



# Shoe Symbolism in *Guru Aini* Novel: Sigmund FREud's Psychoanalytic Study

Hanifah Yulia Sari<sup>(✉)</sup>, Diantri Seprina, and Aditya Rachman

Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia  
hannyhanny463@gmail.com

**Abstract.** This study aims to determine the meaning of the use of shoe symbolism in the Novel *Guru Aini*. Sources of data used in this study are paragraphs that use shoe diction related to the main characters in the novel. The data were collected using library techniques, then the data that had been collected was analyzed using Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theory. This novel tells about the process of the main character in achieving his dream of becoming a teacher. The purpose of this study was to determine the meaning of shoe symbolism related to the personality of the main character, namely Desi Istiqomah. The result of this research is to know the meaning of the symbolism of the use of shoe diction used by the author by describing the structure of id, ego, superego in the main character. The relationship between the superego structure of the main character and the symbolism of shoes is the relationship between knowledge, reason, feet, and shoes in Islamic teachings.

**Keywords:** *Guru Aini* · Psychoanalysis · Sigmund Freud

## 1 Introduction

Research involving literary works as the object of study always starts with critical reading by the readers. Therefore, literary researchers will involve the theories they master when reading literary texts. Faruk reveals that literary criticism activities are based on an academic environment, this is evidenced by the assumption that literary criticism is an activity that produces an understanding and assessment of a literary work based on the principles of modern science [6].

As an object of research, literary works are divided into three types, namely prose, poetry, and drama [16]. One form of prose is novel. According to Nurgiyantoro, the novel is a fictional literary work that tells aspects of humanity that are deeper and presented in a more subtle way [9]. This is evidenced by the popularity of the novel in the community as reading material and as material for scientific research.

This study uses the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata, as the object of the study. Andrea Hirata was previously known as the author of a tetralogy novel entitled *Laksar Pelangi* which was published in 2005. In 2020, he re-published a trilogy novel with the title *Guru Aini*. This novel tells about the struggle of two women to reach their dreams. The first woman is named Aini, a teenager who hates math. But things turned around when his father was sick, since then he has dreamed of becoming a doctor.

The next story is Desi Istiqomah's struggle to achieve her dream of becoming a math teacher. His dream started when he met Mrs. Marlis, a mathematics teacher at his elementary school. The most interesting thing about this novel is the use of shoe symbolism on the title page and the discussion about the shoe oath delivered by Andrea Hirata [8]. Andrea Hirata seems to want to convey a moral message through the symbolism of shoes. Therefore, this study will use Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory in its analysis to reveal the symbolic meaning.

Sigmund Freud formulated that the unconscious dominates the structure of the human mind. There are three structures of the human mind, namely conscious, preconscious, and unconscious [1]. In line with what was expressed by Bartens, Freud then reformulated the terms *Id* (unconscious), *Ego* (conscious, preconscious, unconscious), and *Superego* (conscious, preconscious, and unconscious) [7].

Based on the explanation, this study aims to reveal the meaning of the use of shoe symbolism in Guru Aini's novel which focuses on the story about the personality of the main character, namely Desi Istiqomah. There are several other studies that also use Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory as a formal object. The first research belongs to Ririn Ambarini. This study uses a novel entitled *Poor Man's Orange* by Ruth Park [1]. The result of this research is that the main character's unfulfilled instinctive needs encourage him to try to find realistic ways to solve his inner conflict. The ways used to overcome his inner conflict is to do sublimation/ transfer and ego defense mechanisms.

Next is Fajrul Falah and Marwini's research entitled *The Battle of Fellow Climbers in Ken Anggara's Short Story of the Climbers (Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Study)* in 2021. This research focuses on the assumption that every human being has his own inner turmoil. The result of this research is the *Superego* personality structure is dominated by the main character while the other characters are dominated by the *Id* personality structure. The result of the *Superego's* dominance over the main character is his success in completing the ascent safely [5].

Another research conducted by Fajrul Falah is on a short story entitled "The Honorable One" [4]. The result of this research is that there is an inner turmoil in the heart of judge Subakti when he receives a reward. According to him, the ego personality is shown when the judge hesitates to receive a reward, while the *Superego* is reflected in his integrity as a judge [4].

Then there is research conducted by Novia Rahmah Bastian and his team. The research, entitled *The Study of the Literary Psychology of the Novel Bidadari Bermata Bening by Habiburrahman El Shirazy and the Value of Character Education in Indonesian Language Learning Perspectives*, was conducted in 2021. The result of this research is that every element in the novel has a relationship with one another [2]. On the psychological aspect, this research shows that the novel has character education values, including religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard work, creative, independent, etc.

Next is Etik Safilah's research in 2021. This research looks for intrinsic elements and examines the social life of moral and educational aspects in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. The result obtained is that this novel has the theme of education, especially the struggle in achieving goals. Then the moral aspect in this novel is the human relationship with himself, other humans, the social environment, and with God [15].

## 2 Method

The research method used in this research is library research method. Library research is research conducted by researchers in a workspace. This research method describes the approach, activity design, scope or object, main materials and tools, place, data collection techniques, operational definitions of research variables, and analysis techniques. Chamamah-Soeratno explains that literature research refers to the work of reviewing the libraries used in research. Furthermore, he also explained the steps in the research procedure were described as, 1) determining the main problem, 2) formulating and defining the problem, 3) conducting a literature study, 4) formulating hypotheses, 5) collecting data, 6) processing data, 7) analyzing and interpreting, 8) making generalizations, 9) drawing conclusions, 10) formulating and reporting research results, and 11) presenting research implications [3] [14].

## 3 Results and Discussion

Guru Aini's novel (which would later be referred to as GA) is an inspirational novel. A novel is said to be inspiring if it is able to inspire the reader. Novel GA, tells about the journey of two young women in achieving their dreams. As the title implies, Aini is a teenage girl who at first feels unable and hates math lessons, is faced with a choice that requires her to love math. This was due to his father's condition, who one day suddenly became ill and it was difficult to get treatment due to limited medical supplies in remote areas. Since then, he began to dream of becoming a doctor. Based on the provisions of a teacher who revealed that mathematics is the mother of all sciences, he also tried to love mathematics.

In another part of the story, an adult woman idolizes her elementary school math teacher. Desi Istiqomah, since getting to know Mrs. Marlis, her life has changed, she is increasingly obsessed with being like Mrs. Marlis. All obstacles that hindered him were successfully overcome, including persuasion from his parents to continue the business they started, not only persuasion, even both of them invited the Principal of their high school to advise Desi to change the college major she chose. According to him, being a teacher is a noble and noble job. He measures the success of life from education and education is the responsibility of a teacher. The most interesting part of this novel is the use of images of shoes that are not related to the choice of the title. However, after reading the novel as a whole, there is a chapter (Sumpah Sepatu, p.35) which discusses the symbolism of shoes associated with the main character, namely Desi Istiqomah. Therefore, this study focuses on discussing the meaning of shoe symbolism associated with the personality structure of *Id*, *Ego*, *Superego* in the main character.

Freud revealed that there are two parts of psychic completeness, namely conscious and unconscious. From there the formation of the second thought arises automatically. The process begins when an unconscious mind tries to translate into the preconscious mind, then enters the realm of consciousness (Freud via Ambarini, 2008: 37). Furthermore, he also explained that there are three personality structures, namely the *id*, *ego* and *superego*. *Id* is a desire or energy from the human mind and instinct to fulfill their needs such as eating, socializing, rejection of pain, etc. The way the *Id* works is related to

pleasure, trying to find pleasure and avoid discomfort and pain. The *Id* is in the position of the subconscious and is not related to the real world.

The structure of the *Id* in Desi Istiqomah can be seen in the way it is fulfilled in achieving life. After taking senior secondary education (SMA), Desi Istiqomah chose to continue her teacher education. With a well-to-do family background, his parents hoped that he would choose a doctoral, engineer, or accounting level education, in the hope that he would be able to continue his parents' business.

“Maaf, Bu, aku tak berminat menjadi pedagang beras, aku ingin menjadi guru matematika, jawab Desi tenang [8].”

The *Id* structure in Desi Istiqomah started when she got to know Mrs. Marlis. Desi Istiqomah grew up in a wealthy and religious family. This can be seen from the use of Istiqomah in its name which means consistent, firm stance. In the novel, she is described as a woman who is disciplined, stubborn, ambitious, hardworking, and never gives up. Since then, the existence of Mrs. Marlis influenced most of her life. The direction of his life is filled with the figure of Mrs. Marlis as his idol.

Bu Marlis has become an idol and a comfortable place that Desi Istiqomah wants to reach. Mrs. Marlis' position in her life exceeds that of her parents. However, before his departure, he did not forget to bring his father's flannel shirt and his mother's hijab as a remedy for his longing overseas. His father did not forget to gift him a pair of shoes for his trip. In Islamic teachings, there is a philosophy about shoes that is related to science. There is one phrase expressed by Ali bin Abi Talib, “Knowledge without reason is like having shoes without feet. And without reason, knowledge is like having feet without shoes.”

“Akhirnya Desi siap naik bus. Ayahnya menghampirinya. Terperanjat Desi melihat ayahnya tiba-tiba bertekuk di depannya dan membuka kembali sepatunya. Tali sepatu itu lalu pelan-pelan diikat kembali oleh ayahnya, dengan cara yang aneh, yaitu setelah disimpul, tali sepatu itu diputar ke belakang dan disimpul lagi di belakang kaki (Hirata, 2021:13).”

In theory, the workings of the structure of the *Id* is always trying to avoid a painful position and tend to seek pleasure in every process. However, this is different from what happened to Desi Istiqomah. His journey to achieve his dream of becoming the best mathematics teacher began with his assignment to teach in remote areas of the country. From the city of Medan, he had to make a long and winding journey to Tanjung Hampar Island. At first, the lottery results obtained assigned him to the Bagansiapiapi area, but for some reason he was willing to change places with his friend, Salamah.

As explained in the previous section, the interesting thing in this novel is the symbolism of the shoes used by Andrea Hirata. The use of shoe diction is always placed in positions that are quite important in describing the character's characteristic values. The quotes used are also able to show the structure of the id, ego, and superego in Desi Istiqomah.

“Cara mengikat tali sepatu itu pun sangat aneh, yaitu setelah disimpul, diputar ke belakang dan disimpul lagi di belakang kaki. Desi dengan patuh menganut cara

ayahnya megikat tali sepatunya saat dia berangkat merantau dulu. Cara mengikat tali sepatu seperti itu sering dilakukan pemain sepak bola, terutama pemain yang sering duduk di bangku cadangan [8].”

The symbolism performed by Andrea Hirata in the quote above shows that Desi Istiqomah’s life journey is still long. The figure of Desi Istiqomah is likened to a soccer reserve player. He still has a lot of patience to do until his dream comes true. Through this quote, Andrea Hirata shows that Desi is still going through a lot of bitterness. This is illustrated by the problems that began to appear in Desi’s life after becoming a mathematics teacher. The number of problems that arise is then made him issue an oath entitled shoe oath. In conclusion, explain, this shoe philosophy pairs feet with shoes and reason with science.

“Maka ini bukan melulu soal matematika, ini soal keberanian bermimpi. Untuk Desi berjanji pada dirinya sendiri, dia mengangkat semacam *sumpah sepatu*, bahwa dia akan terus memakai sepatu olahraga pemberian ayahnya, sampai anak genius matematika itu ditemukannya [8].”

Since Desi Istiqomah initiated her Shoe Oath, she has let go of all things related to the world. He only focuses on his dream to be like Mrs. Marlis. When he became a teacher at Tanjong Hampar Elementary School, he actually managed to become like his idol. But his desire was getting further and deeper to find a mathematical genius. In this section, the *Superego* structure begins to appear in Desi Istiqomah.

“Dalam kesempatan dan keadaan apa pun, berpanas, berhujan, berteduh, berjalan, mengayuh sepeda, diboncengkan naik motor bebek, mengajar, ke pengajian, rapat di kantor bupati, dipanggil kepala dinas, kondangan acara khitan dan perkawinan, Bu Desi selalu memakai sepatu olahraga putih itu. Dalam upacara Korpri, seragamnya Korpri, sepatunya sepatu olahraga putih itu, berbeda sendiri dari guru-guru lainnya. Suatu hari pernah Bu Desi berkebayu, dan tetap memakai sepatu olahraga putih itu. Dia tampak seperti Puteri Melayu yang mau ikut lomba lari [8].”

The *Superego* is in two positions, some in consciousness, some in unconsciousness. In contrast to the way the structure of the *Id* works, the *Superego* tends to be concerned with morality. In this structure, conscience is used more. Judgments between good and bad take precedence. The *superego* is in charge of supervising and preventing the perfect satisfaction of the *Id*, which is obtained from education and the family environment. The *Superego* develops from patterns of experience, reward, punishment, which are experienced from childhood to adulthood [7].

Desi Istiqomah’s family education has enabled her to replace the joys of her youth with hard work to become a math teacher. He is so focused on his life goals.

“Mereka tahu, meskipun aneh dan ganjil penampilannya, Bu Desi jauh, jauh lebih cerdas dari mereka. Mereka ingin menertawakannya sekaligus sangat kagum padanya. Jadilah mereka selalu canggung di depan Bu Desi. Tak tahu bagaimana harus bersikap. Sebagian merasa sangat gugup [8].”

Structure of the *Superego* that exists within her, Desi Istiqomah is seen as an eccentric in her work environment. Always wear sports shoes in formal or informal events, even if they do not match the clothes worn. The other side shown by Desi Istiqomah is prioritizing education above all else. Therefore, although he is seen as an eccentric, but when it comes to education, he is still admired.

“Bu Desi dan sepatunya telah menjadi cerita epik di kampung kami. Tak ada yang tahu bahwa sepatu olahraga putih itu bukan sekedar sepatu bagi perempuan muda itu. Sepatu itu adalah pengingat terbaik baginya bahwa dia telah menempuh perjalanan amat jauh dari kotanya, menyeberangi sungai dan samudera, melalui jalan darat yang Panjang dan berliku-liku, demi mengajar matematika. Bahwa karena keputusannya itu dia telah mengorbankan segala kenangan muda. Karena itu dia tak mau pulang dengan sia-sia, dan dia takkan mengganti sepatunya sebelum tercapai apa yang diimpikannya [8].”

The eccentricity of Desi Istiqomah was heard throughout the village of Tanjung Hampar. The story of his shoes became the most epic and exemplary story in the work environment and where he lived. He is known as a genius teacher with worn shoes. The shoes his father gave him lasted for a dozen years. The shoes were also a silent witness to his journey to become a math teacher.

“Esoknya terjadi kehebohan luar biasa di sekolah. Semua guru dan murid membicarakan hal yang sangat luar biasa, yaitu, akhirnya, setelah bertahun-tahun, Guru Desi mengganti sepatunya! [8].”

After a long period of turmoil with her *Superego* structure, Desi Istiqomah finally managed to find a math genius in Ketumbi District. Previously, Aini was a child who really hated mathematics, but when faced with circumstances, she tried to love mathematics. Aini’s struggle to become a math genius is not much different from Desi’s struggle to become a math teacher.

“Esoknya terjadi kehebohan luar biasa di sekolah. Semua guru dan murid membicarakan hal yang sangat luar biasa, yaitu, akhirnya, setelah bertahun-tahun, Guru Desi mengganti sepatunya! [8].”

The figure of Aini is the fulfillment of the Id in Desi Istiqomah. For years he waited for a math genius, traded his young life for all kinds of struggles, and vowed not to change his shoes until he found a math genius. After becoming a mathematician, Aini began to imitate everything related to Desi Istiqomah, especially the way she tied her shoelaces.

## 4 Conclusion

There is a harmonious relationship between knowledge, reason, and shoes in Islamic teachings [10][11][12][13]. As mentioned in the previous explanation, Ali bin Abi Talib once said, “Knowledge without reason is like having shoes without feet. And without

reason, knowledge is like having feet without shoes.” This expression means that knowledge and shoes have a protective function. On the one hand, knowledge is a protector for the mind, and shoes are a protector for the feet. Both have their respective roles which if not present will be flawed or imperfect. Feet without shoes will easily hurt, as well as knowledge if without reason it cannot function properly.

The instinctive needs experienced by the main character cause the main character to try to fulfill or solve the inner conflict that exists within him with realistic solutions. Ways like this are commonly referred to as displacement and *Ego* defense mechanisms. The dominance of the superego in Desi Istiqomah, causes her to try to fulfill her obsession in a rational way. This is due to the influence of the educational environment in his life. In addition, the religious life of the main character, which is depicted by the use of the hijab and the story about his mother’s veil, which is the provision of his journey, makes him able to refrain from the domination of the *Ego* that is within him.

The dominance of the superego that is shown in the main character’s character is when he faces the conflict that exists within himself. When the conflict arose, he preferred to tell his father. From this, it can be seen that the family is quite influential in the formation of the character and character of the main character. The superego that exists in Desi Istiqomah is a form of reason that exists in her and this is reflected in how hard she persists in using her bad shoes instead of choosing to replace them with new shoes as well as her stubbornness to remain an educator until she meets Aini, who becomes her fulfillment of *Id* in him.

## References

1. Ambarini, Ririn. Konflik Batin Dolour Darcy Pendekatan Tokoh Utama Novel Poor Man’s Orange karya Ruth Park, Tesis S2, Program Pascasarjana Universitas Diponegoro Semarang, 2018.
2. Bastian, Novia Rahmah, Suyitno & Chafit Ulya. Kajian Psikologi Sastra Novel Bidadari Bermata Bening karya Habiburrahman El-Shirazy dan Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Tokoh dalam Perspektif Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. Jurnal Basastra, 2018, 6 (2), 129–139.
3. Chamamah-Soeratno, Siti. Sastra Teori dan Metode, Elmatara, 2011.
4. Falah, Fajrul. Godaan Versus Integritas Seorang Hakim dalam Cerpen “Yang Mulia” karya Insan Budi Maulana (Pendekatan Psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud), Jurnal Nusa, 2021, 16 (1) 88-99.
5. Falah, Fajrul & Marwini. Pertarungan Sesama Pendaki dalam Cerpen “Para Pendaki” karya Ken Hanggara (Kajian Psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud). Jurnal Nusa, 2021, 16 (4) 411–420.
6. Faruk. Metode Penelitian Sastra, Pustaka Pelajar, 2014.
7. Freud, Sigmund. Memperkenalkan Psikoanalisa (diterjemahkan K. Barten), Gramedia, 1987.
8. Hirata, Andrea Guru Aini, Bentang Pustaka, 2021.
9. Nurgiyantoro, Burhan. Teori Pengkajian Fiksi, Gadjah Mada University Press, 1995.
10. Ulya, Ridha Hasnul, et al. Cultural manifestation in superstition of Minangkabau society. In: International Conferences on Educational, Social Sciences and Technology. Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan UNP, 2018. p. 422–429.
11. Ulya, Ridha Hasnul. Reinterpretation of Ethic Value in Minangkabau’s Superstition. TELL-US Journal, 2018, 4.1: 47-57.
12. Ulya, Ridha Hasnul. Dimensi Keteraturan Sosial Wanita Hamil dalam Gamitan Superstisi Kubuang Tigo Baleh. Kafaah: Journal of Gender Studies, 2019, 8(2), 183–196.

13. Ulya, Ridha Hasnul. Social Order Dimension in Superstition Pregnant Woman for Kubuang Tigo Baleh Society. *TELL-US Journal*, 2022, 8(1), 38-49.
14. Erni, E., & Ulya, R. H. The Softskill and Hardskill forms of Tunjuk Ajar Melayu in Nyanyi Panjang Bujang Si Undang Palalawan Society of Riau Province. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 2021 13(3), 1688–1695.
15. Safilah, Etik. Novel Guru Aini karya Andrea Hirata sebuah Tinjauan Sosisologi Sastra, Skripsi S1, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia Universitas Widya Dharma Klaten, 2021.
16. Wellek, Rene & Austin Warren. *Teori Kesusasteraan*, Gramedia, 1989.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

