

THE SELF-DESTRUCTION OF BARTLEBY IN MELVILLE'S

BARTLEBY THE SCRIVENER

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for

Gaining the Bachelor Degree in English Literature



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2014

FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this thesis is definitely my own word. I am completely responsible for the content of this thesis. Other writer's opinions or findings included in the thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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Atas perhatiannya, kami ucapkan terima kasih.

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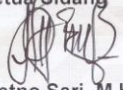
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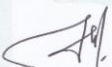
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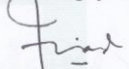
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ABSTRACT

THE SELF-DESTRUCTION OF BARTLEBY IN MELVILLE'S *BARTLEBY THE SCRIVENER*

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Self-destruction is a human's action to destroy themselves because of deep sadness, depression, loneliness and despair. In this graduating paper, the researcher discusses the self-destruction actions that happen in the main character of Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*. It is a descriptive qualitative research using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory about personality structure including Id or human desire that should be fulfilled like eating and drinking, Ego which means the control of Id and Superego as the human supporting factor under conscious mind. The problem of this research is how does Herman Melville tell Bartleby's self-destruction in *Bartleby the Scrivener* based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis?

From this research, the researcher can conclude that Bartleby's personality structure is unbalanced. Bartleby's Id always dominates and defeats his Superego. Hence, the Ego's decision always follows the strong exhortation of his Id. Finally, it leads to Bartleby's self-destruction.

Keyword: *personality structure, self-destruction, Bartleby*

ABSTRAK

THE SELF-DESTRUCTION OF BARTLEBY IN MELVILLE'S *BARTLEBY THE SCRIVENER*

Oleh:

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Self-destruction adalah perilaku merusak diri sendiri yang disebabkan oleh kesedihan yang mendalam, depresi, kesendirian dan keputusan yang dapat terjadi pada diri seseorang. Dalam skripsi ini penulis membahas perilaku *self-destruction* yang terjadi pada tokoh utama dalam cerita pendek karya Herman Melville, *Bartleby the Scrivener*. Ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif menggunakan teori psikoanalisis oleh Sigmund Freud yang berkaitan dengan struktur kepribadian mencakup *Id* atau hasrat manusia yang harus terpenuhi seperti keinginan makan dan minum, *Ego* atau pengendali dari keinginan *Id*, dan *Superego* atau faktor pendorong manusia yang berada di alam bawah sadar (hati nurani). Rumusan masalah dari skripsi ini adalah Bagaimana Herman Melville mendeskripsikan perilaku *self-destruction* Bartleby berdasarkan teori psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud?

Dari penelitian yang dilakukan oleh penulis, dapat disimpulkan bahwa struktur kepribadian yang ada pada diri Bartleby tidak seimbang. *Id* Bartleby selalu mendominasi dan mengalahkan *Superego*nya, sehingga keputusan dari *Ego* selalu mengikuti desakan *Id* yang sangat kuat. Hal ini akhirnya mengarah pada perilaku *self-destruction* pada Bartleby.

Kata kunci: perilaku merusak diri sendiri, *Bartleby*, narator.

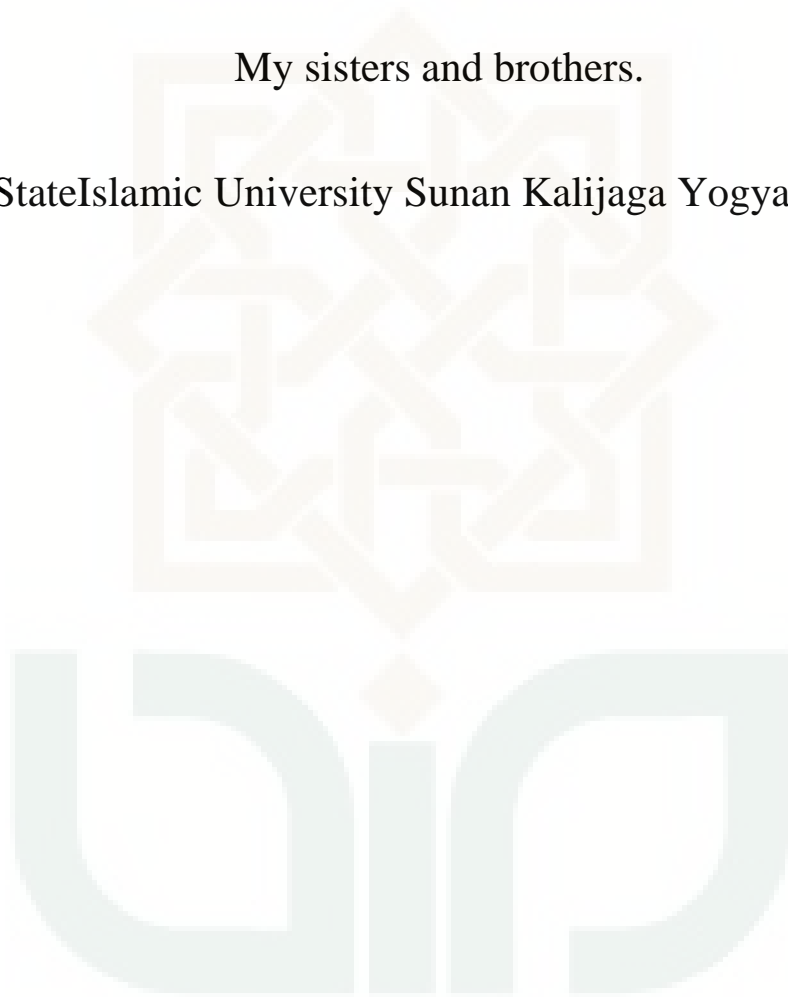
DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper to:

My beloved parents, Bpk. Shoiman & Ibu Junitun.

My sisters and brothers.

StateIslamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.



MOTTO

**HARAPAN DAPAT MENGALAHKAN RASA
TAKUT JIKA KITA PERCAYA**

(Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono)

**WHEN MY PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED, I AM
HAPPY**

BECAUSE IT WAS MY WISH

**WHEN MY PRAYERS ARE NOT ANSWERED, I AM
EVEN MORE HAPPY**

BECAUSE THAT WAS ALLAH'S WISH

(Ali Ibn Abi Thalib R.A)

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Assalamu'alaikum wr. wb.

I praise to Allah, The cherisher and sustainer of the worlds, who has given His blessing and mercy to me to finish my the graduating paper entitled “The Self Destruction of Bartleby in Melville’s *Bartleby the Scrivener*”.

In finishing this graduating paper, I really give thanks and appreciation for people who have helped me. They are:

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12. IKA_BU lampung Yogya. Hopefully, we can get closer.

Actually, there are still some errors and mistakes in this graduating paper. Hence, I wish the reader could give constructive critique to improve this graduating paper.

Wassalamu’alaikum wr. wb.

Yogyakarta, 18 September 2014

The writer,

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature is a term that is used to describe the written or spoken material. Broadly, literature is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works. However, the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imagination including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, literature is writings valued as works of art, especially fiction, drama and poetry (Hornby:1995: 687). It means that literature focuses on language in the written form. Moreover, the analysis of literature includes creative imagination works of poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction.

Literature can be used to entertain and to educate. The novel entitled *Tess D'Urbervilles* written by Thomas Hardy which tells about the domination of men toward women and the movie entitled *Miracle Worker* by William Gibson which tells about the character building of children are the examples. From those two examples, the reader and the audience can be amused with the story telling from fiction which is presented in attractive packaging. Even, the reader and the audience will get the valuable lesson from them. As seen in the novel *Tess D'urbervilles* that gives the moral value about man role that the man is the leader, the protector, and giver the basic necessities of his family. Actually it has the

relation with the religious thought. For the example, in Islam there is clear explanation in the *sura An-nisa* verse 34 Allah says:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا

مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means” (www.Quran.com).

One of the creative imagination works is fiction. Fiction figures human life's problems in an interaction with environment and someone else, society, and their God. Although derived from imagination, it is not true when fiction is considered as the result of the empty imagination because fiction is an imaginative work based on the consciousness and responsibility from the creativity as the aesthetic works (Nurgiyantoro, 2010:3).

Basically, fiction is any narrative which is feigned or invented rather than historically or factually true. In most present-day discussion, however, the term “fiction” is applied primarily to prose narratives (the novels and the short stories), and is sometimes used simply as a synonym for the novel. Literary forms in which fiction takes off from fact are often denoted by compound names, such as “historical fiction”, “fictional biography”, and “fictional autobiography” (Abrams 1971: 59-60).

One of the literary works which belongs to fiction is a short story. The explanation in the book entitled *Fiction an Introduction* by DiYanni states:

The short story as a form of short fiction develop and become popular in the nineteenth century. In this period, fiction was channeled in the direction of realism or a detailed representation of everyday life, typically the lives and experiences familiar to middle-class individuals. Besides, its realistic impulse, the modern short story differs from the ancient forms of short fiction in still another way: in the ratio between summary and scene. Parables, fables, and tales tend to summarize action, to tell what happen in a general overview of the action. Short stories typically reveal character in dramatic scenes, in moments of action and in exchanges of dialog detailed enough to represent the surface of life (2000: 22).

Short story is a work offictional prose, and most of the terms for analyzing the component parts, the types, and the various narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well (Abrams 1971:157). In a short story there are some phenomena that contain a message for human life. By observing literary work, the readers are able to look deeper to get more knowledge and lessons which are reflected by various phenomena in literary works whether social phenomena, psychological phenomena or any other phenomena.

Undoubtedly, in understanding a literary work, especially a short story, the other sciences are needed to support the analysis process and psychology is chosen because both psychology and literature are two things that relate to human psychological aspects. Siswanto has a similar point of view but different sentences. He argues if people compare between literary work and psychology, both of them are different. Literature relates to the fiction world, drama, novel, poem, and essay which are classified as art whereas psychology refers to a

scientific study concerning on a human behavior and a mental process. Nevertheless, they have a similarity, that is literature and psychology start from humankind and life as the analysis source (2005:29).

According to Ratna, there are three ways that can be done to understand the relationship between psychology and literature. The first is analyzing the author's psychological aspects as the writer. The second is analyzing the character's psychological aspects in literary works. The third is understanding the audience's psychological aspects as the reader (2004:343). Endraswara also gives his opinion. Literary works which are viewed as the psychological phenomenon will show the psychological aspects through the characters if text is in the form of drama or prose (2003:96). It is what the researcher is going to do. The researcher conducts a research on the short story by *Herman Melville* entitled *Bartleby the Scrivener*.

This research focuses on analyzing main character, Bartleby, who experiences great depression. *Bartleby the Scrivener* is one of the famous short stories written by Herman Melville. The story begins when the lawyer hires Bartleby to be an employee. At first, he seems to be working out great. Yet, the problem comes when it is time to proofread the documents. In order to quickly and efficiently check for accuracy, all the employees sit together with copies and go through them together. When Bartleby is asked to do this, he replies, 'I would prefer not to' (Zipperer). Moreover, this story tells about the main character namely Bartleby who has previous job in Death Letter Office. Because of this job, he gets depression and his psychological effect starts to appear. This is the reason

why he tries to destroy himself by isolating himself and avoiding the interaction with others. Even, he does not want to eat and finally he dies.

This story is chosen to be analyzed because of the acts of Bartleby to destroy himself. Furthermore, this research is to show the reader that forcing ourselves to work brings the bad impact for both body and mental. As we know in modern living, many people love to work along the day till they get stress moreover they get the dangerous disease in a very young age. Therefore, through this research, hopefully, the researcher can give the reminder to the reader who loves to work through the day and night without taking an enough rest.

From the phenomenon that is experienced by people who gets several problems, they often choose the instant and destructive way to solve their problems which actually worsens their problems, for example; dropping themselves by using narcotics, alcohol and doing suicide. Similar to those phenomena, Bartleby also does the acts of self-destruction. Based on the case of Bartleby, the researcher wants to give more understanding and to raise the people awareness that such a phenomenon is wrong. Precisely, by doing the positive thing, people can solve their problems well.

The prohibition of self destruction acts actually are often explained in the Qoran. One of them stated in the *sura Az-zumar* verse 53:

قُلْ يٰۤاَعْبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ
الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا ۚ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ

Say: "O ye my servants who believe! Fear your Lord, good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world. Spacious is Allah's earth! those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!"(www.Quran.com).

In this verse, there is a clear prohibition for people that over-treat against themselves like Bartleby who forces himself to work without rest and isolates himself from other. Furthermore, this verse explains a prohibition to despair of the mercy and the aid of the God and also the order to ask forgiveness of God.

In this research the researcher focuses to analyze the Bartleby's action to destroy himself by using Sigmund Freud's theory about the personality structure; the *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*.

1.2 Problem Statements

Based on the point which is discussed in the background of study, the problem that will be discussed in this study is how does Herman Melville tell Bartleby's self-destruction in *Bartleby the Scrivener* based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis?

1.3 Objective of Study

From the question that appears in the problem statements, this research focuses on describing the self-destruction of Bartleby which is explained in *Bartleby the Scrivener* by Herman Melville.

1.4 Significance of Study

The researcher wants to explain the significance of this research for the readers theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the significance of this analysis is to describe a literary work, especially the psychological analysis of main character of *Bartleby the Scrivener* by Herman Melville and also to give a brief explanation about a short story to the reader. Practically, this research hopefully can be a valuable reminder for the readers who love to work without rest in their daily life. Again, this study is expected to be a reference and to be the alternative information for the future researchers in doing a similar research.

1.5 Literature Review

There are five relevant prior researches with this research. The first is the graduating paper entitled "Character Analysis of Bartleby in *Bartleby the Scrivener* by Herman Melville" (2013) written by Ni Kadek Ayu Widasari Astuti, a student of English Literature Department of Udayana University, Bali. She does an observation of a psychological aspect and a biographical approach to analyze the conflict of *Bartleby the Scrivener*'s main character. According to this research, the death of the character Bartleby is not understood. After Bartleby dies because of being alone and imprisoned, it finally can be learnt from his past that he previously works in the Dead Letter Office. It can be interpreted as a story about a relationship between two men, the writer and Bartleby who cannot adapt to the environment and the past traumatic experience influencing their thought and

attitude. The data are analyzed by using the theory of William Kenney, theory of Warren and Wellek and other supporting theories of Knicbocker and Reninger.

The second is the graduating paper entitled “Defense Mechanism in the Main Character of Tennessee Williams’ *a Streetcar Named Desire*” (2011) written by Meiriza Lidya, a student of English Department Faculty of Letters Andalas University, Padang. She does an observation of the psychological problems of Blanche Dubois. She is a woman character which has the strange behavior in the work drama entitled “A Streetcar Named Desire” by Tennessee Williams. Blanche feels afraid when she is in the bright shining room, becomes a liar, and likes be seeing thing. In this research, Lidya uses personality structure and defense mechanism theories by Sigmund Freud. From the research that was done, the researcher concludes that there are some psychological conditions that found in the main character, Blanche, such as phobia, hallucination, and the feeling of guilt. It is the conflict between personality structure (Id, Ego and Superego) and Blanche’s unconscious actions which happen because of her problems when she loses her legacy, her husband is dies, she loses his job, and also she is raped by his brother in law. So, Blanche does three defense mechanisms, they are fantasy, denial of reality and regression.

The third is the graduating paper entitled “Personality of Aishe in *The Boy and the Swan*” (2014) written by Imamah Isfarotul Munawaroh, a student of English Department Faculty of Adab and Cultural Sciences State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. She observes the main character of Aishe as the child who lives without his parent. This condition makes Aishe become

closed child and cannot socialize with his environment. It is a qualitative research using Sigmund Freud theory about personality structure. She observes Id, Ego, and Superego relates to nature and nurture. According to this analysis, the good nature of Aishe is the genes from his mother and grandma as the charitable child whereas the nurture of Aishe's personality comes from his surroundings. The Ego of Aishe gets problems because between the Id and Superego are often contradictory. The Ego of Aishe tends to follow the strongest desirability between Id and Superego.

The forth is the graduating paper entitled "The Analysis of Sigmund Freud's Theory in Harper Lee's Novel: *To Kill the Mocking Bird*" (2010) written by Nofamelina Siragih, a student of University Sumatra Utara. She does an observation about personality structure reflected in Atticus, Jem and Scout as the main characters in the novel *To kill the Mocking Bird*. She uses descriptive method and supports it with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory especially about the Id, Ego and Superego. From this analysis, the researcher can conclude that the impulse of the Id is very strong in the human themselves because it is owned since they are born. Meanwhile, the Superego appears because of the moral and value within the society life which lead humans to give priority to general interest rather than their private. In addition, the Ego appears to balance the Id and Superego in the human soul. According to this research, the Superego of those main characters is stronger than Id.

The fifth is graduating paper entitled "Konflik Batin Tokoh Utama Novel *Pudarnya Pesona Cleopatra* Karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy" (2013) written by

Lisa Anggraini, a student of State University Padang. She does an observation the inner conflict of main character in the novel *Pudarnya Pesona Cleopatra Aku & Niyala*. She uses qualitative method and supports it with psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud especially about personality structure of Id, Ego and Superego. After analyzing the main character of this novel, the researcher makes conclusion that there is unbalance in Aku's personal character. The character of Aku tends to give priority to the enjoyment principle rather than the sociological aspect that grows up in the society. The Id of Aku's character is stronger than the Superego. While, Niyala's personal characters is balance between the aspects of Id, Ego and Superego. The impulse of Id is filtered by Ego. Niyala's superego is as the leader and problem solver of Id's desirability.

By looking at those five prior researches, it can be understood that this research has the similarities and differences with them. With the first prior research, this research is similar in the subject and the type of research whereas they are different in the theory. Both of these researches use Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener* as the subject and have the descriptive qualitative as the type of research. Furthermore, in this research, the researcher applies the Sigmund Freud theory of personality structure and the first prior research uses several theories suggested by William Kenney, Warren and Welleck, and Knicbocker and Reninger.

Moreover, with the other prior researches, this research is similar in the theory and the type of the research. It is a qualitative research using the Sigmund Freud theory about the personality structure of human. It is just the same with the

four previous researches which are categorized into the qualitative research and apply the Freud's personality structure theory to analyze their object. The point of the differences between this research and these four previous researches can be found in the subject and the object of the research. This research uses *Bartleby the Scrivener* as its subject whereas the second research uses *a Streetcar Named Desire*, the third research analyze *the Boy & the Swan*, the fourth uses *To Kill a Mocking Bird*, and the last research analyze the novel entitled *Pudarnya Pesona Cleopatra* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. Furthermore, the second difference is about the object of the research. This research analyzes the self-destruction action of the main character. Meanwhile, the second prior research discusses the defense mechanism, the third and the fourth prior research talk about the personality structure of the main characters in the novel, and the fifth researches analyzes the psychological conflict suffered by the main character.

Considering those five prior researches, the researcher concludes that the research entitled *The Self-Destruction of Bartleby in Melville's Bartleby the Scrivener* is new and surely different from those previous researches.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

This study uses a psychoanalysis theory suggested by Sigmund Freud. According to Minderop (2013: 66) since 20th century analysis of literary works often conducted through psychological approach especially applying Sigmund Freud theory. Finally the researcher also chooses Freud's theory because there are many similar works that also uses same theory, so it can support this research.

Psychoanalysis was grown by Sigmund Freud in Wina in the last of 1900s. He was the discoverer of a psychoanalysis theory by the year of 1856 until 1939. Similar to Freud, Ratna also states in her book *Teori, Metode, dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra* that the psychoanalysis theory is a study of thought which emphasizes the influence of the unconscious mind on behavior (2011: 62-63). Freud believes that the human mind is composed by three elements; Id, Ego, and Superego. The content of Id is a primitive impulse that must be satisfied. Thus, Id is a primary subjective reality, the inner world before people have experience of the outside world. The *Ego* controls the Id while Superego contains the inner word.

Freud states that the essential motif of people is an economic motif. The necessity to work still dominates the history of people. It means that the necessity of people should be repressed as a preference to have a good and to satisfy themselves. Everyone has to do the repression because of an “enjoyment principle” (via Widyawati & Setyarini, 2006: 219-220). Yet, some people do it over until come to heroic phase and make them sick. This illness is called as neurosis. They brightly believe that they will reach their necessity later. It is called by Sigmund Freud Id principle. One way to solve the desire which cannot be fulfilled is changing it by doing asocial activity. This is meant Ego by him. Because of changing the fundamental necessity to social value, it builds the culture. It means by changing and repressing the instinct to the higher purpose, the history of culture is created. Moreover, Superego is the human supporting factor under a conscious mind. People do not realize when *Superego* is working. It works

without any pressure from Ego (as cited in Widyawati & Setyarini, 2006:219-220).

1.7 Method of Research

The research method in this section covers type of research, data sources, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

1.7.1 Type of Research

This study is a qualitative research. Creswell via Noor (2011:34-35) views a qualitative research as a complete description in the form of words, and intend to use an inductive approach. Descriptive research has several steps starting from problem decision, deciding information, choosing data collecting procedure, data analysis and the last is making conclusion.

1.7.2 Data Sources

The main data of this research is Herman Melville's short story entitled *Bartelby the Scrivener* and the supporting data of this research are some books related to this short story.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

To collect the data of this study, the researcher does a textual observation which is related to psychological problems of Bartleby. The first step is careful reading, detailed reading, and deep understanding the short story of *Bartleby the Scrivener*. The next step is concerning on the psychological phenomena or aspects

which are reflected on the short story *Bartleby the Scrivener*, especially psychological problems of Bartleby.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

In this research, the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative technique. Here are several steps conducted by researcher:

1. Identifying the data in the form of Bartleby's actions to destroy himself;
2. Identifying Id, Ego, and Superego of Bartleby and the relation between them which finally leads to Bartleby's self-destruction action;
3. Making conclusion of the research.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter describes the general information of the research including the background of study, problem statement, objective of study, significances of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter explains the intrinsic elements of the short story. The third chapter is the analysis of data. The self destruction which is experienced by the main character of Bartleby the Scrivener is analyzed by using a psychoanalysis theory and the last is the conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, the researcher can conclude several facts about the self-destruction of Bartleby in the short-story of Bartleby the Scrivener by Herman Melville.

Actually, the Id of Bartleby himself predominates more than his Superego. Thus, it causes the decision of Ego in the Bartleby himself tends to follow the desire of Id. The strong desirability which appears in the Bartleby himself cannot be defeated by the impulse or inner word (superego).

Besides, the narrator as his close friend always gives priority of his inner word and his pity that appear because of his responsibility to Bartleby as when the narrator has to make the hard decision to fire Bartleby as his employee; when the narrator decides to move to another office and must leave Bartleby because he does not want to move or leave the office; and he must be against his pity of Bartleby while making the promise he will always be responsible of Bartleby whatever he will do.

Hence, when the narrator knows that Bartleby is imprisoned, he is faithful to accompany Bartleby and pays the Grubman more to give the best treatment for Bartleby. When Bartleby dies in the prison, the last person who accompanies Bartleby is the narrator.

The case of Bartleby's complicated life starts from his coming to the narrator's life as his employee but he does not follow the rule where he lives and

still becomes himself who can not adapt with his new surroundings. He is consistent to act as himself until he dies in the prison. In the end, the narrator tells about Bartleby's past that he ever works in Dead Letter Office at Washington as the burden of his life. He must assort the cartloadsof dead letters in the flames annually.

Actually, Bartleby's problems appear since he has worked to handle dead letter. This condition brings the bad impact to his life after he does not work in that office. He becomes introvert and static person without following the rules for anybody around him at that time. However, it worsens his physic and mental condition since he is excommunicated, reputed as a stranger and isolates himself from the people around him. All of those things make Bartleby destruct himself.

"Ah Bartleby! Ah Humanity!" The narrator states this utterance after Bartleby dies in the prison. It is about the humanity value gained by the narrator from Bartleby's life. It is more about human brotherhood in which all of human is considered as Adam's child. It is started when the narrator remembers the preach that delivered by the priest about helping each other. The narrator grows more believe in this thought when he meets Bartleby. He can feel the empathy because of Bartleby.

By the days, the narrator remembers the story of Adam with Colt. It is the story about the people who gets despair and his helper. He relates this story with his life and Bartleby. Furthermore, he recalls their religion thought that every people should love each other. This thought stimulates people to help and love

each other. This thought makes the people believe that the good thing will be resulted in a good thing too.

Moreover, after the narrator reads the books entitled “Edward on the Will” and “Priestly on Necessity” in his leisure times, he gets the lesson that the life mission of every people has been decided before they are born. Then, he understands that Bartleby is his life mission. His mission in this world is to accompany Bartleby’s lonely life. It is the narrator reason to make Bartleby as his close friends moreover as his family. He believes that God has sent Bartleby for him.

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