

## Social Religious Conflict in Taufik Al-Hakim's Short Story Iblīsu Yantaşiru: An A.J. Greimas Narratological Analysis

Lia Angraini<sup>1</sup>, Misbahus Surur<sup>2</sup>, Meysarah<sup>3</sup>, Mubasyir Munir<sup>4</sup>, Arif Mustofa<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia. e-mail: [angrainilia1209@gmail.com](mailto:angrainilia1209@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia. e-mail: [misbahussurur@uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:misbahussurur@uin-malang.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup> IAIN Curup, Indonesia. e-mail: [meysarah@iaincurup.ac.id](mailto:meysarah@iaincurup.ac.id)

<sup>4</sup> UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia. e-mail: [mubasy\\_2ir@uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:mubasy_2ir@uin-malang.ac.id)

<sup>5</sup> UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia. e-mail: [mustofa@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:mustofa@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id)

### **Abstrak**

*The short story Iblīsu Yantaşiru by Taufiq Al-Hakim tells the story of a devout man who is determined to uphold the truth and fight against the misguidance of society. However, his determination eventually crumbles due to the temptations of worldly desires. The narrative is structured to depict the inner struggle between religious idealism and material temptations, reflecting the moral conflicts that often arise in society. The storyline develops from the emergence of a problem and the protagonist's goal to the climax, which reveals spiritual failure due to weak moral integrity. This study aims to examine the relationships among characters and the forms of conflict in the short story by applying A.J. Greimas's actantial and functional structural theory. Greimas, using descriptive qualitative methods and a narratological approach. The main data sources are the short story Iblīsu Yantaşiru and various relevant references. Data was collected through reading, translating, and note-taking techniques, while the analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model: data reduction, presentation, and conclusion. The analysis shows that Nasik, a figure known for his piety, is the subject who wants to cut down the "tree of misguidance" in order to save the community (object), driven by his faith (the sender) and aided by an axe (the helper). He is hindered by Satan and his own desires (the obstacle). Within the framework of functional structure, Nasik failed at the transformation stage because his motivation had changed from sincere intentions for the sake of Allah to worldly desires. As a result, the goal was not achieved and the community remained in a state of confusion.*

**Kata Kunci:** Arabic Short Stories; Character Relationships Conflict; Narratology A.J Greimas

### **1. Introduction**

In modern Arabic literature, many works across various genres, such as novels and short stories, are often used to address social issues intertwined with themes of religion and religiosity.

Several modern Arabic prose writers, particularly those influenced by realism, frequently explore compelling problems that unfold within the social life of their surrounding communities. Apart from Najib Mahfouz, another renowned Arab prose writer who frequently composed realist stories intertwined with socio-religious themes is Taufiq Al-Hakim. He often wrote numerous short stories that engage with socio-religious issues, offering material for reflection on the dynamics of religious and social life. Such themes are evident in one of his short stories, *Iblīsu Yantaşiru*. This short story was published in an Arabic magazine in the 12th edition, dated December 1, 1953, and can be accessed through the website *Arşhif al-Shārikh lil-Majallāti al-Adabiyyah wa al-Thaqāfiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah* (Al-Hakim, 1953).

Stories have often been employed to address social issues closely intertwined with religious themes. A number of modern Arabic prose writers, particularly those associated with the realist school, explore significant problems that emerge within the social life of their communities. Their works not only reflect the realities of society but also serve as a medium. Through the narrative of the short story, Taufiq Al-Hakim presents the tale of a devout worshiper who, by the end of the story, is deceived by the cunning of Satan. The story functions not merely as entertainment but also as a vehicle for conveying values: from profound reflections on faith and the meaning of perseverance to, most importantly, the spiritual dimensions of human nature that are inherently fragile and fluctuating. With its skillful plot and well-crafted characters, the short story succeeds in offering a moving and thought-provoking reading experience.

The main theme of the short story lies in the gradual unfolding of conflict. At first, the narrative presents a devout figure who strives to uphold truth and faith against worldly desires. However, as the story progresses, he is confronted with material temptations that ultimately lead to the collapse of his moral and spiritual integrity. The shift in motivation from a spiritual-ideological struggle to personal desires demonstrates that the power of the story lies not only in its plot and actions but also in the transformation of character traits and the dynamics of relationships among the characters.

In the context of this story, the researcher seeks to examine its narrative construction by employing A.J. Greimas's actantial structure theory as an analytical framework. Greimas's narrative theory appears to be an appropriate and relevant approach for understanding how the narrative elements and characters within the story are interconnected in shaping a whole that is both complex and coherent. Taufiq Al-Hakim's short story *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* presents a strong and fluid storyline that follows the journey and struggle of a devout worshiper in pursuit of his

goal. The actantial structure reveals that in real life there are always parties interconnected with one another, consisting of those who support and those who oppose every course of action. Narrative is defined as a series of events involving specific actors who interact in order to achieve particular goals. By carefully examining the narrative aspects of a story especially the dynamics of relationships among characters as well as internal and external conflicts readers are able to identify the actantial patterns within the narrative and better interpret the author's message through the structural framework employed in the story (Kumalasari & Surur, 2023).

The term narratology derives from the Latin word narration, meaning tale, discourse, or story. In 1969, Tzvetan Todorov introduced the term "narratologie" in French for the first time, which has since been regarded as a branch of semiotics (Ermawati et al., 2019). Some consider Aristotle to be the originator of the most significant narrative theory. However, according to Atmaja's explanation (in Kumalasari & Surur, 2023) Some consider Aristotle to be the originator of the most significant narrative theory. However, according to Atmaja, the Russian formalist critics and the French structuralist tradition were the ones who began to develop the theory of narratology. Therefore, narratology can be defined as the study of meaning-making through specific mechanisms and techniques, such as the act of storytelling.

Narratology, according to several scholars such as Fludernik (in Didipu, 2020: 163) is often referred to as "narrative theory" or "narratology." This term is widely used to denote the study of narrative as a genre. Prince defines narratology as the study of the form and function of narrative, while Jannidis defines it as the study of how speech and thought are represented in narrative texts. Ermawati (Ermawati et al., 2019) she states that narratology is part of structuralism, studying narrative structures and how those structures influence readers' perceptions. According to narratology, the story is the foundation of literary work. At the same time, a story also serves as a record of all human actions and provides a legacy for future generations.

According to structural theory, a narrative consists of two main parts, namely story (and discourse. According to Chatman (in Didipu, 2020), A story is what is told, while discourse is how the story is conveyed to readers or listeners. Conversely, discourse encompasses content or a series of events, including actions, events, characters, and setting elements, such as place and time. This concept aligns with the Russian Formalists' terms, namely the concept of "fabula," which refers to the basic sequence of events that occur in a story, while "sjuzet" refers to the presentation of the story, which is structured and arranged in a particular way. Algirdas Julian Greimas was born on March 9, 1917, in Russia to a Lithuanian family. He was one of the most

important figures in narratology. A.J. Greimas combined Levi Strauss's paradigmatic model with Propp's syntagmatic model (Kumalasari & Surur, 2023). Greimas summarized Propp's theory of narrative functions from 30 functions into 20 functions in 3 syntagms. At this point, Greimas introduced a sharper concept, with a more general purpose, namely universal narrative grammar, and also offered an actant model. Although there are many variations in the structure of character configurations, this actant model is one of the simplest types of syntactic structures (Yuniasti, 2019: 196).

An actant is something abstract, such as love, freedom, or a group of characters (Greimas, 1983). The concept of actant is related to narrative syntactic units, which are syntactic elements that have a specific role. This function can be considered as the basic unit of a story that explains the important actions that form the narrative (Karliana et al., 2022). According to Greimas, actants have six category patterns, which are small narrative units that are related to each other syntactically and thematically. As explained below (in Pratama & Tarihoran, 2023):

1. An object is a person or thing that is sought or desired by the subject.
2. Subject: something or someone assigned by the sender to produce the desired object.
3. Sender: someone or something that functions as the driving force of the story and is the source of the concept. It is the sender who makes the subject want to obtain the object.
4. Receiver: someone or something that obtains the object produced by the subject.
5. Helper: someone or something that assists the subject in obtaining the object based on their desire.
6. Opponent: someone or something that hinders the subject's efforts to obtain the object based on their desire.

Here, Greimas attempts to identify patterns in narrative texts that focus on the function of characters as drivers of the story within the structure of syntagmatic relationships. The functional model states that the story model is a sequence of events called functions. These functions are used to explain the role of the subject in performing the tasks of the sender contained in the actant pattern (Santoso & Soelistyowati, 2020).

Greimas (Afrilla et al., 2025) states that the story model remains as a plot, explained by various actions or known functions, then this is called structural functional. Structural functional is formed by various events in the story. Greimas' Functional Model is divided into 3, namely: 1. The initial situation, which shows the situation before a disturbing event occurs. 2. Transformation, which is the situation of the subject moving toward the object. Here, the

transformation stage is divided into three parts, consisting of: the proficiency test stage, which is the state of a subject encountering obstacles in moving toward the object. The main stage, which is the subject's effort to obtain the object. The triumphant stage, where the subject successfully overcomes a real enemy or the decisive stage where the subject succeeds or fails in finding the object. 3. The final situation, which indicates the initial state or serves as a sign that the conflict in the story has been resolved.

From the researcher's analysis, there are several previous studies that are relevant to this research. Several previous studies that have the same object, namely the short story *Iblis Yantashiru* by Taufiq Al-Hakim, include: First, research conducted by (Nurhidayatun, 2021) with the title *Bina al-qishshah al-qashirah Iblis Yantashiru li Taufiq al-Hakim*. This study looks at stories from a general structural perspective without linking them to the values contained within the stories. Second, the study (Dluha, 2017) with the title *Hazimatu an-Nasik fi al-Qishah al-Qashirah Iblis Yantashiru LiTaufiq al-Hakim*. This study discusses how the main character's psychology changes in order to defeat the devil. Dluha only focuses on the psychological aspect, neglecting the elements that build the story. Third, the study entitled *البنوية النبوية في القصة القصيرة "إبليس ينتصر" لتوفيق الحكيم* in the form of a final assignment/thesis by (Arifin, 2018). This study discusses how Lucien Goldman's genetic structure theory applies to Taufik Al Hakim's short story *Iblis Yantasiru*.

The difference between previous studies and this study lies in the analytical approach used. This study will discuss in greater depth how narrative structure shapes the plot and maps the conflict patterns that occur in the story. Among the three previous studies that examined the same object, the most notable difference lies in the theory used. This study offers a new perspective by examining how narrative structures are formed based on interconnected foundations between elements, thereby creating a coherent storyline and systematically bringing out character conflicts.

Previous studies with similar theories include: first, a study entitled *Struktur Aktansial dan Fungsional Novel Arwāḥ Mut'abah Karya Asmā' al-Ḥuwaylī: Perspektif Naratologi A. J. Greimas* (Kumalasari & Surur, 2023). Secondly, (Salahuddin, 2018) a study entitled *Skema Aktan Dan Model Fungsional Skema Aktan dan Model Fungsional Novel Maryamah Karpov: Kajian Naratologi A.J.Greimas*. Third(Misriyani et al., 2022) a study entitled *Aktan dalam Novel The Maze Runner Karya James Dashner: Kajian Naratologi A. J. Greimas (Actants in James Dashner's The Maze Runner Novel: A Study of Narrative A. J. Greimas)*. Three studies

that use the same theory, namely A.J. Greimas's narratology theory, use novels as their object of study.

Based on the above preliminary study, this research discusses how A.J. Greimas's structural and functional structures are applied to the Arabic short story entitled *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* by Taufiq Al-Hakim. This research does not discuss the structure of the story in general but focuses more on the roles of the characters and their interrelationships in the conflict that occurs. The researcher also noted that no previous studies had used this short story as their object of study, let alone applied A.J. Greimas's narratological theory. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore and describe the actant schema in Taufiq Al-Hakim's short story *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* and to describe the functional model of conflict in the short story.

This study has several benefits, both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it is hoped that this study will increase knowledge about the elements in short stories through the study of A.J. Greimas's structuralism and its application. Practically, this study is expected to provide a critical understanding of certain narrative structures in order to understand the relationships between characters in literary works.

## **2. Metode Penelitian**

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach. It is qualitative because the data collected consists of sentences in the short story *Iblis Yantasiru*. The researcher then describes the sentences, both in terms of data and wording, in the short story in more detail using A.J. Greimas's narratology theory. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah cerpen *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* karya Taufiq Al-Hakim. This short story was published in an Arabic magazine and can be read on the website *Arshīf al-Shārikh lil-majallāti al-adabiyah wa al-thaqāfiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah*, issue 12, dated December 1, 1953 (Al-Hakim, 1953). The data used in this study consists of words, sentences, paragraphs, and other elements related to the conflict in the short story *Iblīsu Yantaşiru*, which show connections with A.J. Greimas's actant schema and functional model, supported by previous literature related to material objects and formal objects or theory.

The data in this study was collected using two techniques, namely reading technique, to find data correctly and clearly, in accordance with the six actantial categories of A.J Greimas and the three functional structural categories (Akbar et al., 2023). Then there is the translation technique, which is used as a tool to facilitate understanding of Arabic short stories in Indonesian. Next is the note-taking technique, which involves recording sentences or paragraphs according to the actant and functional schemes, in order to transcribe verbal data

into written data. The collected data is then grouped and analyzed according to the theory used.

Data analysis involves collecting and comparing all sentences. Then, data analysis is performed by classifying specific components (Aprilia & Lestarini, 2021; Assidik et al., 2023). Data analysis techniques using the Miles and Huberman model, consisting of: data reduction, in which researchers focus on searching for, finding, and marking the elements of A.J. Greimas's actantial and functional categories in the short story *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* (Miles & Huberman, 1994). At this stage, researchers read the object repeatedly and select research data that is relevant to the research question. In the presentation stage, the data is displayed in tabular form according to its actantial and functional aspects and then narrated. The next stage is the conclusion, which is to draw conclusions about the actantial and functional elements of A.J. Greimas in the short story. (Miles et al., 2014)

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. The Structure Actans Of The Story Story “*Iblīsu Yantaşiru*” By Taufik Al-Hakim

The short story *Iblīsu Yantaşiru* opens with a description of a community that worships a tree. This event sparks the desire of one of the righteous characters to destroy the tree. He does this so that the community will return to obeying Allah SWT and not stray further from the path. However, behind every good intention there are always difficult challenges waiting to be overcome. The plot of this short story will be analyzed using A.J. Greimas's structural actantial schema, as follows:

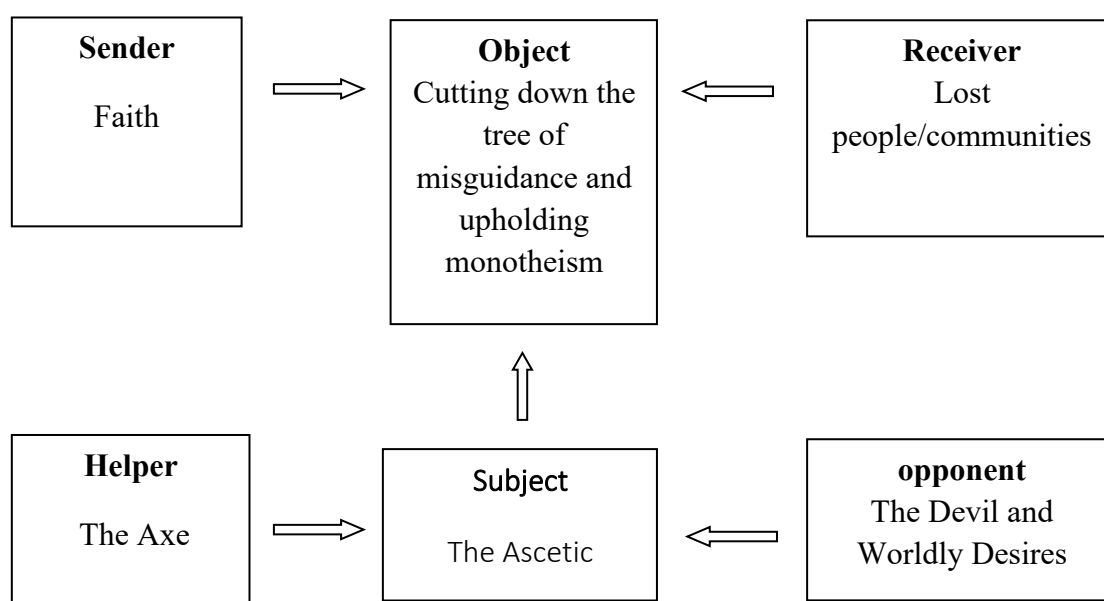


Figure 1. Actantial Structural Scheme

Based on the structural scheme diagram above, the sending agent is faith. Faith is an aspect that plays a role in driving the plot of the short story. Described in the story, the faith within the pious character is awakened when he sees the reality that people worship beings other than Allah SWT. This phenomenon prompts the pious character to take action. This action is conveyed through the following sentence:

اتخذ قوم شجرة ، صاروا يعبدونها... نسمع بذلك ناسك مؤمن بالله (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

A certain tribe worshipped a tree. Then, a devout mystic heard this information...

The above sentence is an excerpt that describes the condition of tree worshippers. In Islam, worshipping trees is considered an act of associating partners with God, or in religious terms, often referred to as shirk. As mentioned by Junaid and Tahir (Junaid & Tahir, 2024) that the act of associating partners with Allah or worshipping other than Allah, further equating the Essence of God with other than Him, is considered an act of shirk. The perpetrator is called a mushrik (Naldi et al., 2023). It is this movement of the community toward idolatry that becomes the reason for the main conflict in the short story. On the one hand, it tells of the rise of faith in a devout figure who fights against idolatry in the community, one way being by cutting down the tree they worship. This is in line with A.J. Greimas's (1983) theory of narratology, which states that the sender becomes the driving force behind the subject's desire for the object.

The data above shows the role of Nasik (a character who is an expert in worship) as the subject actant in the narrative structure. Nasik's participation, who is active in enforcing the principles of monotheism and taking the initiative against deviations in the community's beliefs, namely the practice of worshipping trees, shows Nasik's position as the subject actant. According to AJ Greimas, the subject is an agent with a specific goal or mission to achieve. Nasik himself has an ideological mission, namely, to save the community from doctrinal deviation. Nasik plays the role of a transformative figure who seeks to disrupt the established but deviant beliefs of society. As an agent of change, he acts on his own initiative in order to reflect a strong ethical and religious consciousness, namely the expression of monotheistic values. In this way, Nasik plays the role of a narrative subject. More than that, Nasik is also a symbol of resistance against a distorted value system.

Nasik's goal, which is to cut down the tree of misguidance and uphold monotheism, is evident in the following excerpt:

لأنها تضل الناس (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*Because that tree misleads people.*

كيف أدعهم .. ومن واجبي أن أهديهم (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*How could I ever abandon them, when guiding them was my duty*

The data above explains that the character Nasik tries to eradicate heresy, which in the story takes the form of tree worship, which is considered the root of doctrinal deviation. Nasik's actions represent Greimas's concept in narratology, that the existence of an object is an important element that becomes the goal of the subject's struggle in the narrative of the story. In the short story *Iblisu Yantasiru*, the object is not only the goal pursued by the subject, but also a fundamental reflection of the ideological values throughout the story. The recipient's acting of the subject's success in achieving the object is the lost people or the community that is on the path of misguidance. In Greimas' actantial structure, the recipient actant is the party that is directly affected by the subject's success. In this context, the subject's success in cutting down the tree of error directly implies the possibility of society returning to the straight and true path in accordance with Islamic doctrine or teachings.

This, the subject's success in achieving the object not only affects himself, but also provides direct benefits to the recipient, namely the community that was previously mired in doctrinal deviation. The helper actant in this short story is the axe. The axe functions as a tool that is useful for cutting down the tree of misguidance. The description of the axe can be seen in the following data

فحمل فاسا (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*He bore an axe*

The data above shows that the axe functions as a helper actant. In the framework of A.J. Greimas's actantial model, the helper actant is an important element that assists the subject in attaining the narrative object. The axe serves as the weapon used by the Nasik to strengthen his position as the subject actant in his struggle to achieve the object, namely cutting down the tree of polytheism that had been worshipped by the community. In this context, the axe is not merely a tool, but also a symbol of the Nasik's determination and faith in upholding monotheism to Allah the Almighty. According to Greimas's theory, every subject requires a helper actant to overcome obstacles and move closer to the attainment of the object. The axe serves as a clear representation of the Nasik's good intentions and spiritual effort, which are rooted in sincere faith. However, even with the presence of a powerful helper, the subject's success ultimately depends on the internal strength of his spirit and intention in maintaining his original purpose. Therefore, within this actantial structure, the axe not only fulfills an essential

function but also clarifies the relationship between the subject's intention and his struggle toward the object amid the conflict between helper and opponent.

However, behind all of this lies the opponent actant, which creates obstacles for the subject in achieving the object. In Greimas's actantial structure, the field of conflict between the helper actant and the opponent actant becomes the arena that determines whether the subject succeeds or fails in attaining the object. In this situation, even though the Nasik possesses a powerful tool (the axe), he must still face the primary obstacles in the form of the devil's temptations and inner conflicts (such as pride, ego, or misguided intentions). This is illustrated in the following data:

فلم يكذب يقترب منها ، حتى ظهر له «ابليس» حائلا (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*Just as he was about to approach, suddenly the Devil appeared to block his way.*

ووضع ابليس يده في يد الناسك وتعاهدا .. وانصرف الناسك الى صومعته وصار يستيقظ كل صباح ويمد يده ويذسها

تحت وسادته فتخرج بدينارين (Al-Hakim, 1953: 20)

*And the Devil placed his hand upon the hand of the Nasik, and the two made a pact. The Nasik then returned to his place of worship, and from that moment on, every morning when he awoke, he would reach out his hand beneath his pillow and find two dinars.*

From the excerpt above, it is evident that the Devil hinders the Nasik from attaining his object, namely cutting down the tree of misguidance that had led the community away from the truth. The Devil seeks to prevent this from happening because, in Islamic teaching, the Devil is a creation of Allah whose primary aim is to keep the descendants of Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) on the path of misguidance.

In addition, the obstacle in this narrative also arises from within the Nasik himself, meaning that the opponent actant here originates internally. The Nasik becomes enticed by worldly desires, as seen in the data where he agrees to the Devil's offer of receiving two dinars every day under his pillow. This marks the beginning of the conflict in the Nasik's journey to attain the object. The two axes of conflict created by the narrative are external conflict and internal conflict, both of which signify a shift in the subject's motivation in striving for the object. The narrative text highlights the weakening of the Nasik's initial purpose, which was grounded in faith, as it shifts toward worldly desire (wealth). This illustrates that a person's faith may be weakened not only by external obstacles but also by internal struggles within oneself. The internal obstacle within the Nasik thus becomes a symbol of moral dysfunction, which complicates the narrative structure and adds depth to the story.

### 3.2. The Functional Structure Of The Short Story Iblisu Yantaşiru By Taufiq Al-Hakim

A.J. Greimas’s narratology theory is known as functional structure, which provides a depiction of how the storyline unfolds through the situations that occur and develop within the narrative (Izzati & Rohanda, 2025). In the scheme of functional structure, there are three plot functions, namely: the initial situation, the transformation, and the final situation. To clarify this understanding further, consider the following table illustrating the three functions of the functional structure:

Table 1. Functional Structure Scheme

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>			<i>3</i>
<i>Transformation:</i>				
<b>Initial Stage</b>	<b>Proficienc</b>	<b>Main Stage</b>	<b>Glory Stage</b>	<b>Final situation</b>
The story begins when the Nasik (the devout worshiper) becomes aware of an incident, namely the religious deviation committed by the community.	<b>y Test Stage</b> The physical fight between Iblis and Nasik	The devil devised a plan to defeat Nasik.	The devil defeated Nasik.	The subject's failure to achieve the desired object

As shown in the table above, the initial situation in the short story Iblīs Yantaşiru by Tawfiq al-Hakim describes the starting point of the emerging conflict, namely the anger of the Nasik (the devout worshiper) toward the deviation of faith committed by the community. This anger does not arise suddenly but is triggered by a particular event that symbolically reflects the practice of worshipping an entity other than Allah the Almighty, represented by a tree that is regarded as sacred and made an object of veneration, as illustrated in the following excerpt

اتخذ قوم شجرة ، صاروا يعبدونها (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*A community began to worship a tree*

The excerpt above illustrates the beginning of the Nasik’s anger toward the misguided behavior of the community, namely treating a tree as a god. This behavior represents a concrete form of deviation in faith and falls into the category of major shirk, which clearly contradicts the doctrine of monotheism. The Nasik’s reaction emerges as an ideological and spiritual form of anger, born out of his love for truth and his faith in Allah the Almighty. The community’s

act of worshipping an inanimate object (a tree) not only arouses his emotions but also awakens his existential awareness as a servant of God who carries a moral responsibility to correct the misguidance that has spread within the community.

This event marks the starting point of the initial stage of the narrative, while also establishing the foundation for the main conflict that unfolds throughout the story. It is the conflict between monotheism and polytheism, between truth and deception, manifested through the clash of values between the Nasik and the Devil. Therefore, the community's act of worshipping the tree is not merely a narrative backdrop but rather the trigger of an ideological conflict that directly involves the subject and shapes the entire dynamic of the story. This is what subsequently leads the Nasik into his narrative journey as the subject, with the goal of attaining the object—cutting down the tree of misguidance. Thus, this section plays a crucial role in initiating the character's transformation and the unfolding of the central conflict in *Iblisu Yantaşiru*.

In the transformation stage, there are three parts in the short story, namely the skill test, the main stage, and the stage of triumph. At this stage of transformation, the Nasik as the subject encounters obstacles and challenges in his effort to attain the object. The relevant data for this stage are as follows:

لن أدمك تقطع هذه الشجرة (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

I shall not let you cut down this tree.

فأمسك ابليس بخناق الناسك وقبض الناسك على قرن الشيطان وقبة وتصارعا طويلا الى أن انجلت المعرفة عن انتصار

الناسك فقد طرح الشيطان على الارض وجلس على صدره (Al-Hakim, 1953: 18)

*Then the Devil seized the neck of the devout worshiper. However, the worshiper immediately grasped the Devil's horns and head. The two became engaged in a long and fierce struggle, until at last the worshiper succeeded in defeating him. he threw the Devil to the ground and sat upon his chest.*

The data above illustrates the skill test experienced by the Nasik. This event intensifies the Nasik's anger, as the Devil hinders him from attaining the object and poses a challenge that he must overcome in order to cut down the tree of polytheism. The data shows that the Devil will not allow the Nasik to carry out his intention. He provokes the Nasik into a fight as a means to thwart his determination. The struggle continues relentlessly until, at a certain point, the Devil seeks another way. Realizing that he will inevitably be defeated in physical combat, he devises a new strategy to tempt and ultimately overcome the Nasik. This is depicted in the following data:

ما من باب يستطيع ابليس ان ينفذ منه الى حصن هذا الرجل غير باب واحد : الحيلة فتلطف الناسك ، وقال له بلهجة الناصح المشفق (Al-Hakim, 1953: 19)

*The Devil realized that there was no opening he could exploit to overpower the devout worshiper except through a deceitful strategy such as trickery. He then shifted his approach from confrontation to persuasion, adopting a gentle manner and speaking as though he were a counselor.*

The data above represents the main stage of the transformation. This stage is crucial because it highlights the real challenge faced by the Nasik, who serves as the subject. The Nasik's struggle is no longer limited to physical combat, but extends to the Devil's deceptive psychological approach rather than open confrontation. The Devil employs a manipulative strategy, presenting himself as a compassionate advisor in order to persuade the Nasik to accept his offer. This transforms the Nasik's resistance into a battle of mental and moral endurance. Therefore, this main stage is significant in the narrative's development, as it marks the shift from the initial situation to a deeper conflict that ultimately determines the outcome of the Nasik's mission to attain the object.

In A.J. Greimas's functional structure scheme, there is the stage of triumph, which represents the climax of the transformation phase where the subject faces the ultimate test or challenge in attaining the object. This is similar to the study conducted by Misriyani (Misriyani et al., 2022), which states that at this stage the subject is confronted with the final challenge, as illustrated in the following data:

وانقض الناسك على ابليس وقبض على قرنه وتصارعا لحظة واذا المعركة تنجلي عن سقوط الناسك تحت حافر ابليس (Al-Hakim, 1953: 20)

*With the determination that remained, the Nasik lunged at the Devil and seized his horns. A battle broke out brief, yet filled with tension. In the end, the Nasik's strength could not withstand the Devil's cunning; he fell prostrate, powerless beneath the Devil's feet.*

The data above shows that the Nasik once again intended to cut down the tree of misguidance, but this time with a different intention than before. His motivation was no longer driven by faith and belief in Allah, but rather by anger over no longer receiving the two dinars previously promised by the Devil. Disappointed by this, he once again took up his axe and went to the tree that was worshiped by the community. However, on his way, he was confronted once more by the Devil, and a fight ensued between them. Unlike before, this time the Nasik was defeated. This defeat illustrates that the subject failed to pass the stage of triumph

in the transformation. His intention and motivation had shifted from being purely for Allah to being driven by personal interest. This demonstrates that a change of intention within the subject directly impacted his failure to attain the object of his struggle.

The final situation is marked by the cause of the Nasik's defeat. The Nasik was defeated in his battle with the Devil to cut down the tree, due to a change of intention, as shown in the following data:

لما غضبت الله غلبتني ، ولما غضبت لنفسك غلبتك .. لما قاتلت العقيدتك صرعتني ، ولما قاتلت المنفعتك صرعتك  
(Al-Hakim, 1953: 20)

*When you are angry for the sake of Allah, you are able to defeat me. But when your anger arises for the sake of yourself, it is I who can defeat you. When you fight for your faith, you can throw me down. But if your struggle is driven by personal ambition, I can easily bring you down.*

The data above illustrates the final situation in the narrative, namely the total defeat of Nasik against all the challenges presented in the story. He was defeated by Iblis in battle because his intentions were no longer rooted in pure faith and creed. As a result, the subject (Nasik) ultimately failed to obtain the object, which was cutting down the tree of heresy. In the context of A.J. Greimas's narratology, this represents a failure in the transformative relationship between subject and object, which led to the unattainability of the object. This failure also affected the receiver actant in the narrative, namely the community, who did not gain the truth and instead continued to fall into heresy by committing shirk worshiping something other than Allah, in this case, continuing to worship the tree.

In the end, the short story closes with a tragic resolution: Nasik's struggle to achieve the object ends in failure due to a shift in his intention, succumbing instead to worldly desires. At the same time, the narrative conveys a moral message to readers that every deed carried out sincerely for the sake of Allah and with pure faith will be granted ease and strength. Conversely, when actions are driven by personal interest and fleeting passions, defeat and failure inevitably follow. Thus, the narrative does not merely present a dramatic conflict, but also offers an ideological reflection on the importance of preserving sincerity of intention in religious struggle. We must be cautious of what truly underlies our actions whether they are grounded in devotion or distorted by ulterior motives. As the wise saying goes: many deeds that seem worldly may gain eternal value through the purity of intention, while many acts of worship may be reduced to mere worldly endeavors when corrupted by a misguided heart.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted, the short story *Iblisu Yantasiru* by Taufiq al-Hakim, as examined in this article, becomes more clearly articulated in its narrative construction when described and explained through the actantial and functional structural schemes of A.J. Greimas's narratology. This study is significant because, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no previous research has explored in depth how narratology theory can be applied to this short story. The researcher hopes that this study will provide valuable insights by broadening the scope of narratology applications and contributing to the development of Arabic literary studies both classical and modern through the actantial and functional structural analysis of Greimas.

Theoretically, the findings of this study provide new knowledge and understanding of how characters and conflicts within a story construct a complete and meaningful narrative scheme through the six actantial categories and the three functional stages outlined by A.J. Greimas. The research reveals that within the actantial structure, Nasik serves as the subject actant who struggles to cut down the tree of misguidance (object), driven by faith as the sender, and aided by the axe as the helper actant. The ultimate purpose of this struggle is for the receiver actant the community to return to the path of truth and be freed from the shackles of misguidance. However, the Devil and the desires arising from within Nasik himself function as opposing actants, thwarting his endeavor.

Meanwhile, within the functional structure, the study finds that the subject experiences failure in the stage of transformation, particularly in the stage of glorification, as the initial sincere intention shifts into personal interests and the impulse of desire. Consequently, in the final situation, the subject fails to attain the object, and the community, as the receiver actant, remains in a state of misguidance. From this description, the short story conveys a profound moral impression to us, both as readers and as human beings, that every good deed must always be grounded in sincere and pure intention for the sake of Allah. Moreover, such intention must be maintained with steadfastness and consistency to the greatest extent possible.

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