

A sufistic analysis of Hasan's spiritual journey in the novel Atheist

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ABSTRACT

Atheis is a novel by Achdiat K. Mihadja published by Balai Pustaka in 1949. There are many studies on this novel. This proves that the novel Atheis is interesting and important to study. This research is qualitative research using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis approach which emphasizes the important role of the unconscious mind in shaping human behavior and experience. The main elements in this theory are motivation, emotion and other aspects of personality. The results show that the novel Atheis contains many religious elements, especially in terms of Sufiistic aspects. In the novel Atheis, the main character, Hasan, experiences an inner debate when he meets his friend, Rusli, who adheres to the ideology of Marxism. As a result, he experiences an inner war between Marxism and Islam. On the other hand, it is depicted that the main character has a strong commitment to religion. Religious commitment is depicted in the story which includes various aspects, ranging from aspects of belief, aspects of practice, aspects of knowledge, aspects of experience, and aspects of consequences. Based on the five aspects, the knowledge aspect is the aspect that appears most often because it is owned and mastered by the characters.

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Introduction

One of Achdiat K Mihadja's most notable works is the novel Atheis, published by Balai Pustaka in 1949. The novel received an award from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in 1969. Many studies of this novel have been conducted, including by Saktiono et al. (2018) using the approach of Literary Psychology and character values. The results of his research show that the main character experiences mental disorders because of the various beliefs he encounters (Freud, 2016). Regarding educational values, this novel has eleven-character values, so it is relevant as learning material in schools (Hasim & Aziez, 2012). The Literary Psychology approach is an approach that believes that literary works do not always have to discuss an event but can discuss psychology. Literary Psychology analyzes a novel or a character in it by considering the relevance that exists with the role of psychological studies (Kahid, 2020). By understanding the characters, it will be able to analyze the inner conflicts that occur in the characters so that they can find out what is contrary to psychological theory. In this case, researchers must find what

secrets are hidden by the author, meaning that researchers must find inner symptoms and then analyze them with relevant psychological theories (Suprpto et al., 2014).

Another research on this novel was also conducted by Yunita et al. (2012) using a postcolonial approach. The results of the study found that this novel contained a discourse of postcolonialism in the form of hegemony and mimicry. In addition, there are various ideologies such as authoritarianism, humanism, anarchism, and feudalism. This study does not examine major ideological studies, the dominant values in this novel are Islam and Marxism (Suhita & Purwahida, 2018). Therefore, Yulianto (2019) sees the battle as a battle in which belief against disbelief in the existence of a supernatural realm that is real or not, the belief that humans exist because they were created by God, the battle between male socialization and female socialization, and individual and state ownership (Tedy, 2018). The ideological battle makes the main character experience religious resistance (Darmutika, 2018). The existence of the main character's resistance to religion where there is a rope between awareness in social life and awareness in religion that makes it interrelated.

The elements of hegemony and mimicry can be seen in the characters' attitudes, lifestyles, thought patterns, daily actions, and education (Yunita et al., 2012). In this Atheist novel, the main character, Hasan, experiences an inner debate when he meets his friend, Rusli, who adheres to the ideology of Marxism (Arianie, 2020). After that, there is a spice of romance experienced by Hasan when he meets a beautiful woman named Kartini. As a result, he experiences an inner war between the ideology of Marxism and Islam. This realization causes his strong religious love to falter, so that the protagonist changes from being an adherent of Islam tarekat to an atheist.

Marxism-Leninism is the teaching of Marx which was later interpreted by Lenin. According to Lenin's interpretation, as a Marxist, threatening people who do not share the same school as himself as traitors. Marxism talks about the materialist conception of social phenomena that occur due to economic conditions. Marx considered that what happens is the result of a materialistic metaphysics and the two are unrelated. Therefore, due to this metaphysics, Marxism rejects the existence of God (Hashem, 2001).

Theoretically, the sociology of religion can be understood as a scientific discipline that focuses on the study of the social life of religious people in the context of life together (Dewojati, 2021). This field of science also emphasizes research on group life and social behavior related to religion, as well as activities produced by adherents of the religion (Yulianto, 2019). The sociology of religion does not focus on small and personal aspects, but is more interested in social issues related to religion on a larger scale and with significant impact in the general cultural context (Aryana et al., 2018). In this case, the valuable contribution of the sociology of religion lies in its ability to explain phenomena that are specific or uncommon into concepts that are simpler and easier to understand and provide benefits that can be taken.

There is also colonial hegemony in the novel *Atheis*, where people are influenced by the colonial ideology brought by the Dutch colonialists (Teeuw, 1984). In many cases, the Dutch practiced colonialism and undermined local values (Aryana et al., 2018). This is evidenced by the introduction of religious ideas and systems that they controlled. There is a sense of dissatisfaction from some of the characters that they try to fight against it and seek answers to the questions that arise in their minds (Sari & Munaris, 2017). The existence of anarchism is evidenced by the characters Rusli and Anwar, who are Hasan's friends who oppose colonial rule through the political party they founded (Udayana & Indiatmoko, 2017). Anarchism means an understanding that believes that all forms of government are institutions that foster oppression (Yunita et al., 2012).

This novel also illustrates the religious commitment experienced by Hasan as discussed by Pratami & Munaris (2016) in their research examining how a religious commitment and its relationship with learning design in high school. It is explained that there is a main character who has a strong commitment to religion (Usman, 2015). Religious commitment is described in the story which includes various aspects, ranging from aspects of belief, aspects of practice, aspects of knowledge, aspects of experience, and aspects of consequences (Widodo & Dermawan, 2018). Based on the five aspects, the knowledge aspect is the aspect that appears most often because it is owned and mastered by the characters (Yudiono, 2010).

Regarding the Sufistic dimension, several relevant studies in literary works in the form of novels have previously been conducted by several other researchers, including, first, Arianie (2020) who studied Sufistic Aspects in Danarto's *Asmaraloka* Novel. In addition, research conducted by (2018) which examines Sufism in the Novel *Khidir* by Wiwid Prasetyo and its Relevance to Character Education (Salamah, 2021). Then, research conducted by Widodo & Dermawan (2018) which examines Sufistic Subjects in the Novel *Bekisar Merah* by Ahmad Tohari: A Semiotic Approach. This research has similarities and differences with previous research, the similarities are both discussing Sufism in a novel, which is the difference in this study is the type of novel addressed is a novel by Achdiat Karta Mihardja entitled *Atheist* by looking for the Sufistic side in it.

This study will describe the psychoanalytic aspects of Sigmund Freud in the novel *Atheis* by Achdiat K. Mihadja which contains many religious elements, especially in terms of Suhi aspects. Religious commitment is depicted in the story which includes various aspects, starting from the aspect of belief, the aspect of practice, the aspect of knowledge, the aspect of experience, and the aspect of consequences.

Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis approach. Qualitative research is research that describes words and does not display data in the form of numbers (Creswell, 2014). Moleong (2000), states that qualitative research is more concerned with the process than the results (Kim et al., 2017). This is because the relationship of the parts being studied will be much clearer if observed in the process. According to Ratna (2012) qualitative methods pay attention to natural data, data in relation to the context of its existence. Kaufman & Kaufman (2005) explains "Qualitative research involves studies that do not attempt to quantify their results through statistical summary or analysis. Qualitative studies typically involve interviews and observations without formal measurement".

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach (i.e. Id, ego, and superego) is used in this research because the research in turn involves a large number of psychic symptoms of the characters, for example, the main character and other characters who influence the personality and beliefs of the main character, the social environment, including elements of culture in general will be involved. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach that emphasizes the important role of the unconscious mind in shaping human behavior and experience. The main elements in this theory are motivation, emotion and other aspects of personality. In literary science, the source of data is the work, the manuscript, the research data, as formal data are words, sentences and discourse.

The data source in this research is a novel entitled *Atheis* by Achdiat K. Mihadja published by Balai Pustaka in 1949. The research data are words or text of the novel. The data collection technique uses documentary or literature study techniques. Documentary technique is done by reviewing literary works (Yusub, 2017). The review is carried out by classifying the parts that are the object of research. The steps of data collection that researchers take are through repeated reading activities in the novel which is the object of research (Zubaedi, 2015). Then record the parts and classify and separate the parts that are included as data to be analyzed, making it easier for researchers to connect them with the problems and research objectives.

Results and Discussion

The main character in the novel is Hasan, who comes from a lineage of pious people. His father, Raden Wiradikarya, was a prominent man in the village of Panyeredan on the slopes of Telaga Bodas Mountain. He is known as a pious man and menak (priyayi) because he is a retired school orderly. Likewise, his mother was never separated from her prayer beads and prayer tools. Like other Muslims, Hasan's father and mother wanted to make the hajj in their lifetime (Lubis, 2018). Unfortunately, they were not able to fulfill this pilgrimage until the end of their lives because they never prioritized wealth (Merry, 2021). Nevertheless, they took Fatimah, the daughter of an uncle who had many children and had just died. Apart from being a religious obligation, Fatimah was considered to replace her children who died when they were young. Losing three of his children as children is considered a severe ordeal from God that must be endured with piety to become more pious (Amelysa & Ariska, 2020). Hasan is known as a protagonist who has feelings of indecision in his heart. In this case, of course the readers become silent witnesses to the journey of faith and emotions felt by Hasan. It is true that Hasan's character is well known because he is very inconsistent with his constancy.

Throughout the story, of course, we can feel Hasan's emotional ups and downs and able to make the reader's emotions sway. Hasan's character always appears in every storyline. The figure of Hasan who cannot be consistent with what he believes and what he lives makes him a dynamic character, namely the figure of Hasan who is able to change following his friends and environment. From the beginning, Hasan is portrayed as an obedient and devout child, but when he meets Rusli and Kartini, he becomes an indecisive figure and doubts the presence of God so that he who used to cling to Islam becomes a person who no longer believes in the existence of God or is known as an atheist. Basically, atheists have a different view of God compared to those who are religious. Some of them may recognize the existence of God, but do not choose to follow the teachings of a particular religion. They seem to shy away from reality and assume that God is not involved in the human lives they lead. This thinking is based on a reality that does not match their expectations. It is important to note that there are atheists who also go through life eventually choosing not

to believe in God. It could be that they had previously believed in God and obeyed a religion before deciding to no longer have faith in God (Alawiyah, 2019).

From Hasan's character, we can see the values of the approach or genre in literary theory, namely psychoanalysis, which is closely related to psychological science. This psychoanalytic theory seeks to explain what the nature and how human personality is develops. This theory emphasizes the internal elements that can influence humans such as motivation, emotions, and so on. Psychoanalysis assumes that personality can develop when there are conflicts from these psychological aspects. This can be felt when seen from the perspective of Hasan who views and assumes that the world is only his own, with his own ideology and he is the only one who has the nature of alim, obedient worship, and faith in God. Gradually he realizes the presence of friends in his environment who finally open his vision and feelings. The many messages Hasan wants to convey include emotions and behaviors but are followed by an expression of a word that has its own deep meaning.

The school of psychoanalysis was developed by Sigmund Freud in 1890. This psychological school focuses on the human unconscious. According to Freud, there are three human structures: the Id, ego, and superego. The area of the psyche that cannot be realized is called the Id, which Freud clarified that psychological things are inherited from birth. Basically, the Id is a place that contains human sexual instincts and human animal nature (aggressive impulses). Usually, these instincts are immoral and illogical so that they are only concerned with instinctive pleasure (Sihotang in Usman, 2015). The Id grows something called the ego. This ego can be a human tool to communicate and distinguish itself from the environment. Ego can accept the real world and can also decide how humans should act. Meanwhile, the superego is part of individual morality which can determine which is good and which is bad. Superego is usually obtained from experiences, whether from family, friends, or the surrounding community. The superego can be said to deal with actions in which there are social norms that must be obeyed and can also distinguish good and bad actions (Hariyanto in Usman, 2015).

Based on Freud's psychoanalytic theory, individuals must have a strong desire. In a sense, there is a goal to be achieved and when it is achieved it can fulfill the satisfaction of his heart as the way the Id works, namely a strong desire to fulfill a desire or instinctive satisfaction. Hasan has a strong desire to learn tarekat based on his childhood experience. Little Hasan once listened to a conversation between his father and Haji Dahlan that discussed the science of tarekat (Solihan, 2016).

"I still remember how much fun my father had listening. At that time I was still a child, only about six years old. And of course I didn't understand anything about the conversation between my father and Haji Dahlan. How could that be! And now it's as if I'm repeating Haji Dahlan's description again, actually I'm just guessing, because about these matters of tarekat, tarekat, makrifat and hakikat, later in life I often heard them from my own father's mouth. It seemed that Haji Dahlan's description would not differ much from what my father later liked to tell me." (Mihardja, 2010)

The above quote explains how Hasan has a strong desire to learn the science of tarekat. This indicates that Hasan's Id is based on his childhood experiences in which he often listened to the science of tarekat. He often heard from his family that if he wanted to achieve the perfection of worship, then he had to learn the science of tarekat. The science of tarekat is in the form of rules for practicing worship (Solihan, 2016). Tariqah science is considered a practical method to guide someone who wants to learn it through a well-planned path of thoughts, actions, and feelings and then reach a level that aims to feel the meaning of its true essence (Trimingham in Kholid 2018).

Tariqah and Hakikat

Atheist novels discuss the mystical dimension of Islam in the context of the realization of Suhism, namely Tarekat, Hakikat, and makrifat. This is revealed, among other things, by the life of Hasan's parents. In the view of Haji Dahlan, a pilgrim from Banten who his mother's is still relative, Hasan's parents' life is not the right way to achieve the goal of worship (Mulyani, 2023). The Shari'a that had been based on the guidelines or tariqah to achieve hakikat and makrifat. Hajj, whose name used to be Wiranta, invited him to enter the tarekat and study with the same teacher namely Kiyai Mahmud in Banten (Mutmainah, 2019). The definition of tarekat itself is a way to get closer to Allah Swt. which has the aim that humans can reach Him, namely by worshiping and carrying out obligations that should be done (Rahayu, 2020). In Suhism, one of the teachings is Tarekat. There are several main teachings of Suhism taught by Suhis, namely shariat, tarekat, hakikat, and ma'rifat. In the end, these teachings merged with each other and developed into an independent school.

In the Suhi perspective, the path to Allah or for humans to be happy in the afterlife includes three stages starting from the Shari'a, then the tarekat, to the essence which is the fruit. Tariqah or tariqah can be

interpreted as a path or method to get closer to Allah. First, sharia is laws or rules. Makrifat is called knowledge obtained through reason, and the hinal level is understanding the nature of something, such as the secrets of the Koran and unseen knowledge that cannot be revealed.

Before reaching the essence, one needs a process to reach the essence itself. The process is carried out by carrying out the laws that have been determined by religion and the intention in carrying them out is certainly for Allah Swt. to get closer to Him. This process is what we usually call tarekat (Pratami & Munaris, 2016). For Suhis, the biggest enemy of man is man's own lust. Hakikat can be called the end of the Suhi journey towards Him. It is referred to as the truth. This is a meaning of practice and guidance in accordance with sharia (Rahayu, 2020). The teaching of tarekat is one of the teachings of Suhism so that tarekat and Suhism cannot be separated, especially in the lives of Suhis. The goal of studying the science of tarekat and carrying it out is to get closer to God and know Him as well as possible (Rahmawati, 2014). Tasawwuf can mean purity. The meaning is to purify oneself from physical influences so that one can get closer to the Holy One, namely Allah Swt. who can only be approached by holy people as well (Kartanegara, 2006).

This also stems from Hasan's father's curiosity. Hasan's father was curious about everything that Haji Dahlan did. This curiosity arose when Haji Dahlan was staying at his house. Hasan's father focused his attention by watching everything that Haji Dahlan did (Salamah, 2021). We can see this in the incident when he returned from the mosque after Friday prayers. Hasan's father said to Haji Dahlan that he often saw Haji Dahlan picking prayer beads. With such words, it can be interpreted that Hasan's father focused his attention on Haji Dahlan and was always curious (Saktiono et al., 2018).

Teacher's Role

Tarekat is a religious tradition with the aim of getting closer to God in which there are three dimensions, namely Islam, faith, and ihsan. Tarekat is also often interpreted as a straight path with the goal of getting closer and knowing Him (Sipahutar, 2020). To study tarekat, you must have a teacher. The importance of the teacher is explained.

"O, you don't have a teacher yet? Then that's a pity, because, you worship without the guidance of a teacher is like a villager released in the middle of a crowded city like Jakarta or Singapore. He will get lost. Not unlike a driver who knows how to drive a car, but doesn't know which way to go." (Mihardja, 2010)

A month after Haji Dahlan's arrival, Raden Wiradiharja and his wife left for Banten to study tarekat, leaving Hasan with Siti and Nata. His son Hasan was taught to recite the Koran and pray and dhikr from the age of five. During the fasting month, he fasted until maghrib and prayed tarawih in the langgar. Although in the langgar, he is often teased by his naughty friends like Rusli.

Before going to bed, his mother taught him short surahs and praises to God and the Prophet. The hymns were memorized and sung before prayers even though Hasan did not understand their meaning. At the same time, his mother counseled him through stories of heaven and hell, the torment of hell for those who were negligent and heaven for those who were diligent in their worship. In addition to his mother, Siti, his mother also often told these stories. Siti and her husband, Nata, are the babu and bujang in Raden Wiradikarya's house and come from a pious family. Nata had studied at the Pesantren while his wife, Siti, was the niece of Kyai Bajuri, who taught at her husband's place. This behavior received a positive response from the environment in which Hasan lived. Hasan received acceptance, positive remarks, and compliments that gave Hasan a sense of comfort. If we look deeper, the place where Hasan lives is far from the crowd. This can be one of the factors to minimize diverse views. The point is that the existence of the same view has a greater chance because in such an environment personal desires or views are more often merged with desires or views that are already believed or approved by the local community (Bahri, 2013).

The stories of his mother and Siti made a deep impression on Hasan's soul. From a young age, he was overwhelmed by the fear of hell and practiced religion until he was an adult (Hashem, 2001). The older Hasan grew, the more diligent he became in worshiping and doing what his religion commanded because the tales did not fade. Even in the office, he was known as a pious man. Every time he let his guard down, he was reminded of the punishment and torment of hell. Hasan was very respectful and obedient to his parents, which made him a source of pride that was often told to his father's acquaintances.

During his apprenticeship at the Kotapraja, he dated Rukmini, the daughter of a big merchant in Bandung, Haji Kosasih. She was a devout worshipper, cheerful, friendly, articulate and well-groomed. Unfortunately, the romance ran aground because her father did not want his son to marry a descendant of a conqueror or raden. Rukmini's family had a bad experience with the raden. Eventually, Rukmini married a merchant from Jakarta.

Upon learning of the incident, Hasan spent months in hopeless agony. The sadness was so heavy that it almost made him sick. Faced with this, Hasan felt that his worship was not enough to alleviate his sadness. For this reason, he intended to enter the tariqah that his parents were practicing. This brought happiness to his parents' hearts.

"Well, my son, thank goodness you have such a pure intention. Indeed, with your holy intention, all the worries that have sometimes pressed on my heart have disappeared, namely the worry that you will not be able to endure this path of life full of temptations and disasters, because you do not yet have strong weapons." (Mihardja, 2010)

During a vacation back to his village, Hasan expressed his intention to study tarekat and asked his father to take him to his teacher in Banten. This request made his father happier than when his son graduated from Mulo school or was accepted at the Bandung Municipality office. Previously, his father had worried about his son's life in the big city without guidance. To honor this intention, his mother organized a feast and read the book "Manakib" of Sheikh Abdul Kadir Jaelani.

After becoming a member of the Tariqah, Hasan felt like a new man despite the heavy obligations he had to perform. After praying, he always recited the dhikr taught by his teacher.

"It is the same when I make dhikr. The longer I make dhikr, the faster I say it. In the end I feel as if I am flying, floating lightly as if I have wings. (The world in which we live cannot be 'flying', spinning, but if the world stops spinning, it will fly fast and hard by itself like wings). When the dhikr is said very quickly, what happens is that the meaning of the phrase 'la ilaha illallah' is no longer heard, it turns into 'eha-eha'. The Tasbeeh is no longer spinning as well. It has changed from a counting tool to a rhythmic organizer." (Mihardja, 2010)

As he continued to do so, the obligation became lighter and lighter for him. Hasan even increased his tariqah activities because his father often reminded him through letters of the supernatural punishments that would befall him if he did not fulfill them. Moreover, the visits of his teacher to Bandung, who used to make rounds in places where there were many disciples, further increased his belief in the mystical teachings he was following.

However, these activities alienated Hasan from his social circle and caused him to neglect his office work. At times he also neglected his health to the extent that he looked very thin and contracted tuberculosis. The religious commandments he practiced reached their peak. The activities that culminated included.

"I once fasted for seven days and nights. I once bathed in the Cikapundung river forty times during one night from Isa prayer until dawn. Each time I plunged into the water, dived in, and then quickly came out of the water, then sat at the edge of the river, letting my body dry again by not using a towel. When you are dry, you must immediately immerse yourself in the water again. And so on for forty times. I once locked myself in a room for three days and nights, with no food, no sleep, no conversation with others." (Mihardja, 2010)

After performing these acts of worship, Hasan hoped that there would be a blessing from his efforts and the nobility of his tarekat knowledge. Just as his landlady increased her worship because of the hardships she experienced. As a widow with only a rented house, she increased her prayers even more when in the last few months only Hasan remained in her house.

While practicing tariqah, Hasan felt that he had perfected his worship. So he often looked down on people who were not religiously observant or even so empty that he always had the wish to convert them. In fact, he could not hide his hatred for these people.

Therefore, Hasan felt the obligation to "Islamize", to bring to the good path, his friends Rusli, Kartini, and Anwar. Rusli was his friend in the village and went to school in Tasikmalaya. After graduating from HIS, he went to trade school in Jakarta. However, he did not finish but became active in a political party. When his party was banned, Rusli fled to Singapore. During his four-year stay in the city, he not only studied seriously various ideologies, especially Marxism, but mingled with people from the international movement. Before arriving in Bandung, he moved to various cities under an assumed name.

Kartini, on the other hand, was a seventeen-year-old widow of an Arab moneylender. She dropped out of MULO school because her mother expected her to marry the Arab's fourth wife. The bad experience made her a firm and radical woman plus the political education given by Rusli.

They had adopted a westernized way of life that had broken their faith. Perhaps in people's eyes, the introduction to Kartini was an intensive encounter both in discussions with Rusli and Anwar and joint

activities making it difficult for Hasan to focus. His prayers began to wander. Likewise, it was difficult for him to concentrate his whole soul on the presence of the Almighty.

Conclusion

In the end, Hasan conflicts with his father because his father does not like that Hasan is no longer religiously observant, until the end Hasan and his father have not reconciled until Hasan is shot dead. This novel contains a lot of important values that can be taken, through this novel, we learn many things and as a young generation we should be able to learn and behave maturely so as not to make the wrong choice in taking steps and not end up with regrets later.

Declarations

- Author contribution** : Ahmad Bahtiar is the conceptualizer of this script and the main idea owner. The researcher conducted a comprehensive analysis. Gunta Wirawan became the editor of this manuscript after it was completed by adding analysis and responding to reviewers. Najwa Raihana and Muhammad Jabal An Nur translated the manuscript from Indonesian into English. Then, Syihaabul Hudaa oversaw ensuring citations in this article.
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