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**A Comparative Analysis of the Feminine Self  
in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and  
Katherine Anne Porter's *Old Mortality***

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## **Abstract**

*The Awakening*, written by Kate Chopin, and *Old Mortality* by Katherine Anne Porter are two great works that focus on female protagonists, Edna Pontellier and Aunt Amy, who, living in times when society limited women, sought self-realization and to find their identity. The objective of this dissertation is to compare and analyze the personality of both characters from a psychological, familial, and social point of view. The purpose of this study is to analyze their similarities and differences, both in their personalities and in their path towards the growth and expression of their identity.

**Keywords:** Feminism, Kate Chopin, Katherine Anne Porter, Feminine Identity, Comparative Analysis, New Woman.

## **Resumen**

*El Despertar*, escrita por Kate Chopin, y *Vieja Mortalidad*, de Katherine Anne Porter, son dos grandes obras que se centran en las protagonistas, Edna Pontellier y la tía Amy, quienes, en tiempos en los que la sociedad limitaba a las mujeres, buscaban su realización personal y su identidad. El objetivo de esta disertación es comparar y analizar la personalidad de ambos personajes desde un punto de vista psicológico, familiar y social. El propósito de este estudio es analizar sus similitudes y diferencias, en sus formas de ser, en su crecimiento personal y en su identidad.

**Palabras clave:** Feminismo, Kate Chopin, Katherine Anne Porter, Identidad Femenina, Análisis Comparativo, Nueva Mujer.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*The Awakening* and *Old Mortality*, set between the 19th and 20th centuries, are two works written respectively by American authors Kate Chopin and Katherine Anne Porter. The literary pieces are about women who, despite being trapped and constrained by the values of a patriarchal society, decide to follow a path of self-realization and freedom. The main protagonists, Edna and Amy, aspire to show themselves for who they are to the world. They want to live a life as they please and dedicate themselves to what they are passionate about. They want to find a life partner with whom they can share what they love and who will motivate them to show the best version of themselves. Someone who loves freedom unconditionally. Despite the difficulties of the times in which they lived, the protagonists were determined and independent, making them an example for the readers to follow. However, the values in which they were inculcated still have a negative effect on their knowledge of the true meaning of freedom and independence. This will later affect their relationships with their environment.

Like many other authors, Chopin and Porter intended to inspire women with their writings. However, what set them apart from the rest was their firm belief that women were not limited to the characteristics of their gender. Women could aspire to be what they wished to be and in the process seek their own self-fulfillment.

This study is guided by the influence of feminism in the elaboration of the female protagonists in the two literary works. Edna and Amy will be explored from a feminist approach through a study of their narrative roles and their perception of life. The present last-year dissertation offers, therefore, a comparative analysis of the female entities of the protagonists of the two works. The methodology applied consists of an analysis of three perspectives: psychological, familial, and social. These three spheres constitute important aspects of the study since they construct their emotional and existential identity. Showalter's feminist literary critical methodology "feminine historical literary phrases" will be applied along with the observation and examination of the phases' characteristics that appear in these literary pieces through a qualitative study. In addition to this, special attention was given to the spheres of what the narrator tells us about the protagonists, the situations, the dialogues, symbols, images, and sensations to get to know them.

As for the structure of this dissertation, firstly I will summarize the history and evolution of women's work and education in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this same section, I will review the evolution of women in literature to understand their efforts and to point out the narrative innovations that Chopin and Porter added to women's literature. Then, I will give a short explanation of Elaine Showalter's feminist methodology, since her ideas of the feminine self will shed light on the study of the female characters in the novel. Later, within the previous point, I will also give a review of what Chopin and Porter thought of literature and what women's literature should have.

Once the theoretical aspects have been discussed, the analysis will continue. First, the character of Edna from the novel *The Awakening* will be analyzed, and subsequently, Amy, from the novel *Old Mortality*, will be analyzed. In addition, the innovations that Chopin and Porter introduced in women's literature and featured in these works will be reviewed. Secondly, we will make a comparison of the female protagonists with the women of the time who fought for their rights in education and work. Then, thirdly, the similarities and differences in their identities will be established. Finally, the conclusion will present the reflections that the protagonists reached in their search for identity and growth as individuals. In addition, I will expose the negative effect that the values of the time instilled in them in their search for strength and independence.

## 2. FEMINISM IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Since the beginning of time, women have traditionally been considered inferior to men. There was no room for them in education or work outside the home. Moreover, they had no right to participate in neither the intellectual nor the creative sphere. The writing profession was explicitly reserved for men. Women's groups began to congregate to seek solutions to the ongoing discrimination and to advocate for their rights. These congregations were not only composed of meetings for literary discussions but were also taken into the political sphere. Such intellectual gatherings took place in the homes, where these women were educated and were growing intellectually.

However, when they made their way into the world of writing, they encountered many obstacles and hypocrisy. Many tried to harm them and many others wanted to take advantage of their narrative skills since women represented the majority of the reading population of the time. Despite the obstacles, many women writers made use of their profession to express their criticism not only of society but also of the hypocrisy they suffered in their professional environment, in an industry particularly ruled by men. An example of this is Anne Bradstreet's "Prologue" written in 1850, in which she criticizes the sexist critical appreciation of women's literature:

"I am obnoxious to each carping tongue  
Who says my hand a needle better fits.  
A Poet's Pen all scorn I should thus wrong,  
For such despite they cast on female wits.  
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,  
They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance." (lines 25-30)



## **2.1. TREATMENT AND EVOLUTION OF WOMEN IN EDUCATION, WORK, AND AS WOMEN WRITERS. THE ISSUE OF THE ‘NEW WOMAN’**

From the mid-19th century, women became more visible and independent. Their development became noticeable in education as well as in the professional, creative, and intellectual spheres. In the United States, from the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, due to the growing demand for women in the workplace as teachers and civil employees, there was an increase in investment in the education of young women. All of this was perceived favorably by women who saw their lives improving with new job opportunities and improvements in education. In the beginning, there was a massive increase in high school enrolment and graduation from 1910 to 1930, and by the late 1960s, one out of every 20 law students was a woman. Girls began to take more college preparatory classes in high school in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, around 1970, women began to attend professional and graduate colleges to better their education (Claudia Goldin 2006, 10).

As for the evolution of women in the labor market before and after the investment in education, it went as follows. In the nineteenth century according to census data, domestic servants accounted for half of all wage-earning women in the United States in 1870 (Motz and Browne 1988, 35). Later, urbanization gave women the opportunity to create their own home-based businesses, molding and making accessories or homemade jewelry. (Motz and Browne 1988, 49). Later, women's participation in the labor force became more noticeable in the early 1900s with the increasing demand for labor in clerical and administrative jobs. Even so, the number of active married women remained low until the 1940s due to marriage restrictions that were almost eradicated after the early 1940s (Claudia Goldin 1988, 5).

In the case of young unmarried women, they were already participating in the working world from the end of the 19th century until the 1920s. There were two common types of jobs, domestic workers in the service industry and factory workers in the manufacturing industry. These women had little or no on-the-job training and received just a small benefit from formal human capital after common or elementary school, if at all. At the beginning of the 1910s, professional workers, primarily teachers and clerical workers, made a small but growing percentage of the population (Claudia Goldin 1988, 3). Afterward, from the 1950s several professions emerged for women such as lawyer,

physician, professor, and manager in addition to those already existing. It has been noticed that women's wages grew compared to men's earnings even within cohorts, suggesting that the shift may have spread to those in their middle years and that it was influenced by labor market reforms or antidiscrimination laws (Claudia Goldin 1988, 13).

In the literary field, women who intended to make literature their profession were finally able to do so. From the middle of the 19th century to the middle or near the mid-20th century, whether because of historical or social situations, because of the new literary movements and innovations that their works exposed, or simply because of the problems they encountered as women writers, women writers found it difficult to become part of the literary community. Thus, their history began when American cultural life, according to literature, could not be sustained because those who valued and considered verbal wit, ingenuity, wise allusion, and erudition in writing to be part of the national literary history did not devote themselves to any significant way to preserving or enhancing it, and those who did were mostly women and young people. In nineteenth-century America, they were the primary audience for creative fiction, so the publisher had to discover and promote authors who could write for them (Emory Elliot 1988, 289).

As early as 1850 with Susan Warner's publication of *The Wide, Wide World*, the most prominent movement in the antebellum literature is found in women's writing. It was about a woman's passage from childhood to early adulthood, the construction of an autonomous identity of her own while remaining feminine in a culturally acceptable manner. (Emory Elliot 1988, 299). Other female authors addressed pioneers, colonization, and the destiny of America. (301) Augusta Evans Wilson was notable for presenting heroines who were characterized not only by their moral fortitude and devotion but also had a strong desire to learn and investigate. (301)

At the end of the 19th century, a movement known as "new woman" emerged in women's literature whose principles posed a serious threat to the existing order. However, from the 1880s onward, this movement made a great impact on national and later on international literature (Emory Elliot 1988, 589). It gave rise to a fiction of female regionality. It aimed to build alternative grounds of awareness as well as to demonstrate how consciousness could be used to empower women. Its design was radical and questioned the basic foundations around which men's fictional worlds were built (590). Rather than marriage, the new woman proposed to seek self-fulfillment through work.

The concept of women's sexual independence, including the choice to abstain and choose sexual partners in or out of marital relationships, was also fundamental to literary depictions of the new woman (590).

Several writings encouraged women to grow intellectually. The movement appealed to female readers who were leading an increasingly urbanized lifestyle in an America that was longing more and more for its past. In addition, these authors examined women's lives from different perspectives under the cloak of regionalism. They mapped the various spheres of women's lives, both from within and on the outside (Emory Elliot 1988, 597). American women authors rejected the formal and tonal limits of consciousness in the 1900s. Wharton created the woman who is the actual embodiment of self-consciousness in *The Age of Innocence*, set in 1870s New York. Countess Ellen Mingott Olenska opposes the naivety of the married man who wants to be free with her. She is more experienced than he and more aware of society's demands (600).

From the diary to the utopian novel and quasi-autobiography, the search for formal frameworks suited to the new woman's consciousness took many forms. In the works of Gilman, Wharton, Glasgow, Cather, and Stein, the locus of awareness shifted (Emory Elliot 1988, 602). Gilman established concepts of social reform of the patriarchal society. Gilman's awareness expanded beyond the body and the self, toward a social and utilitarian expression. She claims that women's authority is logical and humanitarian and can legislate new lives and worlds (603). Gilman's novels depict the potential of modified environments, such as central kitchens and nurseries (which she refers to as "baby gardens"), polite social interaction, freedom in dress, and gratifying work for both sexes (603).

The last woman writer worth mentioning is Willa Cather. She recognized the land's spirits as feminine and connected herself with them. In Cather's literature, the American land is therefore the epicenter of women's power (Emory Elliot 1988, 605).

The new woman was represented by male authors in ways that minimized her authority. The notion of the new woman is twisted throughout James' writings. Howell limits the new woman's range of action to the extent that she is most like the heroines of domestic fiction (Emory Elliot 1988, 593). Meanwhile, on the other hand, the hallowed concepts of domesticity were used by conservative female authors to fight the new

woman. The beautiful charming stories of imprisoned damsels rescued by handsome knights abounded in women's fiction during the age of the new woman (595).

Due to the rejection of women's aspirations in the post-war era, the establishment of the flapper as a feminine ideal, and mostly due to the adversity to the female voice in American literature in the colleges and professional associations made this decade extraordinarily and perhaps uniquely different for literary women who came of age in the 1920s (Emory Elliot 1988, 822). Women's contributions to our national literature were seen as a source of weakness and sentimentality in a post-war country (824). Men authors, such as Robert Herrick, chastised women authors for "feminizing" American literature. Moreover, the very men who complained about the empire of feminine prudery showed little tolerance for female unconventionality, inventiveness, and impropriety (825).

For American women authors, the 1930s were not a happy decade. Women were progressively excluded from the academic institutions of American literature. In addition, they were absent entirely from the first edition of a major college textbook, *Major American Writers*, published in 1935. Even best sellers of the decade, such as Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* (1931) and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With The Wind* (1936), were viewed as affirmations of women's skill in popular fiction, which could never compete with male creativity. Nevertheless, their accomplishments have endured, making them major forerunners of today's lives, readings and writings. (Emory Elliot 1988, 840)

### 3. THE FEMINIST THEORY

In order to explain the limitations and difficulties that women suffered in their daily lives, the so-called feminist theories emerged. These theories not only illustrated but also sought strategies for change. (Lisa Disch and Mary Hawkesworth 2016, 2). The feminist theory has become a prominent method of critical theory that reveals the implications of commonly held beliefs about sex, race, sexuality, and gender, as well as providing insights into the social construction of complicated hierarchies of difference (2). Three common features of feminist theory can currently be identified: (1) attempts to denaturalize what passes for difference, (2) challenges to the aspiration to produce universal and impartial education, and (3) attempts to approach the intricacy of power relations with intersectional analysis (4). In the field of humanities, several feminist theories would be developed that help to identify the characteristics of female writings according to language, style, characters, what the writings want to convey, the identification of women in them, and so on.

#### 3.1. ELAINE SHOWALTER

Elaine Showalter's feminist theories have shed light on women's issues in the last decades. Her investigation of the role of women in society and, what is more relevant for my dissertation, of women within the literary field, has opened up paths for a new understanding of literature, particularly of literature written by women.

Showalter's critical methodology, known as 'feminine historical literary phases' in *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* (1999), is divided into three phases. First, from 1840 to 1880, female authors mimicked patriarchal tradition by assigning subordinate positions to their female protagonists. The second phase, from 1880 to 1920, is defined by women's rights being defended and women rebelling against their inferior position. And the third phase, from 1920 to the present, proclaims the manifestation of the female experience for the awakening of her consciousness (Alfred Guerin 1999, 198). We will use this methodology to analyze Porter's and Chopin's literary works because it will shed light on feminist ideas, and provide us with information about the times in which the protagonists in both works lived. All this will

be accompanied by the analysis of actions and behaviors, being these aspects sometimes essential for knowing the social role of the female protagonist.

These literary pieces belong to the second and the third phases and they may present the following characteristics: the rejection of positions of femininity, a feeling of injustice towards the position of women within society, a social protest against the government, laws, and various fields such as education and medicine, and a rejection of the passivity and lack of competitiveness of women in society. The second phase also denounces the suppression of anger and rage stemming from oppression and repression, utopias of female society, inadequate education for women, and economic limitations (Elaine Showalter 1977). The characteristics of the third phase range broadly from the analysis of male morality, mentions of the female body, masculine aspects in women, taboo subjects for the time including adultery and lesbianism, to recollections of victim heroines. (Elaine Showalter 1977)

#### **4. KATE CHOPIN'S AND KATHERINE ANNE PORTER'S POETICS**

Chopin and Porter theorized about literature and the role of women writers in their societies. In this epigraph, I will analyze their ideas on the subject: their thoughts about literature in general and their ideas about literature written by women in particular. The latter is what they think about how literature written by women should be, the themes it should or could delve into, and their literary style in this writing. Likewise, it is also relevant to see what kind of literature these two authors write, the reasons for that type of literature, and the topics they deal with. This is because depending on what they want to teach, awaken and transmit about this to women, it will be reflected in the feminist traits found when analyzing the work of one and the other author.

#### 4.1. KATE CHOPIN ON LITERATURE

Regarding Kate Chopin, many of these aspects of interest were found in the book *The Cambridge Companion to Kate Chopin*. There we learn, for example, about her idea of what literature written for women writers should look like. Chopin says that “they have to explore women’s inner lives, emerging consciousness and awakening sensuality” (Janet Beer 2008, 91). She also states the themes she thinks women writers should write about; like the contrast between ‘mandatory’ and ‘voluntary’ motherhood (97), and the sea as the analogy to women’s expansion and freedom; which are typical in women’s fiction writing. As for the style, this author said: “to use music as a structuring device” (92).

This book also shows other aspects such as the kind of literature she wrote for women. Chopin was influenced by European and, in particular, French literature. She was a fan of the strong-willed heroines of Madame de Staël and George Sand of the early nineteenth century. In fact, that is why in real life she named her daughter Lélia (Janet Beer 2008, 88). She writes this kind of literature as a revolution of female etiquette (89). She recognized, for example, a turning point in the social and medical understanding of female sexuality in the New Women Fiction. This author put in knowledge about the absence of sensual and sexual satisfaction in married women (90).

Concerning the topics she discusses in this literature, she took the risk of publicly exploring women’s sexual desires (Janet Beer 2008, 88). In addition, concerning her study and translation of eight fin-de-siècle stories by Guy de Maupassant, other topics in her ‘New Women Fiction’ were ‘Solitude’ and ‘Suicide’ (88). The value of female freedom; tomboy heroines who refuse to be feminized, women’s battle between art and love, unconventional marriage arrangements, marital dictatorship, adultery, and innate syphilis were all issues she regularly addressed in her short tales (93). The emotional independence of women is also a recurring theme in her writing, which she approaches with a lightness and a lovely sense of location. As for her style, a bright, brisk, and fundamentally hopeful irony is one of her signature tones (Janet Beer 98-99).

Patterns of shapely language and structure were the driving vision of her own oeuvre but were highly impacted by her own experiences in the South and as a woman.

## 4.2. KATHERINE ANNE PORTER ON LITERATURE

The first author of whom these aspects will be unveiled is Katherine Anne Porter. Katherine Anne Porter said in her essay *Collected Stories and Other Writings* (2008): “Literature is that which discovers and makes you understand human motives, human feelings to make a distillation of what human relations and experiences your mind has been able to absorb” (706). The usefulness of literature she said: “it should direct you to points of view you have not examined before, or cause you to comprehend, (...) outside of your normal experience. This by presentation than by argument. This presentation must be real, with a truth beyond the artist’s own prejudices, loves, hates; I mean his personal ones.” (692)

Porter believed that literature should be developed by making use of memory, legend, human experience, and acquired knowledge. (Robert H. Brinkmeyer 2022, 11). The use of self-memory in the development of literature is very important to Porter because for her it involved a commitment to an enigmatic universe of experiences and meanings we all hold within us (9). Thus, the narrative style should include dialogic interaction with one’s inner self – and, by extension, with the rest of the universe – essential not only for individual realization but also for creative production. This discussion would aid her, as well as certain female characters, or protagonists, in comprehending events in her life, the chaos of the universe, and knowing and constructing oneself (10).

As for her literature aimed at women, her work was heavily influenced by stories set in the Old South. They include a variety of characters that would represent the different types of female role models Porter was exposed to from an early age. The themes she explored in this type of literature were: female bondage and resistance, the negative effects of sexual repression, and the failure of love in women’s life (Robert H. Brinkmeyer 2022, 49).

In short, Porter regarded literature as an author’s endeavor to grasp and transmit meaningful paths to comprehend life’s apparent chaos (Robert H. Brinkmeyer et al. 10).



## 5. ANALYSIS: PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, AND FAMILIAL SPHERES

The main purpose of this analysis is to explore the similarities and differences between the two female protagonists, Edna and Aunt Amy. In addition, a critical methodology will be used to analyze their identities and roles as women in the social and narrative arenas and in the way they view life in comparison to other women of the time. First, we will analyze the character of Edna Pontellier in the novel *The Awakening* and then the character of Aunt Amy who is present in the novel *Old Mortality*. In addition, the features developed by Chopin and Porter in women's literature and features these works have according to the movement they belong to, will be seen in the analysis. Consequently, the characteristics of their identities will be seen later on in the results.

The analysis will reflect the thoughts that the characters have about the path to follow for the discovery, expression and development of their identity. This will show the negative effect of the values imprinted on them. On the other hand, the three spheres, psychological, familial, and social, have been taken into account because they are very important pillars that influence the construction of the individual.

Concerning the psychological sphere, everything that reaches us mentally and even emotionally on a rational, interpretative, and sensitive level influences the mind. Experiences, learning obtained at the level of studies, work, civics, and life, what people think of others, how life is viewed, and how emotions are managed to affect the formation of the identity.

Meanwhile, according to familial sphere, family relationships, what they are like, what they are about, how people feel, the security and self-esteem generated in them, together with the values instilled and the rules that exist will be especially relevant in the formation of the individual.

Finally, the social sphere is as essential within this study as the previous ones. Relationships and feelings play a huge role in someone's identity.

## **5.1. EDNA PONTELLIER FROM KATE CHOPIN'S NOVEL '*THE AWAKENING*'**

Edna Pontellier, the protagonist of the novel *The Awakening*, a Kentucky and Mississippi Presbyterian coming from the upper-middle class, is a mother of two children, and the wife of a successful business man from a Catholic Creole background, Léonce Pontellier. She tells the story of her inner and outer journey after the South American Postbellum in the late nineteenth century in the Southern Coast of Louisiana and New Orleans.

### **5.1.1. PSYCHOLOGICAL SPHERE**

Regarding Showalter's second phase, described as the one in which women's rights are advocated and women rebel against their disadvantaged position, some characteristics were found in the psychological sphere. One of the first aspects that appear frequently in these works is the feeling of oppression and repression.

A feeling of oppression and drowsiness overcame Edna during the service. Her head began to ache, and the lights on the altar swaged before her eyes. Another time she might have made an effort to regain her composure, but her one thought was to quit the stifling atmosphere of the church and reach the open air. (Chopin 1899, 45)

Edna begins to show interest and unconsciously flirt and make plans with another man who is not her husband, Robert Lebrun. They visit the church together, along with Lebrun which made her feel sick and guilty for her actions. Here oppression can be seen in the religious imposition, the Catholic religion, and also in the Creole culture from which they educated women about inborn chastity.

But the voices were not soothing that came to her from the darkness and the sky above and the stars. They jeered and sounded mournful notes without promise, devoid even of hope. (Chopin 1899, 67)

In this fragment, she heard voices that came to her in a moment of discomfort, due to the oppression and repression she was facing. These were bitter, hopeless voices that belonged to Nature, and spoke to her of the difficulty in finding a harmonious solution

for everyone without harming her family and herself, making it difficult for her to develop as she wanted and to stay connected and happy with her family and community.

Another characteristic that is also normally found is a feeling of injustice towards the position of women in society. This characteristic is reflected in the following fragment: “But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, (...). She trembled, she was choking, and the tears blinded her.” (Chopin 1899, 33). The passions of her soul are awakened and she realizes the urgency of finding a way to discover what she needs for her self-realization, happiness, and peace, and goes after it. However, once she has learned to be herself, she will prefer physical death to be true beyond this world to the way she is because of the limitations and restrictions imposed by society.

Later, a protest is shown once again, but this time against the government, laws, and education; the denunciation of the lack of education for women; and Edna's rejection of passivity. This is seen in the following excerpt. “She realized that she had neglected her reading, and was determined to start anew upon a course of improving studies, now that her time was completely her own to do with as she liked.” (Chopin 1899, 94). Here Edna picks up her books again and prepares to study. She saw herself as equal to the men and with the power to demonstrate that equality. And now she had the space and time to herself. Furthermore, one characteristic of the new woman's age is evident in this excerpt, and that is the pursuit of self-fulfillment through work. This is seen in the continuation of learning for a greater culture and breadth of knowledge that she desires and enjoys.

Throughout the novel, again, the position of femininity is rejected, but, in addition, there is a sense of injustice towards the position of women within society. Here, Edna blames Nature and society for her position as a woman conferred by her social duty, since, from a very young age she was deposited with the belief and feeling of romantic love, used as an end for women to feel the desire to marry, have children, and serve in the structure of society. Marilynne Robinson thought that nature was represented by Kate Chopin as violent and deceitful, as well as explicitly predatory (Kate Chopin 1989, 9).

(...) with an inward agony, with a flaming, outspoken revolt against the ways of Nature, she witnessed the scene of torture. She was still stunned and speechless with emotion when later she leaned over her friend to kiss her and softly say good-by. Adèle pressing her cheek, whispered in an exhausted voice: ‘Think of the children, Edna. Oh, think of the children! Remember them!’ (Chopin 1899, 142-143)

Meanwhile, in regards to the third phase, which proclaims the manifestation of the female experience for the awakening of her consciousness some characteristics were found. One of the aspects discussed in this sphere is that of the protagonist being seen as a victim due to her knowledge and understanding which is also frequently shown in these literary works. Moreover, in this excerpt, one of the features that Kate Chopin developed and introduced in the works written in connection with the literary movement is an unconventional marriage arrangement. The marriage between Léonce and Edna was decided by the latter believing that they shared beliefs and tastes and that she loved him. Also, she did so knowing that it would not please her father, given his religious background. This encouraged her to be free and defy cultural and familial conventions.

(...) She fancied there was a sympathy of thought and taste between them, in which fancy she was mistaken. Add to this violent opposition of her father and her sister Margaret to her marriage to a Catholic, and we need seek no further for the motives which led her to accept Monsieur Pontellier for her husband. (...) closing the portals forever behind her upon the realm of romance and dreams. (...) Edna found herself face to face with realities. (Chopin 1899, 22)

She realized that after marrying Léonce, she did not have the passion and the love for him that he had for her. She found herself trapped with a person for whom she had a lot of affection, but no love, and with whom she did not share the life and goals she desired. This is linked to that characteristic of the absence of sensual and sexual satisfaction in a married woman's life that Kate Chopin introduced in her literature, and to the literary movement to which she belongs.

Then, a sensitive element is found in this novel, that is, the experience of suicide as an opportunity to investigate consciousness. It is possible that in these literary pieces women are alerted to this situation that they may ponder if they were to live undeveloped and in the shadow of their husbands.

“[...] for the first time in her life she stood naked in the open air [...] She remembered the night she swam far out and recalled the terror that seized her [...] She did not look back now, [...]” (Chopin 1899, 149)

Here, Chopin uses suicide to raise in her ambitious phrase the question of human beings ‘position in the universe’, perhaps implying that every human act is of the highest order of complexity and ultimate significance.

In relation to the previous theme of 'Suicide', we find the theme of 'Loneliness' in this fragment in which Edna feels loneliness in terms of being the only person aware of women's submissiveness and lack of fulfillment. She works on pursuing her development and completion while her husband and many people in the area criticize and judge her. As she lives in a constant struggle between loving her family and continuing to live in a feminine way and the desire for freedom and self-realization, she decides to leave this oppressive and incomprehensible physical world, firmly believing that beyond it she will be able to continue her development.

### **5.1.2. FAMILIAL SPHERE**

In this sphere, there are some characteristics of the second phase. There is again a feeling of injustice towards the position of women within society and the family. This is observed in the fragment below. Edna rejects the duty and surrenders to women's position being mothers.

If one of the little Pontellier boys took a tumble whilst a play, he was not apt to rush crying to his mother's arms for comfort; he would more likely pick himself up, wipe the water out of his eyes and the sand out of his mouth, and go on playing. (Chopin 1899, 9)

It is important to stress that she loved her children with great fervor and always ensured their well-being, but she was not overprotective. She saw them also as human beings who would have to experience and know the world, and become strong, self-confident, and independent, just as she wished for herself.

Further on, there is again the rejection of the position of femininity and also of passivity. She rejects the duty of women to obey their husbands and also, as a social norm for women, at least those who are married, to stay at home. She stays wherever she wants, for example in this fragment in the hammock, in the starlight on her porch. Likewise, this fragment shows a feature that Kate Chopin introduces in literature, marital dichotomy.

'Do you know it is past one o'clock? Come on,' (...) 'Don't wait for me,' she answered. (...) 'No; I am going to stay out here.' (...) 'Léonce, go to bed.' she said. 'I mean to stay out here. I don't wish to go in, and don't intend to. Don't speak to me like that again; I shall not answer at you.' (Chopin 1899, 39)

From the third phase, we find a feature in Edna that was considered a masculine trait. As it is known, men were the only ones who tended to save money for really

necessary things, and they did not bother to repair if something had to be bought for the house; this was a woman's thing. However, in this fragment, we see that this aspect, which was considered masculine, is in Edna. She is here the one who does not want to spend money on unnecessary things just to show that they have a lot and that they remain first class. At the same time, this characteristic is related to the one introduced by Chopin in this literature with tomboyish heroines who refuse to be feminized. She refuses to be like the other women who worry about having luxurious decorations or new furniture at home showing how much money they have and how fashionable they are: “I hardly think we need new fixtures, Léonce. Don’t let us get anything new; you are too extravagant. I don’t believe you ever think of saving or putting by.” (Chopin 1899, 68)

### **5.1.3. SOCIAL SPHERE**

In the social sphere, Edna Pontellier's character is clearly influenced by the second phase. Firstly, the apparent formation and link between friends in a feminine type of society. It is reflected in the next quote: “In the presence of that personality which was offensive to her, that the woman, by her divine art, seemed to reach Edna’s spirit and set it free.” (Chopin 1899, 102)

Mademoiselle Reisz set an example for Edna to act on her desires and needs; her desire for self-discovery and fulfillment by earning her own money as an artist, painting sketches and portraits and owning her own home, but also she introduced her to the concept of women’s rights.

Along in the novel, there is again a rejection of the position of femininity, the lack of female competitiveness, and a rejection of passivity as reflected in the fragment below. Edna shows her friend she went into business with a man who specialized in painting with whom she had relations to sell her sketches, and that, along with the large sum of money she won on horse races she was able to buy a home for herself. She proves a woman’s competence in getting what she wants through her own gifts, contacts, and efforts. In this way, the refusal to remain in a feminine position in which everything is given to her without effort, as well as the refusal of passivity is presented.

Here in this fragment we also perceive the value of feminine freedom, and emotional independence, when she is alone and her husband is away in business. She feels free and independent, and she sees herself as capable of living through her hard work. At the same time, she feels alive and free from the cultural values imposed on women at the time.

‘(...) I won a large sum this winter on the races, and I am beginning to sell my sketches. Laidpore is more and more pleased with my work; he says it grows in force and individuality. (...) However, as I said, I have sold a good many through Laidpore. I can live in the tiny house for little or nothing, with one servant. (...) I know I shall like it, like the feeling of freedom and independence.’ (Chopin 1899, 102-103)

Further on, the theme of injustice towards the position of women within society is presented. Here, anger and uprising are shown against the imposition of allowing men to accompany women, as women were considered too frail to walk alone. Edna refuses this and goes on horseback or takes long walks alone, allowing her to discover beautiful places and landscapes: “‘ (...) I always feel sorry for women who don’t like to walk; they miss so much- so many rare little glimpses of life, and we women learn so little of life in the whole.’” (Chopin 1899, 137). Meanwhile, here we can observe a new feature introduced in Kate Chopin's reading, which is style. It is seen that her style is brilliant and risky while also being natural and honest. Edna manifests a thought that a woman should not speak about the situation of women.

Additionally, the hobby of horse races at the time was explicitly reserved for men, but Edna practices it, not only rebelling against the social rules but also making it a source of money for her as she was very good at it: “She played for very high stakes, and fortune favored her.” (Chopin 1899, 95)

Another characteristic considered masculine in Edna is her way of expressing herself on any subject. Something that did not please society, since the duty of a woman is to be quiet and submissive, and not to complain too much: “‘(...) I suppose this is what you would call unwomanly; but I have got into a habit of expressing myself. (...)’” (Chopin 1899, 137).

## **5.2. AUNT AMY FROM PORTER'S NOVEL *OLD MORTALITY*.**

Aunt Amy lived with her family in the South, in the backwoods of Kentucky. Her trajectory in the physical world is recounted, but her reactions, responses, and actions also provide insight into her inner world. Aunt Amy is the protagonist of her story, and she influenced the early development of her niece Miranda and the promise she makes to give herself a life of her own.

### **5.2.1. PSYCHOLOGICAL SPHERE**

In regards to this sphere, we can trace two features in the character of Aunt Amy. The first involves the lack of anger and rage in the character's responses towards various situations presented in the novel. This characteristic is due to oppression and repression. These trigger some effects translated into weakness and illness as can be intuited by what is told below. The other characteristic is the rejection of the position of femininity by breaking two commitments to preserve her freedom. This last characteristic is related to the one Porter introduced in this literature, female resistance, in this case to marriage, to safeguard her freedom in a patriarchal world. Here in this fragment below we also perceive a characteristic of the 'new woman' era, selecting partners for sensual, and sexual satisfaction. She tried to love and be loved but was afraid of falling into the values and duties that women of that period had to adopt when they married.

Uncle Gabriel had waited five years to marry Aunt Amy. She had been ill, her chest was weak; she was engaged twice to other young men and broke her engagements for no reason... (Porter 1988, 119)

Regarding the discomfort she suffered, it was probably due to repression and oppression by her family and her second cousin Gabriel. This repression can be found in the surveillance she had to endure from simply dressing decently, to doing what they expected of her, to behaving like a lady of the times. Although in their presence she showed her true self and challenged them in her actions, inwardly it could cause her discomfort and illness. Another example of repression is her second cousin Gabriel pressured her by constantly suggesting that she marry him, and harassing her with compliments. On her mother's side, she felt this oppression of constant subtle pleading



and desire for her daughter Amy to marry, and eventually, she did marry. Another interpretation of her physical discomfort could also be from always doing the activity she wanted regardless of the weather. She would go to all the dances she wanted and stay up late dancing, she would ride horses in the early morning, or go out hunting with her brothers. The other feature seen from the second phase in another fragment is the rejection of the position of femininity as seen in this fragment: “The day after Gabriel was gone, Amy rose looking extremely well, went hunting with her brothers Bill and Stephen (...), had her hair shingled and curled again, (...)” (Porter 1988, 134).

What can be seen as a rejection of the position of femininity is her act of cutting her hair very short. She loves her hair, but she does this because she knows that her cousin liked her with long hair. At the same time, this shows defiance of the canons of beauty of the time for a woman to be appealing to men.

She goes out hunting with her brothers without hiding that it is something she is curious about, a masculine aspect that belongs to the third phase. In this way, she exposes and normalizes to society that a woman can delve into the knowledge of this hobby no matter that it was attributed to men and was rare or frowned upon by women. They let her come; she had them mesmerized with her displays of sensitivity and good sense. When she went out, on other occasions, she asked them for their opinion and advice on her way of dressing, which made them think of the importance, and respect that their sister had for them.

### **5.2.2. FAMILIAL SPHERE**

In relation to the family again we find the rejection of the position of femininity as seen in the following fragment. This event is told by Amy's mother to her granddaughters (Amy's nieces): “She ran into the gray cold and stepped into the carriage and turned and smiled with her face as pale as death, and called out ‘Good-by, good-by,’ and refused her cloak, and said, ‘Give me a glass of wine.’ (Porter 1988, 111)

In addition, the following is observed. First, Aunt Amy refuses to wear the cape making it clear that she will not dress as a married woman nor as someone who joyfully and proudly exposes having someone else and being in turn that person's property. She has always felt different from her time, as a free being, and owner of her destiny despite

being a woman. Secondly, they asked to serve her a glass of wine, showing the total freedom of action in which she will continue to behave regardless of being married and suggesting also that her parents and brother will no longer have that power over her as she no longer belongs to them. This aspect is related to the characteristic of female captivity exposed by Porter.

Additionally, the characteristic of love failure in women's lives is shown. She rejects the cloak and the things her husband did to share a life with her since she was not able to fall in love with him because of her fear of losing freedom of action and power over herself. The institution (marriage) was for her suicide, meaning for her invisibility, loss of rights, knowledge, and development. The same trait is observed in Amy's conversation with her mother about marriage: "That's no place for me," said Amy, but she had a way of speaking, a tone of voice, which made it impossible to discover what she meant by what she said. (Porter 1988, 120). Moreover, here we perceive one of the styles Porter develops for the female protagonists, and this is a dialogic interaction with the self. In this fragment, this is as if she is also speaking to her inner self.

Further on, there are some characteristics of the second phase in one sentence. These are a rejection of the position of femininity, a feeling of injustice towards the position of women in society, and a rejection of passivity. This takes place in a conversation between Amy and her mother about marriage: "I shall wear mourning if I like," she said, "it is my funeral, you know." (Porter 1988, 121). These features are seen in the decision and action of saying that she would wear a sad dress color, reflecting her wedding as her funeral.

Later, a rejection of the position of femininity, a characteristic of the second phase, is again found in the following extract. Here stated Aunt Amy her thoughts on love. This conversation occurs between Amy and her mother when they are talking about love and marriage: "What I really need is a good dancing partner to guide me through life," said Amy, "that's the match I'm looking for." (Porter 1988, 122). She refused to follow what was established for women, i.e. a man to take care of her, to provide for her, to tell her what to do, whom to please and admire, and this was because she had another perception of love. She did want to fall in love and make a life with someone, but that person had to be a life partner, friend, confidant, lover; the one with whom to share dreams, and develop passions and skills.

Again, another fragment in which the position of femininity is rejected is the scene that takes place between Amy and her father, before going to the party: Amy's father (...) gave one glance at his daughter (...). "It's disgraceful," he pronounced, loudly. "No daughter of mine is going to show herself in such a rig-out. It's bawdy," he thundered. "Bawdy! Amy had taken off her mask to smile at him. "Why, Papa," she said very sweetly, "what's wrong with it? Look at the mantelpiece. She's been there all along, and you were never shocked before." (Porter 1988, 125). Here we perceive that Aunt Amy had a lot of temper, and she also refuses to go along with the feminine pattern. She rejected decorum and having to hide her body having to cover herself from the lewdness of men.

Once again, there are two traits already seen in the second phase. These are the rejection of the position of femininity, and passivity. They appear in the following fragment, in which Amy and her second cousin Gabriel talk after taking her home from the party.

"Did he kiss you, Amy?"

(...)

"Maybe he did," she answered, "and maybe I wished him to."

"Amy, you must not say such things," said her mother. "Answer Gabriel's question."

"He hasn't the right to ask it," said Amy, but without anger. (Porter 1988, 129)

It is seen that she did not answer him as one would expect her to behave and react, like a lady of the time: sweet, submissive, and kind, but answered calmly and freely because she did not have to answer something personal to someone who was not her life partner.

As for another trait that ends the analysis of this third phase. Here is a masculine aspect observed in the letter Amy sends to her mother when she is on her honeymoon with her second cousin Gabriel: "I go to the races every day (...) and I chose Miss Lucy. She is mine now, she runs like a streak" (Porter 1988, 136). She had a horse of her own and she make it compete in the races, which was usual for men.

### 5.2.3. SOCIAL SPHERE

Concerning the social sphere, the first feature which is found is from the third phase, a mention of the female body. It is below in the description of Amy's disguise: "her white ankles shining, bosom deeply exposed" (Porter 1988, 125). Then we find again the mention of the female body, but also two features of the second phase, these are: rejection of passivity, and rejection of the position of femininity found in the next fragment when Gabriel, and Amy arrive at the ball: "When Amy appeared from the dressing room for her first dance with Gabriel, the lace was gone from her bodice, her skirts were tucked up more daringly than before, and the spots of her cheeks were like pomegranates" (Porter 1988, 126). She did not remain submissive and compliant to her father's order to make her costume decent, indeed, later on in the party she exposed even more flesh.

## 6. RESULTS

The results of the analysis carried out in the previous section will be presented below, considering the variables of the spheres, the second and third feminine historical literary phases, and their characteristics.

As for Edna Pontellier when she discovers her true identity, she is seen to be independent. She does not need anyone to put her in contact with a paint expert to show her sketches to the world and sell them. It is she who gets in contact with one and starts selling them, and, in addition, she makes a large sum of money by betting on horse races. She is brisk, passionate, and spontaneous in what she does and how she expresses herself when she socializes. Also, she is glamorous and elegant in the way she dressed and loves herself. Her elegance can also be seen in the hypnotic and marvelous decoration of the house, the delicacies everyone could expect, and the harmonious music for a meeting. On the other hand, she is utterly at the mercy of unintentional selection. Edna is, moreover, vulnerable; for example, when she reacts to childbirth, and falls in love as an adolescent because of the dreams that awaken in her.

She discovers herself as a serious and ambitious artist, already believing completely in herself and going on selling her sketches as a future professional painter. Edna is also determined by desires of living in her home, being self-sufficient, and becoming an artist by working hard. In addition, she is provocative and sensual, reflected by the reaction she produces in men by her flirtatious personality.

She loves music but also intellectual topics, reading Emerson and continuing to study as she wants to learn new things. In addition, she also has manners, hobbies, and masculine traits in her identity rarely seen in women. She enjoys horse riding and betting on them, wandering the streets, exploring forests and buildings giving in the activity of long walks unaccompanied. According to her manners, she was seen as masculine, as by the way she eats and her teeth, the way she drinks wine, and expresses everything she feels. As for features, she acted on impulses and desires. Finally, she advocates for women's rights, defending their rights when she is talking with her husband while they are eating.

As for Aunt Amy, we can observe that she is a cheerful and adventurous character. This cheerful side is what allows her to see the funny side in all the situations that occur around her, such as the marriage advice. And it is this same cheerful side that makes her mock aspects considered to be serious, for example when her great aunt Sally reprimands her for her actions and behaviors. Or when she would talk teasingly to her father about her disguise by implying that there could be nothing wrong since it was a copy of a disguise from a painting that was at home and it never seemed wrong to him in the character of the painting. She saw excitement and enjoyment in life.

Her adventurous side reflects when she made a three-day trip and forth to say goodbye to her brother, who was going to Mexico to seek peace and protection after having shot Raymond believing that he kissed his sister after dancing with her. She returned joyful and excited after the journey she had made on horseback. It can be observed in her actions how free she acted. She was rebellious, she went against the rules. For example, although she got engaged twice she finally broke these engagements because she loved, above all, her freedom of thought, action, and decision. And getting married completely took away such basic rights. On the other hand, when she finally married she rejected her cloak by refusing to feel like a man's possession, claiming her

freedom as well as the action of drinking a glass of wine thus giving a kick to the norms of behavior and decorum of the time in a married woman.

Another rebellious moment was when leaving the boudoir at the dance place, already outside her house, she puts herself back as she was with the disguise, skirt pulled up but even more daringly than before, the blushes bigger, and no lace on the bodice. Another quality perceived in her is spontaneity. She dances with all the men she wants when she feels like it, dancing wildly, accepting with such joy and warmth with whom she feels comfortable and likes; if she wants to go out with a man to take the air in a ball, she goes out, and arm in arm, and she talks and laughs however she feels. She knows she is provocative with the way men watch her and desire her, and she enhances this by dressing provocatively and defiantly for the times so they find her sensual and interesting.

However, we can still see in her other characteristics, fear and vulnerability. She did not talk to men about something that would disturb them, nor about the rights of women, such as the right to vote, she did not talk to them with the naturalness of what she thought. Moreover, believing that men could truly tell by holding a woman's hand or looking into her eyes that she was on her period, she like other women put her life at risk by drinking water and lemon cutting her periods and so going to the balls. This latter also denotes her innocence.

Finally, we can appreciate a hint of selfishness when she married her second cousin Gabriel in the end without loving him. It is an escape for her from her family environment of oppression and repression regarding her actions and life decisions since he loved her and would give her whatever she wants and needs. But it cannot be avoided the fact she is acting selfishly because although at first, she may be happy because it is something new for her to get married, after some time she became unhappy since she did not love him; anyway she probably knew she had little time left to live. Regarding aspects of feminism, she is the kind of person who defends freedom, equality, and rejection of marriage.

The commonalities in the identity of both protagonists are that they are both rebellious and defiant, as well as free in their behavior and actions, regardless of what people and their closest environment talk or think of them. Moreover, both are spontaneous, they talk as much as they want and do it also with men they are comfortable

with. Lastly, both women love riding horses, and they are provocative, as seen by the reaction they produce in men, but also vulnerable since they do not talk to men about women's rights or intellectual topics, except for Edna with her husband, for fear to produce a negative reaction on them.

In regards to differences, we see that Edna is independent but Aunt Amy is not. Aunt Amy never prepared herself, studying and working for a future career. She did what she wanted when she was young but although she desired to be free and self-possessed she never did things to have a future where she was the one to provide for herself, and she married finally against her beliefs. Another difference can be the cheerful character that Aunt Amy had when she was young but Edna did not.

Aunt Amy is presented as a young woman, maybe quite young, it is not said how old she was, little harm could be done in her actions and behavior as she was not married and so, had no children. On the other hand, Edna desired to see situations, with a teasing, cheerful and optimistic character, but she did not live with the same freedom of thought and action as Aunt Amy. In addition, there is another difference, and it is selfishness. Aunt Amy is selfish since she escapes the oppression and repression of her closest family environment to finally marry her second cousin Gabriel although she does not love him and she could harm him later very much. On the other hand, Edna is not, she knows she can hurt her children by her decisions of going with another man if she does not love her husband anymore and that barely she could too have freely a profession and be true in identity to herself without being criticized by the society so she decides to commit suicide and live beyond this physical world, in the other one, believing that in it she will be true to herself.

Regarding the characteristics of her identity, Edna represents those women of their period who worked for rights. Her personality is brisk and she is passionate in her actions towards her independence, determined in her desire to vote or to be able to buy and hold under her name. The latter, she achieved when she bought a house for herself.

Meanwhile, it can be interpreted the following of Aunt Amy concerning the traits of women of the period who fought for rights. Like the latter, the protagonist acted rebelliously, defiantly, and mockingly in the face of others' beliefs and her actions and thoughts were a threat in the face of the social, cultural, and other norms of the time.

Regarding the narrative role, after reading *The Awakening*, Edna being the main character and the driving force of the story, she is presented to us as a mother and housewife, but later on, because she awakens the right and desire for autonomy, physical, emotional and social independence, and the personal and professional realization she becomes a painter who sells her art by herself and with the help of someone knowledgeable in the art and developing her artistic qualities. In addition, she takes as another profession or livelihood betting on horse races as a connoisseur because of her previous time learning from her father and observing the others who bet, and the horses and jockeys.

For her part, Aunt Amy's narrative role is that of a secondary character but she has the importance of a protagonist since her story, actions, and situations in a patriarchal world are told and her feminine self can be analyzed in this sense. It is a caricatured character, it is used to criticize social and personal reality. This is seen in the reality of submission and obedience in which Amy was pressured by her family and society. Aunt Amy's social role is as a daughter and in the end as a married woman.

Both characters saw life as a world of possibilities, they aspired to fulfill themselves personally and professionally and to be independent physically and emotionally. However, due to the strong patriarchal system of that time, they saw the only way to achieve this was to make their way through life alone or, if possible, to fall in love with someone and share a life with someone with whom they could be independent and confident.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The search for identity has always been and will always be important for every person. In the case of women, for a long time they have been not only limited but on many occasions deprived of this search. During the 19th and 20th centuries, women began to act in small groups or individually to fight for their rights. And it was through this struggle that they came to know themselves better. They began to understand what they lacked or needed professionally, emotionally, and personally to grow. In short, they began to search for their own identity.

If we look at the results shown in the previous section, we can see that the same beliefs dominated the characters despite living in completely different situations. In the case of Edna, to know and develop her identity, she thinks and feels that it will only be possible in solitude, and she considers that the expression of her identity in relation to others in the culture and time in which she lives is impossible. This is because she desired personal, selfish happiness and freedom and sees that she will not be able to achieve it, as there were people against her and she was making her family unhappy. Thus, she decides to commit suicide with the faith that she will achieve the development and realization of her true self in the other world.

On the other hand, Amy believes that the only way to develop her identity is to be alone. This meant that she had to get away from her parents and siblings, who in some ways oppressed her because of cultural and social norms, and ultimately conditioned her to be who she was not. However, she decided to give herself to marriage as an escape route. She could continue to indulge more freely in the passions she had, such as horseback riding, attending the races, and betting on her horse, as she was spoiled by her second cousin Gabriel, and now husband, for the love he had for her. But, on the other hand, as a married woman through untold, she probably encountered oppressions and repressions from which she would be more or less compelled. Still, in any case, neither when she was younger, while living with her family, nor after her marriage, did she publicly fight for women's rights, nor did she take sides for their labor and economic development.

As for the belief in the soul and in a world beyond the one we know, it may simply be that she did not consider it because it seems that Amy lived mostly in the

present moment. But this could also imply that she was not afraid of death and saw it as something natural. In turn, not being afraid of death could already be a clue in that she was communicating to us that she did not think that everything ends here and that we are just matter.

Both protagonists continued to feel very conditioned by society, which punished them, spoke ill of them, denied them speech or friendship, judged them, as well as mistreated them psychologically for their behavior, actions, and decisions.

The values of the times instilled in the protagonists affected in a negative way. Edna, until the last moment, remained conditioned by the idea of love that was instilled in her as a child, probably by the feminine part of her family, but also nurtured by the masculine part. For a few moments, she had thought of remarrying another man whom she loved, but she realized that this love had also been born of her romantic idea of love. She realized it was a possessive idea with expectations and demands towards the other person that would also lead to burnout as soon as the halo of charm towards the other person faded. Therefore, she finally committed suicide seeing in the other world, a life in contact and development with her true self without the conditions imposed in this world. In the case of Amy, the values she has grown up with have led her to believe that she needs a man to protect and provide for her. Because of this she never tried to fight for her rights nor did she make an effort to develop herself professionally. This thinking is what led her to finally get married believing that her problems would be solved and she would gain more freedom. And that is probably the reason why she ultimately committed suicide when she saw that her ambitions did not come true after marriage.

As we have seen, the self is a part of us so valuable and at the same time so vulnerable that to know it and develop it from full consciousness and unconditional love with ourselves and in relation to the rest of creation, we would have to remove the layer of what others and ourselves believe we are, to get to one of the essences of the human being.

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