

SOCIAL IMPACTS OF MODERNIZATION ON THE TAPPERS: A STUDY ON AHMAD TOHARI'S *BEKISAR MERAH*

Suparman¹

*Abstract: The Mimetic and interdisciplinary approach covering economy, history, culture, and ecology used in this research are mainly aimed at revealing the social impacts of modernization on the tappers as reflected in Ahmad Tohari's *Bekisar Merah*. The analysis shows that modernization does not only cause positive impacts but also negative one, which are even stronger. The bad impacts include monopoly, human and cultural conflict, imbalanced ecology, poverty, disharmony, violation of law, materialistic life, less religiosity, drop outs; and migration. The positive impacts include independence, adaptation, rationality, and efficiency. The problems appear in the novel reflects the inner conflict of the author. Ahmad Tohari questions the ideas of the coming of the electricity set in Karangsoja village. Modernization can only be enjoyed by the upper class of the society. It cannot meet the necessity of the traditional people. The tappers cannot enjoy the electricity, even more, it causes misery and poverty.*

Key Words: modernization, tappers, social impacts, electrification

¹ **Drs. Suparman, S.S. M.Hum.** <suparman_stainska@yahoo.co.id> is an alumnae from the English Department of Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta (1997) and the American Studies Graduate Program of Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (2005). He currently dedicates himself to being the Managing Editor of *Jurnal Sastra dan Bahasa* and the Secretary of the Faculty of English Letters at STAIN Surakarta (2006 –now).

INTRODUCTION

Modernization is undeniably a global process. It is one of the developmental goals of a government. It is marked by a strong and conscious break with traditional forms and techniques of expression. It rejects traditional values and assumptions (Holman 1981:274-275). Bradbury states that it is the coming of “a new era of high aesthetic self-consciousness and non-representation toward style, technique, and spatial form in pursuit of a deeper penetration of life” (1976:25). It is generally expected by most of the countries in the world especially the superior or high class (Abraham 1991:1). It can increase income or economic sector. It can also promote economy betterment for society. On one hand, it may mean development, yet on the other hand it can also mean conquest or even destruction (Wuntu 1996:18). Modernization also causes social gap, disharmony, suffering or misery especially for the lower class of the society (Hidayat 1994:1-2). Through *Bekisar Merah*, Ahmad Tohari questions the coming of modernization. The study focuses on the impacts of electrification on the tappers.

This study uses interdisciplinary approach. Besides, it also uses mimetic approach that views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or counterfeiting, or as representation of the world and human life (Abrams 1979:10-14). Literary work is a reflection of human life of a society at a certain time and place. A literary work should be considered as a social phenomenon (Burns 1973:35). Therefore, economic, historical, cultural, ecological, and sociological approaches are indispensable in this study (Smith 1980:14-15).

Ahmad Tohari was born in Tinggarjaya, Jatilawang, Banyumas, Central Java on June 13, 1948. When he was 22, he married Siti Syamsiah, an elementary school teacher (1970). Most of his works deal with religious teaching. To him, literary work is one of the effective methods to teach moral teaching or to deliver history, law and philosophy. He uses literary works as a good method to preach (Tohari 1998:6).

In 1981 he worked in Jakarta as the editor of daily news, *Merdeka* but he retreated for his children at the village. He has studied in various faculties— economics of *Jendral Sudirman University* (1974-1975), politics (1975-1976), and school of medicine of *YARSI* in Jakarta (1969-1970). However, he decided not to continue all his studies. He went back to his

village, Tinggarjaya to lead Islamic boarding school, *NU Al Falah* (Sugono 2003:16). He has worked as a part-timer officer in *BNI* (1946), managing banking magazine. He managed editorial board of the magazine in 1986. In 1990 he followed the international writing program in America for three months. This experience stimulates him to be interested in writing some literary works. He is popular with his *Trilogi: Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (1982), *Lintang Kemukus Dinihari* (1985), *Jantera Bianglala* (1986). He got award for his short story entitled *Jasa-jasa Buat Sanwirya* (1977), and for his novel—*Di Kaki Bukit Cibalak* (1979). His *Kubah* got reward as the best fiction reading in 1980. His *Jantera Bianglala* was the best fiction in 1968 and awarded one million rupiah from the minister of Education and Culture, Fuad Hasan. Through *Bekisar Merah*, he reached the prize of ASEAN literature in 1994.

He started to write fictions since he was in the Senior High School, but he began to publish them after graduating from school. He was eager to write some stories when his first short stories were published in daily news, *Kompas*. He was greatly motivated to write some other stories when his short story, *Jasa-jasa Buat Sanwirya* succeeded to win in the writing contest held by *Nederland Radio*. Since then, he got some other prizes. He is still active writing now. There are three factors to stimulate writing competence namely; habits, regular exercises, and much reading (Sugono 2003:16).

His custom of living in the village influences his works. His local colors of works including *Bekisar Merah* depict the life of the village tappers. He spends his life in the countryside, therefore, he can depict exactly the experience of life in the village. Through *Bekisar Merah*, he depicts the life of villagers in Karangsoaga. The name of *Karangsoaga* village is an imaginative village. There is no such real name in the real place, Banyumas. *Karangsoaga* is chosen to refer to a village where people tap *nira*. The word “*Karangsoaga*” derives from the word *karang* and *soga*, *karang* means a place to live or a place to gather; and rock. *Soga* means a tree in which the bark of the tree is used as the material to redden the sheet (PPPB team 1994:954). Imaginatively, *Karangsoaga* means a hilly and rocky place where people gather and work together to tap red sap. It is described as a poor, infertile, remote and isolated village contrasted to the metropolis life, Jakarta. He contrasts the culture of living in the village and town especially in welcoming the modernization. There are many negative impacts should be

8. an awareness of the dignity of others, for example, woman and children;
9. a faith in the achievement of science and technology, albeit a somewhat simple faith;
10. a belief in 'distributive' justice (Harrison 1988:20-21).

These indications can be used to measure whether or not the people are ready to welcome the coming of modernization. The various ideas on modernization above show that modernization may cause bad impact and good impacts. These ideas support the discussion in the novel that, not all the characters welcome the coming of modernization. The immigrants welcome the coming of modernization, while the Indians reject it. It is mainly caused by their different culture.

SOCIAL IMPACTS OF MODERNIZATIONS IN *BEKISAR MERAH*

Modernization in *Bekisar Merah* appears in the form of electricity. Electricity is the most dominant factor stimulating the social changes. It brings about very extraordinary changes on the life of traditional people in Karangsoaga especially the tappers. The appearance of electricity is able to change the social life including family relationship, cultural differences and relationship among the people in the society. It influences the behavior of the characters in the novel consisting of Darsa, Lasi, *Pak Tir*, Lasi's mother, *mbok Wiryaji* and *Kanjat*. The main cause leading to the very complicated story in *Bekisar Merah* is Darsa's fall from the top of high coconut tree. While tapping *nira* on the palm tress, the wet branches touch the electric lines near the trees that cause him gets electric shock and falls down. *Nira* is sap obtained by tapping inflorescence of coconut palms used to make sugar.

Darsa's fall causes him in serious injury namely urinal sickness and impotence. Undeniably, this condition influences the harmony of Darsa's family. Before getting serious injury, the family was happy, and peaceful. Darsa and his wife respect and love each other. They make them proud each other. Darsa is always proud of Lasi's fair nape of neck contrasted from her black hair. Similarly, Lasi is always proud of Darsa's strong body as a tapper.

Penyadap muda ini tak habis merasa beruntung punya isteri dengan kulit sangat putih dan memberi keindahan yang khas terutama pada bagian yang berbatasan dengan rambut (Tohari 1993:8).

[This young tapper is always lucky having a fair wife with very dark hair]

After undergoing long sickness, there is a little problem in the family. The problem is mainly caused by the condition that they have no money anymore to cure Darsa's sickness in the hospital. Moreover, Lasi's mother, *mbok* Wiryaji begins showing her hatred to his son-in-law because he can do nothing except sleeping, wetting the bed and being angry. Moreover, his sickness spends much money for the hospital, but he is still sick. It is reflected that *mbok* Wiryaji tends to think more about material life rather than the unity of her daughter's family. In this condition, *mbok* Wiryaji always remembers the failure of Lasi's teacher of elementary school who has proposed to marry her.

Family conflict appears when Lasi should replace the existence of Darsa as a tapper in that village. Lasi should do everything alone without getting help from Darsa, because he is still in sick condition. As a woman, Lasi does not climb the coconut tress herself to tap the *nira*, but she asks for help to Darsa's neighbor, Mukri. Several months Mukri works together with Lasi to tap the *nira*. It is natural that a normal man feels interested in a fair and beautiful woman. Javanese culture says "*witing tresno jalaran soko kulino*" loving someone because of being accustomed to". In the long run, Mukri is attracted by Lasi's beauty. Besides, Mukri exactly understands that it is about six months, Lasi does not get intimate touch from her husband. Mukri very often tempts Lasi out of Darsa's watch.

Memang, Mukri suka mencuri pandang dan kadang tersenyum nakal. Lasi yang sekian bulan tidak diapa-apakan bisa tersengat oleh ulah Mukri (Tohari 1993: 67).

[Mukri likes stealing a glance at Lasi and sometimes he smiles naughtily. Lasi who is long enough does not get intimate touch from her husband, can be tamped by Mukri's behavior]

Seeing this condition, Darsa will be jealous, and the jealousy lately causes conflict. Since that time, Darsa and Lasi often quarrel each other.

Adultery done by Darsa and Sipah is also the effect of the appearance of electricity. In *Bekisar Merah*, Darsa and Sipah have sexual intercourse without having legal marriage. Out of his wife's watch (Lasi), Darsa has to have adultery with Sipah because of the pressure from Sipah's mother, Bunek. Actually, Darsa does not have intention to do it at all and neither does Sipah. It is Sipah's mother who always persuades him to do it, because she has helped him, otherwise he should also help her.

Kesontoloyan Darsa bermula dari akal-akalan Bunek
(Tohari 1993:78).

[Darsa's adultery comes from Bunek's tricky action]

Bunek does it on purpose because her daughter, Sipah is very old enough to get married, but she is still single. Moreover, she is a lame girl. This is Bunek's trap to find a mate for her old daughter. The trap is that Darsa is persuaded to test or try his virility healing to someone else first, before testing it to his own wife.

Kesembuhan Darsa tidak boleh dibuktikan langsung kepada isterinya, melainkan kepada orang lain lebih dahulu
(Tohari 1993:78).

[Darsa's recovery must not be proven directly to his own wife, but must be proven to others first]

Divorce is another impact of the coming of electrification. It is a formal and legal ending of a marriage, leaving the former husband or wife and free to marry again. The divorce of Darsa's family is actually the result of electricity. Being pregnant, Sipah accompanied by her mother, meets and demands Darsa to be responsible for his conduct to her. Understanding her husband action, Lasi directly becomes absolutely shocked and frustrated.

Dunia Lasi terus jungkir-balik, malang-melintang. Ia bergoyang lalu berjalan tanpa kesadaran penuh (Tohari 1993:74-75).

[Lasi's life turs up and down and lies-across. She walks unsteadily and unconsciously]

As her compensation, she runs away to Jakarta without asking permission to her family, including her husband, her father and her mother. She leaves home without any preparation and consideration. She flees from her house without bringing money and changing clothes. Since that time, Lasi does not want to see her husband anymore.

Lasi's running away to Jakarta shows her bravery against her husband and the culture in her village. She shows that she has existence that should be treated equally from the man. She does not want to be conquered and betrayed. This is the start of her rational attitude that is regarded as a good impact for her.

In Jakarta, Lasi is stayed in three different places. Respectively, the three places are *bu* Koneng's cafe, *bu* Lanting's house, and *pak* Handarbeni's house. *Bu* Koneng and *bu* Lanting are rich pimps. *Pak* Hand is a very rich-old director of private company, *PT Bagi-Bagi* in Jakarta. He has very great ambition to marry her to be his third wife. Shortly, Lasi has no other choice except accepting it. Consequently, Lasi should divorce her husband, Darsa.

Lasi sedang menuntut cerai dari Darsa. Lasi membawa "surat sakti" dari seorang overste purnawirawan di Jakarta yang ditujukan kepada kepala desa Karangsoga (Tohari 1993:242).

[Lasi asks Darsa for a divorce. She brings 'a mandate letter' from a retired armed service officer in Jakarta that is addressed to the head of Karangsoga village]

Another good impact of modernization is Lasi's brave attitude to divorce his husband, Darsa. She does not want to receive Darsa anymore.

Lasi encounters new culture in new place, Jakarta. After living in Jakarta, Lasi finds everything different from what she has seen in the Karangsoga village. The first time she meets the people in Koneng's cafe, Lasi feels something odd, and unique. She is not totally familiar with everything she sees in Jakarta, for example woman eating in the cafe alone; prostitute; woman going out at night alone; sensual talking; and talking with strange man. In Koneng's cafe, Lasi sees some prostitution. There are some men and women have intimate relationship freely without legal marriage. Koneng herself prepares and provides her cafe to do this action for money. It is

suitable with Koneng's profession as a pimp. She controls and finds customers for prostitutes, and takes a large part of the money that they earn. Two men in the truck bringing Lasi to Koneng's cafe also make a date with the women in Koneng's cafe. For Lasi who usually lives in the village, such kinds of actions are totally strange, disgraceful, and unfamiliar. Lasi should experience and witness living in such situation as the consequence of her running away to Jakarta. Indirectly, this condition influences Lasi's behavior. Lasi gradually learns to adapt to the new situation in the new environment. The easiness and openness of Lasi to adapt to new environment also reflects positive impact of modernization.

Lasi experiences another cultural contrast when she is persuaded to go with *bu* Lanting. Like *bu* Koneng, she is a very rich pimp. She has no legal husband but she has some boyfriends. In her house, Lasi is spoiled and treated extraordinarily. In Jakarta Lasi is introduced with some modern things that she does not see in Karangsoaga. She is not permitted to work in the kitchen or to do something else. She is permitted to accompany her landlady going out such as, to go to a wedding party, supermarket, shopping, beauty center, and the like.

Lasi tak pernah keluar keringat tetapi segala kebutuhan tercukupi: baju bagus, anting, jam tangan, sepatu ... (Tohari 1993:156).

[Lasi never works hard, but all her necessities are fulfilled completely : good clothes, earrings, watch, shoes, ...]

She does it in order that Lasi will be familiar and experienced with city life. Besides, this special treatment is intended to make Lasi feels at home in Jakarta, especially in Lanting's house. In its turn, Lasi looks cleaner, more attractive, and more beautiful so that she can produce high profit for *bu* Lanting. To Lasi, it is something strange because everyday she works hard at home as a tapper's wife. What she usually does in the village is cooking nira, looking for wood, and selling palm sugar.

Lasi mempunyai pekerjaan tetap: menyiapkan tungku dengan kawah besar (Tohari 1993:42).

[Lasi has a permanent activity: preparing a fireplace for a big cauldron]

In Jakarta, Lasi's idealism is faded and adapted easily. From the way of speaking, dressing, and eating, she has changed her behavior. Lasi has very big inner conflict, whether to reject all the goodness from *bu* Lanting or not. However, she does not have power to say no to *bu* Lanting, because she is trapped in the kindness and goodness of *bu* Lanting. She provides everything for Lasi's life—delicious foods, good clothes, much money, complete make-up equipments, luxurious shelter, and safety. Lasi thinks that it is not polite to say no to her. Consequently, she just obeys to whatever the landlady says and instructs her to do.

Lasi does not want to go home to Karangsoaga, because she does not want to see and remember the old memory about Darsa and Sipah. Finally, she just experiences whatever happens to her. Lasi herself is always aware about her mother's suggestion that there is no gift without any demand of repayment: ".....*tak ada pemberian yang tidak menuntut imbalan. Hanya pemberian Gusti Allah yang sepenuhnya Cuma-Cuma*" [It is only God's gift that does not demand repayment]. (Tohari 1993: 145). *Bu* Koneng is very eager to treat Lasi especially because she thinks that Lasi can produce great profit for her. *Bu* Lanting will sell Lasi with all her beauty to a rich man who wants to marry her. Lasi is the symbol of 'Bekisar Merah'. Bekisar is a cross between domestic chicken and jungle fowl. Lasi herself is actually the daughter of mixed blood between Javanese, *mbok* Wiryaji and a Japanese soldier. Lasi's mother confesses herself that a Japanese army rapes her when there is guerrilla war. It is why, Lasi is believed that she has special sense of different sexuality.

Modernization can lead a human being on materialistic way of life. After living in the big city, Jakarta for months, Lasi gradually changes her way of life. In Jakarta she can enjoy everything that she never dreams before for example movie, telephone, TV, radio, traveling, luxurious house, good dress, expensive shoes, watch, etc. Being a wife of a very rich director of a private company, Lasi can get everything easily. She can buy any kinds of foods and drinks; she can go somewhere; she has much money, and she lives in a very luxurious house. In other words, she can get all material life that she wants.

Kemakmuran adalah umpan yang sangat manjur untuk menjinakkan bekisar kampung yang kebanyakan punya latar kemelaratan.bekisar itu menikmati semuanya (Tohari 1993:166).

[Prosperity can be a good bait to tame *bekisar* (rural chicken) that mostly have poverty background]

However, she cannot get sexual satisfaction from her husband because of his old age. He is sixty-one years old, while Lasi is still 24 years old. This condition influences Lasi's life when she comes back to her village in Karangsoaga.

Around one year after marriage, Lasi demands divorce to Handarbeni because he cannot fulfill her sexual need.

Lasi tahu bahwa sesungguhnya Handarbeni adalah impoten. Lasi merasa dirinya hanya dijadikan pelengkap untuk sekedar kesenangan dan gengsi (Tohari 1993:266).

[Actually, Lasi understands that Hand is impotent. She feels she is just placed as a complement of enjoyment and prestige]

Lasi comes back to her village in Karangsoaga. Lasi's material life in Jakarta influences her behavior in Karangsoaga.

Three months after living in Slipi-Jakarta with Handarbeni, Lasi visits her mother in Karangsoaga. Her private driver, *pak* Min with a very luxurious car accompanies her. As soon as she gets home in Karangsoaga, she does not show her longing to her mother.

Anehnya mbok Wiryaji berhenti beberapa langkah di depan Lasi. Biasa, tak terkesan rasa kangen (Tohari 1993:272).

[Mbok Wiryaji stops few steps before Lasi, but Lasi does not show her longing to her mother]

Getting out from the car (sedan), she does not directly approach to her mother, but she stands apathetically near the car. When her mother goes out from the house, Lasi does not show her warm longing. Otherwise, it is the mother who welcomes warmly to Lasi. Lasi looks apathetic in meeting her mother. Lasi's mother thinks that Lasi has changed her behavior. It is because Lasi is rich. Since that time, Lasi is independent woman. She can



do everything based on her own idea. She does not rely on someone else. Modernization can make her independent.

Lasi's less respect to her mother appears when Lasi does not involve her mother's opinion in rebuilding her mother's house.

Demikian kecil makna keberadaannya sehingga untuk membangun rumah sendiri pun mbok Wiryaji boleh dibilang tak diajak bicara. Mbok Wiryaji menelan ludah lagi (Tohari 1993:276).

[How small the meaning of her existence that she is not involved in determining to rebuild her house. Mbok Wiryaji is anxious]

One night in her mother's house, Lasi cannot sleep because her bed is wet from leaking. The next morning without asking permission and any other consideration from her mother, she directly invites a developer, pak Talab to rebuild the house.

Pulang dari rumah pak Talab, Lasi mengemukakan rencana membangun rumahnya yang telah diputuskannya sendiri kepada emaknya. Mbok Wiryaji membelalakkan mata (Tohari 1993:274-275).

[Going home from pak Talab's house, Lasi expresses her plan to her mother about rebuilding house that she has decided personally. Mbok Wiryaji stares her eyes widely]

The rebuilding needs time at least two months. The rebuilding is totally new. It is ironical that, the house belongs to the mother, but the mother is not involved together in discussing the rebuilding. Lasi thinks that her mother will be happy having a new house. But, in fact, her mother is offended. The mother thinks herself that she is only the outsider, the watcher, and not the actor. This action actually offends her mother. Positively, modernization in one place can influence the appearance of modernization in other places. After going home from Jakarta, Lasi is successful in creating development in the village, Karangsoa.

Modernization also influences the religious level of the people. Before the electricity appeared in Karangsoa, people liked to go to *eyang Mus' surau* (prayer-house) to pray together. In the *surau* they pray together

and listen the religious teaching from *eyang Mus*. Very often they discuss or ask questions about Islamic teaching to *eyang Mus*. However, after the coming of the electricity, the number of the people going to the *surau* decreases. This condition is caused by the fact that, when the people are hungry what they remember are working to get daily food. It is stated in the novel that when they are full, they go to the *surau* diligently, but when they are hungry they are busy to get foods. *Eyang Mus* is the old man who is believed as the religious leader in Karangsoaga.

Lelaki tua itu tahu dirinya adalah rujukan dan nara sumber untuk dimintai pendapat (Tohari 1993:51).

[That old man is aware that he is the reference and informan for consultation]

He rejects Lasi's offer to set loudspeaker on his *surau*. *Eyang Mus* considers that his *surau* is still suitable with the condition of the people in Karangsoaga. It is still able to give happiness and calmness to everyone who surrenders to God in it. He thinks that loudspeaker does not influence the increasing number of the communities to go the *surau*. Besides, *eyang Mus* worries that the religiosity of the people are only on the surface level rather than on the practice of religious behavior. People tend to work for daily necessity, so that they have no time to go to the *surau*.

The determination to steal wood in the forest is another example of the impact of electricity. The tappers who have no coconut tress tend to steal the wood from the forest. They steal the wood not only to cook for themselves, but also to sell. They have to do such kind of action because they have no coconut trees to tap, while they should fulfill daily necessities. Because of electricity, the government cuts down their trees. The stealing behavior will cause other serious impacts such as dependency, and imbalanced ecology. Moreover, this action will inherit to their younger generation.

The coming of electricity also causes some children drop out from school. Formerly, the parents can pay the school fee of their children from the result of tapping the nira, but after they have no trees anymore, they have no income. Besides, the children should help their parents working for wood in the forest.

Increasing number of orphans also shows the impacts of electricity. There are some fathers fall from the trees to death because of electrical shock.

Rakam misalnya, jatuh sampai tiga kali, dan meninggal pada kecelakaan yang keempat. Kasihan anak-anaknya sekarang kurus dan kurang terurus (Tohari 1993:68-69).

[Rakam for example, has fallen three times, and die for fourth. ... It is a pity, that his children are now thin and lack of care]

Before the appearance of electricity, the tappers can tap the *nira* any time, but after it, they only tap the *nira* when the trees are really dry. The fact is, it was hard to find dry trees in the rainy season. In wet condition, they can get electrical shock through the branches touching the electric line around them. The tappers cannot stop taping, because it is the only work they can do to survive.

The fading of spiritual and mystical experience marks another impacts of electricity. The following statements reflect that after the tappers have no coconut trees, they will be poorer. The attention is focused more on the food for daily life. They go to the *surau* if they are sure enough that they have enough food for the next morning.

Para penyadap yang selalu menyebut Gusti Allah untuk membuka kesadaran terdalam demi keselamatan mereka, sering lupa pergi ke surau ... Mana yang harus didahulukan oman atau iman? Bagaimana kami bisa lestari berbakti bila perhatian kami habis oleh ketakutan akan tiadanya makanan untuk esok pagi? (Tohari 1993:233).

[The tappers who always mention God to open their deepest awareness for their own safety, often forget going to the *surau*. Which one should be the priority, *food* or *faith*? How can we obey continuously to God, if all of our attention end up in the fear of lacking food for the next morning]

Electricity also influences the people's way of life about mystical experience. Before the appearance of electricity, the village is dark at night, but after the appearance of it, the dark place will gradually decrease.

Consequently, the faith about ghost, apparition and the like can gradually disappear. In the long run, the myth disappears after the coming of electricity. In *Bekisar Merah*, it is stated clearly that when there is a falling tapper from the top of coconut trees, the victim cannot be helped by every person, except the other tapper who understands much about the way of how to help it. The other tapper must help him by urinating him while dancing around him. He must be naked while repeating the action of monkey. This culture will disappear together with the coming of electricity, because the number of the tapper will gradually lessen.

Electrification can also stimulate the appearance of urbanization and transmigration. Because there is no job anymore in the village, some of the people want to move to the town. Lasi's moving away to Jakarta can be regarded as the action of escaping from the reality.

Lasi lari dari rumah, rumah lahir, rumah batin, tempat dirinya lahir. Lari dari gula, nira, kawah ke kota. Lari dari dunia nyata ke ketidakpastian. Lari ke dunia baru yang masih diraba-raba. Lari ke dunia yang belum dikenal atau mengenalnya (Tohari 1993:82-83).

[Lasi runs away from home, physical home, mental home, her homeland. She runs away from sugar, *nira*, and cauldron to a town, escapes from real life to uncertain life, escape to a new life that must be groped first, escapes to a life that she does not know or it does not know her]

Transmigration is also another impact of electricity. People who do not have coconut trees are instructed by the government to transmigrate to out of Java. However, the people reject it because in Kalimantan, they can do nothing except tapping, whereas there is no coconut tree to tapp in Kalimantan. In the end of the story, Lasi leaves Jakarta for Karangsoga. She leaves and divorces her husband, Handarbeni. In the village she rebuild her house, payback all her debt from pak Tir, and finally she find Kanjat to marry her. These actions reflect that Lasi can adapt with the new situation, she will be adaptive, independent, and rational.

CONCLUSION

Modernization has changed all ways of life of Karangsoga tappers. The form of modernization in *Bekisar Merah* is the introduction of electrification. It brings about great changes in the society especially the tappers of Karangsoga. The changes can include all aspects of life, but they primarily shape social aspects of traditional people—the tappers. It shapes the behavior of the tappers in the society. Electrification in *Bekisar Merah* does not only cause positive impacts, but also negative ones, which are stronger. The negative impacts include human and cultural conflict, imbalanced ecology, poverty, disharmony, greediness. The positive impacts include adaptation, the introduction of new technology, and efficiency. The problems in the novel reflect the inner conflict of the author, Ahmad Tohari. He questions the ideas of the coming of the electrification on the traditional tappers. Ideally, the coming of modernization should maximize the positive impacts and minimize the negative ones.

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