



An Analysis of *The Awakening* Under Jung's Archetype Theory

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Abstract: Kate Chopin (1851-1905) is a famous American female writer in the 19th century. As her masterpiece, *The Awakening* establishes Chopin's position as a pioneer feminist writer. *The Awakening* primarily narrates the story of Edna's vacation on Grand Isle with her husband, Léonce, and their two children. Through interactions with a typical woman, Adèle, and a young man, Robert, Edna begins to seek her self and pursue spiritual independence, but ultimately fails. It reflects the universality of women's spiritual dilemma and the significance of self-awareness and self-construction. This paper employs Jung's Archetype Theory to analyze the psychological growth path of the protagonist, Edna. By examining her quests for her self, the paper investigates the psychological reasons behind her tragic fate through the primary archetypes: the persona, the shadow, the anima and animus, and the self. Trapped by the persona of "the angel of the house," Edna's inner shadow expands, but she fails to balance her persona and shadow. Besides, Edna's animus gradually inflates and finally out of control, leading to her lost of self. Through analysis, this paper posits that Edna's failure in self-growth stems from her inability to manage the relationships within her personality system. Unable to combat the shadow and the burgeoning animus, Edna loses her self, succumbs mentally and commits suicide. Consequently, this paper offers insights for contemporary individuals to recognize themselves and provides guidance for shaping a balanced personality and pursuing mental well-being.

Keywords: *The Awakening*; Jung's Archetype Theory; Spiritual Growth

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to *The Awakening*

Kate Chopin (1851-1905), born Catherine O' Flaherty, is an 19th century American writer of short-story and novels. As a female writer, Chopin concentrates on women's issues. In 1899, as one of Chopin's representative works, *The Awakening*, was published. This novel was widely condemned in its time for its sexual frankness and its portrayal of an interracial marriage and went out of print for more than 50 years. When it was rediscovered in the 1950s, critics marveled at the beauty of its writing and its modern sensibility. Today it is considered a landmark work of early feminist works. *The Awakening* reflects Chopin's concern for women's self-discovery and growth. It is a realistic novel about the sexual and artistic awakening of a young wife and mother who abandons her family and eventually commits suicide.

The story begins in the late 19th century on Grand Isle, a popular summer retreat for the wealthy French descendants of nearby New Orleans. Edna Pontellier, the protagonist of the story, is vacationing here with her Creole husband, Léonce, and their two children. Although her husband treats her well, he often lacks the time to be in her company due to his busy work. Consequently, Edna frequently spends time with Madame Adèle Ratignolle, a traditional woman, and Robert Lebrun, a young man. Edna and Robert often go to the seaside and engage in conversation. As time progresses, their simple friendship begins to evolve. Robert's attentiveness awakens Edna's suppressed sexual desires, and she feels more alive than ever before. She also learns to swim and becomes conscious of her independence. However, recognizing the impossibility of their relationship, Robert abruptly departs for Mexico to prevent further development. Grieving the loss of Robert, Edna returns to New Orleans after the vacation and begins to immerse herself in painting, abandoning all social obligations. Following a doctor's advice, Léonce leaves Edna at home alone when he sets out on a business trip to New York, and his mother takes the children. Thus, Edna completely abandons her social responsibilities, moving into a small house and declaring herself independent. During this period, she has an affair with a man named Alcée Arobin, but their relationship lacks love. Later, when Robert returns to New Orleans, he confesses his love for Edna for the first time. Edna explains to Robert that she does not belong to anyone and can stay with him without her husband's consent. However, Robert doesn't understand and insists that he loves Edna but cannot be with her because she is a married woman who belongs to Léonce. She realizes that neither Robert nor her husband understands her, and she is a prisoner of her family. Finally, she returns to Grand Isle, the place of her first awakening, and in the gentle embrace of the sea, she is liberated from fetters forever.

1.2 Jung's Archetype Theory

Carl Jung (1875-1961), Swiss psychiatrist, founded Analytical Psychology, advancing the idea of introvert and extrovert personalities and archetypes. Archetypes can be viewed as evolved cognitive which influence emotions and behaviors. At the same time, archetypes provide structure to different parts of the psyche and the psyche functions optimally when there is a harmonious balance between these parts. Jung's description of individuation was one of his most influential ideas in general psychology, psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis. He viewed the process of self-realization as the very activity of



individuation. The most basic concepts that Jung uses to describe this process of individuation are the persona, the shadow, the anima and the animus, and the self [5].

The word “persona” was used in Roman times to signify a mask worn by an actor. In Jungian psychology, the persona represents the social mask that each of us “wear” in our interaction with others in society. Or to put it differently, it represents the personality that we try to portray to others. It is the public display of a person, the purpose of which is to give a good impression so as to be accepted by the society. Thus, it can also be called “conformity archetype” [5]. The persona in the overall personality can be either beneficial or harmful. If a person is too keen and addicted to the role he plays, only identify with the role he plays, other aspects of the personality will be excluded, which is called “inflation” and it is not conducive to the healthy development of personality.

As mentioned above, the persona represents the public side of a person. The shadow, however, lies in the unconscious and conscious of undesirable characteristics that we have repressed and want to keep in the dark. Jung asserts, “where there is light, there must be shadow” [5]. In his perspective, the shadow is not completely evil, and it is also the source of inspiration, intuition and other good things. In order to integrate one into the collective it is necessary to tame the animalistic spirit that exists in the archetype of his shadow, which requires the development of a strong persona to suppress the shadow [5]. Although he suppressed the animal spirit in his nature, at the same time, his natural vitality and creative spirit was also weakened. To sum up, shadow makes a person’s personality have integrity and fullness, so that people are full of vitality, creativity and vitality.

In addition to the persona and the shadow, other archetypes which normally suffer from under development are two contra-sexual archetypes termed the anima in males and the animus in females. Since the persona is oriented outward, Jung called it the “outward face” of the spirit. And the anima and the animus are oriented inward, acting as “inward face” of the spirit. As Calvin and Vemon put it:

The anima archetype is the feminine side of the male psyche; the animus archetype is the masculine side of the female psyche. Every person has qualities of the opposite sex, not only in the biological sense that man and woman secrete both male and female sex hormones but also in a psychological sense of attitudes and feelings [4].

In order to develop personality harmoniously, the anima and the animus need to be fully reflected in individual consciousness and behavior. If a man only shows his masculinity, his femininity will be left in the unconscious, suppressed and not developed, and his unconscious will be weak and sensitive. The same is true for women. Jung believed that a man was born with a female image, and based on that he unconsciously established a standard that would greatly influence his choice of women and whether he liked or disliked them [5]. As mentioned above, the over development of the persona is detrimental to the healthy development of the personality, but the anima and the animus are often underdeveloped. One reason is that boys are always expected to be culturally appropriate men and girls to be culturally appropriate women. Because of this, boys and girls with opposite sex characteristics are often called “sissy” and “tomboys” and ridiculed by others. In this way, the persona gained the upper hand, and thus overpowered anima and animus. The imbalance between the persona and the anima and the animus may result in revenge by the anima and the animus, and in such a situation people may go to extremes.

The human personality, though yet to be developed, is a unity from the beginning. The organizing principle of this personality is an archetype, which Jung called the “self” [5]. The self is the core of the collective unconscious, just as the sun is the core of the solar system. It is the archetype of unity, organization and order, which draws all other archetypes around it and brings them into a state of harmony. The realization of the self depends to a great extent on the cooperation of the ego, because one cannot attain knowledge and understanding of the self if the ego is indifferent to all kinds of information from the archetype of the self. Everything must become conscious in order to make the personality fully individualized. The ultimate goal of all personalities is the full perfection and realization of self. The self can affect, regulate and restrict a person’s personality and promote the maturity of personality.

1.3 Significance of Research

This study uses Jung’s Archetype Theory to analyze the failed psychological growth journey of Edna. By using the persona, the shadow, the anima and the animus as well as the self archetype of Jung’s theory, the paper tries to analyze the psychological reasons for Edna’s tragic destiny. Through the analysis, this paper is helpful for us to explore the psychological factors in the process of Edna’s self-knowledge and construction from a different perspective from traditional feminism, so as to enlighten contemporary people to recognize themselves and find themselves. In addition, it can also provide people with some enlightenment for building a sound personality and pursuing mental health.

Literature Review

2.1 Research on *The Awakening*

The research of domestic and foreign scholars on Kate Chopin and her masterpiece *The Awakening*, has gone through a development process and achieved a series of fruitful results. In the western academic world, the study of Chopin basically emerged in the 1960s. Much of the contemporary Western reacquaintance with Chopin is due to Per Seyersted, a professor of American literature at the University of Oslo in Norway. In The 1960s, Seyersted published not only *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, but also *Kate Chopin: A Critical Biography*, which are of landmark significance to the contemporary research of Chopin [7].

In recent years, the research on *The Awakening* at abroad has shown a trend of further development. In terms of the interpretation of this work, Abbasi believed that the concept of female failure in *The Awakening* has been largely ignored, mainly due to ignorance or misinterpretation of the image of the sea [1]. Mizic used semiotics and feminist literary theory to

reveal how symbols such as birds and wings, water and ocean form the theme of loneliness in *The Awakening* [6]. In 2015, Shalabi argues that Chopin's novel, despite its age, is postmodern [2].

Domestic scholars began to pay attention to Chopin in the early 1980s. In recent years, domestic studies on Chopin, especially on her masterpiece *The Awakening*, have been flourishing and become one of the hot spots of academic research. The domestic research on Chopin's *The Awakening* can be mainly divided into three stages: the translation and introduction of *The Awakening* in the 1980s, the initial development of the study of *The Awakening* in the 1990s and the fast-growing study of *The Awakening* from multi-dimensional perspectives since the 21st century.

Firstly, the study of Chopin in the 1980s is in its infancy. In 1983, Zhu first commented on Chopin's *The Awakening*, arguing that Chopin's works are different from other female works of the same period and have a clear sense of femininity [16]. Song introduced Chopin's life and the main plot of *The Awakening*, and commented on the theme and artistic techniques [13].

During the 1990s, the study of Chopin's work experienced a gradual development. However, it did not become a prominent topic, and scholars did not focus much on it. In contrast, the study of *The Awakening* was relatively straightforward. Jin and Qin found that Edna's awakening is not only the awakening of the soul, but also the awakening of the body, which challenges the norms of life and social norms of women in the 19th century [10].

In addition, the research achievements of *The Awakening* since the 21st century began to have new characteristics. The scholars supplemented the study of the work from more various perspectives such as mythology, female consciousness, symbolism, existentialism, racism, ethnic identity, and so on. For instance, based on the mythology-archetypal theory, Ou analyzed the archetypal image in *The Awakening* and believed that Edna, the heroine, is the perfect combination of Eve, the "mother of all living beings", and Aphrodite, the Greek goddess [12]. From the perspective of community, Wan pointed that there exists a sharp contrast between the two heroines senses of identity and role in *The Awakening* and *The Good Earth* [14]. Liu revealed the theme of the work by analyzing the symbolism in it, including words and actions, scene arrangement, space structure and characters [11]. Ye contended that *The Awakening* mirrors the social and political strife surrounding racial issues of that era, and addresses the racial challenges faced by New Orleans [15]. Gan and Ning discussed the awakening of the self-consciousness of Edna through the symbolic meaning of her dress [9].

2.2 Research Gap

Previous studies mainly analyzed *The Awakening* from the perspectives of feminism, character image, symbolism, existentialism, racism and so on. And some studies apply psychological theory. For instance, Deng and Peng conducted a psychological prototype analysis of Edna's process of self-characterization [8]. However, the study, which is conducted from the perspective of Jungian psychology, particularly focusing on archetype theory to analyze Edna's self-seeking experience, is even less. Therefore, this study is helpful to enrich the analysis of *The Awakening* from the perspective of Jung's archetypal theory. By using Jung's archetypal theory, this paper can reveal the internal reasons for Edna's tragic ending. Besides, this paper offers valuable insights for contemporary individuals seeking self-awareness and personal growth. It also provides guidance for cultivating a healthy personality and achieving mental well-being.

Edna's Self-Awakening to Self-Destruction

3.1 The Angel in the House Under the Persona

A persona serves as the public face of an individual, often crafted to gain societal acceptance. This formation begins in early childhood, where children typically highlight positive and popular traits while concealing or suppressing negative and unpopular ones. Edna lived under various personas until the summer of her twenty-ninth year. Born into a Presbyterian family with a strict father and a strong Puritan influence, her spiritual world was shaped by male dominance and religious doctrine. Despite her love for romantic fantasies, family and religious expectations led her to suppress her affectionate and sentimental nature. Instead, she incorporated elements that aligned with patriarchal norms and religious teachings into her persona, striving to fulfill the role of a dutiful daughter.

Upon reaching adulthood, Edna married Mr. Pontellier and ascended to the ranks of New Orleans' high society, donning the social mask befitting her status. At home, she acquiesced to her husband's arrangements, overseeing the mansion and its staff. Additionally, every Tuesday afternoon, she would don formal attire to host her husband's business associates, aiding in his career advancement. Thus, she was regarded as a respectable aristocratic woman, endeavoring to fulfill the role of the ideal wife. Embracing the facade of obedience to patriarchal norms, Edna partook in a life of unconscious conformity. She spent her summers vacationing on Grand Isle, entrusting her two children to a babysitter and not tending to their care herself. Mr. Pontellier, the guardian of traditional values, outwardly displayed great concern for Edna. As her spouse, he ensured her comfort with food, clothing, and a pleasant lifestyle. Yet, his love for Edna was not genuine. For instance, he reprimanded her upon learning she had swum in the scorching sun, not out of concern:

"You must be crazy!" Mr. Pontellier shouted, "Swimming at this late hour when the sun is not hot!" He had swum much earlier in the day, at sunrise. "Your skin burned so much that I can't even recognize you!" Mr. Pontellier said, looking at his wife as if his precious treasure had been destroyed [3].

From this it can be seen that he only regarded Edna as a precious ornament to show off his wealth, and a tool for procreation to extend his offspring. And in this kind of life supported by her husband, Edna's persona covered up her true self.

Additionally, others have contributed to Edna's weak sense of self, reinforcing this persona. Adèle, a typical wife and loving mother, always advised Edna to put family life at the center and treat her husband well. For the mothers on Grand Isle like her, "their children were the most precious things in the world. So they saw their main purpose in life was to watch over them as carefully as possible" [3]. She was also a supporter of traditional social customs and the patriarchal society, and tried

to make Edna the right woman just like her. Although this persona enabled Edna to maintain the order of life and get social recognition, it also severely repressed her inner self. In their influence and the traditional atmosphere of the society, Edna has to play the role of a good wife and mother. Influenced by the persona of an “angel,” Edna is akin to a bewildered and dependent canary in Mr. Pontellier’s captivity, with family and society serving as the cage that traps her.

3.2 Edna’s Negative Response to Expanded Shadow

The shadow represents the instinctive desire to compensate for what is suppressed by the persona. When the persona expands excessively, people’s instinctive desire is suppressed. When the two fail to reach a balanced state, the shadow will resist ^[6]. Edna began to wake after being oppressed by social tradition and family for a long time. As her desires to find her self and resist grew stronger, the repressed shadows grew in her heart. However, in the face of the expanding shadow, Edna responded negatively and failed to balance her persona and shadow.

As Edna gradually woke, she began to shed the bondage of the persona. When the inner shadow which has been suppressed and hidden gradually resuscitated, Edna began to follow her inner desire. After many times of meditation and reflection, Edna found that her husband did not really love her, so she began to rebel against him. For instance, one day she abnormally refused her husband’s request to go back to the room:

She could hear him walking about the inside of the cottage. He was clearly upset. Usually she would have done what he asked her to. She did not often think about whether she should or should not. It was simply her habit to do as he asked ^[3].

This was something new. She was resisting him, fighting him. And it was something that she could not stop herself from doing. The feeling was too strong inside of her to stop it.

Edna’s resistance infuriated her husband. Moreover, she stomped on the ground with her wedding ring, seeking to escape the shackles of her restrictive and self-denying marriage. However, Edna was at a loss as to how to manage her marriage effectively. Due to her unhappy marriage, she became pessimistic, viewing marriage as the most sorrowful aspect of life, and even declined to attend her sister’s wedding. Upon realizing his wife’s distress, Mr. Pontellier noticed that Edna made no effort to communicate their issues to him. Thus, her passive response to her problems was evident.

In addition, Jung believes that the shadow can provide people with natural vitality and creative spirit. With the awakening of Edna, she began to realize the importance of self and began to explore the path of self-realization. For Edna, that approach was art. Edna had been fond of romantic fantasy since childhood and had a talent for painting, which made her take art as the way to express herself and realize herself. Through painting, she could feel pleasure and satisfaction, and the artist became the perfect embodiment of Edna’s self. However, in order to be independent from her husband, she took an extreme approach, thus not achieving a balance between her art career and family role:

From now on, she had decided to simply live the way she wanted to live. Tuesdays were no longer visiting days for her, and if anyone came to see her, she did not go and see him in return. She no longer cared about the rules of society. They meant nothing to her ^[3].

The shadow also contains the animal side of human nature. Affected by the shadow, Edna’s sexual consciousness began to awaken. But due to Robert’s incomprehension of her quest for independence and freedom, she has sex with Arobin. Although she was deeply in love with Robert in spirit, her body was addicted to Arobin. With the gradual expansion of the shadow, Edna’s persona gradually collapsed, and the balance between the two was broken. Edna could do nothing about the swelling shadow of sexual desire and was gradually engulfed by it.

3.3 Inflated Animus and Weak Anima

A man’s subconscious female orientation is referred to as the “anima,” whereas a woman’s subconscious male orientation is known as the “animus” ^[5]. After freeing herself from the constraints of the persona and reacting negatively to the shadow, Edna entered the subsequent phase of her spiritual development. During this phase, she began to confront the two archetypes, the anima and the animus. However, the imbalance between the overdeveloped animus and the underdeveloped anima impeded Edna’s spiritual growth.

As Jung said, as the “inward face” of the spirit, the anima archetype and the animus archetype respectively represent the female side of the man’s psychology and the male side of the woman’s psychology. These two archetypes can provide complementary relationships to the male and female selves. This complementarity provides a balance between opposing psychological elements, thus preventing the human mind from falling into pathological imbalance ^[5]. As women’s subconscious male characteristics, the animus can bring women strong and independent character, thus conducive to women’s pursuit of career. At the same time, the animus can also influence women’s choice of the man they love. However, when the animus excessively expands, it will not be conducive to the development of women’s sound personality. The same is true for men. When the anima is too weak, it is not good for men’s mental health. In the face of the inflated animus and the weak anima of her husband, the relationship between Edna and Mr. Pontellier was broken, and she was finally controlled by the animus.

Jung believes that women are born with a male image, and she unconsciously establishes a standard that would greatly influence her choice of men and whether she likes or dislikes a particular man. The first object of the archetype of the animus is almost as much her father as the first object of the archetype of the anima is almost as much his mother ^[5]. Edna was born in a Presbyterian family with a strong Puritan atmosphere. Her father was strict and rigid, and her spirit was suppressed by patriarchal consciousness and religious spirit. However, in fact, Edna likes to fantasize from her childhood, and her animus is especially active in her active action of seeking love. She had fallen in love with a “handsome officer” and with a “famous

writer” [3]. However, under the influence of her father and religious environment, she was required to be a woman in line with the cultural tradition and could not actively pursue love, thus her animus was suppressed. On the surface, Mr. Pontellier appears to be very gentle and loving to his wife, but in fact he is as controlling as Edna’s father and treats her as his personal property. Because the anima traits are not fully developed, the gentle, other-thinking femininity of the male character is often lacking. In this case, a healthy balance between the anima archetype and the animus archetype is not achieved, which tends to increase the male’s desire for control. Therefore, under the influence of her father and husband, Edna’s animus could not develop healthily and could only be repressed deep in her heart.

Besides, judging from her appearance, Edna had masculine features. With her bushy black eyebrows and determined expression, she did not look like a traditionally delicate woman. For her, “ ‘Handsome’ is a better word to describe her than ‘beautiful’ ” [3]. As Edna awakened, Edna’s animus began to inflate. The inflated animus also provided the energy and creativity for Edna’s series of spiritual awakening behaviors. For example, she began to abandon the traditional female identity of “housewife” and began to pursue her own career and desire to gain independent social status. As a result, she devoted herself to painting, then a male domain, as a way to pursue financial independence from her husband’s control.

The balance between anima and animus helps promote a harmonious sexual relationship. Living in a patriarchal society, Pontellier did not understand Edna’s request for independence, and his anima was too weak to put himself in Edna’s shoes. It is remarkable that the extent to which sexual relations are based on projection, the extent to which human love is lacking. When people fall in love with someone who they don’t know as a person, their attraction is only because they reflect the anima or animus image within them, in the sense that these people are falling in love with themselves and not with someone else. And she would eventually find that the love of the one who projected anima onto her almost suffocated her. He also resents her when she tries to develop her own independent personality, because he sees her not as herself, but as the person he wants her to be, just his anima image.

In order to break away from her husband’s control, Edna projected the archetype of animus onto Robert after her sexual awakening. She thought that Robert is her true love, so in the impulse of love she ignored the blind effect brought by animus. However, when Robert learned Edna’s true thoughts, he could not understand Edna’s pursuit of individual independence and spiritual freedom. He confined her to the thing of Mrs. Pontellier, and said to Edna, “I got the crazy idea in my head that your husband might somehow give you up to me so that we could then marry one another” [3]. He was unable to understand her search for self and he even abandoned her when she needed support and encouragement most. Edna found herself a caged bird, confined to the inflated animus, with no way to escape. Like Pontellier, Robert’s love is, in essence, a possession and limitation that does not allow her to be herself. The man who had been overvalued was actually nothing. He wants her to perform the duties of his projected image of the inner woman and to live in his desired way, which is often in conflict with the women’s true self.

3.4 A Failed Journey for Self Seeking

Jung believes that there are confrontations between various components of the personality system, such as between the persona and the shadow, between the anima and the animus, and between the ego and the self. As the core archetype, the self archetype can influence, regulate and restrict a person’s personality, integrate different components in the personality system to achieve a balance and promote a more mature personality [5]. After experiencing the collapse of her persona, negative responses to her shadow, and the failure to balance her anima and animus, Edna finally entered the last phase of her spiritual growth. On her journey of self-discovery, Edna was unable to integrate the opposing aspects of her personality, ultimately leading to her suicide and the failure of her spiritual development.

At the end of the novel, Edna committed suicide by throwing herself into the sea. From the perspective of Jungian Archetype Theory, Edna was unable to integrate the confrontation between different parts of her personality system, especially the confrontation between the archetype of the persona and the shadow, and the confrontation between the animus and the shadow. As a result, she fell into confusion and could not recognize and realize herself. Finally, with a breakdown, she ended up in the embrace of the cold sea.

In order to maintain the dominance of men, the patriarchal society portrayed women as “the angel in the house” without sexual desires. Women are only allowed to play the role of gentle wife and caring mother. Even having sex with her husband is a sacrifice of self to ensure the continuation of the race. This collective persona imposed on women suppressed Edna’s desire for natural humanity, and the prototype of shadow, which is the source of survival energy and reproduction for generations of human beings, could not be released normally. Therefore, the shadow and the persona have a fierce conflict and confrontation. Edna once said to Arobin, “I feel like I’m an extremely evil one” [3]. This indicates that she has realized that her instinctive desire violates the social norms of female behavior. But under Arobin’s seduction, she awakens in the sun like a beautiful female beast, radiating within her the primal desires and smells of the animal, and her libido blooms like a passionate and sensitive flower.

Upon awakening, in order to escape her husband’s control, Edna completely discarded her persona and became a “traitor.” By unmasking her persona, Edna behaved freely, like a child, disregarding the rules of life. However, completely abandoning one’s persona cannot create a perfect psychological function; it is not conducive to adapting to the external social environment. Consequently, it does not aid individuals in achieving self-hood. Jung acknowledged that a person must have a flexible and adaptable persona to grow psychologically. Only in this way can one adapt to the needs of the environment and their own inner world, achieving a kind of inner harmony. This ensures that we live in harmony with others and society, and aids our psychological development to reach maturity. Without a well-developed persona, a person is likely to be socially incompetent and unable to achieve goals that depend on a positive impression. After awakening, Edna completely cast off her persona, rendering her unable to change her social status or her social relations with others, let alone achieve personal accomplishments and gender liberation. She completely abandoned her persona, but was also rejected by society. Therefore,

in the confrontation between the two, the shadow gradually gained the upper hand. As Edna was unable to integrate the two archetypes into balance, she was consumed by the shadows.

In addition to the conflict between the persona and the shadow, the archetypes of Edna's animus and the shadow are also in constant, fierce confrontation. Following her sexual awakening, Edna projected her inner animus onto Robert. She longed for Robert's understanding and love, believing he was her true love. However, when Edna was lost on the path of "self-individuation," seeking individual independence and spiritual freedom, Robert could not understand her pursuits. He even abandoned her when she needed encouragement and support the most. Abandoned by Robert, Edna fell into despair, and the sexual shadow that had been repressed burst forth like a flood breaching its banks, overwhelming her animus. This led to Edna having sexual relations with Arobin. At this time, Edna spiritually yearned for Robert, but her body was caught up in Arobin's sexual demands. Since love and sexual desire belong to different objects, Edna's animus and shadow could not be unified. On one hand, she aspires to win over the heart of animus Robert. On the other hand, she struggles to control the sexual shadow and Arobin's entanglements. In the confrontation between these two archetypes, Edna was unable to achieve balance.

After awakening, Edna completely abandoned the persona in order to pursue her own self. But this practice is not desirable, the personality mask is the foundation of social life, helping us to get along with others in harmony. Edna can choose to take off the "angel" persona, because it is a kind of restraint and repression for her. However, she abandoned all of her persona and did not consider the role necessary for social life, which made her unable to adapt to the social life after awakening. In the confrontation between the persona and the shadow, her weak persona is no match for the shadow, so the shadow eventually takes over Edna's heart.

In addition, as the projected object of Edna animus, Robert could not understand Edna's pursuit of self. Due to the breakdown of her personality mask, the shadow of her sexual desire gradually erupts, which makes Edna deeply trapped in the dilemma of spirit and sexual desire. She did not want to give up Robert and it was difficult for her to control her sexual desire. In the end, she split her personality and broke down mentally in the fierce confrontation. She ended up committing suicide without realizing the integration of her personality.

Conclusion

Kate Chopin explores women's plight and spiritual crisis, positioning spiritual growth and self-pursuit as central themes in her works. *The Awakening* serves as a notable example. This paper uses Jung's Archetype Theory to explore the psychological development of the protagonist, Edna. By examining her journey toward self-discovery, the paper delves into the psychological factors behind her tragic end through key archetypes: the persona, the shadow, the anima and animus, and the self. Confined by the persona of "the angel of the house," Edna's inner shadow grows, yet she fails to harmonize her persona and shadow. Additionally, her animus progressively inflates and eventually spirals out of control, resulting in her loss of self. The analysis suggests that Edna's failure in personal growth arises from her inability to manage the dynamics within her personality. Unable to confront the shadow and the burgeoning animus, Edna loses her self and ultimately takes her own life.

Edna's failed spiritual journey underscores the criticality of balanced integration of personality archetypes. Firstly, while personas serve as essential mechanisms for social adaptation, individuals must engage in conscious reconciliation with shadow elements. Furthermore, the anima and animus requires harmonious integration to foster the development of a unified self, thereby mitigating the risk of psychological fragmentation during the process of self-actualization.

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