

**DISILLUSION OF MARITAL LIFE IN GUSTAVE FLAUBERT'S  
*MADAME BOVARY* NOVEL (1856): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**



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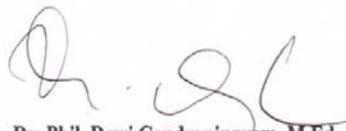
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**ABSTRACT**

*This study elaborates the portraits of disillusion of marital life in Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary novel, that are analyzed through psychoanalytic approach. The objectives of the research are to analyze the structural elements of the novel and to analyze the novel based on psychoanalytic approach by identifying the relationship between the novel and the personality of the major character of the novel. This study belongs to a qualitative research. The data of the research is the text of a novel entitled Madame Bovary. Whereas the data source comes from both primary data source which is in the form of the text of the novel being researched and secondary data source such as biography of the author, websites and other sources about the novel, the approach and the personality of the major character that support the analysis. The method to analyze the data is descriptive analysis. Having analyzed the novel, the conclusions are as follows: the disillusion of Emma Bovary is caused by her unfulfilled need. The basic needs of Emma Bovary is actually a careness of her husband. It shows when Emma Bovary needs something but her husband does not comprehend her. She uses many reactions to reduce her disillusion. Those are repression, denial, fantasy, and reaction formation.*

**INTRODUCTION**

People living in this world always be with their partner of life. Partner of life means somebody who accompanied them to pass this life. They will share anything their have to get their purposes for togetherness. God provides a mate for everyone. People can share their love to someone or eveyone they want to share, they can also make a relationship with somebody. Disillusion is to disappoint someone by telling them the unpleasant truth about something or someone that

they had respected (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary). In Longman Advanced American Dictionary, disillusion is to make someone realize that something that they thought was true or good is not really true or good.

Marital (also called matrimony or wedlock) is a social union or legal contract between people that creates kinship. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures, but is usually an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual, are acknowledged. Such a union is often formalized via a wedding ceremony. Many cultures limit marriage to two persons of the opposite sex, but some allow forms of polygamous marriage, and some recognize same-sex marriage. People marry for many reasons, including one or more of the following: legal, social, libidinal, emotional, economic, spiritual, and religious. These might include arranged marriages, family obligations, the legal establishment of a nuclear family unit, the legal protection of children and public declaration of commitment. *Madame Bovary* is one of the most important French novels of the 19th century. It is vastly regarded as Flaubert's most important work, and is also considered socially relevant because it inadvertently served to inspire, if not signal the dawn of feminism. Flaubert's adulterous heroine, the author's alter-ego of sorts, was happy in her transgressions, her actions seemingly justified by her dull and lifeless marriage.

*Madame Bovary* is the story of Emma Bovary, an unhappily married woman who seeks escape through forbidden relationships with other men. The book could be viewed as an expose of the situation of women in the 19th century; women who had not yet been emancipated and were expected to obey their husbands, to stay in their homes while the men went to work, or left for months on end to fight in wars.

This work expects some benefits of the study, those are: theoretical benefits and practical benefits. Theoretical benefits, the result of the study could provide the information to improve the understanding and comprehending the knowledge in studying literature and give contribution to literary studies on Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* novel. Whereas practical benefits, the elaboration of this research could be used to give clear knowledge guidance for deeper

understanding in literary work as the reference to the other researchers in analyzing the novel into different perspectives.

The objective of the study are to analyze the novel based on its structural element and to analyze the novel based on psychoanalytic approach.

Psychoanalysis is the branch of psychological study that focuses on the personality of human being. According to Freud, "Psychoanalysis reflects to the changing valve in the society and it plays a role in the changing of valves" (Pervin, 1984: 21). Psychoanalytic theory emphasis on the following concepts psychological determinism, the unconscious, behavior as goal directed and expressive of interplay among forces or dynamics and the behavior as an outgrowth of events in the last time on the individual.

According to Freud (Hall, 1985: 33) the personality consists of three major systems: *the id, the ego and the superego*. According to Freud, *id, ego* and *superego* "are not persons, places, or physical things they are the names given to certain motivational forces whose existence is inferred from the way people behave" (Feist, 1985: 24).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Based on the data, this study is categorized as qualitative research. The steps to conduct this research are determining the type of the study, determining the object of the study, determining data and data source, determining technique of data collection, and determining technique of data analysis.

The object of this study is *Madame Bovary* novel (1856) written by Gustave Flaubert. *Madame Bovary* is the story of Emma Bovary, an unhappily married woman who seeks escape through forbidden relationships with other men.

There are two sources that are needed to do this research. The primary data source is the data taken from the text of *Madame Bovary* novel. It covers such thing as words, phrase, sentence and dialogue in the novel. The second data sources are from the article, internet, book, and reference which are relevant with this study.

The technique of data collection is library research, the steps as follows: reading the novel repeatedly, determining the major character that will be analyzed, finding out and taking notes the important data, arranging and developing the selected data into several classification of parts based on its category of elements of literary study, reading some related books to find the theory, data, and information required.

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It is used to describe the element of the play to understand the play. Descriptive technique is a type of research method that does not include any calculation or enumerating (Moleong, 1989:2). The analysis uses word, sentences or picture as the data research, and the data reports will contain quotation and documentation of *Madame Bovary* novel.

## **RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the issue, this study is reflected in Psychoanalytic perspective. According to Freud (Hall, 1985: 33) the personality consists of three major systems: the *id*, the *ego* and the *superego*. In the story of *Madame Bovary*, Emma Bovary is one of the characters that faces inner conflict in her life. The conflict is caused by the contradiction of her *id*, *ego* and *superego*.

### **1. The *Id***

The *Id* is the basic system of personality to satisfy the need wished by the human. This tendency of the *id* devotes itself exclusively to immediate reduction or tension that is called the pleasure principle.

The *id* is shown when Emma decided to meet Leon for some reasons. When Emma wants to do something, Charles cannot stop her because of his love. He does not even distrust her and gives permission to her wife then. Emma's *id* presses the *ego* to go to Leon. Coincide with the *id*, *superego* keeps warn her not to do that act. In this case, *superego* seems lose, the *ego* decides to meet Leon.

“When she was seized with the desire to see Leon, she set out upon any pretext; and as he was not expecting her on that day, she went to fetch him at his office.”(MB.363)

## 2. The *Ego*

According to Freud *ego* evolves out of the *id* to enable the organism to deal with reality. According to Freud (Hall, 1985:34) *ego* can distinguish between things in the mind and things in the external world. The *ego* must continuously differentiate between things in the mind and things in the outer world of reality. The hungry person in search of food, for example must distinguish between a mental image of food and an actual perception of food if tension reduction is to occur (Hjelle, 1992:88).

Emma Bovary’s decision is always influenced by her *Id*’s pressure. It is because the *ego* is full of her *Id*’s impulse. It makes the *ego* often abandon her *superego*’s warning.

The *id* of Emma Bovary persuades her to consume an arsenic. Then her *ego* decides to commit suicide by taking an arsenic that she takes from the drug store. Because of the confusion of her debt, Emma sticks in her problem on how to pay all her debt since she does not have money. Every person who is asked for some helps does not do anything to save her. Her *id* plays its role, she has to solve her problem with extreme way, to commit suicide. Without any thought, she follows her *id* to go to the drug store and takes an arsenic. Her *superego* keeps warn her not to do the act. In this case, the *ego* is pressed by the *id* to eat this arsenic. Finally, the arsenic is eaten by Emma.

“...so well did her memory guide her, seized the blue jar, tore out the cork, plunged in her hand, and withdrawing it full of a white powder, she began eating it.”(MB.411)

### 3. The *Superego*

According to Freud (Pervin 1984:77) *superego* which represents the moral branch of our functioning, containing the ideals we strive for and the punishments (guilt) we expect when we have gone against our ethical code. *Superego* has functions to control behavior in accordance with the rules of society, offering rewards (pride, self-love) for good behavior and punishment (guilt, feeling of inferiority, accidents) for bad behavior.

The *superego* plays apart in the personality of the main character, Emma Bovary. Emma's *superego* arises when the *id* comes to her need for the luxury. The *superego* can lay aside the *id* of Emma Bovary. It is Justin who has inspired her with this whim, by begging her to take him into her service as manservant, and if the privation of it did not lessen the pleasure of her arrival at each rendezvous, it certainly augmented the bitterness of the return. Even so, the *superego* has leads her to presses her extravagance act.

“Emma nevertheless concealed many of these extravagant fancies, such as her wish to have a blue tilbury to drive into Rouen, drawn by an English horse and driven by a groom in top-boots.(MB. 353)”

## **EGO DEFENSE MECHANISM REFLECTED BY EMMA BOVARY**

In faces her disillusionment, the major character uses ego defense mechanism. Those defense mechanism are repression, denial, fantasy, and reaction formation.

### **1. Repression**

Generally, repression is the process of excluding from consciences a thought or feeling that causes pain, shame or guilt (Ruch, 1970:468). It is explained by Sigmund Freud in Psychoanalytic theory that the *ego* is able to keep from consciousness those dangerous object choices, memories and ideas that would be painful if allowed out of the unconsciousness (Lundin, 1969:318).

From the explanation above, it can be seen that repression is an activity of eliminating unpleasant memories from conscious awareness to be unconscious that make the frustrated person is unconscious of his frustration for a period of time in order to reduce frustration.

In the story of *Madame Bovary*, Emma Bovary uses repression when she commits love affair with another man because of her disappointment to her husband. She tries to reduce her disappointment by doing something that make her probably forget her disappointment. The act that she does is the reflection of her disappointment of her marital life.

“...Rodolphe would come; she had sent for him to tell him that she was bored, that her husband was odious, her life frightful.”(MB.247)

In the part of the story, Emma shares all her hate and boredom with her boyfriend, Rodolphe. This thing is done because of her need to be cared. Emma has many ways to make Rodolphe sympathy of what she has passed.

## **2. Denial**

According to Freud (in Feist, 1985:65), denial is the expression of refusing to acknowledge that unpleasant events have occurred. In some faces, the *ego* will resort to denial rather than allow certain thoughts to reach consciousnesses.

When we use denial, we simply state that certain facts do not exist. Freud in Burger (1986:61) states that “The more we use it, the less we are in touch with the reality and the less likely are able to fully function. In some cases the *ego* will resort to denial rather than allows certain thoughts to reach consciousness.”

In the story of the novel, the denial is shown when Emma plans to go with Rodolphe.

“But she paid no heed to them; on the contrary, she lived as lost in the anticipated delight of her coming happiness.

It was an eternal subject for conversation with Rodolphe. She leant on his shoulder murmuring—“(MB.256)

In the narration, Emma lays aside of the fact in her life and replaced it with imagination. In the story, she plans to run away with her boyfriend and lives in the place that far from her family. Because of her disappointment of her marital life, Emma is throwing out her care to abscond than her family.

### **3. Fantasy**

Fantasy is wish-fulfilling day dreaming, the use of imaginative thought as a compensation for personal inadequacy, as a substitute for failure to resolve real frustration, or as an escape from boredom. Fantasy requires the tools of thought, hence, it also tends to occurs frequently among intelligent people (Moskowitz and Orgel, 1969:306)

According to Ruch (1970:469), fantasy occurs when a person desires on frustrated by reality. In this case, he retreats into fantasy world where his thwarted wishes can be satisfied.

Emma Bovary uses her fantasy almost everytime in her life. She wishes that her life is the same as a novel. Her imagination is high so that she compares everything that she has with the story of a novel. Unfortunately, the story of her real life is not good as the story of the novel.

“She had read ‘Paul and Virginia,’ and she had dreamed of the little bamboo-house, the nigger Domingo, the dog, Fiddle, but above all of the sweet friendship of some dear little brother, who seeks red fruit for you on trees taller than steeples, or who runs barefoot over the sand, bringing you a bird’s nest.”(MB.49)

“She thought, sometimes, that, after all, this was the happiest time of her life—the honeymoon, as people called it. To taste the full sweetness of it, it would have been necessary doubtless to fly to those lands with sonorous names where the days after marriage are full of laziness most suave. In post chaises behind blue silken curtains to ride slowly up steep road, listening to the song of the postilion re-echoed by the mountains, along with the bells of

goats and the muffled sound of a waterfall; at sunset on the shores of gulfs to breathe in the perfume of lemon trees; then in the evening on the villa-terraces above, hand in hand to look at the stars, making plans for the future. It is seemed to her that certain places on earth must bring happiness, as a plant peculiar to the soil, and that cannot thrive elsewhere. Why could not she lean over balconies in Swiss chalets, or enshrine her melancholy in a Scotch cottage...”(MB.56)

#### **4. Reaction Formation**

Reacting formation occurs when a person unconsciously represses his socially unacceptable desire, because the very thought of him is guilt provoking. Then he may develop conscious attitude in overt behavior patterns that contradict his unconscious wishes to guard himself against his unacceptable impulses (Ruch, 1970:472). It can be explained by psychoanalytic theory that when one of the motive pressure the *ego* and caused threat either directly or indirectly, the *ego* may avert the danger by substituting the opposite motive (Ludin, 1969:334)

It is shown in the part when Emma commits suicide because of something that she cannot finish. Because of the confusion of her debt, Emma stuck in her problem on how to pay all her debt since she does not have a money. Every person who she asks for help does not do anything to save her. She has to solve her problem with extreme way that is committing suicide. Without any thought, she goes to the drug store, takes an arsenic and eats it then.

“So well did her memory guide her, seized the blue jar, tore out the cork, plunged in her hand, and withdrawing it full of a white powder, she began eating it.”(MB.411)

This act is a reaction formation. When she commits suicide, it is something that is unacceptable by people. What she does is her reaction of her disillusionment of her family especially about her husband who never cares of

what she needs. Moreover, she cannot pay all of her debt because of her cost limit.

## **CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION**

*Madame Bovary* is the story of Emma Bovary, an unhappily married woman who seeks escape through forbidden relationships with other men. The story could be viewed as an expose of the situation of women in the 19th century; women who had not yet been emancipated and were expected to obey their husbands, to stay in their homes while the men goes to work, or left for months on end to fight in wars. In the story is shown the rebel of a woman who wants to looking for something that can develop her.

*Madame Bovary* is the reflection of a woman who tries to reduce her disillusion by committing love affair. It is shown clearly in the story that the major character commits love affair in her marital life. Gustave Flaubert describes Emma Bovary as a well-educated, good looking, and has a high fantasy in her life. When she realizes that her marriage is not same as her fantasy, she becomes disappointed and she makes a relationship with another man then. The story also explains that Emma Bovary is an extravagance woman. She likes to buy expensive things. She has much debt that she cannot pay all of them. Finally, she commits suicide because she does not know how to pay her debt and she cannot finds the way to get money for her debt.

*Madame Bovary* is an interesting novel that gives many worthy insights to the readers. With the novel, the readers find a moral value from the story because the story is full of moral value that can be used as a direction on how to do something. The novel teaches us to pay responsibility of what we do in our life.

This study reveals some suggestions that are hopefully useful for both teacher and other researcher. For teacher, *Madame Bovary* can be used as a reference for studying moral and personality of human *being*. For other researcher, it can be analyzed by using another approach for example by analyzing the personality of the major character by using Individual Psychological

Approach. This approach can be used to analyze deeper understanding about the psychological condition of the major character.

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