

## Figures and Jakarta's Image Deconstruction in Novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara

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### Abstract

Superior views circulating in society can draw out small narratives, but in this novel, there are inferior views from many of society's views. The purpose of this research is to find the binary opposition of figure and image of Jakarta in novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara because many people still believe in the grand narrative. In fact, there are still many realities hidden behind the grand narrative. The researcher uses Derrida's deconstruction theory to find binary opposition in novels and uses the literature technique. In the stage of analysis, the researcher divides it into four stages, classification, reduction, analysis, and conclusions. The results of this study show deconstruction value contained in various characters from the public's view and image of Jakarta city which has the reverse side of many public views. This research contributes to seeing different views from common views in society that are universal. Universal values are reviewed through this research so that readers can see the inferior values of figures and image of Jakarta.

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## INTRODUCTION

The paradigm of society to literary works is getting more extensive because in literary works there are diverse and complex stories that can hegemonise reader's thought. As for the space of freedom that exists in literary works of expression, the author is free to explore his thoughts (Khomisah, 2023). The author's thoughts become embodied in language that makes up his cultural identity (Heriady et al., 2024). Literary work as means for author to express his feelings (Yuniarti et al., 2024). The author has responsible role in social order (Wafiq et al., 2024).

Novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara's tells the story of a man called Arung who has cheating with Betari, she is as a tomboy. In society, women are constructed to be soft and loving (Khavifah et al., 2022). However, different from Arung character who likes women with types outside the constructs in society.

There is paradoxical value in universal views that if woman wants to be liked by men, she must have feminine characteristics. This value is contained in deconstruction initiated by Jacques Derrida, who sees truths as having more value than what is shown (Constantin & Sitorus, 2023). To find the truth value, it must look at each individual with small particles. The author expresses meaning that is expressed and implied through the value of Deconstruction by demolition which has philosophical meaning (Nugraha et al., 2020)

Many societies believe universal values. However, in this novel there are different views from many people who view things positivistically. This novel presents the meaning when looking something, it cannot be generalised with other views. Many people view Jakarta as metropolitan city dominated by high society, but in the novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara presented with characters from the marginalised community such as buskers.

The different views called binary oppositions are contained in deconstructive as meaning of demolition. It is different from the view of modernism which has positivistic

characteristics. In deconstruction, it explores the dominating characteristics, principles, centres, and foundations. There is rejection of ideas that are centred because has relative meaning (Wijayati & Rachmawati, 2023). Deconstruction was initiated by Jacques Derrida, born in Al-Jazair in 1930. Derrida developed Martin Heidegger's thought who had destruction's idea (Rokhman et al., 2021).

According to Norris in Yusuf (2018), the purpose of deconstruction is to peel things circulating in society that are considered true. In order for goal of this deconstruction value to be achieved, there are stages, such as identifying things related to binary opposition, exploring the value of binary opposition, and emergence of different views found in universal space. According to Faruk (2017), the text "fights" to concept. The meaning in context, there is no reference to the limitations of particular context.

In deconstruction, there is difference symbol that differentiates elements value with other elements, which is contradiction of universal value initiated by modernism. There is another truth behind determined truth (Norris, 2017).

There has been no research in novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara using deconstruction theory. Researcher have references in this study, such a journal written by Iis Setiawati entitled Deconstruction of Characters in Novel Sitayana by Cok Sawitri (Jacques Derrida Deconstruction Study) in 2020. The similarity in this research is in theory that uses Derrida's deconstruction. Then, difference is in the object of study. The result of the research is binary opposition, logical inconsistency, and new construction (Setyawati, 2020)

The next reference, journal researched by Cici Nurfauzianah Has and Harris Effendi Thahar entitled Deconstruction Comparison of Mother Figures in Dongeng Batu Menangis and Si Tanggang in 2021. The results of study are binary opposition that describes the mother's character and vague nature of the minor characters in the story and the mother character who is described as bad character. The similarity with this research is in the theory that uses

Derrida's deconstruction theory. The difference in the object of research where the journal uses two objects, the story of Batu Menangis and Si Tanggang (Has & Thahar, 2021).

In this research, contradictions in the society's view of novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara will be presented. From the traits and characters and image of Jakarta city that's different from society's view. This research explore society's view that considers collective truth by adhering to grand narrative. This research purpose to find binary oppositions or hidden truths in novel Jakarta Rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara concerning characters's image and Jakarta city. Because existence of these characters, creates various phenomena in society (Ramadhan et al., 2024).

## METHODOLOGY

Researchers conduct this research with qualitative research. Qualitative research purpose to develop theories that are related to natural events (Rohanda, 2016). Researchers use descriptive analysis method by describing data that has been found and described in order to get elements in question, then the data is analysed (Ratna, 2013).

Object of this research is novel Jakarta rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara, which was published in June 2021. The novel is 176 pages thick with a book length of 20 cm and published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama in Jakarta. The

researcher uses the deconstruction theory initiated by Jacques Derrida to find characters value and Jakarta's image which is inversely proportional from agreement's view in the society.

For collecting data, the researcher used literature technique to compare the narrative in the text and contradicting narrative in society. According to Sari and Asmendri (2020), literature technique is a technique that uses data collection with written sources that are in the text or outside text. The data collected are in form of conversations, monologues, expressions, and various quotations contained in novel (Endraswara, 2013). In this process, the reading of text repeatedly so the plot and details in story could be understood. Furthermore, in data analysis step, the researcher divided to four parts, classification, data reduction, data analysis, and conclusion. In the first step, researcher collected data that was found related to the theory. The second stage, data that has been found is filtered so data analysed is really needed. In the analysis step, the researcher analysed by applying the data using Derrida's deconstruction theory by comparing narratives that come from outside novel in order to find contradiction in novel and in the society's view. In the last step, the researcher concluded the data that had been analysed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1** Deconstruction of figures and Jakarta's image

No	Description	Binary Opposition (+)	Inferior View (-)
1		Loving graceful and feminine women	Loving a tomboy
2	Deconstruction of figures	Discrimination of disability	Equality of disability
3		Choosing faithfulness in marriage	Choosing an affair in marriage
4		Success in bourgeoisie	Success in proletariat
5		Discrimination of children outside marriage	Children outside marriage with rights
6	Deconstruction of Jakarta's Image	Luxury lifestyle in Jakarta	Lowest-income community in Jakarta

**Deconstruction of figures in novel Jakarta rock ‘n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara**

-	+
Loving a tomboy	Loving graceful and feminine women

On the right, binary opposition is universal view of society, while on the left is inferior view. Many men in society prefer to love women with graceful and feminine appearances because they're soft. It is different with Arung who loves Betari in novel Jakarta Rock ‘n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara. Betari is described as a tomboyish woman, as in quote in the novel:

*Sementara ia belum pernah melihat Betari mengenakan rok. Biasa memanggil Arung dengan sebutan Bro. Terkadang juga memanggilnya Dude. Kalau bicara, nadanya cenderung meninggi. Terkadang terdengar seakan ia marah. Terkadang terdengar seakan ia berteriak (Asmara, 2021: 9).*

The quote above shows that Arung is contemplating Betari, she is far from feminine by never wearing skirt and calling her love “Bro”, as nothing romantic about her to Arung. In When Betari speaks her tone seems high and sometimes it sounds like she is angry. In fact, she have habit to speak by high voice. Actually, Arung prefers a woman with a graceful, feminine, romantic, and gentle soul. Arung also likes the type of woman who has a motherly spirit and a soothing nature. But because Betari gives Arung a comfortable feeling, Arung's ideal woman criteria fades away. They both love as they are and there is no force that makes them be themselves in the relationship. Betari's character also comes from the following quote:

*Ia tidak suka pakai rok. Selalu bercelana jins. Hanya bersentuhan gincu bilamana manggung. Dan hobinya main skateboard (Asmara, 2021: 12).*

The quote above shows that Betari's mother never saw her daughter dressed in feminine style. She sees her son wearing jeans and only wearing lipstick when performing. In addition, Betari has a hobby of skateboarding, which is mostly played by men. With Betari's tomboyish image, Arung still loves her for who she is.

This is in contrast to society's view that women's standards can be valued if they fall into the category of beauty. Beauty can be seen from the graceful, soft, feminine, and caring of her body. Usually women pay attention to their appearance because it is very important part of being valued in society. In fact, it is necessity to keep beauty and look good for women (Afifah et al., 2023).

It can be said the standard for women to be loved by men doesn't have to be feminine, but in reality appearance is only a sensory thing that can be seen by eyes. But, it is far from that which can provide comfort feeling to the man. So, the grand narrative circulating in society about the standards to be loved by men by having a beautiful and graceful appearance is not a reference to be appreciated by men.

-	+
Equality of disability	Discrimination of disability

The binary opposition on the right is superior view of disability, while on the left side is inferior view or small narrative. Society views people with disabilities as having limitations and are often seen as disabled. The term makes the paradigm of society towards disability has unfavourable value and far from the character of perfection (Apny & Hasfi, 2019). However, this view is contrasted with June's image as a blind person who has talent for music as shown in one quote in the novel:

*June lulusan SLB Mandiri di kawasan Tanah Abang. Di sini murid tidak hanya dididik secara akademik. Namun lebih melatih bakat dan keterampilan agar bisa mandiri. Dari awal, bakat paling menonjol June adalah musik. Ia punya suara emas (Asmara, 2021: 21).*

The above quote shows that June as a blind girl has talent in her voice. Before entering school, June had a talent in music and had a beautiful voice like gold and was trained again at school. June's talent was passed down from her father. Although has limited vision, she still highlights herself in her voice which not all normal people have advantages in their voices. The friendship

between June and Betari is very intimate because Betari feels comfortable when talking to June, as one of quotes in the novel:

*Dan tuhan juga melipatgandakan kepekaanya. June seakan bisa merasakan hal yang ada di dalam hati Betari. Seakan bisa membaca apa yang ada di dalam pikiran Betari* (Asmara, 2021: 44).

From the quote above, there is statement that Betari as June's best friend trusts her when she confides in June. June is the most comfortable confiding place for Betari even though June has adisability in her eyesight, but she still gives Betari security feeling. Despite her limitations, June has advantage in her other senses and has more sensitivity than normal people by being able to feel what Betari feels when she is beside her. She understands Betari's feeling by using her senses as if she can see Betari's face when she is with her.

June's image as a disability is inversely proportional to society's view that people with disabilities can stay at home and don't have the right to come forward in the public arena. Society claims that people with disabilities are disruptors and obstacles when doing activities like normal people. Therefore, disability are seen as less useful in the public sphere. (Hamid, 2022). Society often discriminates against disability by seeing them as different from other people. As such, they feel marginalised and have limited access to public spaces. In this novel, the image of disability isn't the same as the views of general public and has equal access according to their rights. Because basically there is the potential for sociality in newborn children (Muttaqin et al., 2020)

- Choosing an affair in marriage	+ Choosing faithfulness in marriage
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Binary opposition is universal view of fidelity in marriage. However, in this novel there is inferior view in which character Arung has cheating with Betari and still together in the end of story. In society view, a faithful marriage is moral value in a relationship. However, it is

contrary to Arung's character who prefers Betari as his mistress in the relationship, as in the quote below:

*Betari membaca ucapan yang terikat pada tangkai: SAMPAI KAMU MAU MEMAAFKAN. Ia memejamkan mata. Menarik nafas panjang. Tak ada sejumput pun tega dalam hati untuk langsung membuangnya* (Asmara, 2021: 85).

The above quote shows that Arung sent flowers to Betari. At that time, Betari knew that Arung had married Kunang. As Arung's lover, Betari felt that she was betrayed and indirectly became a mistress in the relationship between Arung and Kunang. Betari decided not to contact Arung again because if she were in the position of his legal wife, she would see herself as a bad person. However, Arung maintained his love for Betari by sending flowers every day to Betari's house until she forgives him. Arung didn't want to end his relationship with Betari even his legal wife had found about the relationship between Arung and Betari. But Arung continued to wish Betari on her birthday, as in the quote below:

*SEKADAR MENEPATI JANJI.  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY,  
MY LOVE.  
ARUNG.*

(Asmara, 2021: 124).

The quote from the novel above shows Arung's love for Betari in the midst of Betari's disappointment to know Arung had married Kunang but he still wanted to have Betari. When Betari's birthday, he sent her a message and sent her photo of Jakarta Rock 'n Roll logo and the design of the Jakarta Rock 'n Roll club they had been aspiring to. Arung showed Betari their dream by proving that he could build the building even though Betari was angry with him at the time. The relationship between Betari and Arung that lasted even though they were in wrong position because Arung was having an affair in his marriage is found in the quote below:

*Arung membuka mata. Ia tersenyum melihat Betari. "Gue juga sayang sama lo, Betari." Suara Arung terdengar lirih dan parau. Betari mengecup kening Arung, air mata bahagia menetes dari pelupuknya.* (Asmara, 2021: 168).

The data above at the end of the story explains that at that time Arung was hospitalised. Betari loved Arung deeply and she couldn't see Arung in the hospital in such a condition. Finally, Arung woke up from his sleep and spoke to Betari and told her that he loved her very much.

From the content of the novel above, it can be seen that marital fidelity is not seen in Arung. The community considers that a good marriage is a faithful marriage because many lessons from faithfulness.

According to Ariyani (Ariyani, 2024), one of the important things in a household is loyalty. Even in marriage, husband and wife have responsibility to maintain loyalty between the two because when they are married, husband and wife are responsible for maintaining relationship. Many people think that perfect marriage is one that is based on loyalty and accepting each other's shortcomings. Infidelity is still bad stigma in society because it doesn't instil the values of loyalty in relationship. In contrast, the characters of Arung and Betari have an affair that ends happily. Although Arung's behaviour is known by his wife Kunang, he continues his relationship with Betari and shows his seriousness by building a performance hall in Jakarta, which is they dream

Success in proletariat	+ Success in bourgeoisie
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Binary opposition on the right is general view of society that a lot of success happens to bourgeoisie. However, this novel shows that even the lower classes can achieve their dreams, as in one of the quotes below:

*Mas Dodot mengontrak Vito menjadi direktur musik beberapa lagu produksinya. Kebetulan lagu-lagu yang digarapnya booming dan digemari di masyarakat. Wajah dan karya Vito Romeo mulai muncul di media massa. Penghargaan-penghargaan bergengsi pun berkali-kali diraihinya* (Asmara, 2021: 66).

From above quote, there is character Vito who plays busker on Jakarta streets and has adistinctive voice that makes anyone who hears his voice can enjoy his songs. In fact, Vito was

recruited by Mas Dodot to be his music director. The song he made went viral and many people liked his song. Because his song is viral, he performed on stage and various media. In addition, the success that happened to proletariat is found in the quote below:

*Luas tanah itu hampir lima ribu meter persegi. Bangunannya sendiri terdiri atas dua lantai, dan besarnya mencapai dua ribu meter persegi.* (Asmara, 2021: 90).

The quote above tells that Vito started out as a busker, was recruited and became a famous singer. As a result of his exploding career, he was able to buy house with large 5000 m2. From here, it can be seen that the success experienced by Vito isn't genetic from rich family, but he started his career from zero. Vito has position in his project to build Jakarta Rock 'n Roll, as in the quote below:

*Dalam akta pendirian, Vito disebut menjabat sebagai managing director* (Asmara, 2021: 130).

When Arung wanted to build Jakarta Rock 'n Roll, he invited Vito and eventually he was appointed as managing director. Vito has sacrificed everything for their dream together. He was no longer busker because Arung had saved his life by introducing him to Mas Dodot. From here, it can be seen that materialism isn't obstacle to success. Vito has been lucky to find someone who takes him to success.

However, many people think that success can only be achieved by people who have privileges from their parents who have connections in their work, most likely their children will become successful because they no longer need to look for work. In study conducted by PEPG (Harvard's Programme on Education Policy and Governance) revealed that parents' income has correlation with children's success because children who are educated with good quality can affect the success of their students (Juhaidi, 2019). However, many people think that success can only be achieved by people who have privileges from their parents who have connections in their work, most likely their children will become successful because they no longer need to look for work. In study conducted by PEPG (Harvard's Programme on Education

Policy and Governance) revealed that parents' income has correlation with children's success because children who are educated with good quality can affect the success of their students.

- Children outside marriage with rights	+ Discrimination of children outside marriage
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Binary opposition on the right shows that society's view of children outside of marriage is still negative as many children from outside of marriage are discriminated against. Usually, there are social sanctions for children born out of marriage and many people call them "illegitimate children". They are often ostracised in community because they weren't preceded by legal marriage by their parents (Dewi, 2013).

However, it is different with character David that he was adopted and decent life without any discrimination in his neighbourhood as in one of the quotes below:

*Bonar berteman dengan David karena kakaknya, Marintan. Mereka dulu sempat menjadi pasangan kekasih (Asmara, 2021: 60).*

From above quote, David is comes from a child outside of marriage, but still has friend Bonar and lives in rented house. David also had relationship with Bonar's sister, Marintan, which coloured David's life. He grew up with a very decent family environment, as quoted in the novel:

*Masa lalunya tidak akan memengaruhi masa depannya. Ia tidak pernah kekurangan kasih sayang orang tua dari Diane dan Mark. Bahkan David menyadari bahwa tidak semua anak diberkati dengan orang tua seperti dirinya (Asmara, 2021: 62).*

Although David has bad past, he still has the future. Diane and Mark love him like biological parent. This is a far cry from the negative stigma against children born out of wedlock. David can achieve his goals without discrimination from society.

Isn't comparable to how society views children born outside of their parents' marriage. The novel tells us that all children have same right to proper life without any discrimination from

any party. A child should be able to achieve his goals without any stigma from society. People are often reluctant to get acquainted with children who are outside of marriage.

**Deconstruction of Jakarta's image in novel Jakarta rock 'n Roll by Sekar Ayu Asmara**

- Lowest-income community in Jakarta	+ Luxury lifestyle in Jakarta
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In general public's view, Jakarta as capital city of Indonesia has high-paced life because it has high minimum wage compared to other cities. Living cost in Jakarta is high if compared to other. In Jakarta, there are luxury buildings such as SCBD area. In this area, many workers from these buildings live luxury lifestyle and use branded products (Azzahra et al., 2023). Jakarta often becomes fashion reference because many young people dress trendy in various places at Jakarta. The high lifestyle has become a habit for people in Jakarta. However, in this novel there is narrative that reverses the view of people towards Jakarta city, which is there are people in lower class such as buskers, as in quote below:

*Dari umur lima belas tahun ia naik-turun bus dan metromini, berbekal gitar butut(Asmara, 2021: 64).*

amidst the glamour of Jakarta, there is busker called Vito. The busker often entered buses and metromini to earn money for bite of rice. Although he busks using a poor guitar, he has a good voice in singing even though his voice is not very special. In addition, the image of Jakarta which is far from luxury is also found in conversation between Arung and Ani as follows:

*"Nama saya Arung, penyelenggara audisi itu. Saya cari kamu tadi ke perempatan Danau Limbotono. Kamu biasa mengamen di situ, kan?"*

*Ani mengangguk.*

*Saya sering dengar kamu nyanyi di lampu merah." (Asmara, 2021: 153).*

From conversation above, there is another busker called Ani. She often goes to Lake limbotono in Jakarta area to busk and sing near the red lights in the area.

From this novel, there are still small communities in Jakarta city in midst of society that views Jakarta city as area with fancy buildings and high lifestyles. This rejects grand narrative that is found in public's view of Jakarta. Although Jakarta is capital city, it doesn't mean that all of its people have luxury lifestyles.

## CONCLUSION

There are different views on characters and Jakarta's image in society in novel. In this novel, there is a difference in society's view that the standard for a woman to be loved must be feminine. However, woman with a tomboyish character can find a partner. There is also a lot of societal stigma about disability who consider them useless because they have physical deficiencies. However, in this novel disability have achievements in sound so there's no stigma about disability in this novel. In addition, marriage is based on loyalty of the couple, but in this novel Arung has an affair with Betari and ends happily. In addition, society's view of success that can only be achieved by wealthy descendants but in this novel there is small community who succeeded in becoming a big singer due to his achievements and luck. Society's view of children from extramarital relationships is bad stigma in society. However, in this novel, a child from an extramarital relationship is well accepted by his friends and gets a decent life.

Image Jakarta city which most people perceive as having luxury buildings and high lifestyle, but in this novel there is a small community in the form of street buskers in Jakarta. These are contradictions of the binary opposition that is the grand narrative in society's view.

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