



## Feministic Features of “THE AWAKENING” By Kate Chopin

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes main characters in “The Awakening” by Kate Chopin and how feministic features are reflected by the author.

**Keywords:** Feminism, character, feminist text, female perspective.

**Introduction.** Kate Chopin is known in today's literary world as the author of the novel "Renaissance". Highly controversial in its time, The Awakening deals with the plight of the married woman in the nineteenth century and has recently been rediscovered and recognized as an overtly feminist text for the same reasons. However, this novel represents the pinnacle of a literary career spent almost exclusively in fiction. It was the "mastering" of the narrative genre that allowed Chopin to complete his last masterpiece, to develop the style best suited to its thematic issues. Of course, this development did not happen in isolation. All writers have their predecessors, and in the case of Chopin, one in particular was very influential, the French short story writer Geo de Maupassant, who in 1880 described the literary world as "...marked by impeccably concise prose, carefully chosen expressive details." and strictly realistic characters" (Ewell, Keith Chopin, p. 19).

**Main part.** Chopin in some sense "adopted" the literary tradition of French male writers, which manifested itself in the form of Maupassant's short fiction. This is a fact that has been repeatedly emphasized in the criticisms of his work, in the criticisms of recent years, and in the words of his contemporary commentators. Maupassant has indeed been identified by one critic as Chopin's greatest literary "mentor" (Taylor p.159). But the most direct evidence of his influence comes from Chopin's own unpublished essay "Confidences" (1896). Here he expresses his admiration for the French "master" as he recalls his reaction when he "stumbled upon" a collection of his tales eight years ago:

"...I read his stories and marvelled at them. Here was life, not fiction; for where were the plots, the old fashioned mechanism and stage trapping that in a vague, unthinking way I had fancied were essential to the art of story making. Here was a man who had escaped from tradition and authority, who had entered into himself and looked out upon life through his own being and with his own eyes; and who, in a direct and simple way, told us what he saw..."(p.700-701).

Chopin's artistic writing in the form of a short story can be seen as another evidence of this high attention, although more clearly. Perhaps most evident is his adoption of Maupassant's form, the very aspect of writing that most concerned the Frenchman himself (Dugan p.130-131). His imitation of the structure of short fiction is fascinating and developed at length by Richard Fusco in his Maupassant and the American Short Story. But areas of his writing style also bear witness to his great influence: Chopin's objective psychological realism, his emphasis on character over plot, his desire for austerity and unity, and his characteristic amorality. Clear parallels connect the French man and the American woman.

However, Chopin's short fiction is more interesting in terms of what lies beyond this clear parallelism in terms of his originality, because his art is by no means a simple imitation. Chopin, as Pierre Seyersted notes in his critical biography, "...has a unique courage and vision..." (p. 199).

Maupassant was undoubtedly an inspiration for his creative spirit, his themes and methods were evident in his work, but "...with his independent spirit and personal views, he completely kept to himself" (p. 129 ). Chopin's identity as a female writer speaks, at best, beyond French influence, and it is a wonderful female voice. The French male form and style he adopted from Maupassant was adapted to his purpose, the study of the feminine position. She exudes literary originality and originality, and ultimately speaks with a truly feminist voice.

This "gender" identity is visible in Chopin's relationship between men and women. Its novelty is not in the subject matter itself, because from this point of view, Chopin's work can be seen as a response to European works in general - mainly focused on gender and, as Helen Taylor suggests, "...shared with him. sex, bourgeois marriage and the role of women (p. 157) And Maupassant, as one of the leading creators of such works, studied these issues for a long time, not only recognizing the existence of eros, but also helping to expand the boundaries. He spoke openly about such things and As Seyersted points out, this is probably why she spoke deeply to Chopin ("Introduction" Complete Works, 24) Her literary identity, then, lies in the way she bravely deals with these relationships and the female perspective she gives them.

As Mary Donaldson-Evans reveals in her *Revenge of a Woman*, Maupassant treats his characters as objects: "...women are objects of erotic delight, intended for the pleasure and adornment of the male, and their physical beauty is paramount...The pleasure that the possession of a beautiful woman affords is entirely physical and is coupled by an absolute disdain for her "being" (p.14).

In his stories, the main male characters are "...bitter about women and love, and are suffused by a general misanthropy and more specific misogyny" (Taylor p.160). changes from object to subject. She explores and articulates what she sees in life for women, subverting the French male tradition she writes about, which is more feminist than simply feminizing the model of male form and style.

Chopin's simultaneous and seemingly paradoxical adherence to and subversion of androcentric French influence is most evident in his 1894 work, *His Letters* [3] , a story largely overlooked by critics. it seems The story was written at a time when Maupassant's influence on Chopin reached new heights - when he translated several of the Frenchman's works into English. Chopin translated eight of Maupassant's stories between 1894 and 1898, a process that greatly influenced his writing in terms of structure and theme. It was at this time that Chopin moved away from the local color traditions that had shaped his work, shifting his interest from regional southern concerns and experimenting with more complex forms, as depicted by Fusco.

**Conclusion.** After all, the "flavor" of Chopin's writing was increasingly characteristic of Maupassant. He seems to have, as Taylor notes, "...through the discipline and difficulty of translation...reconsidered his mentor in terms of his own work" (p. 160). But at the same time, Chopin delves deeper and deeper into a subject that puts him in direct opposition to his French master - the subject of woman and her struggle to assert individual identity beyond the boundaries prescribed by patriarchal dictators.

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