

# **Women and the Myths Behind the Legend Site on the Trilogy of *the Golden Blood***

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**Abstract:** Humans are mythcreators or mythmakers. That is because of human awareness of the things that are unknown or considered to have extraordinary powers. Among the myths that exist in human life, tends to be associated with the role of women. Most are related to the role of women as objects of certain myths in certain traditions, such as: female circumcision, the concept of female sexuality in patriarchal culture, or their positions in certain fields of life. It can be seen on *The Trilogy of the Golden Blood* by Meliana K. Tansri which elevates the role of the dragon-blooded woman who is associated with the myth of a royal legend in the Jambi region. Analysis of such role between women and myths uses a comparative descriptive method, by Roland Barthes's mythological approach. The hypothesis of the first observation describes women, in the mythical legendary site in the trilogy, tends to be objects of sexuality and reproduction, mortars or offerings, and being of a subordinate.

**Keywords:** *myth, woman, dragon, offering*

## **Introduction**

Armstrong (2005) said that humans are known as creators of myth (p. 1). Basically, It was humans belief that there were following points: 1) humans realized that life is not just reality, but there were some things that were far beyond; 2) being so close to nature, especially in past generations, they realized that there was a substance as the creator of nature--that unknown or unreachable beyond of everyday life (p. 1—4). For example, in the case of death, in certain ethnicities, the corpses was buried with all of their provisions and favorite objects. The family believed that the corpse would be in a long period of waiting before the D-day. Therefore, the dead didn't suffer from starving along the period. Armstrong (2005) stressed that myth in current life had so close relation with things not true or never happened (p. 7). She said that human adults had tendencies in enjoying different possibilities play—simply like a children, they went on creating imaginary worlds, entertained hypothesizes, contemplate its effect upon our lives, or achieved new insight into the disturbing puzzle of world (p. 9). Then, she also said that myths were needed to create human spiritual attitude, to see beyond our immediate requirements, and enable people to experience a transcendent value that challenges our solipsistic selfishness (p. 143).

As had been mentioned on the above title that this paper are going to explore such myths which was connected to women. Women couldn't be separated from certain myths where the surroundings insisted them to be perfect creatures. As the surrounding or the power had their own criteria towards women's life, they then strictly standardized those deeply as if it was legal rules. Hafizoh said that, for centuries, human civilization had made a picture about women with an ambiguous and paradoxical perspective (p. ix). She also said that women were both adored and looked down on. He was considered a body which was beautiful like a flower when it blooms, but then was dumped just as he wilted. According to her, for men, a woman's body is synonymous with power charm and pleasure, but at the same time he is exploited for the sake of self-desire and profit (p. ix). According to Nurhayati (2012), talking about women's always

created discussion which was quite warm and almost endless, because of their mind, image, love, and stories always invite controversy (p. vii).

Sa'dan (2016) said that the practice of female circumcision was not only medically harming women, but also women's right to feel pleasure in having sex with her husband had seize away. Thus, removing the practice of tradition wasn't easy because it needed synergy from various related parties: the government, women activists, religious leaders, medical workers, village stakeholders, and parents (p.126). Exploring about female sexuality among patriarchy culture, Fujiati (2016) said that patriarchy saw women as an inferior, so they loose their own right toward their own body. The control of patriarchy made women felt that their body had been a main source of any problem (p.46). There was also Syafri (2010) who saw young women from the Third World (Haiti), Lucy, as his objek in his research. He found that on the novel of Jamaica Kincaid, Lucy saw that there were many bad deals for female existence: father left her mother and his debt, and colonialism nuances in the house her employer. Syafri saw the way that Lucy done to face the colonialism and the injustice up to. Lucy left for her mother to hide from her mother silence, moved to England as a maid of white, then, at last, jump ito new profesion as a worker.

Saputra (2011) explored female character on colonialism based novel: *Tetralogi Buru, Njai Dasima*, and *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. He found that women in such surroundings were considered to be subalterns. There were no way out for them to let people their voice, their fight, or their choices (p. 30). They were left speechless forever. Then, the closest literature review was written by Yusanti (2011) on her thesis. She explored the trilogy of *Golden Blood* from the sociology persfpective. She focused the social interaction between the native and the foreigner (Tionghoa ethnicity). It was associative—through cooperation and accomodation, and dissociative social interaction—through competition, conflict, and contravention (p. 154—156). Seeing those research then could be concluded that most women were stay silenced though they know that they didn't have chance to free them up for reaching the better life. There were many hitches from their surroundings and the power that imprisoning them as a subaltern. The aim of this study was as a filler on the realm of female research reflected on literary works. They resembled the life of women who lived in the injustisness and limitedness social life.

## **Method**

This study was comparative descriptive analysis by applicating the Rolland Barthes's mythology related to female characters' positions among myths of the legend site on Muaro Jambi, Jambi, where there was a dragon who resembled the power of both earth and sky. It came into those people to find the bride and have a child to save the people and the legend site. The site was buried so deep. Above the site, dragon's enemies built the plywood factory. There was a sacred object that had to be taken by the dragon's descendant--always female, and it had to be given to the real king of the ancient site. The journey to the site were involved many parties, both the supporters and enemies of the dragon. It needed offerings from female dragon's heirlooms, and also other who at the same time got involved into the crisis.

The data were taken from the trilogy of *the Golden Blood: (Mempelai Naga (MENA), Gadis Buta dan Tiga Ekor Tikus (GABUT)*, serta *Sembrani (SBR)*) of Melliana K. Tansri. Different from Yusanti, this would be limited on the relation and position of female character towards the myth of the Kemingking legend site on Muaro Jambi. Data was stressed to many points showing the relation or position of them. Then through denotative and connotative understandings, the data was well-organized and rewritten into an article.

## **Results and Discussion**

Main things that were found in the exploration: 1) women were imprisoned by the obligation, obedience, or ambition; 2) women were being trapped by the power and the male superiority; and 3) women was enslaved by the white.

### ***Women were imprisoned by the obligation, obedience, or ambition***

Many women on the trilogy were being imprisoned by these three points: obligation, obedience, or ambition. They knew that those had made them truly tormented. But, the situation and the condition seemed viciously never let them free. So, they forced to be silence. They couldn't find the way by themselves, except, there many many men or other male creatures came into their life and released them. The obedience had to be done whenever a dominant side were so materialistic or profit oriented. The obedience led to the worst perspective of the dominance. The ambition on the trilogy led to many characters. But, here, on the result and discussion segment, it was limited to the female character only and the relation to those male characters.

### ***Cen Cu***

Cen Cu was main female character only on the first novel of the trilogy: MENA. She hadn't ever had the dragon's blood. She was suddenly chosen as the dragon beloved bride, when was trying to catch the sow back to the piggery. She didn't understand, though started loving the heaven's creature existence. Other hand, she was so confused when the dragon insisted her to be a reproduction machine—bearing child who would be a heroine to save the world. She even didn't know that being its bride was high risk duty. Having got sexual intercourse, she had to be left alone and Naga couldn't touch her. The creature will see her in a distance—though still kept stay on the earth until the baby came. Besides, many opposants—the phoenix clan, wanted to kill her and the baby inside her womb. But, when the D-day had come, Cen Cu hardly ever push the baby out. She lost the energy. In time, the baby had been delivered unconsciously, the enemy were invaded her. One of biggest enemy, a witch named Datuk Itam, secretly ran and snook her up at the backside of Cen Cu, stabbed the heart of the young mother until she died. Before her death, she insistly transformed her energy into the baby.

Rombeng, Cen Cu bodyguard and part of Dragon Clan too, failed to save her. The dragon was so furious. The crystal ball he had—that should be swallowed by the new babyborn then unintenciously being ejected out so far so the dragon couldn't catch it back. The dragon then saw his poor bride. He was so angry so decided to do a revenge by lifting seven his scales and quickly jabbed them into seven part of Datuk Itam's digestion organs. The dragon wanted to torture the old witch so radically until then he die. Having gave the punishment, the dragon then held the corpse of Cen Cu, then streaking fled away to sky.

After her pregnancy, Cen Cu was exciled by her stepmother (Guat Kim) into a worse remoted hut among the bush. Rombeng was asked to be her bodyguard. He fight so hard to defeat the enemies. After the death of Cen Cu, Rombeng then nurtured the baby girl, Len Cu, while being her bodyguard.

### ***Nyai Sati***

Nyai Sati was one of the chosen bride for the dragon long time before. She was beautiful and still got the golden blood. But, as the D-Day came so close, Nyai Sati got deep understanding to avoid married and being its bride. She was a great forecaster—the talent that she was inherited

to her grandson: Datuk Itam, and had revelation of future daughter that she had with the dragon. She then decided to do suicide in order to avoid the schims. The dragon blood in body made her not truly death. She had then instantly disappear until then re-existed again to make a revenge. After her first left, she came again into Datuk Itam life to collaborate with her grandson team in order to dragon heirloom removal. But, she then left for the second time after seeing the baby condition: unconscious. But then, Rombeng who at first thought that the baby died, then tried hard to give such treatment awaking her. He got success and care for her so well.

### ***Lena Chan***

Lena was described as good woman but mysterious. She was forced married to Hartanto (the powerful man on the story) as the ideal parent's choice groom. Even though, at the same time Hartanto had a first love, Sulastri, who undetectedly in her early period of pregnancy. Hartanto had never known that Lena Chan was not an ordinary girl. She was golden blood heirloom and would be one candidate for the dragon. But, as what Nyai Sati deed, Lena Chan made a smart plan too hide from the stranged wedding with the creature. She then pretended of suffering from severe disease in her womb and told to her husband, having had a little boy, Betel, that should be soon done the hysterectomy. Lena kept the secret until she died, and covered it by acting as a good wife for Hartanto.

### ***Guat Kim***

Cen Cu's stepmother was her mother younger sister whom married with her father after her mother's death. Guat Kim enslaved Cen Cu so radically. Simply like Cinderella, Little and young Cen Cu had to do almost all domestic routines, even catching back the sow which sometimes escaped from the piggery and run away to the forest. Guat Kim saw her stepdaughter as a slave or a burden, after her husband's death. She resembled a woman who had to keep strong in her life without her husband support. But, a single woman couldn't have balance, as described by the writer. Her emotion would be blown up and wreaked it to her stepdaughter. Cen Cu was then being exiled into a remoted hut inside the bush, after Guat Kim detected her sacred pregnancy. Cen Cu shut her mouth up so close and kept it until the baby's delivery. Toward the baby's birth, Guat Kim had totally changed. She wanted to guide and care for the birth, though it had never ever happened at all. Guat Kim then suddenly attacked by Hartanto guards who had kept shadowing her along the way to the hut to kill, truly, the bride of the dragon.

### ***Rigel***

This was one character who existed on the three novel. Rigel was a reporter of a famous magazine in Jakarta. She was so interested in investigated the legend site of Kemingking, an ancient kingdom which was believed to be located far below Hartanto's plywood industry. Rigel was described a modern woman who easened her work unnormatively. She might slept easily with the respondent just to have the accurate information before she wrote the article. She done the same thing with Hartanto's golden boy, Betel. She slept with him to get deep information about Hartanto and his business. She was pregnant then. She claimed it and had been blocke by A Hai the assistance of Hartanto. Rigel didn't know that she had done incest—Betel was her half brother and Hartanto was her father. Hartanto had never known when leaving his first love, Sulastri, that she was pregnant because of the arrangement by his parents. Hartanto could easily recognized Riga, because of their similarity.

Having known that Rigel's pregnancy, Hartanto then had a plan to take and keep the baby with him. Hartanto had lost his overdose son, so need to find an alternate one as his heirloom. Having son was very important amongs some ethnic family. Son was the main symbol for the Chinese family. Hartanto then did the kidnapped of her own grandson from her own daughter. Rigel then had a great bad dream and getting depressed for twenty ane years, before at last she met her son anyway. The son itself had been forcasted by Datuk Itam would be on her mother and the Dragon Clan side.

### ***Len Cu***

Len Cu was the hope of dragon as his assistance to controlled the world and human beings. She was delivered as a special daughter from a non-golden blood mother. Dragon were really love her and married her as the beloved bride. Loosing her mother, Len Cu lived with the fighter of Dragon Clan. She was blind and lost of his amulet, the thing that could let her see normally. The amulet had thrown far away to any location and had to be found by Len Cu. Len Cu had to had best preparation to be a heroin who would save the people; mastering self-defence, good instinct, and having good health. Len Cu couldn't be left alone or start the journey herself. She was blind and rather weak body, so needed help for someone. She had Rombeng, three little mouse that were former a king, a guard, and a Prime Minister of the legend site, and many male chacaters whom had high loyalty to the dragon. But, being a prnces didn't happy and ease anyway. Many parties wants her death after her mother's death, then Rombeng, other families, loyalties. Being a princess of the dragon, she had a power: create fire by dancing her hands, had deep instinct. The writer tend to describe the ideal figure of princess to Len Cu: beautiful, humble, tender, cooperate, and good respect to the elder, mastering self-defence and other creature language, need love from the male princess—Xander, Hartanto's grandson. She had been described then life happily ever after with him, after passing the great crisis in her life.

### ***Dr. Ratna***

She was the gyanecologist who help for caring and delivering the baby of Rigel. But, rigel didn't know that Ratna had been betrayed and being brabed by his own father, Hartanto, to separate the baby away from her. The tragedy of Rigel's baby birth, made her felt into the depressed. She had never married again and kept waiting for the moment she could see her own son while continuing her last investigation of findings the legendary site. Dr. Ratna was described as women who had sacrificed her academic and carier assets to the power interest. She didn't brave to resist against of Hartanto interest and disregarded other weak mother dipressed.

### ***Women were being trapped by the power and the male superiority***

Most of female character on the trilogy had been described as inferior. They all depended to the existence and help from male characters and other male creatures. Cen Cu lost her father's love and had never found that from his stepmother and her brothers, except A Ming—one of those brothers. She then had been turned to Rombeng over by her stepmother to hide her pregnancy from other people. Since then, Cen Cu had been cared so well by him. She so depended to him, because she couldn't ask it from his partner, the dragon. The dragon only loved her for her body and her womb necessities. The creatures needed her great sacrifice to live with unexpected pregnancy without his help. He had to stay away from her, though still lived on the earth, until the baby had born. Then, he would kept stayed back on heaven. The dragon itself

resembled God or prophet who gave guidance to people on earth. He chose women of golden blood to be his female baby bearer to keep the guidance on earth. But, it was not easy to be the dragon's bride. There would be the schism and the hunt between the parties, the pros and the contras. The Dragon Clan would be eternally confronted against the Hong or Phoenix Clan—the clan that then build the big factory above the legend site and do the forest looting, such as illegal logging. This, then developed other series of crimes, such as murder, robbing, sexual harassment, bribery, tax evasion, gangsterism, etc.

Though, she called as a bride, Cen Cu seemed to be a victim of the superiority of the dragon. She didn't have her right to live normally since the pregnancy. Many people who really wanted to get her rid of based on the special purposes, but, on the other hand, there were many who still had great loyalty as a follower of the dragon. But, Cen Cu couldn't be saved even by the dragon itself who being more concentrated to fight against Datuk Itam. Rigel, as a loneliness girl, then easily surrendered her body to any informant she met, in the aim to get the precious information along the investigation. Losing love of her father, left the wildness part on her inner side. She need love of her father, but she had never met until she found Hartanto. But, he was still being a villain than father for her.

Nyai Sati and Lena Chan knew better the high risk of being dragon's bride. So, they resisted against the dragon, though both of them had married, by let the inheritance broken. Suicide was Nyai Sati best choice, but her spirit sometimes still came into her grandson's life. Surgery, hysterectomy, became Lena's choice to the compulsion of bearing the other golden blood baby.

Len Cu was a blind girl. She was highly depended to people who believed in her daddy, the dragon. Though, she was independence and had sensitive sensor against many things happened around her, she still needed other help for her protection from her father's enemies. At the end, Len Cu came into a normal women's life, as a wife of Xander, and a mother of their baby. The writer seemed to give a stressing to women that they would be happy if they got married and ruing the traditional role. Truly, Len Cu was a demigod, so she could decide the place she wanted to live in. she might live in the heaven with her father or live on earth as human beings. But, she fell in love with Xander, the gate of her happiness.

Dr. Ratna was one of Hartanto's accomplice who let her capacity as a woman and an academist lost against the bribery. Hartanto high interest on insisting to have the baby boy for his heirloom. This was the description of gender bias on Chinese ethnicity. Son would be a priority for the family. In the future, he would be a symbol of the family. While, Hartanto didn't care about Rigel. So, he let Rigel falling into the longtime depression for having the baby boy. Even, it had been so long that Hartanto had a plan to remove Rigel away.

Yuni then being the ending heroin by releasing ties of the victims away because of her neutral position. She wasn't a golden blood. Her common blood released the spell of Reuben Moore.

### ***Women was enslaved by the white***

The writer seemed to give a simple description that colonialism didn't extinct yet. The strange power would be in behind ones country problem. Reuben Moore, a hundreds years old witch who pretended as an anthropologist; robbing the amulet of the dragon, recruiting the followers for developing his magic, and extending his age. On the third novel, SBR, Moore need the body of Len Cu because of her golden blood, also she had an amulet that made her well-mastering many knowledges and having great power. Besides, Moore needed also the body of the truly King, Datuk Raja, a cub, to comprehend the spell of his reincarnation. Moore had

been long dead, but he stayed alive because of dragon shells inside his body. His father was an illuminaty, and hated him so much by any trial of removal him as a fetus inside his wife womb. Moore then grew up as a sadistic man. He then found the anti-aging formula to extend his age. He was so ambitious of having the amulet of the dragon. He thought that the ritual of his late reincarnation would be greater because of the Datuk Raja, a cub of sumatran tiger. Moore collected his golden blood victims on a certain pattern and spell. But, he forgot the one of non-golden blood heroin, Yuni. She sacrificed her common blood to released those victims from the spell. At the same time, Teddy and Sakim suksessfully corrupted the electric currency. Thus, Moore lost much energy to do his ritual.

### ***Myths***

Many myths had been believed in accordance of diversity in our country. The trilogy also gave description about the diversity when the people involved into the crisis were came from different culture, Malayan, Chinese, and Eurasian. In Malayan ethnic, there was well-known *cindaku*, *Kemingking*, dan kingdom crown. Amongst the Chinese ethnic, there were reincarnation, dragon, dragon's bride, dragon shell, son of Chinese family, and golden blood, and common blood. According to Leafloor (2019), across cultures knew since long time ago that phoenix is a birds that symbolized the sun, dies, and reborn. European knew another creature: Pegasus or unicorn. Kuda sembrani or unicorn on the three novel was a combination of both a white horse and a pair of angel wings. Sembrani then did its duty in saving Len Cu from her enemies and, at the end, it went to the sky to return the amulet to the dragon. Besides Greece, there was also a region in Indonesia which have mythology creature simply like Pegasus, kuda sembrani on Madura, East Java. It was believed to be vehicle of Jokotole, one of legendary character in oral tradition there.

*Cindaku* was simply like werewolf in European tradition. It was the myth of men transformation into other creatures. Men had ever good cooperation with tigers to keep their border. It might aimed by men after did some spiritual practices. *Kemingking* then was a legendary site in Muaro Jambi. People believed that there were an ancient kingdom buried deep down into the earth. But, few year ago, according to Tambunan (2011), there was a problem around the site. There was illegal coal hoarding by some coal industries, whereas the site was national heritage. Reincarnation on the last trilogy, was a concept reborn that made someone transformed into another man or creature. Moore, through his annually ritual, wanted to be reborned into a new man whom could marry a dragon blood woman, so there would be heirlooms of the ruler. Kingdom crown was believed to be a symbol of power.

Dragon was a special creature among shio symbols. Helena (2006) described that dragon was best combination of nine creatures: horns (deer), head (camel), eyes (devil), neck (snake), belly (frog), shell (rainbow fish), claw (tiger), nail (eagle), and ear (buffalo) (p. 18). Dragon's bride was on the novel. She was a elect girl or woman to have sexual intercourse with the dragon to bear golden bloods heirloom. They were people whose had duty as a guide to save people. Golden blood were children from the sexual intercourse between the dragon and the chosen women or girls. Dragon shell on the trilogy was related to the dragon shell that looped into human body. If it was handled well, the shell would be an amulet sustenance. On the other hand, if it was misused, the shell would be disastrous. Common bloods at the end of SBR was a common people blood that released the spell.

The trilogy told us that there was a geder bias where boy is very important into the Chinese family. It related to the Khonghucu, according to Suliyati on Agnes and Christiana (2014), that

it was primary base into Chinese tradition and culture (156). Agnes and Christiana said that Confucianism more prioritized at the existence of harmonious relations between one to another., but it became fearful for the Chinese one of the three devotional practices which said "There are three of no devotees, having no son was the biggest " (p. 156). Hartanto did this, behind his great dissappointedness of loosing his son. It was vented to Rigel by kidnapping her baby boy (next: Xander) also his grandson, so the mother could have the same feeling. Hartanto then prepared Xander as best as he can to be his heirloom. But, he can hide from Datuk Itam's forecast that his beloved grandson would be with the Dragon Clan. He accepted the forecast just before his death. Anyway, Jap and Christiana (2013) there few reasons of having son on Chinese family: 1) eldest boy would be his father heirloom with bigger heritage; 2) he would be ahead on such family ritual after the parents passed away; 3) he would take care parent or the ancient ashes after her father did; and 4) he would keep holding the clan (p 36—40).

## Conclusion

Golden Blood Trilogy was a multicultural literary works. There were many cultures that we found in. Some could acculturate so well, on the contrary, other bore dramatic cultural gaps. There were also many myths which was well-belief. Most of them were related to the life of women or girls resembled through female characters on the novel. All myths were patriarchistic where women or girls were mostly became victims: being a bride to bear a heirloom of the golden blood, living on the unsupported and contradictive surroundings, loosing their identities and rights under the materialistic and patriarchistic interests.

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