



Deconstructing Gender Stereotypes in Leak

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Abstract

The belief of Balinese people towards leak still survive. Leak is a magic based on durgaim that can transform a person from human to another form, such as apes, pigs, etc. People tend to regard leak as evil. In general, the evilness is constructed in gender stereotypes, so it is identified that leak are always women. This idea is a power game based on the ideology of patriarchy that provides legitimacy for men to dominate women with a plea for social harmony. As a result, women are marginalized in the Balinese society. Women should be aware of so it would provide encouragement for them to make emancipatory changes dialogically.

Abstrak

Kepercayaan orang Bali terhadap leak tetap bertahan sampai saat ini. Leak adalah sihir yang berbasiskan durgaim yang dapat mengakibatkan seseorang bisa merubah bentuk dari manusia ke wujud yang lain, misalnya kera, babi, dll. Leak termasuk magi hitam sehingga dinilai bersifat jelek. Pada umumnya perempuan diidentikkan dengan leak sehingga melahirkan asumsi yang bermuatan stereotip gender bahwa leak = perempuan. Gagasan ini merupakan permainan kekuasaan berbasis ideologi patriarki dan sekaligus memberikan legitimasi bagi laki-laki untuk menguasai perempuan dengan dalih demi keharmonisan sosial. Akibatnya, perempuan menjadi termarginalisasi pada masyarakat Bali. Perempuan harus menyadarinya sehingga memberikan dorongan bagi mereka untuk melakukan perubahan secara dialogis emansipatoris.

Keywords: black magic; patriarchal ideology; woman marginalization; emancipatory movement.

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INTRODUCTION

The belief of Balinese people towards *leak* still survives in their society until these days. *Leak* is a magic practice which can result in a person to be able to transform into other form like *rangda*, *celuluk*, dogs, pigs, apes, bicycle, cars, airplanes, carts, etc (Pekandel and Yendra, 2013: 61-64; Kardji, 1993: 53-68). This phenomenon is really interesting so there are many people who study it. For example, Pekandelan and Yendra (2010, 2012, 2013), Putra and Putra (2013), Subagia (2011), Segara (2000), Kardji (1993), Atmaja (1993), Pulasari (2013), Sumawa (2013), Yuddhiantara (2008), etc. There are also literary works with *leak* themes such as *Ki Balian Batur* (Supatra, 2012), *Ki Gede Basur* (Supatra, 2006), *Calon Arang* (Suastika, 1997), and so on. In addition, Bali is rich of *lontar* (traditional document on lontar leaves) especially about *leak* like *Lontar Aji Pengeleakan*, *Lontar Aji Pangiwa*, *Lontar Aji Wegig*, etc that are kept in Gedong Kirtya in Singaraja and Balinese Cultural Documentation Center in Denpasar. Those various studies complete each other in order to grasp a deep and comprehensive picture of *leak*. For example, the methods to obtain *pengeleakan*, types of *leak* based on forms and mastering levels, the processes of being *leak*, the danger of *leak* to human, and the methods to overcome in religious and magical ways.

Although the study about *leak* has been done so many times, *leak* is still interesting to be studied academically. The reasons are; first, the studies of *leak* focus on the religious-magical approach with the result that critical studies are neglected. Second, the issue of *leak* is really complex so there are aspects that need deeper and more comprehensive understanding. For example, gender stereotype of image that a person who can do *ngleak* is generally identified as a woman (*leak* = woman). This believe emerges interesting questions to be studied critically, which are “What is used to legitimate gender stereotype that Balinese woman = *leak*?”, “Does this believe contain ideology which leads to women marginalization in Balinese society?”

In order to answer these questions,

critical social theory is used; especially post-culturalist which assumes that man and woman relationship in a society is divided into classes because there are imbalances of authority in capital-economy, social, cultural, symbolic, financial, and body which are legitimated by ideology with the result that their relationships have power dimension (Brooks, 2005: 69-137; Eagleton, 2007: 183-219). The ideology which legitimates that practice is patriarchy or *phallusertrism*. This ideology isn't visible because it is inside human mind. In fact, it can also work sub-consciously (Takwin, 2003: 96-101). Authority is not only represented in the form of someone's ability in determining a person's action by physical pressure, but also by language which has ideology nature in which language is the place where ideology resides (Baryadi, 2012: 20). The relationship of authority can be in the form of hegemony or domination which is indicated by the use of violence—physical, psychological, cultural, or symbolic which leads to marginalization of lower class by upper class or man to woman (Lubis, 2014a: 157-199; Bourdieu, 2010; Barker, 2004: 61-64).

Based on this paradigm, it is hoped that the issue can be answered deconstructively. The objective of this study is not only to get the critical theoretical answer, but also to grow critical awareness especially to women so that their position as lower class and the image as *leak* can be minimized through dialog and emancipatory approach. Therefore, the relationship between man and woman can be equal in a *rwa bhineda* manner.

METHODS

This research employed critical social theory approach so the objective was not only to find the meaning of a visible social reality, but also ideology or power act behind woman image as *leak*. The references were text books and literary works with *leak* theme like *Ki Gede Basur antara Asmara dan Ilmu Hitam* (Suparta, 2006) and *Ki Balian Batur antara Leak dan Titah Betari Danu* (Suparta, 2012); and *lontar*, like *Lontar Aji Pengeleakan*, *Lontar Aji Pangiwa*, and *Lontar Aji Wegig*. Besides, interviews were also done to some

sources who understood about *leak* like Wawan Watra (Lecturer of Universitas Hindu Indonesia). He also gave some reading sources to enrich the understanding about *leak*.

The data from these sources were analyzed qualitatively by mean of deconstruction method (Noerhadi, 2013: 232' Faruk, 2012: 172-232). By this method, the chance to uncover the hidden, contradictive, and internal inconsistent meaning in a text can be optimal (Lubis, 2014: 2-26) either related to denotative or connotative meaning (Bartnes, 2007: 82-89) in the context of Balinese woman image as *leak*.

The answers to those questions focused more to the aspect of *niskala* so the validity, of course, could be debated in empirically rational way. However, in post-modernism paradigm perspective, this idea can be accepted academically. It is because in studying a reality, post-modernism not only stresses on deconstructionism, but also recognizes the existence of pluralism and relativism of truth. Thus, tolerance in any form of truth, including the truth from small narration is open as the way it is (Lubis, 2014: 2-26).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Balinese people's believe about *leak* is closely related to Hindu belief, that is *tantrism* (Surasmi, 2007: 41-57; Santiko, 1987: 218-219; Redig, 2007). That believe can be found in the mythology as follow;

Dewi Uma who was cursed to become Durga

Kardji (1993a: 13-32) and Segara (2000: 12-16) show that the mythology of *leak* can be found in the transformation story of Dewi Uma to become Durga. This condition started from the intention of Dewa Siwa to test the loyalty of his wife, Dewi Uma. Dewa Siwa pretended to be sick and needed the one and only cure that was Cow's milk. Siwa asked Dewi Uma to descent to the mortal world to get the milk. In her search, Dewi Uma met a cow with its shepherd. Dewi Uma asked for the milk. However, the shepherd insisted that he could give it with the condition that Dewi Uma was willing to do sexual

intercourse. Dewi Uma agreed to do it for her husband's recovery.

When Dewi Uma gave the milk to Siwa, Siwa asked her how she got the milk. Dewi Uma claimed that the milk was obtained by asking to a shepherd freely. Dewa Siwa was furious since he knew that the way Dewi Uma obtained the milk was by doing sexual intercourse with the shepherd. Siwa knew it because he was the one who transformed (*mesiluman*) into the shepherd to test his wife's loyalty.

When the fact was revealed, Dewa Siwa cursed Dewi Uma to become Dewi Durga and made her live in Gandamayu graveyard. Dewi Durga protested by using *pengiwe*. As the result, human being was attacked by plague. Siwa, Wisnu, and Brahma tried to solve the problem by the embodiment of *bang*, *telek*, and *barong* masks. This teamwork successfully neutralized the plague made by Dewi Durga (Segara, 2000). The embodiment of Siwa in the form of *barong* was positioned as the opponent and at the same time neutralized the negative aspect of Durga's supernatural power.

Tanting Mas as the disciple of Dewi Durga

The other mythology is the story of King Padelengan. Unce upon a time, the king had a twin son and daughter in the form of piglets (*kucit*). To eliminate the shame, both of them meditated in different places, which were in Pura Dalem for the male *kucit*, and a graveyard for the female *kucit*. Dewi Durga gave her *pengiwe* as her blessing to the female *kucit* and she transformed herself into a beautiful young girl named Tanting Mas. On the contrary, the male *kucit* which meditated in Pura Dalem received blessing from Dewa Siwa in the form of *panengen* and then he transformed into a man named Tanting Rat.

Both of them served in Dirah kingdom. Tanting Rat was promoted to become palace priest because he mastered *ajipenengen*. Then he changed his name into Mpu Paradah (Sri Mpu Baradah). While Tanting Mas, because of her beauty, became the consort of King Dirah. This marriage resulted

in the birth of a beautiful princess, Ratna Manggali. However, because King Dirah didn't respect Tanting Mas and her daughter, Tanting Mas was furious and then killed her husband by using *ajipengliakan*. Tanting Mas became a widow and appointed herself as the Queen with Walunateng Dirah as her title.

Although Ratna Manggali was very pretty, there was no man willing to marry her because they were afraid of her mother's *pengliakan*. Walunateng Dirah was very sad because she was worried that her daughter would be an old virgin. Walunateng Dirah wanted to marry her daughter to Erlangga, king of Kediri. Erlangga refused it because he was afraid to be *leaked*, which made Walunateng Dirah really angry. She released her anger by using *penleakan* that caused plague. Kediri kingdom was saved because of Mpu Paradah. Walunateng Dirah was killed while her daughter, Ratna Manggali, and her men were pardoned and were educated so they could walk on the good path of life (Subagia, 2014; Kardji, 1993: 20).

Leak as the representation of Durgaism

Both mythologies present the image that Dewi Uma, Siwa's *Sakti* after being cursed to transform into Durga and then lived in graveyard. Balinese people describe Durga as Rangda—having demonic facial feature like in Figure 1.

The description of *Rangda* like in picture 1 has religious-magical meanings as follow:

1. A tongue as long as the stomach represents a continuous hunger and always wants to kill and eat her prey.
2. A flaming tongue means the symbol of merciless magical burning. The opponents will definitely be burned magically which results in illness or even death.
3. Bulging and glaring eyes are the symbol of fury, cruelty, ruthlessness, selfishness, and believe that no one is able to surpass her ability.
4. Long fangs are the symbol of wild animalistic nature which is full of cruelty.
5. The flames above the head are the symbol of unrivalled supernatural power

lights (Ginarsa in Segara, 2000: 39).



Figure 1. Two models of *Rangda* as manifestation of Dewi Durga (Source: <https://images.search.yahoo.com/images/> downloaded on 12 June 2014).

Dewi Durga in the form of *Rangda* is worshiped in Pura Dalem—usually located near graveyard. For that reason, it is not surprising if Pura Dalem commonly decorated with *Rangda* statue and/or keeping *pratima* in the form of *rangda* as the symbol of worshiping for Dewi Durga. Pura Dalem as a place for worshiping Dewi Durga is believed as the center of *ajipengliakan*.

When the mythology and the characteristics of *rangda* are deconstructed, there is an ideology behind them, which is *durgaism* (Atmaja, 1993) or *rangdaism*. The ideology contains some ideas as follow:

1. *Durgaism* can result in woman's beautiful physical form to transform (*masiluman*) into mythical demon or others like pigs, apes, dogs, etc. The transformation is also related to the character. For example, from the character of a kind and gentle woman into mythical demon woman character which are hot-headed, killer, selfish, cruel, vicious, savage, ghostlike, fearful, etc.
2. This transformation is based on the magical ability included in *durgaism*, which is *pengeleakan*.
3. *Durgaism* which includes *pengeleakan* is *penengiwe*, a dark art or black magic because it has potential to harm other people.
4. *Durgaism* as *pengeleakan* can be obtained by worshiping Dewi Durga who is positioned as the queen of *leak*.
5. *Pengeleakan* can be inherited or taught to other people by *sisya* for example.
6. *Pengeleakan* as *penengiwe* is a magical technology for a woman to oppose man's hegemony and/or domination in life in the society. The opposition can be in the form of subduing a man by using witchcraft or by using *pengeleakan* destructively. For example, the widespread of plague which results in massive death.
7. *Pengeleakan* can be defeated by *penengen*, a pure magic or white magic. *Penengen* is the supernatural power of a man.
8. *Penengen* is not only able to defeat *penengiwa*, but also related to mercy to lead human being to leave the left path (*kiwa*, *adharna*, bad deeds), and direct them to the right path (*tengen*, *dharma*, good deeds).

If we pay attention to the idea above, it will ensure Fiske's opinion (2012: 207-216)-structuralism approach appears explicitly and implicitly that there is cognition structure which binary oppose *rwa bhineada*, they are:

Dewa : Dewi
 Purusa : Pradana
 Purus (phallus) : Baga (vagina)
 Man : Woman
 Siwa : Uma/Durga
 Barong: Rangda
 Tanting Rat : Tanting Mas
 Paradah : Walunateng Dirah
 Penengen : Penengiwe
 Ilmu kanan : Ilmu kiri
 Pure Art : Dark Art
 White Magic : Black Magic
 Leak Sari : Leak pamaron
 Leak petak (white) : Leak badeng (black)
 Maintain : Destruct
 High (Up) : Low (Down)
 Good : Bad
 Right : Wrong

When we pay close attention to the cognition structure which has *rwa bhineada* deconstructively, we can see that the basis is man's gender, which is phallus or *purus* which is opposed to woman's gender, which is vagina or *baga*. This differentiation is not a problem regarding in *tantraism*, as well as *rwa bhineda* as stated by Atmadja (2014), *Dewa* (God) and *Dewi* (Goddess) are a pair dialectically. *Dewa* is dysfunctional without his *sakti*, *Dewi*. For example, Siwa as the God of destruction can have a role because of his *sakti*, that is *Durga* (Surasmi, 2007: 43; Pekandelan and Yendra, 2010: 8).

Purusism Behind The Image of Woman = Leak

The ideal idea that man and woman or *dewa* and *dewi* are complementary is not in line with its social text. It is related to the existence of fact that binary opposition between man and woman which is being related to various forms of other binary oppositions, that are *penengen* and *penengiwe* and so on will lead to good-bad, right-wrong, or maintain-destruct judgment. Thus, the relationship between man and woman changes to become not neutral. Man as the symbol of *penengen* is associated with good and right which in result has potential to keep the harmony. In the contrary, woman as the symbol of *penengiwe* is associated with bad

and wrong which in result has potential to destroy the harmony.

The emergence of this idea is related to the act of dominant ideology in Balinese society, which is patriarchal ideology (Atmadja, 2010). This ideology has a very strong effect to Balinese society. It is proven in the fact that "...even God is managed in such manner to legitimate the authority of *purusa*" (Atmadja, 1993: 38). Patriarchal ideology is focused to male, considering that the word *purusa* which means man is changed into *purus* which means male genital (phallus = *purus*). Thus, patriarchal ideology in the context of Balinese society can be called *purus* or *purusism* ideology.

Purusism not only puts *purus* as the symbol to differentiate man and woman, but also puts *purus* as the symbol of manliness or manhood to subdue woman as the opponent—stereotyped as a weak being (Endraswara, 2011: 241-244). Man's virility is symbolized by erected or stand tall *purus*. Balinese call unerected *purus* as *purus layu*. *Purus layu* makes it not possible for a man to do sexual intercourse. Hence, erected *purus* is not only as a symbol to manhood, but also as a media to proof that he is a man that is able to subdue a woman (Umar, 2014: 78-79).

In connection with that, it is interesting to mention that Balinese language calls *purus* as *celak*. The word *celak* itself is also recognized in Javanese language which means close or *dekat*. The use of the word *celak* (close) for *purus* denotatively makes sense because the erected *purus* has function to bring something close, attach, or even unite man and woman when they are doing sexual intercourse. The equation of *purus* with *celak* is not only means libidinal closeness, but also closeness in the context of authority using *purus* as the asset.

By referring to Hayong (2013: xvi-xvii) that "... human being with his sexual nature which is revealed in mind and manner determines his existence". It is not enough with just in the form of doing *celak* to woman in private space, but it is also necessary in the public space. This effort needs ideology legitimacy, which is *purusism* ideology (ce-

lakism) which is related to *penengen* which means good and right. In the contrary, woman which is pictured to have *pengiwe* is a quality of bad and wrong. This idea legitimates man's authority over woman, with the pretext if man doesn't have control over woman, then woman will easily do cruelty and harm by using *durgaism*.

The general belief that *leak* is generally female makes Balinese women in the position of "problematic and ambiguous" (Faruk, 2012: 200). This means, woman in Bali can be positioned as subject and object. When she is positioned as subject, there is consequence. That is woman is easily trapped in *durgaism* which results in having bad natures that have potential to destroy human's life by using *pengliakan*. When she is positioned as object, woman, which is pictured as *durgaism*, makes implication that woman is positioned under the authority of man. If woman is not controlled, the life's harmony will be disturbed. The strength of *purusism* ideology influence makes Balinese woman to be positioned as object rather than subject. In connection with that, woman's positioning as *leak* essentially indicates that man makes woman as an object with the pretext to create harmony for human being.

Man's action, making woman as an object easily creates abuse. By referring to Baryadi (2012: 35) abuse is not only in the form of physical abuse, but also symbolic verbal abuse—using language or words, and symbolic nonverbal—using pictures, films, performance, etc. The labeling that woman can *nleak* is basically a symbolic verbal abuse. In the contrary, the description that woman who can *nleak* has the form of apes, *rangga*, *celuluk*, and so on is a symbolic nonverbal abuse. Both verbal abuses are probably taking place simultaneously. Verbal abuse can become psychological physical abuse like seclusion in society to woman who is believed can do *nleak*.

Pengleakan As A Weapon For Oppressed Woman

Even *pengleakan* is opposed because of its destructive nature, *pengleakan* still must

exist according to *rwa bhineda*—*penengen* is meaningless without *pengiwe*. Even *pengiwe* is useful for woman. That is as a tool to oppose oppression which is done by man (her husband). Kardji (1993: 20-21) explained that there are some *ajian* to subdue man, they are *pengasren*, *pengerger*, *pengasih-asih*, *penangkeb*, and *pengleakan*. These are the sequence of actions that start from magic which results in making man seeing woman to look beautiful, then make him interested, then falling in love, continues to woman subduing the husband. When everything has been done well, murder will be done to offer the spirit to Dewi Durga in the grave—called *aji wegid* or *pengleakan* (Kardi, 1993: 20-21).

The option of the action is understandable since the fact that oppressed woman either structurally or culturally must be given a tool to release herself. The tool is not in the form of physical object. It is because woman is not possible to use physical abuse to man. It is not only because physically man generally stronger than woman—man's body is strong, but also, no less importantly, because the application of *purusism* results in cultural barrier for woman to oppose man (her husband)—husband is superior and must be obeyed. Not to mention the existence of *Tri Hita Karana ideology* that is applied in Balinese society which compel human to develop harmonious relationship to each other—that includes woman must be harmonious with man. If the woman neglects it or in the contrary—man is obedient to woman, society will condemn her by gossiping that the wife is accused to be able to do *ngleak*. Thus, Balinese women are in a dilemmatic position. That is if they do not oppose, it will be difficult for them to get out of either cultural or structural abuse. In the contrary, if they oppose, disgrace or even physical abuse can be easily befall them.

In order to overcome this cultural dilemma, Balinese culture gives the way out. That is providing *pengiwe* including *penge-liakan* for woman. *Pengiwe* is a magical religious technology that is very important for woman to overcome abuse that they are experienced. It is because, however, the avail-

ability of *pengiwe* gives space for woman to subdue or even eliminate a man quietly using *ajian pengleakan*. By using *pengleakan*, the woman's purpose to avenge the abuse is accomplished well without causing disrupt to the harmony of social system. Regarding to that, it is no wonder that Atmaja (1993: 43) showed that it is acceptable for a woman to use *pengiwe* including *pengleakan* as long as it is a reasonable option after the one concerned received extreme political and cultural pressures.

Moreover, the use of *pengiwe*, in the point of view of human nature which has anger, becomes make sense the way it is. By referring to Haryatmoko (2014: 59), anger is a hidden power that operates in human being. A person who is angry can do anything unreasonably—anything to channel the anger. In this context, Balinese woman may become unreasonable in the context to release herself from anger or structural and cultural abuse which is done by man. The application of this practice is by using *pengleakan* with hope that the objective is fulfilled. However, the risk is still exist because the law of *karma phala* is still applied so that the chance for the woman to get the retaliation of her negative deeds for the thing that she has done is exist—the hell's door is open the way it is.

CONCLUSION

Balinese people's believe that leak is identical with woman is legitimated by mythology that closely related to Hindu. It is also strengthened by traditional stage performance like *Calon Arang*. Thereby, Balinese people see the mythology as something that is true so they accept it as cultural text, either cognitively or social practical in the society.

That belief is closely related to *rwa bhineda* which regards man as upper class groups who has right to have control over woman who is lower class. The idea is also related to *purusaism* ideology as dominant ideology in Balinese society. Man rules over woman not only because woman is in lower class, but also because woman has potential to disrupt harmony as the result of the existence of *durgaism*. However, woman

may use *durgaism* as a tool to release herself from oppression, either cultural or social, which is done by man. *Durgaism* in the form of *pengliakan* existentially is the tool for losers—woman- to oppose the person who has defeated her - who is man.

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