema nglakoni*—menganggap kasus bunuh diri *nggantung* yang banyak terjadi di daerahnya sebagai peristiwa kematian biasa. Itulah sebabnya, banyak orang Gunungkidul yang berpendapat bahwa kasus-kasus bunuh diri tidak perlu dibesar-besarkan, dan tidak perlu dianggap sebagai suatu masalah, toh manusia hanya sekedar menjalani.

Masalahnya adalah: meskipun tahu bahwa, berkeyakinan, hidup, dan mengakhiri hidup adalah hak setiap orang, tingginya angka bunuh diri di wilayah Kabupaten Gunungkidul tetap saja menjadi beban sebagian masyarakat dan Pemerintah Kabupaten Gunungkidul. Memang benar; apa pun dan bagaimana pun keyakinan seseorang atau sekelompok orang adalah hak yang tak seorang pun berhak melarang; tetapi, tentu harus disertai syarat sepanjang tidak memengaruhi dan “menekan” orang lain. Dengan demikian, kalau persyaratan itu tidak terpenuhi, maka bunuh diri tetap saja menjadi masalah. Apalagi, dalam kenyataannya, dalam kehidupan-bersama manusia, tidak pernah ada satu orang hidup pun yang sama sekali terpisah dengan orang lain. Setiap orang, keberadaanya selalu terkait dengan orang lain, baik secara langsung maupun secara tidak langsung. Dalam konteks inilah, sebagian orang—termasuk Pemerintah yang bertanggung jawab atas ketenteraman, kedamaian, dan kesejahteraan kehidupan-bersama manusia di wilayahnya—tetap menganggapnya sebagai masalah.

Nah...kalau kasus bunuh diri dianggap sebagai masalah, lantas bagaimana cara mengatasinya? Jawaban atas pertanyaan ini tentu tidaklah mudah. Apalagi, sebagaimana dikemukakan di atas, selain terkait dengan kepercayaan yang sifatnya sangat pribadi bahwa kematian *adalah pepethen* dan manusia *mung sadrema nglakoni*, kasus-kasus bunuh diri selalu dilakukan secara sembunyi-

sembunyi. Saya kira, itulah sebabnya, mengapa Satuan Tugas (Satgas) Berani Hidup yang dibentuk oleh Pemerintah Kabupaten Gunungkidul untuk menangani masalah bunuh diri terkesan kurang berhasil.<sup>40</sup> Buktinya, jumlah kasus bunuh diri yang terjadi di wilayah Gunungkidul tetap tinggi; bahkan dari tahun ke tahun cenderung mengalami peningkatan. Pertanyaannya kemudian adalah: dari perspektif pandangan hidup Jawa yang dijelaskan pada uraian di atas, solusi apa yang dapat ditawarkan untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut? Apa yang dapat dan harus dilakukan untuk mencegah semakin maraknya kasus bunuh diri?

Berdasarkan perspektif pemikiran filsafati Jawa, dapat diidentifikasi dua ranah yang harus dijelajahi untuk mencari cara megatasi masalah bunuh diri ini. *Pertama*, upaya pencegahan bunuh diri pada tataran kehidupan nyata (*wilayah Kasunyatan*). Pada ranah ini, terutama untuk menekan kasus bunuh diri yang diakibatkan oleh tekanan ekonomi dan/atau akibat menderita penyakit kronis menahun yang tak kunjung sembuh, program-program pengentasan kemiskinan dan pelayanan kesehatan yang memadai mesti dilakukan. Pemerintah harus mengusahakan agar pelayanan kesehatan dapat ber-

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40 Satgas (Satuan Tugas) "Berani Hidup" dibentuk oleh Pemerintah Kabupaten Gunungkidul untuk menangani masalah bunuh diri. Satgas ini terdiri atas berbagai kalangan, antara lain: praktisi kesehatan, tokoh-tokoh agama, budayawan, dan para pegiat organisasi non pemerintah. Salah satu tugas Satgas ini adalah memetakan dan mengidentifikasi masalah yang terkait dengan bunuh diri.

beaya murah, sehingga dapat terjangkau oleh semua warga masyarakat yang secara ekonomi kurang beruntung. Bagi kelompok potensial bunuh diri karena penyakit menahun, seperti penderita penyakit kanker, kepada yang bersangkutan perlu diberikan perlakuan khusus seperti subsidi atau pembebasan beaya pengobatan rumah sakit. Sedangkan untuk kasus-kasus bunuh diri yang dilatarbelakangi selain kemiskinan dan penyakit menahun, seperti akibat putus cinta atau frustasi, perlu dicari format khusus yang sesuai. Memang harus diakui bahwa, untuk mengidentifikasi dan menangani kelompok potensial bunuh diri akibat kasus-kasus seperti ini tidaklah mudah, karena sifatnya yang sangat personal dan tidak terbuka. *Kedua*, pada tataran *kebatinan*, untuk menekan kasus bunuh diri di kalangan warga masyarakat yang percaya bahwa mati dengan menggantung diri setelah kejatuhan *pulung gantung* sebagai *pepesthen* (kodrat atau takdir) harus dilakukan dengan cara *olah kebatinan* juga. Para tokoh spiritual yang mumpuni *ngelmu kebatinannya* dapat diperbantukan untuk memfasilitasi *olah kebatinan* (laku prihatin), dengan dibarengi proses penyadaran bahwa *kodrat bisa diwiradati* (kodrat dapat disarankan atau didiasati) dengan *laku prihatin*, seperti *cegah dhahar lawan guling* (puasa dan mengurangi tidur), dan/atau dengan berbagai bentuk ritual atau laku spiritual lainnya.

Itulah dua hal yang dapat ditawarkan sebagai solusi untuk menekan angka kasus bunuh diri menurut cara pandang *Kejawen*. Memang tidak ringan; tetapi perlu dan

penting untuk dicoba dilakukan dengan keyakinan bahwa *kodrat bisa diwiradati*. Soal hasilnya seperti apa, *Walla-hualam!!!* Itu bukan urusan manusia; biarlah Tuhan yang menentukan.

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# **SUICIDE PHENOMENA IN INDONESIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF JAVANESE WAY OF LIFE: Revealing the Viewpoint on Rationality and Irrationality of Suicide in Gunungkidul.**

**(English translation)**

**Dr. Johanes Mardimin**

## **Abstract:**

Occasionally, there is a strong tendency that suicide rates throughout the world continue to increase. Many people argue that depression, due to economic pressures, chronic diseases that do not heal, breakups, and frustration, are the main factors. However, the reality on the ground shows that suicide cases are no longer the monopoly of people who are poor and who suffer from chronic diseases that do not heal. According to Javanese way of life in *Gunungkidul*, there is another mysterious factor. For some Javanese people in *Gunungkidul*, suicide - especially after the fall of the *pulung gantung* (suicide by hanging) - is believed to be as fate, or as nature, which no one can fight and reject. Such an assumption, is formed

by their belief that in life and human nature, there are three things that can be considered a mystery, namely: *tibaning rejeki* (having fortune), *tinemuning jodho* (meeting your soul mate or life partner), and *tekaning pati* (coming of death). This article will explore suicide according to Javanese way of life, with suicide cases in Gunung-kidul as the basis of observation. This is very important to be studied in depth, because the suicide rate in this area, from time to time, continues to increase.

**Key Words:** "suicide", "outlook on life", "*pulung gantung*", "death", and "destiny".

## Introduction

It is an undeniable fact that, despite the increasingly rational human mindset, suicide rates remain high. In fact, sometimes, the suicide rate tends to get higher. Based on data released by Wikipedia, every year, around the world, there are around 800,000 to 1,000,000 people die from suicide. With this number, suicide has ranked 10th cause of human death in the world. Even more astonishing, beyond the suicide rate — the so-called successful suicide, every year, there are around 10-20 million failed suicide attempts. This fact shows that, rationality and irrationality, it turns out, have perspective; relative according to whose perspective or according to which perspective. That is, in the context of this conversation, whether rational suicide or not, depends very much on who sees, and from which side is seen.

Meanwhile, in the general perspective (ordinary people), suicide is considered an irrational act. This view is based on a person's tendency to cure his/her illness, familiar healthy patterns and lifestyle, avoid the challenges of death, always be grateful and hoping for health, and so forth, all of which are intended to stay healthy so they can live long. It is all very strong evidence that, for most people, life is a gift and an opportunity that must be maintained and should not be wasted. But, on the contrary, from the perspective of survivors (perpetrators), suicide is - or at least: is considered a rational act, as a reasonable action, to release the burden of life that is too weighted on the person. For example: for people whose lives are very difficult to bear the shame of being exposed to the public, or for people who can no longer bear the burden of life that is too heavy due to poverty that befalls them, and / or for people who cannot stand it anymore feeling the pain of his illness, suicide is the way out to end the unbearable suffering. According to the perpetrators and - I think, for some observers of the phenomenon of suicide, that way of thinking is very rational. Then the question is: Is that rational? And conversely, what is meant by irrational? How can something be considered rational or irrational?

Rational in English, and *rationalis* (reasonable) in Latin, is a formation of the word ratio, which means mind. For ordinary people, the word rational is interpreted to "reasonable", "fit with reason", or "according to logical

thinking", "understandable", and "be responsible". While the word irrational is the opposite of the word; which by most people means "unreasonable", "incompatible with reason", or "not based on logical thinking", "cannot be understood", and "cannot be justified". Starting from the etymological and epistemological understanding, it can be formulated that something will be said to be rational, if the results of the analysis contain ratios or match the ratios, are reasonable, can be understood, can be understood, and can be justified rationally. Thus, accepting something as rational means accepting it as something that makes sense, as something appropriate, or as something in accordance with the desired goal. On the other hand, something can be said to be irrational, if the results of the analysis do not contain ratios or do not match ratios, are unreasonable, incomprehensible or incomprehensible, and cannot be justified rationally. The rational is considered to be exoteric (can be understood by anyone); while the irrational is considered esoteric ("secret") - which can only be understood with "inner glasses".

As ensnared in the title above, this brief paper will examine the phenomenon of suicide in Indonesia in the perspective of Javanese philosophy of life. This perspective becomes very important, especially to explain suicides in Indonesia, and more specifically in Java, because: (1) Studies on suicide carried out by Western scholars, such as Albert Camus - existentialist philosopher - and Emile Durkheim - a sociologist - both of whom are of

French nationality, are inadequate to dissect suicides in Java because the socio-cultural context is different; (2) Ethnographically, the number of ethnic Indonesian people with Javanese outlooks reaches more than 52% of the total population of Indonesia; and (3) In Indonesia, the highest number of suicides occur in the *Gunungkidul* Regency and in the Klaten Regency area; both of which are in the same locus, and are dominated by Javanese people and from Javanese ethnic groups.

As stated above, according to available data, until 2019, the highest suicide rate in Indonesia occurred in *Gunungkidul* Regency, the Special Region of Jogjakarta. The question now is: why and how did it happen? What factors and / or conditions such as those that support the occurrence of the phenomenon? In order to answer these questions, successive discussions will be discussed about the philosophy of life or view of Javanese life, specifically about life, [socio-cultural] life, and their livelihoods - including: Javanese views on death and the results of suicide analysis as one way to grab it. Based on these three things, this paper will try to uncover why the suicide rate in *Gunungkidul* is quite high, following alternative solutions that can be offered. However, before describing it all, perhaps, it would be very useful to put forward about the phonemics of suicide in various parts of the world first.

## Suicide as a Global Phenomenon

The phenomenon of suicide is not Indonesian monopoly. Suicide cases are rife everywhere, in almost all parts of the world. According to World Health Organization data, in 183 countries in the world, all were found and / or facing suicides. As an example for the Asian region, for example, in China more than 2,900 people committed mass suicides by drinking pesticides. According to information, the mass suicide was carried out as an expression of disappointment over the declining morality of the local population, as well as a response to the conflict between the older generation who wanted to maintain traditional values and the younger generation who wanted modernity. In South Korea, mass suicide also occurred. On August 31, 1987, as many as 33 followers of a religious sect in Seoul committed mass suicide by killing each other in a crowd in the attic of a factory in Yongin. In Japan, in the post-Second World War, massive mass suicide also occurred. As reported by Dada Sathilla, on April 2, 1945, as many as 140 residents of Okinawa, Japan, committed mass suicide in Chibichiri Cave. They committed mass suicide to defend their honor - not wanting to be captured and raped by US troops who invaded Japan at the time.

Even in the United States, which is known as a superpower, rich and most advanced country in the world, it also faces suicides; even with very high suicide rates. As Darmaningtyas (2002) stated, in 1990, in Tijuana, the bor-

der region of Mexico and the United States, mass suicide occurred, followed by 15 sect followers whose origins were unclear. They commit suicide by downing a type of fruit mixed with alcohol. In fact, suicides in the United States do not stop at that case. Not even three years after the events in Tijuana, on April 19, 1993, in Waco, Texas, United States, as many as 86 followers of the David Koresh or Davidian sect also committed mass suicide by burning themselves, when the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) ) United States surrounds their base. And more ironically, four years later, similar events repeated again. On March 28, 1997, a total of 39 followers of the Marshall's Heaven's Gate sect, Marshall Applewhite also committed mass suicide in a mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, California, USA.

In countries in the European region are also not much different. On October 5, 1994, in Cherry City, Valais District, precisely in Southwestern Switzerland, a number of followers of certain sects also committed mass suicide by burning themselves. According to information, in the incident no less than 48 people who came from Switzerland and Canada were declared dead by suicide. In Africa, suicide cases also occur everywhere. On November 18, 1978, in Guyana mass suicide occurred in a small village in the middle of the forest in the Jonestown area. In that case there were 914 people, including sect leader Jim Jones, committing suicide using cyanide poison. On March 19, 2000, a similar incident occurred again. In the small

town of Kanungu in Southwestern Uganda, South Africa, to be exact about 320 km southwest of the capital city of Kampala, no less than 253 followers of the Ten Commandments Recovery Movement committed mass suicide in a church.

Meanwhile, in the Australian Continent, although not as large as what happened in other regions, cases of mass suicide also occurred. As reported by VoA Asia Pacific on 11/02/2019, Australia has released reports of high Aboriginal suicide rates. According to the Report, trauma and inter-generational poverty are thought to be the cause of a series of Aboriginal youth suicides in Western Australia. In fact, according to the report, in mid-2019, Aboriginal suicide rates in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia have increased. This case is high enough to stomp and seize the attention of the Australian Government, due to the rapid rise in Aboriginal suicide rates occurring in the population at a relatively young age.

Data on cases of mass suicide that occurred in various parts of the world mentioned above are just a few examples of cases, which in no way represent the number of suicides that occur. With examples of cases of mass suicide that occurred in various parts of the world, I just want to say that suicide cases are not the monopoly of certain ethnic groups, in certain countries, at certain economic levels, and at certain cultural levels. Suicide cases, it turns out, are not the monopoly of the population in

countries that are economically poor or relatively poor; but it also occurs in superpower countries that are economically very rich, such as the United States, Japan, and South Korea. Thus, in a nutshell, it can be stated that suicides can occur anywhere, at any time, in any ethnic group, at any level of economic prosperity, and at any level of culture.

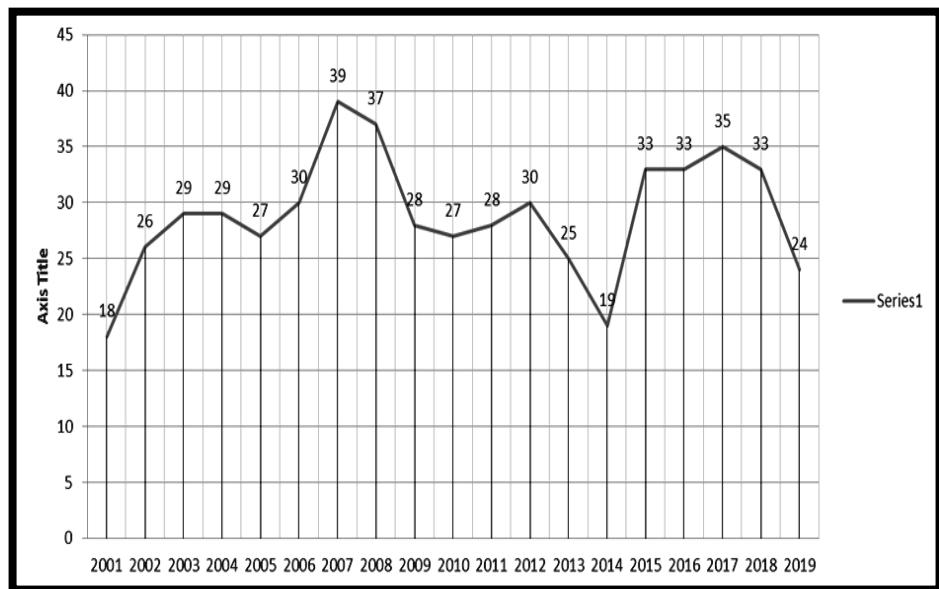
### Suicide in Indonesia: *Gunungkidul* as a Case Example

Although not occupying the top position in the order of countries based on suicides that occur every year, the phenomenon of suicide in Indonesia is still important to note. It is true that, when compared to other countries in the world, suicide rates in Indonesia are still relatively low. According to the List of Countries by Suicide Rate, World Health Organization, 2016, with a suicide rate of 3.7 per 100,000 population per year, Indonesia ranks 159th out of 183 countries in the world. So far, there is no definitive data on how many suicides occur in Indonesia each year, including how many perpetrators, how many successful suicides, and how many failed suicides. However, if we look at suicides that occur in *Gunungkidul* Regency, the province of Jogjakarta Special Region, for example, suicides in this country will look high and feel alarming; especially if we see the trend. According to available data, suicide rates in Indonesia, from year to year, the percentage tends to rise. As Desy Susilawati reported on October 16, 2018, according to WHO, the sui-

cide rate in Indonesia, in 2010 was 1.8 per 100,000 people, or around 5,400 people per year with the calculation of Indonesia's population of around 261.1 million in the year that. That number, then, increased to 4.3 per 100,000 people or around 10,000 people in 2012; and increased again to 5.2 per 100,000 people or about 13,572 people in 2016.

In a narrower scope, if we look at the number of suicides in *Gunungkidul* District - which ranks top in suicide cases in Indonesia, the large number of suicides feels even more heartbreaking. According to available data, until 2019, the highest suicide rate in Indonesia occurred in *Gunungkidul* Regency, the Special Region of Jogjakarta. Each year, the death rate due to suicide that occurs in this area is an average of 33 cases. In 2019, until the first week of September 2019, there were 24 cases of suicide in *Gunungkidul*. In fact, on Thursday, September 5, 2019, it was reported, in one day there were two suicides by hanging themselves. As revealed by Jaka Januwidiastha from the Inti Mata Jiwa Foundation (Imaji) - a suicide watchdog in *Gunung Kidul*, the suicide rate in *Gunungkidul* is, in fact, more than reported by the media. Because, there are a number of areas in the *Gunungkidul* area that have an agreement not to disclose to the public if there is a case of suicide by means of self-gatung. In addition to avoiding "slanted" reporting which could add to the burden of the suicides in the victim's families, they assume that suicide is a common death. They believe that death -

in whatever way or whatever - is a letter of fate (pepesthen) that no one can evade. The following matrix is data of suicides in Gunungkidul exposed to the public starting from 2001 to September 5, 2019.



Source: Processed from several sources: IMAJI Fighting to Prevent Suicide Cases in Gunungkidul, <https://www.starjogja.com>, January 23, 2019; Mutiara Kumasani, Social Background of Self-perpetrators in Wonosari District, 2018; <https://regional.kompas.com>, 01 November 2018, accessed 09-12-2019; <https://krjogja.com>, 12-12-2018, accessed 09-12-2019; and <https://jogja.suara.com>, September 6 2018, accessed 09-12-2019). Additional notes: Suicide cases in Gunungkidul in 2019 were only counted from January to 05 September 2019), and do not include those that were not reported and not exposed to the public.

If we pay attention to the above data, from 2001 to September 5, 2019 there were 546 cases; with an average of 29 cases per year. During that period, the number of suicides that occurred in *Gunungkidul* District occurred in 2007 with a number of cases 39; and followed the following year with 37 cases; meanwhile, the lowest suicide rate occurred in 2014. The question is: why in 2007 and 2008 did the surge in suicide rates in *Gunungkidul* Regency; and conversely, why in 2014 the suicide rate in *Gunungkidul* was relatively low compared to the years before and after it? What factors, or what conditions, caused people in *Gunungkidul* to commit suicide? I think it needs separate research to answer these questions.

According to the results of research by Darmaningtyas (2002) and Mutiara Kumalasani (2017), which is why many people in *Gunungkidul* commit suicide are not merely economic factors. There are other factors; that is, what they call *pulung gantung* (hanging). Based on Kumalasani's findings, the highest number of suicides in *Gunungkidul* occurred in the *Wonosari* sub-district which was the main belt of the socio-economic development of *Gunungkidul* Regency. Of course, this finding can still be debated, because it is hard to deny that, not all residents in *Wonosari* Sub district are economically well-established or well off; even though they are at the center of the economic development of *Gunungkidul* Regency. So far, at least as far as I know, no one has specifically examined the profile of *Gunungkidul* suicides, especially those who committed suicide in *Wonosari* sub district in 2007. The profiles of suicide perpetrators revealed by Darmaningtyas are only ten cases - which of course is very far from adequate.

In terms of age, the perpetrators of suicide in *Gunungkidul* are dominated by residents aged over 45 years. According to data collected by the Inti Mata Jiwa Foundation (Imaji) as quoted by Kumalasani (2018), 75% of suicide perpetrators in *Gunungkidul* were aged 46 years and over. Meanwhile, according to gender, the perpetrators of suicide in *Gunungkidul* Regency, from year to year, remains dominated by men. As stated by Kumalasani (2018), during the period 2000-2014, of 156 recorded suicides in *Gunungkidul*, 114 cases (73.08%) committed suicide by men; and there were 42 cases (26.92%) of successful suicides committed by women. This is consistent with data presented by Darmaningtyas (2002) that, suicides in Indonesia during the period 1994 to 18 October 2001, of the 809 suicides examined in the Forensic Medicine Section of PPKPH-UI / FKUI, 580 cases (65.99% ) of which were carried out by men, and the remaining 229 cases (26.06%) were carried out by women.

Judging from the technique of suicide used, most of the suicide perpetrators in the *Gunungkidul* Regency ended their lives by hanging themselves. Of 425 suicides that occurred in *Gunungkidul* during 1980-2001, 335 cases (around 78.82%) by hanging; and 90 cases (around 21.18%) by other means. So far, how to commit suicide by *Gunungkidul* residents, in addition to hanging themselves is through drinking poison (insecticide) and plunging into a well or luweng (natural well).

Related to the methods used for suicide in the *Gunungkidul* Regency, there are interesting things to study, namely the number of suicides related to the existence of *pulung gantung*; a sign from the sky in the form of a round comet like a comet, reddish-colored slightly yellow with a blue tinge that glides and

falls rapidly at home or around the house of a person who [later] commits suicide. However, there are also those who describe hanging pulses in the form of reddish light shaped like a rope, hovering in the sky, and then falling at home or around the house of someone who [later] committed suicide. According to the testimony of *Gunungkidul* residents as stated by Darmaningtyas, *pulung gantung* (hanging) usually appears and falls at night, ranging from 21:00 to 22:00, a few days before the suicide occurred. Meanwhile, people who do not believe in things that are supernatural will tend to say that what is called *Pulung gantung* (hanging) and are believed to be mysterious by members of the community in *Gunungkidul* is just an ordinary natural event that is posted and used as a justification for committing suicide by hanging. The question is: how do Javanese people in *Gunungkidul* view life, life and death? Why do they believe so much in myths and supernatural things such as hanging pulses?

## Javanese Philosophy on Life, Livelihood, and Death

*Kejawen* - a term used to refer to the philosophy of life or the Javanese way of life, broadly speaking, can be mapped into two mainstreams. The two mainstreams are schools that refer to his teachings as *kaweruh kasunyatan*, and the other refer to his teachings as *kaweruh kebatinan*. *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan* bases its teachings on things that are tangible, *wadzag*, or visible. Therefore, the followers of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan* tend to reject the existence of various things that are *tan wadzag* (invisible) and do not make sense. Meanwhile, the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan*, in addition to basing its teachings on things that are tangible and visible (*wadzag*), also bases its teachings on things

that are invisible or unreal (*tan wadhag*). The *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan* concentrates its teachings on things that make sense, which match the ratio. Whereas, in the *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kebatinan*, besides stacking its teachings on things that are visible and reasonable, it also concentrates its teachings on things that are invisible, which are *tan wadhag* - which sometimes feels at all does not make sense.

According to the teachings of the *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan*, human life is the will of the *Gusti Kang Mahaupip* (the Lord of the Living, the True Sanctuary) —a term in the terminology of Abrahamic Religions called God. According to the teachings of *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan*, God created or sent humans into the real world, and existed, as beings, through both parents. As such, the teaching of *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan* places the parents as the visible God. When it comes to human transference to the real world, the teachings of *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan* and the teachings of the *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kabatinan* are not so different. They both regard humans as special beings, blessed with thoughts and common sense. In contrast, the *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan* does not acknowledge the existence of everything that is not tangible (invisible or invisible), though inconsistent.

According to the Javanese philosophy of life (*Kejawen*), both in the *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kasunyatan* and *Kejawen aliran Kaueruh Kebatinan*, they both believe that God *Gusti Allah* sent man in the world, already equipped with all the necessities of life. They were convinced that, *sakabehing kebutuhane uripe titah wus kasamektaake* (all necessities or means of life were prepared). Therefore, the Javanese adherents to *Kejawen*

are very confident that: "*Yen Gusti Allah isih maringi urip, mesti wis dicawiske kabeh saranane kanggo urip*" (If God had given life, he would have prepared all the means necessary to live). In fact, the Javanese also believe that God has also given them the tools to access them in their intellect, mind, and skills. Thus, according to the philosophy of Javanese life, human beings are brought into the world to think and do or do something for life, for themselves and for their fellow creatures (*makarti*) to realize their existential tasks and responsibilities.

According to the Javanese way of life, *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, in the presence of the Giver, every human being is treated the same. The Life-Giver becomes the *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi* (as "Origin" and "Purpose" or "Alpha" and "Omega") gives justice to every people or to every order without distinction. God's justice is absolute and equal to all mankind. That is, by God, each individual is given the same rights, duties and responsibilities. According to the followers of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, in addition to being given the same rights, duties, and responsibilities, each individual is also given the freedom to act or act in order to actualize his rights, duties, and responsibilities. Thus, what distinguishes human beings in the world is *pakarti-nya* (their thoughts and actions). According to adherents of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, everything that happens and attaches to each individual is *pakarti dan wohing pakarti* (their thoughts and actions and their fruit); and everyone will be *ngudhuh wohing pakarti* (harvesting the fruit of their thoughts and actions). So, according to the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, each individual being brought in the real world is certainly provided with a complete package of life with the various means necessary to survive. However, they are not instantaneous — easy to

obtain and easy to use. Each child was given a human obligation to *mbudidaya* (working) so living facilities that have been provided by the Life-Giver can be accessed and used. According to them, *Manungsa [mung] wenang lan wajib mbudidaya; nanging, tetep Gusti Allah kang nemtoake* (Man has only the right and the obligation to work; but the result is determined by God). One important thing to note from this stream of teaching is the belief in the assurance of God that anyone who wants to win will save (and anyone who earns it will surely get it), and whoever invests in it (who plants the harvest), because everything that man needs to live is provided by God.

Slightly different from the view of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, according to the teachings of *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan*, each individual who is entrusted, respectively, has outlined his life path. What will be the life of someone (rich or poor; suffering or happy), who is his life partner, will live to what age and will end life (death) through and / or in what way, and so on, everything has been determined by God. According to the teachings of Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan, "*manungsa urip mung sadrema nglakoni*" (living people only live) what has been outlined or determined by the Life-Giver; The owner of life, namely *Gusti Allah kang murbeng dumadi* (God, Almighty God) - called *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi* earlier. That is what in Javanese outlook on life is called "a letter of fate", "the nature of life", "fate", or "*urip man*" of humans. Because everything has been determined and outlined, adherents of the Javanese *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan* argue that, "*lelakon iku adile mung [yen] dilakoni*" (the way of life will only be according to the wish of the Giver of Life [God] if lived); because, God has outlined and determined everything. As proof

of this, as Ki Ageng Soerjomentaram revealed: "one can imitate other people's behavior; however, it is impossible to imitate his luck." That is why, adherents of this school argue that, "*ing salumahing jagad, ora ana kang patut dioyak mati-matian, utawa diselaki mati-matian*" (in this universe, there is nothing worth pursuing desperately, or denied death - death). Because, everything has been outlined; everything is determined, and humans only live what has been outlined.

The followers of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kabatinan* also believe that, in life and human life in the world, there are three things whose existence are considered to remain a mystery and remain difficult to understand. These three things are: *tibane rejeki* (the arrival of fortune or the fortune obtained), *tinemune jodho* (meeting the soul mate or life partner), and *tekaning pati* (time to die, time of death). Regarding these three matters, *Manungsa mung wenang lan wajib mbududaya; nanging tetep Gusti Allah kang bakal nemtoake* (Humans are only authorized and obliged to try; but [still] God decides); including in it: concerning life and death. Regarding death, adherents to *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan* believe that, *yen wis titi wancine [teka pesthine], digedhongone, dikuncenana, manungsa bakale tetep mati* (even if placed in a closed and locked room, when the time comes, someone's death will still come). No one can avoid death, if the time determined by the Life-Giver is due.

According to Javanese outlook on life, life is and is only a part or fragment of "*sangkan-paraning dumadi* pilgrimage", where it came from and where it came back. In Kejawen's terminology, human life in the real world is and is only *mulih marang mula-mulanira* (back to its origin) - after carrying out its

existential duties and responsibilities. According to the Javanese, this life span is very short. Sangking in a nutshell, Javanese often likens *Urip iki mung sawene wong mampir ngombe* (human life in the real world is only during the time people stop by to drink). The question is: if life's journey is only brief, even very short, why do some people still want to speed up or shorten their lives by committing suicide? What is the Javanese view of people who commit suicide? Before answering these two questions, it might be good, if we first discuss the Javanese Life View of death.

## Javanese Life's View on Death and Suicide

As mentioned above, for adherents of Javanese outlook on life, death is something mysterious. That is, no one knows and can know when he will die, how he will die (in what way), why should he die, and where will his soul go after passing through the event of death? However, there is one thing that is certain to be known, namely certainty he will die. It seems that the problems that formulated in these questions make this theme of death permanent and always a very interesting theme for philosophers, especially for existentialist philosophers who make death the main theme in their philosophical thinking. Moreover, if we look at the results of their thinking which is very speculative in nature. The question then is: what are the speculations about Javanese outlook on the secrecy of death?

When I conducted a series of interviews with a number of Information Sources - which I consider to be spiritual figures - in order to gather information about this, none of the Information Sources can answer questions about death and life after

death completely with confidence. Generally, their answers are still biased in their religious identity. The answers they give generally tend to be similar, even almost always in accordance with theological references they have. This happened because the remaining followers of the Kejawen group, generally, claimed to have a certain religion, even though at first it was only limited to fulfilling the prevailing political provisions. But, in the end, not a few were contaminated too. For example: answers given by Information Sources that have a "Christian identity" will tend to give answers that are similar or in accordance with Christian teachings about death. Likewise, the answers were obtained from Javanese people who "identified with Islam". Generally, they also tend to give answers that are almost the same as the teachings of their religion, that after death, the human soul will enter the realm of waiting - which he calls the grave - to wait for the "final judgment".

However, from the Javanese inner recesses (Kejawen adherents) who are still remaining and slightly open, it can be noted that the Javanese view of death is, in fact, not singular. There are several views about this: First, according to the view of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, after experiencing the event of death, the human souls will return to their origin, *bali mulih marang mula mulanira*. According to *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, the body of *wadzag* (growth) of the people that used to be "non-existent" will return to "nothing"; whereas, his soul will return to *Sangkan-Paraning Dumadi*, which is the Life-Giver who is both the owner and the life preserver. Secondly, in the view of *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan*, there are two possibilities for the departure of human souls after experiencing the event of death. Probably, first, human souls will return to life with a different body of *wadzag*;

and the second possibility is that the souls of people who have passed through the event of death will continue to live in another realm — the so-called *Alam Kasuksman*; but they can still "communicate" with humans (souls with *wadhag* bodies). According to *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan* and the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan*, the human body (*wadhag* body) is only a *sandhangane* of the soul that lives in the real world. Therefore, it is not strange if there is one variant of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan* which does not [want to] use the terms "dead" and "death" to refer to the event of the separation of the soul with, or from, its body. They call the event of the separation of the soul with the body with the term "*ngalih papan*" (moving places). So, how does Kejawen's view on the phenomenon of suicide?

### *Kejawen's views on the phenomenon of suicide?*

As the development of two main groups in the *Kejawen*, there are also two opinions about suicide. In the view of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*, suicide is *undhuh-undhuhan wohing pakarti* (as a harvest of his thoughts and deeds) - which are generally controlled by *grandhul pitu* (seven life burdens), psychiatric symptoms that control human desires. The seven life burdens that control the human appetite are: 1. *Rasa Meri* (envy), 2. *Rasa Pambegan* (broken heart), 3. *Rasa Ungkul* (superiority), 4. *Rasa Sumelang* (worried), 5. *Rasa Suja-na* (suspicious), 6. *Rasa Getun* (disappointed), and 7. *Gegayuhan* (ideals, ambitions). If in one person there are one or several of the seven *grandhul* who are considered too heavy to burden, people who are not strong and do not have *adeg-adeg* ("handle"), generally, tend to or will be challenged to accelerate

the "journey of his life" by ignoring and / or do not want to enjoy life and living. Therefore, the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan* divides death into three levels; namely: *mati nistha* (shameful death), *mati madya* (natural death), and *mati utama* (wonderful death). First, *Mati Nistha* (shameful death). *Mati Nistha* is the separation of the soul and body before the time comes. *Mati Nistha* is death caused by negligence, whether intentional or unintentional, in caring for and maintaining life. Deaths that are categorized as *Mati Nistha*, among others, such as: accidental death due to careless or reckless on the road, die from falling from a height, and death due to suicide triggered by *Grandhul Pitu* earlier. Second, *Mati Madya* or natural death. The so-called *Mati Madya* are natural death, death because of their old age, and physically they are no longer able to survive. Humanly, *mati madya* are believed to be death whose time has come to die, and is believed to be in accordance with God's will; and Third, the *Mati Utama*. *Mati Utama* is the separation of the soul and body which occurs as a result of his actions to fight for truth, justice, and glory; namely death that occurred in order to enforce these three things. Death is classified as the *mati utama*, among others, death in war to uphold truth and justice, to defend the nation and state, and other ways of death taken to uphold truth and justice. With this limit the deaths of humanitarian fighters, the deaths of freedom fighters, and the deaths of truth and justice fighters in general can be classified as *Mati Utama*. In our life together, *Mati Utama* is considered the best or most honorable way to die. *Mati Utama* is not the monopoly of the warriors — who is awarded the title of Hero, but also for anyone who chooses to die in punishment rather than sacrifice the truth and justice championed. In the context of this understanding, the death of a thinker like Galileo-Galilei

who chooses to die by drinking poison to defend the truth of his theory can also be categorized as *Mati Utama*.

The *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan* on the phenomenon of suicide, in general, is not much different from the view of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kasunyatan*. The difference is that the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan* is only dividing death into two categories, namely: *mati karana Allah* (natural death) and *mati kakehan polah* (a lot of endeavors). What is meant by *mati karana Allah* (natural death) is the separation of the soul and body, because the body has become old and therefore no longer possible to continue the "life-together" of his soul. Because of this vulnerability, it is only natural to experience a death event. Whereas the so-called *mati kakehan polah* is the separation of body and soul before the body becomes old. Such deaths are considered to be premature. Deaths due to accidents, suicides, deaths in wars, etc. — which occur prematurely are categorized as *mati kakehan polah*. Death by war is included in this category, because - according to their belief - Gusti Allah never wanted a war. War is human activity; warfare is human *pakarti*; and not God's will. Mati kakehan polah is *undhuh-undhuhan wohing pakarti*, a harvest of thoughts and actions.

In addition to the two views above, there is one other variant that holds that death, at any time, and in any way is *pepesthen* - God's will. *Manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (Humans only undergo). According to this variant, by basis on the belief that a living person *mung sadrema nglakoni* (human life only undergoing), death by any means - including suicide - is considered a "letter of fate", and is considered an ordinary way of death. Because, everything that happens to life and hu-

man life is believed to have been outlined or determined by the Life-Giver, namely the Owner of Life as well as the Preserver of Life. Thus, whatever happens to humans need not be considered strange. Everything is normal. In other words, in the view of the followers of the *Kejawen aliran Kaweruh Kebatinan*, death - in whatever way - is understood and believed to be *pepesthen*, as a letter of destiny - as a play to be acted on, or as a lifeline to be lived. In the context of this kind of thinking, it is not surprising that some *Gunungkidul* people think that committing suicide by hanging themselves after getting a sign from the sky in the form of *pulung gantung* (hanging) as an act of "*nggenepi kodrat*" ("fulfilling God's will"), or "carrying out destiny". That is why some, *Gunungkidul* community members disagree if the problem of suicide by hanging or whatever means is revealed to the public as a deviation. They believe, all the events that have been set, and perhaps even *manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (humans just undergo).

It is important to state here that, such a view is doubted by observers who tend to prioritize common sense. According to them, phrases like *manungsa mung sadrema nglakoni* (human beings only undergo), *pati uripe manungsa kawengku ing kodrat* (the life and death of people is determined by Gusti Allah), and so forth are only *panuntoning panemu* (opinions in response to reason and mind) for various existential problems that cannot be thought and resolved humanely. In short, these expressions are no more than expressions of consolation, so that the mysterious cases faced and cannot be resolved by reasoning do not drag on to their thoughts and feelings; and does not cause excessive mental injury.

## Reflection and Opinion

Viewed from, or with, the Javanese perspective (Javanese way of life or philosophy of life), the phenomenon of suicide that is rife in Java — especially in the *Gunungkidul* region, seems to be of some interesting and important things to study. Some of these are: **First**, in the perspective of Javanese way of life or philosophy of life, two dimensions can be identified that are related and affect the rise of suicides in Java, especially in the region of *Gunungkidul* Regency. The two dimensions can be categorized and referred to as the material dimension and the spiritual dimension. Material dimensions are defined as various factors or conditions that are profane (exoteric in nature), such as: economic conditions and health of the offender; while the spiritual dimension is meant various esoteric things related to psychiatric problems (psychological conditions) and the perpetrators' beliefs that are sacred in nature. In this context, what is categorized as a spiritual dimension are various beliefs, especially those related to living - life and death - including belief in the existence of pulung hanging as a "fetcher of death". **Second**, it is true that many of the people in *Gunungkidul* are in poverty, and the lives of their citizens are under severe economic pressure; because of its very barren natural conditions. Besides causing depression for some people; poverty also causes many people who suffer from chronic disease (chronic) - both physically and mentally ill - cannot be "treated" completely; because health costs they cannot reach. Therefore, it is not surprising that many sick people who cannot seek treatment and can no longer bear the pain prefer to end their lives. However, it is also important to note that the rampant suicide in *Gunungkidul* is not the monopoly of people who are economi-

cally poor, and / or people who suffer from chronic diseases. **Third**, for the people of *Gunungkidul*, the existence of *pulung gantung* is considered a fact; because it can be witnessed with the naked eye, and its presence is constraint. In *Gunungkidul*, there have been many testimonies about this. Therefore, the problem of suicide - if considered a problem - becomes complicated and not simple to overcome. Moreover, aside from being related to personal beliefs, suicides are always carried out secretly; and some members of the community-based on the belief that human life *mung sadrema nglakoni*-considers the case of hanging suicides that occur in many areas as an ordinary death event. That is why, many *Gunungkidul* people argue that suicides do not need to be exaggerated, and do not need to be regarded as a problem, but human beings are just doing it.

The problem is: despite knowing that, believing, living, and ending life are everyone's rights, the high suicide rate in the *Gunungkidul* Regency region remains a burden on the part of the community and the *Gunungkidul* Regency Government. It is true; whatever and how a person or group of people believes is a right that no one has the right to prohibit; however, it must be accompanied by conditions as long as they do not influence and "pressure" other people. Thus, if the requirements are not met, then suicide remains a problem. Moreover, in reality, in human life-together, there has never been a single person who lives completely separate from others. Every person, his existence is always associated with others, both directly and indirectly. In this context, some people — including the Government responsible for the peace, peace, and prosperity of life — together with humans in their territories — continue to consider it a problem.

Well ... if the case of suicide is considered a problem, then how to deal with it? The answer to this question is certainly not easy. Moreover, as stated above, aside from being related to a very personal belief that death is *pepesthen* and humans are *mung sadlema nglakoni*, suicides are always carried out secretly. I think, that's why, why the *Satuan Tugas* (Task Force) formed by the *Gunungkidul* Regency Government to deal with the problem of suicide seems to be less successful. The proof is the number of suicides that occurred in the *Gunungkidul* region remains high; even from year to year it tends to increase. The question then is: from the perspective of the Javanese outlook on life described in the above description, what solutions can be offered to overcome this problem? What can and must be done to prevent the rise of suicides?

Based on the perspective of Javanese philosophical thought, two realms that must be explored to find ways to overcome this problem of suicide can be identified. **First**, efforts in the prevention of suicides at the grassroots level (Kasunyatan region). In this level, especially to suppress suicides caused by economic pressures and / or as a result of suffering from chronic diseases that do not heal, poverty alleviation programs and adequate health services must be carried out. The government must strive for low-cost health services so that they can be affordable to all members of the community who are economically disadvantaged. For potential groups of suicides due to chronic diseases, such as cancer sufferers, to those concerned need to be given special treatment such as subsidies or the exemption of hospital treatment costs. As for the cases of suicide that are motivated in addition to poverty and chronic diseases, such as the result of a breakup or frustration, it is necessary to find a specific format that is appropriate.

It must be admitted that, to identify and deal with potential groups of suicides due to cases like this is not easy, because it is very personal and not open. **Second**, at the level of mysticism, to suppress the case of suicide among members of the community who believe that dying by hanging themselves after the fall of the *pulung gantung* (hanging) as *pepesthen* (nature or destiny) must be done by way of mysticism as well. Spiritual leaders who are capable of mysticism can be helped to facilitate *olah kebatinan* (concerned behavior), accompanied by a process of awareness that *kodrat bisa diwiradati* (nature can be funded or finalized) with *laku prihatin*, such as *cegah dhahar lawan gulung* (fasting and reducing sleep), and / or with various forms of ritual or other spiritual practice.

These are two things that can be offered as a solution to reduce the number of suicides according to the *Kejawen* perspective. It's not easy; but it is necessary and important to try to do it with the belief that nature can be inherited. What kind of results, God knows!!! That is not a human business; let God be decisive.

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# Coping with Suicide

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## Introduction

Suicide (both successful and attempted suicide) have been recorded in history, in all cultures. The Bible also recorded persons who had suicidal acts or thoughts, as in the story of Judas Iscariot in the New Testament and the prophets Jonah and Elijah in the Old Testament. Such behaviour causes not only personal injury and loss, but can also bring serious and long-term detrimental physical, psychological and social consequences to family members and even to the society at large. Besides, such human “behaviour” can be contagious, as “copycat” cases do occur with fans of actors /actresses who died of suicide.

## Prevalence

Close to 800 000 people die due to suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds, and suicide is a global phenomenon and occurs throughout the lifespan (WHO, 2019). During the past 50 years, suicide has increased by over 60% in some countries, and is one of the top three causes of adult mortality (WHO, 2001). The 2004 statistics found that Lithuania, Russian Federation and Belarus had the highest rates of suicide in the world, with >35 cases per 100,000 per year, while Dominican Republic, Egypt and Brazil have the lowest rates. A recent study by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention found that though the suicide rates in some countries have fall-

en, that in the US has risen in recent years (Weir, 2019). Some would therefore suggest that the rate of a suicide can be a health indicator of the country concerned. For Hong Kong, the rate was 12.5 in 1997 but has jumped to 18.6 by 2003. By 2010, the rate was dropped to 13.6 (Yip 2012)

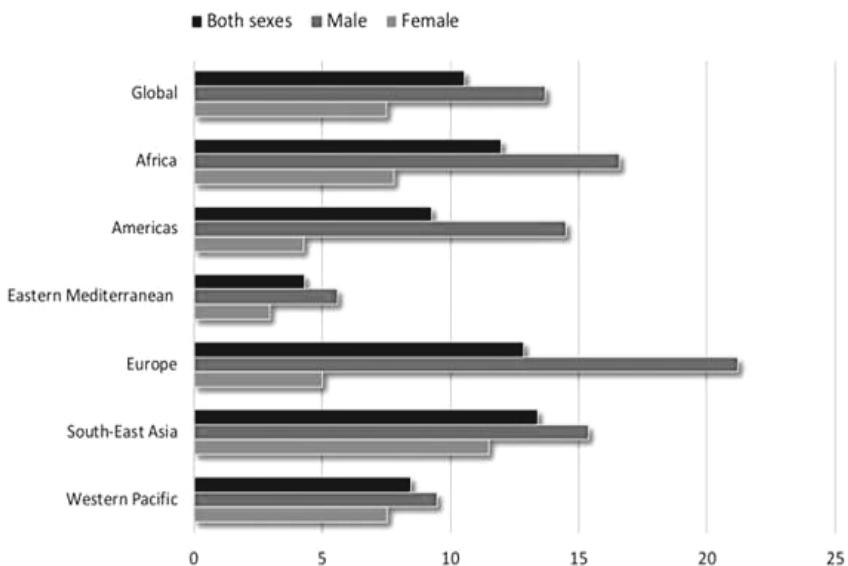
Suicide among the young has always been a social concern, and during the two-decades period of rising unemployment and divorce, and greater use of alcohol and drugs, the suicide rate in young men in the UK (aged 15-35) doubled (Hawton & Fogg, 1992). On the other hand, Cyprus has the lowest rate in Europe, probably due to the strong family support, low social isolation, orthodox religion and social acceptance of social externalization of anger and aggression, etc.

Overall, there are some gender differences in suicide rates. Usually there are more women who attempted suicide, but the success rate for women is lower than men. However, for those who died from suicide, there were more men than women, with the possible explanation that there is usually a stronger intent to die in men when they commit suicide, and the often employ more violent means without concern about bodily disfigurement, while women suicide attempters often use the suicide gesture for an appeal function to modify the behaviour of others (Hawton, 2000). As regards rates of suicide among females, the highest rates occur in Sir Lanka, China and Japan (10-35 cases per 100,000 per year), while lowest occur in Syrian Arab Republic, Seychelles and Bahamas have the lowest (WHO, 2019).

Usually, suicide rates are lower in Western high-income countries compared to low-middle income ones (Jacob, 2008). During economic recession, for example

the Great Depression in the US in the 1930s and the Russian crisis in the 1990s, the rates often rise (Granados & Roux, 2004). During the 2002-03 economic crisis in Hong Kong, there was a sudden increase of suicide by 'charcoal burning' among adult men (Chan et al, 2005). The World Health Organization does provide update information about suicide rates (see graph below)

### **Suicide rate per 100,000 population by WHO region, 2016**



Source: WHO Global Health Estimates ([http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global\\_burden\\_disease/estimates](http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/estimates))  
Regional data shown are age-standardized estimates.

There are also certain groups of the population that are at higher risk for suicide, particularly those who are unemployed, and those with severe physical and psychiatric problems including those with alcohol or substance misuse. Suicide among children and adolescents are usually less than that of adults, but any incident among this group can become sensational with the mass media. At one time, the suicide rate of young (aged 15-24) females (especially in the rural farming areas) in China was much higher, alleged due to the toxicity and ease of acquiring the toxic agricultural toxic materials and pesticides (Cheng & Lee, 2000). One interesting factor found in a prospective Japanese study was that people on prudent diet with high intake of vegetables, fruits, seaweed and fish has decreased risk of suicide, but whether this is the cause or the result cannot be ascertained (Nanri, 2013)

It has been controversy whether the mass media reporting on suicide, would induce people to follow suit. There is suggestion that reports of celebrity or sensational suicides, especially if the method of suicide is specified and presented in details, could induce people (especially the younger people) to imitate similar suicide acts (the "copycat syndrome") (Hawton & Williams, 2002). On the other hand, reports which portray persons who contemplated suicide but then coped constructively with adverse circumstances actually decrease suicide rate in the short-term (Neiderkrotenthaler et al, 2010).

### **Methods of suicide**

There are numerous ways of killing oneself, and the method employed often depends on the ease and availability of the means. Traditionally, the commonest way of suicide is by hanging (either on the tree or on the ceiling). Such painful means are less common nowadays, but still prevalent among the elderly and within institutions. Jump-

ing from heights has also been common, and in the past many did die by drowning (into the sea or in the wells in rural areas). In modern cities, people now jump from tall buildings or from bridges (high chance of instant death). Self-poisoning also has a long history, and for women and adolescents in modern society, over-dose with medications is a common means. In the past, carbon monoxide poisoning by coal gas or car exhaust fumes appeal for peaceful death, and there was a surge of suicide by charcoal burning in Hong Kong during the financial crisis in 2002-3, especially after extensive media coverage. However, such measures occasionally cause explosions with injuries to neighbouring persons and properties. There are definitely many other means such as air or insulin injection, self-bleeding, self-suffocation in plastic air-tight bags, etc. etc. But in a way, there is no absolute certainty of death by any of the above methods.

### **Reasons for committing or attempting suicide**

Scientifically, there are more and more studies on the neurobiological basis of suicide, but this area is not the intention of this paper. Suffice to say that suicidality and impulsivity have been correlated with neurochemicals in the brain and their brain circuits, particularly to the neurotransmitter of “serotonin”, and actually medications targeting this substance has been used to treat patient with high suicidality (Turecki, 2014).

Phenomenally, suicide is a behaviour is a “Conscious Decision” made by the person, and there is often an element of “Impulsivity”. There are two main determinants for the Decision, namely that of “Hopelessness” and “Means to communicate with others”.

- 1) For Hopelessness, there are many contributory factors, such s physical or mental illness, depression with neg-

ative beliefs regarding self, others and/or the world, family or financial difficulties, social isolation with difficulties in coping with the stresses of life.

- 2) For Means in communication, many attempters use suicide as a punishment for self or for others (e.g. spouse), a cry for help or attention seeking, to test fate (whether can die or not) or consider this a solution to problems (e.g. debts). Some even use the act to get benefits ("secondary gains" in psychological terms) such as insurance, avoid punishments by law, etc.
- 3) As regards Impulsivity, it is the tendency to do things on the spur of the moment, and is often dependent on the personality of the individual. It is also more obvious in those with certain mental disorders such as Attention & Hyperactivity Disorder, Bipolar Affective Disorder, Borderline and Psychopathic Personality Disorders, Impulse Control Disorder, etc., and those under the adverse influence of alcohol or drugs.

From a sociological point of view, the famous Emile Durkheim in 1897 classically argued that suicide primarily results from a lack of integration of the individual into society. According to such integration, he proposed 4 types of suicide: egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic (Durkheim, 1951).

- 1) Anomic suicide is an extreme response by a person who experiences a sense of disconnection from society and a feeling of not belonging resulting from weakened social cohesion. Anomie occurs during periods of serious social, economic, or political upheaval, which result in quick and extreme changes to society and everyday life.
- 2) Altruistic suicide is often a result of excessive regula-

tion of individuals by social forces such that a person may be moved to kill themselves for the benefit of a cause (e.g. religious or political ideology) or for society at large. In such social circumstances, people are so strongly integrated into social expectations and society itself that they will kill themselves in an effort to achieve collective goals.

- 3) Egoistic suicide is a profound response by people who feel totally detached from society, when social bonds at work, family and community are severed or severely weakened e.g. through retirement or unprepared separation. Elderly people who suffer these losses of money, status and/or relationships profoundly are highly susceptible.
- 4) Fatalistic suicide occurs under conditions of extreme oppressive conditions e.g. concentration camps, and the person may elect to die rather than continue enduring the intolerable hardships.

More recent sociological hypotheses include the Interpersonal-psychological theory by Joiner (2005) and the Learned Helplessness theory by Seligman (1972). For Joiner, he brought into consideration 3 factors:

1. The capacity to commit suicide, especially when there is;
2. Perceived burdensomeness e.g. I am a burden to my loved ones; and,
3. Failed belongingness e.g. I feel disconnected from others.

As for Seligman's "learned helplessness", it is a be-

haviour exhibited by a subject after enduring repeated aversive stimuli beyond their control. It was initially thought to be caused from the subject's acceptance of their powerlessness: discontinuing attempts to escape or avoid the aversive stimulus, even when such alternatives are unambiguously presented. According to Seligman, such feeling occurred in depression and in those who committed suicide.

## **Coping with suicide**

In certain sense, the acts and thoughts of suicide can be "preventable". There are studies that safety measures, prompt recognition and appropriate interventions, targeted particularly at high-risk persons, can bring down the incidence of suicide.

## **Prevention**

The above discussion on causes of suicide can all be considered Negative Factors for suicide, which if negated can prevent many cases of suicide. However, this is easier said than done, and it is purely impossible to screen everybody for such risk factors. It is perhaps more feasible to target at risk groups for suicide, those with depressive or psychotic disorders, serious substance abuse, and those chronic debilitating or incurable physical illnesses, especially those who are socially alienated without support. For these persons proper assessment of their suicidality (intent, plans or actions) is most important, and past history of attempted suicide is a very strong warning signal. Basic psychological support (attentive listening, reassurance with instillation of realistic hope) should be provided to persons identified at risk, and appropriate therapies (psychological, medical and/or spiritual) should be provided to those who are in distress, either individually or in groups. Significant social difficulties should be ameliorated with proper support from social services.

Mental patients with risk of harm should be promptly treated and followed up closely, with their compliance to treatment carefully monitored to prevent relapse. Psychotropic medications properly prescribed are often therapeutic, and formal psychotherapies are similarly effective in the long run. At present, the most evidence-based psychotherapy technique is Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy (Stanley et al, 2009) but should be applied by trained therapists. Lastly, for those with imminent risk or impulsive acts of suicide, referral to specialists should be quickly arranged, and sometimes compulsory confinement to hospital or a safe protected and supervised environment may-be necessary.

In order to negate the risks, there should be proper psychoeducation about mental health and sanctity of life. Front-line workers (in particular physicians, social workers, teachers, etc.) should be trained to assess suicide risks, and to provide “mental first aids” when needed (Table 1 below). There should also be control of means to danger and harm, such as regulation on the sale of large amount of medications (including paracetamol), and putting safety measures such as barriers and locks to suicide hotspots such as roof-tops and bridges. There should also be an emergency help-seeking channel for help, such as telephone hot-lines or consultations (Gunnell & Miller, 2010).

**Table 1: Key components of Mental First Aid**

1. Sense of Safety: make the scene safe, and find a suitable space (and time) where the person feels comfortable sharing his/her struggles and concerns.
2. No judgment listening: listen without criticism, and without judgment, sincerely listen and take an inter-

est in his/her well-being.

3. Creating Connections: build an on-scene relationship, including connecting the person to his/her family, friends, and others.
4. Reassurance and Information: build hope and give reassurance by communicating a realistic and predictable step towards recovery.

Source: 2019 First Aid Courses Sydney

### **Increased resiliency**

On the other hand, there are also Protective Factors (stress coping) against suicide, and their absence make a person more vulnerable for suicide. These elements (which should be encouraged or developed) include: hopefulness (with strong religious beliefs that are against suicide), good social relationships and strong social support, problem solving and communication skills, conflict resolution, strong family ties (especially for women with young children) and good marriages (especially for husbands), easy access to and effective care and treatment for physical and mental illnesses. Unfortunately, such protective (or resilient) factors have to date not been studied as extensively or rigorously as risk factors. Nevertheless, there are many training programmes in communication and social skills, but the following are important elements to practice:

1. Attentive listening – with gestures and responses when other persons speak, look into the eyes of the person
2. Observe response – the verbal and non-verbal response of the other persons when you speak to them
3. Ask diligent questions – to clarify the intention and real meanings of what the other persons' responses
4. Find common ground – for continued conversation or discussion, even during an argument

## **Coping styles**

Besides, it has been found that many suicidal persons take to the act because of their dysfunctional stress coping mechanism. A study found that the use of the following coping styles correlated positively with suicidal risk, viz. suppression, blame and substitution. On the other hand, minimization, replacement, mapping and reversal coping styles correlated negatively (Horesh et al 1996) (Table 2 below). Therefore, training in adaptative coping styles maybe instrumental in preventing suicide in the long run.

**Table 2: Coping styles (effective or dysfunctional)**

suppression (avoiding the problem),  
help-seeking (asking for help),  
replacement (dealing with problems by finding alternative solutions),  
blame (blaming others for the problems),  
substitution (engaging in tension reduction activities such as sports),  
mapping (collecting information about the problem),  
reversal (acting the opposite of the way one feels) and  
minimization (minimizing the importance of the problem)

## **Care for family members**

Last but not the least, attention should also be provided to family members (and significant others such as girl-friend and long-term acquaintance), so that they can provide proper care and support to suicidal patients. Even when death due to suicide do occur, these bereaved relatives (especially young children) should be supported, such as assistance in memorial and funeral services, and grief

counselling (Table 3 below), as they maybe at increased risk of suicide themselves.

### **Table 3: Grief counselling techniques**

1. Recognize that bereaved persons often have grief feelings including denial, anger (being left behind), blame and regret (survivor's guilt)
2. Psychological support for the emotional pain – ventilation of feelings should be allowed
3. Guided mourning – to gradually part with the deceased (including the belongings), acceptance of the reality of loss, saying “good-bye” (such as a good-bye letter)
4. Adjust to necessary changes in life
5. Cultivate a new positive life-style

Sometimes, the bereaved will develop complicated grief reactions (also called ‘pathological grief’ or the DSM-5 ‘persistent complex bereavement disorder’) and even evolved into a depressive disorder. They should be encouraged to seek professional help, especially if they harbour suicidal thoughts themselves.

### **Religion and suicide coping**

Generally speaking, there is less suicide among those with religious faith compared to those without. In the United States, those who attend church frequently are less likely to die by suicide (Kleiman & Liu, 2014). Thus religion can have a vital role to play in suicide prevention and pastoral care. Yet many pastors and pastoral counselors feel overwhelmed and unprepared to prevent suicides. Using spiritual and theological understanding of stress and crisis, pastoral caregivers can be agents of hope.

First of all, the church should be a safe place which can provide acceptance and support to those who attempted suicide and their traumatized relatives. Church pastors can teach on the sanctity of life which is given as a gift from God, thus should be terminated only by the giver. Besides, they should always emphasize possibility of forgiveness no matter the level of any wrongs committed. Besides, pastors can monitor those at risk of suicide and intervene when necessary (Mason, 2014). Because church leaders are often present in people's lives in times of trouble, birth and death, they can use biblical messages to provide comfort in the midst of suffering and offer guidance for the future (Oladele Ayankeye, S, 2013).

## Conclusion

In a way, suicide is a “preventable behaviour” and also a “curable disease”. Prompt detection and management are important in saving lives. The public should be educated about the harms of suicide, and front-line workers should be trained to detect suicidal risks among their clients, and referred to appropriate agents for care and treatment.

Though many suicidal persons would write their wills before they commit suicide, but this is not always true as many do not have enough time to do so. Nevertheless, many suicided persons did consult their general practitioners and/or other front-line helpers prior to their death, leaving often subtle clues about their death wish. Unfortunately, such clues are often missed or ignored by untrained inexperienced practitioners. Therefore, primary care doctors should be well trained to act as gate-keepers in combating suicide (WHO 2000).

A life saved is psychologically rewarding!

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# **Loneliness and the Need to Connect**

**Leila Fernandez Distajo**

Feeling lonely is part of being human. It is a condition where individuals feel socially isolated even when with people. All of us regardless of where we come from or how old we are have one way or another felt lonely. It is a feeling when an unwanted stimulus or event take place and is not consistent with our expectations. We remember experiences in our childhood when we cry out loudly just so our parents would give in to what we demand from them. Or an experience during our adolescent stage when we were ignored by friends and we felt rejected. Or a relationship that did not work out and we felt like our world had ended. These are some of the events that make us feel lonely.

Loneliness is a feeling that warns us to do something about our state of being. It is like physiological sig-

nal that urges us to make a move. It is like hunger that prompts us to eat something so that the feeling of hunger will disappear and eventually be replaced by satisfaction. Loneliness should not push us to isolate ourselves. It is should not bring us to a forest so that we will hang ourselves in desperation.

Loneliness is an unpleasant experience that occurs when individual's social network is deficient either quantitatively or qualitatively (Peplau & Perlman, 1982). But being alone does not automatically mean you are lonely. In fact we need some time to be alone to be able to have inner peace which can make us happy. Reasons for being lonely may vary from one person to the other because an individual may still perceive that he or she is lonely by being socially isolated even when with other people.

## **ANATOMY OF LONELINESS**

Loneliness has powerful impact on our state of being.

We are lonely when we are socially disconnected. We humans are innately socially interrelated. This may be the reason why we get lonely when we encounter rejections and social exclusions. In whatever occasion, it is best appreciated when we felt accepted, and we are part of the group. Being an outcast or "out of placed" in a crowd would give irrational thoughts about ourselves.

We are lonely when we are not able to regulate our emotions. When we are lonely, our ability to regulate or to create positive outlook diminishes, we openly welcome negative thoughts and entertain them further because we have opened the doors of vulnerability by being lonely.

We are lonely when our expectations do not match our reality. When we perceive our environment to be cooperative and expect favorable responses from others. Our perceptions is dependent by how we feel because of the inability to rationalize.

People who are fast working, result oriented, competitive are labeled Type “A” personalities. They are the ones who are prone to burnout and may eventually become lonely. These are people who are susceptible to cardiovascular diseases because of minimized leisure and are frequently stressed out from being too demanding in their work output. One factor that identifies a type “A” person is their “hostility.” These are people that are hard to get by when you have the propensity to work at your own pace. Studies reveal that an attitude of hostility results to being distrustful and cynical (Everson, Rose, Clark & Henderson, 2013). Hostility is characterized by being cynical and angry which may impair our connectedness. A study conducted reveal that patients undergoing coronary procedure when asked to recall an undesirable incident reacted in a way that was enough to induce a coronary artery to constrict (Cacciopo & Patrick, 2008). Loneliness results into hostility and distrustful behavior which are common stressors that may lead to diseases.

Being lonely affects our self-esteem as well, because of one’s tendencies to isolate oneself. Our social environment gives us security and engagement. However, isolating oneself, coupled with irrationality may affect how we perceive ourselves thus adding to being lonelier. Emotional distress and the decline of our executive functioning may lead to engagement to temporary oral pleasures such as drinking, smoking and binge eating. Which will eventually create into further problems.

We don't choose to feel lonely but we experience it one way or the other. When we are lonely, our self-regulating thinking is down. We become more protective of ourselves thus we become more intensely reactive to negatives and become less aware of the positives. We become overly protective of ourselves that we turn into protective mode. We are on the lookout for anything that may threaten ourselves. We become more defensive and vigilantly ready to fight back at an indication of attack against us.

According to Weiss' research (1973), there are two types of loneliness. (1) The emotional loneliness which is the absence of intimate figure or close emotional attachment (either a husband, partner or close friend) and (2) Social loneliness which is the absence of broader contacts or engagement in social network. (Hsu, Hailey & Range, 1987).

## **LONELINESS IS NOT DEPRESSION**

Although loneliness and depression are both aversive and an undesirable state, these two are different in many ways.

Depression is a dysphoric mood state accompanied by loss of enthusiasm. It is a general slowing of mental and physical activity and negative distortions (Beck, 1976). Whereas loneliness is characterized by an emotion of longing. A lonely individual alleviates loneliness by forming relationships while depressed individuals surrender to distress (Weiss, 1973).

When we are lonely, we often mistakenly thought it as a “depression.” We often hear people say that they are “depressed” because of undesirable events that took place. We often hear opinions about people withdrawing or refusing to socialize as “depressed.” Depression is a condition that is not always triggered by any stimulus or event. On the other hand, loneliness is triggered by events and prompts the desire to associate. It reflects how we feel when we fail or there is conflict in association. Depression results into being apathetic while loneliness prompts an individual to do something such as creating relationships (Cacioppo and Patrick, 2008).

Depression and loneliness may have one common characteristic, which is the diminished sense of personal control that makes coping passive. This reason can lead to the loss of motivation and further frustrations. Loneliness is not depression but it is linked to or can lead to depression.

## OUR SCHEMA FOR BELONGINGNESS

According to Gierveld, Tilburg and Dykstra (2006). The opposite of loneliness is belongingness. Our human nature gave us the capability to physiologically respond to stimulus from our environment, situations and how we perceive based on our “schema.” Schema is how our knowledge or idea is constructed and stored in our memory. We have our own idea and mental framework on how a certain situation should be. Crane and Hannibal (2012, p.82) states that according to Frederic Bartlett, (British Psychologist (1896-1969)), Memory is reconstructed and the “Schema” influences recall. Memories make us who we are now. Memories are stored images that are recalled based on our own schema of what a memory should be. Loneliness penetrates through memory recall

when our schema and the memory recall does not fit together or the reconstruction of memory do not fit the recall. Experiences of neglect during childhood may have difficult recall for a grown up person because we usually have that schema (or idea) that childhood experiences is a fun, carefree experience that we as children should be loved and cared for by adults.

On the other hand, who we are now is a product of our previous experiences particularly that of childhood. The recollection of these memories will either give us feelings of loneliness or happiness.

We are lonely when we feel rejected and or neglected. Harry Harlow in 1958, conducted a research on rhesus monkeys. He separated the newborn monkeys from their mothers and substituted these with a monkey-like figure covered in cloth and another monkey like figure made barely with wire but with a milk bottle. As observed by Harlow, the baby monkey goes to cuddle the monkey like figure covered in cloth when the animal is under stressed and only when significant feeling of hunger takes place that the infant monkey goes to the wire monkey to drink milk from. It is also observed that these monkeys have an innate need for tactile comfort, physical touch and connection with a surrogate nonmoving, monkey like figure despite not having the ability to reciprocate the gesture from the baby monkeys. (Cacioppo and Patrick (2008, p.129). By instinct, the rhesus monkey study revealed that the infant rhesus cuddles the mother like figure covered in cloth most of the time and only when it gets famished that it goes to the wire monkey for nourishment.

Harlow's study found that monkeys deprived from mother's care have significant delays mentally and emotionally. Significant delay means that the mental and emotional development is not taking place according to its normal phase and age. Children growing up without parental care are the ones who seek attention, affirmation and comfort from other sources while growing up to become adults. Neglected childhood results to the feeling of being isolated even when with people. To be loved and being cared for is very important in the development process of a child. According to Dears and Levin (1967), the most crucial and persuasive influences toward a healthy development of children were the love and warmth imparted by the parents. That the child feels belongingness. (Zulueta & Distajo, 2011). Thus, growing up with the orientation that you belong will not make you easily feel lonely.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND LONELINESS

In this internet age, people are connected virtually through social media. Individuals can now be updated with someone's life by merely browsing through Facebook, Instagram and other social media platforms. Technology has changed the way we connect with people conveniently in the comforts of wherever we are and at the click of our fingers. Gadget use has become so affordable and convenient that has teamed with internet to come up with everyone's virtual world.

People engaging on online connectedness are more isolated to the real world. Online communication potentially isolated individual users in real life and gave rise to low wellbeing (Kim, Larose, & Peng, 2009). People particularly those that are actively engaged into their social media accounts actually become physically isolated particu-

larly with family members at home. They become withdrawn from their environment and more connected virtually with anyone around the world.

Does virtual connectedness help in alleviating loneliness? A study done by Pitmann and Reich (2016) indicate that excessive use of Social Media makes individuals unhappy. Individuals who are engaged into social media are lonelier as it tends to give good impressions of someone else's life compared to yours. Social media users may have tendencies to be pretentious by posting photos and captions about good life, but is it always true?

## DEALING WITH LONELINESS

As mentioned earlier, feeling lonely at times is like feeling thirsty or hungry that we need to eat and drink. When a certain weird feeling is emerging in your system, which starts to make you feel unmotivated, then you may be just feeling lonely. Loneliness is a signal that prompts us to do something. We may have different ways of dealing with this feeling but human as we are, and in the right state of mind, we are always pushed to do something to make us feel better. Passivity makes an individual feel lonelier.

### The “Wilson” Effect

In the movie “Castaway”, the character Robert Zemeckis played by Tom Hanks was stranded in an island alone following a plane crash that made him the only survivor with all the packages and parcels in tow. Being isolated in a faraway desert island with no one with, made him incredibly lonely. In a certain scene, in his desperation and frustration from not being able to make a fire, he accidentally cut his palm, where blood oozed from it, he

grabbed the volleyball which was in one of the parcels supposed to be delivered and furiously threw the volleyball away. This left a blot of blood on the volleyball. When Robert finally calmed down, he modified the blood clot on the volleyball and made a face out from it. He named it "Wilson" from the volleyball's brand name. Wilson became Robert's companion through the years that he was in the island alone. He gets to talk with it like a person. He talks with it, pouring his frustrations and pain and anger on it. When he had the chance to get out of the island, on a makeshift raft, Wilson was blown away from its place where it was tied securely. Robert got so emotionally devastated losing his dearly loved companion.

A study done by John T. Cacciopo (2008) revealed that people who are lonely tend to *anthropomorphize* inanimate objects and form relationships with it. You form "Para social relationship" when you get attached with pets or objects. You anthropomorphize it when you relate with like that of a human. The study showed that lonely people relate more with objects in a humanlike state and create Para social relationship with it. The "Wilson effect" is somehow helpful to lonely people. It motivates a person to go on and somehow become "socially" connected with objects or pets that are *anthropomorphized*.

## The Prayer Phenomenon

Whatever religion anyone belongs to, prayer is a common practice. Prayer is an act of talking to a Divine being not seen and an act of meditation. People who are in desperation mention prayer as one of their ways of coping.

In a research done by Fernandez-Distajo (2008) on Burnout and Well-Being among Clergywomen, who have their own families (married with children). The study revealed that the feeling of loneliness is one the many symptoms of someone getting burned-out. Feeling burned-out is being emotionally tired from routines. It is a feeling of being rejected by colleagues and angry about anything.

Spirituality on the other hand is one's connection with the Divine being. The level of spirituality is significant in dealing with burnout which being lonely is one of its onset of symptoms. Spirituality in the study is defined as the respondents' manifestation of ones connection with God through prayer, bible reading, church attendance, tithing among others. The study revealed that the lower the level of spirituality the higher the level of burn out, while the higher the level of spirituality, the lower the level of burn out. The study relates the level of spirituality to that of dealing with burnout which loneliness is one its main components.

Prayer is an act of spiritual connection. It is an act to communicate with God to feel empowered and connected (Fernandez-Distajo, 2008).

## Conclusion

Loneliness is a natural phenomenon, we go through with it at some point in our lives. It is a social isolation where one becomes withdrawn even in a crowd. Belongingness is the opposite of loneliness. Our orientation of belongingness goes back from our experiences in childhood. Belongingness means we are loved and cared for by our immediate family while growing up.

Human as we are, we always find ways to cope with loneliness. Social media has been an escape to make oneself somehow socially connected virtually but as studies found out, lonely people who engage in social media become lonelier. Others connect with nonliving objects or animals and deal with it as if they are humans. Lonely people become more imaginative.

Ponder on which suits you in dealing with loneliness. It may be effective if we connect with people more by utilizing technology as the fastest and easiest way to get in touch.

Let us be reminded that from the busyness of life, let us take time to reach out and get in touch with people, who knows they may be lonely too.

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# **Merataplah: Upaya Mempertimbangkan Konteks Kultural dalam Pendampingan terhadap Orang-orang yang Berduka**

**Pdt. Alokasih Gulo**

## **Abstrak**

Kedukaan merupakan fenomena universal yang dialami oleh manusia dari berbagai konteks kehidupan. Ada berbagai cara yang dilakukan untuk melewati masa-masa sulit karena kedukaan, salah satunya dapat ditemukan dalam tradisi-tradisi (agama dan budaya) lokal. Artikel ini berfokus pada upaya menggali dan memanfaatkan tradisi kultural Nias dalam menghadapi kedukaan, dengan maksud memperkaya para pendamping, terutama para pelayan gerejawi, dalam menolong orang-orang yang berduka. Hal ini dilakukan dengan asumsi bahwa ada berbagai potensi dalam tradisi (agama dan budaya) lokal yang dapat digunakan untuk pengembangan model pendampingan pastoral kedukaan.

Tidak semua aspek akan digali dalam artikel ini, penulis lebih melihat aspek ekspresi kedukaan yang

dalam setiap tradisi memiliki keunikannya masing-masing. Salah satu ekspresi kedukaan dalam tradisi Nias adalah meratap (*mangenu*). Tradisi ini sebenarnya dapat ditemukan juga dalam beberapa teks Alkitab, menegaskan bahwa tidak ada yang salah dengan tradisi meratap. Tulisan ini tidak mungkin menjawab semua pertanyaan, tetapi paling tidak dapat membuka wacana untuk mempertimbangkan konteks kultural dalam mendampingi orang-orang yang berduka.

**Kata-kata kunci:** kematian, ekspresi kedukaan, gereja, budaya.

## Pendahuluan

WG adalah seorang ibu (janda) berusia 65 tahun, tinggal bersama anak bungsunya yang masih belum menikah. Suaminya meninggal dunia dalam sebuah kecelakaan mobil tujuh tahun yang lalu, tetapi sang ibu sendiri belum menerima kematian suaminya itu. Dengan terbata-bata dia menceritakan peristiwa kecelakaan tersebut, dan sambil menangis dia mengakui kalau dia masih belum menerima kematian suaminya, dia tidak percaya musibah itu. Ketika suaminya meninggal, dia diminta oleh para penggerja gereja dan keluarga besarnya untuk tidak terlalu sedih, sebab menurut mereka orang beriman tidak boleh bersedih kalau ada anggota keluarga yang meninggal dunia. Khotbah-khotbah pada ibadah-ibadah penghiburan terus menerus mendorong dia untuk merelakan kepergian suaminya, para pengkhotbah

mengatakan bahwa semuanya terjadi atas kehendak Tuhan. Ibu WG tidak dapat berbuat apa-apa pada waktu itu, dia hanya mengikuti saja nasihat-nasihat dari gereja. Namun demikian, selama tujuh tahun sejak suaminya meninggal, dia menyimpan rasa dukanya yang begitu dalam, dan selama waktu itu dia tidak berani lewat di depan gedung kantor almarhum suaminya, “amat menyakitkan”, katanya.

Kasus di atas adalah kisah nyata yang dialami oleh seorang perempuan yang lahir dan besar dalam budaya Nias. Dalam konteks pelayanan gereja, keluarganya sangat aktif dan mendukung berbagai kegiatan gereja. Ketika suaminya meninggal dunia, dia sebenarnya ingin mengekspresikan kedukaannya yang amat dalam, penulisng sekali gereja dan keluarga besarnya justru “melerangnya” dengan dalih orang beriman, apalagi tokoh gereja, harus tegar. Akibatnya, kedukaannya tidak tuntas, dia harus menanggungnya selama tujuh tahun, sampai akhirnya dia menceritakannya. Sementara itu, gereja menganggap masalah kedukaan ibu WG sudah selesai, dengan anggapan bahwa sebagai seorang tokoh gereja, imannya pasti kuat, ibu WG pasti sudah merelakan kepergian suaminya itu.

Dengan menggunakan kasus di atas, tulisan ini dimaksudkan untuk menggali kembali kekayaan agama lokal dalam kaitannya dengan kedukaan berfokus pada ekspresi kedukaan dalam tradisi Nias. Penulis juga akan

mengulas sikap gereja (BNKP) terkait ekspresi mengekspresikan kedukaan. Fokus pembahasan memang pada ekspresi kedukaan, tetapi tentunya akan membahas beberapa hal penting terkait kematian secara umum dalam pemahaman tradisional Nias, dan sikap gereja BNKP sendiri atas kematian (atau orang mati).

### **Apakah itu Kedukaan?**

Hampir tidak ada orang dan budaya yang tidak mengenal kedukaan, sudah dianggap umum dan biasa terjadi, sehingga membuatnya tidak terdefinisikan dengan tuntas. Edgar N. Jackson dalam studinya atas kedukaan, menemukan bahwa tidak ada definisi tunggal atas “kedukaan” ini, baik dalam bidang medis (para dokter), teologi (teolog dan rohaniawan), psikologi, maupun filsafat (lih. Jackson 1977, 16-17). Jackson sendiri tampaknya melihat kedukaan dalam kaitannya dengan respons manusia atas situasi dan peristiwa kehilangan (Jackson 1977, 17). Totok S. Wiryasaputra dalam bukunya “Mengapa Berduka”, mengkompilasi beberapa pendapat para ahli dan ensiklopedi terkait definisi kedukaan ini, semua terkait dengan perasaan/emosi manusia. Beliau sendiri memahami bahwa kedukaan selalu berkaitan secara langsung dengan kehilangan sesuatu atau seseorang yang dianggap berharga atau bernilai, sehingga dapat dikatakan kedukaan itu sebagai reaksi manusiawi untuk mempertahankan diri ketika sedang menghadapi peristiwa kehilangan (Wiryasaputra 2003, 25).

Penulis sendiri melihat bahwa kedukaan memang pertama-tama ada kaitannya dengan kehilangan sesuatu/seseorang yang berarti, terkait erat dengan situasi/peristiwa kehilangan. Namun demikian, kedukaan juga kadang-kadang ada kaitannya dengan aspek lain yang mungkin saja tidak berhubungan langsung dengan “kehilangan” yang umum dipahami. Dalam Alkitab misalnya, kita dapat menemukan kedukaan dirasakan oleh seseorang karena dosa (Mzm. 38:2-7; Yer. 23:9; Ezr. 10:1, 6), karena kesehatan yang memburuk (Ay. 1:14-17), karena penderitaan orang lain (Neh. 1:3-4; Est. 3:13-14), karena anak yang menyimpang dari jalan yang benar (Ams. 10:1, 17:21), atau karena berpisah dengan orang yang dilayani (1 Tes. 2:17). Oleh karena kedukaan dapat disebabkan oleh banyak faktor, maka perlu penulis pertegas bahwa kedukaan yang dimaksud dalam makalah ini adalah suatu perasaan dukacita karena kehilangan (kematian) orang-orang yang dikasihi.

### **Kedukaan dalam Tradisi Nias**

Kedukaan merupakan suatu fenomena universal yang terjadi di berbagai tempat, dialami oleh semua orang tanpa membeda-bedakan status sosial, jenis kelamin, umur, agama, asal-usul, dll. Totok S. Wirya Saputra mengatakan bahwa pengalaman dan tanggapan manusia tentang kedukaan sebenarnya sama, yang berbeda adalah cara pengekspresian pengalaman kedukaan tersebut (Wirya Saputra 2003, 15). Persoalannya ialah ketika pengalaman kedukaan tidak terekspresikan dengan baik,

maka akan meninggalkan duka yang mendalam dan tak terselesaikan. Kondisi ini tentunya akan mengganggu gerak hidup orang yang sedang berduka tersebut, ibu WG contohnya.

Oleh karena kedukaan terjadi di berbagai tempat dan dialami oleh semua manusia dari berbagai konteks, maka masing-masing konteks pun memiliki “tradisi” cara pengekspresian pengalaman tersebut. Dengan tradisi ini, orang yang berduka tertolong untuk menghadapi masa-masa sulit itu sampai pada akhirnya dia mampu melewatkannya dengan tuntas. Demikian juga dengan konteks Nias, ada tradisi yang biasa dilakukan ketika terjadi peristiwa kedukaan. Tradisi ini tentu ada kaitannya dengan kematian sebagai fokus makalah ini. Bagaimana pemahaman orang Nias tentang kematian? Tuhoni Telaumbanua dan Uwe Hummel mengatakan bahwa sebagaimana kelahiran umumnya dipandang sebagai permulaan kehidupan seseorang, kemudian pernikahan mempersatukan dua kehidupan dan idealnya merupakan sumber dari kehidupan baru, maka kematian dilihat sebagai akhir dari kehidupan di dunia ini, di mana tubuh (*boto*) menjadi debu, sementara jiwa (*noso*) kembali kepada *Lowalangi* (sebutan untuk yang tertinggi dalam agama suku Nias), dan roh (yang disebut sebagai *bekhu zimate*) yang dipercaya berada dekat jenazah akan turun ke dunia bawah setelah empat hari kematianya (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 45-46). Menariknya, kematian bukanlah kehendak yang Empunya kehidupan

seperti yang umum dipahami saat ini, melainkan kehendak yang bersangkutan ketika masih berada dalam kandungan. Hal ini terlihat misalnya melalui ungkapan “*no irugi fangandrönia*” (sudah tiba pada batas permintaannya) (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 46). Itulah sebabnya, apabila seseorang (biasanya orangtua) merasa sudah dekat waktunya, apalagi kalau yang bersangkutan sakit parah, dilaksanakan upacara memberi makan orangtua (*fangotome'ö*). Upacara ini cukup penting, sebagaimana dicatat oleh Tuhoni Telaumbanua dan Uwe Hummel:

Ini adalah tanda hormat kepada orangtua, juga untuk meminta berkat darinya, sekaligus merupakan kesempatan bagi semua kerabat untuk saling memaafkan dan berdamai bila ada pertikaian. Terkadang orangtua membagi warisan bagi anak-anak pada kesempatan ini. (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 47)

Ketika seseorang meninggal dunia, apakah ikatan dengan keluarganya putus sama sekali? Tidak! Bagi orang Nias, orang yang sudah meninggal dunia, apalagi orangtua dengan status sosial tinggi (bangsawan), tetap memiliki “ikatan” dengan keluarganya. Memang ada tradisi atau upacara *fanibo tufo* (membuang tikar) yang dilakukan empat hari setelah penguburannya dengan maksud supaya yang meninggal dunia tersebut tidak lagi kembali ke rumah (W. Gulo dkk, 2004, 86), namun sesungguhnya ikatan dengan keluarga tidak diputus sama

sekali. Setelah empat hari ini juga kemuliaan almarhum akan dipanggil untuk menetap di dalam *adu zatua* (patung orangtua), dan dipercaya akan menjadi sumber berkat bagi keluarga yang ditinggalkan (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 50). *Adu zatua* ini biasanya diletakkan di bagian atas rumah yang disebut “*buatō*” (semacam sotoh rumah), dengan maksud supaya *adu* orangtua yang telah meninggal dunia tersebut tetap mengawasi anggota keluarga, melindungi mereka dari serangan roh jahat, dan memberkati mereka (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 50). Upacara *fanibo tufo* tidak lagi dilaksanakan sekarang, digantikan dengan upacara *fanano bunga* (menanam bunga) yang disebut oleh W. Gulo dkk sebagai upacara yang bernuansa kristiani (Gulo dkk 2004, 87). Artinya, entah *fanibo tufo* atau pun *fanano bunga*, tetap menunjukkan bahwa bagi orang Nias, ikatan orang yang telah meninggal dunia dengan keluarganya tidak dapat diputus total, selalu ada ikatan. Hal ini tampak juga ketika kebaktian akhir tahun gerejani, banyak jemaat yang menangis pada kebaktian minggu dimaksud, umumnya mereka mengingat kembali anggota keluarganya yang telah meninggal dunia.

Lalu, bagaimana orang Nias (menurut tradisi Nias) menghayati kedukaannya ketika ada orang yang meninggal dunia? Sebagai masyarakat dengan ikatan sosial dan ikatan kekeluargaan yang kuat, dari dulu sampai sekarang, banyak orang yang datang melayat ke rumah duka. Mereka melayat untuk berjaga bersama

keluarga duka, sekaligus menghibur keluarga tersebut. Menariknya, ada juga upacara adat (walaupun sekarang sudah berkurang) yang disebut *molaya* (semacam tarian) dan *hoho ba zimate* (suatu litani), yang dilakukan untuk menghormati orang yang meninggal dunia tersebut, juga untuk mengingatkan keluarga agar tetap menjaga nama baik almarhum (Telaumbanua dan Hummel 2015, 49). *Hoho* tersebut bukan mite (*myth*), melainkan berisi dongeng (*folktale*). Dikisahkan seorang bernama *Lawaendröna* mencari hidup abadi, dan *Lawaendröna* berhasil menemukan tempat itu, di bulan (Mendröfa 1981, 199). Meski hanya dongeng, *hoho* ini dituturkan dalam upacara ritual kematian, suatu tradisi yang dipraktikkan pada zamannya.

Selain itu, keluarga juga diberi kesempatan untuk “menangisi” orang yang sudah meninggal dunia tersebut. Dalam ratapannya, ketika anggota keluarga mengekspresikan kedukaannya, mereka lebih bebas “menceritakan ulang” kisah-kisah penting atau kenangan tertentu akan orang yang meninggal dunia, tidak jarang menangis sambil berkisah (*mangenu*= meratap). Dalam ratapan ini, anggota keluarga, bahkan orang-orang yang ikut merasakan kedukaan (walaupun mungkin bukan anggota keluarga), diberi kesempatan untuk mengekspresikan kedukaannya masing-masing, bahkan sampai pada saat penguburan orang yang meninggal dunia tersebut.

## Sikap Gereja (BNKP) atas Kedukaan

Sikap BNKP atas kedukaan tentu terkait dengan pandangannya atas kematian yang menyebabkan kedukaan itu. Dokumen yang dapat dipakai sebagai referensi untuk mengetahui sikap BNKP tersebut adalah Buku Agendre BNKP (buku liturgi) dan Peraturan terkait. Berbeda dengan pemahaman tradisional Nias, BNKP tidak melihat orang yang meninggal dunia secara terpisah, yaitu tubuh (*boto*), jiwa (*noso*), dan (*roh*). Pandangan BNKP atas orang yang meninggal dunia pun kurang jelas, selain mengulang beberapa teks Alkitab pada saat pemakaman orang yang meninggal dunia. Teks-teks dimaksud antara lain Mazmur 103:15-18; Mazmur 90:1-6; Filipi 3:20-21; Ayub 14:1-2; 1 Tesalonika 4:13-14, 16-18; 1 Korintus 15:42b-44a. Penulisng sekali, tidak ada penjelasan rinci tentang pemahaman BNKP atas teks ini. Beberapa hal yang mungkin dapat dipahami dari pandangan BNKP berdasarkan teks-teks dimaksud, misalnya tentang kefanaan manusia, tentang kematian sebagai bagian dari anugerah Tuhan, tentang kesiapan dan ketegaran menghadapi kematian dan kedukaan, dan tentang semuanya terjadi atas kehendak Tuhan.

Sama seperti gereja protestan pada umumnya, BNKP menegaskan bahwa tidak ada lagi hubungan yang hidup dan yang mati, sehingga segala bentuk persembahan atau pemberian, bahkan tradisi *fanibo tufo* tidak boleh dilakukan lagi, karena tradisi itu dianggap kafir (Gulo 1983, 207). Sikap BNKP ini sudah lama

ditegaskan, tertuang dalam Peraturan BNKP (*Amakhoita ba* BNKP Nias) tahun 1961 pasal 8. Walaupun dengan bahasa yang agak berbeda, sikap ini masih terus dipertahankan sampai sekarang, bahkan acara *fananö bunga* pun harus dilakukan dengan hati-hati supaya tidak terikat dengan tradisi lama. Hal ini terlihat misalnya dalam Peraturan BNKP No. 15/BPMS-BNKP/2013 tentang Tertib Penggembalaan, Pasal 8 ayat 6. Dalam peraturan tersebut ditegaskan larangan “menghubungi” atau berkomunikasi dengan (roh) orang yang sudah meninggal dunia, dilarang juga menaruh barang-barang orang meninggal di atas kuburan seperti yang biasa dilakukan dalam tradisi asli Nias. Mengapa? Karena ini semua dianggap sebagai penyembahan kepada nenek moyang, dianggap sebagai kepercayaan kekafiran. *Adu zatua* sendiri sudah lama “dibuang” atas “perintah” para misionaris karena dianggap sebagai penyembahan berhala, melanggar titah ke-2 tentang larangan membuat patung. Kalau pun di beberapa tempat masih ada *adu zatua*, namun karena kerasnya larangan dari gereja, maka *adu* tersebut tinggal sekadar hiasan rumah.

Sementara itu, tradisi *hoho* dan ratapan ketika ada orang yang meninggal dunia sudah ditinggalkan, tidak ada lagi ruang untuk mengekspresikan kedukaan sebagaimana biasanya dilakukan dalam tradisi Nias. Menurut gereja, orang beriman tidak boleh bersedih, tidak boleh menangisi orang yang meninggal dunia seperti yang dulu dilakukan, semua kehendak Tuhan dan

orang tersebut adalah milik Tuhan. Ada kecenderungan memperlakukan iman dengan kesedihan dan tangisan kedukaan. Mengekspresikan rasa duka dengan menangis seperti dalam tradisi Nias akan dianggap sebagai orang yang kurang beriman, sebaliknya tidak menangis akan dianggap sebagai orang Kristen yang tegar dan beriman kuat. Itulah yang dialami oleh ibu WG ketika suaminya meninggal dunia. Akibatnya, dia menyimpan dukacita yang mendalam dalam dirinya hingga tujuh tahun, suatu waktu yang cukup panjang dan melelahkan.

Sikap BNKP di atas muncul dan berkembang sebagai akibat dari sikap dan ajaran yang dari awal ditunjukkan oleh para misionaris yang datang ke Nias. Para misionaris yang datang ke Nias berlatar belakang Neo-Pietisme yang menganggap diri sebagai bagian dari reformasi tetapi tanpa terikat dengan dengan salah satu tradisi, baik Lutheran maupun Reformed (lih. Gulö 2012, 55). Fokus utama para misionaris pada waktu itu adalah keselamatan jiwa-jiwa dengan mengajak masyarakat untuk meninggalkan agama dan budaya Nias yang sebagian besar dianggap kafir dan berhala (Gulö 2012, 26, 61-62). Hal ini dilakukan dengan maksud sebanyak mungkin menjangkau “jiwa-jiwa” yang dianggap masih berada dalam kegelapan. Walaupun kini para misionaris dari Eropa itu tidak ada lagi di Nias, namun pola atau pendekatan seperti ini masih amat kuat, hal inilah yang terlihat dalam sikap BNKP seperti dijelaskan sebelumnya. Selain itu, pengaruh teologi-teologi triumphalisme di BNKP

dalam beberapa tahun terakhir tidak dapat dihindari. Hal ini disebabkan oleh karena banyaknya para pendeta BNKP yang berlatar belakang pendidikan teologi injili yang umumnya berasal dari Amerika. Teologi ini amat menekankan keselamatan jiwa-jiwa dan kemenangan atau superioritas budaya barat (yang diklaim sebagai ajaran kekristenan) atas budaya lokal.

### **Meratap sebagai Ekspresi Kedukaan yang Alkitabiah**

Kembali pada kasus ibu WG, yang terpaksa menyimpan dan menanggung kedukaannya selama tujuh tahun karena gereja (dan orang-orang Kristen) melarangnya untuk mengekspresikan rasa sedih dan dukanya yang begitu dalam. Kematian suaminya merupakan sesuatu yang amat menyakitkan, apalagi suaminya tersebut meninggal karena kecelakaan. Menggunakan teori Elisabeth Kübler-Ross tentang sikap atas kematian (lih. Kübler-Ross 1998, 48), maka penulis melihat beberapa sikap yang terjadi atas diri ibu WG belum terlewati dengan tuntas. Pada awalnya dia terkejut (*shocked*) dengan kematian suaminya yang tiba-tiba, dia begitu marah kepada pengendara mobil lain yang menabrak suaminya, dan sampai dia bercerita kepada penulis dia juga masih belum menerima dan terus menerus menyangkal (*denial*) peristiwa yang membuat suaminya itu meninggal dunia. Penulisng sekali, gereja dan orang-orang di sekitarnya telah “memotong” sedemikian rupa proses kedukaan yang amat dalam ini, sehingga ibu WG merasa tertekan dari waktu ke waktu.

Intinya, ibu WG tidak diberi kesempatan untuk mengekspresikan keduakannya dengan baik, akhirnya dia tidak mampu menghadapi dan melewati masa-masa sulit itu dengan tuntas. Inilah yang disebut sebagai keduakan yang tidak terselesaikan.

Totok S. Wiryasaputra membagi 3 jenis keduakan yang tak terselesaikan, yaitu keduakan berkepanjangan (*prolonged grief*), keduakan tertunda (*delayed grief*), dan keduakan tidak penuh (*distorted grief*) (Wiryasaputra 2003, 37, 38, 40). Keduakan berkepanjangan ada kaitannya dengan keduakan pada masa lalu yang dibawa ke dalam kehidupan masa kini, disebabkan karena penduka tidak melalui proses keduakannya secara wajar (Wiryasaputra 2003, 37). Keduakan tertunda terjadi karena orang yang berduka tidak ingin, tidak mampu, atau tidak ada kesempatan untuk mengalami keduakannya pada saat atau segera setelah menyadari adanya kehilangan (Wiryasaputra 2003, 38). Keduakan tidak penuh dapat disebut juga sebagai keduakan yang terhambat, muncul karena orang yang berduka “dilarang” atau dinasihati oleh orang lain (biasanya para rohaniawan) agar dia tidak menangis, lebih baik semuanya diserahkan saja pada Tuhan (Wiryasaputra 2003, 40). Keduakan yang terakhir inilah yang terjadi pada ibu WG, dia tidak boleh menangis, sebab menurut para pelayan gereja, orang beriman tidak perlu menangisi orang yang sudah meninggal dunia.

Banyak hal sebenarnya yang dapat dilakukan untuk menolong ibu WG ketika suaminya meninggal dunia, salah satunya adalah memberikan kesempatan kepadanya untuk menyalurkan perasaan/emosi keduakannya dengan baik. Latar belakang sosial budaya serta usia ibu WG tentu menjadi pertimbangan penting dalam menentukan cara apa yang sebaiknya dilakukan supaya dia tertolong menghadapi dan melewati masa-masa sulit itu. Persoalannya ialah dia tidak diberi kesempatan untuk itu sama sekali sejak awal, akhirnya semuanya terpendam, dan itu amat menyiksa hidupnya. Dengan latar belakang sosial budayanya (lahir dan besar dalam tradisi Nias), dan usianya yang cukup tua (umur 57 tahun ketika suaminya meninggal dunia), maka penulis melihat beliau mestinya diberi kesempatan untuk mengekspresikan keduakannya dengan meratap, yaitu menangis dengan bebas atas kematian suaminya yang tiba-tiba. Di atas telah dijelaskan bahwa “meratap” merupakan salah satu tradisi Nias yang dilakukan ketika ada orang yang meninggal dunia.

Persoalannya ialah gereja seringkali menolak tradisi agama lokal dengan alasan hal itu bertentangan dengan ajaran kekristenan yang berdasarkan Alkitab. Gereja kini hanya melakukan ibadah penghiburan, dengan isi lebih banyak nasihat kepada keluarga duka dan orang-orang yang hadir pada ibadah tersebut. Hal inilah juga yang ditemukan oleh Aguswati Hildebrandt Rambe dalam penelitiannya atas ritus kematian dan kedukaan di Sumba dan Mamasa (Hildebrandt Rambe 2014). Dalam konteks

Nias, tradisi lokal yang memberi kesempatan kepada orang yang berduka untuk mengekspresikan keduakannya melalui *hoho* dan ratapan dibendung sedemikian rupa, digantikan dengan sesuatu yang sebenarnya asing bagi orang Nias, sesuatu yang memaksa orang yang berduka melupakan begitu saja keduakannya, sementara perasaan terdalamnya tersiksa dari waktu ke waktu.

Pertanyaannya ialah apakah “meratap” memang tidak Alkitabiah seperti dituduhkan oleh ajaran kekristenan? Howard W. Roberts melihat bahwa “meratap” justru sudah menjadi tradisi yang biasa dipraktikkan pada zaman dulu dan Alkitab tidak pernah melarangnya. Menurutnya, meratap merupakan bagian dari ibadah penghiburan dan pemakaman.

*The purpose of a funeral or memorial service is twofold: to worship and to mourn. Mourning in worship has an ancient heritage as many of the psalms suggest. The lamenting mentioned in the psalms often was the response of the people for the sins they had committed, but there also is evidence of the congregation mourning losses. (Roberts 1995, 62)*

Jadi, jelas bahwa “meratap” merupakan ekspresi keduakan yang alkitabiah. Kita dapat menemukan sejumlah bagian dalam kitab Mazmur misalnya, dimana pemazmur dan umat kadang-kadang meratap sedemikian

rupa untuk mengekspresikan kesedihan sekaligus permohonannya atas situasi “duka” yang sedang mereka alami. Kitab Ratapan pun dipenuhi oleh ratapan yang menangisi kejatuhan Yerusalem. Secara tradisional kitab ini dibacakan pada saat tertentu dalam tahun liturgi Yahudi, yaitu pada hari kesembilan dari bulan Ab (sekitar pertengahan Juli), ketika orang Yahudi memperingati penghancuran kota Yerusalem.

Bagaimana dengan “meratap” dalam tradisi Nias? Mengapa ditinggalkan dan malah dianggap sebagai bagian dari kepercayaan kafir? Pertanyaan-pertanyaan seperti ini tidak dapat dijawab dengan sederhana. Di atas telah dijelaskan latar belakang para misionaris dan latar belakang pendidikan teologi sebagian para pendeta BNKP yang cenderung “anti” budaya lokal. Hal ini menyebabkan semua tradisi lokal, termasuk meratap ketika ada orang yang meninggal dunia, dihentikan, penulisngnya gereja pun tidak menawarkan sesuatu yang jauh lebih baik selain nasihat untuk tidak terlalu terhanyut dalam kesedihan, untuk merelakan begitu saja kepergian orang yang begitu dikasihi, dibungkus dengan kalimat yang membis “Tuhan adalah Pemiliknya, dan Tuhan sudah tahu yang terbaik baginya”. Ternyata masalah kedukaan tidak dapat terselesaikan dengan cara yang seperti ini, sebaliknya membuat para penduka semakin tenggelam dalam kedukaan terpendam mereka, ibu WG contohnya. Itulah sebabnya, menurut penulis, gereja sebaiknya memberi kesempatan yang luas bagi warga jemaat untuk

mengekspresikan keduanya entah dengan cara “meratap” atau pun dengan cara lain yang sejenis, intinya si penduka dapat melewati masa-masa sulit itu dengan tuntas.

Dari kasus ibu WG, penulis melihat “meratap” sebagaimana dilakukan dalam tradisi Nias dapat digunakan dengan pertimbangan faktor usia dan latar belakang sosial budayanya. Ratapan seperti ini dapat diintegrasikan dengan ibadah-ibadah penghiburan dan pemakaman yang sudah umum dilakukan saat ini, tentu dengan merancang liturgi yang tepat untuk itu. Contoh dari liturgi seperti ini dapat dilihat dalam karya Howard W. Roberts (Roberts 1995, 63-67). Selain itu, selama pendampingan yang dilakukan pasca kematian dan penguburan mesti juga selalu memberi kebebasan bagi si penduka untuk mengekspresikan keduanya. Pengalaman penulis dengan ibu WG, walaupun membutuhkan proses yang agak panjang, penulis memberi kesempatan bagi dia untuk meratap dengan cara menangis sambil menceritakan ulang kisah-kisah berkesan bersama dengan (almarhum) suaminya. Banyak hal terungkap selama proses pendampingan ini, sampai pada akhirnya dia sudah semakin terbuka dan semakin berani menerima realitas bahwa suaminya sudah meninggal dunia tujuh tahun yang lalu.

Bagaimana dengan mereka yang sudah tidak mengenal banyak lagi tradisi lokal Nias, terutama generasi

milenial? Menurut penulis, pemberian kesempatan bagi mereka untuk “meratap” masih mungkin dilakukan. Awal tahun 2017 yang lalu penulis mengajar di kelas pastoral dengan tema kedukaan. Sesuai dengan rancangan perkuliahan yang sudah disiapkan, kami mengawali kelas pastoral tersebut dengan ibadah singkat, bernyanyi dan berdoa. Penulis sengaja memilih lagu “Di Doa Ibu” karena sebelumnya penulis sudah menelusuri “masa lalu” para mahasiswa dan banyak di antara mereka yang telah kehilangan orangtuanya tetapi mereka belum melewati masa-masa sulit itu dengan tuntas. Diiringi gitar, kami menyanyikan bersama-sama lagu tersebut, dan alhasil semua mahasiswa menangis, dan penulis membebaskan mereka untuk itu. Setelah selesai perkuliahan, ada beberapa mahasiswa yang mendatangi penulis dan ingin menceritakan kepedihan hati mereka karena ayah atau ibu mereka telah meninggal dunia beberapa tahun yang lalu.

Berangkat dari pengalaman ini, penulis melihat bahwa “meratap” dapat dilakukan untuk memberi kesempatan yang luas bagi para penduka dalam mengekspresikan kedukaan yang sedang dialaminya. Sekali lagi, pertimbangan yang mesti diperhatikan dalam menentukan ratapan seperti apa yang cocok antara lain: usia, latar belakang sosial budaya, dan konteks yang kini sedang berlangsung. Dengan cara ini, gereja dapat menolong warganya yang berduka, baik secara personal maupun komunal. Sementara itu, para penduka pun dapat mengalami, menghayati dan mengekspresikan

kedukaannya dengan bebas, sehingga pada akhirnya mereka dapat melewati masa-masa sulit itu dengan tuntas.

## Penutup

Andreas A. Yewangoe dalam kata pengantaranya di buku Aguswati Hildebrandt Rambe “*Keterjalinan dalam Keterpisahan*”, memastikan bahwa kematian (dan kedukaan) pasti dialami oleh siapapun, bahkan oleh semua makhluk, dengan catatan manusia (mampu) mempertanyakannya, sebagaimana manusia juga mempertanyakan asal-usul kehidupannya (Hildebrandt Rambe 2014, 13). Ini tidak diragukan lagi, dan tampaknya semua orang menyadarinya, walaupun banyak juga yang berusaha untuk melupakannya. Persoalannya bukan pada kematian itu sendiri, melainkan pada reaksi manusia atas kematian itu, terutama reaksi orang-orang yang ditinggalkan oleh orang yang meninggal dunia. Di sinilah “kedukaan” memainkan peranan penting dalam diri manusia, peranan yang mungkin menumbuhkan, atau sebaliknya peranan yang mungkin saja menenggelamkan. Itu tergantung pada cara manusia menghadapinya, dan dalam konteks kekristenan, gereja memegang peranan penting dalam menolong warganya menghadapi dan menghayati kedukaannya.

Artikel ini berjudul “Merataplah: Upaya Mempertimbangkan Konteks Kultural dalam Pendampingan terhadap Orang-orang yang Berduka”,

mencoba mengajak gereja untuk melihat kedukaan dari perspektif orang yang berduka sendiri, bukan dari perspektif ajaran gereja yang diwarisi dari barat. Ini adalah “jeritan” orang-orang berduka untuk didengarkan oleh gereja supaya diberi kesempatan yang luas dalam mengekspresikan kedukaannya. Ini adalah “seruan” orang-orang berduka supaya gereja segera memperbaiki pendekatannya dalam mendampingi orang-orang yang berduka dengan mempertimbangkan konteks mereka, bukan sebaliknya menjadi bagian dari pihak yang menunjukkan superioritas tradisi Kristen (barat) atas tradisi lokal.

Pada uraian sebelumnya juga telah dijelaskan bahwa ada berbagai cara yang dapat dilakukan untuk mendampingi mereka yang berduka, salah satunya adalah dengan pendampingan ratapan (*mourning care*). Ini merupakan salah satu bagian dari *ritual care*, yang sebenarnya sudah ada dalam tradisi kekristenan dengan segala bentuknya, dan tentu saja sudah ada dalam tradisi agama-agama lokal. Adalah sangat alkitabiah dan kontekstual apabila orang-orang yang berduka diberi kesempatan mengekspresikan kedukaannya dengan “meratap”, supaya mereka dapat menuntaskan kedukaannya tersebut. Dalam bingkai inilah gereja sebaiknya hadir bersama mereka, meratap bersama para penduka. Rasul Paulus mengatakan: “Bersukacitalah dengan orang yang bersukacita, dan *menangislah dengan orang yang menangis!*” (Roma 12:15).

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# **Lament: Efforts to Consider the Cultural Context in Accompanying Grieving People**

**(English translation)**

**Rev. Alokasih Gulo**

## **Abstract**

Grief is a universal phenomenon experienced by humans from various life contexts. There are various ways to go through difficult times because of grief, one of which can be found in local traditions (religion and culture). This article focuses on exploring and utilizing Nias' cultural traditions in dealing with grief, with the intention of enriching the assistants, especially the ecclesiastical servants, in helping those who are grieving. This is done with the assumption that there are various potentials in local traditions (religion and culture) that can be used to develop a pastoral care model of grief.

Not all aspects will be explored in this article, the writer looks at aspects of expression of grief that in each tradition has its own uniqueness. One of the expressions of sorrow in the Nias tradition is mourning (*mangenu*).

This tradition can actually be found also in several biblical texts, asserting that there is nothing wrong with the lamenting tradition. This paper may not answer all questions, but at least can open the discourse to consider the cultural context in accompanying people who are grieving.

**Key words:** death, expression of grief, church, culture.

**Preliminary:**

WG is a 65-year-old mother (widow), living with her youngest child who is still not married. Her husband died in a car accident seven years ago, but the mother herself has not yet accepted the death of her husband. She stammered about the accident, and while crying, she admitted that she still had not received the death of her husband, she did not believe the disaster. When her husband died, she was asked by church workers and her extended family not to be too sad, because according to them believers should not be sad if a family member dies. Sermons on consolation worship continue to encourage her to give up her husband's departure, preachers say that everything happens by God's will. Mrs. WG could not do anything at that time, she just followed the advice of the church. However, for the seven years since her husband died, she kept a deep, long lasting grief at that time she did not dare to pass by in front of her late husband's office building, "very painful", he said.

The above case is a true story experienced by a woman born and raised in Nias culture. In the context of church service, his family is very active and supports various church activities. When her husband passed away, she actually wanted to express her deep grief, writing that the church and her extended family actually "forbade it" on the pretext of believers, especially church leaders, to be strong. As a result, his grief was not complete, he had to endure it for seven years, until he finally told it. Meanwhile, the church considers the problem of WG's mother's grief has been resolved, assuming that as a church leader, her faith must be strong, WG's mother must have given up her husband's departure.

Using the case above, this paper is intended to re-explore the wealth of local religion in relation to grief focusing on the expression of grief in the Nias tradition. The author will also review the church's attitude (BNKP) related to expressing grief. The focus of the discussion is indeed on the expression of grief, but of course it will discuss some important issues related to death in general in traditional understanding of Nias, and the attitude of the BNKP church itself towards death (or the dead).

### **Is that grief?**

There are almost no people and cultures who do not recognize grief, it is considered common and so that makes it not completely defined. Edgar N. Jackson in his study of grief, found that there was no single definition of

"grief", both in the medical field (doctors), theology (theologians and clergy), psychology, and philosophy (cf. Jackson 1977, 16-17). Jackson himself seems to see sorrow in relation to human response to situations and events of loss (Jackson 1977, 17). Totok S. Wirya Saputra in his book "Why Grieve", compiled several opinions of experts and encyclopedias related to this definition of grief, all related to human feelings / emotions. He himself understood that grief is always directly related to losing something or someone that is considered valuable or valuable, so that grief can be said as a human reaction to defend themselves when facing a loss event (Wirya Saputra 2003, 25).

The author himself sees that grief is firstly related to losing something / someone that is meaningful, closely related to the situation / event of loss. However, grief too sometimes it has to do with other aspects that may not be directly related to the "loss" that is commonly understood. In the Bible, for example, we can find the sorrow a person feels because of sin (Ps. 38: 2-7; Jer. 23: 9; Ezra 10: 1, 6), because of deteriorating health (Job 1: 14-17) , because of the suffering of others (Neh. 1: 3-4; Est. 3: 13-14), because of a child who deviates from the right path (Prov. 10: 1, 17:21), or because of separating from the person being served (1 Thess. 2:17). Because grief can be caused by many factors, it is necessary for the writer to emphasize that the grief referred to in this paper is a feeling of sorrow for the loss (death) of loved ones.

## Grief in the Nias Tradition

Grief is a universal phenomenon that occurs in various places, experienced by all people without discriminating social status, gender, age, religion, origin, etc. Totok S. Wiryasaputra said that human experiences and responses about grief are actually the same, different is the way of expressing the grief experience (Wiryasaputra 2003, 15). The problem is that when the grief experience is not well expressed, it will leave a deep and unresolved suffering. This condition will certainly disrupt the motion of life of people who are grieving, Mrs. WG for example.

Because grief occurs in various places and is experienced by all people from various contexts, each context also has a "tradition" of expressing that experience. With this tradition, the grieved person is helped to face the difficult times until he is finally able to pass it through thoroughly. Likewise with the context of Nias, there are traditions that are usually carried out when grief events occur. This tradition certainly has something to do with death as the focus of this paper. How do Nias people understand death? Tuhoni Telaumbanua and Uwe Hummel say that as birth is generally seen as the beginning of one's life, marriage then unites two lives and ideally is the source of new life, death is seen as the end of life in this world, where the body (*boto*) becomes dust, while the soul (*noso*) returns to *Lowalangi* (the term for the highest in the Nias tribal religion), and the spirit (referred to as *bekhu zimate*) who is believed to be near the body will descend to the

underworld after four days of his death (Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015, 45-46 ). Interestingly, death is not the will of the Master of life as commonly understood today, but the will of the person concerned while still in the womb. This is seen for example through the phrase "*no irugi fangandrönia*" (arrived at request limits) (Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015, 46). That is why, if a person (usually a parent) feels that his time is near, especially if he is seriously ill, a parenting ceremony (*fangotome'ō*) is held. This ceremony is quite important, as noted by Tuhoni Telaumbanua and Uwe Hummel:

This is a sign of respect to parents, also to ask for blessings from him, as well as an opportunity for all relatives to forgive each other and make peace when there is a dispute. Sometimes parents share the inheritance for children on this occasion.  
(Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015, 47)

When someone dies, does the bond with the family break altogether? Not! For Nias people, people who have passed away, especially parents with high social status (nobility), still have a "bond" with their families. There is indeed a *fanibo tufo* (throwing mats) tradition or ceremony which is carried out four days after his burial with the intention that the deceased will no longer return home (W. Gulo et al, 2004, 86), but in fact the ties with the family are not broken at all. After four days also the glory of the deceased will be called to settle in the *adu zatua* (parent

statue), and is believed to be a source of blessing for the families left behind (Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015, 50). These quarrels are usually placed at the top of the house called “*Buatö*” (a kind of housebreak), with the intention that the parents who have passed away keep watching their family members, protect them from evil spirits, and bless them (Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015 , 50). The *fanibo tufo* ceremony is no longer held now, replaced by the *fananö bunga* (planting flowers) ceremony which was referred to by W. Gulo et al as a ceremony with a Christian nuance (Gulo et al 2004, 87). It means, whether *fanibo tufo* or even *fananö bunga*, it still shows that for Nias people, the ties of people who have died with their families cannot be severed completely, there is always a bond. This can also be seen when the service for the end of the church year, many congregations cry at the Sunday service, in general they recall family members who have died.

Then, how do Nias people (according to Nias tradition) experience their grief when someone dies? As a society with strong social and family ties, from the past until now, many people have come to mourn the funeral home. They mourn to keep watch with the bereaved family, as well as entertain the family. Interestingly, there are also traditional ceremonies (although now reduced) called *molaya* (a kind of dance) and *hoho ba zimate* (a litany), which is done to honor the person who died, also to remind the family to keep the good name of the deceased (Telaumbanua and Hummel 2015, 49). *Hoho* is not a myth

(myth), but contains a fairy tale (folktale). It is said that a man named *Lawaendröna* sought eternal life, and *Lawaendröna* managed to find the place, on the moon (Mendröfa 1981, 199). Even though it is only a fairy tale, this hoho is told in a ritual of death, a tradition practiced in his day.

In addition, families are also given the opportunity to "cry over" the person who has died. In his lament, when family members express their grief, they are more free to "retell" important stories or certain memories of people who died, not infrequently weeping while telling stories (*mangenu* = wailing). In this lament, family members, even those who share the grief (though perhaps not family members), are given the opportunity to express their grief each, even at the time of the burial of the person who died.

### **Church's Attitude (BNKP) on Sorrow**

BNKP's attitude towards grief is certainly related to his view of the death that caused the grief. Documents that can be used as a reference to find out the attitude of the BNKP are the BNKP Agendre Book (liturgical book) and related Regulations. Unlike the traditional understanding of Nias, BNKP does not see people who die separately, namely the body (*boto*), soul (*noso*), and (spirit). BNKP's view of the deceased is also unclear, besides repeating some biblical texts at the funeral of the deceased. The texts referred to include Psalm 103: 15-18; Psalm 90: 1-6;

Philippians 3: 20-21; Job 14: 1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-14, 16-18; 1 Corinthians 15: 42b-44a. Very briefly, there is no detailed explanation about BNKP's understanding of this text. Some things that might be understood from the view of the BNKP based on the texts in question, for example about human mortality, about death as part of God's grace, about the readiness and determination to deal with death and sorrow, and about everything happening by God's will.

Like the Protestant Church in general, BNKP emphasizes that there are no more living and dead relationships, so that all forms of offerings or gifts, even *fanibo tufo* traditions should not be made anymore, because the traditions are considered infidels (Gulo 1983, 207). This attitude of the BNKP has long been affirmed, set out in the 1961 article of the BNKP (*Amakhoita ba BNKP Nias*) Regulation 8. Although in a slightly different language, this attitude is still maintained until now, even the *Fananö Bunga* event must be done carefully so that it is not bound by old traditions. This is seen for example in BNKP Regulation No. 15 / BPMS-BNKP / 2013 concerning Pastoral Affairs, Article 8 paragraph 6. In the regulation the prohibition on "contacting" or communicating with (spirits) of people who have passed away is also prohibited from putting dead people's belongings in the grave as usual carried out in the original tradition of Nias. Why? Because all this is considered worship of ancestors, it is considered pagan belief. *Adu zatua* itself has long been "banished" by

the "order" of the missionaries because it is considered as idol worship, violating the second commandment on the prohibition of making statues. Even if in some places there are still quarrels, but because of the strict prohibition from the church, the contest is just a decoration of the house.

Meanwhile, the tradition of *hoho* and lamentation when someone dies has been left behind, there is no more room to express grief as is usually done in the Nias tradition. According to the church, believers should not be sad, may not weep for people who die as they once did, all the will of God and that person is God's property. There is a tendency to contrast faith with sorrow and grief. Expressing grief by crying as in the Nias tradition will be considered as a person who lacks faith, otherwise not crying will be considered a Christian who is strong and has strong faith. That was experienced by WG's mother when her husband passed away. As a result, he kept a deep sorrow in himself for up to seven years, a long and tiring time.

The above BNKP attitude emerged and developed as a result of the attitudes and teachings which were shown from the beginning by the missionaries who came to Nias. The missionaries who came to Nias had a Neo-Pietism background who considered themselves part of the reformation but without being bound by any of the traditions, both Lutheran and Reformed (cf. Gulö 2012, 55). The

main focus of the missionaries at that time was the salvation of souls by inviting the community to abandon the religion and culture of Nias which was mostly considered to be infidels and idols (Gulö 2012, 26, 61-62). This was done with the intention of reaching as many souls as possible in the dark. Although now missionaries from Europe no longer exist in Nias, but this pattern or approach is still very strong, this is seen in the attitude of the BNKP as explained earlier. In addition, the influence of triumphalism theologies on BNKP in recent years cannot be avoided. This is due to the large number of BNKP ministers who have a background in evangelical theological education who generally come from America. This theology strongly emphasizes the salvation of souls and the triumph or superiority of western culture (which is claimed to be the teaching of Christianity) over local culture.

### **Wailing as an Expression of Biblical Grief**

Back to the case of WG's mother, who was forced to save and endure her grief for seven years because the church (and Christians) forbade it from expressing her deep sorrow and grief? The death of her husband is something that is very painful, especially her husband died in an accident. Using Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's theory of attitudes to death (cf. Kübler-Ross 1998, 48), the authors see several attitudes that occurred towards WG's mother have not been completely overcome. At first she was shocked by the sudden death of her husband, she was so angry with other motorists who crashed into her husband, and

until he told the writer he also still had not received and continued to deny events that made him die world. Unfortunately, the church and the people around it have "cut off" in such a deep grief process that the WG mother feels pressured from time to time. In essence, WG's mother was not given the opportunity to express her grief well, in the end she was unable to face and get through the difficult times completely. This is what is called unresolved grief.

Totok S. Wirysaputra divides 3 types of unresolved grief, namely prolonged grief, delayed grief, and distorted grief (Wirysaputra 2003, 37, 38, 40). Prolonged grief has something to do with past grief brought into present life, because grief does not go through the grief process properly (Wirysaputra 2003, 37). Delayed grief occurs because a grieving person does not want, is unable, or has no opportunity to experience grief at the time or immediately after realizing loss (Wirysaputra 2003, 38). Incomplete grief can also be called obstructed grief, arising from people who are grieved "forbidden" or advised by others (usually the clergy) so that they do not cry, it is better to leave everything to God (Wirysaputra 2003, 40). This last grief is what happened to WG's mother, she was not allowed to cry, because according to church servants, believers do not need to weep for people who have died.

Many things can actually be done to help WG's mother when her husband dies, one of which is to provide an opportunity for him to channel his feelings / emotions

of grief well. The socio-cultural background and age of WG's mother certainly become important considerations in determining what ways should be done so that she is helped to face and get through these difficult times. The problem is that he was not given the chance at all from the start, eventually everything was buried, and that was very tormenting his life. With her socio-cultural background (born and raised in the Nias tradition), and her age (57 years old when her husband died), the writer sees that she should be given the opportunity to express her grief by wailing, that is, weeping freely over the death of her husband who died suddenly. The above has been explained that "wailing" is one of the Nias traditions that is carried out when someone dies.

The problem is that the church often rejects local religious traditions on the grounds that it is contrary to the teachings of Christianity based on the Bible. The church now only carries out consolation worship, with more advice to the families of the bereaved and those present at the service. This was also found by Aguswati Hildebrandt Rambe in her research on the death and grief rites on Sumba and Mamasa (Hildebrandt Rambe 2014). In the context of Nias, local traditions that give an opportunity for grieving people to express their grief through hoho and lamentation are dammed in such a way, replaced by something that is actually foreign to Nias people, something that forces the grieving person to forget their grief, while their deepest feelings are tormented from time after

time.

The question is whether "wailing" is indeed not biblical as Christian teachings claim? Howard W. Roberts sees that "wailing" has become a tradition that was commonly practiced in ancient times and the Bible never forbade it. According to him, weeping is part of a consolation and funeral service.

The purpose of a funeral or memorial service is two-fold: to worship and to mourn. Mourning in worship has an ancient heritage as many of the psalms suggest. The lamenting mentioned in the psalms is often the response of the people for the sins they have committed, but there is also evidence of the congregation mourning losses. (Roberts 1995, 62)

So, it is clear that "weeping" is an expression of biblical sorrow. We can find a number of passages in the Psalms, for example, where the psalmist and people sometimes wail in such a way as to express their sadness as well as their request for the "grief" situation they are experiencing. The Book of Lamentations was filled with lamentations which weep over the fall of Jerusalem. Traditionally this book was read at a certain time in the Jewish liturgical year, namely on the ninth day of the month of Ab (around mid-July), when the Jews commemorated the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

What about "wailing" in the Nias tradition? Why was abandoned and even considered as part of pagan beliefs? Questions like these cannot be answered simply. The above has explained the background of the missionaries and theological education background of some BNKP priests who tend to be "anti" local culture. This causes all local traditions, including wailing when someone dies, to be stopped, the authors of the church also do not offer anything much better than advice to not be too lost in sadness, to just let go of someone who is loved, wrapped in a sentence who anesthetized "God is the owner, and God already knows the best for him". It turns out that the problem of grief cannot be resolved in this way, instead making the gurus increasingly immersed in their pent up sorrow, WG's mother for example. That is why, according to the author, the church should provide broad opportunities for members of the congregation to express their grief either by "wailing" or by other similar means, in essence, the griever can get through these difficult times completely.

From the case of the WG mother, the authors see "wailing" as practiced in the Nias tradition can be used with consideration of age factors and socio-cultural background. Lamentations like this can be integrated with consolation and funeral services that are common today, of course by designing the right liturgy for this purpose. Examples of such liturgies can be seen in the work of Howard W. Roberts (Roberts 1995, 63-67). In addition, during

the assistance carried out after death and burial must also always provide freedom for the grieving to express their grief. The author's experience with WG's mother, although it requires a rather lengthy process, the writer gave her the opportunity to mourn by crying while retelling memorable stories together with her (deceased) husband. Many things were revealed during this mentoring process, until in the end she had become more open and more willing to accept the reality that her husband had passed away seven years ago.

What about those who don't know much about Nias local traditions, especially millennial generation? According to the authors, providing opportunities for them to "lament" is still possible. Beginning in 2017 the author taught in a pastoral class with the theme of grief. In accordance with the lecture plan that has been prepared, we started the pastoral class with a short service, singing and praying. The author deliberately chose the song "In Mother's Prayer" because the author had previously traced the "past" of the students and many of them had lost their parents but they had not gone through the difficult times completely. Accompanied by the guitar, we sang together the song, and as a result all students cried, and the writer released them for it. After completing the lecture, there were a number of students who came to the writer and wanted to tell their heartaches because their father or mother passed away a few years ago.

Departing from this experience, the author sees that "weeping" can be done to provide broad opportunities for gurus to express the grief that is being experienced. Once again, considerations that must be taken into account in determining what lamentation is appropriate include: age, socio-cultural background, and the current context. In this way, the church can help people who are grieving, both personally and communally. Meanwhile, the gurus can experience, live and express their grief freely, so that in the end they can get through these difficult times completely.

### Closing:

Andreas A. Yewangoe in his introduction in the book Aguswati Hildebrandt Rambe "*Keterjalinan dalam Keterpisahan*", ensures that death (and grief) must be experienced by anyone, even by all beings, with human records (being able to question it), as humans also question the origin his life (Hildebrandt Rambe 2014, 13). This is no doubt, and it seems that everyone is aware of it, even though many are trying to forget it. The problem is not the death itself, but the human reaction to the death, especially the reaction of people left behind by the deceased. This is where "grief" plays an important role in humans, roles that might foster, or conversely roles that might drown. It depends on how humans deal with it, and in the context of Christianity, the church plays an important role in helping its citizens face and live their grief.

This article, entitled "Merataplah: Upaya Memberimbangkan Konteks Kultural dalam Pendampingan terhadap Orang-orang yang Berduka", tries to invite the church to look at grief from the perspective of the grieving themselves, not from the perspective of church teachings inherited from the west. This is the "scream" of grieving people to be heard by the church so that they are given ample opportunity to express their grief. This is a "call" to the bereaved so that the church will immediately improve its approach in assisting those who are grieving by considering their context, rather than being part of those who demonstrate the superiority of (Western) Christian tradition over local traditions.

In the previous description it has also been explained that there are various ways that can be done to assist those who are grieving, one of which is mentoring care. This is one part of the ritual care, which actually already exists in the Christian tradition in all its forms, and of course it already exists in the traditions of local religions. It is very biblical and contextual when grieving people are given the opportunity to express their grief by "wailing", so that they can resolve the grief. In this frame the church should be present with them, wailing with the priests. The Apostle Paul said: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep!" (Romans 12:15).

# **Pastoral Care Kepada Orang yang Berduka**

**Pdt. Nursini Sihombing**

## **Mengapa?**

Pertanyaan „mengapa“ sering diungkapkan saat mengalami sakit dan kehilangan karena kematian yang menimbulkan duka.

Bpk. Ahmad (nama samaran) beberapa tahun yang lalu telah mengalami tragedi saat merayakan hari raya Idul Fitri. Dalam perjalanan mudik bersama keluarga, mereka mengalami kecelakaan yang mengakibatkan putri, mantu, anak danistrinya meninggal dunia; sedangkan dia hanya luka dan selanjutnya sembuh setelah dirawat beberapa lama di rumah sakit. Beliau mengalami duka yang berkepanjangan dan sering bertanya “Mengapa hal ini terjadi kepada keluargaku?” “Mengapa mereka semua pergi?” “Mengapa Allah begitu tega kepada saya?” “Mengapa saya tidak ikut mati saja daripada saya sakit seperti sekarang ini?” Selama bertahun-tahun pertanyaan ini terus ada dalam pikirannya.

Kini pak Ahmad sedang menjalani perawatan di rumah sakit sebagai pasien hemo dialysis. Menurutnya kata “mengapa” selalu bergaung dalam telinganya yang membuatnya kembali ke awal kejadian dimana ada rasa: sedih, marah, terluka, sendirian, dan kosong. Proses pendampingan, dengan beberapa kali pertemuan konseling, telah mengubah pertanyaan “mengapa” menjadi “apa yang patut disyukuri selepas kejadian tragis tersebut.” Menurutnya, dia mulai mengingat saat-saat suka-cita bersama istri dan anak-anak, relasi keluarga yang harmonis mengingatkannya akan indahnya hidup. Memahami pertanyaan “mengapa” membuatnya mulai menemukan harapan dan kekuatan lagi.

Kebiasaan gereja dalam mengahadapi jemaatnya yang berduka adalah melakukan tahap-tahap seperti; ibadah di rumah duka, ibadah di tempat pemakaman dan ibadah penghiburan.

Sayangnya tahapan-tahapan ini belum sepenuhnya menjawab kedukaan yang dialami oleh orang-orang yang mengalami kehilangan orang yang dikasihinya seperti suami-istri, ayah-ibu, anak-cucu, sanak saudara dan sahabat; sehingga pada gilirannya muncul dampak atau reaksi duka yang berkepanjangan di dalam diri orang yang mengalami kedukaan tersebut.

Sikap atau tingkah laku yang sering sekali ditonjolkan oleh orang yang berduka yaitu sikap pasif

yang termanifestasi dengan gampang menyerah, karena mereka melihat kejadian duka itu sebagai kejadian yang dikehendaki Allah. Angresif yang termanifestasi dengan respon mengeluh, memberontak, memprotes karena tidak dapat menerima kematian. Depresi; tertekan karena mereka tidak mampu menanggung beban penderitaannya.

## **Penyebab Dukacita**

Dukacita diartikan sebagai kesusahan dan kesedihan yang berasal dari kata dasar duka yaitu susah hati dan sedih hati. Duka merupakan respon normal atas kehilangan sesuatu yang dekat dengan kita, baik kehilangan benda, materi dan relasi terhadap orang yang kita kasih akibat kematian; respon fisik dan psikologis yang terpola spesifik pada individu yang mengalami kehilangan. Respon atau reaksi normal, karena melalui proses berduka individu mampu memutus ikatan dengan benda atau orang yang terpisah dan berikatan dengan benda atau orang baru. Berduka dapat mencakup aspek fisik maupun psikologis, kognitif dan perilaku orang tersebut. Ketika seseorang menghadapi dukacita atau kesedihan, tidak peduli bagaimana hal itu didefinisikan, seseorang hanya merasakan sakit di luar kendali. Duka dapat berdampak pada rasa: bersalah, malu, kesepian, kecemasan, takut, marah, kekosongan, putus asa, dan tidak berdaya.

Salah satu bentuk duka yang harus dihadapi setiap orang adalah saat menghadapi kematian, karena kematian

merupakan bagian dari hidup manusia yang tidak dapat dihindari. Walaupun setiap orang pasti akan mengalaminya, seperti kematian yang terjadi pada dirinya sendiri maupun yang terjadi pada orang lain, kematian tetap merupakan perpisahan terakhir yang menyedihkan. Kematian memiliki pengaruh yang cukup besar dalam kehidupan manusia dan agama. Setiap budaya di Indonesia memiliki pemahaman dan respon tersendiri mengenai makna kematian yang tertuang dalam ritual kematian yang dilakukan. Setelah seseorang mengalami kematian orang yang dikasihi, maka respon selanjutnya adalah ia merasa kehilangan dan setelahnya ia akan mengalami kedukaan. Pada masa itulah seseorang harus didampingi selama masa berduka sehingga tidak menimbulkan berbagai persoalan mental, psikologis, dan sosial yang lebih serius. Oleh karena itu perlu dilakukan pendampingan pastoral agar orang yang mengalami penderitaannya secara utuh dan penuh dan merasakan kelima fungsi pendampingan pastoral yaitu penyembuhan, pendampingan, bimbingan, perdamaian, serta pemberdayaan.

Ada dua sifat utama dalam setiap kedukaan, yaitu unik dan holistik. Kedukaan bersifat unik sebab merupakan sebuah pengalaman yang bersifat khas dan sangat pribadi. Pengalaman kedukaan yang dialami oleh seseorang kemungkinan besar tidak sama dengan pengalaman orang lain, walaupun kehilangan objek yang sama bahkan mungkin pada waktu yang sama.

Selanjutnya, dapat terjadi orang yang sama mengalami peristiwa kehilangan yang sama, namun kedalamannya kedukaannya berbeda. Kedukaan bersifat holistik sebab berkaitan dengan dan mempengaruhi seluruh aspek kehidupan kita; aspek fisik, mental, spiritual dan sosial. Dalam pandangan holistik, keempat aspek tersebut harus dilihat sebagai satu kesatuan yang utuh dan sinergistik. Abeneno mengatakan bahwa proses berlangsungnya kedukaan pada tiap orang berbeda satu dengan yang lain, karena orang-orang yang berduka (walaupun dalam satu peristiwa kehilangan yang sama) dalam proses kedukaan itu tidak sama. Pengalaman hidup yang berbeda-beda, penting tidaknya kehilangan yang diderita adalah beberapa hal yang membuat proses berlangsungnya kedukaan tiap orang berbeda-beda.

## Akibat Dari Duka

Setiap manusia memiliki respon yang berbeda saat menghadapi dukacita. Namun, secara umum perasaannya dapat ditemukan sama seperti yang dikatakan C.M Parker. Dia menyebutkan empat fase yang umumnya dialami oleh setiap orang berdukacita.

### Pertama: Fase *Numbness*

Fase dimana respon awal saat mendengarkan berita duka itu adalah *shock*, antara percaya dan tidak percaya. Kenyataan akan ‘kehilangan’ belum dapat diterima. Biasanya pada fase ini banyak orang mencoba menangis namun sulit; menangis namun sulit mengeluarkan air

mata karena rasio dan emosi belum bekerja secara harmonis.

### **Kedua: Fase *Yearning***

Fase dimana orang yang bersangkutan mencoba mengatasi realita kehilangan itu. Ini dapat diekspresikan dalam bentuk penyangkalan (*denial*), tawar menawar, dan berusaha menjauhkan diri dari realita yang sesuanguhnya terjadi.

### **Ketiga: Fase *Disorganization* dan *Despair***

Fase dimana realita yang tidak dapat diubah itu mulai diterima dan tidak ada lagi tuntutan untuk tidak menerima realita itu. Dan orang yang bersangkutan mulai merasakan kesedihannya secara sungguh sungguh sebab telah menyadari orang yang dikasihinya tidak ada lagi bersamanya.

### **Keempat: Fase *Reorganization***

Fase penyesuaian diri dengan kondisi yang baru. Artinya, orang yang berduka ini sudah sampai kepada tahap menerima kenyataan bahwa dia telah kehilangan seseorang yang dikasihinya dan siap menata hidup tanpa dia. Melepaskan ketergantungannya terhadap orang yang sudah pergi dengan mengambil inisiatif melakukannya sendiri.

## Apa Kata Alkitab tentang Dukacita.

Alkitab memberikan banyak kesaksian tentang dukacita. Allah sebagai gembala yang baik menjanjikan penyertaan pada anak-anak-Nya yang berjalan dalam lembah kekelaman dan dukacita (Maz 23;4). Setiap tokoh Alkitab disaksikan pernah mengalami dukacita. Dan Alkitab juga menyaksikan bahwa firman Allah dapat memberikan penghiburan kepada yang berdukacita (Maz 119;28,1 Tes 4;18). Hal ini dipertegas dengan kehadiran Yesus di tengah-tengah orang yang kehilangan setelah la mati dan bangkit kembali. Yesus mendampingi orang-orang yang berduka itu selama 40 hari. Ia hadir dalam dukacita dan memberi penguatan bagi Maria dan para murid-muridNya. Setelah mereka kuat dan sampai kepada fase reorganization, yaitu pemahaman baru tentang siapa Yesus, maka ia naik ke sorga, diberangkatkan dengan rasa haru dan sukacita oleh para pengikutnya. Pendampingan Yesus telah membalut luka kehilangan dan memberi pemahaman baru tentang siapa Yesus yang sesungguhnya.

Dengan demikian dapat dikatakan bahwa Alkitab tidak melarang dukacita, sebab itu adalah sebagai reaksi normal dari suatu kehilangan yang sifatnya tidak permanen, semakin cepat penanganannya maka semakin cepat dia dapat mengelola rasa dukanya. Dalam kematian juga ditemukan pengharapan (1 Tes 4;14) sehingga kita dapat saling menghibur dan menguatkan (1 Tes 4;18).

Oleh karena dukacita bagi orang percaya merupakan salah satu tanda dari keselamatan. Dalam Khotbah di bukit Tuhan Yesus mengatakan “berbahagialah orang yang berdukacita karena mereka akan dihibur”.

## Tujuan pendampingan

Pendampingan/konseling/*pastoral care* bertujuan agar orang yang sedang berduka dapat menerima kenyataan atas rasa kehilangannya dan menyesuaikan diri dengan kehidupan setelah kehilangan, dan mengatasi perubahan dalam diri sendiri dan lingkungannya (bnd. kasus pak Ahmad). Menggali dan memahami perasaan sedih, cemas, marah, kesepian, rasa bersalah, isolasi, kebingungan, atau mati rasa. Mendampingi orang yang berduka ini berdampak pada rasa terbebas dari perubahan perilaku, seperti merasa lelah, sulit berkonsentrasi, masalah tidur, perubahan nafsu makan, mimpi yang menyatakan bahwa almarhum masih hidup, atau melamun tentang almarhum.

## Fungsi Pendampingan

Pendampingan merupakan upaya untuk memahami secara umum dan khusus apa yang dialami klien melalui proses *listening, acceptance, empathy, dan understanding*. Pemahaman harus disertai dengan pengenalan akan prinsip-prinsip kebenaran firman Tuhan.

### *Listening:*

Mendengarkan merupakan aktivitas sehari hari yang

dilakukan oleh setiap orang. Namun, tidak semua orang dapat mengerti dan memahami apa yang didengarnya. Seringkali aktivitas ini dilakukan dengan tidak efektif, sehingga menyebabkan hilangnya beberapa informasi penting, salah faham bahkan yang didengar merasa kurang dihargai.

Dalam proses pendampingan orang yang berduka, mendengarkan merupakan keterampilan yang sangat penting. Kehadiran pendeta atau konselor yang melakukan layanan bantuan kepada individu yang mengalami kesulitan dalam mengekspresikan perasaannya, menemukan solusi atas masalahnya, menetapkan pilihan serta mengambil keputusan yang menyangkut kehidupan pribadi, kehidupan sosial, kegiatan belajar, perencanaan dan pengembangan diri, kehidupan berkeluarga serta kehidupan keberagamaan sesuai dengan konteks hidup orang berduka bukan konteks hidup pendeta/konselor. Sehingga dapat penulis katakan bahwa keterampilan mendengarkan merupakan keterampilan dasar yang sangat penting bagi pendeta/konselor untuk menjalankan fungsinya. Mendengarkan adalah kegiatan yang dinamis, yaitu proses mendengar secara aktif atas percakapan dengan konseli yang dilakukan dengan konsentrasi penuh dan focus kepada konseli. Mendengar aktif untuk memahami isi pembicaraan dan perasaan orang yang berduka tersebut yang diekspresikan melalui kata, bahasa tubuh, air mata dan intonasi suaranya.

### *Acceptance:*

*Acceptance*, menerima apa adanya, menerima pribadi orang yang berduka secara objective sebagai suatu keseluruhan tanpa memberi kesan membenarkan atau menolak karakter atau kepribadian orang tersebut. Kesungguhan dan kehangatan terhadap orang yang berduka tanpa membedakan agama, suku, situasi, kondisi, bersih, kotor bahkan bau badan dan lingkungan merupakan bentuk penerimaan yang menolong mereka merasa nyaman dan diterima oleh pendeta/konselor.

*Acceptance*, dapat diekspresikan dengan bahasa tubuh yaitu dengan mengangguk tanda menyimak dan mendengar apa yang sedang diceritakan bahkan memberi respon dengan kata-kata seperti: "Saya memahami", "Saya dapat memaklumi", "Saya dapat merasakan".

### *Empathy*

Setiap proses pendampingan, hal yang sangat dibutuhkan orang berduka dari pendeta/pendamping adalah rasa *empathy*, mengingat proses konseling merupakan sebuah bantuan melalui interaksi. *Empathy* adalah langkah memahami, merasakan perasaan orang berduka dari sudut pandang mereka bukan dari sudut pandang konselor. Hal ini deperlihatkan dengan cara focus kepada masalah mereka, mengijinkannya bercerita, menangis bahkan menjerit tanpa memberi nasihat yang menghentikannya. Dalam pendampingan orang berduka, jika pendamping kurang menerapkan rasa empati dalam berko-

munikasi maka akan menyebabkan kesalahpahaman interaksi komunikasi sehingga konseli dapat jadi frustasi dan tidak ada manfaat yang dihasilkan dari proses konseling tersebut.

*Empathy* merupakan dasar hubungan *interpersonal* dalam mencapai hubungan profesional. Hal yang juga penting diungkap dalam konteks peningkatan mutu empati seseorang adalah berlatih menampakkan ekspresi-ekspresi atau isyarat-isyarat non-verbal yang membuat orang lain merasa dimengerti dan diterima, karena kemampuan empati terutama melibatkan kemampuan seseorang untuk membaca perasaan lewat pemahaman terhadap isyarat-isyarat *nonverbal* orang lain. Pemahaman seperti ini membuat hubungan antar individu terjalin dengan baik, sehingga tujuan dalam pendampingan dapat tercapai dengan baik. Oleh karena itu, peran empati cukup esensial yang diakui dalam teori-teori konseling, empati yang diwujudkan dalam praktik konseling selama ini merupakan suatu keniscayaan untuk ditumbuh-kembangkan secara sistemis di dunia pendidikan dan kehidupan masyarakat kita.

### ***Understanding:***

*Understanding* adalah sikap positif dan terencana dari pendeta/konselor yang diekspresikan melalui pemberian kesempatan seluas-luasnya pada konseli untuk mengekspresikan dirinya secara tepat. Untuk itu, konselor harus dapat menahan diri, mengontrol diri, dan

menunggu saat yang tepat untuk menyampaikan kebenaran-kebenaran yang harus diketahui oleh konseli. Sikap positif yang terencana akan memberikan kesan yang positif dalam diri konseli. Mengijinkan konseli yang berduka mengetahui bahwa dia dapat menangis dan itu wajar sebagai ungkapan kesedihan, kemarahan, kekecewaan atas kepergian seseorang yang berarti baginya; memberi ruang untuk mengekspresikan perasaannya dengan bebas tanpa merasa di hakimi dan di salahkan.

Unsur yang tidak kalah penting dalam memahami ini adalah kesabaran mendampingi saat klien tidak mau bicara, diam tanpa reaksi apa apa namun pendeta/konselor tetap ada bersamanya tanpa mendesak untuk bercerita atau segera menutup pertemuan dengan doa. Sebagai konselor perlu memahami makna *ministry of present* dan *ministry of silent*, dapat memberikan perhatian dalam bentuk tindakan non-verbal seperti tatapan, sentuhan bahkan pelukan tanpa ada maksud lain.

Cara untuk memahami kedukaan adalah memahami pribadi yang mengalaminya, serta hubungan yang ada antara dia dan orang yang menyebabkan dukacita. Hal terbaik untuk menolong adalah dengan menjadi pendengar yang aktif yang faham bahasa verbal dan non-verbal.

## Kesimpulan

Perpisahan dan kehilangan yang menimbulkan duka menunjukkan bahwa kita memiliki batas. Batas-batas itu menyatakan kekuatan Allah yang begitu mengasihi kita. Setiap kehilangan dan dukacita mengingatkan kita bahwa kelak kita akan hilang dan akan ada orang yang berduka atas kepergian kita. Untuk itu kita perlu mempersiapkan diri untuk siap kapanpun dipanggil oleh-Nya dan mempersiapkan orang yang akan kita tinggalkan agar kelak mereka dapat menerima dan mengelola rasa dukanya; sebab hidup kita hanya tergantung kepada Tuhan. Kita hanya dapat memeliharanya. Peran utama dari pendeta/konselor sebagai pelayan adalah menjadi SADAR dan MENYADARI bahwa, penyakit, kehilangan, kematian menimbulkan duka yang butuh pendampingan.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



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# **Pastoral Care for People who are Grieving**

## **(English translation)**

**Rev. Nursini Sihombing**

### **Why?**

The question "why" is often expressed when experiencing pain and loss due to death that causes suffering.

Mr. Ahmad (a pseudonym) several years ago had experienced a tragedy while celebrating Eid. On their homecoming trips with family, they have an accident that results in the death of their daughter, son-in-law, child and wife; whereas he was only injured and subsequently recovered after being treated for some time in hospital. He experienced prolonged grief and often asked "Why did this happen to my family?" "Why did they all leave?" "Why did God have the heart for me?" "Why didn't I just die than I was sick now?" these years the question remained in his mind.

Now Mr. Ahmad is undergoing treatment at the hospital as a hemo dialysis patient. According to him the

word "why" always resonates in his ears which makes it go back to the beginning of the incident where there was a feeling: sad, angry, hurt, alone, and empty. The mentoring process, with several counseling meetings, has changed the question "why" to "what should be grateful for after the tragic event." According to him, he began to remember moments of joy with his wife and children, harmonious family relations reminded him of the beauty life. Understanding the "why" question made him begin to find hope and strength again.

The church's habit of dealing with grieving congregations is doing stages such as; worship in a funeral home, worship at a funeral and consolation worship.

Unfortunately these stages have not fully answered the grief experienced by people who have lost loved ones such as husband and wife, father-mother, children and grandchildren, relatives and friends; so that in turn there is a prolonged impact or grief reaction in the person experiencing the grief.

The attitude or behavior that is often highlighted by the grieving person is the passivity which is manifested by giving up easily, because they see the grief event as the event desired by God. Angressive which is manifested by the response to complain, rebel, protest because they cannot accept death. Depression; depressed because they are unable to bear the burden of his suffering.

## Causes of Grief

Grief is defined as the grief and sadness that comes from the basic word of grief, that is grief and sadness. Grief is a normal response to the loss of something close to us, both the loss of objects, material and relationships to our loved ones due to death; Patterned physical and psychological responses are specific to individuals who experience loss. The response or reaction is normal, because through the grieving process the individual is able to break bonds with separate objects or people and bond with new objects or people. Grieving can include physical, psychological, cognitive and behavioral aspects of the person. When someone faces grief or sadness, no matter how it is defined, one only feels pain out of control. Grief can affect feelings of guilt, shame, loneliness, anxiety, fear, anger, emptiness, hopelessness, and helplessness.

One form of grief that must be faced by everyone is when facing death, because death is an inevitable part of human life. Even though everyone will experience it, like death that happens to himself or that happens to others, death is still a sad final farewell. Death has a considerable influence on human life and religion. Every culture in Indonesia has its own understanding and response regarding the meaning of death as stated in the ritual of death. After a person experiences the death of a loved one, the next response is that he feels lost and after that he will experience sorrow. At that time a person must be accompanied during a time of grieving so as not to cause various more serious mental, psychological, and social problems. Therefore it is necessary to do pastoral assistance so that people who experience their suffering

fully and fully and feel the five functions of pastoral assistance namely healing, assistance, guidance, peace, and empowerment.

There are two main characteristics in each grief, namely unique and holistic. Grief is unique because it is a unique and very personal experience. The grief experience experienced by someone is most likely not the same as the experience of another person, even though losing the same object may even be at the same time. Furthermore, it can happen that the same person experiences the same loss, but the depth of grief is different. Grief is holistic because it deals with and influences all aspects of our lives; physical, mental, spiritual and social aspects. In a holistic view, the four aspects must be seen as a unified and synergistic whole. Abeneno said that the process of grieving in each person is different from one another, because people who grieve (even though in one event the same loss) in the grief process are not the same. Different life experiences, the importance of the loss suffered is some things that make the process of the grief of each person is different.

### **As a result of grief**

Every human being has a different response when dealing with grief. However, in general his feelings can be found the same as said C.M Parker. He mentions four phases that are commonly experienced by everyone mourning.

## **First: The Numbness Phase**

The phase where the initial response when listening to the sad news is shock, between believing and not believing. The fact of 'losing' is not yet acceptable. Usually in this phase many people try to cry but it is difficult; crying but it is difficult to cry because the ratio and emotions have not worked in harmony.

## **Second: The Yearning Phase**

The phase in which the person concerned tries to overcome the reality of the loss. This can be expressed in the form of denial, bargaining, and trying to distance themselves from the reality that is actually taking place.

## **Third: Disorganization and Despair phases**

The phase in which the irreversible reality begins to be accepted and there is no longer any demand not to accept that reality. And the person concerned begins to feel his sadness seriously because he has realized that the person he loves is no longer with him.

## **Fourth: Reorganization Phase**

Adjustment phase with new conditions. This means that the grieving person has reached the stage of accepting the fact that he has lost someone he loves and is ready to arrange a life without him. Release his dependence on people who have left by taking the initiative to do it themselves.

## **What Does the Bible Say About Grief.**

The Bible gives much testimony about sorrow. God as a good shepherd promises the inclusion of His children who walk in the valley of darkness and sorrow (Ps. 23; 4). Every Bible character witnessed has experienced sorrow. And the Bible also testifies that God's word can provide comfort to those who mourn (Ps. 119; 28.1 Test 4: 18). This is confirmed by the presence of Jesus in the midst of people who lost after He died and rose again. Jesus accompanied the grieving people for 40 days. He was present in sorrow and gave encouragement to Mary and His disciples. After they were strong and came to the phase of reorganization, which was a new understanding of who Jesus was, He ascended into heaven, departed with emotion and joy by his followers. Jesus' assistance has wrapped the wound of loss and gave a new understanding of who Jesus really was.

Thus it can be said that the Bible does not forbid grief, because it is a normal reaction of a loss that is not permanent, the faster it is handled, the faster it can manage grief. In death, hope is also found (1 Thess 4: 14) so that we can comfort and encourage one another (1 Thess 4: 18). Because sorrow for believers is a sign of salvation. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said "Blessed are those who mourn because they will be comforted".

### **The purpose of counseling**

Counseling / pastoral care aims so that people who are grieving can accept the reality of their loss and adjust to life after loss, and overcome changes in themselves and their environment (cf. the case of Mr. Ahmad). Dig

and understand feelings of sadness, anxiety, anger, loneliness, guilt, isolation, confusion, or numbness. Accompanying the grieving person has an impact on feeling free from changes in behavior, such as feeling tired, difficulty concentrating, sleep problems, changes in appetite, dreams stating that the deceased is still alive, or daydreaming about the deceased.

## **Function of Counseling**

Accompanying is an attempt to understand in general and specifically what is experienced by clients through the process of listening, acceptance, empathy, and understanding. Understanding must be accompanied by an introduction to the principles of the truth of God's word.

### **Listening:**

Listening is a daily activity carried out by everyone. However, not everyone can understand and comprehend what they hear. Often these activities are carried out ineffectively, leading to the loss of some important information, misunderstanding and even those heard that feel undervalued.

In the process of mentoring people who are grieving, listening is a very important skill. The presence of pastors or counselors who provide counseling to individuals who have difficulty in expressing their feelings, find solutions to their problems, make choices and make decisions regarding personal life, social life, learning activities, self-planning and development, family life and religious life in accordance with the life context of the bereaved is not the context of the pastor or

counselor. So the writer can say that listening skills are basic skills that are very important for the pastor or counselor to carry out their functions. Listening is a dynamic activity, that is the process of active listening to conversations with the counselee which is carried out with full concentration and focus on the counselee. Active listening is to understand the contents of their story of grief and feelings expressed through words, body language, tears and voice intonation.

### **Acceptance:**

Acceptance, accepting what it is, accepts the person who grieves objectively as a whole without giving the impression of justifying or rejecting the person's character or personality. Seriousness and warmth towards people who grieve regardless of religion, ethnicity, situation, condition, clean, dirty and even body odor and environment is a form of acceptance that helps them feel comfortable and accepted by the pastor or counselor. Acceptance, can be expressed in body language by nodding in listening and hearing what is being said and even responding with words such as: "I understand", "I can understand", "I can feel".

### **Empathy:**

For each mentoring process, what is really needed by the grieving person from the pastor / counselor is a sense of empathy, given that the counseling process is an aid through interaction. Empathy is the step of understanding, feeling the feelings of people who are grieving, from their perspective not from the counselor's point of view. This is demonstrated by focusing on their problems, allowing them to tell stories, crying and even screaming without giving advice that stops them. In

counseling people who are grieving, if the companion does not apply a sense of empathy in communication then it will cause misunderstanding of communication interactions so that the counselee can become frustrated and there are no benefits resulting from the counseling process.

Empathy is the basis of interpersonal relationships in achieving professional relationships. It is also important to reveal in the context of improving the quality of one's empathy is to practice expressing non-verbal expressions or cues that make others feel understood and accepted, because the ability to empathize involves one's ability to read feelings through understanding of non-verbal expressions or cues of other people. Understanding this makes the relationship between individuals well established, so that the goals in counselling can be achieved properly. Therefore, the role of empathy is quite essential which is recognized in counseling theories, empathy that is manifested in counseling practices so far is a necessity to be systematically developed and developed in the world of education and the life of our society.

### **Understand:**

Understanding is the positive and planned attitude of the pastor / counselor who is expressed through giving the widest opportunity to the counselee to express himself appropriately. For this reason, the counselor must be able to hold back, control himself, and wait for the right moment to convey the truths that must be known by

the counselee. A positive attitude planned will give a positive impression in the counselee. Allow the bereaved counselee to know that he can cry and that is natural as an expression of sadness, anger, disappointment at the departure of someone who means to him; give space to express their feelings freely without feeling judged and blamed.

An equally important element in understanding is the patience of counseling, when the client does not want to talk, is silent without any reaction, but the pastor or counselor is still there with him/her without urging to tell stories or immediately close the meeting with prayer. As a counselor, you need to understand the meaning of the ministry of presence and ministry of silence. You can give attention to this in the form of non-verbal actions such as stares, touches and even hugs without any other purpose.

The way to understand grief is to understand the person who experienced it, as well as the relationship that exists between him/her and the person who causes sorrow. The best thing to help is to be an active listener who understands verbal and non-verbal language.

## Conclusion

Separation and loss that cause sorrow shows that we have a limit. These limits reveal the power of God who loves us so much. Every loss and sorrow reminds us that

someday we will disappear and there will be people who will mourn in our departure. For that we need to prepare ourselves and to be ready whenever we are called by God and prepare the people whom we will leave behind, so that one day they can properly accept and manage their grief; because our lives depend only on God. We can only maintain it. The main role of the pastor or counselor, as a servant, is to become aware and realize that illness, loss, death causes suffering that requires your assistance.

# **Exorcism: An Alternative to Healing Ministry**

**Dr. Jaharianson Saragih**

Some people say that the signs of miracles and the exorcism that Jesus did in His day were not relevant at present. Rudolf Bultmann expressed in his demythologize that he understood about the miracles and exorcism that Jesus did was a legend alone or was a sign of seasoned myth and legend.

There is also an understanding that the stories of the exorcism in the New Testament are the stories of the Jewish demonology of the Intertestamental period.<sup>1</sup> Is exorcism still happening today?

In the midst of the current world development and progress, exorcism continues to exist or happen with in various parts of the country on Earth.

Rituals of exorcism are found in every part of the world. A lot of news mentioned about being possessed,

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Sorensen, Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity, (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2002), 118.

particularly in Indonesia. Even today there is a YouTube account about exorcism.

This writing will try to answer the issues of exorcism from biblical point, why somebody can be possessed and some cannot, what are the door ways on how to solve it?

## What is Exorcism?

Exorcism comes from the Greek word *eksorkizo* means "urgent", "cursed", and "liberating or expelling". And *eksorkizo* is very close with *horkizo*. The word *eksorkizo* is in the book of Matthew, translated "We adjure you" (Matthew. 26:62), and the Book of Acts is translated by "We adjure you" (Acts. 19:13). Whereas in other biblical translations such as the King James Version (KJV) and New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) expressly translate *eksorkizo* with Exorcist.

From its etymology can be interpreted that exorcism is an act of expelling or urging the devil's power out of one's body. Graham H. Twelftree has the following exposition: "Exorcism as a form of healing used when demons or evil spirits were thought to have entered a person and to be responsible for sickness and was the attempt to control and cast out or expel evil spiritual Beings or demon from people."<sup>2</sup> Albertus Purnomo defines that exorcism is not in the sense of "expelling" but rather "asking for a more powerful authority to urge evil spirits to act something contrary to his desires."<sup>3</sup>

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2 Graham H. Twelftree, Jesus the Exorcist a Contribution to Study of the Historical Jesus, (Tubingen: J.CN. Mohr (Paul Siebeck, 1993), 11.

3 Albertus Purnomo, Iblis dalam Alkitab (Jogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius, 1992), 61.

In Indonesian dictionary, exorcism is an expulsion of demons with certain ceremonies.<sup>4</sup> Exorcism is to expel evil spirits or demons of one's self<sup>5</sup>, and that refers to the act of controlling the evil spirits of people or things.<sup>6</sup> According to the New Advent Encyclopedia, the sense of exorcism are:

1. The expulsion of demons or evil spirits of the people, places, or objects, which believed to be possessed by demons or become victims or tools of deception.
2. As a means to be done for an official expulsion of Satan in the name of the Lord.<sup>7</sup>

It also contains the word *εκβαλλω* (*Ekballo*) meaning to lead demons to exit. The word *εκβαλλω* (*Ekballo*) is also used as a forcibly expulsion order. Also, interpreted as to throw out (throwing outward), to expel (Put out, put the word out), to repel (repelling, refuse, extrude), to cast out (throw out). The word *Ekballo* usually shows a resistance to invade the enemy, such as from within a government. But it is used also for the expulsion of demons, demons or jinn.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, it can be understood that exorcism is the expulsion of the evil spirits of a person or object possessed or at least exposed by the power of evil spirits by

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4 Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2007), 253.

5 Gerald Collins & Edward G. Farrugia, Kamus Teologi, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1996), 67.

6 Ian A. Mcfarland, 'Exorcism', David Fergusson, dkk, The Cambridge Dictionary Christian Theology, (USA: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 179.

7 Henry W. Sage, the New Advent Encyclopedia, (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1990), 134.

8 Gerhard Kittel (Ed), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Vol V, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), 526-528.

pressing and exhorting it to exit using the power of Jesus Christ (Mark 6:7)

## **Exorcism in the Old Testament**

The Old Testament is an important source for Christian theology, as it enlightens the Jewish minds of the first century. The exorcism in 1 Samuel. 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9, and 1 Kings. 4:29-34 seems to have been the basis for all subsequent speculation.<sup>9</sup>

The fall of the first man into sin, when listening to the temptation of the serpent, which was believed to be the devil, resulted for man being divided into two parts: the Sons of God and the sons of Satan or so-called children of Light and children of Darkness - this is the second great Power that in holy history has been always the opposite. The fight culminated with the coming of Christ who came to save people.<sup>10</sup>

The story of the two opposing forces continues in the history of life. The evil spirit is a spirit that rebelled against God's will. The first man's fall into sin resulted in punishment and then they were driven out of the garden of Paradise, this is evidence of disharmony between the spirit of evil and the spirit of God. God wants the world and the people to live in God with the hope of having orderliness and life. But history records that men tend to live in their own will, they are often tempted to be led by the spirit of wickedness. The story of the cruelty of Cain against his brother Abel is an example of evil spirit development.

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9 Graham H. Twelftree, Jesus the Exorcist: A History of Religion Study, (England: University of Nottingham, 1981), 33-34.

10 F.L. Baker, Sejarah Kerajaan Allah 1: Perjanjian lama, (Jakarta: BPK-GM, 2007), 32.

God hates darkness and instead misses the light in the lives of his People. The war between the two great powers in human history continues until today.

The culture surrounding ancient Israel seems to have been obsessed by two topics, namely demon possession and exorcism. But Judaism is an exception in the Middle East, the Hebrew Scriptures contain relatively few references to demon possession and exorcism. Some of the references to evil spirits inhabit humans are found in the story of Abimelech (Genesis 20), some of the prophets (1 Kings 22), and Saul (1 Sam. 16:18 & 19). In the OT, Saul was possessed. The spirit of the Lord leaves him and the evil spirit of God to bother him (1 Sam. 16:14; 19:9). It can be interpreted by saying, "If a person has been filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, if he is unfaithful, then God can allow the evil spirit to enter his life". The evil spirit was removed from Saul by the music of David: Because the music was usually accompanied by a psalm, through the song of the psalm that drove out the evil spirit.<sup>11</sup>

Evil spirits are present in man not because of God, but because of man himself. The OT writers believed, that everything that is happening, even in his own sin, is recognized by God. Sin and guilt are the concerns of sinners. Saul's unfaithfulness and the appointment of David as ruler over Israel by God was caused when the spirit of God came out of Saul, it automatically opened the door for the evil spirit to work on Saul. The evil spirit raises the chaos that resulted in the envy of the heart and the joy in Saul's heart (1 Sam. 18:8-9; 21). The beginning of the activity of evil was when Saul's desire rebelled against God. When

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11 J.S. Wright, J.D. Douglas, Ensiklopedia Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2 M-Z, (Jakarta: Yayasan Komunikasi Bina Kasih, 2011), 306.

David was playing a harp and singing psalms, Saul felt calm because the evil spirit came out of him.

The evil spirits, as enemies of God, are the source of darkness (Heber. “*Hosekh*”) and death (Heber. “*Mawet*”). The story of creation, in the beginning was dark, empty and in chaos (Gen. 1:2-3). But God, with his Spirit, was present and ministered to create good, orderliness (Heber. “*Tov me’ot*”) and life in the midst of such a dark and chaotic world.<sup>12</sup> The spirit of God is a source of orderliness, while evil spirit is a source of chaos.

Thus it can be understood even in the OT there are no record of exorcism and in-depth discussion of evil spirits, but there are always a record of the battle between the two contradicting powers - the power of God and the power of the evil, who can never be fused. The evil one raises the negative nature of human beings and causes disharmony between God and his creations.

### Exorcism in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the word εζορκιζω (*Exorkizo*) is used only in Acts 19:13. Εζορκιζεν is used to exorcism in acts 19:13 i.e. Εζορκιζων (*Exorkizon*) derived from the word ορκος (*Orkos*). In Matthew 26:63, the high priest’s investigation with Jesus. He put Jesus under oath before the living God. He urged Jesus to tell the truth and show modestly in his assertion of being the Messiah and the Son of God. Jesus gave a definite affirmation in answering the high priest's question. Jesus acknowledge that he is the Messiah, the Son of God seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.<sup>13</sup>

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12 E. Gerrit Singgih, *Hermeneutik Perjanjian Lama III*, (Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana Press, 2002), 39.

13 J. Schneider, Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich & Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of New Testament Vol.5*, 457-465.

The New Testament records a number of possessed events, and the Gospels show that Christ differentiates the usual diseases in conjunction with possession. Normal illnesses were healed by the laying-on of hands or anointing with oil. The illnesses caused by demon possession were healed by the command, using the power (*eksosia*) given by Jesus (e.g. Matthew. 10:8; Mark. 6:7, 13; Luke. 13:32; Acts 8:7; 19:12). The possession is not constant, but when it happens it carries a very dangerous consequence (Mark. 9:18). Blindness and the thirst for possession, seemingly persistent (e.g. Matthew. 9:32-33; 12:22).<sup>14</sup>

They believe that the evil spirit is Beelzebul and by the ruler of the demons (Mark. 3:22), perished in water (Matthew. 8:32), and also in waterless region (Matthew. 12:43); having the potential to be the object of sacrifice/aid (1 Cor. 10:20-21; 1 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 9:20); able to speak to their possessed humans (Mark. 1:34), and animals (Mark. 5:12); cause affliction (Matthew. 12:22-24; Mark. 1:21-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29); giving men superpowers (Mark. 5:3-5); deceive Christians (1 John. 4:1, 3, 6); and, be taken captive by the believer (Eph. 6:12).

Paul uses the terms power and strength to explain the existence of demons who compete against God and have the potential to separate Christians from God (Rom. 8:38-39; 1 Cor. 15:24; Acts. 2:8-15). Paul associates idols with Demons (1 Cor. 10:20-22). Jesus saw his ministry especially on exorcism as the first stage of two stages in defeating Satan (Mat. 12:22-30; Luke. 10:18). The theology of Paul and John states that the cross is the focus of the last stage in defeating Satan in the end times (Matthew.

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14 J.S. Wright, Ensiklopedia Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2 M-Z, 306.

13:24-30), a view that the Christians believe.<sup>15</sup> Some words related to *ορκος* (*Orkos*) meaning "oath"<sup>16</sup> such as: *Ορκιζω* (*Horkizo*) which means to utter an oath (Mark. 5:7; Acts 19:13). In a special and positive sense, this word was used by Paul in 1 Thess. 5:27. *Εζορκιζω* (*Exorkizo*) meaning to swear.<sup>17</sup>

Exorcism is an occurrence in the Palestine region as well as in the ancient Middle East and in the surrounding areas. There are many people who feel strong enough to do the expulsion of demons. There are many stories about it. There was a man who would do exorcism. The evil spirit knew him but the Exorcist told him to be silent, then he did the practice of removing the evil spirit. Finally, the possessed was healed by the release of evil spirits through the blowing of the loud wind that everything around it fell apart. But in Mark 1, no strange element was done by Jesus. The practice of exorcism that Jesus did was quite different, and those who were present saw with awe what Jesus did unequal to other exorcists. His purpose was to declare the kingdom of God.<sup>18</sup>

In the Bible, especially in the Gospels, there were stories of exorcism that Jesus performed by commanding it. Sometimes the evil spirits that were cast out acknowledged the power of the eviction (Mark. 1:24). Unlike other exorcist in his day, Jesus did not do or pronounced any mantras. He cast out demons only by the power of his command. After Jesus cast out Satan, it came to rest and

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15 G.H. Twelftree, Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, dkk, New Dictionary of Theology Jilid 2, 16.

16 Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich & Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Theological Dictionary of New Testament, 452.

17 W.E. Vine's, Expository of Biblical Words, (U.K Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1985), 234.

18 Stefan Leks, Yesus Kristus Menurut keempat Injil, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990), 78-79.

became aware of his divine presence (Mark. 5:15). But, more importantly, Jesus began the final warfare against the evil spirit by casting out the devil, he usher in that evil spirits would lose.<sup>19</sup>

Jesus himself acted very practical in the face of evil spirits. He emphasized the importance of exorcism when He said, "But when I cast out demons with the power of God, then indeed the Kingdom of God has come to you (Matthew. 12:28)". Thus, exorcism declares two spiritual truths: to remove two conflicting kingdoms: the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan; and, declare God's victory over the Devil's kingdom.<sup>20</sup> Here is an example of what Jesus had done in the Bible in the Ministry of exorcism, namely:<sup>21</sup>

1. Jesus rebuked the evil spirit that possessed someone in the synagogue. He commanded the evil spirit and drove him out (Mark. 1:28).
2. Jesus cast out evil spirits in Gerasenes (Mark. 5:1 -20).
3. Jesus healed a daughter who was possessed by an evil spirit through his mother's faith (Mark. 7:25-30).
4. Jesus healed a child who was possessed by an evil spirit, the child became deaf and dumb from being possessed by an evil spirit and Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out and do not return again (Mark. 9:25).

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19 J.S. Wright, Ensiklopedia Alkitab Masa Kini jilid 2 M-Z, 306.

20 Derek Prince, They Shall Expel Demons (Mereka Akan Mengusir Setan-setan), (Indonesia: Derek Prince Ministries Indonesia, 2008), 13.

21 Duane F. Watson, David Noel Freedman, the Anchored Bible Dictionary Volume 2 D-G, (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 184.

When the time came, Jesus sent and commanded his disciples to serve with the same pattern of service as what he did - he gave two facets of authority to do exorcism, and to heal all diseases and weaknesses (Matthew. 10:1). Mark gives an explanation of the disciples' actions in carrying out their duties. "And they cast out many devils and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them (Mark. 6:13)"<sup>22</sup>. After that Jesus sent the seventy disciples two to prepare the way in the places that he would visit. The Bible does not record a complete instruction given by him, but from what they convey upon their return from the ministry that they could conquer Satan in behalf of Jesus (Luke. 10:17).<sup>23</sup>

There are some cases of possessed evil spirits recorded in Acts. Although the number is much less than what is recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. The exorcism was done by the Apostles (Acts 5:16). By Philip (Acts 8:7), and by Paul (Acts 16:16; 19:12). They carried out the exorcism in different and far-away places (Jerusalem, Samaria, Philippians, and Ephesus).<sup>24</sup>

The Greek language used to expel evil spirits is *exorkizo* which means placing under oath, urging or giving a serious injunction, or forcing a spirit to obey. The word is essentially rare or never used in the New Testament.<sup>25</sup> This word appeared once in the New Testament, in Acts 19:13. The context is practiced by an expert Jewish exorcist. In those days, the word was often used in supernatu-

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22 Derek Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 28-29.

23 Derek Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 29.

24 Derek Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 130.

25 Everet Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 333.

ral practice and magic, especially among the healers and magicians who claimed to be able to heal demons through certain words or magical actions. The 1st-century Babylonian magicians actively practiced the expulsion of demons by using the name of their gods. But there were some prominent Jews who practiced this exorcism.<sup>26</sup>

Paul uses two terms about Satan, the *Satanas* and the *Diabolos*. As in the Synoptic Gospels, Paul viewed Satan as the opponent of God's will and intent. Satan is one of the barriers to the apostles in preaching of the Kingdom of God (1 Thess. 2:18), drawing profits from believers through the tensions that occurred in the life of the Church (2 Cor. 2:11), torment God's children (2 Cor. 12:7) and Satan can disguise as a bright Angel (2 Cor. 11:14). In the same letter Paul mentioned that the activity of this ancient God that blinded the minds of the people not to see the light of the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). It is obvious that the nature of Satan is darkness. When Paul spoke of the state of lawlessness, he said that the lawlessness would come through the work of Satan (2 Thess. 2:9). But Paul was convinced that the devil would be destroyed by God.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, it can be seen clearly that Jesus, the disciples and Paul did the expulsion of demons in their ministry. In terms of preaching the gospel, Jesus and the apostles experienced confrontation with demons. But in the New Covenant, Satan was always subject to Jesus.

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26 Julianto Simanjuntak, Konseling Ganguan Jiwa & Okultisme: Membedakan Gangguan Jiwa dan Kerasukan Setan, (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), 87-88.

27 Donald Guthrie, Teologi Perjanjian Baru I, 135-136.

## The Asian Paradigm

There are two paradigms that influence every human way of thinking on this earth, including the servants of the Lord.<sup>28</sup>

**First**, Aristotle's paradigm. This paradigm explains that there are two beings in the world - spirit beings or spirit and the human beings. Despite acknowledging the existence of the spirit, the spirit cannot intervene in our real life now. Both are in different realms and are not interconnected. God who is a recognized as spirit exists but can't do anything in real life now.

The existence of God who is spirit is accepted. But what is being rejected is the spirit of God or the spirit world can intervene in our present life.

Like football fans who can only shout from the stand but they cannot intervene in football field, so does the Lord who cannot intervene in our daily activities.

After God finished creating the heavens and the earth, He became a spectator that no longer intervenes in the struggles of believers. In line with that, the miraculous events of the Bible are rejected by this paradigm because behind the miracles there was an intervention of God who is a spiritual being.

Many educated pastors and Christian counselors in theological schools adhere to Aristotle's paradigm. When they minister in their congregations and deal with the above mentioned phenomena they cannot explain, be-

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28 Jaharianson Sarajih, Kebaktian Kesembuhan Meditatif, (Medan: Sinarta, 2013), 21-36.

come confuse or assume that God cannot intervene in our daily activities.

**Second**, Plato's paradigm and the Bible. Plato was the teacher of Aristotle. The teacher's view is contrary to Aristotle's paradigm. Plato's view was that the true world was inhabited by the spirit and man. But the spirit (God or evil spirit) can intervene in real life. God, who is Spirit, is able to intervene in the struggles of believers. Satan, who is a spirit, also can intervene in human life to bring about sickness, healing, wealth and so forth.

The Plato's paradigm is parallel with the biblical paradigm and with the Eastern paradigm that the spirit can intervene in real life. From Genesis to Revelation we find a paradigm that is parallel to the Platonic paradigm.

After God finished creating the heavens and the earth, God intervened in the struggle of the believers' lives. The water became blood, the Red Sea is torn, the blind became normal, the sick are healed, the possessed is restored and so forth. With this paradigm – miracle, Satan, evil spirits, enchantments and the likes are acceptable.<sup>29</sup>

Amich Al Humamy, in his article, said that almost all high-ranking officials in Indonesia rises to the top with the help of shamans and sometimes witchcraft to harm their rivals.<sup>30</sup> He wanted to say that the paradigm of Indonesians, the eastern people, believes in the intervention of spirits that can give positions, secures it and can be used

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29 Jaharianson Saragih, Kebaktian Kesembuhan Meditatif, 21-26.

30 Amich Al Humami di tahun 2009 melakukan riset untuk disertasinya dengan judul "Political Power, Corruption, and Witch craft in Contemporary Indonesia" Department of anthropology University of Sussex, Inggris

to harm others. This practice confirms what Kurt Koch revealed that the cause of the disease is one of the powers of darkness or evil power.

## Who is Possessed? Why?

"Can Christians be possessed by demons?" The Bible has witnessed in Num. 23:23 "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel....." and also in 1 John 4:4" Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." These two verses represent several other biblical verses that says Christians who believe in Jesus Christ will not be able to experience the devil's possession.

It is right what the Bible says that believers in Jesus Christ will not experience being possessed. But in reality we found out that some Christians also being possessed by evil power.

In I Corinthians 6:19 it says "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" In this verse it is said that a Christian is fully possessed by the Holy Spirit. But we know that this is not the case. Many other factors comes in such as man will do harm that would cause him to do something very contrary to the word of God he knew or disobeying the Lord.

Christians can experience the devil's possession because our faith is based on our National Identification (often called in Indonesia "Kristen KTP"), sometimes called "mixed faith". This "mixed faith" is when Christians believe in other gods in his life. Christians whose faith is on Jesus Christ as his Savior, then Christians will not experience

the devil's possession. Some factors why Christians could experience the devil's possession or we often hear the term door way. Here are some factors that can cause Christians to experience the devil's possession:

#### a. Descendants

Every human being must have a so-called family. The descendants referred in this point are when the family (parents, grandfather, grandmother and great grandfather and mother) have ever asked help from other gods and it has never been prayed for. The curse will continue until the next generation. This is the doorway for Christian to be possessed by evil power.

#### b. Occultism

Occultism comes from the terms "Occult" and "ism". "Occult" means dark, hidden, magical and mysterious. And "ism," meaning understanding or teaching. Thus, occult means the understanding or belief of the dark forces, the supernatural powers beyond the power of God.<sup>31</sup> The term occult used to mention beliefs and practices pertaining to forces outside the world is natural. It is said that the occult is astrology, forecasting, and spiritualism, which are the belief that the spirits of the dead have a relationship with the living.<sup>32</sup>

- Worship Other Gods
- Ask for help to the shamans (medication, looking for *pelaris*, harm others, ask the body guards etc.)
- Spiritism (which is a practice based on the belief

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31 Jaharianson Saragih, Pelayanan Pelepasan dan Dampak Positifnya, (Medan: L-SAPA, 2016), 87-88.

32 Surya Kusuma, Okultisme Antara Budaya VS Iman Kristen, (Yogyakarta: Andi, 2010), 6.

that the dead have a relationship with the living person. The spirits of the dead can be called people who live through the "*Jelangkung*" and called the Paranormal. Besides being called, the spirits of the dead are also believed to bless his descendants, so that the ceremony to honor the spirit must be done, for example visiting the grave by bringing offerings.)<sup>33</sup>

- Magic Science is called Supernatural science, use, or *Jampi*. (Magic is rooted in a belief that in persons, objects, places or also circumstances contains power or matter related to dynamism.<sup>34</sup>

### c. Inner Wound

Wounds on the body can be felt and seen. But wounds in the soul cannot be detected easily. These wounds are in our souls, which is called "inner wound". The inner wound is caused by the following things:

1. Painful events and events seen with the eyes
2. Unkind words and deeds, example: insulted, dims
3. Painful past experiences, examples: rejected, raped, trauma, etc.
4. Rejected
5. Grandfathers or grandmothers abuse the fathers ruthlessly, and then treat the child in the same way. Etc.
6. Inner wounds can also be a factor that causes a person to be possessed by demons. It is the author saying departed from the author's experi-

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33 Surya Kusuma, Okultisme Antara Budaya VS Iman Kristen, 215.

34 Ibid, 264-265

ence and also the testimony of some of the demon-possessed. That said that although there has never been a relationship with occult but inner wounds can be a factor that people can be possessed of.

## Deliverance Ministry

Anyone who is in contact with the power of darkness in various forms, aware or not, the person is directly tied to the Power of Darkness (Satan) and cannot release himself from the bond, but rather requires of the Lord's servants. It is very important the servants of the Lord equipped himself with the knowledge of the occult, its forms and the way of Satan's work and how the steps of ministry toward people who are bound to occult practice. The Ministry of Exorcism is one part of the service. It is given to those who are experiencing demon-possessed manifestations. There are various methods that can be implemented and no one method is ready to be used in all circumstances. But there are some things to note in the discharge service of practical power of Darkness, among others:

1. Conduct analysis in service, taking into account the symptoms of whether the person is involved with occult.
2. Get rid of occult by revealing the various forms of occult sins according to the Word of God and consequently the person will be brought to the realization of the sins of occult practices in his life.
3. After the person has willingness to repent of the occult, then the person is guided through the confession of sin and the prayer of denial based on the power of Jesus. In this connection it is

good to make a list of occult practices that are performed so that it can experience a complete delay.

4. After the occult sins are acknowledged, the Lord's servants do a prayer of discharge and termination of connection to any occult bonds made. Then give words of encouragement that forgiveness of sins was delivered.
5. Doing the service to accept the Lord Jesus will experience the deliverance from power of darkness, and have the power to resist the attacks of the power of darkness and guided to live in fellowship with God

### The Case

From the explanation above has been explained what is exorcism and how to do it in theory and here is an example of people who experienced the Ministry of exorcism.

His name is Jerry, living in Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia. Jerry is one of the freshmen in a theological school. Jerry is very active in Christian fellowships, both in the church and in small Bible study groups. But Jerry experienced of being possessed by the demon. This made him confused. "Why did I experienced the devil's possession, when I am a student of theology and I start to discipline in my walk with God?"

To answer the confusion what Jerry experienced. We see the chronology of Jerry experience and how he recovered.

Jerry was possessed when he participated in prayer activities or retreat in groups that he followed that took place in Simalungun area, North Sumatera, Indonesia.

At that time Jerry had never experienced being possessed by the devil. Jerry was prayed over by one of the GKPS pastors as well as by the community that participated in the event. When Jerry was being possessed, there were manifestations like tiger animals, gorillas and frogs.

What causes Jerry could experience demon possession?

Here we'll take a look at the steps why Jerry was possessed by demons:

1. From a search through his family tree, Jerry's parents come from a family that each has a bond with the power of darkness. The grandfather of Jerry's parents from two sides were shamans.
2. Passing through his family tree, the author found things related to the ability of Jerry to see ghost or having two layers of vision that caused him to be possessed.
3. A closer examination of his attachment with the dark power was never brought to remedy instead it went to the shamans to look after his condition. In him there was a feeling that his prayers are not being heard by God and fell to do other immoral sins.
4. Jerry had anger issues towards his family. In other words Jerry has inner wounds.<sup>35</sup>

## Interventions and Process

Proceeding from the findings made by the Pastor from GKPS (Simalungun Protestant Christian Church) and the Prayer team, an invocation prayer was given because it

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35 Jaharianson Saragih, PsychoDelSi, (Medan: Sinarta), 117-124.

relates to occult and the inner wound. It was followed by singing Jerry's favorite song "Menyenangkan-Mu" (Pleasing You Lord).

Jerry was led to the prayer of confession and the cancellation of his ability on seeing two layers of vision from his father's line and his mother and his grandfather's line.

During the prayer of exorcism, the team who accompanied the counselor, sang the song Kumenang-kumenang (I win) then Jerry felt a soothing sensation in his blood.

After Jerry prayed the prayer of confession and cancellation with dark power from his parents' lines and followed by a prayer of forgiveness. When this prayer was raised, the prayer team sang in gentle voice, the song forgiving-forgiving more seriously made Jerry asked for forgiveness to a family member that hurt him.

After that, the pastor laid over Jerry's eyes that God plucked out the two-layer visions that he inherited from his two parents.

Some things that occurred during the process of praying as narrated by Jerry were: he felt sick, unopened eyes and mouth feels stiff during prayers. Jerry could feel that there was still the presence of an evil spirit that followed him. At that time he was possessed for approximately an hour.

After being prayed, Jerry felt the tranquility and can continue his activities as usual.

## Follow Up

Jerry received follow up ministry in the campus. He was reposessed and could see ghost. When he hears a horse lumping sounds he gets possessed. Jerry was prayed over by the prayer team and also by the writer.

Jerry experienced possession from December 2012 to April 2013. When Jerry found relief, after a week Jerry was possessed three times and disturbed his study. The impact was Jerry's achievement index at that time was only 2.4.

Jerry join the healing and deliverance session in campus in February 2013, almost 350 people attended this ministry, mostly were students. While praying together he suddenly jumped like a frog was possessed for approximately 45 minutes. He even kicked the prayer team in order to free himself. His power was very strong. More than six team members had to hold his hands and legs. After being ministered, Jerry finally was released.

Jerry was already received deliverance from the power of darkness in the line of his father and grandparents. He was cut off from the relationship with the power of darkness from the shamans through prayer. And he was led to forgive his family.

A few months later when Jerry followed the retreat in Sibolangit, with the prayer team, Jerry did not experience any more possession and cannot see ghost anymore.

After Jerry had recovered, Jerry returned to activity as usual. After recovering, he actively took part in every healing and deliverance ministry in campus.

Here is the urgency of follow-ups to be done so that the open doors will not widen, giving opportunity for the

evil spirit to come in(cf. Mat. 12:43-45).

## ***Analysis***

The case of Jerry who can see ghost and often possessed is the presence of dark power. The entrance as explained above from the parent line, and from his grandfather's line, is an entrance to his inner wound with the family.

The ability to see or have two layers of vision is not the gift from God. Anyone who has the ability to see ghost is a clue that there is an attachment from the line above, from the line of parents or grandfathers, who are shamans. In other words, the ability to see ghost is the inheritance from the previous generation who had a connection with evil power.

Although Jerry had been released from the power of darkness both from the lineage and from the shamans that led him to forgive, Jerry remained a demon-possessed.

Jerry could not instantly forgive his family. It took some time to process forgiveness. As long as Jerry was unable to forgive, he remained the doors open for demon to possess him.

But after he forgave, Jerry had restoration and never again experienced possession.

After six months, his ability to see the ghost disappeared and fully released from being possessed by the evil spirit.

give an opportunity for the evil spirit to repossess you (Mat. 12:43-45).

From Jerry case it was clear that the doorway that made somebody to be possessed was not only because of having attachment with evil power but also because the unresolved inner wound.

There are some signs that appear in Jerry case that are not a psychic case, among others:

1. Changing voice - from his normal voice to the voice of an elderly person.
2. Sharp, red or white eye highlights
3. The body trembles, wriggle and uncontrolled was an expression of fear or expression of any spirit entering his body.
4. Anger exploded suddenly.
5. Felt pain in certain parts of the body.
6. Spitting towards the team was an indicator of the presence of an deceitful spirit.
7. Shuts his ears and shouts at people to stop from singing because the evil spirits inside his body was being disturbed.

Some signs of people who have experienced deliverance include:

1. There is a feeling of relief and calmness.
2. Responds normally to what is said to him.
3. Recognize himself and the people around him.
4. Exhausted.
5. Thirsty.
6. No more pain in the body.
7. Tremendous joy to praise the Lord.
8. The face and eyes are bright and glowing.
9. Able to pray.

## Conclusion

Exorcism is the term used for the expulsion of demons. The word *εζορκιζω* (Exorkizo) has its roots from the word *ορκος* (*Orkos*) which means oath. Exorcism means to calm under oath, expel out by urging, or bring out evil spirits.

Jesus sent his disciples to preach the gospel and cast out demons in His name. He promised signs and wonders to hold the serpent and cast out demons in behalf of Jesus. In this case, the church is the Fellowship of the believer who lives in the light of Christ be able to bring to the congregation that God has freed us from the power of evil spirits.

The purpose of Satan being expelled is to declare the kingdom of God. Jesus sent His disciples to preach the good news and equip with the power of casting out demons and healing the sick. And every man who has been made free from the bonds of darkness feels the presence of the Kingdom of God in him. Like what the person in Gerasa who experienced the Ministry of exorcism that Jesus did. Consequently, he wanted to follow Jesus. But Jesus rejected him and told him to preach the good news to his house, and to his people. He became a living witness of what Jesus did to him, and news spread throughout the Decapolis.

One of the challenges in the Protestant churches under UEM, particularly in Asia and Africa, is how to equip the pastors with this kind of contextual and relevant ministry.

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# **Integral and Holistic Healing Ministry**

**Rev. Francisco J. Hernando**

## **Introduction**

Integral and holistic healing ministry has been the highest goal of the Church as religious institution that springs from the biblical-theological mandate as described in Jesus' mission in Luke 4: 18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (NRSV).

Coming back to the Philippines and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines after fourteen years of doing pastoral care and counseling work with Filipino migrant workers in South Korea, gave me new insights in how the UCCP has been carrying out its healing ministry through the years. The Church's hospitals have provided valuable technical and human resource support to the relief and rehabilitation work during the calamitous impact of typhoon Haiyan in 2013 and the years that followed, but for the former Bethany Hospital in Tacloban City that was badly hit by the super typhoon, the hospital

could not provide the necessary medical and health services needed by the people for it was closed and almost all the hospital personnel were casualties of the calamity.

Also, the Church's hospitals, through the years, long after these were handed over by the mission boards have advanced and complied with government's regulatory standards for tertiary health care centers. However, in the course of upgrading its facilities and with the rise of competition in medical business enterprises, the Church's hospitals had to find means to upgrade its facilities. The Bethany Hospital in Tacloban City, now renamed as United Shalom Medical Center (USMC) was declared closed immediately after it was totally damaged by the typhoon. The USMC has been building new sturdy and disaster resistant concrete buildings and is putting up capitalization for its medical and laboratory equipments.

The Visayas Community Hospital in Cebu constructed a modern hospital building but due to lack of capitalization for the buildings, it incurred huge loans and losses. The Brokenshire Integrated Health Ministry, Inc. (BIHMI) in Davao City had recently overcome its management concerns, while Bethany Hospital in San Fernando, La Union has been ridden with governance issues and concerns. Silliman University Medical Center is only on partnership status with the Church and continues to benefit from the Church's Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training program that optimizes the services of qualified CPE supervisors and Pastors and students accessing the training programs.

In many instances, the UCCP national leadership has been assessing the very focus of the Church's healing ministry as this is purely focused in the hospital ministry

and has very minimal investment in Basic and Community Based Health Care Program, which local churches and Conferences should have been implementing , providing basic health care program in the communities. Reviewing the healing ministry statement of the Church will refresh the readers of its theological undergirding and the defined scope and perceived direction when the statement was formulated and what has become of these.

## **UCCP HEALING MINISTRY: A springboard for revitalization of basic health care and community based program.**

Briefly, I would like to mention about the UCCP Mission Statement on the Healing Ministry which is the springboard for revitalization of the Clinical Pastoral Education of the Church. This also serves as the guidepost of all healing ministry centers, such as Church run hospitals and healing ministries being done by local churches and conferences.

### **The UCCP Mission Statement on the Healing Ministry (1987)<sup>1</sup>**

The UCCP Constitution and By-laws provides, that:

As part of its ministry of teaching, healing and service, the Church shall continue its participation in the ownership of schools, hospitals and other service, institutions. The administration, operation and maintenance of schools, hospitals and other service institutions wholly or partially-owned by the Church shall be subject to annual review by the National Council to ensure the quality of their service and their contribution to the mission of the Church. The Church shall take steps to ensure their

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<sup>1</sup> UCCP Healing Ministry Manual, <https://uccpchurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/The-UCCP-Healing-Ministry.pdf>

continued viability. (UCCP Constitution and By-Laws Article V, Section 28, LICCP By-Laws, 1993).

In 1987, the UCCP came up with a mission statement on the healing ministry. It was issued at a time of great expectations. It was the year after EDSA I, which brought about the fall of the Marcos dictatorship and the installation of a popular regime. There was hope that the agenda of the poor would be finally addressed. (Montes)

The UCCP engages itself in holistic health ministry in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ for abundant life for all.

Affirmation of this conviction, we thus further state that health is a basic human right.

While it is the duty of the State to provide health care, the Church has a moral responsibility towards the attainment of a wholesome and healthy life for everyone as God intended, recognizing that the art and science of healing is an integral part of the message of salvation.

The active participation of the people of God through her various institutions shall enable the Church to fulfill her healing ministry.

Though the Church focuses her attention upon people, she cannot close her eyes to the ills of society which give rise to poverty of the body and spirit. It is therefore necessary for the Church to address herself to the historic problems of domination, unequal distribution of land, inequality in economic opportunities and resources, and

oppression and exploitation of less privileged and marginalized Filipinos (EC 1987).

The Church's healing ministry has evolved since the late 1980s. Organizationally, the healing ministry was decentralized as the Health Ministry Desk was integrated into the succeeding program clusters. With it conferences and local churches become aware of their share of the health ministry of the Church and assumed greater responsibilities in the health ministry. However, the succession of leadership in the national level has impacted as well the scope and mechanism of the health ministry.

The national leadership through the actions of the general assembly in 1960s-80s allocated two (2) percent from the 9% share of the 22 percent Wider Mission Support remitted by local churches to Conferences has been allocated to support the UCCP hospitals and educational institutions. Yet, the 2% share s for all hospitals and is not much to defray costs in running hospitals and schools. It is more of symbolic gesture to sustain the direct connection with the general assembly. In the succeeding quadrennia the healing ministry was to a large extent became a specialized ministry of the Church's hospitals. By and large the Church, with the Healing Ministry Statement and Policy, although much has to be desired in the management system, has positively impacted the healing ministry at the community level but only in providing medical treatment through admittance in the hospitals and which by nature are curative rather than preventive.

What is health, anyway? The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in 1948 as a "state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing not merely

the absence of disease or infirmity". This coincides closely with the holistic view seeing the patient first as a person within their family, community and workplace, and recognizing the positive and negative influences each can have on the person. Helping an ill person back to better health requires due account to be taken of factors other than their physiology and anatomy; meeting psychological, social, spiritual and environmental needs are important.<sup>2</sup>

In the same material source, the authors present the social determinants of health and how these can impact the wellbeing of persons. More so in the hospital setting the patients who are considered as persons-in-need, are supported by the social environment as they undergo medical treatment and recuperate back to health and wholeness.

### **Social determinants of health.**

The social determinants are those factors that persuade or encourage individuals to become hooked on unhealthy habits, and to persist in that habit despite their knowledge of the harm it is doing to their health. The Marmot Review on health inequalities Fair Society, Healthy Lives (February 2010) details the need for social justice, material, psychosocial and political empowerment. Health inequalities are not inevitable and can be significantly reduced. They stem from avoidable inequalities in society: of income, education, employment and neighborhood circumstances. Inequalities present before birth set the scene for poorer health and other outcomes accumulating throughout the life course. The central tenet of the Marmot Review is that avoidable health inequalities are

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2 [https://www.ahsw.org.uk/userfiles/Other\\_Resources/Health\\_\\_Social\\_Care\\_Wellbeing/\\_psychologicalsocialneedsofpatients\\_tcm41-202964\\_copy.pdf](https://www.ahsw.org.uk/userfiles/Other_Resources/Health__Social_Care_Wellbeing/_psychologicalsocialneedsofpatients_tcm41-202964_copy.pdf)

3 Ibid, page 2.

unfair and putting them right is a matter of social justice.<sup>3</sup>

IBON International has published its Mid-year 2019 socio-economic and political analysis the nation's state of affairs and it outlines the Daily Wage Indicators for the National Capital Region that shows the difference between the daily minimum wage and the estimated family living wage in the four-year period, 2016-2019.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 10**

Daily wage indicators for the National Capital Region

Period	Daily minimum wage (Php)	Real minimum wage (2012=100; in Php)	For a family of six members			For a family of five members		
			Estimated family living wage (Php)	Wage gap (Php)	Wage gap (%)	Estimated family living wage (Php)	Wage gap (Php)	Wage gap (%)
Jun 2016	491	468	1,077	586	54	897	406	45
Jun 2017	491	454	1,111	620	56	925	434	47
Jun 2018	512	447	1,175	663	56	979	467	48
Jun 2019	537	455	1,210	673	56	1,008	471	47

**Sources:** National Wages and Productivity Commission and Philippine Statistics Authority

Table 10 indicates the wage gap between the actual minimum wage and the required, estimated family wage for a family of 6 members. This is indicative of the social inequality in the country, yet endowed with rich natural and human resources. Wages are the means for people to access health care, but given the dire situation, many working class people and especially the poor and the elderly could not afford to buy their medicines and go to medical specialist for treatment or get quality and sustainable health care.

<sup>4</sup> IBON, Midyear 2019 BirdTalk, Duterte's Midterm : Change for the worse, July 11, 2019, p. 15-16

## **Psychological and social needs**

The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health cited above describes that it is not only the physical needs of ill patients that need to be addressed but also their psychological, social, spiritual, and environmental needs. The European Charter on Environment and Health declares that ‘good health and wellbeing require a clean and harmonious environment in which physical, psychological, social and aesthetic factors are all given their due importance’. The EU Department of Health defines need as ‘the requirements of individuals to enable them to achieve, maintain or restore an acceptable level of social independence or quality of life, as defined by particular care agency or authority’.

Furthermore, concepts of need are widely used to define means of treating patients as people, holistically. The environment we live in is fundamental to basic human needs as emphasized in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Needs-oriented theories emphasize the health professional’s role in helping the patient to meet his or her physiological and psychosocial needs. Traditionally health authorities and other health-related organizations at local, regional, and national level set out to provide appropriate services to meet population needs, seeking to achieve levels of health improvement, an acceptable level of social independence and improved quality of life.<sup>5</sup>

## **UCCP healing ministry policy guidelines**

The UCCP has been trying to address the health needs of its constituents and the Filipino people in general by operationalizing this at the level of community

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<sup>5</sup> IBON, Midyear 2019 BirdTalk, Duterte’s Midterm : Change for the worse, July 11, 2019, p. 5

based Primary Health Care program and at the secondary and tertiary health care centers like clinics and hospitals. It is quite interesting to note that prior to the recent much vouched universal health care system for all debated in many countries has already been stated in the policy in 1987. Let me state the 5-point policy guidelines:

1. Community-Based Health Programs (CBHPs) shall be initiated and implemented by the local church through its members and church organizations. It shall be in cooperation and coordination with the community or community organization and shall provide services to the entire community.
2. Primary Health Care (PHC) shall be its main approach. PHC means essential health care made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community by means acceptable to them, through their full participation and at a cost that the community and country can afford. It forms an integral part both of the country's health system of which it is the nucleus, and of the overall social and economic development of the community.
3. PHC as an approach of CBHPs shall address the main health problems in the community, providing promotive, cultural background, economic status, and political affiliation. Health programs shall give priority to the poor, the marginalized, the deprived, the oppressed, unserved and underserved among the people.
4. The Health Ministry Desk (HMD) shall promote awareness through the education of the people concerning their health in relation to society, and shall emphasize that health is a basic human right, and that it is the right and responsibility of

everyone to maintain; and promote wholeness not only for him/herself but for the community and society preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services accordingly. It shall include at least: promotion of proper nutrition, growth-monitoring, adequate supply of safe water, basic sanitation, maternal and child care, including family planning; immunization against the major infectious diseases; prevention and control of locally endemic diseases; education concerning prevailing health problems and the methods of preventing and controlling them; and, appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries.

5. The church and the community shall work together to make the program self-generating, self-sustaining and self-reliant, thus contributing to the development of the community.

The Health Ministry Desk (HMD) no longer exists at the national office, but its functions are assumed by the Conferences, Local Churches and the hospitals. These are coordinated by the Office of Institutional Ministry. Aside from this Local Churches and Conferences capable of rendering health and medical services to the communities conduct their own free medical check-up and medical treatment of symptomatic illnesses and made referral to secondary and tertiary health care providers for further analysis and treatment. Oriental medicine, which are introduced as alternative medicine like acupuncture and herbal medicine have been used as well in many instances in their health programs and services.

Hospital community outreach programs have been in place in BIHMI and VCMC and most probably in other hospitals. Brokenshire Hospital implements various

community projects, ranging from sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition program, providing vocational skills for unemployed or underemployed persons in the communities they serve. Visayas Community Medical Center has been running a community outreach program dubbed “Balay Malingkawason” a name that denotes a home where freedom or healing is experienced. The program offers free medical, dental and minor surgical services to depressed villages in the City and the Province of Cebu. It includes in their program the HIV voluntary testing, counseling and referral services.

### **Clinical Pastoral Education in the Healing Ministry of the Church**

The UCCP Healing Ministry includes the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). This is one of the important aspects of theological education and training for seminary students and for church workers who wanted to further their professional training as pastoral counselors in the clinical bed-side hospital training and in the community setting. In October 17-18, 2017, the national office called for CPE Ad-hoc Committee Meeting. The group was composed of CPE supervisors, supervisors-in-training and the UCCP executives. They decided to create the CPE Board that oversees the program, develop programs to address the training and coordination needs, develop standards for basic and advance CPE training, specifically identify candidates for supervisory training. The Board will recommend and supervise the candidates.<sup>6</sup>

The formation of the CPE Board opened the way for a well-coordinated program in the various facets of the CPE training for seminary students in all UCCP recognized theological education centers and the church workers

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6 Proceedings of the CPE Adhoc Committee Meeting; October 17-18, 2017, UCCP Shalom Center

working in the local churches and would be chaplains in hospitals and the military service. Many aspects of the CPE program have been ironed out and are put in place such as the tasks and functions of the CPE Board, the UCCP CPE Standards for basic, advance and supervisory trainings. On the broader aspects, the Board will work on accreditation criteria for chaplains and Pastoral Care Educators and for accreditation for CPE Centers. The centers are the Brokenshire Integrated Health Ministry Inc. (BIHMI), the Silliman University Medical Center (SUMC) and the Visayas Community Medical Center (VCMC).

Now that we have the CPE Board installed, it has been pro-active in carrying out the planned CPE training program for the seminary students this year, which set the schedule for the six (6) weeks CPE training for students from Silliman University Divinity School, Southern Christian College, Union Theological Seminary, Pag-aso School of Theology, and the Ecumenical Theological Seminary. They are carefully assigned to the different CPE training centers in the Visayas and Mindanao and with corresponding qualified CPE trainers and supervisors. Funding wise, the Conferences and local churches, UCCP national office, the seminaries and the hospitals where the CPE training will be conducted will collectively defray the costs. I'm optimistic that the CPE Program will be carried out effectively and meaningfully by our CPE supervisors and CPE supervisors-in-training.

### **Challenges to Spiritual Care**

It is an accepted notion that when we talk about 'spiritual care', we are in fact talking about the wellbeing of persons from the vantage point of religious faith and beliefs. I think, when we deal with the challenges to Pastoral/Spiritual care of persons in need, it is necessary

to review some theoretical and practical aspects of the ministry. First, I would like to point out this definition of health and the social determinants of health. Second, I will make conceptual link with the Church's healing ministry statement and policies. Third, I will cite some evaluation points I made about caring for migrant workers in Korea as concluding part of this presentation.

Now, what are the concrete challenges posed before us and especially for Pastoral/Spiritual Care Provider or Professional that needs to be emphasized? I know that there are various collection of competencies of a pastoral counselor or spiritual care provider that are required by Spiritual Care Centers or organizations. Perhaps in addition to these and in consonance with it, I would like to pose my list as challenges:

- **on the pastoral caregiver or professional**
  - a) Well-seasoned pastoral identity and psycho-emotive maturity.
  - b) Relevant and effective use of communication and counseling knowledge and techniques.
  - c) Comprehensive understanding of the person-in-need in terms of his/her social background, personal struggles and manifest psychological state.
  - d) Deeply rooted in the greater hopes and aspirations of the community of faith and the wider society.
- **on the institutional level**
  - a) Program content and mechanisms consistency with the Church's Mission statement on the Healing Ministry.

- b) Systematic and democratic coordination and support of programs by the CPE Board and the national committees and executives.
- c) Challenging, confronting social forces and structures that threaten health and wellbeing of persons and communities.

### What it takes to be Spiritual Caregiver for migrant workers and marriage migrants?

Doing pastor care and counseling with and amongst migrant workers and marriage migrants for fourteen years in Korea has given me insights on how to deal with the varying issues and concerns of migrant workers. Of course, there has been no perfect model how a Spiritual Caregiver perform their responsibilities and a measure of appropriate behavior they must exhibit in the course of their mission programs and interpersonal relations with people they work with.

Although there are compelling theological motivations in doing the Missio Dei among migrant workers and marriage migrants, such as personal and social necessity for salvation or liberation from things that keep them in bondage or those that have haunted them their whole lives. The traditional teleological assumptions of Christian mission, that of providing pastoral care and counseling have been basically the conversion of the individual person from their depravity to acceptance of God's forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.

While it is true that individual migrant workers and marriage migrants are persons who are living with their own depravity, they are as well living in the shadow of social alienation that causes them to develop resultant behavior. This impinges on their individual personality as

concurred by their peers at the social level through their continuing interpersonal interaction and the frequency of their encounter with recurring social situation and repetitive psycho-somatic response to the environment.

In so many ways coming to South Korea for pastoral care ministry for the Filipino migrant workers and marriage migrants entail competencies that suit the need of migrants, such as:

- a) above average level of empathy, that is, the ability to understand a person's psycho-emotive state in their distressed situation and in non-verbal psychological state.
- b) the ability to relate with individual persons in the level of social organization or cultural and class identity. This means that Pastoral Caregiver learned and keep learning how the social location e.g. factories, domestic violence of migrant workers and marriage migrants impact their self-esteem, sense of humanity and their need for support when they were in the lowest emotive and somatic state.

Furthermore:

- c) Grasp of the extent of labor exploitation and the need for self-respect and economic sustainability are two clashing values that allow a new perspective of reality to evolve.
- d) Involvement in social organizations in which migrant workers and marriage migrants would seek assistance or intervention when there is a need for psychological support and redress for rights and dignity being eroded in the work place.

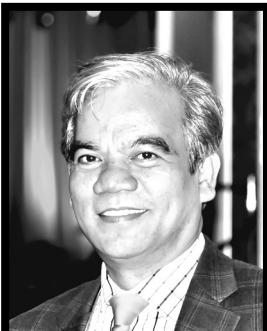
Given that individual persons may overcome difficulties like violation of rights and losing their human dignity in the workplace, one needs to verbalize the need for concrete steps to overcome those difficulties by establishing social connections with persons with the same or similar experiences, with organizations such as their ethno-linguistic groups, with institutions like local churches and non-government organizations. In that context can be part in making analysis of their situation and find ways to collectively address their situation in an organized manner.

Finally,

- e) Pastoral caregivers must have a workable knowledge and experience of forming social organization whether ethno-linguistic, trade-labor organization, faith based and gender-based organizations are very important as part of pastoral care ministry and Spiritual Care for migrant workers and marriage migrants.

Community based Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) must be strengthened as a means of greater involvement in the life of migrant families that is constantly increasing in number in the country and our world and their issues and concerns have become complicated. This is a major programmatic recommendation that we in the UCCP CPE Program should be developed and systematized, alongside the hospital-based CPE.

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# **Healing Earth: Through Recycling Christianity and Respecting Local Wisdom**

**Rev. Oinike Natalia Harefa**

## **Abstract**

In August- October 2019, several countries had destructive forests' fires such as the Amazon Rainforest in Brazil, Gondwana Rainforests in Australia and Kalimantan Rainforest in Indonesia. The burning of forests has a lot to do with human greediness in exploiting the earth and other creatures. In 1967, Lynn White in his article, *Science*, argued that the western Christianity had legitimatized environmental destruction.<sup>1</sup> It has served to make ecological exploitation of the earth legal because it has an extremely anthropocentric ideology in line with its religious belief. Its biblical interpretation justified the exploitation of the environment. Furthermore, it removed the spirit and sacredness of nature. It has historically claimed that humans were created in the image of God and everything else has been created solely for their use. For instance, Genesis

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn White, Jr "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," in *Science* 155 (1967), p. 1203-1207

1:28 is interpreted in anthropocentric view that nature has value only as it was useful to humans. As the earth's inhabitants and as Christians, how do we contribute to heal the earth and make it whole again? This paper is intended to criticize western Christian theology handed down in Asia, to consider idea of recycling Christianity and to propose ecological Bible reading. It is also a calling to respect the local wisdom in Nias indigenous belief that supports the interconnectedness and the wholeness of all creation.

**Keywords:** recycling, healing, wholeness, interconnectedness, *Silewe Nazarata, böwö*

### Criticism to the Western Christian Theology on Creation

From the history of mission in Asia, the former missionaries did not only bring their theology but also their civilization. The western missionaries focused not on protecting the ecology rather they concentrated on spreading Christianity and planting churches. In Nias Islands, Indonesia, the former missionaries even destroyed the heart of indigenous belief of Nias' natives who believed in *Adu* as a medium to relate with the spirit of the ancestor. It was not allowed to relate with *Adu* and all the various rituals and practices embodied in their tradition connected to it were prohibited. The Holy Spirit from the western world displaced the position of the Spirit of ancestors in Nias.<sup>2</sup>

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2 Tuhoni Telaumbanua and Uwe Hummel, Cross and Adu: A Socio-Historical Study on the Encounter between Christianity and the Indigenous Culture on Nias and the Batu Islands, Indonesia (1865-1965) (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2007), p. 284.

Destroying *Adu* meant destroying all beliefs and wisdom related to it, including the wisdom of protecting the nature. Then, what was Christian theology from the west offered to us?

In many pre-Christian religions such as in Nias; rocks, trees, mountains and streams were inhabited by the spirits of ancestors, totems, divines and semi divines creatures. In contrast, Christianity removed the spirits and sacredness from the land and made it into inanimate objects that could easily be exploited. Anthropocentrism has involved a sense of human superiority and contributed on separation of human from other creation. It supported dualism between human and nature in a whole series of binary and hierarchically. The problem in this binary hierarchical dualism is associating the items on each side together and considering those on the left as superior to those on the right as seen below:

- Heaven – Earth
- God – Human
- Male – Female
- Rational – Emotional
- History – Nature
- Human – Nature
- European – Indigenous
- Civilized – Uncivilized
- Spirit – Matter

The spirit of Christian pietism in the past also influ-

enced how Christians today in Asia understand apocalyptic eschatology, including Christianity in Nias Islands. There is a strong belief that in the end, the earth is going to be destroyed and Christians will be taken to heaven. This kind of eschatology makes a little attention and motivation of Christians to protect the earth. Christians pay more attention on the issues of heaven rather than what is happening on earth.

## Recycling Christianity

Kwok Pui-Lan argued that circles, cycle and recycling are common language of Asian people, women all over the world and conscientious Christians. In Asian religious art, circle is as common as crucifix in Western Europe. In Buddhism, circle (*mandala*) is a sacred symbol. In Hindus myth, circle is a powerful symbol of reincarnation. The image of circle is also close related to women. It is an important symbol for women in biological period. However, since Enlightenment, Western Christianity understood time as a linear process that somehow eliminates the importance of cycle periodical understanding in Asia. Christian with ecological awareness has begun to question it. Recycling is a significant ecological and spiritual theme.<sup>3</sup>

Pui-Lan proposed recycling Christianity as a challenge to reflect and to promote ecological consciousness,

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3 Kwok Pui-Lan, "Ecology and the Recycling of Christianity" in Constructive Christian Theology in the Worldwide Church, Willam R. Barr (ed.) (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), "Ecology and Recycling of Christianity", 267.

interrelatedness, mutuality and eco-justice. Recycling Christianity means the raising of awareness on anthropocentric, hierarchical and patriarchal religious system in Christianity. Some of our traditional beliefs need to be recycled so it can be more relevant in our today's context. Recycling also means anticipating to conversion, metanoia and resurrection.<sup>4</sup> She proposed three areas where Christian religious system should be recycled. Firstly, Christianity needs to be recycled from the hierarchical model of Christianity to be an ecological model. A hierarchy puts God infinitely above human and human above nature, male above female, mind over body and human above nonhuman. In contrast, an ecological model understands God, human and nature as interdependent, interrelated, and interconnected as the arrows of recycling. Secondly, Christianity needs to be recycled from anthropocentrism to biocentrism. Before, humans have been understood as the center of the universe. It is an arrogant statement for the biosphere which existed long time ago before human and human depend on it. Thirdly, Christianity needs to be recycled from the passive spirituality to passionate spirituality. In the past, spirituality is understood as pietism or asceticism. Spirit is against the body, emotion and appetite. Now, we need to speak of the holistic and the wholeness of spirituality. Instead of being passive, we need to be passionate, erotic and full of spirit towards justice, peace and harmony.<sup>5</sup> These concepts on recycling Christi-

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4 Pui-Lan, "Ecology and the Recycling of Christianity," 269

5 Pui-Lan, "Ecology and the Recycling of Christianity," 269-270.

anity will help us to raise the spirit of solidarity with creatures as a step to heal the earth.

## **Ecological Bible Reading**

Christian theology needs a new interpretation of the Bible to protect and heal the earth. Interpreting the Bible with the spirit of anthropocentrism continues to be debated and criticized since it diverges to the principles in ecological readings of the Bible.<sup>6</sup> In the Bible, we can find some narrations which direct us to pay more concern on earth and nature. For example, when Jesus told his disciples to pray, not that they will go to heaven, but that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mat 6:10). Paul also speaks of creation's longing for redemption (Rome 8:19-23) and the Apocalypse of John pictures the New Jerusalem coming to earth (Rev 21:2-3).

Norman Habel and some theologians created the Earth Bible in 2000 to develop ecojustice principle.<sup>7</sup> They used six principles of ecojustice. These principles became a challenge for many theologians to construct the new interpretation of Bible towards ecojustice interpretations and healing the broken earth. They are:<sup>8</sup>

1. The principle of intrinsic worth: the universe, earth, and all its components have intrinsic value.

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<sup>6</sup> Steven L. McKenzie, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation* Volume 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 250

<sup>7</sup> McKenzie, *the Oxford Encyclopedia*, p. 252.

<sup>8</sup> McKenzie, *the Oxford Encyclopedia*, 253-254.

2. The principle of interconnectedness: earth is a community of interconnectedness living things that are mutually dependent on each other for life and survival.
3. The principle of voice: earth is a subject capable of raising its voice in celebration and against injustice.
4. The principle of purpose: the universe, earth, and all its components are part of a dynamic cosmic design within which each piece has a place in the overall goal of that design.
5. The principle of mutual custodianship: earth is balanced and diverse domain in which responsible custodians can function as partners, rather than rulers, to sustain a balanced and diverse Earth community.
6. Principle of resistance: earth and its components not only suffer from injustice at the hands of humans, but actively resist them in the struggle for justice.
- 7.

Ecological reading today refers to some texts in the New Testament towards theology of creation. In Romans 8:19-23, we can find the expressions of God's plan for the natural world. Before, this text was understood as the apocalyptic expectation that at the end of history God will reverse the damage from the fall not only to humanity, but also to nature itself. It shows that it is too often the biblical apocalyptic tradition has been misinterpreted as

narrowly focused on the salvation of human souls but world-denying and pessimistic about nature. On the other hand, the apocalyptic writings which began in post-exilic Judaism, often expressed an ecological concern for nature by stressing that the natural world was created by God and is under God's control. God holds humans for their sins against the earth and animals. Nature is a victim of human and it cries out in suffering. Today we are calling to heal the earth and nature.

The biblical apocalyptic worldview profound implications for ecological ethics: God's plan for redemption is not just for individual human souls. God intends "to reconcile himself to all things" (Colossians 1:20). Human is God's agent in caring for nature. When humanity is restored to a right relationship with God, the creation will also be restored to God's intended operation. Human beings have an essential solidarity with nature. We groan together with nature as we long to be set free from the consequences of sin (Romans 8:22-23). The eternal destiny of God's redeemed people is to dwell in perfect resurrected bodies in a perfected earth, full of glory and freed from bondage to decay (Romans 8:21; Revelation 21-22), not as disembodied spirits floating about in some immaterial emptiness (2 Corinthians 5:1-4). God's redeemed children ought to show a strong concern for the care of nature.

In the biblical apocalyptic imagination, the material world suffers because it is a victim of sin, not because it is

inherently evil (as in a world-denying Gnostic worldview). Since God plans to redeem the damaged material creation (Romans 8:19, 21), we should begin to act now in ways that anticipate the new creation. Nature waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Romans 8:19) because when believers are glorified and freed from sin, they will assume their proper relationship to the rest of creation so that nature itself will share in that glory (Romans 8:21). Far from avoiding involvement in the environmental movement, Christians should be leaders in it. Christians should care for the earth because of the stewardship given by God.<sup>9</sup>

### Towards Theology of Creation from Indigenous Belief of *Ono Niha*

The indigenous belief of *Ono Niha* (Nias people) is a religion based on nature. Nature is seen as sacred and a place for divine creatures. There is no separation, big distance and clear hierarchy among God, humans, and nature as in western Christianity. The indigenous belief of Ono Niha has respect to nature. Therefore, it is important to dig and to restore the local wisdom which was buried by the Western Christianity in the past. It is not for the purposes of historic nostalgia in the ancient era but to find wisdom which is rooted in Nias traditional life. The indigenous belief which paid more respect on nature. Some of the values are in line with the spirit of healing earth that could support Christian movement. Towards

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<sup>9</sup> [www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/106717.pdf](http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/106717.pdf) downloaded on 23rd of August 2016.

the theology of creation from the belief on Nias people, I propose three concepts that could be developed in the future.

## 1. The Myth of *Silewe Nazarata*

Cosmology of Nias' society can be wholly explained by the existence of a goddess namely *Silewe Nazarata*<sup>10</sup>. She was a mediator between gods and creation of the world.<sup>11</sup> She formed the world in her body parts. She was acknowledged as a creator. When human were created, she put wisdom and understanding into human body. On earth, she planted rice through a woman who became her messenger. In the belief of Nias people, *Silewe Nazarata* was the sister of the gods. She has two characters, both good and bad. She was seen as a carrier of fortunes but also calamities. She was associated with the upper world with all the good and the underworld with all evil. This is the dualistic ambivalent side of *Silewe Nazarata* that became the basic cosmology of Nias people that were united in her. As a mediator among gods and creatures, she united two different poles between the world above and the world below.

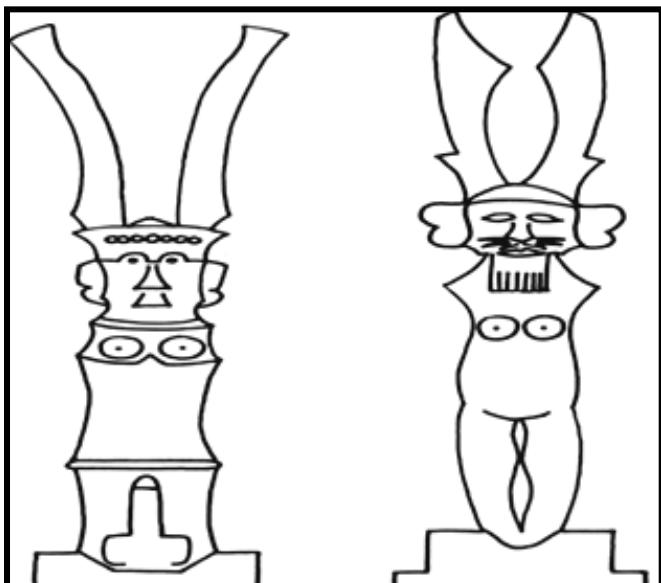
Peter Suzuki believes that the unification of these two worlds depicted in the image of the goddess *Silewe Nazarata* through two sculptures namely *Adu Horö*, the

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10 Peter Suzuki, the Religious System and Culture of Nias Indonesia. Dissertation of Leiden University (The Hague: Uitgeverij Excelsior, 1959), 10.

11 Bambowo Laiya, Solidaritas Kekeluargaan dalam Salah Satu Masyarakat Desa di Nias – Indonesia (Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada, 1983), 24

bisexual statue.<sup>12</sup> The aspect symbolized in it is the two opposing sides to form a unity. The myth of *Silewe Nazarata* shows us the unity of the opposite element on earth. She can be understood as the symbol of interrelatedness, mutuality and interdependency of human and all creation. She was the creator and mediator of wisdom. She brought fortune for those who respect the mutuality among creations, but she brought also calamities for disrespecting the nature. Suzuki even argued that the highest god in Nias was not *Lowalangi* but *Silewe Nazarata*. She was a divine trickster who can be a life destroyer but also a life giver. Through this power, she became a goddess of healing, including the healing of creation.



Picture: a figure of Goddess *Silewe Nazarata*.

Figure on the left side has pennies and female breast.

Figure on the right side has a vagina, mustache and beard (Suzuki, 1959).

12 Suzuki, The Religious System, 17.

## 2. Philosophy of "*Böwö*"

Nias people commonly use *böwö*, a terminology that refers to bride's price. Authentically, *böwö* has a deeper meaning to that of being considered only as a bride's price. It is related to the hospitality of Nias' natives. Some matters relating to the hospitality of *böwö concept* in Nias society:

1. *Böwö* is a concrete manifestation of complementarity by participation "to give and to take" in which hospitality is served.
2. *Böwö* in Nias society accommodates space for mutual relationships.
3. *Böwö* becomes a fundamental practice that includes family, friends, and relatives.
4. *Böwö* is connecting the two parties in a relationship of mutual giving and receiving as an economic activity. It is the basis of the growth in social, political, and religious aspects. *Böwö* in Nias society serves to strengthen relations on the basis of social exchange in love.
5. In sharing out of roles in the house, women played the role of *sangolayagö böwö* (who serve with hospitality).
- 6.

In ecological understanding, I propose *böwö* in Nias society must not only become a well-known terminology in the marriage rite but also for wider relation among all creations. Biologically, in the natural cycle, all creation is a

source of life to other creation directly or indirectly. Human needs to show *böwö* (hospitality) to earth and all creation for the earth has already given us sustenance through land, air, water, plantations, animals, and so on. It's about time for humans to show hospitality to all creations.

### **3. Woman as "Source of Life"**

In Nias marital rite, woman is known as the source of life. In the past, it was referred to the biological function. This concept can be reimagined towards eco-feminist theology. Women are close to nature but as an active agent for protecting and nurturing life. Like the earth which gives birth to all creation to be alive, women also give birth to human life. Like the earth who keeps all creation in her womb, women also keep a seed of human in her womb. Like the earth who gives growth from its breast to all creation, women also feed the infants from their breast. In eastern culture, to obey and to love our mother is the duty of the children. As we obey our mother, as the source of life and love; it is also important for human to love the nature and environment who gives us life.

### **Conclusion**

Christianity in Asia, including in Nias, has strongly been influenced by Christian theological model with western missionary. The problem is not only because we are living geographically apart from the West world but we are

facing a different struggle in Asian context. One of the struggle today is the massive destruction of ecology. Western theology sees the world as binary, linear, hierarchy, and anthropocentric. It has conditioned how human subjugated the earth. In the contrary, Asian spirituality sees life in a cycle. Human and earth is interconnected and inseparable. Therefore, recycling Christianity from the past is needed especially in our mission today to heal the earth and the whole creation from human exploitation. Recycling Christianity is also a calling to respect the local wisdom in Nias indigenous belief that supports the spirit of earth's healing to be whole again.

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