

An Analysis of Edna Pontelier's

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AN ANALYSIS OF EDNA PONTELLIER'S SELF ACTUALIZATION ACT IN KATE CHOPIN'S *THE AWAKENING* NOVEL

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ABSTRACT

This thesis was explained about an analysis of Edna Pontellier's self actualization act on psychoanalytical approach in Kate Chopin's The Awakening novel. Based on feminist perspective which critiquing the patriarchal ideology of Western society especially in America, during Victorian Era. I am getting inspired to write about this topic because i am a woman who has experience of being oppressed due to i was born as a woman. I also have experienced the debilitating sexism and devaluation of my gender through the social institution of marriage and the historical and legal institutionalization of women's rights and property. I have learned that I was not alone in this experience and that many women i have known felt much the same way based on Kate Chopin experiences as a gendered woman in her society. I realized if i have the same feelings of helplessness, determination, fear, sadness, and mostly frustration with an unbalanced and unequal way of life. Understanding and sharing this experience with other women from the present to the past created a passion inside me to share that information with men and women of all races and classes. This is one of the reasons why this research is so incredibly important to me and i hope that it will have the same impact too for those who are in need.

Key words : Psychoanalytical Approach, Victorian Era, The Awakening

I. INTRODUCTION

Novel written by Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899) tells about a female protagonist Edna Pontellier, a twenty-eight-year old woman, and her awakening, which can be interpreted as a struggle for self-awareness, self-possession, liberation from social conventions, and yearning for freedom of expression, own will, and love. Because she was a Kentucky Protestant and was surrounded with Creole Roman Catholics who had different views of life, love, and freedom than she. She awakes from her semi-conscious state of devoted wife and mother to a state of total awareness, in which she discovers her own identity, and does everything to satisfy her emotional and sexual desires. Through a series of little awakenings Edna becomes a strong, independent woman, who moves out of her family house, leaves her husband and children, and is responsible only to her own needs.

She breaks the social conventions, and lives the life she wants to live. Eventually, that all leads to her isolation from others, because people do not accept rebels, and that isolation gradually developed into loneliness, and after a few disappointments that loneliness led to some kind of depression, and finally it all ended with Edna's suicide. There is both pessimism and optimism in *The Awakening*. Edna takes her own life because she is unable to find a way to live as an independent woman in society. Edna gains self-awareness in *The Awakening*, but it comes at a high price. There was no place in nineteenth century society for an emancipated woman, and the only choice for a free woman was to live an inauthentic life or commit suicide.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used a qualitative research method in this study to analyze the

data found in *The Awakening* novel. Creswell stated that a qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the maning individuals or groups interviews, observation and document review (Cresswell 2009) The qualitative research method emphasized the description and interpretation of data. In conducting the research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative method because the collection data was in the form of dialogue in the novel.

2.1 Data Analysis

In analyzing data, the researcher employs descriptive qualitative research in which the research in which the researcher just collects the data, classifies the data and analyzes it, the last makes conclusion.

In order to make it easier in applying the self actualization theory, the researcher takkes the following steps :

1. Arranging the evidence of the author's way to describe self actualization in the novel.
2. Arranging the evidence of the cause of Edna Pontellier's self actualization.
3. Arranging the evidence of the effect of Edna Pontellier's self actualization.
4. Formulating all the data in the story with psychological approach.
5. Analyzing the data by using deductive and inductive technique of writing. Inductive technique of writing begins the discussion with a quotation and then the quoatation is followed by some explanations underneath to prove that is true. It can be said that it begins from specifics to general. While deductive technique of writing begins with the explanation and those explanations are followed by the quotation as the proof or deductive technique starts from general to more spesific.
6. Using intrinsic and extrinsic approach. Intrinsic approach deals with the theory of character, types of characters, method of characterization. In intrinsic approach the researcher tries to find out Edna Pontellier's type of character in the story. While in extrinsic approach, it might applies psychological by using theories of self actualization because the study concern on the self actualization.

III.FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher found there are also several factors that leads Edna did her self actualization act during her life to provide that she has right to do so and to show off her existemce to The Creole society. Such as Edna's internal conflict which is causing a battle with herself. And also Edna's external conflicts against Leonce Pontellier, against Robert Lebrun, against Alcee Robin, and against The Creole society.

Last but no least is Edna's against her family. For example, her father and her big sister force her to marry her husband on the reason of religion. She accepts his marriage proposal because she has impressed on his behaviour toward her. Those things made her marriage such as an accident for her. That mistaken marriage affects her for having no passion and love with him " Her husband seemed to her now like a person whom she had married (Chopin, page 86, ch.25)";

"of her husband, realizing with some unaccountable satisfaction that no trace of passion or excessive and fictitious warmth colored her affection, thereby threatening its dissolution (page 21, chapter 7)".

Starting when she falls in love with another young man named Robert who awakened her passion, her affection, her longing, and make her grown to become an adult woman. It is explained in the following quotations:

"For the first time she recognized anew the symptoms of infatuation which she had felt incipiently as a child, as a girl in her earliest teens, and later as a young woman (page 51, chapter.15)".

"The sentiment which she entertained for Robert in no way resem husband, or had ever felt, or ever expected to feel (page 53,chapter.16)".

The quotations above show that she has just fall in love with a young man who awakened her desire and passion as a woman. That feeling is diff lack of passion and love.

IV. CONCLUSION

Overall, the researcher concluded based on the analysis of Edna Pontellier self actualization in *The Awakening* novel by Kate Chopin is Leonce is the one who earns the wealth for the family, so he exploits Edna to be a fully "mother woman" and follow

whatever he asks. Whether Edna is a "mother woman" personality or not. She is still demanded by her husband to be the ideal one. Edna is ruled by her husband, that a wife should give all of her love and time to look after household, the children and to worship her husband. Leonce only demands Edna to give her love to their children, where children also need love from their parents not only from a mother's side.

One of Edna's self actualization acts is when she turns to a disobedient wife, she refuses his husband's command to reply the letters for her husband business partner's wife. She dare to refuse her husband's request to not attend Tuesdays. Where his big family and business partner gather together. She earns her own money and moves out into a small house without her husband's permission. She earns her own money in order to be as equal as her husband. So she can rule her own life and seek what makes her happy. She starts to abandon every role from her husband that she always follows before. She becomes an independent woman by living separately from her husband.

The last self actualization is when she was committed to suicide, at the sea as her victorious ending to let all of her burdens go away. She feels happy when the risrt time she learn to swim. She wants to imitate the sea that portrays a freedom and independent. The moment she touches the water at the sea, the moment she feels all of burden she has are taken away by the water in a tragic way.

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