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The Body Politics of Gendered Subjects in Indonesian Post-Reform Films

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Abstract

The phenomenon of power, exercised through the issue of gender and sexuality, is represented in Indonesia along with different regimes. However, the gendered body becomes the target of experienced body politics. Thus, this article aims at investigating the body politics of the gendered subjects as revealed in Indonesian Post-Reform films entitled *The Dancer (Sang Penari)* and *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*. This study used the narrative method by applying Yuval-Davis' theory. Through these two films, this paper argues that the intersection of gender and sexuality leads to the othering process of the gendered body through the notion of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Further, the ambivalence construction of motherhood, which essentially deals with femininity, is practised toward the gendered bodies. However, the power relation positions the gendered subjects paradoxically by mystifying their body and also demystifying their existence. This shifting is operated under altered discourse in different regimes. Further, biopower is exercised not only by regulating the body but also by subjugating them through sexual slander. Indeed, it leads them to be demonized as PKI regarding the regime's agenda in maintaining the Indonesian collective trauma of the 1965 Genocide. However, the gendered subjects define themselves as a subject through their agency by submitting to the master narrative.

Keywords: Body Politic, Gendered Subjects, Sexual Slander, *Lengger*, Resistance

Introduction: The Body Politic and gendered Subjects

The exercise of power over sexuality and gender has been practised in Indonesia through the various forms of regulation and law enforced on the citizen's body. Therefore, the body becomes a site. Further, it is in line with Foucault's study that the body is related to the modern operation of power, in which the body and knowledge are focused mainly. This is what Foucault (1995: 28) coined as the body politics: "a set of material elements and techniques that serves as weapons, relays, communication routes, and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge."

Further, Sassatelli (2012: 348) stated that body politics refers to an understanding of practice toward the body that involves the process of society in regulating and exercising social control over the body. Furthermore, Brown & Gershon (2017: 1) stated that the efforts to subjugate these

bodies to certain regimes were carried out systemically, such as through governments' regulations. This policy is a method of the power to ensure that these bodies will behave in a socially and politically acceptable manner as the government or regime wants to shape their citizens. Therefore, it is plausibly related to Mirzoeff (1995: 55) who defines body politics as a manifestation of justification and rationalization of violence. In the Indonesian context, it can be related to any form of threat against the absolute power of the state that will be labelled as a capital crime. Consequently, violence will be executed against the dissident body. Therefore, body politics involve all the methods of subjugating a body as required by the power to create a docile body.

Interestingly, two films—*The Dancer (Sang Penari)* and *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*—shared the same narratives on the body politics exercised on gendered subjects. Further, as coined by Fulton et al (2005: 108), examining technical production like camera angles, sound, character, and point of view (*focalization*) reveals the complexity of signification to understand the notion of the film. Therefore, these films are observed in detail through the close reading technique. The data are taken by capturing the screen on the scenes related to issues of body politics. All the data are then categorized, and the unnecessary data are reduced. The data are analyzed on how the cultural narratives of the regimes in Indonesia ambivalently practice othering the body on the issues of gender and sexuality. In conclusion, the researcher concludes by identifying how the Indonesian ideology of gender and sexuality is exercised toward the gendered body which leads to the othering.

In these two films, the gendered subjects are defined as *Ronggeng and Lengger*. At this point, it can be highlighted that the intersection of gender and sexuality is the fundamental notion in exercising power. These two films used the bodies of *Ronggeng and Lengger* dancers to articulate the practice of power over their bodies. However, the intersection of gender and sexuality leads to the othering process of the gendered body through the notion of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). In the Indonesian historical context, PKI reminds the Indonesian collective trauma of the Genocide in 1965. The bloody tragedy involved the mass murder of the people who were labelled as members of the PKI by the army led by Soeharto, which ended in the replacement of the Indonesian President from Soekarno to Soeharto. The labelling regarding sexual slander involves the use of PKI as an instrument of othering. However, there is a shift in the target of othering in Indonesian regimes from women in the Old and New Order eras to the LGBT groups during the Reformation era. The gendered body becomes a site of power contestation related to the discourse of sexuality in those different regimes.

These two films tell the story of *Ronggeng and Lengger* dancers from different eras. Both the dancers are famous in Banyumas even since Indonesia was under Dutch colonialization. *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, directed by Ifa Isfansyah in 2011, depicts the Old Order and New Order eras. This film is inspired by Ahmad Tohari's novel entitled *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, written during New Order Era. Again, *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*, directed by Garin Nugroho in 2018, reveals the setting of the Reformation era. This film is inspired by the life of Rianto, a Lengger from Banyumas. These two films were produced in the Post Reform era which had a great impact on the freedom of the marginalized group. However, these two films revealed how sexual slander is exercised by labeling gendered bodies as members of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).

Thus, it can be assumed that these two films criticize how the scapegoating of PKI was used for the political agenda in New Order and Reformation Era.

The bodies of *Ronggeng* and *Lengger* in both of the films cannot be separated from the context of their terminology, which is closely related to Banyumas' traditional dancer. In Javanese ancient literature, known as *Serat Centhini* written by Adipati Anom (5th edition, article (pupuh) number 321-356, *Lengger* is often referred to as the history of Mas Cebolang who danced and dressed up as a woman. Fatmawaty & Alim (2020: 262) stated that etymologically *Lengger* comes from the words "leng" and "ngger". Here, *leng* (hole) symbolizes a woman, and *jengger* (the crown of a rooster) is used as a male symbol. Hence, *Lengger* is defined as a traditional dance performed by a male in a female costume or by transvestite. In some parts of the region, *Lengger* performed by a female is called *Ronggeng*. However, *Lengger* and *Ronggeng* bodies are noticeably gendered regarding their oppressions exercised by a superpower. At this point, Foucault's concept of bio-power as power originates in power over the body (Foucault in Synnott, 1993: 232) and is manifested in the control over the *Ronggeng* and *Lengger*'s bodies.

Through these two films, the shifting gender ideology of different regimes in Indonesia can be identified. Further, it can be underlined that the articulation of gender in the Old Order and New Order eras conforms to a binary gender system, which leads to the dichotomy of masculine-feminine as depicted in the film *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*. Even though this film depicts the binary gender system in the New Order Era, the existence of gender fluidity in the New Order Era actually was revealed around 1970. It was when Jakarta's Governor Ali Sadikin (1966-1977) introduced *waria* (the melting words of *Wanita/female* and *Pria/male*) to replace the term *wadam* to give opportunities to the transgender residents of the capital to get the same right to be treated in city services (Murtagh, 2013: 5). Meanwhile, the Reformation era opened more spaces for alternative gender variants as articulated in the film *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*. However, gender fluidity, which also idealizes a binary gender system that intentionally positions the masculine-feminine dichotomy, remains the parameter in gender relations. Further, the gender relations reveal that the embodiment of femininity in the dancer's body had an implication for the submission of the dancer's body. Thus, regarding the embodied femininity, the gendered bodies are mystified as well as demystified in different eras.

Mystification and Demystification of the Gendered Subjects in Indonesia

A mystified and demystified body is a manifestation of the gender-related body politics practised in Indonesia. The gendered bodies in these films reveal mystification that positions the dancers' bodies as a blessing, whereas demystification posits the body as a moral threat. In *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, the body of female dancers experienced mystification by being considered *the mother of collectivity*. It is in line with the basic concept coined by Yuval-Davis (1997: 56) that the female figure is usually associated with the mother symbolizing the spirit of collectivity. At this point, the culture positioned a woman's body as the mother of collectivity in which all hopes and kindness are embodied in her body. However, the dancers' bodies in the New Order era are demystified as they should fit the prevailing norms. As stated by Lysloff (2002: 4), compared to court dance, *lengger* or so-called *ronggeng* by Tohari, represents the earthy, more fleshy sexuality of the potentially available, and even dangerous, women. The dancers are

considered available because they are generally viewed as immoral, often becoming sexually involved with some of the male members of the audience. Meanwhile, they are also considered dangerous because their overt sexuality is thought to lead men astray, destroy marriages, and result in fights or sometimes even murder. Furthermore, in *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*, the body of a *male Lengger* dancer in the Reformation era also experienced mystification, but later was demystified by political groups as a moral threat to society. Juno as *gemblak* in Murtagh's category (2013: 6) was similar to traditional or sacred homosexuality from Indonesia like other well-known terms such as *bissu* and *warok*. Through an intradiegetic sound, the Regent's wife stated that

"The people next to the river have 60% of the vote, but they demand Juno and his friend should be banished from this village. They say Juno's group will only destroy the morale of young people. That is the issue" (01:29:35).

The dialogue reveals that Juno's existence was considered a form of moral threat to the youth and also destroyed the nation. As posited by Suryakusuma, homosexuality is often considered a deviant, abnormal, and immoral sexual orientation. (2012: 44) It also legitimizes the views of Indonesians highlighting the homophobic notion that positioned the effeminate body against the natural gender role in the feminine-masculine dichotomy.

In gender relations, women are attached to a burden of representation which places women in an ambivalent position. As in *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, this ambivalence is also experienced by Srintil, the *Ronggeng* dancer. This ambivalence reifies her as a subject that represents the spirit of collectivity. On the contrary, it required her to submit to the patriarchal order. As suggested by Yuval-Davis (1997: 57-58), the ambivalence, on the one hand, reifies women by idealizing their bodies as the mothers of the community. But, on the other hand, it also positions women as inferior. However, mothering becomes the mode of subjugation. As revealed in this film, how women's bodies are mystified and demystified by the power indicates a big narration perpetuating the hidden agenda of dominant masculinity.

Ronggeng dancers in the Old Order era experienced mystification because the existence of Banyumas people's spirit of collectivity was embodied through the body of *Ronggeng*. Through intradiegetic sound, it is described how a woman thanks and gives a gift to Srintil for sleeping with her husband. She hopes that *Lengger* will spread her blessings so that she and her husband will be fertile. This is related to the myth that the *Ronggeng* body is a symbol of fertility. Whoever succeeds in sleeping with a *Ronggeng* will be blessed so that the wife will also have the blessing. *Ronggeng* is a sacred symbol as she embodied the supernatural power of *Ronggeng* called *indang* (Tohari in Lysloff, 2002: 7).



Figure 1. A woman waited outside the room while ronggeng slept with her husband as she hoped to be blessed with fertility

However, *Ronggeng's* body is also positioned ambivalently in a different socio-political context in the Old Order and the New Order. In *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, culture remained the dominant discourse in which all the villagers should submit to the rule. It implies that in the Old Order era, the state was not involved in regulating the body of the *Ronggeng* dancer. Thus, the position of the *Ronggeng* dancer remained exclusive in society as a reflection of collective idealized femininity. Tohari described a *ronggeng* dancer as the common property of the village men, playing her role to prevent boredom in the marriage. (in Lysloff, 2002: 7) A *Ronggeng* dancer is also positioned as sacred because of her mystical power. The existence of *Ronggeng* as a folk dance was developing in the Old Order era since Indonesia was focusing on the development of a national culture rooted in the folk arts. As explained by Foulcher, folk arts are seen as the cultural expressions of Indonesian people that were originally sources of resistance. (Foulcher, 1987: 85) Therefore, it was maintained and developed to resist the absorption of imperialism. In line with the cultural-political context, President Soekarno strongly encouraged and supported the development of traditional culture. Various efforts were made by Soekarno to explore national culture rooted in traditional culture. (Ismail, 1972: 37) Further, Ardjo stated that Soekarno was a statesman and artist who liked art, especially Indonesian traditional dances. (in Lindsay and Liem, 2012: 401-415) Hence, he strongly supports the development of women's dance. However, it is not surprising that in the Soekarno era, when laborers and peasants were one of the strengths of the Old Order, folk art also received great support for its development. Under the People's Cultural Institute (LEKRA), arts rooted in folk culture were developed enormously. Through BKR and under the supervision of LEKRA, several types of folk-themed arts have been developed, such as fishermen dances, farmer dances, and tea picking dances. The development of folk arts in various regions shows how female dancers engage themselves in the public sphere and become symbols of being desirable and idealized, as depicted in *Sang Penari (The Dancer)* that being a dancer becomes a girl's dream. In addition, sleeping with a dancer also becomes the people's ambition, not only for sexual pleasure but also for their pride.

In the New Order era, *Ronggeng* experienced demystification. As a folk dance that is associated with prostitution, *Ronggeng* becomes the target as it confronts society's norms. Yuval-Davis states that the construction of womanhood using cultural codes defines a proper woman, but indeed it still positions women as inferior. (1997: 58) Formerly, the existence of *Ronggeng* as a folk dance can be related to the position of Banyumas which is outside the Jogja and Solo Court (Keraton Jogja and Solo). Larasati states that in the mid-1960s, the construction of separation and differentiation of court and non-court cultures re-emphasized traditional social values ??such as aristocracy to be elegant, and rooted in aristocratic culture. (2013: 65) Further, Lysloff states that the court dance symbolizes ideal beauty and femininity, and even obedience in the New Order era. (2002: 14) This underlines the shift in the symbol of ideal femininity through dancers' bodies from the Old Order era to the New Order era. *Ronggeng* is no longer idealized because the sensuality of the female body is considered a threat to the nation's morality.

On the other hand, a different mode of mystification is experienced by the *Lengger* dancer. An effeminate male *Lengger* dancer experiences more complicated issues regarding gender and sexuality problems. As revealed in the film *Memories of My Body* (2018), the mystification positions the *Lengger* body to bring luck, but not regarding the mothering body. His body is mystified to disclose its relationship with the mythical shaman. In one scene, it is described how Juno was ordered by the wife of the Regent to serve the Regent. The scene was revealed with a mystical song from Banyumas, *Sulasih-Sulandana*. In fact, this song is believed to summon an angel to spread the blessings through *Lengger's* body. The mystification becomes the requirement for the Regent to win the Regional Head Election (PILKADA). Thus, it can be seen how the position of the *Lengger* is placed below, in which the lens of the camera point to the Regent as the owner of greater authority than the *Lengger* dancer with the Javanese singer (*sinden*) who is sitting at the bottom. This scene represents the positioning of the *Lengger* dancer as the mystified body and also a dominating body.



Figure 2. Juno's mystification as a complement to the offerings in the election winnings ritual.

In its journey, the body of the *Lengger* dancer in the Reformation era then experienced demystification because it was an open site to build a stigma on the fluidity of gender and sexuality. Indeed, the demystification positioned the body of a *male Lengger* dancer as no longer sacred or not an ideal figure in society's fantasy as experienced by *Ronggeng*. *Ronggeng* was ubiquitously present in some political rallies such as PKI or PNI. It highlighted the notion of their mystification for being commodified as a magnet for drawing a huge crowd. Larasati stated that in the context of 1965, the power of female dancers and singers, in particular, was able to attract the attention of the masses in various performances. (2013: 6) Furthermore, the existence of dancers in political rallies remains essential even in this Reformation era. It is fascinating that through the character of Juno (the *Lengger*), the gender and sexuality complexities of a male dancer are presented in this film. Juno, whose name was taken from Arjuna, symbolized a figure of dualistic nature of feminine and masculine. As stated by Anderson that Arjuna, taken from a figure in the Indian epic *Mahabharata*, is believed to be conventionally combining male and female characteristics. (in Heryanto, 2008: 66) Arjuna's character, who has a dualistic nature, seemed to be manifested in the *Lengger* dancer's body. In the *intradiegetic* sound or the dialogue between Juno and Pak Atmo, it was stated that Wahyu Juno's full name, *wahyuning arjuno*, means a calm stature like water and magnificent like a mountain (*dedege ning-ning koyo banyu, neng-neng anteng manteng koyo gunung*). This dialogue implied the dualistic character of Juno as a certain hope for being *halus* (refined) as well as having superior power to defeat. Once, Arjuna was also described as a symbol of virility and invincibility because of his spiritual powers derived from self-control and asceticism (Wieringa, 2014: 447). Further, Arjuna was also a womanizer just like Juno (*the lengger*), who was also effeminated as depicted in this film. Hence, this representation basically legalizes *Lengger's* body in articulating subordinate gender and his gender relations with the other figures.

The shifting of mystification into demystification had a great influence on how body politics is exercised toward gendered subjects. However, they subsequently experienced the exclusionary mechanism as they were labelled as members of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). PKI, as part of Indonesian collective trauma in relation to the 1965 Genocide, has always become a haunting memory for Indonesian society. Just after Soeharto took power in 1965-1966, anything related to PKI will always be regarded as a threat. As stated by Larasati, anyone who is involved either directly or indirectly with the PKI is considered a subversive act and part of a political crime. (2013: 37) Both films reveal how the gendered bodies of *Lengger* and *Ronggeng* are labelled as PKI and the new style of PKI. On the one hand, Srintil as *Ronggeng* is labelled as PKI as her body is considered to be a threat to the nation. Indeed, she was performing in PKI's rallies; but, the narratives of the film depict that she is not a member of PKI as she performed for her economic needs. On the other hand, Juno, as a homosexual, is labelled as a threat to the morale of the nation. Therefore, it can be interpreted that sexual slander on the body of *Ronggeng* dancer by assaulting her as a PKI member is a form of control mechanism to subjugate the gendered body. Indonesian Women's Organization (Gerwani) and LGBTQ as a group with sexual perverse are seen as threats to the nation. Communist phobia and homophobia reproduced simultaneously see Gerwani and LGBTQ through 'pornographic gaze' (S. Wieringa & Katjasungkana, 2019: 114-118). Thus, the state then took a big role in determining attitudes toward sexuality. The state also uses several institutions such as family, the court system, the police, and the community. Therefore, it

had also a relation to PKI with Gerwani and the new style of PKI. Henceforth, it is highlighted by the government that it would be safer for people to avoid being labelled as PKI since the consequence will be extremely horrifying.

The artist's closeness to the accusation of being part of the PKI has been going on for a long time. Further, Larasati (2013) states that many dances can cause their death because of the accusations of being part of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This closeness is presumed to be originated from the issue of folk dances as a form of gratitude at the harvest festival so that various folk arts are considered to be able to gather masses. The New Order, which identified this as a threat, took steps to control artists with the threat of being stigmatized as PKI. This association is indeed related to how the New Order regime maintained the collective memory of the Indonesian nation by deliberately reviving the PKI as a haunting specter. The sexual slander of being a PKI has caused deep trauma for Indonesian people regarding the social sanctions of being isolated and alienated. The PKI and all its affiliated organizations were associated as inhuman, barbaric, and evil. This association raises the notion that being part of the PKI or being associated with the PKI was a fatal mistake that led to the curse of justification, torture, or murder of PKI members. (S. Wieringa & Katjasungkana, 2019: 114-118) Therefore, the 1965 discourse that reappeared in the Reformation era was essentially aimed at causing trauma and spreading fear in the community. The collective memory of this trauma is well preserved to haunt any action that challenges authoritative power.

Resistance of Gendered Subjects

The body politics practised on the gendered bodies creates resistance toward domination. As revealed in these two films, the various negotiations of the two dancers are efforts to affirm their existence as a subject by submitting to the dominant discourse. Srintil in *The Dancer (Sang Penari)* empowers her position as a subject in her relation to Rasus. Meanwhile, Juno in *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)* reveals the same ideas in his relationship with Warok. De Lauretis (1990: 132) states that resistance and resistance strategies can be understood as having two objectives, seeking equal status or radically opposing "men". However, the resistance of these gendered subjects emphasizes more on seeking equal status. By submitting to the dominant discourse, the resistance is specifically aimed as a form of subversion toward the order.

Both *Ronggeng* and *Lengger* bodies have agency precisely when they submit to the dominant discourse that surrounds them. Leahy stated that the agency of the female subject is intentionally used to express her resistance to patriarchal objectification. (in Morrissey, 2013: 310) As revealed in *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, the *Ronggeng's* body is positioned as an arena for cultural domination to play the tradition of net opening (*buka klambu*). Her resistance toward culture is done by breaking the culture as the culture required an auction for her virginity. Therefore, she intentionally has sex with her lover before her virginity is auctioned in the tradition of net opening. As revealed in this film, through homodiegetic narration, Srintil takes the role of a subject by refusing Rasus' request to stop as *Ronggeng* in their discussion. She said "Sus, ronggeng is my world. A form of devotion for Dukuh Paruk." At this point, she has a bargaining position to be a *ronggeng* dancer. Therefore, equality creates an agency as the subject does what she wants.

In different regimes, *Ronggeng* and *Lengger* were categorized into different classes as revealed in these two films. In the film *The Dancer (Sang Penari)*, Srintil is depicted as an artist who receives special privileges because her position is higher than other women's. It happened in the Old Order era when the culture supported it much. Being *Ronggeng* means increasing her status to be more respected. It is still clear in the memories of the villagers of Dukuh Paruk how her parents were seen as the actor behind the *bongkrek* poisoning tragedy. Hence, Srintil is able to negotiate her status to recover the good name of her family. She also realizes that being *Ronggeng* gives her the luxury of being a local celebrity. While Alexander (2011: 373), who also uses Yuval-Davis' (2008) theory, stated that by labelling as the mother of the nation, women are categorized in the second class, I highlighted that in some and certain cases, it is different. This film shows that it is still possible to position women in the first class just like a *Ronggeng* in the Old Order Era. Although at the same time she is also aware that she cannot escape from patriarchal rules, the society affirms her existence as a *Ronggeng* and hails her as a local artist. People in the village even compete to give her prizes such as vegetables, fruit, and crops. However, the entrance of *Ronggeng* into the political economy of party rallies such as PKI or PNI in the Old Order Era reveals an ambivalence position. Even though she affirms her agency to be the chosen dancer, in fact, she still has to submit to all the rules of the dominant discourse.

The different atmosphere was created differently for the male dancer (*Lengger*). In *Memories of My Body (Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku)*, almost all scenes show how the effeminate body of *Lengger* is marginalized and far from being appreciated by society. Juno's life journey as a *Lengger* in this film is always exposed as a marginal class group. Even this film was so controversial that it was rejected by some community leaders and mass organizations in certain regions for being aired since it was suspected of campaigning for homosexuality. This condition reveals how certain attitudes toward gender have become more and more conservative since the Reformation era. However, the resistance was done to challenge the Regent's power. The power contestation between *Warok* and the Regent positions Juno's body as an arena. In relation to *Warok*, Juno becomes *gemblak*. *Gemblak* is a male dancer who dresses up as a female or is known as transvestites. According to the *Reyog* legend in the Cebolang story, the hero disguised as a *gemblak* is the son of a *kyai*. The myths in Ponorogo about *gemblak* expose that there is a magical power gained by *Warok* in its relationship with *gemblak*. Wilson states that *gemblak* is a domestic *Warok* partner and has a sexual relationship with *Warok*. (in Murtagh, 2013: 67) They are known for their courage, art, and magical powers. As *gemblak*, Juno defined himself as a subject who had an agency. Even though being *gemblak* meant that he would also be dominated by a *Warok*, at least he was free from the domination of the Regent to be his gay partner. Juno also had a guarantee of safety from the *Warok* because he was considered the property of *Warok*. *Reyog* and *gemblak*, as a traditional dance from Ponorogo East Java, has a strong relation with mysticism. Kartomi (1976: 86-87) explains that Ponorogo *Reyog* art has characteristics related to mysticism, sexuality, humor, and politics. *Warok* may indeed be physically strong, but he is also a powerful man with his magic. Thus, the relationship between *Warok* and *gemblak* indicates how the societies perceive negatively toward their sexual relationship. Perverse sexuality was considered to be the essential notion of morality in the Reformation Era.

Conclusion

This study highlights that the articulation of gender ideology of the regimes in Indonesia underlines the notion of a binary gender system. These two post-reform films reveal that the shifting regimes construct the gender relation differently. While gender relations in the Old Order and New Order eras were depicted in the relationship between men and women, the Reformation era revealed the relations between masculinities and other masculinities. Thus, the Reformation era gives more space for the fluidity of the gender system. However, all of these relationships lead to gender domination which is operated on certain marginalized groups. Further, as culture played an important role as the main power in the Old Order era, norms and morality became the reference standard in the New Order and Reformation era. However, the ambivalence construction of motherhood, which essentially deals with femininity, is practised toward the gendered bodies. Furthermore, the power relation positioned the gendered bodies paradoxically by mystifying their body and demystifying their existence. This shifting is operated under altered discourse in different Indonesian regimes.

In addition, the sexual slander experienced by the gender bodies describes how the control mechanism is exercised that leads to othering. The haunting collective memory of PKI highlighted how the spread of fear is intentionally organized to subjugate society. Undoubtedly, the phenomenon of the body politic that is practised against the gendered body has a great impact on gender oppression and even leads to sexual oppression.

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