Re-Actualization Of Rangda As A Class 
In Online Game: Tree Of Savior

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Abstract
Rangda is the queen of Leyaks (child-eating demons) and an infamous figure of the evil witch in Balinese mythology. Tree of Savior gave her a new and important role inside their game and she became a new RPG class. This research uses a qualitative paradigm method with data collection techniques through literature studies and field studies in the form of documentation and in-depth interviews. Then the data obtained were analyzed using the theory of cultural perceptions and the other supporting theories. The analysis shows that re-actualization of deconstructed Rangda from its original provenance to a new entity with a new stygma in its debut on Tree of Savior to attract new players or players from Indonesia. So the results of this study are useful for anyone who engaged in the world of video game to generate new ideas or concepts.

Keywords: Balinese Mythology, Online Game, Rangda, RPG Class, Tree of Savior

1 Introduction

The queen of Leyaks (child-eating demons) named Rangda is an infamous figure of the evil witch in Balinese mythology. Pictured as a monstrous villain, a famous online game named Tree of Savior gave her a new and important role inside their game in early 2020. Rangda became a new RPG (Role-Playing Game) class in Scout type of characters, specialize on using daggers and guns. This phenomenon is pretty interesting because Rangda has a reputation that is contrary to what is conveyed by Tree of Savior. Mainly the viewpoint of the people of Indonesia, especially Balinese people, who already consider Rangda as the black part of their version of Yin Yang as the morality balance in Balinese mythology (and Barong as its white part). This is related to the long history of legends and folklores in various versions which eventually became mythology in the daily life and spiritual beliefs of the Balinese people.

Rangda’s appearance, as presented by Tree of Savior in their game broke the prejudices and perceptions of players from Indonesia towards Rangda. The version of Rangda that displayed in their game has several contradictions in various aspects, such as visuals, backgrounds and impression of the role in the game.

The said monstrous appearance of Rangda changed and she became a beautiful lady with Rangda-like costume as its class master’s visualization. With some needed modifications and adjustments on the game’s side, myths and lores combined into one, making Rangda that appears as a frightening creature to a divine and powerful being.
From this phenomenon, it is seen that there is a lot of Indonesian cultures that can be brought as new potentials for the world to see. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how Rangda’s image changeable for the sake of the game’s plot and almost entirely changing her original background. This research uses a qualitative paradigm with data collection techniques through literature studies and field studies in the form of documentation and in-depth interviews. Then the data obtained were analyzed using cultural perceptions and other supporting theories. The purpose of this study is to analyze how Rangda can be deconstructed from its origin to another entity and used as a new entity with a new stigma in a game.

The analysis shows that re-actualization of Rangda with her new debut on Tree of Savior presented as fresh idea to attract new players or players from Indonesia. So the results of this study are useful for practitioners such as game designers, game studios, as well as academics engaged in the world of video game to generate new ideas or concepts.

2 Rangda in Mythologies

Rai in [5] said that Balinese people’s believe Leyak is closely related to Hindu and can be found in two well-known mythologies, the story of Dewi Uma and the story of Tanting Mas, the disciple of Dewi Durga.

In the story of Dewi Uma, her husband, Dewa Siwa, tested her loyalty by faking his illness and asked Dewi Uma to get a cure in a form of a jar of milk by a certain sheperd in the mortal world. Worried about her husband recovery, she agreed and descent herself to the mortal world. She met the sheperd that accompanied by his cow and proceed to ask for the milk for curing her husband. The sheperd insisted that he could give her the milk in exchange of sexual intercourse. Still thinking about his husband’s recovery, she agreed. After she got the milk, she came back to her husband. Her husband asked her how she got the milk. Didn’t want to make her husband worried, she claimed that she got it freely by asking the sheperd. Dewa Siwa was furious, knew that his wife was lying to him. He knew because he was the one who transformed into the sheperd, an act he did to test his wife’s loyalty. Dewa Siwa cursed Dewi Uma into Dewi Durga and made her live in Gandamayu graveyard. Drowning in anger and grief, Dewi Durga transformed into Rangda (Leyak) to spread negative auras and as a result, human beings were attacked by plague. Three gods, Siwa, Wisnu and Brahmana tried to solve the problem with some items and one of them is Barong mask. The attempt was successfully neutralized the negative aura of Durga’s. Barong represents Siwa as the good and positive aura, contrast to Durga’s negative aura as a Rangda. This conclusion made Rangda as a representative of the evil (Yin) and Barong as a representative of the good (Yang) of Balinese people’s morality balance of society.

The second story, Tanting Mas, is pretty similar to the Dewi Uma’s version, although Tanting Mas’ plot is pretty complicated because there are many figures and kingdoms involved. Both of the story ends with the female protagonists being cheated or slandered by their loved ones and became wrathful, thus making them vengeful and harming the human realm.
According to Ginarsa in Segara [5] Rangda is the presentation of the cursed version of Dewi Uma’s Durga and in Tanting Mas’ story. Rangda lives in the graveyard and people of Bali described Rangda with demonic-like features. The description of Rangda’s features related to religious-magical meanings as follow:

a. A long tongue that reaches the stomach represents eternal hunger, a desire to kill and eat her prey.

b. Flaming tongue represents magical burning, flame that will burn her prey which results in illness or death.

c. Big, bulging eyes represent selfishness, cruelty and believe that no one is able to surpass her power and ability.

d. Long fangs represents a wild animalistic nature.

e. The golden headdress and flames above the head are the symbols of unrivalled supernatural power.

Atmaja [1] said although Rangda in mythologies and folklores are deconstructed, there is an ideology behind it, it’s called Durgaism or Rangdaism. Durgaism is a faith in a form of dark art or black magic that has potential to harm other people, worshipped by the followers who practice the teachings of Dewi Durga and have the ability to transform into Leyak. The common result of transforming into Leyak the practitioner’s (usually a woman) beautiful physical form to transform into mythical demon or any kind of animals. The transformation itself is also related to the character. For example, from a beautiful, kind and gentle woman into a hot-headed and cruel mythical demon. The dark art of Durgaism can only be defeated with white art or white magic called Penengen (the supernatural power of a man).

The emergence of this ideology is related to the act of patriarchy [2]. This ideology has a very strong impact in Balinese Society. The general belief that Leyak is generally female makes Balinese women in the position of “problematic and ambiguous” [3]. It is seen by the Balinese society that people who practice the teachings of Durgaism are easily trapped women who tried to oppose the belief of women that aren’t controlled under the authority of a man as a disturbance of the harmony of life. Thus, making Durgaism as a weapon for oppressed women. It happens because the mythologies
and folklores conveyed to people that women in the story are the evil ones. The stories went that way with an intention to control the hierarchy of women in the patriarchy ideology. Eventhough in the original mythologies, the protagonists who were originally lovely and faithful transform to monstrous and demonic beings after being slandered or wronged that can be seen as the way to avenge the wrong and defending themselves.

3 Rangda in Tree of Savior

Tree of Savior is an online MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game) based game that adapts Lithuanian mythology as its main reference. Because of the uniqueness of its gameplay, plot, attractive character designs and its similarity to its predecessor online game which has a similar basis, namely Ragnarok Online, Tree of Savior has received quite a lot of attention from gamers in recent years. In the main storyline, players’ characters are the chosen saviors by the goddess of fate named Laima. The players will receive divine messages from Laima to help her defeat her sister, Giltine, the goddess of death, as well as Giltine’s armies of demons and bring peace to their world.

This game has dozens of classes that players can choose based on their interest in their respective base classes, such as Swordsman, Cleric, Wizard, Archer and Scout. Each class will be branched to adjust to the level of the players, as well as players’ interest during the game and allows the players to have a different type of character from the other players. For example, Swordsman can be differentiate to several types by the character’s skills and by weapon types (such as two-handed swords, one-handed swords or spears). This system covers all classes without exception. Cleric class can be classified as offensive or supporting types, with weapons like hammer and staff. Wizard class as offensive or defensive types, with weapons like rod and staff. Archer class with large enemy ratio or one-on-one types, with weapons like bow or crossbow. And finally, Scout class with one-on-one or large enemy ratio types with weapons like dagger, gun, cannon or rifle.

Scout class is famous its for surprise attacks and high agility when dealing with enemies. This class has fast attacks and is very skilled at avoiding enemy attacks. Rangda is one of the branch from the Scout based class. This class is one of the latest classes presented by Tree of Savior in their international server. Rangda itself is one of the classes that are experts in the field of Debuff (reducing enemy performance through skills).

In the game’s plot, Rangda is not an individual being like the original Rangda. Rangda in Tree of Savior is an entity, tribe or folk that have high respect for faiths. This entity sent its best fighters and warriors to help the goddess of fate, Laima, defeat the demons.

Figure 2. Rangda Class
a. Wolios Wahid (Rangda Class Master)

Every class in Tree of Savior class’ system has class masters. Class masters are one of NPCs (non-playable characters) that have a role to provide players needs for their own respective classes. Class masters can provide things for characters’ skills and they offer lessons or quests for players to gain new skills, abilities as well as costumes for their characters. Each master class has their own stories that are mixed well in the original plot.

Wolios Wahid is one of the master classes in Tree of Savior and she holds the title of the class master of Rangda. Players with Rangda as their class can learn skills or do some specific quests from her. Wolios Wahid visualized as a beautiful young woman with tanned skin and long dark hair. She wears an attire that looks a lot like Rangda itself. Rangda’s messy white hair, golden crown, big eyes and sharp fangs became Wolios’ headdress. Rangda’s infamous long tongue became Wolios’ necklace and a part of her attire. Rangda’s claws became special additional for her sleeves to visualize that her hands have sharp and big ‘claws’. With a Rangda-like attire, Wolios Wahid can be easily recognized by Indonesian players that she’s Rangda master class. The visualization of Wolios Wahid as the master class of Rangda has contradictions of the original appearance of Rangda. The contradictions followed by the skills of Rangda class that Tree of Savior presented. The new visual of Rangda supported the new stygma of the origin of Rangda as an image changing.

b. Rangda’s Skills

According to Tree of Savior’s English official website [7], Rangda has skills that titled in Indonesian language. Indonesian words are used to explain what kind of skill that Rangda has, such as Kutukan (Curse), Kelethian (Fatigue), Luka (Injury), Penyerapan (Absorption), Barong (Summoning Barong), and the most powerful skill, Rawa (Swamp). Indonesian players would recognized what kind of skills those are based on the words they read.
The skills are explained in points below:

- **Barong**
  Manipulate captured Barong. Barong appears near enemy that has been targeted within distance of 150. Barong delivers attacks to enemies with 20% of removing their buffs.

- **Keletihan**

- **Kutukan**
  Inflict chaotic curse on a targeted enemy. Enemies inflicted with [Kutukan] transform into an immovable [Kepa] and becomes unable to restore HP and SP, dealing damage over time to nearby enemies and themselves based on user's AoE Ratio. When the enemy is dead or incapable of combat during [Kutukan], the debuff is contagious to a nearby enemy for the time remaining. (Boss monsters on certain grades are immune to [Kutukan].)

- **Luka**
  Attack enemies giving bleeding damage over time. Duration increases based on the number of debuffs applied on the target. (Max 5 seconds)

- **Penyerapan**
  Increases additional damage. Increases stacks of [Keletihan], [Reduced Movement Speed] from Rangda upon skill use.

- **Rawa**
  Form a swamp in front of the caster. Swamp slows down enemies and increases Rawa stacks on enemies. More stacks increase Movement Speed reduction and damage dealt by Rawa.

## 4 Indonesian Players’ Perspective

In-depth interviews were conducted with several Tree of Savior’s Indonesian player. On average, Tree of Savior players were former players of Ragnarok Online in early 2004. Similarities in terms of visuals and gameplay are some of the reasons why they chose to play Tree of Savior (the nostalgic side that arose). The interview participants are in the age range of 25-35 years old and mostly are in the class of workers. Data obtained from in-depth interviews by participants are related to their opinions of Rangda as a class in the Tree of Savior (from Indonesians perspective). Indonesian players were chosen for their knowledge of the origin of Rangda as a part of ‘culture’ in Indonesia.

The interview results show that the Tree of Savior player was quite surprised by Rangda’s role as one of the saviors that chosen by the goddess of fate, Laima, in the game. According to them, Rangda is a symbol of the evil, malicious female figure from Balinese’s moral balance and this is also the point of view of Indonesian people other than Balinese. This is triggered by mass and minimal knowledge about good and evil that are commonly displayed to the public through mythologies and folklores. Rangda’s role as a ‘good’ entity in the Tree of Savior is questioned by the players, on what grounds and decisions does the Tree of Savior deconstruct the impression Rangda has in reality. Things that could be considered strange and odd are unexpectedly made the players interested in finding out about Rangda more.

Interviewees assume that Tree of Savior has a specific purpose when constructing the image that Rangda has in their game. Especially after learning that Rangda has a skill that can summon Barong to help them fight the enemies. Although Rangda’s role here is reversed, Barong is not.
According to the players, Tree of Savior does not aim to reverse the role of Rangda and Barong, but unites the two to achieve the same goal, namely against the enemy of Laima, the demons. Although in the game Barong does not have a significant role and has a role as a creature that can be summoned by Rangda (it is still questionable whether Barong is a pet or support-assist creature), Barong still maintains its status as a ‘good’ entity. This also makes Rangda’s image different for Indonesian players. The reactualization from this study is the changing of the image of Rangda as an entity. Making Rangda who was once feared and has a reputation as an evil witch to become a great and very powerful entity. Opposing Indonesians’ stigmata about the original image of Rangda and this changing of image attract more players, especially from Indonesia.

5 Analysis and Conclusion

The data from these sources were analyzed qualitatively by mean of deconstruction method to uncover the hidden, contradictory and internal inconsistent meaning [4]. The impression that Rangda has is deconstructed by the Rangda Tree of Savior which is considered by Indonesian people as a symbol of evil to be a symbol of virtue. In the story of Dewi Uma and Tanting Mas and the continuity with Balinese’s views of patriarchy in these mythologies, the role of Rangda becomes a form of resistance by the status of women in the patriarchal system of Balinese society. Tree of Savior finally strengthened this by making Rangda to a beautiful, majestic and strong figure represented by the skills of the Rangda class and the visualization of the Rangda class master, Wolios Wahid. By not undermining the status of the eternal opponent of Rangda, Barong, Tree of Savior makes Barong as a ‘good’ entity by remaining ‘good’ even with an insignificant role (by supporting Rangda class’ skill). In the end, due to the deconstruction carried out by the Tree of Savior, the results of the actualization of Rangda were successful. Tree of Savior’s Rangda has an impression that is contrary to what is usually conveyed by mythologies and folklores. That ‘self-defense’ in the form of Durgaism carried out by Dewi Uma (Dewi Durga) as well as female figures in the Tanting Mas story is not just something negative (especially as dark arts), but rather is a form of rebellion against patriarchy experienced by women (figures) in the mythologies and folklores.

6 References