

**IDEOLOGY OF THE STORY *CUPAK KE SWARGAN*
BY PUPPET MASTER *I MADE JANGGA*:
IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL STUDIES**

I Nyoman Murtana¹, I Made Suastika²,
I Wayan Dibia³, I Nyoman Kutha Ratna²

¹Postgraduate Program, Udayana University

²Faculty of Letters, Udayana University

³Performing Arts Faculty, Indonesian Arts Institute, Denpasar

ABSTRACT

This dissertation contains the result of the research in the ideology of the story or *Lakon Cupak Ke Swargan* (hereon abbreviated to LCS) by the puppet master or *Dalang Jangga*, in a performance of *Wayang Cupak* at *Dukuh Pulu Tengah*, Mambang Village, East Selemadeg District. This story conveys a number of life values which are expressed ideologically through various events, including a power struggle, a love story, and a search for God. All the events are expressed aesthetically so that audience can enjoy the performance.

The target of the research is a performance of LCS by *Dalang Jangga* in a recording by *Aneka Record Tabanan*, which the writer transcribed in the form of a written text. The research focuses on the ideology contained in LCS. The type of data used was qualitative data about the ideology that was assumed to be found in this story. The qualitative data associated with the life of the late *Dalang Jangga*, in relation to his work in the field of shadow puppet theater, was based on the data collected in the field through in-depth interviews with a number of informants, using a snowball technique. A post-modern approach was applied through phenomenological, deconstructive, and critical paradigms. The analysis was carried out using an analytical descriptive technique based on an interpretation of the data collected. The focus of the analysis was directed by applying three theories, namely theories of ideology, function, and semiotics.

Three main topics were obtained from the analysis of the data, namely the form, function, and meaning of the ideology. By studying the ideological form, it was possible to gain a picture about the conservative, progressive, and pragmatic

ideology of *Dalang Jangga*. From the ideological function, the writer gained an idea of its social dynamic, educational, ritual, and aesthetic. A study of the ideological meaning provided an illustration of the symbolic, ethical, and aesthetic meanings.

Key words: ideology, *Cupak Ke Swargan*, and *Dalang I Made Jangga*.

INTRODUCTION

LCS by *Dalang Jangga* is a repertoire which conveys various life values, expressed through a number of events, including a power struggle, a love story, and a search for God. All these events are expressed aesthetically so that the audience can enjoy the performance. For this reason, the substance and essence of ideological form, function, and meaning in this story need to be studied as a reference for self-control and awareness of the true meaning of life.

The focus of the ideology which is the target of this research is the expression of communist ideology, the ideology of togetherness, and the ideology of divinity, expressed through the artistic ideology in LCS. All the ideology was obtained from six audio cassettes which the researcher transcribed in the form of a written text to be used as a document for studying the data about the ideology.

This research uses qualitative data about the ideology contained in the story, as discovered and collected from the results of the transcription. The data associated with the rumours of his involvement in the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was collected by means of observation through in-depth interviews using a snowball technique. This technique was chosen as it offered a greater guarantee of success in covering or collecting data which was kept secret by the community. Although the laws of subversion related to communism were abolished by the former President, Abdurrahman Wahid, many members of the community are still reluctant to talk about the political conflict surrounding the events of G'30'S/PKI. At that time, all the inhabitants of Dukuh Pulu Tengah became PKI sympathizers in order to retain political unity in the local community. They were trapped in the political unrest and had no knowledge of the basic ideology, direction, or goals of the party. As a result, 18 members of the community were killed, including *Dalang jangga*, as they were rumoured to be local leaders of PKI.

The questions which are hoped to be answered are (1) What ideology is contained in LCS? (2) What is the function of the ideology in LCS? (3) What is the meaning of the ideology in LCS?

This research applies a post-modern approach through phenomenology, deconstruction, and critical paradigms. According to Scott Lash (in Turner, 2003:

104-105, 107), postmodernism defends humanism, rebuilds historical dimensions, rejects the group of pioneers who place importance on convention, and is not self-referential but other-referential. Humanism is related to the ontological primacy of man before God. Postmodernism correlates with the art of humanistic beauty which replaces the aesthetical experiences of the modernists. Postmodernists have a desire for space which is friendly to its owner.

Phenomenology studies the symptoms which emerge as knowledge of essence (Wahana, 2004:32), which according to Nietzsche (in Sunardi, 2006:95) are relational. A phenomenological approach directs the focus and attention onto an object which consciously exists. All directions converge on the object; on something which is known, seen, loved, and hated. The world is created and can be understood through consciousness (Wahana, 2004:32-36). According to Alfred Schultz (in Maliki, 2004:233-34), the man creates his own world through an understanding of the continuity of experiences which the senses receive. This encourages the consciousness to act for all meaningful actions.

According to Barbara Johnson, (in Audifax, 2007:46), deconstruction has almost the same meaning as “analysis,” which means breaking down, disentangling and revealing. Deconstruction is a strategy for breaking down a structure and its field of meaning. Derrida used deconstruction to show the relevance of world views about logocentrism, phallogocentrism, and binary opposition (Barker, 2005: 98-103). The aim of a deconstructional study is to defend or fight for a culture which is marginalized as one of “the others,” or a culture which is hegemonized.

Critical paradigms position knowledge on active not static construction, and are not free from values, and the community is historically marked. Critical paradigms encourage social but not agitative change. The direction of change is left up to the community. Critical paradigms regard domination to be structurally characterized. The community is influenced by larger institutions in the field of politics, economy, culture, discourse, gender, and race. The structure is revealed to provide an understanding of the global roots and the rationale of an incidence of suppression. Critical paradigms break false awareness, since it is believed that human power, whether individual or collective, can change society. Critical paradigms understand social structure in order to change their social conditions.

Critical social paradigms believe that man is responsible for his own freedom and for preventing the suppression of others. For this reason, revolutionary pragmatism is rejected by another group of elite leaders who act as dictators over the proletariat (Agger, 2006:7-10).

The data was analysed using an analytical descriptive technique. In order to direct the focus of the analysis, three theories were applied, namely theories of ideology, function, and semiotics. According to Althusser (2006:X), ideology is a tool through which ideas can be accepted by society as something normal and natural. Ideology questions the symbols used to create, preserve, support, develop, and maintain asymmetrical power system relations. Ideology becomes a 'social adhesive' by binding its members collectively so as to apply certain values and norms. An analysis of the forms of ideological symbols means analysing the forms of the relation used and controlled in a particular social and historical context. This theoretical reformulation avoids the tendency to view ideology simply as a power relation in a modern country, but rather views it in other life relation systems, such as in daily life. However, it focuses not only on small matters which ignore the characteristics and limit of broader structures (Thompson, 2004:17-22). Ideology is adopted to explain, justify, and legitimize the actions and goals of a person (Maliki, 2004:20).

The theory of function introduced by Merton (in Kaplan & Robert A Manners, 2002:79) concerns the difference between manifest function and latent function in a cultural act or element. Manifest function is the objective consequences which provide a contribution to the adaptation of a system that is desired and known by those who are a part of the system. On the contrary, latent function is the objective consequences of a culture which are not desired or known by members of the community.

Semiotics is a scientific discipline which investigates all the different forms of communication that occur using signs and are based on sign systems (codes). The key concept of semiotics, the general science of signs, is known as semiosis. Morris (in Seegers, 2000:4-5) defines semiosis as a sign process, that is a process in which something is a sign for a number of organisms. Umberto Eco (in Piliang, 2003:44-46) defines semiotics as a discipline which studies everything

that can be used to lie. In Eco's theory of untruth, the theory of truth is implicit, just as the day is implicit in the word night.

ANALYSIS

The research in the ideology of LCS by *Dalang Jangga* was prompted by a rumour that was going around outside the village which said that Jangga was a leading figure and a voice for PKI. This was also the reason for Jangga's murder in 1965. Nevertheless, until the end of this research, there was no definite information regarding his active involvement as a PKI leader, since the members of the Pulu Tengah community refused to verify this rumour.

Whether or not the rumours are true, there is a strong indication of provocative communist ideology presented by *Dalang Jangga* in LCS: (1) the poverty of the peasants, bringing together the proletariat, (2) the low wages of labourers, (3) the competition to win the princess and the crown of Kediri from the hands of *Cupak*, which can be interpreted as a war against the capitalist bourgeoisie, (4) the belief that the president must originate from the common people so as to be able to enforce a true sense of justice and equality for all, (5) the killing of the mythical *Garuda* bird, which signifies an attempt to change the *Garuda Pancasila*—the symbol and basic principles of the Republic of Indonesia, and (6) the fact that if its son became president, Pan Bekung would be ready to become a party leader and I Bekeng would be ready to become a member of local government (*Sedahan*).

These six points included by *Dalang Jangga* in LCS cannot be used as grounds for accusing him of being a leading figure in PKI, as it could be that he was simply intending to deride or make fun of communists. The Balinese community considers puppet master to be *guru loka*, or moderate spiritual teachers, because their artistic skills and cultural knowledge which are passed on to the community through shadow puppet performances are not only available to certain groups but to the entire community. Anyone can pay for a puppet master to give a performance of *Wayang Cupak* for a variety of different needs.

The performance of LCS by *Dalang Jangga* contains conservative, progressive, and pragmatic ideology. The conservative ideology is evident in the use of the elements of Balinese culture to form a unit of expression in the per-

formance of *Wayang Cupak*, as a medium for spreading ideology. The contents of the performance are a mixture of the day to day events described in LCS and communist ideology so that the performance can be said to be progressive in nature. The actual and contextual content of the performance was the reason for *Dalang Jangga's* popularity and meant that he could earn a living from this profession. Hence, the pragmatic value of the shadow puppet performance becomes clear.

The ideological function of LCS reflects the presense of an educational, social dynamic, ritual, and aesthetical function. The educational function teaches the audience to be honest and to avoid bad deeds, and to strive hard to move forward and increase the standars and dignity of mankind.

The social dynamic function describes Jangga's cultural policies that local culture needs to be understood and preserved in anticipation of the strong influence of outside changes such as the influence of international communist ideology. This ideology opens up and broadens the worldview of the local community about politics but in practice destroys the social system in Indonesia.

The ritual function of the performance of *Wayang Cupak* is its use to accompany *Dewa yadnya*, *Manusa yadnya*, or *Pitra yadnya* ceremonies. This function can strengthen the religious ideology of the Balinese community.

The aesthetical function of LCS emphasizes aspects of democracy which in a practical way inspire the class struggle to strive for a better way of life in socio-economic, socio-political, and socio-religious areas. This function increases the awareness of the commuity to explore new aesthetical experiences, develop their imagination and passion for life, and to make their lives more meaningful.

The iedological meaning of LCS contains symbolic, ethical, and aesthetical meanings, and understanding of physioplastic dimensions (all stage equipment has a symbolic meaning) which are combined with the ideoplastic dimensions, such as social, political, religious, and economic events which bring the story in touch with social reality.

The ethical meaning describes the moral struggle which is reflected in the actions of the people in the story. Cupak's acts of sabotaging *Raden Galuh Laksmi* and attempting to kill *Grantang* are clearly immoral, even criminal. On the other

hand, *Grantang*'s participation can be justified from a logical point of view since it is carried out in public. However, it is morally unacceptable since *Grantang* fights against his own brother with the goal of winning a woman and gaining power. *Grantang*'s actions give the impression of political revenge.

Cupak's act of freeing the Kingdom of Obagosi by killing *Garuda* is regarded as an attempt to change the symbol and basic principles of the Republic of Indonesia, that is *Garuda Pancasila*. Only the context of time leads to such a claim. When the time context passes, the accusation disappears. When *Cupak* goes into a hole in the ground to shelter, it symbolizes his union with nature. *Garuda*, the symbol of a spirit which must be controlled and directed in order to attain unity with God, is the source of goodness in the world. This is the implementation of the concept of a reciprocal relationship between man, nature, and God (*Tri Hita Karana*), as a symbol of resistance against modernization, which searches for enlightenment by exploring the power and high technology which cause destruction to nature.

The aesthetical meaning is the quiver of emotion which is aroused by the environment and artistic situation when watching a work of art. From the performance may come feelings of love, humour, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, surprise, astonishment, awe/respect, and peace, which in the cultural context can be defined as the spirit of life to build the continuity of civilization.

FINDINGS

This research resulted in six different findings: (1) *Dalang Jangga*, who was originally an 'genuine' village artist, was influenced by the political community to express the political ideology of the day in his shadow puppet performances. (2) The expression of the proletariat in LCS as performance by *Jangga* portrays a struggle for freedom from hegemony. This struggle was the people's resistance to the capitalist bourgeoisie, to gain a sense of justice and "equality for all." The story of the royal kingdoms—of Kediri and Obagosi—is used as a background of time and space to show the prominent role of the people. (3) The poverty, use of a cudgel, suggested that the president originates from the common people, and the killing of *Garuda* are all symbols of resistance against the ruler and the state. (4) *Dalang Jangga* transforms the figure of *Cupak* meditating into *Cupak*'s journey to

heaven to meet *Batara Brahma*. Heaven is not associated with death rather symbolizes the search for God. (5) The strength of *Tri Hita Karana* (the reciprocal relationship between man, nature, and God) is a rejection of actions in science and sophisticated technology which cause destruction to nature. (6) The aesthetics of *Dalang Jangga*, which are founded on the democratic expression “from the people for the people,” display the ideology of togetherness of the lower class, to increase and strengthen their sense of social solidarity.

CLOSING

It is hoped that this dissertation will be of benefit to many artists, especially puppet master, and provide information on the traditional methods of developing the dramatic structure and actuality of a story. In addition, it is hoped that this dissertation will motivate other researchers to study various kinds of stories used in shadow puppet theatre which are useful to be passed down to the young generation in Bali, Indonesia, and the rest of the world, so that they can understand the story of Balinese shadow puppet theatre through its various texts and contexts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agger, Ben. 2006. *Teori Sosial Kritis: Kritik, Penerapan dan Implikasinya*. Penerjemah: Nurhadi. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana.
- Audifax. 2007 *Semiotika Tuhan: Tafsir atas Pembacaan Manusia terhadap Tuhan*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Pinus.
- Maliki, Zainuddin. 2004. *Narasi Agung: Tiga Teori Sosial Hegemonik*. Surabaya: Lembaga Pengkajian Agama dan Masyarakat.
- Piliang, Yasraf Amir. 2003. *Hipersemiotika: Tafsir Cultural Studies Atas Matinya Makna*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Segers, Rien T. 2000. *Evaluasi Teks Sastra*. Alih Bahasa: Suminto A. Suyuti. Yogyakarta: Adicita.
- Thompson, John B. 2006. *Kritik Ideologi Global: Teori Sosial Kritis tentang Relasi Ideologi dan komunikasi Massa*. Diterjemahkan oleh Haqul Yaqin. Yogyakarta: IRGiSoD.
- Barker, Chris. 2005. *Cultural Studies: Teori dan Praktik*. Bandung: Bentang
- Sunardi, St. 2006. *Nietzsche*. Yogyakarta: LkiS.

Wahana, Paulus. 2004. *Nilai Etika Aksiologis Max Scheler*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

The writer would like to thank the Director of Postgraduate Studies at Udayana University Denpasar, Prof. Dr. dr. A.A. Raka Sudewi, Sp., S. (K); Vice Director I Prof. Dr. I Made Budiassa, M.A. , dan Vice Director II, Dr. Ir. Budi Susrasa, M.S. for their reception, facilities, and all the help and support provided.

Thanks are also extended to Prof. Dr. I Made Suastika, S.U., and Prof. Dr. I Nyoman Kutha Ratna, S.U. the Head and Secretary of the Doctorate Program of Culture Studies, for all their endless guidance, direction, attention, and motivation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my supervisor, Prof. Dr, I Made Suastika, S.U., co-supervisor I, Prof. Dr. I Wayan Dibia, SST, M.A., and co-supervisor II, Prof. Dr. I Nyoman Kutha Ratna, S.U., for all the time they willingly gave, and their input, guidance, motivation, and patience in supervising the writing of this dissertation until its completion.