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The old state ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma Motto in Denpasar city government practice

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Abstract--This article discusses the dismantling of the ideology behind the meaning of Sewaka Dharma. as the public service motto of the Denpasar City Government. In general, in carrying out its activities, it uses the motto as a supporter of its employees. This article focuses on the locus of the Denpasar City Government by critically analyzing the study of cultural studies in the realm of public employees. This article uses the theory of deconstruction and is supported by the concepts of social practice and the power of knowledge. The data collection method in this article uses interview techniques, and observations of informants. This article also offers a finding that behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma, the hidden meaning of the old state ideology which is manifested through patrimonial behavior still includes an increase in the symbolic identity of the presence of formal power, namely the Mayor of Denpasar as an analogy to the king's power. In this capacity, the motto of Sewaka Dharma becomes an effective means of power among bureaucrats at all levels which places them as a means of discipline as well as effective supervision for employees who serve in power.

Keywords--cultural studies, ideology, meaning, old state, Sewaka Dharma.

Introduction

Most governments from the central to regional levels have a motto or slogan as a confirmation of the identity of the character of the bureaucracy which also translates the vision and mission of the formal leaders in power in the area concerned. The motto is mostly taken from sacred texts or philosophy that applies to the local community. The Denpasar City Government, as the centre of the capital city of Bali Province, also has a motto or slogan to support the implementation of its bureaucratic practices as well as the embodiment of Balinese identity, namely the motto Sewaka Dharma.

This article discusses the deconstruction of the ideological meaning behind Sewaka Dharma, as the public service motto of the Denpasar City Government which is believed to not contain a single meaning, but also includes disciplinary practices for Denpasar City Government ASN. This article focuses on the locus of the Denpasar City Government by critically analyzing the linkage of cultural studies within the realm of the public bureaucracy (government) which has tended to be dominated by positivistic paradigm analysis ([Ikhsan, 2022](#); [Yuni 2014](#)).

The ideology behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma is assumed to have hidden thoughts. If analyzed based on a deconstructive thinking space, the rationale and main objective of Denpasar City government practice are not always in line with the main conceptual definition of the Sewaka Dharma motto as the meaning of obligation is to serve. The Denpasar City government bureaucracy that embeds the word "Sewaka Dharma" as a service spirit, on the one hand, holds other goals including the actualization of certain political ideologies. The practice of government includes legal space to carry out various other latent goals that are not known by the public.

The ideology behind Sewaka Dharma's motto is analyzed from the point of view of Michel Foucault's power of knowledge theory. Foucault positions the power of knowledge as an important aspect of discourse formation. His theories discuss the relationship between power and knowledge and examine aspects of power and knowledge when used to establish social control through social institutions that are more imprisoned ([Vardeman-Winter, 2010](#); [Winder, 2006](#); [Croke, 1997](#)).

The assumption of this theory is in line with the existence of the Denpasar City government as an institution that has a disciplinary nature. Discipline in this case is close to the context of imprisonment as a step to construct or organize discipline for individual workers. Discipline is carried out by people who have knowledge and power. In line with the previous review, the discipline carried out by knowledgeable agents and power owners also aims to protect other ideological foundations behind the Sewaka Dharma motto. The protected ideology is in the form of a system or an effort to regenerate the power of the owner or ideological driver behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma. The question of this article is what ideology is hidden behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma as a Denpasar City government practice?

Methods and Theory

This article is based on the results of research using qualitative research methods and techniques. This article seeks to obtain descriptive information related to the meaning of discourse from the Sewaka Dharma motto as ASN disciplinary practice in Denpasar City. The approach of this article is qualitative with a deconstruction perspective. This study took the research location in Denpasar City with research units of bureaucrats or ASNs in public service units, both agencies, agencies, or institutions within the Denpasar City Government. Primary data sources are obtained from sources that are collected directly from the field. Secondary data sources are data collected from other sources to support primary data obtained from previous research, journals, documents, news, and so on. Data analysis was carried out using the main theory of deconstruction and the supporting theory of social practice and the power of knowledge. The main theoretical frame of deconstruction is used because the researcher believes that Sewaka Dharma's motto does not contain a single truth. This motto contains various discourses of interest and this is in line with the main aspiration of the main theory used is to reveal other meanings that are marginalized, ignored, or hidden. This study follows McQuillan where deconstruction lays on five strategies, namely reading events, contamination of binary oppositions, reading there are marginalized meanings, rereading the history behind the text, and being guided by the guidance that in each text meaning refers to a series of traces, namely context- the context in the text that gives meaning (Becker, 2020; Johnston & Ollerenshaw, 2020; Duckitt, 2001).

The supporting theory is that the power of knowledge for researchers has an important role to strengthen various discourses of interest that have been thought to have been marginalized, ignored, or hidden behind the operation of the Sewaka Dharma motto. Another supporting theory is the theory of social practice where all social practices cannot be separated from the dimension of discourse. In this discourse, the motto of Sewaka Dharma is not only understood as a form of language but is also seen as an instrument of power, because social relations are domination relations which in this study are thought to contain disciplinary practices against ASN Denpasar City Government. The author tries to deconstruct the Sewaka Dharma motto to dismantle the ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma motto in the realm of public service by ASN in the Denpasar City Government. The researcher uses the main theoretical framework (grand theory) of deconstruction from Derrida and to support his analysis, the researcher also uses supporting theories, including the power of knowledge from Foucault and the theory of social practice from Bourdieu. Through these three theories, this study tries to answer three things from the formulation of the problem in this study, namely the deconstruction of the Sewaka Dharma motto, the ideology hidden behind the motto, and the implications of the Sewaka Dharma motto on ASN in the Denpasar City Government.

Results and Discussion

Sewaka Dharma: Shaping Old State Ideology in Modern Bureaucracy

The word "Sewaka Dharma" as the government motto of Denpasar City can be analyzed as a verbal political construction to build an old state ideology in a modern bureaucratic system. The old state ideology in the modern bureaucracy behind the Sewaka Dharma motto can be done by the latent embodiment of past values that are identical to classical government. The embodiment of the values of classical government, in the future, will be a step that is considered most following the main spirit of Sewaka Dharma. Classical governments such as kingdoms or castles that have ever existed in Bali have prioritized the spirit of service. This service is realized through the provision of certain policies that can touch the tax (community). However, the aspect of feudalism that was thick in the royal era made service a pseudo-practice ([Rosso et al., 2010; Huettig & Altmann, 2005](#)).

The old state ideology behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma strengthens the coalition of government bureaucrats who are comfortable with classical government patterns. The hidden actualization of the old style of government is used as a space to reap various benefits for those who are loyal to the old government system itself. The coalition is well executed so that it can always run amidst the modern visions and missions of the Denpasar City government. This coalition seems to be getting stronger, during Denpasar City's efforts to maintain the local culture in the Denpasar City environment.

The old state that is built behind the Sewaka Dharma motto can make the Denpasar City government a development base of government that is imbued with the spirit or the royal system. Although this spirit is not realistically shown to the public, or in other words, it is practised amid public trust in the external appearance of the Denpasar City government. The values of the old government which are interpreted through the spirit of Sewaka Dharma will be moved by politicians, bureaucratic ranks, including policy holders in Denpasar City.

The review above is in line with Foucault's view, in the theory of the power of knowledge where power is productive, invisible, but omnipresent, flows, and is even normalized in disciplinary practice. Based on Foucault's view, Sewaka Dharma as an old state aspect in modern bureaucracy can be seen from several informants' statements in the form of the loyalty of Denpasar city government bureaucrats to the Mayor, which is an old state form that always translates hegemonic awareness of the hierarchical top as interests that are subordinated as common interests. This is as stated by the informant as follows:

Yang jelas loyalitas ada pada diri kami. Kami bisa menyediakan gedung gratis, bahkan kalau masyarakat dapat membuat proposal yang dapat diterima pemerintah, pemerintah bisa membantu dengan berbagai cara untuk acara, atau event yang diajukan masyarakat.

Translation:

What is clear is our loyalty. We can provide free buildings, even if the community can make a proposal that is acceptable to the government, the government can help in various ways for events, or events that are proposed by the community (Rai mantra, interviewed 29 March 2022).

Sewaka Dharma as the motto embodied in most programs, including those that are subordinated to the major program "Bureaucracy Reform", including those that emphasize the aspect of utilizing information technology. On this side, control efforts are running effectively in the minds of Denpasar City Government bureaucrats. The top-down power over the translation of the Sewaka Dharma motto has become something that is completely indicated by the apparatus as a success story of the translation of the Sewaka Dharma motto.

Sewaka Dharma on the one hand encourages top-hierarchical service as one of the characteristics of the old state. The ancient government with the royal system is synonymous with hierarchy. The placement of rulers (kings) and society is on a strict structural line. The royal government, which has a hierarchical nature, places the king in the top-hierarchical position. All forms of the king's orders as the figure holder of the highest power must be carried out by the ranks below him, including the smallest layers of society. The royal government system, generally only makes the king as a leader and protector. While services are still carried out by the middle ranks (ministers and leaders under the king), and the community as the lowest layer. The service is nothing directed to the king himself. In this position, it can be seen from the statement of the public bureaucrat who is also the executor of the Sewaka Dharma motto. This is as stated by the informant.

Ketika saya melamar CPNS, saya berarti sudah menekan kontrak untuk bekerja. Paling tidak karena saya ditempatkan di pelayanan publik intinya saya sudah mengiyakan diri saya bahwa saya bekerja loyal kepada atasan dan semuanya tentu untuk melayani dan itu prinsip saya. Dan itu juga sebagai bentuk motivasi diri bahwa saya siap untuk melayani.

Translation:

When I applied for CPNS, I meant that I had pressed a contract to work. At least because I was placed in public service, basically I have confirmed that I work with loyalty to my superiors and everything is of course to serve and that is my principle. And it is also a form of self-motivation that I am ready to serve. (Nina Kania, interviewed 24 April 2022)

This statement explicitly implies that since becoming a public bureaucrat, orientation to superiors and loyalty is the main thing, although this is later refined into the meaning to provide services to the community. The previous government system tends to position the king as a figure who must be served. Serving in the spirit of royal government is only carried out by subordinates to superiors, ministers to the king, courtiers or governors to Dalem (the title of Balinese king), concubines to the king and so on. Kings in ancient governments were knights. Knights have the main task only as leaders and central management, both in political affairs between kingdoms, as well as the battle for power. These knights then seemed to become soldiers who had hegemonic justification for the Sewaka Dharma motto as a message of kindness to everyone.

Soldiers who consciously spread meaning, because this is indeed the soul of this program as the foundation of ideal government practices.

The king more monitoring, with the movement of programs that been carried out by his subordinates. On the other hand, the king as a leader is only in charge of protecting the kingdom and the territory he leads. The practice of protection has a quite different actualization from the act of serving. Considering that serving is an action that is more like giving a welcome, entertaining, providing knowledge, entertainment, and other service actions. Unlike the case with protection which emphasizes strength and power in front of other rulers. So it can be said that in the royal system, the position of the king is the ruler who provides protection (not being a specific servant), while the people are the servants (Sewaka) of the king himself. This is contained in several Hindu textual which provide an overview of the obligations of the king (as protector) and the people (as servants) as it is contained in Yajurveda IX.40 as "*Asmi visah-esa vi-ami raja*" or its translation "Citizens must serve leaders and leaders must protect their citizens" (Titib, 1996).

The Yajurveda passage above even gives an affirmation that serving is a must that is done by the people to their king. This happens a lot when an era is fully controlled by a government in the form of a kingdom. The king was given various banquets and offerings by his people. In simple terms, the king has been seen as a hero who protects his people, even though realistically the king does not fully protect the people. Many other relationships and goals behind actions and jargon protect the people. However, the knowledge and power possessed by the king give a hegemony and a strong influence on the minds of the people to obey, respect, and even sincerely entertain every king.

The position of the king as a subject that must be served is also seen in the attitude of the king to the problems of the people. The king as a leader should have a high sensitivity to people's problems, even though there is no direct information or reports from the community regarding problems and potential problems in the life of the community itself. However, the kingdom as one of the old state systems tends to wait for information from the people regarding the problems experienced by the people themselves.

The king as a leader just sits on the throne, without being too active in observing the lives of his people. This condition is certainly quite contrary to the current modern government system, which requires even a leader to come directly to meet his people. So that the spirit of Sewaka Dharma in this case can also give the meaning that the people's activity hopes to face the king. This can later be done by constructing various symbols about Sewaka Dharma, which allows the king to be positioned in a strategic location so that it is easily and quickly accessed by his people (Imai & Gentner, 1997; Pickett et al., 2004).

Sewaka Dharma, an old state development space amid modern government, certainly contains aspects of subtle hegemony that lead the people to be deeply obedient to the leader. The obedience of the people in the future will also aim to strengthen people's services to bureaucrats in Denpasar City. Various regulations that bind the people strictly are applied in the actualization of the Sewaka Dharma motto.

The holder of the old state ideology behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma certainly aims to maintain their existence as a superior class. Leaders who have the spirit of the old state government, rarely want themselves to be seen as having the same principles as the individuals below them. This condition also occurs in the employment system as one of the realities of the old state government. Therefore, the drivers of the old state ideology behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma will devise various strategies to remain the main class. The main class in this case refers to the position of oneself with the people, as well as individuals who will be appointed as heirs of leadership. The old state ideology behind Sewaka Dharma provides room for the election of leaders from certain people, which in terms of ethnicity refers to the upper class in the view of local culture in Bali. The intellectuals and nobles tend to be seen as elite groups who have authority and knowledge and are always prioritized in the government system. This is very reasonable, considering the old state system (king in the kingdom) tends to always maintain himself as a great figure. Not infrequently one of the pleasures of the king in the old state system is the assumption that he is a god and the best compared to other creatures (Simpen et al., 2022).

Based on the above review, it can be said that the old state ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma motto shows that the values that are the important foundations that are preserved are the existence of deep and rationalistic power relations, which continue even though they include the commodification of texts that are considered sacred as forming or strengthening the legitimacy of power. Based on critical analysis, the existence of Sewaka Dharma's motto contains a reversal of power relations. Its meaning no longer means sacred, it only serves the lower 'community' group, which on the surface has a democratic meaning. Sewaka Dharma which means to serve is seen from its practical meaning where the construction of power that is built is reversed. Not something that produces an attitude to serve downwards, but serves up.

The old state system sometimes prevents people from knowing many things, both related to government and other things. Knowledge is concentrated only as belonging to brahmins and knights. Ordinary Sudra people have great taboos to have a certain knowledge of religion, government, and so on. Initially, this motto was indeed constructed by two knowledge agencies, namely the Denpasar city government expert team together with the authorities and technocrats, namely the Mayor and his bureaucratic ranks. However, it is this construction of power from the agency that practically positions this motto as the basis for strengthening the sovereignty of the local leader, in this case, the Mayor of Denpasar.

Referring to [Suryawan \(2020\)](#), various policies that grip bureaucrats throughout the community as service users cannot be separated from the will to regulate, improve, or all empowerment goals carried out by the state. In the logic of deconstruction, of course, the slogan or motto of Sewaka Dharma is the will to improve what was indeed initiated by power, in this case, the state as well as its various instruments, the apparatus (bureaucratic apparatus) and the interest groups that stand behind it. Various policies that are subordinated under the motto or jargon of public service Sewaka Dharma through the performance of the bureaucratic apparatus that is intended for the people of Denpasar City as a

whole contain regulatory meanings. This meaning contains an important element related to imagination, especially related to the shadow of intervention carried out by the state on the community, especially the local bureaucrats.

This perspective departs from the criticism expressed by [Ferguson \(1990\)](#), that development with an emphasis on technical program policies, especially at the local government level, including through this Sewaka Dharma motto, has depoliticized society. All forms of development intervention have reduced the complexity of people's lives and their problems to mere technical problems. It also includes the issue of public service, which is only simplified as a motto of obligation, without critically looking at the context that is running and working. This technicalization of problems in development later became the basis for strengthening the regime of experts, including when the Sewaka Dharma motto was formulated by the regional formal ruling elite and their expert staff in the government.

Regulations are translated through a set of rules and their implementation, namely state apparatus and networks that seem to have noble aims, under the pretext of serving the interests of the lower class so that all recognize the sovereignty of the local leader which is aimed at bringing about good. Every power has a goal as well as a desire to improve (the will to improve) from a situation that is considered wrong. Therefore, there is an intention or effort to improve it even though in the end it only becomes a populist strategy, in the name of the public interest, even though the desire to improve lies only in the arena of power. In this context, the intention is certainly not in a space that is sterile from power ([Suryawan, 2020](#)).

The old state ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma motto makes leaders (mainly the position of Mayor of Denpasar) get great respect from the community. Leaders have been seen as important agents capable of protecting people's lives. The mayor as the main leader in Denpasar City rarely gets criticism from the public, either through social media or more directly, because it is undeniable that the typical characteristics of Balinese people, in general, have an accepting attitude. Although in the current era where people are accustomed to technology, they often only express disappointment, which is dominated by service products, not to leaders or policy makers (Source: [Pusatdata.denpasarkota.go.id, 2021](#))

Pro Denpasar service as an online complaint service based on a website under the Denpasar Kominfo Service. Based on the table above, it shows that Pro Denpasar from 2017-2021 on average experienced a significant decrease in complaints and the majority of complaints only complained about public facilities products or problems with delays in management related to administration advances in technology and people's way of thinking, and when observed these criticisms are more of an embodiment of the public democratic space through social media. But on the other hand, this is of course the responsibility of the head of the SKPD service and his staff. But unfortunately, these public criticisms do not have direct implications for the position of Mayor of Denpasar.

On the other hand, the leader (Denpasar Mayor) is the determinant in efforts to improve the quality of human resources under him. This shows that the desire to

improve the quality of human resources is not carried out optimally. Old state ideology tends to make leaders superior subjects, one of which is in terms of knowledge. This action is taken so that the authority and position of the leader are not rivalled by those who have positions below him. Parties who are allowed to increase resources in terms of knowledge tend to come from certain figures who are internally able to provide benefits and only serve as inspiration for other parties. The focus of the leader as a determining subject for improving the quality of human resources can be seen through Nina Kania's acknowledgement as follows:

Untuk peningkatan kualitas seperti menyekolahkan dan lain-lain itu dananya banyak dan kami tidak memiliki itu. Karena itulah disini ada sang Sewaka Dharma yaitu adalah pegawai-pegawai yang kapasitasnya itu telah dinilai oleh tim Walikota dan dianggap layak untuk dijadikan panutan atau contoh”.

Translation:

For quality improvements such as sending schools and others, the funds are a lot and we don't have that. That's why there is the Sewaka Dharma here, namely employees whose capacities have been assessed by the Mayor's team and are considered worthy of being role models or examples" (Nina Kania, interviewed 24 April 2022)

Sewaka Dharma as an old state development space also gave birth to the dominance of the nobility aspect for the leadership of Denpasar City. As in the previous review, nobles and intellectuals generally have a special position in the life of Balinese people, especially in the era of the previous kingdom. Whether we realize it or not, the politics of local nobility has always been embedded in the face of politics and leadership of Denpasar City. The old state government really puts forward the element of nobility as the foundation in continuing the reins of leadership.

The number of leaders among the knights is a manifestation of the domination of local nobility in the position of Mayor of Denpasar. The old state system, of course, highly respects the knight clan as a leader. This is more based on the position of knights in the aspect of the Balinese dynasty, which has the main tasks and skills of bureaucrats. Knights from the *wangsa* aspect in Bali are those who have the title Anak Agung, Gusti and the like. Indirectly this is also an encouragement for the birth of the old state ideology behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma. Based on the historical footprint of the mayor as the highest leader in Denpasar City, it is indeed more dominated by the knights (Source: Denpasar City Government Official Website, 2021)

Apart from the knights, the leadership in Denpasar City was also held by the Brahmins. The Brahma dynasty in the view of the Balinese people is also seen as having a special position. From the perspective of *warna/color*, a brahmin is seen as possessing proficiency in knowledge. This also gives an influence when looking at the brahmin from the side or the perspective of the dynasty. The historical leadership of Denpasar City shows that the mayor of Denpasar was held by Ida Bagus Rai Wijaya Mantra. Ida Bagus Rai Wijaya Mantra himself is the son of a Balinese figure and former governor of Bali, Ida Bagus Mantra. The virtues of

such circles also erupted in earlier societies to elect the Brahmins as kings or at least become royal *purohita*. The Brahmin clan who once held the government (Mayor) of Denpasar was IB Rai Dharmawijaya Mantra, who held a term of office from 2008 to 2015 and continued from 2016 to 2021.

Kings and brahmins in the ancient system of government have a very close correlation. Brahmins are seen as knowledgeable people who later guide the king in the management of government. On the other hand, the king was the holder of power and politics capable of embodying certain ideologies of the brahmins. The ideology of the brahmin is of course very thick with the religious side. The close relationship between the king and the brahmins in the previous system of government was seen as capable of providing an authoritative and spiritual government. A knight or king is obliged to honour and receive instructions from the king. This obligation is contained in the Kakawin Ramayana (I: 47)

Positive feedback must also be shown by a priest to the king who made him *Purohita*. The royal priest was obliged to give in-depth advice to the king. This is certainly very visible from the services of Dang Hyang Nirarta to Dalem Waturenggong. This priest is as a subject who gives teachings of dharma (truth), possess (goodness) and papa called papa (sadness) as described in the Kakawin Ramayana (I: 48)

The old state ideology also provides a place for the development of aristocratic domination in the ranks of the Denpasar City bureaucracy. This is inseparable from the top leadership who comes from the local aristocracy. Leaders as determinants and subjects who approve human resources within the Denpasar City Government provide space for the inclusion of individuals with local nobility in the ranks of the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy will later be controlled by certain top leadership around the elite. This often happens in the old state government. The royal subordinates who feel they have the same background as the king, indirectly act arbitrarily. This condition also seems to occur in the public services of Denpasar City. Some parties who feel there is a closeness with the leader tend to perform less than optimal service, on the contrary, the subordinates are hegemonized by certain bonds of loyalty and loyalty. This condition occurs when power is running effectively. When subordinates feel that the leader is seen as protecting them in carrying out their duties, bonds of loyalty are formed.

The old state ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma motto on the one hand can give birth to deep obedience among the apparatus. The old state ideology positions the cult of leaders in terms of knowledge, including the symbols that accompany it. Every command that is outlined by the leader is rarely violently opposed by the subordinate apparatus and even the people. The Denpasar City Government, which was led by a clan or group of knights and Brahmas, on the one hand, was highly respected by the community. Sometimes, respect for the government of a leader is not based on law, however, it is more based on the principle of aristocracy that underlies the leadership in Denpasar City.

Based on the above review, it can be said that there are traces and compositions from the legacy of the old government held behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma.

This can be seen in the organizational structure of the division of functions and personnel of government administrators, including the institutionalization of the authority in it. For example, this is reflected in the forms of administrative files, archives, speech texts, and so on which lead to a top-down hierarchical organization, translating the essence of Sewaka Dharma. In this idea, the old state ideology provides space for the work of power that is manifested in the structure of modern organizational life based on its demands for labour, time and the prosperity of society, this modern system of government cannot justify its existence based solely on these demands but can depart from the reality in society at large as the basis of its modern legitimacy.

It is undeniable that modern government is in the process of absorbing, fostering and kicking personnel often for a long period. The characteristics of such an institution are the existence of precise rules, both for the requirements for personnel acceptance in terms of age, education and the end of the term of office, that is, when relinquishing authority. Modern government in addition to keeping the common memory also contains an inner desire to preserve and establish self-greatness; this desire at some point can be "expressed" through the role of personnel, but cannot be considered personal ambitions of personnel who happen to play a role.

Such conditions of modern government will carry out policies which are an arbitrary combination of two types of public interest and group interest. Both deserve to be viewed as "representative interests" and "participatory interests", respectively. So, we can draw some kind of spectrum connecting the two poles, or two different situations. This is a variation of interesting distinctions developed with the power of imagination.

The motto of Sewaka Dharma in the end is more constructed as a discordant ideology that allows for two-way service (service by the leader to the people - service by the people to the leader) with a tendency to focus more on serving the people to the leader. The service is in line with the old state image. Sewaka Dharma, which is defined as an activity to serve is an obligation, to provide space for leaders with the thickness of the aristocratic aspect to hegemonize the people to move or serve the leader himself. Services performed by the people of the leader are not solely based on compliance with the juridical principles of the leader. However, it is more directed at the aristocratic side which has been respected by the Balinese people since the past.

The dilemma of escaping from the shackles of the Patrimonial Bureaucratic Ideology

Sewaka Dharma's motto includes the practice of patrimonial bureaucratic ideology. Patrimonialism itself is the power that is sourced and managed directly by the authorities, with a tendency for ambiguity between public and private rights. Sewaka Dharma is positioned as a sacred text which incidentally is only used as a cultural and spiritual face veil, to cover the workings of various power practices behind the word "Sewaka Dharma". Political desire in the process of achieving a leadership seat does not always lead to development or direct society towards prosperity and progress. Efforts to use power to covertly enrich

themselves and their groups also always have the potential to occur in the achievement event for the leaders of Denpasar City.

The emergence of the patrimonial bureaucratic ideology behind Sewaka Dharma cannot be separated from the old state ideology as described previously. The ancient mindset towards the practice of government encourages the leader or creator of the Sewaka Dharma ideology to practice patrimonial bureaucracy. The king in the royal system tends to want to be the main figure, who gives control and determines the existence of a region or territory. On the other hand, it also aims to enrich the welfare of the royal family.

Sewaka Dharma in a patrimonial perspective provides space for the practice of power which is only carried out individually. Service can be carried out directly by the leader, but there may be a goal from the leader to get full service from the people. This condition will later become one of the manifestations of the obscurity of personal and public rights and obligations, as the main image of the patrimonial bureaucracy. The group or group that has a family relationship with the leader will later submit and follow all orders and positions given by the leader.

The patrimonial bureaucratic ideology behind the Sewaka Dharma motto is still analyzed by adhering to the theory of the power of knowledge from Michel Foucault. Michel Foucault says that knowledge becomes the soul or controller of power. If it is associated with patrimonialism in Sewaka Dharma, the leader who becomes a sacred ruler utilizes two pieces of knowledge, namely, knowledge of the views of the Balinese (Denpasar) community towards the king or leader of the previous era and internalization of personal knowledge in utilizing the knowledge of the community. This knowledge will also become an arena for the sole ruler to maintain their existence of himself and the groups that support him. Furthermore, patrimonialism in Sewaka Dharma spreads into many forms of knowledge that are formed effectively.

Sewaka Dharma as the motto of public service in Denpasar City cannot avoid the trap of bureaucratic reform. Bureaucratic reform is an echo of the government system issued by the central government, to regulate the bureaucratic order in every region in Indonesia. Bureaucratic reform from the central government must be carried out by every provincial and district government which incidentally has a government grip with its own local culture. The central government is of course the highest leader above the Denpasar City government which must be followed in carrying out bureaucratic practices. So it can be said that bureaucratic reform is the dominant ideology in the Denpasar City government, which ultimately provides a dilemma for the Sewaka Dharma motto in the Denpasar City government.

The existence of a higher power above the Denpasar City government is something that the Denpasar City government must accept. In the local context, the Denpasar City government, which operates on the premise of Sewaka Dharma, has indeed become the centre of power only for the residents of Denpasar City. But in state practice, of course, there is no state within a state. A government that is under the highest government, must submit and follow the program of the highest government. This is in line with the perspective on power

as Foucault argues, namely that power must be understood as diverse and scattered relations such as networks, which have a strategic scope. This condition of course makes Sewaka Dharma only a verbal motto whose movements tend to be inconsistent with the essential meaning of Sewaka Dharma, and tend to lead to the ideology of the national government.

The ideal practice that should be able to form from the ideology of Sewaka Dharma has been hampered by the dominance of bureaucratic ideology by the central government. Denpasar as a regional government unit under the provincial and central governments is obliged to march in one line related to various aspects of the implementation of the government order. The formulation of policies and work strategies that should be able to be implemented autonomously through the spirit of Sewaka Dharma, sometimes cannot be realized because they must obtain recommendations or approval from the Central government. Many government activities in Denpasar City show the dominance of the central government's ideology over the autonomous practice of the Sewaka Dharma motto. One of them can be seen through Nina Kania's confession as follows:

Pasti, kami mau tidak mau di paksa untuk paham itu. Dan otomatis kita harus belajar juga mengenai hal tersebut. Dan itu biasanya kami atasi dengan Bintek tiap tahun untuk operator...Bahkan sekarang pemerintah mengeluarkan slogan berAKHLAK yang dinisiasi KemenpanRB yang jujur saja isinya hampir sama dengan Sewaka Dharma yang berorientasi pada pelayanan.

Translation:

Of course, we can't help but be forced to understand that. And automatically we have to learn about it too. And we usually deal with that with Bintek every year for operators...Even now the government has issued a slogan with AKHLAK initiated by the KemenpanRB which, to be honest, has almost the same content as the service-oriented Sewaka Dharma (Nina Kania, interviewed, 24 April 2022)

Spirit and the actualization of Sewaka Dharma into a sacred text that is in a discordant position. Sewaka Dharma is actively used as the main discourse at the local level by the Denpasar City government, but it is like competing with new national-scale slogans created by the central government. If you look closely, even though the contents are the same, the origination of the term from the Sewaka Dharma motto has a spirit in the local order that comes from sacred texts. Almost every government program and activity in Denpasar City is required to lead the Sewaka Dharma narrative as a sweetener and reinforcement of local trust in the work practices of the Denpasar City government ASN. However, the realistic steps of the Denpasar City government are more subject to instructions and dominant ideology in the form of bureaucratic reform. So this gives a phenomenon that, the motto in local government can certainly backfire, especially when practical deviations occur in the field, one of which is the practice of corruption, cases of mal-administration or other complaints practices that are completely far from what is expected by the spirit of the relevant motto text, especially when the social practices displayed are counterproductive to the public service itself.

The social practice that is displayed between the Sewaka Dharma motto as a spirit of service is an obligation that must ultimately be subordinated to the big national motto, namely bureaucratic reform. Even though it is sacred, the meaning between the two has a power relation which in the end forms an unbalanced meaning. The motto of Sewaka Dharma which departs from sacred texts and is in its sacred realm is very local, in the end, it must be universalized with values that take on international values which are considered as "standards" of goodness. The West beats, negates or subordinates the East in this case the Sewaka Dharma motto as a binder or bounding for bureaucrats in working based on local values. In several speeches or review reviews of events or the bureaucratic context of many media, local officials often follow the term bureaucratic reform more, although some still refer to Sewaka Dharma as part of bureaucratic reform and not the other way around. In practice in the field, eventually, the meaning of the Sewaka Dharma text seems to often be blurred or obscured by a more universally visible term, namely reform, even though if traced in the historical sequence of the text, there was a Sewaka Dharma which was taken from sacred texts rather than bureaucratic reform. In this regard, Rai Mantra said as follows:

Roda pemerintahan di Kota Denpasar wajib berjalan satu jalur dengan pemerintah pusat. Bagaimanapun juga pemerintah pusat adalah sentral acuan bagi pemerintah kota dalam mewujudkan kesejahteraan atau kesamaan langkah, dengan tujuan mensejahterakan rakyat. Oleh sebab itu, apapun instruksi dari pemerintah pusat terkait dengan pengembangan tata kerja birokrasi, kebijakan pengelolaan ekonomi, konservasi lingkungan dan lain sebagainya, wajib didukung oleh segenap pemerintah Kota Denpasar.

Translation:

The wheels of government in Denpasar City must run in one direction with the central government. After all, the central government is the central reference for the city government in realizing parallels or similar steps, intending to prosper the people. Therefore, any instructions from the central government related to the development of bureaucratic work procedures, economic management policies, environmental conservation and so on, must be supported by the entire Denpasar City government (Rai Mantra, interview 29 March 2022)

Likewise, as an excess or impact of bureaucratic reform that includes international values that are claimed to have received mutual recognition, in reality, it can be interpreted as a value system that includes traps of bureaucrats in carrying out modern bureaucratic functions. This reality also eventually becomes the standard that also includes or drags Sewaka Dharma in its sacred meaning to fade. Instead of upholding the spirit of a modern bureaucracy with bureaucratic reform values with many rigid and measurable performance mechanisms, in the end, it also dragged several high-ranking bureaucrats from Bali who were deemed to have violated or injured the values of Bureaucratic Reform. Personal bureaucrats who should interpret Sewaka Dharma in their daily breath of serving are obligations as sacred mandates which eventually fade due to bureaucrats who have to sink or even slip themselves into the values of bureaucratic reform.

The news above implies that what public officials or bureaucrats do is a willingness to bear the consequences for the impact of abuse of authority. One of the effects of the meaning behind the spirit of serving is the hidden obligation of meaning for individual interests which is difficult to incubate, and also the absence of commitment in carrying out the motto that should have been ingrained and become the *taksu* of the Balinese to serve is an obligation as a consequence of carrying out the sacred mandate as well as in carrying out their worship.

In the context of the above news, serving has become a counterproductive meaning, especially from what was originally idealized to the community or the public as users with a horizontal power relation direction, instead turning completely to personal self or even possibly to the self-interest of the local ruling elite local.

Conclusion

This article shows that the Sewaka Dharma motto contains various ideological meanings that are strongly influenced by the operation of power. This article highlights these three findings. Behind the motto of Sewaka Dharma, which contains the work of old state ideology is manifested through patrimonial behaviour, in reality, it still includes strengthening the symbolic identity of the presence of formal power, namely the Mayor of Denpasar as an analogy to the power of the king. The hierarchical nature of power, which is centralized and mystical, feudalistic, embodied in the symbolization of programs and buildings, is an ornament of power that emerges from this ideology. The ideology that confirms the central position of the ruler and all his followers is translated through the modern bureaucracy. Sewaka Dharma becomes an effective means of power among bureaucrats at all levels which places them as human subjects who are effective in the running of a patrimonial bureaucracy.

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