

## ABSTRACT

### BALINESE CASTE SYSTEM: A DECONSTRUCTIVE READING TO OKA RUSMINI'S *EARTH DANCE*

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This research aimed to make meaning from the Balinese caste system presented in Oka Rusmini's *Earth Dance*. The modification of deconstructive reading proposed by Barry (2002) was used as the method of the research to analyze the dynamics and complexities that occurred in the most distinctive binary opposition in the Balinese caste system. This research found that *Wangsa Brahmana* became the privileged binary in the Balinese caste system. The privilege came in the form of power resulted from wealth and lineage. A reversal of the binary opposition was found in the text when a reversed cross-caste marriage occurred. This reversal strengthened the power of *Wangsa Brahmana* and makes them remains as the privileged *Wangsa* in Balinese caste system. The privilege was influenced by the practice of the Balinese caste system through the myth, rules of naming, and traditional ceremonies. This means that *Earth Dance* can be categorized as a deconstructive text. From the findings, it can be inferred that *Earth Dance* had successful demonstrated the dynamics of the Balinese caste system in the form of binary opposition between *Wangsa Brahmana* and *Wangsa Sudra*. Although it succeeded in sympathizing it concerns to the marginalized *Wangsa*, the text here made a pragmatic ending for the story. Thus, has made *Earth Dance* a contemplative for the reader.

Key words: *Social Stratification, Balinese Caste system, deconstruction.*