

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

One of interesting literary theories is Psychology. Psychoanalysis is a branch of psychology that methodology of studying mental process and mental behavior. Psychoanalysis related to structural, process and developmental change. Basically, Psychology has the relation between people behavior and the other human. It comprises everything related to the feeling, thought, behavior, ideas, etc. related to the psychology, every person are created with different personalities.

The quality of personality is being a person. Personality is deeper than character. It does not confine itself to an organized expression as character does. In a movie, the personality of the main character is interesting object for the researcher to analyze. Personality in a movie is closely related to personal psychological behavior, because it is shown many ways, like actions, dialogues, attitudes, and characteristics that influence the personality. It means that character can influence personality, but personality is unchanging.

Wellek and Werren (1956: 31) in theory of literature state that literature has function as the duce and the utile. They said that the work of literature is successful, the two “notes” of pleasure and utility should not coexist but coalesce. The pleasure of literature need to maintain is not one of

preferences among along list of possible pleasure but also a “higher-pleasure” because pleasure is higher kind of activity, i.e. non-acquisitive contemplation.

Personality is defined by the particular concepts a theorist uses to describe or understand human behavior. According to Pervin (1984: 2) the field of personality is concerned with the total individual and with individual differences. The personality is a phenomenon that really instead different personalities, where the individual seem to have completely different personalities on different occasions.

The general endowments of personality are: pure intelligence in the mind, warmth and expansiveness in the heart, dynamism in the vital, endurance and perseverance in the physical. If these things are there on their own, they will include all the capacities of character. For personality, the capacity of the mind to take an idea to an idealistic level, for the achievement of the ideal is where it differs from character. A man with personality will be open-minded. He won't be bound by his opinions or have rigid preferences. He will prefer what is best at that moment and be willing to change his habits if necessary.

The first personality theory to be considered is that of psychoanalysis. The psychoanalytic theory of Freud is reviewed because of its prominence in the culture of our society, its place in the history of psychology. According to Pervin (1984: 4) personality includes cognitions (thought processes), affect (emotions), as well as overt behaviors. Perhaps most of all, personality

concern the complex relationships among cognitive, affective, and overt behavioral processes in person.

In this case, the writer intends to conduct a study on the personality aspect of the main character, April Wheeler in *Revolutionary Road*. Paramount picture released the movie version of *Revolutionary Road* in January 23, 2009. This film was directed by Sam Mendes. The screenplay was created by Justin Haythe based on the novel *Revolutionary Road* by Richard Yates. In this film music by Thomas Newman and cinematography by Roger Deakin.

Mendes was born in Reading, Berkshire, England to Jameson Peter Mendes, a university professor, and Valerie Helene Barnett, an author of children's books. His father is from Trinidad's ethnic Portuguese community, and his mother an English Jew. His grandfather is the Trinidadian writer Alfred Mendes. He attended Magdalen College School in Oxford and graduated from Peterhouse, the oldest college of the University of Cambridge, with a BA in 1987. Mendes first attracted attention for his production of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* in the West End which starred Judi Dench before he was twenty-five years old. Soon he joined the Royal Shakespeare Company where his productions, many of them featuring Simon Russell Beale, included *Troilus and Cressida*, *Richard III* and *The Tempest*. He has also worked at the Royal National Theatre, directing Edward Bond's *The Sea*, Jim Cartwright's *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, Harold Pinter's

The Birthday Party, and *Othello* with Simon Russell Beale as Iago.
[\(<http://www.gradesaver.com/author/sam-mendes/>\).](http://www.gradesaver.com/author/sam-mendes/)

Mendes married British actress Kate Winslet on 24 May 2003 in Anguilla in the Caribbean. The pair met in 2001, when Mendes approached his future wife about appearing in a play at the Donmar Warehouse Theater, where he was then artistic director. Their first child, Joe Alfie Mendes, was born on 22 December 2003. Mendes also has a stepdaughter, Mia Honey Threapleton (b. 12 October 2000), from Winslet's first marriage to assistant director Jim Threapleton. The family now live in New York City and Church Westcote Manor, Church Westcote, Gloucestershire, England. He previously dated Jane Horrocks, Rachel Weisz, and Calista Flockhart. Mendes was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2000. In 2008, Mendes directed *Revolutionary Road*, starring his wife, Academy Award-winner Kate Winslet, along with Leonardo DiCaprio and Kathy Bates. In a January 2009 interview, Mendes opened up about directing his wife for the first time.

[\(<http://www.revolutionaryroadmovie.com>\)](http://www.revolutionaryroadmovie.com)

Revolutionary Road, the first novel of author Richard Yates, was a finalist for the National Book Award in 1962 along with *Catch-22* and *The Moviegoer*. When it was published by Atlantic-Little, Brown in 1961, it received critical acclaim, and the New York Times reviewed it as "beautifully crafted... a remarkable and deeply troubling book." Set in 1955, the novel focuses on the hopes and aspirations of Frank Wheeler (Leonardo DiCaprio) and April Wheeler (Kate Winslet), self-assured Connecticut suburbanites who

see themselves as very different from their neighbors in the Revolutionary Hill Estates. In the opening scene, April stars in an embarrassingly bad amateur dramatic production of *The Petrified Forest*.

(<http://www.revolutionaryroadmovie.com/>)

Revolutionary Road, produced by Scott Rudin after years of arrested development, is strictly an art house play and should score with the Academy. Mendes takes a more realistic and less stylized approach to this dysfunctional suburban family than he did on the Oscar winning *American Beauty*. The entire ensemble is first rate Shannon got a rousing round of applause at my screening for his role as the insane truth teller who cuts through all the crap. The movie hits hard with some folks relate to it others don't.

The movie offers some possibility of hope for the rest of audience. It lives and breathes. As do Leonardo Dicaprio and Kate Winslet, reunited more than a decade after *Titanic*. She always gives strong performances, but runs with the layered role of deeply unhappy housewife April Wheeler. She's smart and trapped and angry and resigned and still in love with the person she once thought her husband could be.

Frank and April Wheeler, in the seventh year of their marriage, have fallen into a life that appears to most as being perfect. They live in the Connecticut suburbs with two young children. Frank commutes to New York City where he works in an office job while April stays at home as a housewife. But they're not happy. April has forgone her dream of becoming an actress, and Frank hates his job one where he places little effort, although he has never figured out what his passion in life is. One day, April suggests that they move to Paris, a city where Frank visited during the war

and loved, but where April has never been, as a means to rejuvenate their life. April's plan, She would be the breadwinner, getting a lucrative secretarial job for one of the major international organizations, while Frank would have free time to find himself and whatever his passion. Initially skeptical, Frank ultimately agrees to April's plan. When circumstances change around the Wheelers, April decides she will do whatever she has to get herself out of her unhappy existence.

April Wheeler was working alone, and visibly weakening with every line. Before the end of the first act the audience could tell as well as the Players that she'd lost her grip, and soon they were all embarrassed for her. She had begun to alternate between false theatrical gestures and a white-knuckled immobility, she was carrying her shoulders high and square, and despite her heavy make-up you could see the warmth of humiliation rising in her face and neck.

Oscar watch, comments on November 18 2009, said that *Revolutionary Road* First do read Richard Yates' 1961 debut novel. The adaptation by Justin Haythe is very close; some scenes are staged exactly the way they were originally written. Is the movie as great as Yates' novel? No. But Yates never caught the popular imagination, never sold more than 12,000 copies of any of his seven novels, because he was too searing, too critical of his characters. He held no hope for couples like the Wheelers. He dissected them as though they were pinned insects.

Revolutionary Road is lavishly dark, some might say too dark yet, I'd suggest it has a different limitation. For all its shattering domestic discord, there's something remote and aesthetic about it. April brings a private well of

conflict to her middle class prison, but Kate Winslet is so meticulous in her telegraphed despair that she intrigues us, moves us, yet never quite touches our unguarded nerves (Owen Gleiberman, 2009).

Related to previous description the writer intends to analyze the film using psychoanalytic approach because of four reasons. The first reason is because the writers attracted to analyze the human's personality that contains a lot of tragedy especially in film "*Revolutionary Road*". This film contains many conflicts about the personality of April Wheeler as a main character. It begins when Frank, propelled by a carefree attitude brought on by the thought of Paris, turns in a sarcastic piece of work to his nagging boss. Amazingly, his work is considered brilliant by company executives, and he is offered a promotion with better pay. Secondly, April becomes pregnant for the third time. When she reveals it to Frank, she also floats the idea of an abortion. April is desperate to move to Paris by any means necessary, but Frank is disgusted by the thought of abortion.

Beside that, It all seems too swell for this tragic couple, when suddenly Frank is offered a promotion at his redundant job with a higher paying position, heavier responsibilities, and more importantly a chance to be apart of something great, the computer. Frank refuses this handsome offer from his boss at first because it interferes with their big trip to Paris. On the other hand, Frank cannot resist the temptation and is drawn to stay at this job because of the attachment he has regarding his father. We learn that Frank's father has also worked at Knoxx Business Machines for 30 years. It suggests

as though Frank has a yearning desire to fulfill this empty legacy. On a different note, it strongly expresses Frank's inability to change and triumph over his trepidation. This couple struggles to achieve any sort of compromise as their lays a serious conflict of interest regarding their futures. April wants a lifestyle change in Paris; meanwhile, Frank is satisfied working in a miserable occupation with a higher salary. This relationship portrays that conflict of interest incessantly; it also shows how it affects their lifestyle and how they grapple with the consequences.

The second reason is the film has great possibility to know the phenomenon of psychoanalytic in the character. Most of his films give new consideration and experiences to audiences. It because the moral message from the story, that as a human being must have a big patience and not follow our desire when we have problem. The figure of the major character, The Wheelers' frustrations and yearnings for something better represent the tattered remnants of the American Dream. Sam Mendes saves his snarkiest moment for *Revolutionary Road*'s final scene. We are in the home of Helen and Howard Givings (parents of John). Helen is the local real estate agent, and she's going on and on to her husband about the new tenants that moved into Frank and April's old house. Helen thinks they represent an ideal that she's always envisioned for her community. The camera then slowly pans to Howard. He's sitting opposite Helen in a comfy chair, looking in her direction, appearing as if he's interested. Calmly, and without a change in

expression, Howard moves his hand up and turns the volume of his hearing aid down to zero. Silence, dead sound, dead face. Cut to black.

The third reason is because Sam Mendes the author of *Revolutionary Road* is a famous director. *Revolutionary Road* has received generally positive reviews from critics. It holds a 69% rating from critics on review aggregate website Rotten Tomatoes, based on 190 reviews, with the consensus being "Brilliantly acted and emotionally powerful, *Revolutionary Road* is a handsome adaptation of Richard Yates' celebrated novel". Metacritic lists it with 69 out of 100, which indicates "generally favorable reviews", based on 38 reviews.

The fourth reason, as far as the writer knows, this research has not ever been conducted yet by other student who take literature as their subject in English Education study program, Faculty of Teacher Training and education, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

Based on the previous reason the writer will observe *Revolutionary Road* movie by using Psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud. Therefore, the writer constructs the title **THE PERSONALITY OF APRIL WHEELER IN SAM MENDES'S REVOLUTIONARY ROAD MOVIE (2009): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

Many students of English department have ever studied the psychoanalytic as a research problem. But, *Revolutionary Road* never be studied by the students of English Department of Muhammadiyah University

of Surakarta, Sebelas Maret University or Surakarta regional. It can be caused by this movie is new release.

From the observation to find the literature review in a website (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2010/feb/01/revolutionary-road-review-winslet-dicaprio>) posted by Phillip French at Sunday 1 February 2010, entitled movie “*Revolutionary Road*”, he said that this film is so good. It is devastating. The wheelers are individuals in their own right, suffering and inflicting suffering. They also represent a general malaise peculiar to the bourgeois world of the affluent postwar years, and are victims of what Yates sees as the humanist. This journal is different from this study, the writer focus on how the personality reflected in *Revolutionary Road* movie. Entitled: **THE PERSONALITY OF APRIL WHEELER IN SAM MENDES'S REVOLUTIONARY ROAD MOVIE (2009): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH.**

C. Problem Statement

The major problem in this study is “How is major character’s personality reflected in Sam Mendes’s *Revolutionary Road* movie?”

D. Limitation of the Study

To carry out study, the researcher needs to limit the study. The researcher is going to analyze April Wheeler as the major character in movie *Revolutionary Road* based on Psychoanalytic approach.

E. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the Study are as follows:

1. To analyze the film based on its structural elements
2. To analyze the film of the major character on the psychoanalytic approach by Sigmund Freud.

F. Benefit of the Study

1. Theoretical Benefit

The study is expected to be able to give theoretical contribution in literature study, particularly psychoanalytic study on literature about personality of *April Wheeler* viewed from psychoanalytic approach-Sigmund Freud.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is expected to give an additional contribution on understanding the major character Personality of *April Wheeler* in Sam Mendes viewed from psychoanalytic approach-Sigmund Freud.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Research

In analyzing Sam Mendes's movie *Revolutionary Road*, The writer uses descriptive qualitative method because it is suitable to explain the analysis and there is no need a statistic evaluation.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is the personality of April Wheeler in film Sam Mendes *Revolutionary Road* movie that was released in January 23, 2009.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

In study there are two sources namely primary and secondary data source.

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the movie self, *Revolutionary Road* by Sam Mendes.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data are the biography of the author, the websites in the internet about the movie *Revolutionary Road* and other resources related to this movie such as articles, movie review and other relevant information.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The data collecting technique used in this study is library research.

The necessary steps are as follows:

a. Note taking.

b. Scene capturing.

While the steps which are used by the writer are as follows:

a. Watching the movie repeatedly.

b. Reading the script.

c. Classifying the data.

d. Browsing in the internet to look for related information such as movie script, movie's identity, public response, etc.

e. Reading the relevant books.

- f. Analyzing the data of the research based on Sigmund Freud theory of psychoanalysis.
- g. Drawing conclusion based on the analysis data.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the writer employs descriptive qualitative analysis of content. The steps used in analyzing the data of this study are clarifying the data by selecting the necessary ones. The next is analyzing the data based on psychoanalytic theory. This step is where the writer applies the psychoanalytic theory which is related to the term, topic, issue and aspects of the movie.

H. Paper Organization

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction. This chapter involves the background of study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, research method, and paper organization. Chapter two is underlying theory. It deals with the notion of psychoanalytic and theoretical application. Chapter three is structural analysis. In this chapter, the researcher explains the structural elements, which included character and characterization, plot, point of view, setting and theme. Chapter four deals with psychoanalytic analysis. Chapter five deals with conclusion and suggestion.