

**DISGUISE MANEUVERING  
IN JAMES MCBRIDE'S NOVEL *THE GOOD LORD BIRD* (2013)**

**THESIS**

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements  
to Obtain Strata I (S1) Degree*



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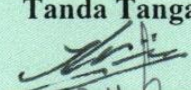
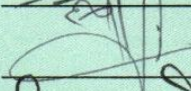
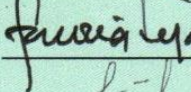

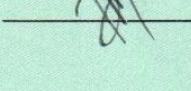
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## ABSTRAK

**Tivani, Rezki. 2016. “Disguise Maneuvering in James McBride’s Novel *The Good Lord Bird* (2013)”. Thesis. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

**Pembimbing: 1. Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A  
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Skripsi ini merupakan analisa novel *The Good Lord Bird* (2013) karya James McBride. Permasalahan yang dibahas dalam analisa ini ialah sejauh mana novel ini merefleksikan proses *Disguise Maneuvering*. Analisa ini didasarkan pada *text-based interpretation* yang meliputi *fictional devices*. Tujuan analisa ini adalah (1) menganalisa sejauh mana novel ini merefleksikan penyamaran identitas secara terencana, (2) menunjukkan kontribusi elemen fiksi dalam mengungkap *disguise maneuvering* pada novel ini. Data penelitian ini adalah teks tertulis yang dikutip dari novel. Kutipan teks tersebut kemudian diinterpretasi dan dianalisa melalui elemen fiksi (*characters, setting and plot*) lalu dikaitkan dengan konsep *mask or persona* oleh Carl Jung. Hasil analisa menunjukkan bahwa karakter mengubah identitas aslinya sebagai akibat dari rasa ketidakamanan yang dia alami. Ada tiga cara perubahan yaitu: cara berfikir, bertingkah laku dan berpenampilan. Perubahan cara berfikir yang dilakukan oleh karakter terlihat dengan merubah cara berfikirnya seperti perempuan, karakter juga menunjukkan emosinya. Sedangkan perubahan dalam bertingkah laku bisa terlihat dari perubahan nama karakter menjadi perempuan, karakter juga mengambil peran-peran perempuan. Terakhir, karakter berusaha mengubah penampilannya seperti menggunakan bentuk tubuhnya yang kecil, karakter juga menggunakan gaun, makeup dan aksesoris.

**Keywords:** *disguise, maneuvering, Mask atau Persona*

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Everyone has a preference to develop their own personal identity. This is mainly caused by the basic necessity of the people to be known as their own self and to be distinguished from others. Identity is something that people take as a social consequence and more-or-less unchangeable. However, there are some people who have certain aim. For example, the people who want to secure themselves, force them to hide their identity. The effort of the people to hide their own identity from the authority is called disguise maneuvering.

Disguise is intended as a way of securing a person identity or giving a protection against others. In Britannica Encyclopedia (2014), the purpose of disguise is to modify the manner or appearance of a person in order to prevent recognition while maneuvering is defined as the action of cleverly planning something to get an advantage. In other word, disguise maneuvering reflects to the actions taken intelligently and planned by someone who faced the situation in order to conceal or mistaken his true identity from others.

People who do disguise maneuvering normally change their attitude, behavior and appearance in order to make their plan get a success. Attitude itself refers to a manner of thinking, feeling, or behaving that reflects a state of mind or disposition. Meanwhile, behaviour refers to the way to act or do something. Behavior can also be an expression of a person's character.

Appearance refers to outward look of a person that deals with dress and hair style, face and body shape.

There are many reasons why people do disguise maneuvering. It can be interfered by internal or external factors. Sample (in *Methods of disguise*, 1993:9) states that there are two main reasons why people want to disguise themselves. The first one is to make themselves less recognizable and the second one is to impersonate someone else. A lot of factors cause people want to make themselves less recognizable. One of them may want to defend or protect themselves from the controller or the authority. One of the famous examples is the act done by Jewish Children during the holocaust in World War II. The article that written by Anne Frank, *Life is Shadows Hidden Children and the Holocaust* (2004), describes how the Jewish children can be survived during the process of holocaust done by NAZI. Thousands of Jewish Children who survived from the brutal manner by disguising their identity in terms of appearances, like pretending to be a Christian or living with foster parents who are not Jewish and some of them really hide from the world.

The second reason is to impersonate someone else. In other word, their pretend to be known as a new person or someone who is different. They try to be more recognizable to emulate someone who has been recognized and get advantage of their act. For example by changing appearance so the person does not recognized as a new figure and not recognized as an old self. In the Guardian News (2015), the example is the act done by Sisa Abu Daooh, an Egyptian woman who has lived as a man for 40 years. The aim is to sustain her family life

since 1970 when her husband died, so she still can work as a man. She changes her appearance by shaving her head and wearing loose-fitting male robes. She worked as a bricks maker and also as wheat farmer.

The issue of disguise maneuvering in order to protect one self from others is interesting to be analyzed. Novel, as the one of the example of literary works, has effectively revealed this phenomenon. One of them is the novel *The Good Lord Bird* (2013) by James McBride. This novel explains how the protagonist does disguise maneuvering to obtain security for himself. He does disguise maneuvering in order to hide his identity from others.

## **1.2 Disguise Maneuvering**

There are two main words in this study. They are disguise and maneuvering. According to Sample (in *Methods of disguise*, 1984:1) disguise is changing appearance to impede recognition. The main reason for disguise is its effect on others. This differentiates it from what has come to be called "body image" changing, where dieting, plastic surgery and other measures are taken mainly for the effect on the self. Disguise is a kind of self-hiding by not showing the real identity of someone. This action is usually done to provide security for someone or commonly performed by someone who wants to be someone else by imitating or hide their real identity and makes this profitable for themselves.

Meanwhile, in Meriam Webster Encyclopedia (2015) maneuvering is defined as the action of cleverly planning something to get an advantage. In other

word, this action is usually plan by someone who wants to achieve his goal by securing his identity.

Disguise maneuvering in this analysis refers to the act which is done by the character, a boy who camouflages his identity into a girl. In doing disguise maneuvering, his cleverly plan his action to conceal his identity.

### **1.3 A Brief Description of Author's Biography**

James McBride is an American musician and writer. He was born in Brooklyn, New York City on September 11, 1957. His father, Rev. Andrew D. McBride was an African American and his mother, Ruth McBride was a Jewish immigrant from Poland. James McBride was graduated from New York City public schools. He continues to studied composition at The Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio and refinished his Masters in Journalism in Columbia University in New York at age 22. He also holds several honorary doctorates and is currently a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University.

McBride has won several prestigious awards for his literary work. McBride first novel *The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother* published in 1997 by Riverhead spent over two years on The New York Times bestseller list, and now appears on high school and university course lists across America. His second novel *The Good Lord Bird* (2013) by Riverhead Books, won the National Book Award for fiction in 2013. This novel is going to be adapted to a movie, starring Liev Schreiber and Jaden Smith. This novel also takes the lead in Oprah Magazine Top 10 Book of the Year.

There are some comments about McBride's novel *The Good Lord Bird*. First comment from Columbus Dispart (2014), John Greed gives the comments about McBride's novel *The Good Lord Bird*. He states that

The *Good Lord Bird* is exhilarating; McBride makes what could be a confusing tale clear and creates suspense even in a story whose end is well-known. Beneath the humor lies sympathy for Brown and all those whose lives were caught up with his.

It says that the abolitionist John Brown as the essential component in James McBride's novel. He watched into the relevant information. He does a lot of reading like biography of John Brown as a abolitionist. Most of the character of novel had been closest to John Brown lives.

Another comment about the novel *The Good Lord Bird* comes from McBride's fans. In Amazon (30 may 2013), Trudire Barreras praise *The Good Lord Bird* as one of a good novel to be read. He says:

On the other hand, those who are willing to accept the validity of McBride's setting will find the descriptions of John Brown's character and the "inspired irrationality" of his abolitionist crusade full of nuance and depth. The narrator character, the boy Henry speaks with complete authenticity and amazing insight. The various sons of John Brown who appear in the story are portrayed with extraordinary intensity given the relatively minor parts they play.

The two quotations above show that they consider McBride work has some good points to potrays John Brown lives. For the theme, the character and setting can make the reads become interested in the story. The way McBride presented this novel with its limitations gives the reads new point about the abolitionist John Brown lifedifferently.

#### **1.4 The Good Lord Bird**

The novel entitled *The Good Lord Bird* (2013), written by James McBride, reflects disguise maneuvering. Disguise Maneuvering refers to the act that done by changing attitude, behavior and appearance in order to conceal someone's identity. In this study, disguise maneuvering is done by protagonist, Henry. He is a nine years old boy who is forced to join the army to fight slavery. The protagonist does disguise maneuvering in order to conceal his identity as he struggles to stay alive. He pretends to be a girl since being a girl give him some benefits such as not having to carry a pistol or rifle, he also not having to lift nothing heavy and fellers admiring him for being tough as a boy. His struggles can be seen through his attitude, behaviour and appearance.

Attitude refers to a manner of thinking, feeling, or behaving that reflects a state of mind or disposition. In term of attitude, the protagonist does some efforts to pretend to be a girl. First, he starts to think like a girl and second he tries to keep his ego and shows his emotion.

In terms of behaviour the protagonist acting is like a polite girl. The protagonist does the same behavior of girls. He calls himself Henrietta. He takes the woman roles in doing household such as doing laundry, cooking, and helping the other girls.

In terms of appearance, Henry keeps his small body, big eyes, and his soft skin. He uses his bodyshape and his face very wisely to disguise his identity. He always wears fancy dress and never wear boy's clothes. He also wears make up and accessories commonly used by girls.

### **1.5 Problem of the Study**

There are many issues which can be explored from the Novel *The Good Lord Bird* (2013) by James McBride. However, this study explores the issue of disguise maneuvering. In order to reveal the issue, the research questions are needed. Those research questions are:

1. How does the protagonist reflect the process of disguise maneuvering?
2. To what extent do setting and plot (conflicts) contribute in revealing the disguise maneuvering?

### **1.6 Purpose of the study**

This analysis is intended to disclose how does the protagonist in James McBride's novel *The Good Lord Bird* reflects the process of disguise maneuvering. This is also going to find out to what extent do setting and plot (conflicts) give contribution in revealing the issue of disguise maneuvering in the novel.

### **1.7 Previous study**

The analysis about *The Good Lord Bird* especially that focuses on the issue of disguise maneuvering has not been found yet. However, there are two studies that give contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel. It has different focus. Travis (2006) focuses to character who doing disguise to ensure her safety. Meanwhile, Kbied (2010) focuses to the character who utilizes different masks or personas while searching for her love.

The first study is written by Stephen Travis (2006) entitled “*Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night; Disguise, Gender Roles, and Goal-Setting*”. The issue that is raised by Stephen revealed a psychology approach that portrays the lives of the character who is doing disguise in order to saving his brother life. By focusing on to accomplish a goal, this study deals with the problem of one notable character Viola, the main female protagonist, dresses as a man in order to search the country of Illyria for her brother, Sebastian, who was lost at sea during a storm. Viola disguises herself as a man in order to fulfill the goal of finding her brother. The conclusion of the analysis exposed that the characters causes’ confusion among Illyria’s aristocracy, and dressing as a man would ensure her safety, especially againts sexual dangers, and the protagonist would have access to certain parts of the city that might be closed to females.

The second study that gives contribution to this analysis was written by Patricia Kbied (2010) entitled *Defiance against the Patriarchy in “The Rover” by Aphra Behn*. Her analysis deals with the idea of the culture dominant male authority structure. In this analysis, Patricia is mainly concerned in disparity between men and women and their attitude towards love and expecting reciprocity in a patriachal society. This study deals with the characters Helena who searching for love and defiance against authority of her father. She must follow her father plan. Her father’s purpose is to exchange his daughter in marriage in order to expand the family’s holdings both economically and through procreatist. To satisfy these ends, the characters utilize different masks or personas. The conclusion of this analysis exposed that disguises are to facilitate mistaken

identity and to camouflage or accentuate aspects of the characters personality, in order to illuminate how the characters perceive themselves or how they perceive others.

Hence, those two works have contributed and enriched this study. The first study exposes disguise that made the characters safety. The second study focuses on the characters who searching for love and doing disguise to camouflage their personality. Unlike those studies, this study is focuses on disguise maneuvering which is emphasized by its characters, setting and plot (conflict).

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

The analysis of this novel is related to the concept of a persona or mask by Carl Jung. Carl Jung (in the archetypes and the collective unconscious, 1948:207) states that the “mask” (or persona) is the outward face we present to the world, it conceals our real self and describes it as the “conformity” archetype. This is the public face or role a person presents to others as someone different to who their really are. In other word, it is a kind of self hiding by not showing the real identity of someone.

Moreover, someone use mask to cover their true identity. As Salingar in Crowder (2006:16) states that disguise as a “mask,” and asserts that in society, one must adopt a mask for self-preservation. It means the efforts of a person in doing disguise are to conceal his true identity and signalize his new identity in society to preserve themselves. It is supported by Ulrich Marzolph (in The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia, 2014:540) who state that disguised as employed to enter restricted or forbidden enclosures, to cross real or fictional boundaries, and

to cross over from one realm into another. It is also described that the use of disguise frequently employed a woman dressing as a man or a man dressing as a woman. In other word, disguise is the act done by someone who wants to secure themselves from others by hiding their true identity.

Maneuvering is important way used by protagonist to do his disguise. In Britannica Encyclopedia (2015), the word maneuvering refers to a movement or combination of movements involving skill and dexterity. While doing disguise, he may use a great and skillful plan to make his act success. He does disguise maneuvering through his attitude, behavior and appearance.

Attitude plays a major part in determining a person's identity. This affects the way people perceive and act towards people, objects or events that they encounter. Dweck, Gordon Allport (1988: 256) states that:

Attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person behavior.

It means, attitudes also have an effect on one's social interactions. When someone holds an attitude they have a tendency to behave in a certain way toward that person or object. It can influence their behavior as well.

Besides attitude, people can also be determined by their behavior. According to Wilma Guez and John Allen (2000:9), behavior can be defined as the way in which an individual behaves or acts. It means that behavior is also an expression of a person's character. The way they act and how the mindset of the person. Sometimes, these acts are shaped by family background, education and media.

Another important major part in determining someone's identity is physical appearance. In Meriam Webster Encyclopedia (2012), appearance refers to the outward look of a person, which deals with dress, hair, style, face and body shape. In other word, appearance is something that is shown, like the way of their style and how they keep the outside of their body parts. Through these actions the protagonist does disguise maneuvering.

Furthermore, disguise helps people to hide their personal self when they have goals. By having disguise, they are able to determine what they wanted to achieve their plans. Besides, it helps to secure themselves whenever they have a brilliant plan. In this analysis, those aspects of disguise maneuvering were done by the protagonist. He shows his skillfully plan to hide himself. He maintains his life by successfully plan his action which hamper his way to survive from the abolitionist. Disguise maneuvering can be seen through his action, such as changing his attitude and behavior. He deals with the obstacles to hide his true identity from man to woman, continue to change his appearance as the first and most lasting impression that people get from someone.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text and context based interpretation in order to bring out the case of disguise maneuvering. According to Glenn and Gray (2014: 178) text-based interpretation is the approach that based on the analysis and interpretation to text itself, which is nothing more than what is contained within the text itself. Meanwhile, context-based interpretation is the approach that considers the historical period during which a work was written including the circumstances of culture, history political, and social. It means that

the analysis is not only focussed on the text itself, but it also involves the phenomenon and circumstances which exist in the real world.

Fictional devices such as character, plot and setting also give contribution in analyzing this novel. Characters play an important part in the story. They refer to a textual representation of human being. Abrams (1999: 32-33) states that “characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work who can be interpreted by the readers through what they say (dialogue) and their distinctive ways of saying it and from what they do (action)”. The analysis of character can be done through its actions, thoughts, and how they react toward certain conflicts of circumstances around them. In this analysis, the character that is analyzed in the novel is Henry Shacleford, a nine years old boy who is taken away by abolitionist. He skillfully plan an action to make himself secure. He changes himself into a girl.

The second device that is going to be used is plot that focused on conflicts. According to Pia and Diez (2007: 2) conflict is “a struggle between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals”. This needs do not only come from the external, but also from the internal of the characters. As Guerin (2005) states that conflict can be identified into two forms: internal conflict and external conflict. Internal conflict is the conflicts which occur within a character itself, meanwhile, external conflict is the conflict which occur between two or more characters or a character and his/her environment. External conflicts manifests itself as man versus man, man versus nature, man versus society and man versus fate. In this analysis, the external conflict is prominent. This external conflict can

be seen through the interaction of the characters with their environment. This analysis is mainly focused on external conflicts who is faced by the main character Henry Shackleford to keep himself secure. He hide his identity from someone who has power. In this novel, he also cleverly plans his action through several ways. He changes his attitude, behavior and appearance.

Another element of fictional device that is used to analyze in the novel is setting. Setting does not only mean place and time in the novel but also has related to situation, condition, and atmosphere of the story. Klarer (2005) states:

Setting includes the location, historical period, and social surrounding in which the actions of text develop. In literary analysis, setting helps to catch the meaning of the text by connecting the story with the situation and condition around the characters.

From the definition above, it shows that setting, conflict, and character cannot be separated. They help the process of finding the implicit meaning of the novel. The characters and settings in a story are influenced by setting. It gives contribution to reveal the meaning of the story by persuade toward the character and conflicts. Circumstances and surrounding in this analysis determine the thought and the action of the protagonist. In this novel, the protagonist was surrounded by grief, misery, and abolitionist. His life completely changed after abolitionist coming.

## **1.9 Methodology**

The analysis of this novel is done through combining text based and context-based interpretation. Text based interpretation focuses on exploring fictional devices, such as; characters, plot (conflicts) and setting. These devices cannot be separated in exploring the meaning of the text since they supported each

other. Character is used to reveal the issue of disguise maneuvering by analyzing character attitude, behavior and appearance. Plot and conflicts in this novel also take an important role in revealing the meaning. They are used to acknowledge the conflicts which the character faced. Setting deals with the situation and condition exist in the novel in order to reveal character attempt to conceal his identity. Furthermore, In addition these elements are analyzed based on the concept of disguiseby Carl Jung, Salinger, and Ulrich Marzolph.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **CONCLUSION**

The Good Lord Bird novel (2013) is written by James McBride reflects disguise maneuvering. It is exposed by focusing on psychological approach from Carl Jung. The psychological is about how people use the mask or persona in order to conceal our real self and describes it as the “conformity” archetype. Furthermore, this novel exposed by focusing on the element of fiction such as the character, setting and plot. Disguise maneuvering in this novel shows from how the character tries to hide his identity in order to dodge from the raid. It can be seen through the way character attitude, behavior and appearance.

The character changes his attitude in order to pretend to be a girl. He starts to learn about women attitude and understood it. The setting in this analysis refers to strained situation, curious atmosphere of the character. This situation makes he wants to know more about their attitude. The conflict appears after he knows the differences of the attitude. The conflict mostly comes from the character itself when he faces some new attitude. He can release its conflict by following and willingly imitate those entire attitudes.

In imitating girl behavior, the protagonist does some habitual of girl. He chooses to follow these habits and shows to other people that he can pretend to be like girls. The setting in this analysis refers to the situation that is changing into new behaviors. The conflict emerges when he has to go through some new behavior of girl. This conflict mostly comes from the character itself. He can release it by following and imitating of what girls mostly do.

The character changes his appearance when he tries to pretend like a girl. He focuses to make the body shape in his priority. He does hard efforts to achieve good body by improving his appearance. The setting in this analysis refers tension condition that the character faces in order to changes his appearance. The conflict mostly comes from the character itself when he has the task to maintain his new appearance and imitate them. He can release the conflict by imitating some woman way when their keep their appearance.

People can change themselves to be what they want. It depends on how strong they do the effort to make it true. In some case, the changing is not easy task to reach. There must be some obstacles to gain the changing. The obstacle can be hard situation and conflict that people face to make the changing. They have to go through its obstacles in order to achieve it. However, this changing is not always success to get. There are some people who cannot do it. People who is really seriousness in changing themselves would get guarantee to pass it.

Disguise maneuvering can be found in society. Each people consider that pretend themselves to be someone else as the only way to live. They forget that their families, friends and their surrounding cannot recognized them as their old self. Therefore, it makes everyone feel like a new person. Thus, they do not be known as their true identity. In fact, the people in this situation do not realize that they are starting to be as a new person. They even do not know what is freedom in them. However, pretending is the important ways by them to secure themselves from the pattern of power or from the controllers. Each people should start interacting caring, and appreciating each other to live this life.

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