

# Jegingger's Ahmad Tohari: A re-narrated based on sacrilege and social disorganization

Widodo Aribowo

Faculty of Cultural Science, Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Surakarta 57126, Indonesia; aribowosolo@staff@uns.ac.id

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**Abstract:** This research examines the Jegingger, novel written by Ahmad Tohari (JAT) which highlights the banal life of a family (palm trees climbers). JAT was re-narrated as exploiting the tension between the economy and family ties, whether ideally economic activities are separate (industrial economy) or integrated with the family (subsistence). Cultural establishments are mutually contested: the subsistence culture of traditional society is challenged by the productive economy, or conversely, the productive economy is challenged by the banal subsistence economy of traditional society. The methodology of postclassical narratology—exploring and explaining cultural manifestations and then exposing chronological sequences—was used to structure the vulnerability or resilience of banal communities in maintaining social ties. A subsistence economy with its characteristics of low productivity because it tends to be a cultural activity—not economic. It contains vulnerabilities seen from two sides: 1) banal agencies that do not have literacy and competence in carrying out subsistence professions have the potential to commit malpractice; 2) low productivity limits access to health facilities. These two weaknesses become obstacles to maintaining social ties. Sacrilege—abuse of sacred symbols—which was triggered by the malpractice of coconut climbing, has caused social disorganization—the loss of basic family and community affection—becoming a hub for the idea of raising awareness of the importance of the power of knowledge and materials in supporting traditional community ties. Mastery of material, especially in massive amounts (1.5 billion diamond necklaces), can transform a banal agency into a powerful one.

**Keywords:** sacrilege; social disorganization; Javanese novel; Jegingger; subsistence economy

## 1. Introduction

Reality in fiction as an imaginary system is a model on which modern science relies heavily. The imaginary system was chosen as the object of study because it is not as complex as the target (Salis, 2021). According to Walton (1973), there are at least two models of the relationship between fiction and reality, namely fiction as a portrait of reality and fiction as a representation of reality (Salis, 2021). This article is not sensitive to the debate between the two groups, however, according to Putnam (1973), a concept—ignoring the rigid description of concept terminology—may not be a strict description of truth but still refers to something and refers to things—the same one. A concept may be a member of a reality—the word ‘a’ is a limitation.

It is hoped that this middle ground proposition is based on the following assumptions: 1) fiction depicts reality in its best version, such as capturing the nuances of human behavior; social situations, and cultural norms that are the focus of fiction; 2) as a representation project, research seeks to interpret or reflect aspects of reality in a fictional world. These assumptions require collaboration between

depictions of reality in fiction and real life to understand the real world as best as possible. This understanding is important not only as a contribution to human development but also to a theoretical and methodological framework for the development of science.

This research is a cultural studies project with a special poststructuralist and postmodernist style. The poststructuralist assumption is the negation of authorship instead of emphasizing readership—to empower readers as a form of view of the fluidity of truth (truth on becoming) contained in objects or discourse (Broekman, 2023). The postmodernist assumption is of concerns the meaningfulness of banality, namely Jean Baudrillard’s everyday objects (Pawlett, 2007). The novel *Jegingger* by Ahmad Tohari (JAT) is used as a case study to be examined. Narratology, as the developer of this conceptual framework, will be strengthened with a methodological framework (Bal, 2021). This framework will be applied collaboratively with real-world observations because it sees the relationship between the world (what), representation (how), and the occurrence of representation (Fludernik, 2009). The issue in this research is the setting of traditional society, which is in tension between subsistence and industrial economic landscapes. The theoretical question asked is: if the parameters of the economic landscape are the levels of economic productivity, what is the role of materials in the dynamics of traditional society? Economic inequality that triggers social disorganization is a real issue, and if it is linked to the family happiness index, it is only natural that this issue becomes an important part of the Sustainable Development Goal(s), especially number 3.

The methodological research question asked is how the collaboration of observing JAT and observing the real world produces an adequate cross-disciplinary understanding of banal reality. The focalization topic, as an important aspect of the narratological, approach is the occurrence of violence against sacred symbols (sacrilege) which chronologically has caused social disorganization. Thus, it will unlock a new understanding of the contemporary situation regarding this interdisciplinary pressure. Like another important aspect, such as temporalization, this research is expected to be useful for building awareness nowadays that banality is an important element of human development. It is implied that in JAT there are times when banal agents change their position post-structurally to be powerful agents. First, banal objects have the potential to change the transposal positions from referents to representative signs. The second, banal agent through its self-narration has the potential to challenge the metanarrative, thus it has the potential to become a new truth. These two assumptions form a research gap that needs to be filled through this research.

Then, to claim the state of the art and research gap as stated above, this research found several articles related to the study of the Narratology which has the potential to become a hub for various scientific disciplines. The article entitled “Rupturing the Traditional Thought in Search of Novel Heuristic Voyages in New Testament Studies: New Reflections on Narratological Methodology” (Marevesa, 2023), is in a position to support Marevesa in calling for the opening of cross-disciplinary boundaries to discover new heuristic terrain. Another important article still about Narratology as a methodology is, “Narrative and Experience: Interdisciplinary Methodologies Between History and Narratology” (Eiranen, 2022). Even though this

article is more sensitive to the field of historiography, its enthusiasm in calling for interdisciplinarity is quite strong.

Regarding methodological narratology in the practice of empirical narrative analysis, an important article that was found was “Navigating Between the Plots: A Narratological and Ethical Analysis of Business-Related Conspiracy Theories” (Alemany Oliver, 2020). This article critically highlights the failure of CSR projects with political nuances. This article is different in the collaboration system between fiction and experience in the real world, where the fictional world (diegesis) is a comparison of the main object of study, namely CSR practices. The reciprocity of the real world with fiction and vice versa the world of fiction and reality is exposed on an adequate methodological basis.

## **2. Literature review and contribution**

The first thing about the methodological application of Narratology, where this research and article acts as a report, is in the constructivist paradigm which seeks to collaborate observations of the main object in the form of JAT fiction and then compare it with real-world experiences. Photographing reality through JAT and comparing research perceptions based on observations of coconut climbing communities in 3 different areas is expected to succeed in convincing the concept of the meaningfulness (matters) of fiction in the real world. In the tension between traditional and industrial patterns of society, this research theoretically seeks to strengthen the depiction of traditional society. Methodologically, this article “only” aims to strengthen the theoretical position of contemporary or postclassical Narratology, namely the poststructuralist push to go beyond the existing boundaries of Narratology and enter the wider realm of narrative ‘texts’ (Liveley, 2019). Even though the author of JAT looks important because it has been recognized worldwide and received several international awards (Yulisatiani et al., 2020), this article does not focus on Ahmad Tohari’s authorship.

Narratological methods have been used in various variations and purposes. A search for publications in this research found 4 important articles, namely: 1) the application of narratology for concrete experiences in the field of social and cultural history (Eiranan, 2022); 2) exploration of worldview discourse regarding the emancipation of the role of women, so looking at the novel is an affirmation of the urgency of the novel as a discourse on awareness movements (Cao, 2022) confirmation of transmedia narratology as strengthening post-classical narratology theory (Le, 2023); and 4) the existence of 4 layers of narratology that underlie the interaction between the museum and visitors (Trisno et al., 2022). It is hoped that this article will encourage the use of narratology, especially in generating meaning by researchers or the wider community when trying to understand the ideas hidden behind works of fiction.

## **3. Methodology and theoretical framework**

This research uses a Narratology methodology which views the existence of 3 layers of narrative, namely text, story, and fabula (Bal, 2021). Narratology as a 3-layer re-narrating tool is briefly a 3-ex work stage: explore, explain, and expose.

Explore is the work of searching narrative texts such as language elements, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination of these elements. The work at this stage produces a certain point of view or epistemology which becomes material for the explanation at the story stage. The central position proposed by Bal as a proponent of post-structural narratology theory (Liveley, 2019) is a story, the stage where the reader or researcher tries to explain his findings. At the final stage, these findings are presented (exposed) through re-narration in the form of a fibula. Meanwhile, the fibula is a logical chronological series of events caused or experienced by the actor (Bal, 2021).

Bal pioneered the view of narrative as a medium, "...demonstrating tight connections between narrative and the 'real world,' history, and other societal issues." The reason is that fiction is not about frivolous beautiful things but about significance (matter) (Bal, 2021). Bal still admits that narratology is the science of narrative structure, so narrative structure has 2 spectrums at once, namely: 1) spatial perception and the narratological issue of sequential ordering meet (Bal, 2021); and 2) temporal emphasis and in this segment the reader is helped by the chapter titles (Bal, 2021). Temporal emphasis refers to the chapter title, while spatial perception requires interpretation. The method of interpretation by readers or researchers aims to empower the text to have a new meaning (readerly), perhaps not by the author's intention (authorly).

To fulfill the principle of tight connection between fiction and the real world as per Mieke Bal's scheme, apart from JAT fictional text objects, this research requires second data, namely visual data in the form of real-world objects, especially the existence of coconut climbing professions (including palm trees or siwalan) in 3 regencies (Purworejo, Pacitan, and Rembang). Purworejo is generally known as the best producer of coconut sugar, Pacitan is a producer of coconut milk, and Rembang is a producer of palm fruit and sap. In addition, the socio-cultural situation in the three coconut tree habitat areas is not much different from the description in JAT.

Data triangulation as a validity strategy step, was complemented by third auditive data in the form of interviews with coconut climber subjects. This research also interviewed a professor in the field of Rural Sociology, which was useful for getting another view (second opinion) that rural descriptions and the coconut climbing profession do exist in the real world. In this way, there are 3 types of data: 1) textual data in the form of JAT fiction; 2) visual data as a result of field observations; 3) auditive data in the form of interviews with professional coconut climbers and expert opinions. The method applied in analyzing these three types of data is interpretation which is based on a generalization proposition (summary of interpretation and claims) that the facts arise from the researcher's personal experience (Creswell and Creswell, 2023).

Regarding the theoretical application of Narratology, this research attempts to approach the phenomenon of the subsistence economic landscape as a banal situation in everyday rural communities. Often people at this level escape the attention of academics and the government so that their welfare—as is the issue of SDGs point three—is often neglected. This research seeks to provide recommendations that there is no reason whatsoever to ignore the banal village life. In this way, this article seeks to call for the urgency of Narratology as a methodological and pragmatic movement

as an alternative to understanding human existence, no matter how small its role in shaping the modernity of our world.

The terminology that requires definition here is the terms sacrilege and social disorganization. Sacrilege means harassment or disrespect for symbols that are considered sacred (Kovacs, 2024), while social disorganization is the process of losing the influence of original community rules on individuals when they move (Mao et al., 2023). The theoretical scenario according to both terms is that desecration or loss of respect for sacred symbols is the cause of social disorganization. This article highlights the flight of individuals from traditional society to enter an “other” life, namely urban society. As the research design previously stated, the interest of this research is to explore the narrator’s challenges to the established culture. In other words, this project has an emancipatory tone to find a metanarrative and then expose the role of the narrator in opposing that metanarrative.

## **4. Results and discussion**

### **4.1. Narrative material**

This research focuses on the Jegingger novel even though it refers to the “origin” novel of this novel, namely *Bekisar Merah* by the same author. *Bekisar Merah* is served in Indonesian while Jegingger is in Javanese, the Banyumasan dialect. Even so, the nuances of the two feel different. It is almost impossible to get the same equivalent for Indonesians from Javanese or vice versa. The Banyumasan dialect of Javanese feels more effective in terms of capturing the situation and dynamics of rural communities, especially in the cultural area of the Banyumas Regency. The distance of this city is approximately 300 km from Jakarta (the capital of Indonesia). As an example, the first sentence of *Bekisar Merah* reads, “From behind the curtain of afternoon rain, the coconut trees across the valley were like virgins taking a wet bath; fresh, full of passion, and vitality” (From behind the curtain of afternoon rain the coconut trees across the valley were like wet bathing virgins; fresh, full of passion, and vitality) (Tohari, 2010). While Jegingger, “Sewijine dina nalika udan gerimis, wektune meh sendhekala. Sekang kadohan wit-wit klapa neng sabrang sawah kae keton kaya prawan sing lagi padha adus, seger tur semringah” (One day during a drizzler rain, at dusk. From a distance, the coconut trees across the rice fields look like virgins bathing, fresh and lustrous) (Tohari, 2010). *Bekisar Merah*’s last sentence, “The sweat of the tappers will probably become an eternal debt for him” (Tohari, 2010). What is meant by tapping (coconut sap) is the job of most men in Karangsoja Village. The ‘him’ referred to in the last sentence is Kanjat (prince of Lasi ever after). Jegingger’s last sentence was, “Kanjat karo Pardi padha dene mesem cause krungu Lasi linduran” (Kanjat and Pardi both smiled when they saw Lasi was delirious) (Tohari, 2010).

Another basic thing to consider is that there is a metafictional phenomenon in Jegingger that is not found in *Bekisar Merah*. The *Bekisar Merah* metafiction only mentions the BAGIAN PERTAMA (chapter one); BAGIAN KEDUA (chapter two); etc. Jegingger is more complete because it mentions BAB SIJI: Bocah Ayu Anake Tukang Deres (Chapter one: beautiful girl child of coconut sap tapper); BAB LORO:

Detinggal Royal, Minggat Maring Jakarta (Chapter Two: Because she was cheated on by her husband, she then ran away to Jakarta); etc. Metafiction in the form of novel titles is not discussed because it refers to the same real world, namely the color red. Bekisar chickens are ornamental chickens resulting from a cross between male green (*Gallus varius*) or red (*Gallus gallus*) jungle fowl with various types of female local chickens (*Gallus domesticus*) (Hamiyanti et al., 2023).

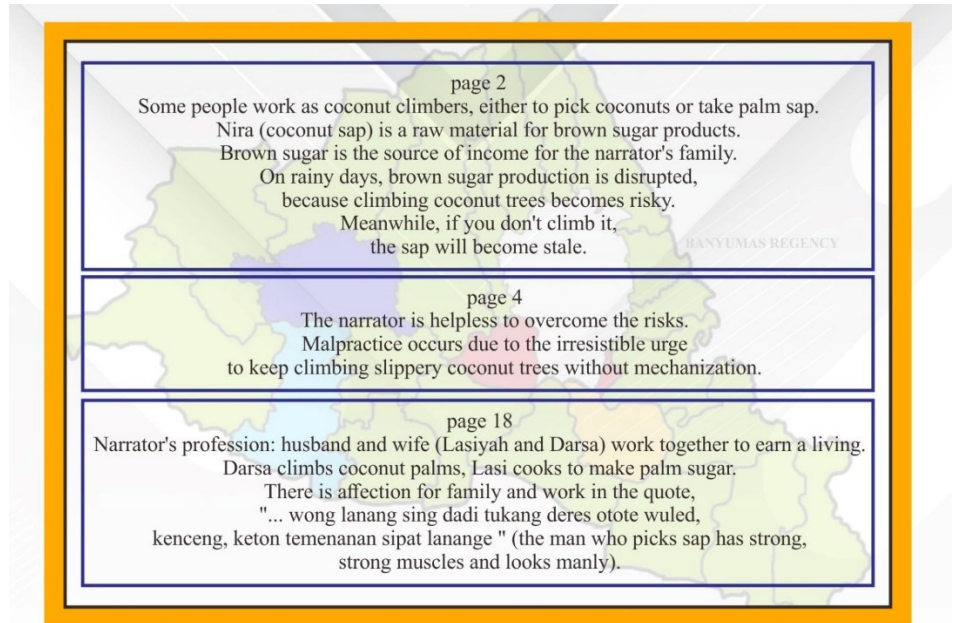
The textual data inferred from JAT is in the form of a story, so the initial research work is to search fictional texts to find narrative material. The narratological methodology is not carried out strictly like a textbook but rather finds epistemology in narrative material such as setting and characterization. According to the research scenario that has been determined, the narrative material will be limited to two elements, namely setting and characterization. The setting highlighted by this research is Karangsoga Village. Karangsoga Village was photographed and represented by JAT as an area of tension between the Worship Village and the subsistence economic landscape. The work at this stage in Bal's Narratology scheme is included in the first layer, namely text.

<p>page 1 Karangsoga Village, a heavenly village, is similar to villages in Bali. The soil is fertile, even coconut trees (<i>Cocos nucifera</i> Linn.) can grow well on sloping land.</p>	<p>page 2 Statement of basic affection for family and environment/profession: husband and wife relationship becomes an instrument of liberation from the obstacles of the economic production process.</p>
<p>page 25 Worship village depicted: all activities carried out by all community members in their daily activities are worship.</p>	
<p><i>wong kas ingkang sampun makolih hakul yakin tingale pan nyata sarta lan sapatemone pan sampun sirna luhuh tetebenge jagad puniki kabotan katingalan ing wardayanipun anging jatine Sanghyang Suksma datan pegat anjenengaken mangkyeki kang ketung mung Pangeran</i></p>	<p>The salutation of 'kas' means a person who already has it faith, his vision is clear whatever he sees have merged with outward curtains it's the ones who are burdened he thought but actually God always steadfast in his stance God is always within him</p>
<p><i>sapolaha dadi pangabekti salat daim pan datan wangenan pan ora pesthi wektune pan ora salat wulu tan pegat ing ulat liring mantep maring Hyang Suksma salir kang kadulu andulu jatining tunggal jroning bekti miwah sajabaning bekti sampun anunggal tingal</i></p>	<p>every movement is worth worship worship takes place at any time and is not bound by the time and water of ablution his gaze straight ahead steadily looking towards God every sight only God is One inside or outside worship no longer differentiated</p>
<p>page 53 Eyang Mus as the priest for the Worship Village talks about fatalism.</p>	
<p><i>wenang sami ngawruhana pati wong agesang tan wurung palastra yen mati ngendi parane saengga manuk mabur mesat saking kurunganeki ngendi parane mbenjang aja nganti luput umpamane wong agesang asesanja tan wurung mulih marang negri kamulyan</i></p>	<p>you should know about death humans must die at the time of death where is the destination like a flying bird out of the cage where it's headed do not forget like a living person is on a visit and then goes home to heaven</p>
<p>page 57 There is a hierarchical relationship because Eyang Mus is the priest of the Worship Village, reflected in his mbapani (fatherly) nature.</p>	

Figure 1. Worship village setting.

Narrative material as a result of inferential exploration is summarized in

**Figures 1–3.** **Figure 1** depicts the situation of Karangsoaga Village as a Village of Worship. It is called that because all the daily activities of the Karangsoaga Community are seen as worship. In this worship act as priest for the Worship Village is Eyang Mus. The residents of Ibadah Village consult about values such as right-wrong and good-bad with Eyang Mus.



**Figure 2.** Subsistence economic landscape in Karangsoaga, the worship village.



**Figure 3.** The banal narrator of worship village.

Next, **Figure 2.** is a visualization perspective of the daily activities of the Worship Village residents from the perspective of economic productivity of coconut climber and brown sugar maker particularly.

#### **4.2. Semantic reality explained**

In the explanation stage, this research collaborates narrative material resulting from text exploration with real-world situations, especially observations of the experiences of professional palm tree climbers (coconut, sugar palm, and palm tree). A comparison of JAT's textual facts with real-world experience will be useful to confirm that the reality depicted and/or represented through JAT is not fiction even though it has undergone fashionization. The reality that JAT is trying to portray is easy to recognize from the statement on page 18 (**Figure 2**) which shows that there is no distance between family and business activities. Even on page 2 (**Figure 1**) failures in the production system are overcome by the husband and wife relationship. Based on the interview with Mahendra Wijaya on 16 April 2024, the lack distance between professions and affections is one of characteristics of a traditional or pre-industrial society. Mahendra's statement is in line with Smelser and Bates' (2001).

Then, to further emphasize the connection between the novel and the real world, this research will explore other data through interviews with sources and direct observations. Interviews with several informants from the community who climb coconuts and other types of palms, both fruit pickers and sap collectors, aim to obtain their statements regarding 1) the welfare of palm tree climbers; and 2) the risk of coconut climbing malpractice and mitigation efforts. This research also analyzed at traditional societies and subsistence economic landscapes in areas where the practice of the palm tree climbing profession occurs. This research looked at 3 villages in 3 regencies, namely Purworejo, Pacitan and Rembang. Eclectic data is displayed in the article text.

To fulfill the principle of meaningfulness (matters) of this novel where the central position of cause and effect between sacrilege and social disorganization becomes the foreground discourse or prominence of the ground, namely socio-economic reality (Bal, 2021), first of all, it is necessary to state here the existence of the climbing profession coconuts in the real world as a semantic reference. This research has observed an economic landscape similar to the description in JAT in 3 regions, namely Purworejo and Rembang Regencies (both in Central Java Province) and Pacitan (East Java). In general, the informants interviewed both stated that in their place there were professions related to palm trees, especially coconut (*Cocos nucifera* Linn), enau or aren (*Arenga pinnata* Merr), and siwalan (*Borassus flabellifer* Linn).

Research in Purworejo Regency observed the situation of coconut trees in several villages in three districts (Purworejo District, Bener District, and Bagelen District) and obtained statistical data about the coconut tree-based economic landscape (**Figure 4**). Apart from that, this research also interviewed Suropto (59 years old, living in Bener Village, Bener District) who has been in his main profession as a palm tree climber (coconut, sugar palm, and siwalan) for more than 40 years. Sumadi (56 years old, lives in Cangkep Lor Village, Purworejo District)

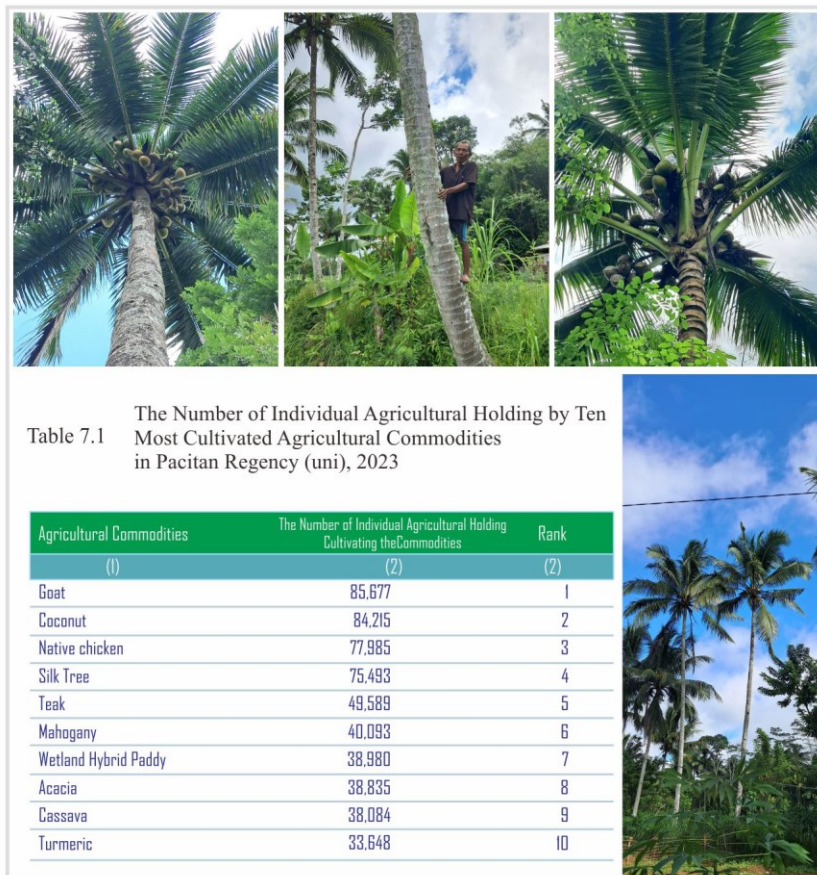


has been working as a coconut tree climber for 40 years. Sumanto (35 years old, lives in Krajan Lor Village, Bagelen District), since he was a teenager he has been a coconut climber to get sap for his family's brown sugar production. Kusyanti (42 years old, lives in Krajan Lor Village, Bagelen District) has been a brown sugar maker since 1998. Interviews with informants in Purworejo Regency were conducted on 4 April 2024. The description of their profession looks the same as the description in the JAT setting. The income earned from the coconut climbing profession is relatively low, only around 6000 to 10,000 per tree climbed. On special days such as before the Eid holiday, the wages for climbing coconuts are usually higher (the highest is 12,000 per tree). On normal days, they climb 10 trees every day, but on special days the number of trees climbed increases to 15 trees.



**Figure 4.** Screenshot of statistical data on the area and productivity of coconut trees in Purworejo, coconut tree land, brown sugar makers, and coconut climbers in Purworejo regency.

Research in Pacitan Regency observed the situation of coconut trees in Gasang village, Tulakan District, and interviewed Sarni (73 years old, lives in the same village) who has had a side profession as a coconut climber since he was young. Statistical data on the coconut tree-based economic landscape in Pacitan shows that the coconut sector ranks second in the community's productive efforts (**Figure 5**). Wages for coconut climbers and their monthly income are not much different from those in Purworejo Regency.



**Figure 5.** Clockwise from top left: Coconuts from Pacitan are generally larger than those from other areas; Sarni, a coconut climber from Pacitan; Pacitan coconut trees are usually cleaner than those in other areas; Pacitan coconut trees are relatively taller and last longer than those in other areas; screenshot of economic statistics based on coconut trees ranked second (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Pacitan, 2023).

The climbing situation in Rembang Regency is somewhat different (**Figure 6**). The research was conducted in Kebonagung Village, Sulang District. According to statistical data, siwalan in Sulang District has the largest population. Siwalan produces products in the form of young siwalan fruit (consumed like young coconuts), fresh palm juice ready for sale, and brown sugar. Kandar (57 years old) works as a palm tree climber, while Kasbi (45 years old) climbs the family's palm trees so he doesn't get paid for climbing palm trees. Kandar's income per day can reach Rp. 300,000, while Kasbi's income is much more from selling fresh sap, brown sugar, and young siwalan fruit. Kasbi's highest income can reach Rp. 576,000 per day.



**Figure 6.** Clockwise from top left: Siwalan trees in Sulang District, Rembang Regency; the activity of climbers picking palm sap; Kasbi (45 years); kandar (57 years); palm sap ready to sell; brown sugar from siwalan sap; siwalan tree 20 meters high.

When asked whether there was a risk of malpractice in carrying out their profession, they stated that the risk of falling from a coconut tree was real. Even in Pacitan, the risk of injury is greater because the coconut trees in Pacitan Regency look taller than in Purworejo. However, they stated that they had not heard of a climber falling from a coconut tree for a long time. In general, our interviewees admitted that they were very careful when climbing trees so that they had never experienced this incident. They manifest this caution in the form of a kind of tree climbing guide, such as 1) making a relatively large notch in the coconut tree so that the foothold on the tree feels steady; 2) do not climb while the tree is slippery, for example, because of rain; 3) do not climb on an empty stomach; 4) bring proper equipment such as a sickle, because sometimes there are disturbances during climbing such as animals and insects that usually live in coconut trees such as geckos, scorpions, and fire ants; 5) always be aware and pray to be protected by Almighty God.

Apart from what was experienced by climbers from Rembang Regency, welfare in terms of the income they received was relatively small, but gratitude meant that whatever they received was not a problem. Climbers in Rembang admit that they are very prosperous with their work, they are even able to pay BPJS (health insurance)

contributions. All interviewees claimed to be very healthy, so when asked whether they had access to health facilities, they stated that they had never experienced any significant health problems. Likewise, when asked whether they had ever experienced any malpractice during their profession as a coconut climber, they stated that they had, but it was not very fatal, such as falling from a tree. The obstacles they experienced were only small problems, such as being surprised to see a gecko when it was in a tree. The worst malpractice that Suropto ever experienced was being bitten by fire ants while coming down from a tree. The pain and heat were excruciating but it was still manageable so it didn't fall from the tree. However, all climbers admitted that they did not apply mechanization to their work. These facts indicate three conclusions: 1) that they practice a subsistence economy; 2) their productivity in a subsistence economic landscape varies between low and medium; 3) even though they are subsistence, their productivity can be increased with a little mechanization such as using equipment that makes their work easier—while preventing the risk of malpractice. In other words, a subsistence system can still be implemented if the system is deemed to be the most ideal for maintaining ecological sustainability and social ties.

#### **4.3. Story in temporality: Sacrilege attempt by unreliable narrator**

In Bal's narratological scheme, the main problem in the story is temporalization and focalization. Harassment of genitals as a sacred symbol in the Village of Worship is an anachronic phenomenon, meaning that every era brings similar incidents. According to textual facts, destruction of sacred sexual symbols (page 7's **Figure 3**) is still an insolent act. The relationship between the coconut climbing profession and the risk of malpractice in carrying out this profession still exists today. In JAT's case, the unreliable narrator said that he was in a state of forgetfulness or stupidity because he could not control his lust (**Figure 3**). It's even stupider because Darsa (the unreliable narrator character) questions fatalism. Even today, this might happen. Furthermore, in terms of cause and effect, the destruction of the sacred symbol has caused the narrator to lose basic family affection and commit escapism. The relationship between the two will be elaborated below.

Karangsoga is a village that has symbols of heaven (rivers with pristine water and fresh air), all the plants live well, and there is no pollution whatsoever. This situation is paradoxical in the form of the society that inhabits it. Pollution occurs in the souls of humans who live there. Nature is at risk when inhabited by societies that are unequal in intelligence. A test of intelligence comes to Darsa, the unreliable narrator (Fludernik, 2009), as can be seen from two events. First, he was determined to climb a coconut tree on a rainy day so the risk of falling would be greater, especially without adequate protective equipment. The reason for his subsistence is correct, namely that he has to climb coconuts and take sap, so that his wife can make brown sugar, and the results of their work will become a living for tomorrow. According to Kandar, a siwalan climber in Rembang Regency, the risk of falls from coconut tree climbers is not as great as that of palm trees, but there has never been any malpractice. Kandar said in the interview, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, coconut tree climbers should equip themselves with safety equipment such as ropes that attach the

climber's body to the tree they climb.

Second, Darsa—Lasi's husband, the main narrator—seems to be in a “difficult” situation when he has to choose who he prefers: 1) his loyal wife; or 2) Bunek, a shaman massager who is credited with curing the disease. He chose Bunek, so by having an affair with Sipah (Bunek's daughter) his intelligence seemed not good enough. Seeing that the society in which he lives is spiritual and even religious, Darsa's actions include sacrilege in the concept of desecrating symbols of religious purity. In this regard, Darsa seems to be trying to question fatalism (**Figure 1**) which assumes that human desires and actions are a fate that must be lived (Tohari, 2010).

The nexus between naturalism and culturalism in the Karangsoaga Village community is ideal when linked to spirituality or religiosity that respects sacred symbols. The two can go hand in hand, support each other, and then have little risk when one more factor is included, namely profit in the form of a living element to support human life. Risks may come from outside and from within due to demands for adaptation and change (change to fitness). A subsistence economic landscape may be the best choice—compared to an industrial landscape—depending on the individual in it, he is required from within himself to be cognitively and spiritually intelligent. If people have both intelligences then naturalism and culturalism can survive. What is happening in Karangsoaga is not like that and the risk is social disorganization.

#### **4.4. Story in focalization: The banal narrator's escapism**

The narrator of this novel functions as a banal agent amid the atmosphere of Karangsoaga Village as a Worship Village, where those who act as congregations are all members of the Karangsoaga Village community. Serving as priest (worship leader) is Eyang Mus (**Figure 1**). At first Lasiyah's role was very insignificant (banal). She was only “in charge” of cooking the sap her husband (Darsa) harvested. As a narrative agent, she is described as having basic affective feelings towards family (husband), society, and the environment (**Figure 1**'s page 2, **Figure 2**). This novel contains a depiction of the Worship Village (**Figure 1**). In the Worship Village ritual, Lasiyah only plays the role of a layperson or makmum (congregation).

This banal position then changes when she becomes a victim of symbolic violence (sacrilege) committed by Darsa, her husband. He then ran away from his communal ties, went secretly to Jakarta, and experienced things that changed his role. Its important role is its ambiguous potential to oppose political forces, namely the established cultural ties as a Village of Worship. It is called ambiguous. At first he ran away from Karangsoaga because he felt he had lost basic affection for his family, community and environment.

On the other hand, methodologically, Lasiyah becomes a comparative agent who, when carrying out escapism, experiences a kind of small entertainment (solace) and even rejuvenation, even though she does not change his character—due to a lack of adaptive power related to his intelligence—and still does not get any lessons other than longing to return to its habitat as a natural organism with a nature-culturalism character. Lasiyah's illiteracy regarding the depth of religious appreciation—in the form of blind obedience—in other parts of this article will make him an unreliable

narrator.

Efforts to escape from communal ties constitute escapism, which first attempts to: 1) find fresh air, get out of the bonds of one's habitat (first attempt to disorganize oneself from one's habitat); 2) making a new start (even if the intention is just to run and run away from the dominative confines), struggle to start something new or just live in a different way. Second, she accidentally obtained more space to live in a new world (vast wilderness) and his physical appearance happened to be advantage to urban culture. But is the physical appearance "fit for the new environment?" apparently not, because Lasi is described as having difficulty smiling in such luxurious surroundings. Occasionally she does smile, but seem be forced so. Third, the wider space that she gets is a different thematic element: stranded in the city then trying/forced to be in an independent environment, free, and contrasts with the original environment in her village.

#### **4.5. Fabula: Challenging metanarrative**

In the exposure stage, this article re-narrates the situation of Jean Baudrillard's banal community or everyday objects (Pawlett, 2007) which seeks to challenge the established culture. In other words, the solution re-narrated is first that the subsistence economic landscape invites questions about vulnerability and resilience in maintaining social order. Second, the agency or narrator transforms from banal to powerful after sequentially experiencing events of social disorganization (loss of basic affection for family and community). Third, there is a transposition of the narrator from banal to powerful, which is ultimately symbolized by the saving of a diamond necklace worth 1.5 billion. The number is very spectacular when compared to the setting of the Village of Worship. The sequence of events which is considered to represent the researcher's views is arranged in the form of sentences resembling a synopsis which is the deepest structure of the text. That is the final work of the Narratology procedure, which ends with the discovery of a metanarrative that is open to being challenged. This scenario was chosen with the intention that the methodological procedure is still achieved even though it is not comprehensive panoply. The more important aim of the research is to emphasize that novels are not just entertainment but something that is meaningful (matter) and relevant to the real world.

The third layer of Bal's narratology is the fabula. Fabula is a series of causes and effects, as expressed in the title of this article. There is a relationship between events as a thread of reflection (series of events) and the foreground in the form of occurrences (momentariness). The fabula's job is to narrate events and then emphasize what happened. It is in this section that the narrative as a cultural object is asked (question), questioned (undermine), and the distinction is postponed. When Lasi and Kanjat keep a necklace worth billions, it is implied that there is a "mischief" that has the potential to turn a banal agency into a powerful one. The same docility will change completely when our agency changes its position transposally from makmum (congregation) to prayer leader in social life. If the event is a transition, then the fruitful result is a postmodernist transposition that undermine the metanarrative. It is called transposition because the powerful position of Lasi moves

from a reference (semiotic reference) to a new sign. Unfortunately this novel does not continue with Lasi's (and Kanjat's) social life after becoming a new sign (because they keep a necklace worth billions), but this potential is still interesting and can be imagined by readers.

JAT can be summarized into 15 sentences divided into two paragraphs, where the first paragraph consists of 6 sentences containing literary statements about the life of the main character in Karangsoa Village. The second paragraph consists of 9 sentences containing textual statements about the life of the main character in Jakarta. The details are outlined in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** Chronology of banal-powerful transposition.

<b>First Paragraph: The life of the main character in Karangsoa Village</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Statements of Events</b>	<b>Happened</b>
1.	Lasiyah, a very beautiful woman—of mixed Japanese-Javanese descent—who experiences life in the Worship Village.	Ground
2.	She was born and raised in Karangsoa Village, a paradise-like village where most of the people earn a living from climbing and pressing palm sap from their dozens of coconuts which are tens of meters high, while the women work in the kitchen processing the palm sap their husbands pour into palm sugar.	Ground
3.	The risk of falling from a coconut tree—especially during the rainy season—is very high and Lasiyah's husband (named Darsa) fell from a coconut tree, did not die but was ill for a long time, especially because his vital organs were not functioning.	Foreground
4.	Poverty prevents access to health facilities, while—the novel suggests—treatment taken over by humans rather than systems introduces other risks.	Ground
5.	The shaman healer had a reward when he succeeded in healing Darsa, Darsa "married" her daughter (named Sipah) and became pregnant.	Ground
6.	Lasiyah was shocked internally because she felt betrayed by her husband, then ran away until she was stranded in a big city.	Foreground
<b>Second Paragraph: the life of the main character in big city</b>		
7.	Lasiyah lives in Jakarta as a <i>jeringger</i> (forest rooster) and was in captivity, and her physical life changed completely as a classy woman.	Ground
8.	Her heart was unhappy, he found it difficult to smile and still missed his village.	Ground
9.	Lanting as a professional woman trafficking professional has made Lasi's life filled with wealth.	Ground
10.	The first important official old man (named Handarbeni), a rich and apparently a sufferer of impotence, which this situation makes her feminine purity safe.	Ground
11.	The second official is dashing flirt (named Bambang), almost the highest official in his country, very powerful but powerless before his wife.	Ground
12.	This second official hated pregnant women, so when he took control of Lasiyah's body he did not touch the sacred symbol of her femininity.	Ground
13.	At that time, Lasiyah was pregnant because during her escape from Bambang she was married informally to Kanjat (her childhood friend) by Karangsoa Village elder (named Eyang Mus).	Ground
14.	At the end of the novel, Lasiyah succeeds in overcoming the domination of city power with the help of people from her village who know the ins and outs of the city and its decay.	Ground
15.	Husband and wife (Lasiyah and Kanjat) managed to return to Karangsoa while hiding a diamond necklace worth 1.5 billion left over from their relationship with Bambang.	Foreground

These fifteen statements are the basis for determining the chronology of the

practice of sacrilege and situations of social disorganization. This series of causes and effects will result in reframing (Bal, 2021), namely the existence of: 1) established cultural practices as metanarratives; 2) a challenge to the metanarrative as its resolution. The ground-foreground distinction in the Bal scheme is used as an analytical tool to show potential results (potential productivity). Ground is a transitional or normal routine, while foreground is a break in a normal routine.

According to **Table 1**, in the first paragraph there are 4 grounds and 2 foregrounds, while in the second paragraph there are 9 grounds and 1 foreground. The relationship between 15 sentences and what happens can be schematized like the scenario in **Figure 7** below.



**Figure 7.** Chronology of loss of basic affection in traditional families and communities.

Finally, the chronology of the emergence of challenges to the metanarrative is exposed in the issue of the subsistence economic landscape which is a characteristic



of traditional society, both as a mode of production (socio-economic) and a historical strategy for carrying out life together (co-existence of human groups) (Diamond, 2012). An economic landscape is a projection or visualization of an economic perspective (macro) in an area that relies on sectors or conversely the actors (humans) involved in the productive process. The productive process usually forms up and down lines so that it forms a visual and is measured by production value, added value, number of people working, etc. (Sonis et al., 2000). In JAT, the village depicted is a traditional region that historically implemented a subsistence production system.

The subsistence production system is synonymous with poverty even though we don't always have to see it from that side. First, according to Diamond, the subsistence economic landscape must be understood as a cultural mode, not a productive economy. They are bound by cultural norms to produce or not to produce, or to sell or not to sell a product. Apart from that, this primitive mode of production is also very dependent on nature and there are even times when the production system is controlled by nature (Diamond, 2012). An example is sap as a raw material for brown sugar production. The production of sap depends on the ecological system (Diamond, 2012) such as what type of palm can grow well in an area such as in the mountains or lowlands, the maturity period of the coconut flower depending on the area where it grows, the duration of the sap's freshness while waiting to be picked, and so on. In the case of JAT, sap that is not harvested immediately will soon go stale and this will disrupt the brown sugar production process.

Second, poverty as subsistence has attracted the attention of researchers and resulted in findings that subsistence in the energy sector is actually a positive thing, apart from being an alternative for providing renewable energy, production activities in this sector are able to alleviate poverty (Olayungbo et al., 2024). That in the case of China, in the Worship Village, and the villages observed during the research, the subsistence economic landscape tends to be an intersubjective bond, not a material one (Li and Taube, 2020). Then, if the subsistence economic landscape in traditional society does have intersubjective characteristics, then this model is certainly ideal for managing the environment (planet), actors (people) and production processes (profit) simultaneously. This ideal situation is clearly visible in the final resolution offered by JAT when banal agencies (Lasi and Kanjat) are depicted as holding diamond necklaces worth 1.5 billion. Banal agency in a banal society is transformed into a powerful one when it has the symbols of cultural capital. From a poststructuralist perspective, it is conceivable—because it is not described in JAT and it is not necessary—that there is an inevitability that there will be a transposition of banal agents: from reference to sign.

Escapism—an escape from the banal village to urban life—brings the narrator to an experience that is different from what he experienced while in the Village of Worship. The determining factor is that she (Lasiyah) has the awareness to change her role from a banal agent to a powerful one. All the possessions obtained during the escapism period were left behind when he returned to the Village of Worship, except for a necklace worth 1.5 billion. This object is more than enough to change his role from lay people to leader, from banal to powerful. The following is an excerpt from the decisive dialogue between Kanjat and Pardi (Tohari, 2010).

Kanjat: *Di, inyong arep crita rahasia. Ning ko kudu teyeng njaga lambe, crita kiye aja deambrah-ambrah.* (Di [Pardi], I want to tell you a secret. But you have to watch your mouth, don't let this story spread).

Pardi: *Iya, Mas. Crita apa sih?* (Okay, Brother [Kanjat])

Kanjat: *Neng trak kiye ana barang sing regane karotengah milyar. Kalunge Lasi. Ko mbok ngandel?* (In this truck stored an object worth one and a half billion. The Lasi's necklace. Do you believe it?)

Pardi: *Angger sing omong Mas Kanjat apa enggane inyong kon ora ngandel?* (As long as it's what Mas Kanjat is talking about, I'll definitely believe it).

Kanjat: *Kalung barleyan, Di.*

(Diamond necklace, Di).

.....

Kanjat: *Enggane kalunge ko dedol, dhuwite kena nggo gawe umah sing kaya istana, ana kolam renange, ana garasi isi mobil pitu, ko munggah kaji ping patbelas.* (If the necklace is sold, the money can be used to build a house that looks like a palace, has a swimming pool, a garage with seven cars, you can go on the Hajj fourteen times).

Thus, this article attempts to highlight social inequality that intertextually exists in fiction and its relationship to the real world. JAT exposed the banal situation of society, especially those practicing palm tree climbing professions in a society setting that applies a subsistence economy. In the real world, this profession does exist, although the circumstances are slightly different. Theoretically, this article seeks to provide an appreciation for this profession along with the choice of a subsistence economic model, noting that there is government attention for this profession. Crucial points that require attention include mechanization of production processes to increase productivity, advocacy toward the better access to health facilities, and literacy in religiosity to prevent blind piety. It is also hoped that this article will encourage the use of narratology, especially in generating meaning by researchers or the wider community when trying to understand the ideas hidden behind works of fiction or phenomena in society.

## **5. Conclusion**

The collaboration of textual facts in JAT that have been extracted into narrative material with real-world experiences produces methodological and theoretical viewpoints that are useful in finding ideas for human development. On the one hand, traditional society as a banal community is vulnerable when seen as a practice of productivity through viewing the subsistence economic landscape as its historical legacy. One of the cases that is narrated through this article is the occurrence of malpractice in implementing subsistence economic activities which tend to be cultural rather than economic activities. When viewed from a cultural perspective, this malpractice changes its nature to sacrilege or desecration of sacred symbols—sex and sexuality are religious symbols—and is then exacerbated by obstacles to access to health facilities.

Social disorganization as a situation of separation of individuals from their community ties, is theoretically caused by the loss of basic affection from family and

community. This situation gives rise to experiences such as escapism from a banal society. JAT illustrates that the chronological return of banal agency to its community of origin in the view of Cultural Studies is a challenge to established cultural practices and has the inevitability of transposing banal agents into powerful ones, transposing references into signs. Issues of poverty, family ties, access to health facilities, reproductive health and family economic health are sensitive issues for the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the third point, namely happiness and prosperous people. The final word of this article is: the subsistence economic landscape can be maintained as long as individuals in it have an awareness of the importance of intelligence—in addition to obedience as its main pillar—and innovation to support their work.

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