



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***PROPRIETY OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW
WOMAN IN KATE CHOPIN'S SELECTED FICTION***

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**PROPRIETY OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW WOMAN IN KATE
CHOPIN'S SELECTED FICTION**

By

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June 2012

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Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

This dissertation tries to depict Kate Chopin's protagonists' quests for autonomy, self-determination and freedom aligned with nineteenth century female traditions of New Woman's writing. Chopin deploys some features of the modernist form to refute the Victorian era's rigid system of normative ethics and this study attempts to show Chopin's modernist disillusionment with Victorian society's convention through her depiction of the emergence of modern New Women in her selected fiction. Feminist and psychoanalytical critical approaches are employed to interpret the modern features of the selected texts. The first critical chapter, *At Fault*, "Lilacs" and "Two Portraits", unravels how Catholicism and patriarchal hegemonic ideology of the fin-de-siècle served as the primary sources of women's oppression and their limitation. This chapter also introduces Chopin's early works as a prologue to her more anthologized works and to

show her subtextual intention to depict characters who can emerge, in later works, as more developed, liberated and rebellious females with modern attitudes. This dissertation traces the ways in which the protagonists possess or anticipate the New Woman's attributions. *The Awakening*, "A Point at Issue", "The Story of an Hour" and "A Pair of Silk Stockings" are put in the second critical chapter to examine how the female protagonists adopt the New Woman's visions to disregard the propriety code of society. The heroines strive to denounce the gospel of motherly self-sacrifice and dismantle the female domestic confinements within patriarchal social orders. All these quests for individuality, self-fulfillment and freedom which were practiced or envisioned by the heroines anticipate the New Woman's traits and creeds which are examples of a modernist writer's obsessions. *The Awakening's* heroine personality development and her individuation process have not been deservedly examined on psychoanalytic grounds combined with feminist perspective. Thus, the last critical chapter looks at Edna Pontellier's revolt from the eyes of Jung's, Briggs Myers' and Erikson's psychological theories of human life transition to identify the phases through which Edna Pontellier passes on her journey towards self-discovery. This dissertation tries to delineate that some of the psychological and cultural processes she experiences in her transformation into a new identity are akin to New Woman's feeling and ideals.

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Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KEWAJARAN KEMUNCULAN WANITA BARU DALAM BEBERAPA KARYA
FIKSYEN OLEH KATE CHOPIN**

Oleh

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Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Rosli Talif, PhD

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Disertasi ini cuba menggambarkan pencarian Kate Chopin terhadap watak protagonis, autonomi dan kebebasan wanita dalam penentuan nasib sendiri sejajar dengan tradisi abad kesembilan belas tentang penulisan Wanita Baru. Chopin melaksanakan beberapa ciri bentuk moden untuk menyangkal sistem yang ketat bagi etika normatif era Victorian. Oleh itu, Kajian ini cuba menunjukkan rasa kecewa Chopin terhadap konvensyen masyarakat Victoria melalui gambaran beliau tentang kemunculan wanita moden baru dalam beberapa fiksyennya. Feminis dan pendekatan kritikan psikoanalitikal (psychoanalytical) bertujuan untuk mentafsir ciri-ciri moden teks-teks yang dipilih. Antra bab-bab kritikan yang pertama, *At Fault*, “Lilacs” dan “Two Portraits”. Walau bagaimanapun agama Katolik dan ideologi patriarchal hegemonic

fin-de-siecle merupakan sumber utama penindasan yang terhad kepada wanita. Bab ini juga bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan kerja-kerja awal Chopin sebagai prolog kepada kerja-kerja yang lebih bersifat antologi dan menunjukkan hasrat subteksual Chopin untuk menggambarkan kemunculan watak-watak. Di samping itu, ia juga bertujuan untuk menunjukkan sifat wanita lebih maju, bebas dan berani dengan sikap moden. Disertasi ini cuba mengesan proses watak protagonis dan mengambil bahagian dalam perjuangan Wanita Baru. *The Awakening*, "A Point at Issue", "The Story of an Hour" dan "A Pair of Silk Stockings" dimasukkan ke dalam bab kritikan kedua untuk mengenalpasti cara protagonis wanita mengadaptasi visi Wanita Baru, tanpa mengambil kira kesesuaian kod masyarakat. Wira-wira wanita berusaha untuk mengutuk fahaman perasaan pengorbanan keibuan dan menghapuskan pantang larang bagi wanita dalam amalan patriarki sosial. Semua usaha untuk individualiti, keperluan sendiri, dan kebebasan yang diinginkan oleh wira-wira wanita baru dan pegangan-pegangan itu merupakan contoh obsesi seorang penulis moden. Pembangunan personaliti heroin kebangkitan dan proses individualiti tidak diteliti dengan sewajarnya atas alasan psikoanalitik yang digabungkan dengan feminis. Manakala, bab kritikan yang terakhir melihat pemberontakan Edna Pontellier dari mata Jung, Briggs Myers dan teori-teori psikologi Erikson peralihan kehidupan manusia untuk mengenal pasti fasa-fasa yang dilalui oleh Edna Pontellier ke arah penemuan-diri. Disertasi ini juga cuba untuk menggambarkan bahawa beberapa proses psikologi dan budaya pengalamannya dalam transformasi itu ke dalam identiti baru seperti perasaan Wanita Baru dan ideal.

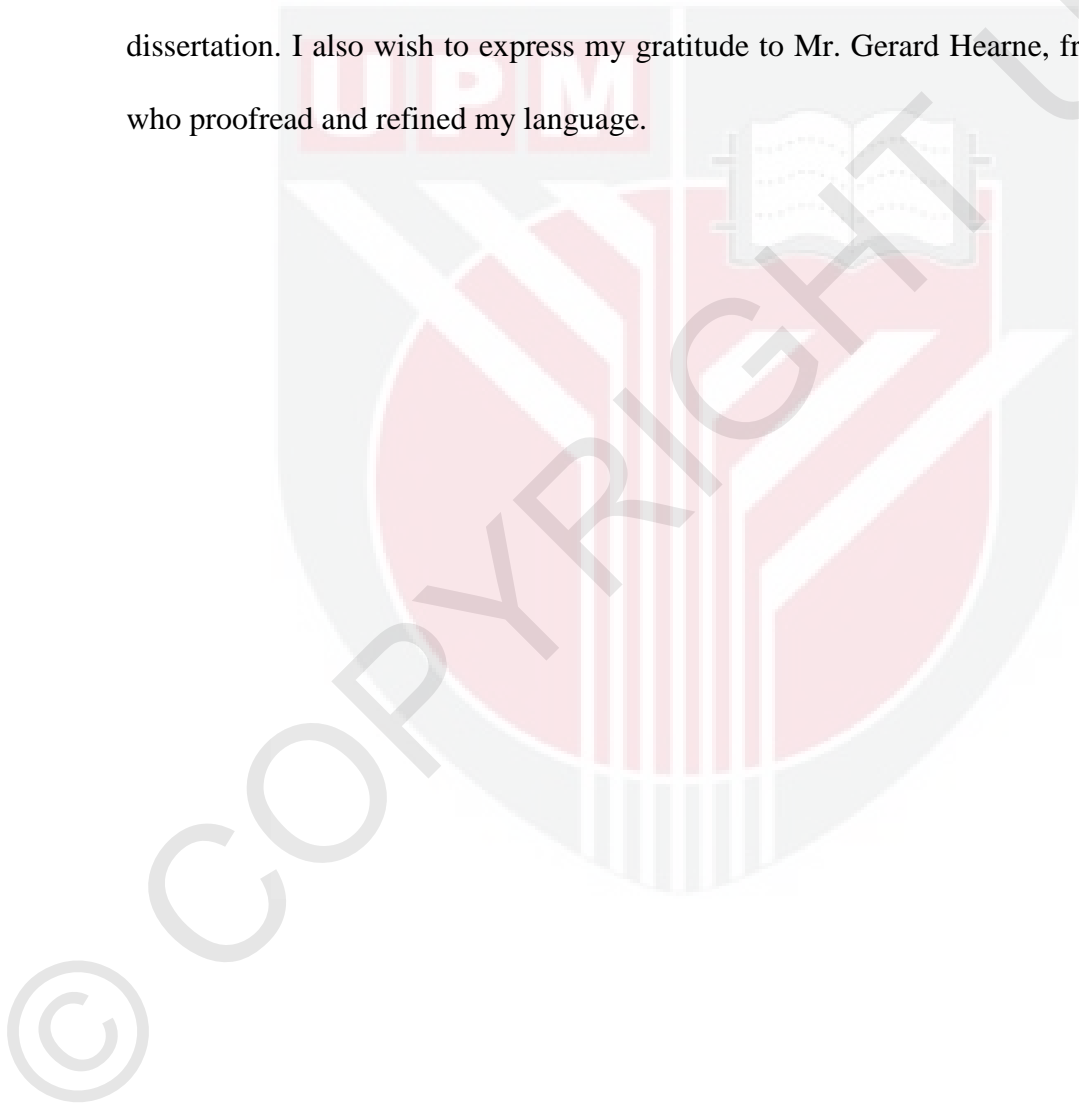
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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on to conduct the final examination of Ali Khoshnood on his thesis entitled “The Propriety of the Emergence of New Woman in Kate Chopin’s Selected Fiction” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the relevant degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.



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