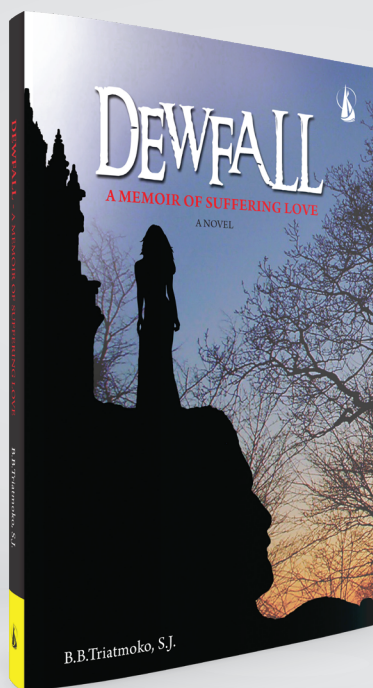




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B.B. Triatmoko, SJ

Novel

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DEWFALL

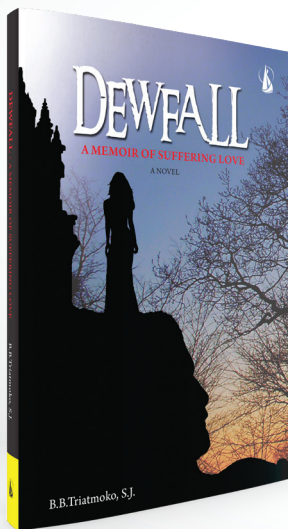
Bisma Dewabrata

If you have explored one of the Hindu heritages and legacies in Indonesia, you of course will know one of the two epic stories that are still actual and still exist until the present day. Let's just call it the story of Rama Sinta, Hanoman, War of Bharata Yudha, and other stories that are quite popular among the people today. One of the interesting ones, as an example, the story of Rama and Sinta, is regularly performed on the stage platform of the Prambanan temple. Of course, this is a way to keep preserving the tradition, also to bequeath to the present generation. Other methods are also used for example by writing and producing a literary work in the form of novels, like *Dewfall*.

This novel starts from Triatmoko's daily routine in writing word by word, then assembled together into a story in this novel. It can be said that this is the result of the daily reflections of the writer. There are some symbols that readers can find from the world of shadow puppetry in this book. The flow of the story is also arranged in a certain way to create a presentation that astonishes the readers.

In this story, the goddess Tara is depicted as perhaps the most ancient deity that is still widely respected in modern times. The goddess of Tara initiated from the Hindu Goddess, as the Mother goddess the Creator, is the source of the power of eternal life, which

gives life energy to all beings. In Sanskrit, the name Tara means Star, but she is also referred to as “She Who Gives Life”, “Mother of Great Love”, “Great Protector”, “Mother of Wisdom”. Buddhism adopted the Tara Goddess to be a highly respected god in the Tibetan tradition. In the Buddhist tradition, Tara is a female Buddha, who has gained enlightenment and reached the highest level of wisdom.



The sentences in the preface section seem to be sufficient to be a clue to the beginning of the novel's excitement. Why is it so? This novel begins from Hindu and Buddhist teachings, where both religions have their own peculiarities and distinctiveness. Triatmoko is accomplished to bring this novel into a modern-day novel with language that is also contemporary. This *Dewfall* novel underwent a title change; it was originally titled *Between Fog and Drenched Land*. This change is expected to further bring this novel to its specificity as a novel from Hindu and Buddhist stories. This novel is divided into 7 chapters, with each chapter representing the level of consciousness of the human soul. *Dewfall* becomes a novel that combines daily reflective experience and cultural heritage of Indonesian shadow puppetry. Bringing these two dimensions together is not an

easy task, especially for present readers. What Triatmoko made in this work presents the reader with a new way of reading about a story of shadow puppetry.

Chapters 1-3 comprise awareness of human experiences which accompany readers to get to know the characters one by one. The development of the characters appears in the flowing storyline, and from the attention of Triatmoko in formulating the characterization of the figures in the story. For example, the character of Dewi Amba who is gentle in heart will stay strong until the end of the story. Even with the character of Patih Danureja, who at the beginning was described as a cunning and power-hungry person, at the end of the story his character still survives and can be marked directly as this character's characterization. It was also similar to other figures, such as Wulandari,

Prabu Sentanu, Rama Bargawa, and others.

Entering chapters 4-6, awareness of things outside the physical begin to be developed. These chapters will be decorated with conflicts that begin to surface although they still have the same characters. However, their roles rose to a level compared to the previous chapter. Also, in chapters 4-6, Dewabrata received supplies to be able to get blue utpala flowers.

As a conclusion that summarizes all of the novel's rhythms and conflicts, chapter 7 presents the final level of awareness after the person has finished processing the physical and spiritual aspects, namely enlightenment. At this point, the figures get enlightenment according to each of their respective maturity levels.

Besides various ingredients for the religious spiritual wrapped with pretty and interesting words, this book also presents the love triangle romanticism, between the main characters, Dewabrata with Dewi Amba and Wulandari. This love romanticism will end on the conflicts full of trickeries, but it will open up soul awareness for all of the characters.

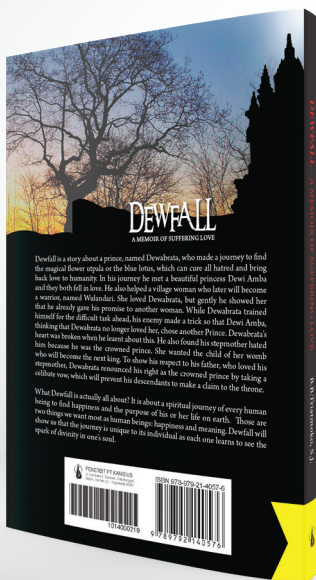
Depicted in this novel, there is a prince, heir to the throne, crown prince of the Astinapura kingdom who is experiencing inner agitation in seeking the perfection of life. His desire to increase self-awareness must begin with a journey after receiving a sign that he must seek the blue utpala flower, as flower that gives peace and inner freedom. The voyage begins with his freedom to let go off his status as crown prince and look for the existence of blue utpala flower.

One of the persons who can help and lead him to get blue utpala flower is the figure of a Begawan, Rama Bargawa. Rama Bargawa is defined very well in Triatmoko's novel. It is narrated that Rama Bargawa was a knight and hermit who did not hesitate to kill his enemies in cruel ways. Rama Bargawa's meeting with Dewabrata had slightly changed his perspective. The presence of the character Rama Bargawa has become a way to open awareness of the purity of the heart. Finally, it was in the hands of Rama Bargawa that Dewabrata had risen up off the level of knighthood and learned to improve his knowledge. He did that in order to get a blue utpala flower. Besides meeting with Rama Bargawa, Dewabrata also met with other figures who also served important roles throughout the novel. The meeting with Dewi Amba drove him to the love relation. Furthermore, meeting

with Wulandari, a village girl who was forced to become a concubine of the Danureja regent, also eventually led to a mysterious event that had never came to mind before.

This novel ends with a very famous battle story in the history of Hindu Buddhist shadow puppetry, Barata Yudha war. This war is the key as well as the answer to all of the questions in this novel. Triatmoko brought this story to the historical side very cleverly and also emphasized the aspect of shadow puppetry literature which has become one of Indonesia's cultural arts.

There is one more unique thing about this novel that is trying to be poured in the form of important sentences of soul awareness. Triatmoko with his expertise succeeded in pouring important sentences into a beautiful color to start each chapter in his novel. Soul awareness can bring blessings or curses to him.



*The beginning of the journey is to let the soul's longing
for meaning direct all of consciousness.*

The longing for each soul is unique.

*We love different people, kneel in front of a different altar,
lamenting in front of a different tombstone.*

But ultimately the end of the journey is the same.

We want to be happy and live meaningfully.

About the Author

Benedict B. Triatmoko, SJ was born in Tanjung Balai Karimun in 1965. He entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1984 and was ordained priest in 1994. From 2000 to 2009 he was the director of the Academy of Machinery Industry in Surakarta. In 2009 he was named the head of the Academy of Machinery Industry Foundation. He was trained in Philosophy, Theology in Jakarta and Manila. He took special studies in Manufacturing Technic, Computer Science, and Business Management in Boston, USA.



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