

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Every human being is unique. They are the essential parts that get mind and thought from God. They are also blessed with the capability of communicating and having social relation with the others to yield something in their life. Therefore, human usually creates a literary work as a product of society's serial thinking. Finally, it will bring a wonderful literary work of an author to be consumed by society. Because of a social relationship in society, so it brings a strong and real influence in every work of an author.

In general, an author's literary work can focus on human problem and it submits how human can overcome the problem. The human problem, which may have arisen, is his or herself destiny that should be answered. It says about conflict between class, group and even individual of a society. It is not only in a simple human problem but also in a more complex human problem of situation. Therefore, it makes human overcome his or her own problem by making a strong effort and takes risk to overcome the problem. Similarly, the human problem concerned with the important aspects like as finance, social stratification, belief, political position, also gender.

In overcoming and answering the human problem, human can find the solution by observing the human condition and analyze the relation between the human problem and the human problem's solution. The human problem's

solution will be clear and very real if they have taken the above action for example. For the next similar of the human problem, the human problem's solution can be applied very well in order to make a better condition.

The idea to overcome the human problem brings human into consideration, which is reflected by the imitation condition of life or the literary work as example of its appearance. It is because literary work as a conception of imitation implies a view of literature on a reflection of society (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972: 23). An author inspiration to his or her literary work at the time is a main point of viewing. Moreover, based on the statement of Swingewood, it seems suitable in viewing the social condition at the time. This had given the idea to one of the Victorian's controversial woman author, Kate Chopin, to present a series of criticisms to the society at the time. She talks about the condition with numbers of symbolism that have brought her literary work as the greatest and tragic novel in the history, entitled *The Awakening*.

Kate O'Flaherty Chopin was born in 1850 as a native of Missouri, who married to Oscar Chopin, the son of a wealthy Louisiana cotton grower, in 1870 and moved to New Orleans. They had six children and stay in Chopin family near Cloutierville in Natchitoches Parish. In 1882, her husband died of swamp fever, so she and the children moved back to St. Louis, where she began writing to support the family. Nearly all of her literary works set in the areas around New Orleans, Grand Isle, and Natchitoches, and concern with the Louisiana life at the time. Her early stories were well received nationally

and earned her literary fame as a "local colorist," even appearing in the first issue of *Vogue*.

The Awakening is one of the greatest and controversial classic novels by Kate Chopin. Herberth S. Stone and Company, New York, published it in 1899, which is belonging to the Victorian era that is often using to cover the whole of the nineteenth century. This novel drew a storm of criticism for the "shocking, morbid, and vulgar" story and quickly went out of print. Moreover, this literary work was not resurrected until the 1920s, when participants in the growing women's movement recognized its importance. Now, *The Awakening* is among the most-read American novels and is considered an early example of American realism.

The other interesting point of *The Awakening* is the great ability of Kate Chopin in carefully elaborating a concept of Creole women, like Edna Pontellier with the symbols to add meaning to the next text and to underline the idea, so it becomes the story alive. Therefore, the novel can submit messages by the symbolisms, the characters, and the characterizations. Because of them, the novel and the author can portray the social life phenomena of the time. In addition, *The Awakening* is a representative of the American society that happened at the time, which has been covered by Kate Chopin as a literary work.

The Awakening novel by Kate Chopin takes place in the early 1890's on the Grand Isle of Louisiana. The Grand Isle is a resort area for the wealthy. This novel's theme is about a woman named Edna who awakens to a new life

as she discovers her independence. In this novel, Edna also “awakens” to her love for Robert Lebrun and most importantly, she awakens to the knowledge that her husband is not in control of her life. Edna and Mr. Pontellier’s relationship begins to get worse after he leaves for his business trip to New York. There are two stages of Edna and Mr. Pontellier’s relationship, one of which is before Mr. Pontellier’s trip to New York and the other is after he leaves (<http://www.bookrags.com/essays/story/2005/5/2/02010/78238>).

Based on the phenomena, this novel is very possible to be analyzed by using sociological approach because this is a social novel with a perpetual relevance in its exploration of the human efforts to bring into reality of the personal aspiration with social norms and social values. Simply, this novel can say the portrait and the influence of the American society at the time. Because a literary work will not and never appears in the world without a society.

B. Literary Review

The Awakening is a quite interesting novel to be discussed so it is no weird thing if there are many researchers interested in conducting their studies on his work. Moreover, there are some reviews of *The Awakening* in (<http://kclibrary.nhmccd.edu/awakening.htm>).

Even though, as far as the researcher know, there is no research based on a sociological analysis of the influence of American society in *The Awakening* novel conducted by researchers at least in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, State University of Surakarta, State University of

Semarang, Diponegoro University, Gajah Mada University, and Muria Kudus University.

C. Research Problem

Based on the title and the background of the research clarified above, there is a single problem: “What is the influence of American society in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*?”

D. Research Objective

The objectives of the research are:

1. To analyze the novel based on the structural elements, by finding character and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, style, and theme.
2. To analyze the novel based on the sociological perspective, by identifying social background of the latest nineteenth century American society.

E. Research Limitation

The limitation of the research is the analysis of the American society in the late of nineteenth century as reflected in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*.

F. Research Benefit

The benefits expected from this research are as follows:

1. Theoretical benefit: to give some contributions to the larger body in knowledge particularly studies in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*.

2. Practical benefit: to give deeper understandings in literary field as the reference to the other researchers in analyzing this novel using different perspective.

G. Research Methodology

1. Type of the Research

The type of the research is qualitative or library research, whose data are based on non-human sources, especially the printed materials.

2. Object of the Research

The object of the research is Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. The researcher uses sociological development theory to analyze the data.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Sources

The data in this research is taken from the novel that consists of words, phrases, and sentences.

The data sources in this story are literary data, which are divided into two categories, primary and secondary data sources.

- a. The primary data are taken from the novel of *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, that is published by Herberth S. Stone and Company, New York.
- b. The secondary data are taken from some references and materials related to the research by picking up either from books or internets.

4. Method of the Data Collection

The method of the data collection is done through documentation or library research. Some steps of the data collection are:

1. Reading and comprehending the novel repeatedly.
2. Collecting, recording the evidence, and taking notes of the information in both primary and secondary data.
3. Arranging the data into several information based on its classifications.
4. Developing the data provided.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

In analyzing the novel, the researcher uses descriptive analysis technique. It is begun with the author and her novel, the structural analysis of the novel, and finally sociological analysis of the novel. This is an interpretation of the text and content analysis to get the characteristic of the data in using sociological analysis of the novel *The Awakening*.

H. Research Organization

This research consists of six chapters. *Chapter I* is introduction, which explains the research background, literary review, research problem, research objective, research limitation, research benefit, research methodology, and the last is research organization. *Chapter II* comprises of the underlying theory, which presents notion of sociology on literature, major principles of sociology on literature, structural elements of the novel, and theoretical application. *Chapter III* is the social background of American in the latest nineteenth

century, which consists of social, economic, political, science and technology, cultural, and religious aspects. *Chapter IV* is structural analysis of the novel, which includes the structural elements of character and characterization, setting, point of view, plot, style, theme and discussion. *Chapter V* constitutes sociological analysis of the novel. The last is *Chapter VI* contains conclusion and discussion.