

Reading of Symbols and Feminism in Balinese Stories based on Tajen

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Abstract: *This study aims to describe symbols and feminism in Balinese folklore based on Tajen. The object of the study is the story of I Bagus Diarsa and Tuung Kuning. Data were collected by reading both stories carefully and in depth and then recording in detail the symbols and representations of women contained in both stories. Data were analyzed using a semiotic approach, a feminist approach, hermeneutics, and verstehen. The results of the study are that the stories of Bagus Diarsa and Tuung Kuning contain many symbols. From the symbols used in the story, they can be grouped into six groups of symbols, namely the name/designation symbol group, the nature symbol group, the food symbol group, the animal symbol group, the job symbol group, and the travel symbol group. This rich symbol causes the story to contain meaningful values. Women in the story have played a role in the public sector, in addition to the domestic sector. In the story of I Bagus Diarsa, there is an understanding of gender equality, while in the story of Tuung Kuning, patriarchy is still thick and strong; women are only in the domestic sphere. There is women's agency, but it is still weak because it is done secretly, and there has been women's empowerment, but it has not been appreciated. The results of the study are presented descriptively with inductive - deductive techniques.*

Keywords: symbols, Feminism, Balinese stories

1. Introduction

Bali has long been known internationally. Bali is known for its customs and culture. One of the cultural products of the Balinese people is literary works. Many Balinese literary works are noble. Balinese literary works are full of moral messages conveyed in language that is simple, easy to understand, and easy to absorb. The messages contained in Balinese literary works contain local wisdom that can shape strong character in the generation that inherits it.

Folklore is a narrative that is passed down from generation to generation in a particular community or cultural group. These stories are often delivered orally and change over time, but the core message and values remain intact. Folklore contains values such as moral values, ethical values, and religious values and beliefs, and is a reflection of the social structure of a society. Folklore also teaches about goodness, truth, and justice and reflects the ethics or norms that apply in a society. In addition, folklore can also show the gender roles expected of men and women in society.

Every literary work contains symbols that certainly have certain meanings according to the location or area where the story was created. A symbol is an emblem (<https://kbbi.web.id/symbol>). A symbol is an object that represents an idea to provide a completely different meaning that is much deeper and more significant (Tika Sujata in <https://kumparan.com/pengertian-dan-istilah-mengenal-arti-simbol-jenis-dan-fungsinya-209W17KbLX9/1>). A symbol is a sign or image that represents a concept, object, or idea. Symbols can have varying meanings and significance depending on the context and culture that uses them. Symbols show that language has no natural relationship between the signifier and the signified. This relationship is arbitrary. The meaning of the sign is determined by convention (Karmini, 2011: 112).

Folklore is rich in values that can form a strong character in a person. The values contained in folk literature or traditional

literature are very important to be inherited from an early age to the next generation. Inheritance can be done in a conventional way or in a modern way using modern technological tools. Folklore that is full of interesting values to be studied more deeply through the reading of symbols and feminism. The stories that are the objects of research are the stories of I Bagus Diarsa and Tuung Kuning. The reading of symbols and feminism is implemented in traditional works based on Tajen. Both stories are set against the background of Tajen and feminism. The symbols and reflections of gender roles in the traditional works are discussed in depth using the semiotic and feminist approaches. Actually, there have been many works that discuss literary works with the semiotic and feminist approaches. There are also many articles discussing Tajen. However, those that discuss symbols and feminism in traditional Balinese literature based on Tajen are not many. Based on the explanation above, the problem can be formulated, namely how is the reading of symbols and feminism in traditional Balinese stories based on Tajen? Thus, the purpose of this study is to describe the symbols and feminism in Balinese folklore based on Tajen. It should be noted here that the concept of Tajen is a tradition of cockfighting gambling in Bali that is carried out by attaching spurs, which are small knives, to the feet of two roosters that are pitted against each other as a weapon to kill their opponents. There are three types of Tajen, namely 1) Tajen in the tabuh rah ritual, which is usually held in connection with religious ceremonies; 2) Tajen terang, namely Tajen, which is deliberately held by traditional villages to raise funds; 3) Tajen branangan, which is not preceded by permission from the traditional village head and is solely oriented towards gambling (Diari, 2018).

To realize the objectives of this study, the semiotic theory and feminist theory are used. Semiotics is the science that studies signs and symbols and how they create meaning. The figures who developed semiotics are Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Ferdinand de Saussure is a Swiss linguist who emphasizes the sign system in language. He

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distinguishes between *langue* (language system) and *parole* (individual speech). Saussure also introduced the semiotic concept of signifiers and signifieds. The signifier is the formal form that marks something called the signified, while the signified is something that is marked by the signifier, namely its meaning. For example, a mother is a signifier. The signified is the person who gave birth to us (Karmini, 2011: 111 - 112). Another developer is Charles Sanders Peirce, an American philosopher who developed a theory about three types of signs, namely icons, indexes, and symbols (Karmini, 2011: 112). An icon is a sign that has a physical resemblance to the object it represents (for example, a photo). An index is a sign that has a causal relationship or physical proximity to the object it represents (for example, smoke as a sign of fire). A symbol is a sign whose meaning is based on convention or mutual agreement (for example, a flag as a symbol of a country). Roland Barthes, as a successor to Saussure's thinking, emphasized the interaction between text and the personal and cultural experiences of its users, the interaction between conventions in the text and the conventions experienced and expected by its users. Barthes' operational concept of thought is known as the Order of Signification. In simple terms, Barthes' semiotic study can be explained through the following example. Coca - Cola is a soda drink produced by PT. Coca - Cola Company, with a brownish color and a red can. This example contains a denotative meaning, namely the real meaning, or a phenomenon that is visible to the five senses, or can also be called a basic description. Other meanings will emerge if viewed from the cultural construction so that there is a shift but it remains attached to the symbol or sign. An example is Coca - Cola, which is a drink that is identical to modern culture, where Coca - Cola is one of the modern and capitalist products. By consuming Coca - Cola, an individual will appear modern and can be said to have popular cultural thinking. The two aspects of Barthes' study above are the main studies in researching semiotics. Then Barthes also includes the myth aspect, namely where, when the connotation aspect becomes a popular thought in society, then a myth has been formed about the sign (Kriyantono, 2007: 268).

In general, feminism is always associated with the struggle of women. Women are subordinated so that they have functions, roles, and positions that are stereotypically relatively low (Wahono et al., 2015). Feminism reveals the important values of individual women and the experiences they have experienced, as well as the struggles they have undertaken (Suhendra et al.2023). The goal of feminism is to end male domination by destroying cultural structures, all laws, and rules that place women as invisible and worthless victims (Sulistyaniningsih, 2022).

2. Research Method

The data source for this research is a Balinese folk/traditional story entitled *Bagus Diarsa* and *Ni Tuwung Kuning*, which is based on *tajen*. Analysis was carried out on the text content (content analysis) of both stories. The focus of this research is on the interpretation of the meaning and symbols in both stories. The meaning and message of the object are a study of cultural results (Ratna, 2019). Likewise, specific situations in the story experienced by certain people or social groups are also used as objects related to the research objectives (Alsa,

2004). Because of that, this research is a type of qualitative research. Data were collected by reading both stories carefully and in depth and then recording in detail the symbols and representations of women contained in both stories. Faisal (2003: 256) states that the data collected needs to be reduced and then "displayed" into appropriate patterns, categories, focuses, or themes, so that in the end it can be concluded. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using a semiotic approach, a feminist approach, hermeneutics, and *verstehen*. The Semiotic approach used is in accordance with the opinions of Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, and Roland Barthes. Feminism is used not as a separate method, but only as a lens or perspective used in the analysis of gender representation related to the patriarchal power structure. Hermeneutics or interpretive or interpretation methods are ways of understanding by interpreting life between the essence of fiction and reality (Moleong, 1996: 14). According to Betti, interpretation is needed to understand the forms, to reveal the messages conveyed, while *verstehen* the meaning is to understand it deeply (Bleicher, 2003: 35). This interpretation method focuses on understanding the meaning of symbols and the role of women behind the text. The results of the study are presented descriptively with inductive - deductive techniques.

3. Results and Discussion

Synopsis of the Story of I Bagus Diarsa

The story of *I Bagus Diarsa* is a story about a gambler (*bebotoh*) of cockfighting (*Tajen*), named *I Bagus Diarsa*, but he was very poor. Every day he fought cocks, but never bet much and always lost.

One time, he gambled (*metajen*) outside the castle walls. He brought only four hundred (*samas*) and lost only one hundred. Then *I Bagus Diarsa* bought rice. While eating, an old man came, smelling bad because of ulcers and asked *I Bagus Diarsa* for rice. People covered their noses. After eating, the old man asked to stay at *I Bagus Diarsa's* house and was allowed. The family chatted about *tajen*, about always losing, about chickens, and about children. The old man suggested that *I Bagus Diarsa*, could go to his hut and would be given a chicken. The old man asked that his son be allowed to stay in his hut because he was old, so he could help him, which was also permitted by *I Bagus Diarsa*. Before going home, the old man asked for three chicken feathers and had to put them in *Sanggih Pengijeng*. When you go to the hut, bring the chicken feathers. After the conversation was over, they slept, but the old man *Putu* about goats, cows, chickens, little ducks, etc. Everything the old man had would be given to *Putu* so that the child was so happy that he fell asleep soundly.

Early the next morning, the old man invited the little boy (*Putu*) to go to his house. But before that, *Putu* was told to say goodbye to his parents, and *Bagus Diarsa* advised his son not to be naughty and always obey the old man. They set off. The journey was non - stop, entering the forest, climbing mountains, and descending into ravines without feeling tired and finally arriving at the top of the mountain. There he stopped for a while; the old man transformed into *Betara Siwa*, then was picked up by the *Resigana*, who were ordered to *ngelukat* (self - cleansing, which of course was accompanied by a mantra) *Putu* (the little boy) so that he

could be invited to Heaven. Then, they set off for Heaven. After arriving at Siwaloka, Putu was amazed to see the beauty of the palace/purse whose walls were all gold and whose stones were diamonds.

I Bagus Diarsa and his wife never regretted that their son was invited by someone. I Bagus Diarsa continued to fight every day and always lost. The king's order for cockfighting was getting closer. I Bagus Diarsa was confused because he did not have a chicken. If he did not bring a chicken, he would be fined or tortured. He remembered the old man who invited his son. His wife was told to prepare lekesan (betel filled with lime, gambir, areca nut, and tobacco) because I Bagus Diarsa was going to the old man's house. Very early in the morning, I Bagus Diarsa left with chicken feathers, according to the old man's message. His journey went up the mountain, down the ravine, and into the middle of the forest by following the chicken feathers that continued to fly. If I Bagus Diarsa was tired and stopped, the chicken feathers would also stop, and when he felt fresh, the chicken feathers would fly again, and he continued to follow them. I Bagus Diarsa arrived at a beautiful palace, and in front of it was a large banyan tree. The chicken feathers went straight into the palace, while I Bagus Diarsa sat under the banyan tree.

Betara Siwa knew of I Bagus Diarsa's arrival because the chicken feather had entered the palace. Then he told Putu to pick up his father outside the palace. The father and son met, and the son told him that the old man was Betara Siwa. They then faced Betara Siwa. After chatting for a while, I Bagus Diarsa was told to eat. The rice and side dishes he received were all little, but every time I Bagus Diarsa ate the rice, strangely the rice was not finished; eating a mouthful, another mouthful appeared. After being full, he faced him again. Betara Siwa told I Bagus Diarsa to choose a chicken. After the choice was made, I Bagus Diarsa conveyed his choice. After facing him for a long time, then I Bagus Diarsa asked permission, but before going home, he was told to pick flowers in Mrajan which were used for betting. Betara Siwa advised I Bagus Diarsa when he went home, his path must be straight to the West, with no twists and turns.

In an instant, I Bagus Diarsa had arrived home, his wife was very happy. I Bagus Diarsa told his son and what he saw in the palace of Betara Siwa to his wife.

Long story short, Tajen was held soon. Many people had gathered, including I Bagus Diarsa. Kelian and Perbekel had checked who should be fined and who should not be fined. Then there was an announcement that Tajen would begin; everyone had brought out their chickens, including I Bagus Diarsa. I Bagus Diarsa's chicken always lost when it was pushed to other chickens. The King knew about it. The King called I Bagus Diarsa to fight his chickens, but his chickens only ran here and there. I Bagus Diarsa tried to make his chicken aggressive, and finally his chicken was aggressive. Next, his chicken was given spurs; the King's chicken was also given spurs. The King asked how much the bet was, I Bagus Diarsa took the flower given by Betara Siwa; it turned out that the flower turned into gold, gems, etc. He said this was all a bet on my chicken. The King was also ready. The chickens had not yet fought, because I Bagus Diarsa's chicken only ran here and there and then made a sound. After being

put down, the chicken flew looking for the King until the King died from being hit by the spurs. I Bagus Diarsa felt that he would be ganged up on by the people, so he ran home and took a bath and then dressed in white. Many eagles had been flying above I Bagus Diarsa's house, but suddenly his chicken came to protect I Bagus Diarsa and turned into a garuda bird. I Bagus Diarsa sat on the garuda bird, and the eagles were afraid and respected the garuda bird.

I Bagus Diarsa, became the new king and was very loved by his people. His son, who was in Siwaloka, was told to go home by Betara Siwa because his father had lived happily and had become king. When there was a meeting, I Wiracita, son of I Bagus Diarsa, came and sat in the middle of the meeting. The people at the meeting increasingly admired and loved the new king.

Synopsis of the Story of Tuung Kuning

There was a gambler (bebotoh) named I Puduk. He did not like to work; his job was only gambling (Tajen). Initially he only had two chickens, but over time there were hundreds, so that his wife had trouble helping to find grass, clean up the dirt, and was heavily pregnant again. I Puduk was going to gamble in Denbukit; it was not certain when he would return. He told his wife if she gave birth to a boy, he must be well cared for, and if she had a girl, she should be killed and fed to his chickens. After a few days of I Puduk's absence, his daughter was born. I Puduk's wife was confused remembering I Puduk's message, to kill her daughter and have her be fed to his chickens. Then her child was entrusted to her grandmother. Every day she went to her mother's house to give her porridge and breastfeed her child, who was named Ni Tuung Kuning. After growing up, Tuung Kuning was very diligent and good at weaving.

One day I Puduk came home from gambling and ran out of money because he lost. After knowing that his child was a girl from the sound of his chicken, I Puduk prepared to kill his child. His wife was told to call Tuung Kuning at his grandmother's house. Tuung Kuning always delayed with the excuse of finishing weaving cloth. Then he was called again, delayed again with the excuse of still getting dressed, and finally the third call, Tuung Kuning came home dressed all in white. Before going home, Tuung Kuning said goodbye to his grandmother and said that he would die before her.

Arriving home, he was immediately taken by his father and taken to the forest to be killed. I Puduk did not listen to the advice of his parents and his in-laws. Arriving in the forest, Tuung Kuning was about to be killed. Before being killed, an angel came and took Tuung Kuning and replaced him with a banana stem. The banana stem was cut into pieces by I Puduk and taken home and fed to his chickens. Tuung Kuning was taken to heaven by the angel and taught good sewing and weaving. I Puduk was getting older, sickly; no one served him, and no one cared about him. His parents were distant, his wife was also distant, he had no descendants, and God was also far away. Only then did he regret killing his son.

Meaning of Symbols in the Story of I Bagus Diarsa and the Story of Tuung Kuning

It has been explained above that the semiotic approach was used for symbol analysis. From the results of the analysis, the symbols described below were found.

1) Name/Term Symbol

Lexically, Balinese names have the meaning of hope and the meaning of memories, while contextually, these names have their own meanings according to the interpretation of the person giving the name (Bandana, 2015).

I/Ni: In Balinese culture, "I" is generally used for men, while "Ni" is for women. So, the "I" in "I Bagus Diarsa" indicates that the name is for a man. Bagus: The word "Bagus" in Indonesian and Balinese means "good", "handsome", "beautiful", or "good quality". In the context of a name, "Bagus" often contains the hope that the child will grow up to be a good person, attractive, and have a positive character. Diarsa. The word "Diarsa" probably comes from Sanskrit or Old Javanese. While the exact meaning is difficult to determine without more specific context, some possible interpretations are Di, possibly related to the prefix "di - " which in Indonesian can mean "on", "in", or indicate existence. Arsa. Possibly related to the word "arsa" which in Old Javanese means "desire", "will", or "ideal". Thus, "I Bagus Diarsa" can be generally interpreted as a man who is expected to have good qualities and have noble desires or ideals. I/Ni: As explained earlier, "Ni" indicates that this name is for a girl. Tuung. The word "Tuung" in Balinese means "eggplant" (vegetable). The use of names taken from the names of plants or nature is common in various cultures and can have various symbolic meanings, such as fertility, life, or a connection to nature. Yellow. The word "Kuning" refers to the color yellow. In many cultures, the color yellow is often associated with positive things such as brightness, happiness, wisdom, or nobility. So, "Ni Tuung Kuning" can be interpreted as a woman who is associated with eggplant and the color yellow. Interpretation of its symbolic meaning can be fertility and life, brightness and happiness, Relation to Nature, which can indicate closeness or respect for nature. The color yellow can symbolize the hope that the child will have a bright and happy life. Relation to Nature: This name also.

King as a symbol:

- Power and leadership: The king symbolizes supreme power, leadership, and authority.
- Justice and Wisdom: An ideal king also symbolizes justice, wisdom, and protection for his people.
- Relation to the Gods: In some cultures, the king is considered a representative of the gods on earth or has divine legitimacy.

People as a symbol:

- Society and Community: People symbolize society as a whole, community, and important elements in a kingdom or country.
- Strength and Unity: People who are united are a strength for a kingdom or country.
- Dependence and Obedience: People are dependent on the king as a leader and are expected to obey the rules that apply.

Sore and Smelly Parents as a symbol:

- Weakness and Limitations: Sore and smelly parents symbolize weakness, physical limitations, and human fragility.
- Wisdom and Experience: On the other hand, parents also symbolize wisdom, life experience, and inherited knowledge.
- Attention and Affection: This symbol reminds us of the importance of giving attention and affection to parents.

Angels as a symbol:

- Beauty and Beauty: Angels symbolize beauty, beauty, and perfection.
- Purity and Purity: Angels also symbolize purity, purity, and goodness.
- Luck and Blessings: In some mythologies, angels are associated with luck and blessings.

Mother as a symbol:

- Affection and Sacrifice: Mother symbolizes sincere affection, sacrifice, and protection.
- Life and Growth: Mother also symbolizes life, growth, and maintenance.
- Strength and Fortitude: Mother is often depicted as a strong and steadfast figure in the face of various difficulties.

Grandmother as a symbol:

- Wisdom and Experience: Grandmother symbolizes wisdom, long life experience, and inherited knowledge.
- Affection and Attention: Grandmother also gives affection and attention to her grandchildren.
- Guardian of Tradition and Values: Grandmother is often the guardian of family or community traditions and values.
- Chicken Can Talk Like Human: The ability of chicken to talk can also symbolize wisdom hidden in things that seem simple or trivial.

"I won 15 times" and "I won 11 times": Symbolizes pride, competition, and material achievement.

"I defeated the king": Symbolizes ambition, arrogance, and the desire to go beyond the limits that should be. Defeating the king can be interpreted as rebellion or rejection of legitimate authority.

"I was given the placenta": The placenta is usually considered something dirty or a remnant of birth. This statement shows humility, simplicity, and acceptance of oneself as is.

The child is entrusted to his grandmother": Shows the importance of the role of the family, especially the grandmother, in raising and educating children. It also emphasizes traditional values about family responsibility and the inheritance of noble values.

Bagus Diarsa Tells His Wife About What He Saw at Betara Siwa's Palace: This context is important because it shows that Bagus Diarsa's experiences and observations at Betara Siwa's palace have a message that needs to be shared and reflected upon together. Betara Siwa as one of the highest gods in Hinduism symbolizes wisdom, power, and transformation.

Therefore, the experience at Betara Siwa's palace most likely contains important spiritual or moral lessons.

2) Natural Symbols

Wind as a symbol:

- Change: Wind is often associated with change. In the story, wind can symbolize the changes that occur in Bagus Diarsa's life.
- Freedom: Wind can also be a symbol of freedom.

Trees as symbols:

a) *Life and Growth:*

- Life Cycle: Trees experience a life cycle similar to humans, from small seeds to large trees and finally dying. This symbolizes the cycle of life, death, and rebirth.
- Growth and Development: The upward growth of a tree symbolizes personal growth, spiritual development, and the achievement of goals.
- Strength and Resilience: A sturdy, well - rooted tree symbolizes strength, resilience, and the ability to survive in the face of adversity.

b) *The Relationship between Earth and Sky:*

- Roots and Earth: The roots of a tree embedded in the ground symbolize the relationship with the earth, foundation, and origin.
- Trunk and Branches: The towering trunk of a tree and its spreading branches symbolize the relationship with the sky, spirituality, and connection with the universe.
- World Connector: Trees are often seen as connecting the lower world (roots), the middle world (trunk), and the upper world (branches).

c) *Symbols in Culture and Religion:*

- Tree of Life: In many cultures and religions, trees are seen as a symbol of life, fertility, and eternity.
- Family and Lineage: Trees with many branches are often used to symbolize family and lineage, depicting the connection between generations.
- Wisdom and Knowledge: Old, large trees are often associated with wisdom, knowledge, and experience.
- Protection and Shelter: Trees provide shade and protection, thus symbolizing a sense of security and comfort.

d) *Symbols in Specific Contexts:*

- Pancasila (Banyan Tree): In Pancasila, the banyan tree symbolizes the Unity of Indonesia, depicting the strong and sturdy Indonesian nation, a place of refuge for all Indonesian people.
- Dreams: In dreams, trees can have the meaning of personal growth, strength, or relationships with family.
- Mountains as symbols:
- Strength and Eternity: Mountains often symbolize strength, steadfastness, and eternity because of their large size and solidity.
- Spirituality and Transcendence: In many cultures, mountains are considered sacred places, places where gods reside, or places to achieve spiritual enlightenment.

- Challenges and Achievements: Climbing a mountain symbolizes challenges to be overcome and the achievement of goals.
- Nature and Beauty: Mountains also symbolize the beauty of nature and the majesty of God's creation.

The Banyan Tree as symbols:

- Life and Eternity: The banyan tree with its spreading roots symbolizes continuous life, growth, and eternity.
- Protection and Protection: The lush leaves and branches provide protection and protection.
- Unity and Unity: Its strong, intertwined roots symbolize unity and oneness. In Indonesia, the banyan tree is the symbol of the third principle of Pancasila.

Flowers as symbols:

- Beauty and Beauty: Flowers generally symbolize beauty, beauty, and fragrance.
- Love and Affection: Flowers are often used as an expression of love, affection, and appreciation.
- Life and Death: Flowers also symbolize the cycle of life, from bud to bloom and wither.
- Happiness and Joy: Flowers are often associated with happiness and joy.

Chicken Feathers as a symbol:

- Lightness and Freedom: The lightness of chicken feathers symbolizes lightness, freedom, and the ability to fly.
- Beauty and Adornment: The various colors and textures of chicken feathers can symbolize beauty and adoration.
- Banana Tree as a symbol:
- Fertility and Growth: The fast - growing and fruit - bearing banana tree symbolizes fertility, growth, and regeneration.
- Benefits and Uses: All parts of the banana tree can be used, symbolizing its versatile benefits and uses.
- Life Cycle: From budding to fruiting and death, the banana tree symbolizes the cycle of life.

Forest as a symbol:

- Nature and Life: The forest symbolizes nature, life, and biodiversity.
- Mystery and Power of Nature: The forest also symbolizes mystery, the power of nature, and the untouched.
- Protection and Resources: Forests provide protection and provide various resources for humans

Puri/Palace as a symbol:

- Center of Power: The puri or palace is the center of power of the king and his government.
- Grandeur and Majesty: Castles were often built with magnificent and beautiful architecture, symbolizing the grandeur and prosperity of the kingdom.
- Social Status Symbol: Living in a castle or having a relationship with a castle indicates high social status.

Gold as a symbol:

- Luxury and Wealth: Gold symbolizes luxury, wealth, and prosperity.
- Eternity and Purity: Gold also symbolizes eternity, purity, and high value.
- Power and Status: Gold is often used as a symbol of power and high social status.

Beads as a symbol:

- Beauty and Aesthetics: Beads symbolize beauty, aesthetics, and ornamentation.
- Social Status and Identity: The type and quality of beads can indicate social status, ethnic identity, or group.
- Spiritual and Magical Value: In some cultures, beads are believed to have spiritual or magical powers.

Silver as a symbol:

- Purity and Elegance: Silver symbolizes purity, elegance, and preciousness.
- Wealth and Prosperity: Silver also symbolizes wealth and prosperity, although its value is generally lower than that of gold.

Jewels as symbols:

- Beauty and Luxury: Jewels symbolize beauty, luxury, and high value.
- Power and Authority: Jewels are often associated with power, authority, and high social status.
- Spiritual and Magical Symbols: Some jewels are believed to have spiritual or magical powers.

Wearing All White as symbols:

- Purity and Cleanliness: The color white symbolizes purity, cleanliness, and cleanliness.
- Spirituality and Religiousness: In many religions, white is associated with spirituality, religiousness, and peace.
- Mourning (in some cultures): In some cultures, white can also symbolize mourning.

Heaven as symbols:

- Happiness and Peace: Heaven symbolizes eternal happiness, peace, and a perfect life.
- Rewards and Rewards: In religious teachings, heaven is a reward for those who do good.
- Hope and Final Goal: Heaven is the hope and final goal for many people.

Lekesan in the context of Balinese culture consists of several parts as symbols:

- Betel Leaf: Symbolizes humility, respect, and unity. Its creeping shape also symbolizes close kinship. In some contexts, betel is also associated with Goddess Uma or Goddess Durga.
- Kapur: Symbolizes strength, honesty, and purity. Its white color symbolizes purity and clean intentions.
- Gambir: Symbolizes steadfastness, loyalty, and binding promises. Its bitter taste can also symbolize steadfastness in facing life's trials.
- Betel Nut: Symbolizes prosperity, well-being, and health. Its red color is also associated with courage and enthusiasm.
- Tobacco: Symbolizes spiritual strength, concentration, and a connection with the supernatural world. Its use in traditional ceremonies is often associated with requests to the gods or ancestors.

Overall Symbolic Meaning of Lekesan:

- Unity and Togetherness: Lekesan is often served and enjoyed together in various traditional events and social gatherings, symbolizing unity, togetherness, and strengthening ties of friendship.

- Respect and Acceptance: Offering lekesan to guests is a form of respect and acceptance. Accepting an offer of lekesan also shows respect and agreement.
- Communication with the Supernatural World: In the context of traditional ceremonies, lekesan is used as a means of communication with the supernatural world, both with the gods and ancestors. The smoke produced when tobacco is burned is believed to convey prayers and requests.
- Symbol of the Five Gods: In some interpretations, lekesan also symbolizes the Five Gods (five manifestations of God), with each material representing one god.
- Taksu: In the context of puppetry, lekesan is associated with taksu, which is the spiritual power or energy needed by a puppeteer to bring a wayang performance to life.
- Confinement: Symbolizes limitations, attachments, or loss of freedom. Confinement can also be interpreted as a trap or situation that is difficult to escape. In a social context, confinement can symbolize oppression or injustice.

Sanggah Pengijeng as a symbol:

Sanggah Pengijeng Karang is also called Penunggun Karang or Palinggih Pangijeng. Its function is as a guardian of the karang or palemahan and the guardian of its inhabitants so that they are always under the protection of Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, safe, peaceful, and blessed, both in sekala and niskala. Penunggun Karang or Tugu Karang comes from two syllables, namely the word Tugu which means to know/know/have knowledge and the word Karang which means yard/house yard or self/body coral (Candra Arisma, <https://budayabali.com>)

- Protection and Guard: Pengijeng means "guard". Sanggah pengijeng is believed to be the place where supernatural powers reside that protect the household from negative disturbances and provide safety.
- Balance and Harmony: The existence of sanggah pengijeng in the front area of the house symbolizes the balance between the outside world and the world in the household. It is a symbolic boundary between public space and private space, and maintains harmony between the two.

Pemerajan as a symbol:

- Definition: Pemerajan or merajan is the main sacred place in a Balinese Hindu household. Symbolic Meaning:
- Spiritual Center of the Household: Pemerajan is the spiritual heart of the household. This is where the family gathers to pray, perform religious ceremonies, and strengthen their relationship with God and ancestors.
- Microcosm of the Universe: The layout and architecture of the pemerajan often reflects the concept of Tri Loka (three realms: Bhur Loka – the lower realm, Bhuwah Loka – the middle realm, and Swah Loka – the upper realm). This symbolizes that the household is part of a larger universe.
- Connection with the Gods and Ancestors: Pemerajan is the link between humans and the gods and ancestors. Through prayers and ceremonies at the pemerajan, the family asks for blessings, protection, and guidance.
- Family Identity: Pemerajan is also a symbol of family identity. Each family has its own traditions and ways of caring for and using the pemerajan, which are passed down from generation to generation.

3) Animal Symbols

Cow as a symbol:

- Strength and Hard Work: Cows symbolize physical strength, hard work, and endurance.
- Prosperity and Fertility: Cows also symbolize prosperity, fertility and good fortune.
- Patience and Fortitude: Cows are known as patient and steadfast animals.

Goat as a symbol:

- Independence and Resilience: Goats symbolize independence, resilience, and the ability to survive in difficult environments.
- Fertility and Abundance: Goats also symbolize fertility and abundance.

Memeri (Duckling) as a symbol:

- Intelligence and Agility: Memeri are known as intelligent and agile animals in water and on land.
- Adaptation and Resilience: Memeri also symbolizes the ability to adapt to different environments.

Chicken as a symbol:

- Courage and Vigilance: The rooster symbolizes courage and alertness.
- Fertility and New Life: The hen and her eggs symbolize fertility and new life.

Eagle as a symbol:

- Strength and Courage: Eagles symbolize strength, courage, and sharpness of vision.
- Freedom and Independence: Eagles flying high symbolize freedom and independence.
- Power and Authority: Eagles are often used as a symbol of power and authority.
- Garuda as a symbol: Strength and Glory: Garuda in Hindu mythology symbolizes strength, glory, and power.
- National Emblem of Indonesia: Garuda Pancasila as the national emblem of Indonesia symbolizes the strength of the nation, unity, and the spirit of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Each part of the Garuda Pancasila has its own meaning related to history and Indonesian national values (for example the number of feathers on the wings, tail and neck).

4) Food symbols

Taro as a symbol:

- Fertility and Prosperity (especially in the context of agriculture): Taro as a food crop symbolizes fertility, prosperity, and sustenance.
- Adaptation and Resilience: Taro can grow in various conditions, symbolizing adaptation and resilience.
- Staple Food: In some areas, taro is a staple food, thus symbolizing the source of life.

Sweet Potato as a symbol:

- In General Context as a symbol:
- Staple Food/Stability: In many cultures, tubers (especially cassava and sweet potatoes) are an important source of carbohydrates and a staple food. Therefore, tubers can

symbolize stability, food security, and the fulfillment of basic needs.

- Simplicity and Blessings: Because they are easy to grow and relatively inexpensive, tubers are often associated with simplicity, humility, and blessings in terms of simple but sufficient sustenance. This is reflected in several traditions in Indonesia, where tubers are often served at selamatan or kenduri events.
- Wealth and Prosperity (in Dreams): In some dream interpretations, eating sweet potatoes can be interpreted as a symbol of wealth and prosperity, because sweet potatoes are associated with abundant harvests.

In Certain Cultural Contexts as a symbol:

- Identity (Cassava in Indonesia): In Indonesia, cassava was once a symbol of rural community identity and a folk food. This reflects resilience and adaptability amidst limitations.
- Symbol in Ceremonies: In some regions, sweet potatoes (especially cassava) have symbolic meaning in certain traditional ceremonies, although the details can vary between regions.

In Dream Contexts as a symbol:

- Financial Stability: Dreaming of eating sweet potatoes can be interpreted as a good sign related to financial stability.
- Wealth and Prosperity: Sweet potatoes in dreams can also symbolize the arrival of fortune or good luck.
- Happiness: Some dream interpretations associate sweet potatoes with happiness and satisfaction in life.

Rice as a symbol:

- Life and Prosperity: Rice as a staple food symbolizes life, fortune, and a source of livelihood.
- Fertility and Prosperity: Rice plants that produce rice also symbolize soil fertility and prosperity.
- Welfare and Sufficiency: Sufficient rice symbolizes welfare and food sufficiency.

Rice as a symbol:

- Staple Food and Energy Source: Rice as a staple food symbolizes a source of energy and basic human needs.
- Unity and Togetherness: Eating rice together often symbolizes unity, togetherness, and close social relationships.
- Respect and Offerings: In some traditional ceremonies, rice is used as an offering or symbol of respect.

Side dishes as a symbol:

- Complements and Variations: Side dishes complement rice and provide variations in taste and nutrition in food.
- Social Status and Economic Ability: The type and amount of side dishes can indicate a person's social status and economic ability.
- Symbol of Togetherness and Hospitality: Offering side dishes to guests is a symbol of togetherness and hospitality.

5) Symbols of work

Majejahitan (Sewing in Bali) as a symbol of:

- Skill and Precision: Majejahitan symbolizes skill, precision, and patience.
- Creativity and Aesthetics: Sewing results also symbolize creativity and aesthetics.

- Women and Domestic Roles (traditionally): Traditionally, sewing is often associated with women and domestic roles.

Weaving as a symbol of:

a) Women's Identity and Gender Roles:

- Skill and Independence: In many cultures, weaving is closely associated with women. The ability to weave is often considered a measure of a woman's skill and independence. In fact, in some societies, women who cannot weave are considered "immature" or "incomplete".
- Inheritance of Tradition: Weaving is also a way for women to pass on traditions and knowledge to the next generation, especially their daughters. This process involves learning weaving techniques, motifs, and their symbolic meanings.
- Resistance to Patriarchy: In some contexts, weaving is also seen as a form of women's resistance to patriarchal domination.

Through weaving activities, women can express themselves, maintain cultural identity, and have an economic role.

b) Symbols in Rituals and Traditional Ceremonies:

Ancestral Respect: Woven fabrics are often used in traditional ceremonies as a form of respect for ancestors. The motifs and colors on woven fabrics can have symbolic meanings related to beliefs and values passed down from generation to generation.

Social Status Symbols: In some communities, the type of woven fabric, motif, and materials used can indicate a person's social status. Intricate woven fabrics that use expensive materials are usually worn by the nobility or important figures in society.

- Symbols of Unity and Togetherness: The weaving process, which is often carried out in groups, can symbolize unity and togetherness in society. In addition, woven fabrics can also be a symbol of the identity of a community or region.
- Symbols of Life's Journey: Several woven motifs depict the journey of human life, from birth to death, with all the joys and sorrows and stages that are passed through.

c) Weaving Process as a Symbol:

- Patience and Accuracy: Weaving requires patience, accuracy, and perseverance. This symbolizes the importance of these values in achieving goals.
- Creativity and Innovation: Weaving also provides space for creativity and innovation in creating new motifs and colors. This symbolizes the human ability to adapt and grow.
- The Interconnectedness of Threads: The process of uniting threads into woven fabric can symbolize the interconnectedness of individuals in society and the importance of cooperation.

Tajen (Cockfighting) as a symbol:

- Courage and Masculinity: In Balinese culture, tajen is traditionally associated with courage, masculinity, and social status.
- Rituals and Ceremonies: Tajen also has a ritual aspect and is often associated with religious ceremonies.

- Gambling (negative connotation): Today, tajen is often associated with gambling, which has a negative connotation.

6) Symbols of the Journey

Mountain Climbing as a symbol:

- Struggle and Effort: Climbing a mountain symbolizes struggle, effort, and challenges that must be faced to achieve a goal.
- Growth and Self - Improvement: The climbing process also symbolizes personal growth, increasing self - capacity, and learning from each step.
- Achievement and Success: The mountain peak symbolizes achievement, success, and satisfaction with the efforts that have been made.
- Spirituality and Transcendence: In some beliefs, mountains are considered sacred places that connect humans with spiritual power or transcendence.

Descending a Ravine as a symbol:

- Difficulty and Failure: Descending into a ravine can symbolize difficulty, failure, or difficult times in life.
- Vulnerability and Loss of Control: The ravine can also symbolize vulnerability, loss of control, and feelings of being down.
- Reflection and Learning Process: Although difficult, descending into a ravine can also be a process of reflection, introspection, and learning to rise again.

Entering the Middle of the Forest:

- Ignorance and Uncertainty: The dense and untouched forest symbolizes ignorance, uncertainty, and things that have not been explored.
- Self - Discovery and Spirituality: Entering the forest can also symbolize self - discovery, connection with nature, and spiritual experiences.
- Trials and Challenges: The forest can also be a place of trials and challenges, where one is tested for courage, resilience, and ability to survive.

The Road to the West Must Not Be Curved as a symbol of:

- Firmness and Determination: A straight road without any bends symbolizes firmness, steadfastness, and focus on one's goal.
- Honesty and Openness: A straight road can also symbolize honesty, openness, and having nothing to hide.
- Clear Direction and Purpose: The direction west has its own symbolic meaning in some cultures (such as the sunset or the end of a journey). A straight road to the west emphasizes the importance of having a clear direction and purpose.

Stopping Due to Tiredness of Walking as a symbol of:

- Human Weakness and Limitations: Stopping due to tiredness symbolizes human weakness and limitations.
- Rest and Reflection: Stopping also provides an opportunity to rest, recharge, and reflect.
- Accepting One's Limitations: This symbol reminds us of the importance of accepting one's limitations and not pushing ourselves beyond our capabilities. The Journey Continues as a symbol:

Symbolizes perseverance, tenacity, and an unyielding spirit in achieving goals. This journey can also be interpreted as a process of seeking knowledge, experience, or a deeper understanding of life

The Meaning of Feminism in the Story of I Bagus Diarsa and Tuung Kuning

In this study, feminism is only used as a lens or perspective in conducting the analysis. Therefore, feminism here is not a separate method in this study. Related to this, below is a description of Women in the story of I Bagus Diarsa and Ni Tuung Kuning.

Depiction of Women in the domestic and public spheres

The depiction of an obedient wife/woman is very clearly depicted in the story of I Bagus Diarsa. Whatever the husband says, the wife obeys, but in the story there is no coercion or violence. The harmony of household life is clearly depicted in the story of I Bagus Diarsa. The values of harmony and cooperation in the family are highly valued by cultural feminism. In the context of this story, there is no doubt that there is inequality of power in it. The principle of ardanawari is most likely implemented in the family of I Bagus Diarsa. Ardanawari is a manifestation of the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati in Hindu beliefs in Bali. The concept of ardanawari in Manawa Dharmasastra (Hindu Law Book) means that men and women are equal because they were both created by Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa (God Almighty). This can be strengthened by looking at the end of the story where I Bagus Diarsa becomes a King who is highly respected by his people. Food traders, in this case rice traders in Tajen are generally carried out and dominated by women. In this case, there is also no apparent coercion to carry out trading activities. In other words, in the story of I Bagus Diarsa, there is no coercion of the will of men or husbands on wives/women in choosing the work they do. The work chosen by women is adjusted to their abilities (agency). Women as traders in Tajen, which means women work in the public sector. Tajen, as a cockfighting arena, is often associated with masculinity, violence, and gambling. Here there is an economic role for women. From a socialist/Marxist feminist perspective, this shows the role of women in the informal economy.

They contribute to the family economy by selling, but often in uncertain working conditions and without adequate social protection. The presence of women in Tajen shows the complexity of women's roles in the male - dominated public sphere, where they can act as economic agents.

In the story of I Bagus Diarsa, it is also explicitly explained that the parents asked Bagus Diarsa's son to be invited to his house to help him because he was old and alone. The request was fulfilled with the child's consent. Here it is clear that this family is a democratic family; there is no coercion; even handing over children to older people is considered an honor. In the context of Balinese culture, raising children by older people is the inheritance of noble values and maintaining traditions that are instilled in the next generation. Moreover, the handover is to parents, who are later known as Betara Siwa.

In the story of Tuung Kuning, I Puduk's wife is depicted as an obedient figure who always helps her husband's work. From a feminist perspective, this can be seen as a representation traditional women's roles that are tied to the domestic sphere and subordination to their husbands. This absolute obedience reflects the patriarchal social construction that places women under the power of men. I Puduk's wife entrusting her child to her grandmother is an important act. This shows the existence of agency (the ability to act) and a strong maternal instinct to protect her child from threatening dangers, even from her own husband. This action can be interpreted as a form of passive resistance to violence and male domination. Although done secretly, this is an effort to protect the next generation of women. Tuung Kuning is depicted as an ideal figure in a patriarchal society, diligent, skilled in domestic work (weaving), and obedient to her father. This obedience, although it appears as a virtue in the context of the story, can be seen as a form of internalization of patriarchal values that oppress women. She accepts her fate even when she knows she will be killed, showing how strong the social pressure is on women to obey male authority. Tuung Kuning is saved by the angels and taught good sewing and weaving. The intervention of the angels and the opportunity to learn better sewing and weaving in heaven can be interpreted as salvation, as a Deus ex Machina by an external force (the angels). This can be seen as a representation of women's lack of agency to save themselves in the real world. This can be a critique of the limited space for women to move in a patriarchal society. There is also a depiction of the strengthening of gender stereotypes in the Tuung Kuning story. The teaching of sewing and weaving in heaven can strengthen gender stereotypes that associate women with domestic work and handicraft skills. Although these skills are valuable, excessive emphasis can limit women's aspirations in other areas. As empowerment in a limited realm, although still in the domestic realm, teaching higher skills can also be seen as a form of women's empowerment. By mastering better skills, Tuung Kuning has more value and has the potential to gain recognition or higher status.

According to the lens of Feminism, the Tuung Kuning story reflects:

- 1) Patriarchy as a Dominant Structure. The Tuung Kuning story as a whole reflects the strength of the patriarchal structure in society. Women are represented in traditional roles as obedient wives, protective mothers, and obedient daughters. Absolute power and authority are in the hands of men (father/husband).
- 2) Passive Resistance and Limited Agency. Although there are passive resistance efforts (such as the desire of I Puduk's wife to entrust her child), women's agency in this story is very limited. The rescue by the angel emphasizes women's dependence on external forces.
- 3) Potential for Subversion. Although dominated by patriarchal values, this story also has the potential for subversion. For example, the actions of I Puduk's wife who dared to go against her husband's wishes, albeit secretly, show an awareness and desire to protect her child. In addition, Tuung Kuning's kindness and sincerity ultimately lead her to a better life, albeit through supernatural intervention.

From the description above, it can be said that through the lens of feminism, the story of Tuung Kuning represents the challenges and limitations of women in a patriarchal society. There is a depiction of gender stereotypes and a lack of female agency. This story shows the potential for resistance and the importance of maternal values and sincerity.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of symbols and the feminist lens of the I Bagus Diarsa story and the Tuung Kuning story is as follows. Both stories contain many symbols. From the symbols used in the story, they can be grouped into six groups of symbols, namely the name/title symbol group, the nature symbol group, the food symbol group, the animal symbol group, the job symbol group, and the travel symbol group. This rich symbol causes the story to contain meaningful values. Women in the story have played a role in the public sector, in addition to the domestic sector. In the I Bagus Diarsa story, there is an understanding of gender equality, while in the Tuung Kuning story, patriarchy is still thick and strong, women are only in the domestic sphere, there is women's agency but it is still weak because it is done secretly, and there has been women's empowerment, but it has not been appreciated.

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