

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

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A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**

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ABSTRACT

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*This study is aimed to reveal the hesitancy in *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel by Edith Wharton. The major problem of this study is hesitancy when the first time he love with his fiancée, namely is May Welland. One more time, his life changes when he meets Countess Ellen Olenska, May cousin but also have love affair with her. May offers to release him from their engagement, and he can marry the woman he truly loves. May appears to trust him, at least at first. Thus hesitancy occurs when he will engaged with May Welland, he must to settle and handle divorce cases May cousin that is Ellen. He and Mr. Letterblair will discuss divorce case between Ellen and her husband. Newland Archer feels hesitancy because he not sure can solve divorce this cases. The objective of this study is to analyze Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel on the structural elements and analyze this novel based on Psychoanalytic Approach.*

*The researcher employs descriptive qualitative research. The researcher uses two types of data sources. The source of primary data is Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel. The secondary data sources are from books, biography of the author, journals, and internet sources related to the study. The two kinds of data collected through library research and the technique of data collection is descriptive analysis.*

*Based on the research, the researcher draws the following conclusions. First, the study shows that the problem which is faced by the major character is love affair. Newland Archer feels hesitated about his love between May Welland or Ellen. Newland Archer learns she had always known of his continued love for Ellen, because he surrendered the thing most meaningful to him out of loyalty to their marriage. Second, based on psychoanalytic approach in id, ego, superego and the hesitancy of physiological the major character reflected in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel.*

Keywords: hesitancy, the age of innocence, psychoanalytic approach

A. Introduction

The Age of Innocence has become one of the popular novels Edith Wharton novel is far more than a romantic tale of a love. A tale of nineteenth-century New York high society in which a young lawyer falls in love with a woman separated from her husband, while he is engaged to the woman's cousin. Edith Wharton's literary works is rather conservative, so he often given surprise to the reader about life style and attitude. He is spirited to let loose the irregular attitude of the character in his novel. As novelist author, he tries how the people life through a complicated research. His work is as a mean to state the opinion, response and sympathy to the social, love affair condition in his time to the present readers.

The story of *The Age of Innocence* is set in upper-class New York City in the 1870s. It is very interesting to be read because this novel reveals some real conflict in human life, such as psychology problems, sex deviation, divorce, and also discrimination between upper and lower class. *The Age of Innocence* describes the lives between Newland Archer, May Welland and Ellen Ollenska. It deals explicit with themes of sexuality, that is considered taboo for woman leave her husband and chooses to love someone else.

The issues of the hesitancy the major character in *The Age of Innocence* novel is reflected well. The major character Newland Archer is described as the young and gentleman lawyer and he is one of New York City's best families. The story began when he couldn't be more pleased with his recent engagement with May. Then, his life changes, after he meets Countess Ellen Olenska, a May's cousin. Society in New York already avoid Ellen because her divorce with her husband. A divorce in New York culture is very contemptible. Newland wants help divorce cases of Ellen. But, he is in love with Ellen, despite with his engagement. The whole parts of the novel describe condition where Newland Archer wants married May, but he has a love affair with Ellen.

B. Literature Review

The researcher has searched other researches that analyzed *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel in library and internet. The researcher finds many researches that conducted on the research of hesitancy by using psychoanalytic approach in different issues and theory. There are as follows:

The first is research paper written by Bina Widyawati (English Education Study Program Faculty Of Teacher Training And Education Ahmad Dahlan University Yogyakarta: 2007), The researcher uses a Psychological Study to analyze the data and uses *The Age of Innocence* novel as the object. She research about the love and duty. The writer discusses about The Values of Love and Duty of Newland Archer's personalities with using Psychological Approach. The second research paper is study conducted by Mustika Salamah (UNNES: 2010) in this research paper entitled "The Influence of Social Norms on Individual Manners in The End of 19th Century Entitled The Age of Innocence In Edith Wharton's Novel. The theory uses A Sociological Approach".

C. Problem Statement

The problem statement of the research is "How is hesitancy of Newland Archer reflected in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* novel (1920)?"

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher focus on analyzing Hesitancy of Newland Archer reflected in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* novel (1920) by using a Psychoanalytic Approach.

E. Underlying Theory

This chapter deals with underlying theory. This research paper used psychoanalytic approach to analyze the novel because the theory of psychoanalytic has a big deal with human psyche, which can be used to analyze the major character's psychological condition.

a. Notion of Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud is known as the first man who introduces the theory of psychoanalytic theory in 1856. The most influential theories in the field 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).

He was interested in human psyche especially in unconscious mind. According to him there are three parts of mind; conscious, pre-conscious, and unconscious. Freud said that the conscious and preconscious are the smallest parts of the mind, while the unconscious is the biggest part of the mind (Boeree, <http://www.ship.edu/html>). The unconscious mind is everything that is difficult to be brought to the conscious mind, such as instinct and desire and also something we cannot reach out, such as memory, emotion, and traumatic. The unconscious mind is the centre of motivation in our body (Boeree, <http://www.ship.edu/html>).

The illustration above that the conscious mind has a small position in the mind but it is connecting our mind with all objects of the world. The position of conscious mind is in the middle of the reality and *ego*, and the *superego* is near it. *Id* is under of it has the big portion in the conscious mind, and the lower one is human physical needs that need more and more every day.

b. The Structure of Personality

1) The *Id*

The *Id* is the prime-mover; it is the source of all psychic energy. The psychic energy or drive within it called the libido, if left totally unchecked, will lead to amorous activities and if fully checked will lead to damming up of libido. Both are dangerous, to the society and to the individual respectively. The form of *id* such as wish, motivation, needs

occurs spontaneously. The examples are thirst, hunger, cool, sex, and the other experiences show presence a need.

The *Id* is governed by the pleasure principle, with an overriding goal maximizing to pleasure and eliminating tensions and conflicts associated with achieving pleasure. The *id* works in keeping with the pleasure principle “The pleasure principle does not take into account the feelings of others, society norms, or agreements between people” (Newman 1983: 385). According to Hall, (1980: 29) the purpose of pleasure principle is to make someone free from stress or at least reducing stress. Still according to him, stress is the situation in which someone suffers, and need a help to avoid it. The action of helping from stress is called pleasure and satisfaction.

2) The *Ego*

The *ego* is governed by reality principle instead of pleasure principle that governs the *id*. There is that small portion of the mind we discussed before, the conscious that concerns with the senses. The *ego* relates to reality by means of its consciousness, and it searches for objects to satisfy the wishes that *id* creates to represent the needs. It needs problem- solving to be balanced in reality. This problem-solving activity is called the secondary process. Unlike the *id*, the *ego* distinguishes between reality and fantasy, tolerates moderate amounts of tension, changes as function of new experience and endanger in rational cognitive activity (Feist, 1985:90). According to Hall (1980: 55) the activity of problem-solving stated above is called Identification. Identification here is the process of differentiate, memorize, percentage, compare and consider what has been demanded by the *id* as the subjective factor, with the environment as the objective factor.

3) The *Superego*

The third part of personality called the *superego* is the moral censor, which is identified with the voice of conscience. The *superego* is

partially unconscious and partially conscious. So, the man in psychoanalysis is a primitive being, driven by pleasure dominating principles, being exposed to external world. *Ego* meets the demands of id by channelizing it to the activities acceptable to external world that are being censored by the *superego*.

The main functional of *superego* is for decide whether does is right or wrong good or bad, and moral or amoral in standard authorized by the society. *Superego* cannot release itself the rules, norms, and belief of the society. Hall states that “*superego* is morality element branch of justice from personal system; *superego* is the internal representative of traditional values and evaluative norms” (Hall, 1988:35).

The *superego* has two systems, the conscious and the *ego* ideal. The conscious is resulted from experiences with punishment for improper behavior by giving quit feeling. Meanwhile the *ego* ideal develops when a child is rewarded for proper behavior (Feist, 1985:27). Boeree, 2003, supports this statement. He states that there are two aspects to the *superego*: One is the conscience, which is an internalization of punishments and warnings. The other is called the *ego* ideal. It derives from rewards and positive models presented to the child. The conscience and *ego* ideal communicate their requirements to the *ego* with feelings like pride, shame, and guilt (Boeree, <http://www.ship.edu/html>).

c. Notion of Hesitancy

In human life might have an experience in differences quality of hesitancy, although there is no matter of individual that is doubted. Every human being has a belief in some cases, for example, a person has faith in himself and in presence of the natural surroundings and feeling, but he gets hesitancy on various matters. Person will experience a real doubt in certain parts of the case. Sometimes, factors of doubt felling come from psychology problems, internal aspect of humans, and of thought. Hesitancy is one of factor from psychology problems. Hesitancy is *ego*. *Ego* feels as if it can be

disappeared by those powers. Hesitancy is an attitude of doubt feeling and confusion from human in face of problems life. The feeling of threatened is called hesitancy.

Hesitancy is an attitude that describes distrust towards something that will not necessarily be the truth. Adler (1956:83) states that some people hesitate or vacillate when faced with difficult problems. Their procrastination eventually gives them the excuse “It’s too late now.” Adler believed that most compulsive behaviors are attempts to waste time. Compulsive hand washing, retracting one’s steps, behaving in an obsessive orderly manner, destroying work already begun, and leaving work unfinished are examples of hesitation. Although hesitating may appear to other people to be self-defeating, it allows neurotic individuals to preserve their inflated sense of self-esteem.

Hesitancy is included in decision-making theory that can satisfy these major properties of decision-making as well as some others. The first requirement in approaching decisions in a psychologically fresh way is to address the issue of why decisions happen at all – that is why there exists hesitancy. The state of hesitancy is a failure of decision-making processes that normally produce action. We need to make a decision when the course of action because of an inner conflict, “objective” uncertainty, cognitive ambiguity, conflicting information or some other reason. Thus, obvious decisions are usually not considered to be decisions at all, so what are usually thought of decisions are cases of hesitancy. But rather than pinning the distinction on a property such as intentionality, as some models do (Kahneman, 2003) the model I am proposing pins its distinction to a less metaphysically burdened notion of mere hesitancy.

However, the change goes beyond merely renaming the old distinction. The reason why previous “no-decisions” are now made an integral part of decision-making model is because they serve as a model for

all decisions. In other words, each agent is trying, when hesitant, to bring himself into the state of action, that is, the state in which decisions become obvious again. The appreciation of the connection between certainty of attitudes and behavioral action has a long history and a strong empirical record. In addition, it has been shown (Buturovic-Bradaric, 2010) that experimentally manipulated feeling of obviousness influences one's willingness to act on it, which corroborates the importance of certainty in decision-making.

F. RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used a qualitative research. It is a library research while data sources need literary data. This kind of research has purpose to analyze literature using psychoanalytic approach. The first step of conducting the research is determining the type of the study. The second is determining the object of the study. Then the third is determining data and data sources. The fourth is determining the technique of data collection, and the fifth is determining technique of data analysis. The object of the study of the research is *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel, written by Edith Wharton`s.

G. RESEARCH FINDING

1. Analysis of Structural Elements of the Novel

a. Character and Characterization (Major Character)

1) Newland Archer

Newland Archer is the main character in the story. Newland Archer is a young gentleman A gentleman simply stayed at home and abstained.” (Edith Wharton: *TAOI*, 1920: 78) *Physically*, he is not tall and he has a little short dark curls hair.

2) May Welland

May is fiancée, then wife of Newland Archer. She wants to be a perfect wife and mother. She is a young woman, tall, her face

glowed. She is also calm. “As he looked at May, returning flushed and calm from her final bull's-eye, he had the feeling that he had never yet lifted that curtain.” (Edith Wharton: *TAOI*, 1920: 161)

3) Ellen Olenska

Ellen is May's cousin and Mrs. Manson Minggot granddaughter. She is a young woman. She became countess by marrying Polish Count Olenski, a European nobleman. “The Countess Olenska was the only young woman at the dinner” (Edith Wharton: *TAOI*, 1920: 48)

b. Setting

The setting of place which is described in *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel is mainly located in New York and Paris. New York is the name of town in United States. The places are divided into the novel as namely: Opera House, The Beaufort's House, Mrs. Mingot's House, Ellen Olenska's House, Newland Archer's House, and Library on East 39th Street, Newport in Rhode Island, Washington, and Paris.

The setting of time described in *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel is in the era of 1920's. It is proved by the used of several brands by the character in the story. The first story of the novel starts on January evening of the early seventies in Faust at the Academy of Music in New York.

c. Plot

a) Exposition

The Age of Innocence (1996) novel explains exposition on part one, which is described on chapter 1 until 3. The most beginning of the story tells the main character, Newland Archer. He is young gentleman lawyer and he is one of New York City best families. He wants to marry with May Welland, because he really

love her, and keep their relationship. His life changes when he meets Countess Ellen Olenska. Recently, Ellen Olenska has returned to New York from Europe after scandalously separating herself from a bad marriage with Polish Count Olenski.

b) Conflict

1) Internal conflict

The internal conflict that happens when Ellen Olenska decides to divorce Count Olenski causes a social crisis for the other members of her family, who are terrified of scandal and disgrace. Then, Newland Archer's internal conflict is when he tells about his feeling that he loved Ellen. She responds, but is horrified that their love will aggrieve May. She agrees to remain in America, separated but still married to Count Olenski, only if they do not sexually consummate their love. Newland receives May's telegram agreeing to wed sooner.

2) External Conflict

The external conflict that is faced by Newland Archer and May is their marriage. He tries unsuccessfully to forget Ellen. His society marriage is loveless, and his social life once so absorbing has become empty and joyless. Though Ellen lives in Washington and has remained distant, and he is unable to cease loving her. Their paths cross while he and May are in Newport. Newland Archer discovers that Count Olenski wishes Ellen to return to him, but she has refused, although her family wants to reconcile with her husband and return to Europe. The other external conflict is Newland Archer desperately seeks a way to leave May and be with Ellen, obsessed with how to finally possess her. Despairing of ever making Ellen his wife, he urges her to become his mistress. Then, Ellen is recalled to New York

City to care for her grandmother, because her grandmother are sick, who accepts her decision to remain separated and agrees to reinstate her allowance.

d. Climax

The climax of the story happened when Newland have a love affair with May's cousin is Ellen. Then, when Ellen relents and agrees to consummate their relationship with him. However, Newland discovers that Ellen has decided to return to Europe. He makes up his mind to abandon May and follow Ellen to Europe. May announces that she and Newland are throwing a farewell party for Ellen. In the night, after the party to begin Newland resolves to tell May that he is leaving her for Ellen. May interrupts him to tell him that she learned that morning that she is pregnant. She reveals that she had told Ellen of her pregnancy two weeks earlier, despite not being sure about it. The implication is that she did because she suspected about love affair.

e. Resolution

The resolution of the conflict is when Twenty-six years later, after wife of Newland Archer is namely May's death, he and his son are in Paris. He was staying with his son in a hotel. The son learning that his mother's cousin lives there. They have arranged to visit and to meet Ellen in Paris. Ellen lived in a Apartment. Newland is stunned at the prospect of seeing Ellen again. On arriving outside the apartment, Newland to sends up his son alone to meet Ellen. While he waits at outside, he see a balcony of her apartment. Newland considers going up, but in the end decides not to, he walks back to his hotel without seeing Ellen Olenska.

f. Causality

Causality is the part of the story, which is show that the events are, related each other. The causality of *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel is described clearly and easy to be understood.

g. Plausibility

The plausibility is the sequences of the major character that changes the life. The plausibility is happen logically. It had change the major character`s personality life. In *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel, the changing of the character`s life can be seen in Newland Archer as major characters.

h. Point of view

The narrator of the story combined both major character as first participant and second participant. The major character as first participant means that the narrator introduces major and minor character as a character in the novel story. The narrator successfully combined the characters into good conversation or dialogues.

i. Style

The style of *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel points out that there are many things involved for example, diction, grammatical structure, sentence construction, figurative language, imagery and symbol.

j. Theme

The theme that present in *The Age of Innocence* (1920) novel is described clearly. The theme is a triangle love and loyalty. Triangle love is that happen between a Newland Archer with May Welland, and he with May`s cousin namely Ellen Olenska. He is very love with May, and he was engagement to May is one in a string of accomplishments. They will be married. His life changes when he meets May`s cousin that is Countess Ellen Olenska. When he assures May that he loves only with her, May

appears to trust him, at least at first. At the story start they relationship as younger cousin, and only as friendship. A short time later Newland will be love with Ellen.

1. Conclusion

The research had analyzed the structural elements of the novel, and the issue of hesitancy in major character. The message that the researcher wants to convey is difference in age not an obstacle between the couple human being that everlasting. Because, the love is change everything and also unites feeling one of another. Love should make your life more useful; love should make your feel happy, and many other expressions. The narrator describes the way to maintain, struggle of life, and left egoism for shake of the true love. The narrator had successfully delivered the message that age is not a matter to have intimate relationship by giving description that the major characters. The narrator illustrates a psychological phenomenon in which a man and a woman fall in love and a man love with other woman.

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