

The Representation of the Seven Elements of Culture in the Novel Janji di Tanah Jawa by Agil Sri Rahayu

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Article history

Submitted: 2026/05/22; Revised: 2026/06/12; Accepted: 2026/07/19

Abstract

This study aims to describe the representation of seven cultural elements in the novel Janji di Tanah Jawa by Agil Sri Rahayu based on the concept of seven cultural elements according to Koentjaraningrat. The study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method in interdisciplinary comparative literary studies. The research data source is the novel Janji di Tanah Jawa by Agil Sri Rahayu, while the research data are in the form of quotations that represent cultural elements. Data collection techniques are carried out through intensive reading activities, recording, classifying, and documenting data, while data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that the novel completely represents the seven cultural elements according to Koentjaraningrat, namely (1) language shown through the use of Javanese krama as a marker of politeness and social stratification; (2) a knowledge system depicted through the use of plants as traditional medicine; (3) social organization that shows social stratification, position, and division of roles in society; (4) a system of living equipment and technology reflected in the use of horse-drawn carriages, traditional writing tools, and traditional clothing; (5) a livelihood system realized through plantation activities, trade, and agricultural processing; (6) a religious system that displays a blend of Islamic teachings with beliefs in ancestors, dreams, and the Javanese calendar; and (7) art represented through gamelan as a traditional Javanese musical art. The research findings show that the novel Janji di Tanah Jawa not only functions as a literary work, but also as a medium for representation and preservation of Javanese culture that shows the close relationship between literary works and the socio-cultural realities of society.

Keywords

Cultural Representation, Interdisciplinary Comparative Literature, Literary Anthropology



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INTRODUCTION

As a form of literature, the novel represents life, presenting not only imaginative stories but also capturing the social, historical, and cultural realities that develop within society. Through characters, plots, settings, dialogue, and conflicts, authors are able to reflect the cultural

values that exist within a community, enabling literary works to function as a medium for preserving and conveying cultural identity to readers (Marni & Nasution, 2019). Literature is not merely entertainment, but also a cultural document containing knowledge systems, beliefs, customs, language, arts, livelihoods, and even the technology that developed during a given period. Therefore, the study of literary works is crucial because it can reveal the close relationship between literary texts and the lives of the communities that gave birth to them. From a literary anthropology perspective, literary works are seen as reflections of culture, containing various symbols, values, and norms that can be scientifically analyzed, thus providing a deeper understanding of a society's social life (Marzuqi et al., 2024). Indonesia is a country with a rich cultural diversity, with traditions, regional languages, social systems, arts, and beliefs developing in each region. This diversity forms a national identity that continues to be passed down from generation to generation through various media, one of which is literature. Novels set in local culture play a strategic role in introducing and preserving cultural values to a modern society that is beginning to experience changes due to globalization. Amidst the increasingly rapid development of information technology, local culture faces challenges in the form of shifting values, changing lifestyles, and declining interest in regional cultural heritage by the younger generation. Therefore, literary works that highlight local culture are an effective medium for maintaining the existence of cultural values so that they remain known and understood by the wider community (Huda & Jesica, 2024).

One novel that powerfully represents the cultural life of the Javanese people is Agil Sri Rahayu's **Promise in the Land of Java**. Set in 19th-century Javanese history, this novel depicts the lives of people under the shadow of Dutch colonialism, presenting family conflicts, politics, love, and the struggle to maintain honor. The main characters, Raden Mas Manggala and Kinanti, are placed in various events that demonstrate the strong influence of Javanese customs, social structures, power systems, and cultural values on everyday life. In addition to its engaging plot, the novel also showcases the use of Javanese language, etiquette, cultural symbols, societal traditions, and the relationship between humans and their social environment, making it rich in cultural elements. The colonial historical setting, combined with Javanese social life, makes this novel a relevant literary work to be studied from a cultural anthropology perspective (Indrastuti, 2018).

The study of cultural representation in novels is important because literary works not only convey stories but also construct meaning about the lives of the communities they represent. One concept widely used to identify culture is Koentjaraningrat's theory of the seven universal elements of culture. According to this concept, culture in every society has seven basic elements: language, knowledge systems, social organization, systems of living equipment and technology, livelihood systems, religious systems, and the arts. These seven elements are universal because they exist in all social groups, although they take different forms depending on their respective cultural characteristics. This approach allows researchers to identify how a literary work comprehensively represents the cultural life of a society through various events, characters, dialogues, and settings constructed by the author (Rohma et al., 2025).

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa*, these seven cultural elements appear to be present in an integrated manner. Language is evident through the use of Javanese terms, greetings, and dialogue, reflecting the social stratification of society. Knowledge systems are evident in how characters understand customs, ethics, leadership, and social life during the colonial period. Social organization is reflected through relationships between noble families, the structure of the duchy government, and the relationships between the community, the *priyayi*, and the colonial government. The system of living equipment and technology can be observed through depictions of traditional houses, clothing, weapons, means of transportation, and other life-saving equipment. The livelihood system is depicted through the community's economic activities related to agriculture and local government. The religious system is reflected through community beliefs, spiritual values, and respect for customs and traditions. Meanwhile, artistic elements are evident through various cultural symbols, fashion, traditional ceremonies, and aesthetic expressions that enhance the nuances of Javanese life. The representation of these seven elements demonstrates that this novel not only presents a historical narrative but also serves as a space for preserving Javanese culture rich in meaning (Septiani & Mufid, 2025). However, research on *Janji di Tanah Jawa* (Promise in the Land of Java) still focuses primarily on linguistic aspects, social class, and gender issues. Studies specifically identifying the representation of the seven cultural elements based on Koentjaraningrat's concept are relatively limited. However, a literary anthropological approach using the concept of the seven cultural elements can provide a more comprehensive picture of how the author constructs Javanese cultural identity within the novel's narrative. Such an analysis not only enriches Indonesian literary studies but also contributes to the development of cultural anthropology, education, and the preservation of local cultural values through literary works (Putri et al., 2025).

Based on this description, research on the Representation of the Seven Cultural Elements in Agil Sri Rahayu's novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* is crucial. This study aims to identify, describe, and analyze the representation of the seven cultural elements according to Koentjaraningrat's concept in the novel, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the richness of Javanese culture as represented through literature. The results are expected to broaden the study of literary anthropology in Indonesia, serve as a reference for culture-based literary research, and contribute to efforts to preserve local culture through an appreciation of contemporary Indonesian literature.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method from a literary anthropology perspective. The primary data source is the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, while secondary data sources are obtained from books, scientific articles, and previous research results relevant to the theory of literary anthropology and the concept of Koentjaraningrat's seven elements of culture. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies using reading and note-taking techniques to identify quotations, narratives, dialogues, and descriptions that represent the seven elements of culture, namely language,

knowledge systems, social organizations, systems of living equipment and technology, livelihood systems, religious systems, and arts. The collected data are analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Then interpreted based on the concept of Koentjaraningrat's seven elements of culture to obtain a comprehensive picture of the representation of Javanese culture in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu..

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Language is the primary means used by humans to communicate and interact with one another. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), language is a system of symbols, both spoken and written, that humans use as a means of communication in social life. In addition to serving as a communication tool, language also reflects variations based on geographical regions and the social strata of society. In Javanese society, language use is determined by the social hierarchy of its speakers, resulting in different language varieties used by common people, the *priyayi* (nobility), and members of the royal court.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of language. This concept can be observed in the following excerpts.

(1)

"*Pripun kabar Kanjeng Gusti Raden Mas?*" greeted Regent Soerya warmly.
 "*Alhamdulillah, sae. Kula maturnuwun. Kula nyuwun kabar panjenengan ugi?*" replied Tumenggung Raden Mas Soeryaningrat, a respected figure from Bhumidharma.
 "*Alhamdulillah, kula ugi sae,*" answered Regent Soerya with a gentle laugh.
 (UUB/JDTJ/28–29)

The quotation demonstrates the use of **Javanese *krama***, the refined level of the Javanese language, spoken by noble characters. This is evident in the use of words such as *pripun*, *kula*, *sae*, *maturnuwun*, and *panjenengan*. These expressions belong to the refined *krama* register, which is used to convey politeness and mutual respect. Since both Regent Soerya and Tumenggung Raden Mas Soeryaningrat belong to the noble class, the use of *krama* reflects that language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a marker of equality and respect among members of the aristocracy. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of language through the use of Javanese *krama* as a reflection of the social hierarchy portrayed in *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(2)

"*Wilujeng enjing, Gusti Raden Mas.*"
 "*Wilujeng enjing. Kanjeng Bupati sudah bersiap?*"
 "*Sampun, monggo langsung mlebet.*" (UUB/JDTJ/70)

This quotation also demonstrates the use of Javanese *krama* in the interaction between characters. Expressions such as *wilujeng enjing*, *sampun*, *monggo*, and *mlebet* are forms of respectful language used to express politeness toward the interlocutor. Unlike the first

example, where *krama* is used between individuals of equal noble status, in this excerpt the refined language is spoken by a servant whose social position is lower than that of Gusti Raden Mas. This indicates that the level of Javanese language changes according to the social relationship between the speaker and the listener. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of language through the variation of Javanese *krama*, which reflects differences in social stratification in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Knowledge System

Human life cannot be separated from knowledge acquired through experience and transmitted from one generation to the next. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), the knowledge system encompasses the entirety of human understanding of the surrounding environment, including nature, plants, animals, the human body, natural materials, space and time, and human behavior.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of the knowledge system. This concept can be observed in the following excerpt.

(3)

"Tabib Harjo began his work by washing the wound with a warm betel leaf decoction, then sprinkling herbal powder to relieve pain. With the precision of a traditional healer, he removed the bullet using bronze forceps and then covered the wound with a sterile cloth soaked in a mixture of medicinal leaves and pure coconut oil." (UUB/JDTJ/280)

The quotation demonstrates the community's knowledge regarding the medicinal benefits of plants. Warm betel leaf decoction is used to clean wounds, herbal powder is applied to reduce pain, while medicinal leaves and pure coconut oil are utilized to promote the healing process. In this passage, Tabib Harjo not only possesses knowledge of the types of plants used for traditional medicine but also understands the methods of preparing and applying these natural ingredients to facilitate wound healing. Such knowledge is acquired through experience and passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the knowledge system through the utilization of plants as traditional medicine in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Social Organization

Social life takes place within a social order that regulates relationships among its members. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), social organization refers to the patterns of relationships and social structures within a society, including systems of social relations, status, roles, and social stratification. Through social organization, every individual understands their rights, obligations, and the norms governing social life.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of social organization. This concept can be observed in the following excerpts.

(1)

"A sigh escaped Regent Soerya. 'Kinanti, you must remember who you are. You are a daughter

of noble blood. Do not make friends carelessly, especially with those who are not of the same social caste as we are. Wira is only the son of an ordinary family.'" (UUB/JDTJ/75)

The quotation demonstrates the existence of social stratification within society, distinguishing the noble class from ordinary people. As a descendant of the aristocracy, Kinanti is expected to maintain relationships that are appropriate to her social status. Meanwhile, Wira is regarded as different because he comes from a common family. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of social organization through the social stratification between the noble class and ordinary people in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(2)

"Wira was stunned. Although his status had been elevated to supervisor of the forced cultivation system, it did not change the fact that he was not a member of the priyayi class who should be respected or feared by the villagers. He was merely a servant of the system, an attendant who understood the rules and lived from the crumbs that fell from the table of power." (UUB/JDTJ/37)

The quotation demonstrates that social stratification in society is determined not only by the position a person holds but also by family background and ancestry. Although Wira has the position of supervisor of the forced cultivation system, he is still regarded as an ordinary person because he does not come from the *priyayi* class. This indicates that a person's social status is determined by two factors, namely position and lineage, and these two factors are not always consistent with one another. Wira can attain a higher position, but he cannot change society's perception of his family background. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of social organization through social status determined by ancestral lineage in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(3)

"Regent Soerya sat together with representatives of the people: several Demang, village Kiai, and former soldiers who had once served this land." (UUB/JDTJ/125)

The quotation demonstrates the existence of a social structure consisting of individuals with different roles in society. The Regent, *Demang*, *Kiai*, and former soldiers each occupy distinct positions and responsibilities within the community. The presence of these figures reflects a clear division of roles in social life. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of social organization through the social structure and division of roles among individuals in the community in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

System of Living Equipment and Technology

Human ability to create and utilize various tools represents one of the cultural manifestations that continues to develop within society. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), the system of living equipment and technology encompasses various elements of material culture, including production tools, fire-making equipment, weapons, containers, food, clothing, housing, and transportation. These tools are utilized by society to support daily activities and fulfill basic needs.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of the system of living equipment and technology. This concept can be observed in the following excerpts.

(4)

"As the morning approached noon, the soft ringing of carriage bells accompanied the wooden wheels as they gradually slowed before finally stopping in the courtyard of Regent Soerya Wiranagara's pavilion. A dark brown horse neighed softly, gently shaking the jempana carriage decorated with golden curtains, which appeared magnificent under the sunlight." (UUB/JDTJ/28)

The quotation demonstrates the use of a horse-drawn carriage as a means of transportation during that period. The *jempana* carriage, pulled by horses, was used to facilitate travel, particularly for members of the nobility. The use of horse-drawn carriages reflects a form of traditional technology that was adapted to the needs of society at that time. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the system of living equipment and technology through the use of traditional transportation in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(5)

"Before them, an old wooden board and black charcoal served as substitutes for books and pens." (UUB/JDTJ/34)

The quotation demonstrates the use of simple writing tools in educational activities. Wooden boards and charcoal were used as writing media that were easily accessible to the community during that period. The use of these materials illustrates how people utilized simple objects to support learning and writing in their daily lives. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the system of living equipment and technology through the use of simple equipment as learning and writing tools in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(6)

"He stepped down wearing a black beskap and a striped batik blangkon. The attire was neat and flawless, reflecting the appearance of a regional leader." (UUB/JDTJ/281)

The quotation demonstrates the use of traditional clothing as part of the system of living equipment in Javanese society. The *beskap* and *blangkon* function as clothing worn in social life. In addition to serving as attire, these garments also symbolize social identity and cultural heritage during that period. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the system of living equipment and technology through the use of traditional clothing as a marker of social and cultural identity in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Livelihood System

The fulfillment of daily needs encourages people to engage in various economic activities that serve as their source of livelihood. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), the livelihood system refers to the ways in which communities obtain and utilize natural resources to sustain their lives. These economic activities include traditional occupations such as hunting, gathering,

farming, animal husbandry, and fishing, as well as trade as part of the community's economic system.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of the livelihood system. This concept can be observed in the following excerpts.

(1)

"Soerya is too foolish and far too sympathetic toward the common people. In fact, Jayamukti possesses abundant wealth that we can exploit for our own benefit. Sugarcane, indigo, and coffee are valuable export commodities. The land is fertile, and the soil is highly promising."
(UUB/JDTJ/20)

The quotation demonstrates a livelihood system that depends on plantation agriculture. Crops such as sugarcane, indigo, and coffee are cultivated as commodities with high economic value. This reflects the economic activities of society during the colonial period, when natural resources were utilized as the primary source of livelihood. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the livelihood system through plantation activities in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(2)

"At the market, the muddy ground never became an obstacle for the people to earn a living."
(UUB/JDTJ/79)

The quotation demonstrates the determination of the community to earn a living through trading activities in the marketplace. Despite the muddy and crowded conditions, people continued buying and selling goods to meet their daily needs. These activities indicate that trade served as one of the primary forms of livelihood within the community. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the livelihood system through commercial activities in the marketplace in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(3)

"Today the market was exceptionally crowded. They spent the entire day peeling coconuts, cutting corn, and sorting cassava until nightfall." (UUB/JDTJ/219)

The quotation demonstrates the community's activities in processing agricultural products as part of their livelihood. Peeling coconuts, cutting corn, and sorting cassava illustrate the efforts of the people to fulfill their economic needs through the processing of agricultural produce. These activities constitute an integral part of the community's livelihood system. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the livelihood system through the processing of agricultural products in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Religious System

Belief is an inseparable aspect of social life because it relates to faith in powers considered greater than human beings. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), the religious system refers

to the system of human beliefs concerning supernatural powers, accompanied by religious emotions and expressed through beliefs, religious ceremonies, and communities of adherents.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, several data illustrate the cultural element of the religious system. This concept can be observed in the following excerpts.

(4)

"May the blessings of Gusti Allah and our ancestors accompany this noble intention."
(UUB/JDTJ/30)

The quotation demonstrates the community's belief in both God and their ancestors. The expression *Gusti Allah* reflects faith in God, while the mention of ancestors indicates reverence for ancestral spirits. This belief illustrates the spiritual relationship between humans, God, and their ancestors in the life of the community. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the religious system through belief in God and ancestral spirits in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(5)

"In Javanese tradition, dreams are not merely sleeping flowers. Dreams are invisible commands, messages from the ancestors." (UUB/JDTJ/31)

The quotation demonstrates the community's belief in supernatural forces and ancestral spirits. People believe that dreams possess special meanings and are regarded as messages conveyed by their ancestors. Such beliefs form an important part of the community's spiritual life and continue to be maintained in everyday life. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the religious system through the belief that dreams are messages from ancestors in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

(6)

"Wednesday, coinciding with the Legi market day in the Javanese calendar, is believed to possess a particular spiritual aura and is often chosen for healing practices or peaceful rituals."
(UUB/JDTJ/79)

The quotation demonstrates the community's belief that certain days possess spiritual significance. In this passage, the Javanese calendar is used as a guide for determining the appropriate time to conduct healing practices and specific rituals. This belief forms part of the traditional heritage of Javanese society, passed down from generation to generation, and continues to serve as a guide in everyday life. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of the religious system through belief in the spiritual significance of the Javanese calendar in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Art

Human appreciation for beauty has given rise to various forms of artistic expression that have become an integral part of social life. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), art is a form of

human expression associated with beauty and manifested in various creations that can be appreciated through the senses, including visual arts and musical arts.

In the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu, data illustrating the cultural element of art can be found in the following excerpt.

(7)

"The room was filled with the gentle fragrance of jasmine lingering in the air, while the soft melody of the gamelan from afar resembled the rhythm of a prayer blending with the wind, enveloping the meeting in a profound sense of serenity." (UUB/JDTJ/30)

The quotation demonstrates the cultural element of art through **traditional Javanese music**, namely the *gamelan*. The melody of the *gamelan* is used to create a peaceful and solemn atmosphere during the occasion. Its presence illustrates that artistic expression occupies an important place in Javanese society and serves as a medium for creating beauty, harmony, and a distinctive cultural ambiance. Therefore, this quotation represents the cultural element of art through traditional Javanese *gamelan* music in the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu represents the seven universal elements of culture proposed by Koentjaraningrat (2015), namely language, the knowledge system, social organization, the system of living equipment and technology, the livelihood system, the religious system, and art. These seven cultural elements are not merely presented as the background of the story but also construct the cultural identity of Javanese society portrayed throughout the novel. Through the perspective of literary anthropology, literary works are understood as representations of social life that preserve the values, norms, traditions, and patterns of thought of a particular society in a specific historical period. Consequently, the novel does not simply present a fictional narrative but also functions as a medium that comprehensively represents Javanese culture through the characters' behavior, dialogues, traditions, and the social environment in which the story unfolds.

Language emerges as the most dominant cultural representation in the novel because it functions both as a marker of social identity and as a medium of communication among the characters. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), language is a symbolic system that serves not only as a means of communication but also as a reflection of the social structure of a society. Data (1) and (2) demonstrate the use of refined Javanese **krama** through expressions such as **pripun**, **kula**, **sae**, **maturnuwun**, **panjenengan**, **wilujeng enjing**, **monggo**, and **mlebet**. The use of these expressions indicates that language choice in Javanese society is not arbitrary but is governed by social norms regulating relationships between speakers. In the first excerpt, **krama** is used between two noble characters as a form of mutual respect among individuals of equal social status. In contrast, in the second excerpt, **krama** is employed by a servant when addressing Gusti Raden Mas as a sign of respect for someone of higher social standing. These findings demonstrate that language in Javanese society fulfills a dual function,

serving as both a communication tool and a symbol of social stratification. From the perspective of literary anthropology, language functions as a cultural symbol representing politeness, etiquette, and respect for social hierarchy, thereby reinforcing the Javanese cultural identity that highly values **unggah-ungguh**, or proper manners, in communication (Iman & Andalas, 2019).

The representation of the knowledge system in the novel is reflected through the community's traditional knowledge of herbal medicine, as illustrated in Data (3). Koentjaraningrat (2015) explains that the knowledge system encompasses humanity's understanding of its environment, acquired through experience and transmitted across generations. The character Tabib Harjo utilizes betel leaf decoction, herbal powder, medicinal leaves, and pure coconut oil as treatments for wounds. This practice demonstrates that Javanese society possesses extensive knowledge of medicinal plants and understands the methods of processing them for traditional healing purposes. Such local knowledge has developed through long-term empirical experience and has become an essential component of cultural heritage. From an anthropological perspective, traditional healing practices represent not merely medical activities but also forms of human adaptation to the natural environment. Therefore, the novel illustrates that traditional knowledge possesses significant cultural value because it embodies local wisdom that has been inherited from one generation to another as an integral part of Javanese cultural identity (IMBRANSYAH, 2022).

Social organization in the novel is represented through social stratification, social status, and the division of roles within the community. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), social organization is the system of relationships that regulates the position and function of each individual in society. Data (4) shows that Kinanti, as a descendant of the nobility, is forbidden from forming a relationship with Wira, who comes from an ordinary family. This reflects the idea that social status is determined by lineage, thereby influencing patterns of social interaction. Furthermore, Data (5) reveals that formal positions do not necessarily alter an individual's social status. Although Wira has been appointed as a supervisor of the forced cultivation system, he continues to be regarded as an ordinary villager because he does not belong to the **priyayi** class. This phenomenon demonstrates that the social structure of Javanese society prioritizes genealogical background over occupational mobility. Meanwhile, Data (6) illustrates the division of responsibilities among the Regent, **Demang**, **Kiai**, and former soldiers in managing community affairs. Each figure occupies a distinct social role while collectively maintaining social harmony and order. Thus, the novel represents Javanese social organization as a hierarchical system characterized by clearly defined social positions and responsibilities (Al Azmi & Karkono, 2024).

The representation of the system of living equipment and technology is evident through the use of various traditional tools that support everyday life. Based on Koentjaraningrat's (2015) theory, this cultural element encompasses all material equipment used by humans to fulfill their daily needs. Data (7) demonstrates the use of the **jempana** horse-drawn carriage as a means of transportation for the nobility, reflecting the development of traditional

transportation technology during that period. The carriage functions not only as a mode of transportation but also as a symbol of the owner's social status. Furthermore, Data (8) illustrates the use of wooden boards and charcoal as learning media, highlighting the creativity of the community in utilizing simple resources for educational purposes. Data (9) presents the use of the *beskap* and *blangkon* as traditional clothing that serves not only as apparel but also as symbols of cultural identity and social status. These findings demonstrate that technology in traditional societies should not be interpreted solely in terms of modern advancement but rather as the community's ability to develop tools that correspond to environmental conditions, practical needs, and cultural values (Lantowa et al., 2022).

The livelihood system portrayed in the novel illustrates how Javanese society utilizes natural resources as the foundation of its economic life. According to Koentjaraningrat (2015), the livelihood system refers to the methods through which communities obtain their living by engaging in various economic activities. Data (10) indicates that sugarcane, indigo, and coffee plantations function as major export commodities with significant economic value during the colonial period. This demonstrates that the plantation sector served as the economic foundation of society while simultaneously becoming a target of colonial exploitation. Furthermore, Data (11) depicts commercial activities in the marketplace as an important source of livelihood that continues despite unfavorable environmental conditions. The market functions not only as an economic center but also as a social space where community interactions occur. Data (12) shows the processing of agricultural products such as coconuts, corn, and cassava, reflecting the utilization of agricultural resources as a primary source of household income. Collectively, these findings indicate that the economic life of Javanese society is fundamentally based on agriculture and trade, both of which develop according to the availability of surrounding natural resources (Adzka, 2025).

The representation of the religious system in the novel reveals the integration of Islamic teachings with traditional Javanese beliefs. Koentjaraningrat (2015) argues that the religious system includes beliefs in supernatural powers manifested through faith, rituals, and religious practices. Data (13) illustrates the community's belief in *Gusti Allah* while simultaneously expressing reverence for ancestral spirits. This reflects a form of cultural syncretism that combines Islamic values with indigenous traditions (Hudaa et al., 2021). Data (14) demonstrates the belief that dreams are messages from ancestors carrying important meanings for human life. Meanwhile, Data (15) illustrates the use of the Javanese calendar in determining appropriate times for healing practices and ritual ceremonies. The belief in the spiritual significance of specific market days (*pasar*) demonstrates that Javanese society perceives time as possessing sacred dimensions. These representations indicate that the religious system portrayed in the novel encompasses not only formal religious practices but also the preservation of traditional beliefs as an essential component of Javanese cultural identity (Anshari, n.d.).

The cultural element of art is represented in the novel through the presence of the *gamelan*, the traditional musical ensemble of Java, as illustrated in Data (16). According to

Koentjaraningrat (2015), art is a form of human expression manifested through creative works that provide aesthetic experiences. The soft melody of the *gamelan* accompanying the meeting creates a sacred, peaceful, and respectful atmosphere. The presence of *gamelan* functions not merely as entertainment but also as a medium for establishing emotional and spiritual harmony during important social events. This demonstrates that art in Javanese culture fulfills social and religious functions in addition to its aesthetic role. Overall, *Janji di Tanah Jawa* successfully represents art as an integral component of community life that strengthens cultural identity while symbolizing harmony between human beings, tradition, and the surrounding social environment. Collectively, the seven cultural elements proposed by Koentjaraningrat are comprehensively portrayed throughout the novel, demonstrating that literary works can function as powerful media for preserving Javanese cultural values while simultaneously documenting the social life of the society represented in the narrative.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* by Agil Sri Rahayu fully represents the seven elements of culture according to Koentjaraningrat's theory, namely language, knowledge system, social organization, life equipment and technology system, livelihood system, religious system, and art. The representation of language elements is seen through the use of Javanese krama language which reflects politeness, respect, and social stratification of Javanese society. The element of knowledge system is realized through the use of plants as traditional medicine which shows local wisdom passed down from generation to generation. Social organization is represented through the existence of social stratification between nobles, priyayi, and ordinary people as well as the division of social roles in society. The life equipment and technology system is depicted through the use of horse-drawn carriages, wooden planks, charcoal, beskap, and blangkon as forms of traditional technology that support people's life activities. The livelihood system is represented through plantation activities, trade, and agricultural processing as a source of livelihood for the people. The religious system is displayed through a combination of Islamic teachings with beliefs in ancestors, dreams, and the Javanese calendar which reflects the syncretism of Javanese culture. Meanwhile, the artistic element is manifested through the presence of gamelan as a traditional musical art that has aesthetic, social, and spiritual functions. Based on all these findings, it can be concluded that the novel *Janji di Tanah Jawa* does not only function as a work of fiction, but also as a representation of the cultural life of Javanese society in accordance with the concept of Koentjaraningrat's seven elements of culture, so that it can become a medium for preserving cultural values, strengthening local cultural identity, and contributing to interdisciplinary comparative literary studies between literature and cultural studies.

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