

**IRRESPONSIBILITY IN EDITH WHARTON'S *THE AGE OF
INNOCENCE* NOVEL (1920) :
A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**



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ABSTRACT

This Study is about Irresponsibility in Edith Wharton's The Age of Innocence novel (1920) which is analyzed by using psychoanalytic approach. The objectives of the research paper is to analyze the novel based on psychoanalytic approach by Sigmud Freud. This research paper appertain to descriptive qualitative research. Data of the research paper are divided into two part, primary data and secondary data. The primary data of the research is The Age of Innoence novel by author Edith Wharton in 1920. While secondary data of the research are other materials taken from some books, author biographies, virtual refference about The age of Innocence novel to support the analysis. The method to analyze of this data is descriptive analysis. The researcher describes two discussions in his research. The first, based on structural analysis it shows that Newland Archer delivers moral message in The Age of Innocence. The second, based on psychoanalytic approach analysis it shows that in The Age of Innocence novel Newland Archer illustrates psychological phenomena in which in individual is irresponsible at the beginning story. Then, when the story will over he becomes responsible.

Keywords: Irresponsibility, The Age of Innocence, Psychoanalytic Approach

A. Introduction

Literature is expression of life in the world of some thoughts, feeling or idea about experience human life in the world. Literature also the writing or the study of books, valued as works of art (drama, fiction, essay, poetry, biography). In particular novel can be analyzed in several points of view. It can be analyzed from the moral, characters, setting, theme, plot and point of view. Moral has a close relationship with character, because moral is reflected by character. Character is the element of novel and morals is characterization of the character. Characters of the story are the person which are there is in a narrative novel. Moral is very basic description of the character in the some novel. Moral has mean attitude and habits. The readers can understand their morals by identifying their utterance, expression, and what the characters do.

Morals is one of the basic element of literature. Morals is basic reflection of the moral behavior or moral attitudes, for better or for it is worse. According to Adam Smith (2002: 20) stated that the book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the book contains about description the morals is basic element of the person. Moral sentiment has relationship with moral responsibility. Not everyone tries to escape from moral responsibility when they have been involved in something bad. Responsibility is moral or positive attitude of someone to do something right. Moral responsibility is even more important in our lives and in how we think of ourselves. According to Lucas (1995: 34), responsibility is described about moral of answerability, which the obligation to answer the question. He also states that about negative responsibility or irresponsibility. Moral responsibility has relationship with moral irresponsibility

Moral irresponsibility as failure to respond to the goodness of persons (Brian Lewis, 2013: 17). This attitude has harmed other people in the society or in their environment. Because, this attitude does not receive in the society. This attitude is done because that person is not satisfied with

what they have gotten. This also can be done because of someone's selfishness. Using psychoanalytic theory someone to know about moral responsible and irresponsible of characters in the novel story.

Then, we must know about theory of psychoanalytic and who introduces the theory of psychoanalytic. Sigmund Freud is known as the first man who introduces the theory of psychoanalytic theory in 1856. The most influential theories in the field was of personality has been Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). He conceived the first comprehensive theory of personality and after nearly a century, his theory remains the most detailed and original yet formulated. Bootzin (1986: 454). According to Gilmer (1948:60), psychoanalytic theory sees the working of our instincts and emotions as a product of the dynamic interaction between our instincts and the counter forces set up by the external environment. And the researcher will be analysis novel of Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. The next paragraph will be explain about *The Age of Innocence* and the story *The age of Innocence*.

The Age of Innocence is Edith Warton's novel. The novel is consist of two section, book one and book two. In the book one is divided to eighteen chapter. Then in the book two is divided to sixteen chapter. The novel is about triangle love story. The story is set in upper-class New York City in the 1870s. The novel story is very interesting to reader. There are a little summary of story *The age of Innocence*. The story began by Newland Archer is a young man, popular, successful lawyer living with his mother and sister in an elegant New York City house. Newland Archer will be engaged with May Welland is one of rich families, scarred and beautiful. Newland Archer's life become different when he meets Countess Ellen Olenska, she is May Welland sister. He meets Countess Ellen Olenska at New York City's fashionable Academy of Music. Through his relationship with her, then his love begins with Countess Ellen Olenska and he always try to say if he serious.

There are three reasons why the researcher is interested in studying this novel. The first is *The Age of Innocence* has an interesting story. The story tells about centers on an upper-class couple's impending marriage, and the introduction of a woman plagued by scandal whose presence threatens their happiness. The second novel is one of literary review that tells story, characteristics, sequence of events of human life. Novel also gives emotional feeling to the reader and everyone who read. The third about moral conflicts in this novel. Not a few moral messages conveyed in this story. From the novel story is not only conveyed the messages about the deep story, but also conveyed about description irresponsibility in the novel *The Age of Innocence*. In particular, irresponsibility of main character in the novel of *The Age of Innocence*, he is Newland Archer, because he is irresponsible with his marriage. He does not give a happiness to May Welland. Whereas May Welland is Newland Archer's wife. He is disappointed by May Welland. In their marriage, Newland Archer is dishonest. He falls in love with Ellen Olenska. Although May Welland knows about it, she has still faithful.

From above the explanation, the researcher is really interested in analyzing irresponsibility of Newland Archer at Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* novel. The study will be analyzed by using Psychoanalytic Approach. So, the researcher entitles this research **Irresponsibility In Edith Wharton's *The Age Of Innocence* Novel (1920) : A Psychoanalytic Approach.**

B. Research Method

This study belongs to qualitative method (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). In this method, divided to two types of data source, primary data and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novel itself, meanwhile the secondary data sources are other materials to support the study. Both data are collected through library research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3).

In collecting data, the researcher will takes some steps as follow: reading the novel until know, taking notes for important primary data and secondary data source, arranging the data into several groups based on its theoretical category, selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis, drawing conclusion and discussion.

In analyzing the data, the researcher applies a descriptive approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 11). The researcher analyzes the data based on psychoanalytic approach. Focus on the meaning of irresponsibility reflected in Newland Archer's *The Age of Innocence* novel.

C. Research Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

In analyzing irresponsibility in Newland Archer's *The Age of Innocence* novel, the researcher gets two findings that first contain in structure of personality divided to *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. Second contain in irresponsibility.

a. Structure of Personality

The *id*, *ego* and *superego* will be used to analyze Newland Archer's structure of personality. The three elements take a big role in developing the idea of Newland Archer's mind. The *id* is ambition of Newland Archer to marry by May Welland (his fiance), but he also fall in love with Ellen Olenska (May's sister). The *ego* is divided to be two parts namely: the first, Newland Archer to marry by May Welland, but relationship without love. Then, the second when Newland Archer get

married with May Welland, he also fall in love and dishonest with Ellen Olenska. Many reasons that caused him unpleased with his condition. The *superego* when Newland Archer will to go on a long trip, suddenly May Welland told to Newland archer if her pregnant, then since that time Newland Archer knows his wife is very faithful.

1) *Id*

The id Newland Archer emerges when Newland Archer's *ego* is happening. The first Newland Archer is felt disturbed by Ellen Olenska (May sister) when he will marry with May Welland. Because, Ellen will divorce with her husband (Countess Olenska). And at that time in New York city divorce is unacceptable. Newland Archer as the lawyer, he save the Welland family's reputation. A law partner of Newland asks him to dissuade Countess Olenska from divorcing cases. He succeeds, but in the process to save her from divorce case, he afraid of falling in love with Ellen.

2) *Ego*

The *ego*, it comes when Newland Archer will save the Welland family's reputation, a law partner of Newland asks him to dissuade Countess Olenska from divorcing the count, then Newland Archer go to Ellen Olenska's house. Since that time Newland Archer fall in love with her. Until he get married with May Welland, he still fall in love and dishonest with Ellen Olenska.

3) *Superego*

Superego emerges from Newland Archer, when he will leave May Welland (his wife) to go together with Ellen Olenska. The dinner is over, Newland and May go to the library. Newland starts to confess once again, but says instead that he needs to go on a long trip because he is very tired. May explains that the doctor might not let her go along, and she reveals that she has already told both her mother and mother-in-law that she is pregnant. It dawns on Newland that the conversation she had with Ellen two weeks earlier was about her pregnancy. She watches Newland intently

as she asks if he minds. In questioning her, he finds that she told Ellen this news long before she was sure.

b) Irresponsibility

Moral irresponsibility as failure to respond to the goodness of persons (Brian Lewis, 2013: 17). This attitude has harmed other people in the society or in their environment. Because, this attitude does not receive in the society. This attitude is done because that person is not satisfied with what they have gotten. This also can be done because of someone's selfishness. Example, someone is given trustness and other person abused it. Irresponsibility of Newland Archer when he will marry with May Welland, but he also fall in love with Ellen Olenska.

2. Discussion

The Age of Innocence (1920) novel by Edith Wharton is a wonderful romance novel and very interesting novel. There is an important thing that the researcher wants to explain about: characters, setting, theme, plot, point of view, style of *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel. The researcher explains major characters and minor characters. The major characters is Newland Archer, May welland, and Ellen Olenska. The minor characters is Mrs. Manson Mingott and Mrs. Augusta Welland. The narrator described the setting of place in the New York City. The first place at New York City's fashionable Academy of Music. In this place is opera house music, and many people together to see music performance. Second at Mrs Mingott's house, where the pleasantries turn to the family blessing, the engagement ring for the wedding day, and wedding party. Third at Ellen olenska's house. Ellen olenska's house is rented house "far down West 23rd Street," in a strange, Bohemian quarter. Fourth at Newland Archer's house, Newland has dinner with his mother and sister Janey, and he learns that the Countess visited them while he was away. Newlnd and family meet together to dinner after he return on evening. Fifth at Washington, Soon it

is November and four months have passed since Newland last saw Ellen, who is now living in Washington with her aunt. Sixth at library on East 39th Street.

The narrator uses the traditional plot. The plot consist of exposition, complication, climax, and resolution. The exposition expalain about story begins with Newland Archer`s, he is the gentlemen lawyer, hansome, and rich. The complication explain about conflict is divided into two, namely internal conflict and external conflict. The climax explain about the climax of the story happened when back in New York and under renewed pressure from Newland, Ellen relents and agrees to consummate their relationship. The resolution explain about when Twenty-six years later, after May's death, Newland and his son are in Paris. The son, learning that his mother's cousin lives there, has arranged to visit Ellen in her Paris apartment. The style that the writer used is very supported the story. It gives strong characteristic to the character. The narrator uses dialogue and narration by implemented short and long grammatical structure. The narrator also uses many figurative languages, and symbols.

Based on the psychoanalytic analysis above, the researcher found that the main character has a good and bad psychological condition. It described from the *id* Newland Archer emerges when Newland Archer's *ego* is happening. The *ego*, it comes when Newland Archer after his married with May. He will save the Welland family's reputation. Then Newland Archer go to Ellen Olenska's house. Since that time Newland Archer fall in love with her. *Superego* emerges from Newland Archer, when he leave May Welland (his wife) to go together with Ellen Olenska. When their dinner and over and Newland and May go to the library. Newland starts to confess once again, but says instead that he needs to go on a long trip because he is very tired. May explains that the doctor might not let her go along, and she reveals that she has already told both her mother that she is pregnant.

After that he is conscious. The researcher had analyze the *id*, *ego*, and *superego* which are reflected on the main character of the novel. The researcher assumed that charecteristic of Newland Archer is irresponsible. But he also responsible in the end story of *The Age of Innocence* novel. Whereas our live in the world, we must responsible while doing something.

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher would like to draw some conclusions as follows: First, based on structural analysis it shows that Edith Wharton delivers moral message in *The Age of Innocence* novel. *The Age of Innocence* novel tells about romance conflic story three person. The plot in this story is traditional plot and tells about Newland Archer is a young lawyer, popular, and handsome. He will be get married with May Welland but he also fall in love with Ellen Olenska, she is May Welland sister. Style used in *The Age of Innocence* novel is standard English language. Standard English is used by the Narrator to deliver the story to the readers, also the conversation between Newland Archer with May Welland and Ellen Olenska. *The Age of Innocence* novel tells about someone who has bad circumstance in her life but she has positive self-concept to face it. From that reasons she creates the character, situation, plot like that and overall it is in a set of unit.

Second conclusion, it shows that in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* novel illustrates psychological phenomena in which individual is someone which initially irresponsible. When he knows that his responsible is very important for his family, he is conscious. *The Age of Innocence* novel illustrates psychological phenomena that contained in its story. The story tells Newland Archer which one at the beginning of the story until half of the story, he is irresponsible to his wife and dishonest. But in the end of the story, he is conscious that his wife faithful and always love him. The struggle his wife make him proud and Conscious. Although

initially Newland Archer irresponsible, but he knows and conscious to be responsible. Since his wife die, he tried to responsible care for his children and love him.

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