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THE FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN *THE AWAKENING*, BY KATE CHOPIN

**CAMPINA GRANDE
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Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Artigo) apresentado à Coordenação do Curso de Letras-Inglês e ao Departamento de Letras e Artes da Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de Licenciada em Letras - Inglês.

Área de concentração: Literatura e Estudos de Gênero.

Orientador: Prof. Me. Giovane Alves de Souza.

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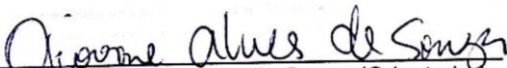
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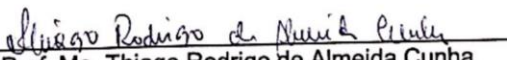
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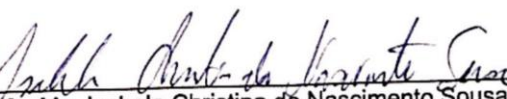
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To all the women who came before me and made my life, my education and the writing of this work possible – especially my mom, Maria da Guia, I DEDICATE.

“Women have to summon courage to
fulfill dormant dreams” (Alice Walker)

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THE FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN *THE AWAKENING*, BY KATE CHOPIN
A REPRESENTAÇÃO DAS MULHERES EM *O DESPERTAR*, POR KATE CHOPIN

Amanda Caroline Gomes Ramos¹

ABSTRACT

Throughout history, female writers have played a significant role in reflecting and changing social and cultural perceptions, meaning that literature is, therefore, crossed by several issues, especially gender. This observation is evident in writers such as the American Kate Chopin, author of the novel *The Awakening* (2008), her most prominent work. Set in New Orleans and coastal Louisiana, this work tells the story of the character Edna Pontellier, a woman who defies the social norms and standards imposed on her gender in her time. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the female representation of the main characters, going through the gender debate concerning the figure of the woman who is a wife and also a mother, based on Woolf (2014); Manguiera (2012); Branco and Brandão (2004), among others. Finally, this work shows us that women who decide to challenge patriarchal society in search of their freedom through their desires and choices, sometimes feel isolated, exhausted, and unhappy.

Keywords: The Awakening; Kate Chopin; gender studies; women's writing.

RESUMO

Ao longo da história, as escritoras têm desempenhado um papel significativo de reflexão e mudança das percepções sociais e culturais, fazendo com que a literatura seja, portanto, atravessada por diversas questões, especialmente a de gênero. Tal constatação fica evidente em escritoras como a norte-americana Kate Chopin, autora do romance *The Awakening* (2008), sua obra de maior destaque. Ambientada em Nova Orleans e no litoral da Louisiana, essa obra conta a história da personagem Edna Pontellier, uma mulher que desafia as normas e os padrões sociais impostos a seu gênero na sua época. Logo, este artigo tem como objetivo analisar a representatividade feminina das personagens principais, perpassando o debate de gênero em relação à figura da mulher que é esposa e também mãe, a partir de Woolf (2014); Manguiera (2012); Branco e Brandão (2004), entre outros. Por fim, esta obra nos mostra que as mulheres que resolvem desafiar a sociedade patriarcal em busca da própria liberdade através de seus desejos e escolhas, se sentem, por vezes, isoladas, exaustas e infelizes.

Palavras-chave: O Despertar; Kate Chopin; estudos de gênero; escrita das mulheres.

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1 INTRODUCTION

According to *The Cambridge Companion to Kate Chopin* (Beer, 2008), Kate Chopin (1850-1904) was an American writer known for addressing controversial themes of her time, such as women's emancipation and sexuality. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, into a family of French and Creole origin, Chopin had a privileged education for a woman, allowing her access to European literature and culture. In 1870, she married Oscar Chopin, a successful businessman, with whom she had six children. However, her life changed drastically with the sudden death of her husband in 1882. She then moved to New Orleans, where she began to write fiction. Her first book, *At Fault*, was published in 1890, but it was with the release of *The Awakening* in 1899 that she gained greater recognition.

The representation of women in literature is a topic of great relevance, especially in works that have been written during historical periods in which the female figure was relegated to a secondary role in society. One such example is Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening*, which was published in 1899 and caused great controversy at the time due to its representation of female emancipation. Although this work was considered so scandalous that it was banned from several libraries and schools in the United States, over the years, *The Awakening* has become an important work for the feminist movement and American literature. Kate Chopin was a pioneer in presenting a complex and multifaceted female character who questioned the social roles assigned to women. Her work influenced many later writers and was rediscovered in the 1960s as a landmark of feminist literature.

In summary, Kate Chopin's life and work are closely related, as her writings had been a way for her to express her own beliefs and values. *The Awakening* exemplifies the writer's courage and determination to challenge the social norms of her time and present complex and independent female characters. Also, it is a novel that addresses controversial issues for the time, such as the search for personal freedom and female repression.

The story takes place in New Orleans, at the end of the 19th century, and follows the character Edna Pontellier, a young wife and mother who, dissatisfied with her life, begins questioning social expectations and the roles assigned to women in society. Edna longs for a more meaningful life and falls in love with the young Robert Lebrun, who inspires her to explore new aspects of her personality. She begins to paint, swim, and express herself freely, without worrying about social conventions. However, her search for personal freedom is seen as a threat to the established order and she is forced to face the consequences of her choices.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the female representation in *The Awakening* and how the main character, Edna Pontellier, struggles for her emancipation. Chopin's novel is a work that explores the consequences of personal freedom and questions the social expectations imposed on women. Edna is a character who defies the social and cultural norms of the time the novel was written and her trajectory is a critique of the position of women in society.

The research will focus on how Edna Pontellier's character questions her position in society, how she relates to other women (or not), and how she deals with the expectations imposed on her as a wife and mother. The analysis will also address the reactions of male characters concerning Edna's feminist emancipation and how this reflects society's view of women's position at that time.

To perform this analysis, feminist theorist such as Virginia Woolf (1929) will be used to support the discussion of the female condition in society and the

consequences of the feminist movement. In addition, literary theories such as feminist literary theory will be used to discuss the representation of women in literature and how female writers deal with the social expectations imposed on female characters. To support this discussion we will also bring the contributions of Lucia Castello Brando (2004) and Ruth Silvianno Brandão (2004) on what concerns women's writing.

This paper is aligned with the interpretive paradigm, which allows us to observe the world, its social practices, and its meanings (Bortoni-Ricardo, 2008), as well as look at, describe, and analyze social processes in the light of spheres of society (Moreira; Caleffe, 2008). In line with this paradigm, we adopted a qualitative approach (Flick, 2007; Gerhardt; Silveira, 2009; Moreira; Caleffe, 2008), since this approach is interested, according to Moreira and Caleffe (2008), in trying to describe the meaning, establishing an interpretation of data, to explore certain characteristics and scenarios in which these roles are present. By the end of this paper, it is expected that there will be a deeper understanding of the female representation in *The Awakening* (1899) and how Kate Chopin's work is a milestone in feminist literature. It is also possible to understand, through this paper, that women who decide to challenge patriarchal society in search of their freedom through their desires and choices, sometimes feel isolated, exhausted, and unhappy.

2 FEMALE VOICES IN LITERATURE: EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES

At least these two last centuries, the presence and role of women in literature have been a topic of discussion and reflection over the centuries. For a long time, women were marginalized and underrepresented in this field, facing social, cultural and structural barriers that limited their access to writing and publishing. In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), writer and essayist, Virginia Woolf discusses how women are intellectually subject to the issues that surround the woman who writes. The main idea of this essay is that women need a physical and private space where they can work in peace. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of financial independence by stating that

[...] what a change of temper a fixed income will bring about. No force in the world can take from me my five hundred pounds. Food, house and clothing are mine forever. Therefore not merely do effort and labour cease, but also hatred and bitterness. I need not hate any man; he cannot hurt me. **I need not flatter any man**; he has nothing to give me (Woolf, 1929, p. 32, our emphasis)

Through this fragment we understand that access to money, in addition to writing, also means no longer needing to be subject to any man. With money in hand, the woman can finally experience a little freedom "which is freedom to think of things in themselves" (p. 33). Another important point in her statements is regarding the little literary production by women. Woolf analyzes the lack of a female literary tradition throughout history by drawing a parallel between the (im)possibilities of women writers and Shakespeare when she states that

[...] **it is unthinkable that any woman in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius**. For genius like Shakespeare's is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people. It was not born in England among the Saxons and the Britons. It is not born today among the working classes. **How, then, could it have been born among women whose work**

began, [...], almost before they were out of the nursery, who were forced to it by their parents and held to it by all the power of law and custom? Yet genius of a sort must have existed among women as it must have existed among the working classes (Woolf, 1929, p. 41, our emphasis)

How, then, can a woman be an artist who equates to Shakespeare when even humanity itself – be a woman – is considered inferior to everything? To women only the good customs and fulfilling their duties: being a mother, serving their husband, and taking care of a home.

Still on the relationship between women and literature, Virginia Woolf explains, that throughout history, women are represented, generally in novels, through male perspective. In other words, the men who write the female roles and more than that – the men end up, in a certain way, reflected in these roles, as the author puts it “women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size” (Woolf, 1929, p. 30).

Woolf further states that notable personalities such as Napoleon and Mussolini “both insist so emphatically upon the inferiority of women, for if they were not inferior, they would cease to enlarge” (1929, p. 30-31). It is possible, then, to expand this logic to other men, realizing that the need to inferiorize women, when they express their opinions and desires (even if they may be similar to those of men), is the reaffirmation of oneself through them and the maintenance of the narcissistic self.

In agreement with this idea, the authors Branco and Brandão, in *A mulher escrita* (2004), state that the male writer, in the process of creating a female character, is actually in a narcissistic process. This results in a female character with the ideals of her male author, which, in turn, becomes utopian as it does not match the reality of women:

The female character, constructed and produced in the masculine register, does not coincide with the woman [...] It is, rather, the product of someone else's dream and there she circulates, in this privileged space that fiction makes possible (Branco and Brandão, 2004, p. 11, our translation)²

This limited look at women in literature reflects the patriarchal structures and dominant values of a society that has historically relegated women to a secondary role. With that being said, we are invited to reflect on the history and current status of women in literature and the social structures that shape women's participation and visibility in this field. We are challenged to question established norms and pursue a more inclusive literature, in which women are represented in all of their humanity and given space to express their perspectives.

2.1 Women's writing

As pointed out before, the importance of financial and intellectual independence for women writers and the lack of a "roof of their own" – a physical and mental space where they can focus and create freely – has been a significant obstacle to female literary production and their development of creative potential

² A personagem feminina, construída e produzida no registro do masculino, não coincide com a mulher [...] É, antes, produto de um sonho alheio e aí ela circula, nesse espaço privilegiado que a ficção torna possível.

(Woolf, 1929). Women, however, always looked for a way to subvert the norms. When they could, they wrote about a wide range of topics that reflected their individual experiences, perspectives, and desires as pointed out by Branco e Brandão (2004):

One of the most characteristic productions of female writing are memories, in the form of diaries that point to a subjective and intimate view of life, with personal concerns, passing through minor facts, reports narrated in a fragmentary way or reflections on pieces of what was lived, perhaps marked by seclusion, in which horizons can sometimes seem too narrow for the reader of great novels. (Branco and Brandão, 2004, p. 78, our translation)³

Therefore, it is expected that, given the women's context, when they had the opportunity to write, they would write about their husbands, God, their children, domestic activities, or love. However, some transgressive authors appear in history, such as, for example, Florbela Espanca and Gilka Machado who wrote erotic poetry. To join the hall, Kate Chopin appears, writing about divorce, female self-knowledge, gender, and dissatisfaction with being a mother through female characters who challenged social norms at a time (1899, the year the book was released) when people did not dare talk about such topics – especially women. About being an artist, Woolf states that

No girl could have walked to London and stood at a stage door and forced her way into the presence of actor-managers without doing herself a violence and suffering an anguish which may have been irrational—for chastity may be a fetish invented by certain societies for unknown reasons—but were none the less inevitable. Chastity had then, it has even now, a religious importance in a woman's life, and has so wrapped itself round with nerves and instincts that to cut it free and bring it to the light of day demands courage of the rarest (Woolf, 1929, p. 42)

In other words, a woman that desires a space in the artistic world would suffer due to the social norms of the time being so strongly rooted in society. Due to fear of not being published, the solution that so many authors found was anonymity, using, mainly, pseudonyms such as Currer Bell, George Eliot, Geroge Sand, and By a Lady.⁴

Another important factor is that even when these authors published under a pseudonym, they preferred to remain anonymous, as in the case of George Eliot (Mary Ann), even for their editor. The author was in a relationship with a married man, so assuming authorship of her works would be a problem at the time. His identity, however, was discovered after the publication of the work *Adam Bede* (1859), which was very successful and sparked readers' curiosity to discover who the author was. However, even with her success, Mary Ann was not spared from reprisals by society (Costa, 2016).

Following the other authors' steps, it is no coincidence that *The Awakening* was, for many years, considered immoral. The inability that some readers have to

³ Uma das produções mais características da escrita feminina são as memórias, na forma dos diários que apontam para uma visão subjetivada e intimista da vida, com inquietações pessoais, passando por fatos miúdos, relatos narrados de forma fragmentária ou reflexões sobre pedaços do vivido, talvez marcado pela reclusão, em que os horizontes podem por vezes parecer demasiadamente estreitos para o leitor dos grandes romances.

⁴ Respectively, pseudonyms of Charlotte Brontë (1816-55), Mary Ann Evans (1819-80), Amandine Dupin (1804-76), Jane Austen (1775-17). (N. da E.)

dissociate the literary work from the author means that female literary production is considered immoral, especially because women are denied the right to talk about whatever they want, however they want (Branco; Brandão, 2004). Kate Chopin only had her third book published posthumously due to two factors: the first was due to the negative repercussions of *The Awakening*. The second is that her literature came to be considered “outdated” because she used *Local Color*⁵ and Regionalisms in her works – techniques that lost prestige at the beginning of the 20th century. It was then rescued, according to Manguiera (2012), in the 70s in the Second feminist wave in the United States.

However, despite attempts, sometimes successful, to silence women or prune them, they continue to exist, resist and write. For, as Woolf puts it precisely, “for masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that the experience of the masses is behind the single voice” (1929, p. 55). This means that even though they are marginalized, the reason so many female writers are successful is because they speak for those who cannot speak. And the reason they can speak is because so many others came before them, so your role, too, as a writer, is to support those who will come in the future. Thus, with everyone united in a single voice, the power to move forward is greater.

With that being said, women’s writing breaks with the stereotyped representation of women in literature, which historically relegated them to secondary roles or simplistically portrayed them. Women have a lot to say about any relevant subject, including politics, philosophy, science, sexuality, motherhood, and everyday experiences without limitations imposed by a restrictive view of what is considered “appropriate” for a theme to write.

2.2 Female representations in literature

According to Candido (2000), literature represents the thoughts, questions, and beliefs of a society, taking into account its time, community, and individuals. A writer's work is shaped by both their personal experiences and the world around them, which impact their writing. The social context is connected to the creative inspiration that extends beyond its original context. In agreement with this, Ruth Silviano Brandão, in *Mulher ao pé da letra* (2006), affirms that

There is a dialogue of texts and readings that allow us to consider literature as a symbolic, cultural production, which does not exist only in the author's imaginary record. It can be conceived as a large structured body, inside and outside the same society or nationality. Here the concept of authorship is thought of in a different way, as it is not just the author's exclusive speech that counts. This is inserted elsewhere and constantly dialogues with other discourses, even if this is done unconsciously (Brandão, 2006, p. 29, our translation)⁶

⁵ Writing technique that explored the dress, speech, habits, etc. of a certain southern region of the United States (Harmon & Holman, 2000).

⁶ Há um diálogo de textos e leituras que nos permitem considerar a literatura como uma produção simbólica, cultural, que não existe só no registro imaginário do autor. Ela pode-se conceber como um grande corpo estruturado, dentro e fora de uma mesma sociedade ou nacionalidade. Aqui o conceito de autoria é pensado de diversa maneira, pois não se conta apenas o discurso exclusivo do autor. Este se insere em outro lugar e dialoga sem cessar com outros discursos, mesmo que isso se faça de forma inconsciente.

Therefore, how women are portrayed in literature depends on how the author, the text, and the reader relate to society (Candido, 2000). The way women are depicted in different periods reflects the ideals, beliefs, and female roles of that society, and these aspects show up in literary works. In the early days of literature, men were mostly in charge of the art world, and they tended to depict women from their viewpoint. Schwantes (2006) suggests that most portrayals focused on men's experiences, often downplaying the importance of women's experiences:

[...] strip an object of what is accessory to it and preserve what is essential, so that it can correspond to all objects of that type. [...] all representation involves subjectivity: someone determines what is essential and must be preserved and what is accessory and can be discarded. In a society where the male experience is valued and the female experience is trivialized, the essential feature of any representation will be tied to the male experience (Schwantes, 2006, p. 11, our translation)⁷

As pointed out by Jacomel & Pagoto (2008), the way women are represented in literature sheds light on the historical oppression of women due to social and conservative beliefs. The patriarchal system favored men, and women, in this setting, and existed within an authoritarian culture dominated by male voices and power dynamics. Also, many literary works have often used cultural stereotypes to depict women. They described women using words like incapable, hysterical, dangerous, and crazy (Zolin, 2009). In the past, female characters in literature were often portrayed as starting with marriage, conforming to the traditional image of a submissive woman who depended on her husband financially and had responsibilities limited to taking care of the home and children.

Mangueira (2012) suggests that the idea of "feminine nature" is often associated with qualities like being nurturing and devoted, especially in the role of a mother. However, if a woman does not fit this stereotype, she is often portrayed in one of two extremes: as a kind, motherly angel or a devil who is punished for not conforming to traditional expectations (Bonnici, 2007).

This perspective suggests that these standards limit and shape women's lives in the real world, leading to male dominance and predefined roles for women. Nevertheless, as more women became involved in literature, the concept of femininity, within literature, evolved. It began to focus on women as central figures and started to remove certain male-dominated portrayals (Bonnici, 2007). In some instances, these authors were successful in creating characters that showcased the desires of some women.

A prominent Brazilian author who challenged male dominance to support women's freedom was Nísia Floresta. In the 19th century, when women had little rights or say, Floresta's ideas challenged societal norms and disturbed some individuals. She argued that women could think rationally, which contradicted the expected social norms. She also stressed the importance of social equality and education:

⁷ [...] despir um objeto do que lhe é acessório e conservar o que é essencial, de modo que ele possa corresponder a todos os objetos daquele tipo. [...] toda a representação passa por uma subjetividade: alguém determina o que é essencial e deve ser preservado e o que é acessório e pode ser descartado. Em uma sociedade em que a experiência masculina é valorizada e a experiência feminina é trivializada, o traço essencial a qualquer representação vai se prender à experiência masculina.

Men, not being able to deny that we are rational creatures, want to prove to us their absurd opinion and the unfair treatment we receive by a blind condescension to their wills. I hope, however, that women of good sense will endeavor to make it known that they deserve better treatment and will not slavishly submit to such ill-founded pride (Floresta, 1989, p. 41, our translation)⁸

From this perspective, it is worth mentioning that Kate Chopin wrote stories and books with similar themes. For instance, in her short story *Athénaïse* (1896), she portrays a character trying to escape an unhappy marriage. As previously discussed, men have played a significant role in shaping the literary concept of marriage. In *Athénaïse* (1896), Kate Chopin presents a character who feels that her identity has been taken from her and is overwhelmed by the responsibilities of marriage.

It is important to highlight that, despite the difficulties faced, some women found support in female literary circles, where they could share their works, discuss ideas, and obtain mutual support. These spaces, often informal, were essential for women to feel encouraged to continue writing.

Analyzing Kate Chopin's work, as we will do now, we highlight the importance of her independent and questioning female protagonists. They challenged social conventions and explored issues such as female sexuality, desire and the quest for self-fulfillment. This rediscovery and appreciation of Chopin's writing allowed her works to be considered important contributions to feminist literature and the understanding of women's experiences.

3 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE AWAKENING, BY KATE CHOPIN

According to Zanattai (2013), Kate Chopin liked to make society think by writing about characters who did not follow the usual rules for women. In *The Awakening*, there is a female main character who breaks away from what society expects women to do. She tries to figure out who she is and goes after what she wants, even though it is not what most people – especially women – around her would do.

Through literature, we can see how society was in the past. *The Awakening*, for example, was a work released at the end of the 19th century – a time that was, generally speaking, conservative. It is natural then that the behavior expected of women was the result of this worldview: their value was in motherhood and marriage. These women were often called the "Angel In The House" (Mangueira, 2012). As Virginia Woolf pointed out in her essay *Profissões para Mulheres* (1996), these women were supposed to be a woman who was caring, kind, and always willing to put her family first. However, not all women were like that, even though it was expected of them at the time.

In *The Awakening*, Kate Chopin creates women who either follow society's rules or go against them and the book shows how society treated these women. Our study looks at how women are represented in the book, with a focus on the main character, Edna Pontellier, and two other female characters who represent different roles that women had during that period.

⁸ Os homens não podendo negar que nós somos criaturas racionais, querem provar-nos a sua opinião absurda, e os tratamentos injustos que recebemos, por uma condescendência cega às suas vontades; eu espero, entretanto, que as mulheres de bom senso se empenharão em fazer conhecer que elas merecem um melhor tratamento e não se submeterão servilmente a um orgulho tão mal fundado.

3.1 Female characters in *The Awakening*

In *The Awakening*, the narrator tells the story of Edna Pontellier, a wealthy married woman who, after spending a summer in Grand Isle, begins to question her own life. These questions spark Edna's "awakening" along with the passion she feels for the young Robert Lebrun. In her reflections, Edna questions the roles imposed on her by society, such as being a wife and mother, which she never wanted. Faced with these discomforts, Edna seeks to change her life when she leaves the mansion of her husband, Leonce Pontellier, and goes to live alone. At a certain point in the story, Edna realizes the impossibility of being with Robert and achieving independence. She then commits suicide by going into the sea.

During the narrative of the work, some female characters, in addition to Edna, stand out. They are: Adèle Ratignolle and Mademoiselle Reisz. Through Adèle, it is possible to see what society wanted women to be like. She perfectly fits the "Angel In The House" image, that is, always putting her family before herself, especially as a devoted mother. This can be exemplified in the following excerpt:

The mother-women seemed to prevail that summer at Grand Isle. [...] They were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels. [...] one of them was the embodiment of every womanly grace and charm. [...] Her name was Adèle Ratignolle (Chopin, 2008, p. 10)

In the story, Adèle's every action is all about taking care of her family and making sure everything at home is peaceful. Kate Chopin uses Mrs. Ratignolle to show the kind of women society liked and approved of. Adèle is the perfect example of the "Angel In The House" idea, while Edna breaks away from what society, especially the male-dominated part, wants from women.

By showing how happy and comfortable she felt with the simple life she led, Adèle accidentally awakens in Edna the first discomforts that she will feel throughout the story. Edna feels embarrassed when listening to the stories that Adèle tells, without any shame, about her births:

Never would Edna Pontellier forget the shock with which she heard Madame Ratignolle relating to old Monsieur Farival the harrowing story of one of her accouchements, withholding no intimate detail. She was growing accustomed to like shocks, but she could not keep the mounting color back from her cheeks (Chopin, 2008, p. 14)

She feels embarrassed hearing about the births because it wasn't Edna's habit to talk about such intimate things. So, for her, being intimate with other people was difficult. In another moment, when they go to the beach and Adèle starts to talk, Edna, looking at the sea and the sky, experiences memories of her youth and, along with that, previously lost desires.

[...] The hot wind beating in my face made me think—without any connection that I can trace of a summer day in Kentucky, of a meadow that seemed as big as the ocean to the very little girl walking through the grass, which was higher than her waist. She threw out her arms as if swimming when she walked, beating the tall grass as one strikes out in the water (Chopin, 2008, p. 20)

Soon after, Edna does not understand the relationship that this memory, so old, has with the moment they are living. However, a little further on she confesses that “sometimes I feel this summer as if I were walking through the green meadow again; idly, aimlessly, unthinking and unguided.” (Chopin, 2008, p. 21). From that moment on, Edna's concerns begin to become more frequent as Adèle increasingly fits into her role as woman-wife-mother.

At a certain point in the narrative, Edna reveals that she would give up her money and even her life for her children, but she would not give up herself, who she was, for them. While Adèle promptly contradicts her

“I don't know what you would call the essential, or what you mean by the unessential,” said Madame Ratignolle, cheerfully; “but a woman who would give her life for her children could do no more than that— your Bible tells you so. I'm sure I couldn't do more than that” (Chopin, 2008, p. 52)

Edna contradicts her, however, we realize at this moment that for Adèle there is no separation between the spheres of woman and mother. It is as if Adèle's subjectivity was taken over by the role of mother, while for Edna there is a limit to how far she will go for her children – Edna-mother can sacrifice herself for her children, but Edna-woman cannot.

Despite being so different, they both have affection for each other. Especially because through Adèle, Edna had access to a new world: the freedom to talk, express herself, and have friends once she

[...] had had an occasional girl friend, but whether accidentally or not, they seemed to have been all of one type—the self-contained. She never realized that the reserve of her own character had much, perhaps everything, to do with this. (Chopin, 2008, p. 21)

Edna feels comfortable with Adèle – even though she has different thoughts from hers – because, compared to her previous friends, in Adèle's presence, she stops being so reserved and starts to feel more free to think. As the story progresses and they return to New Orleans, Edna goes through her process of change and awakening, which upsets the people around her.

Adèle is one of those people who tries to dissuade Edna from her intentions. Before giving birth, she asks them to send for Edna and, trembling that Edna is having an extramarital affair with Arobin (Edna's friend who falls in love with her), she warns, as soon as Edna arrives, “think of the children, Edna. Oh, think of the children! Remember them!” (Chopin, 2008, p. 115). This appeal shows us that Adèle had a certain care for her friend, as she wanted to see her well and that is why she gave her advice. She, however, was unaware of Edna's needs. Furthermore, the moment in which this conversation takes place – the birth of her son – shows us that Adèle is, more than ever, a woman of her time.

On the other hand, in another character, Mademoiselle Reisz, we see what Edna wants for herself: freedom and independence. Mademoiselle Reisz is a musician, and her job allows her to be financially self-sufficient. She does not conform to the traditional roles of a wife and mother, as she is single and lives alone.

Mademoiselle Reisz is described as “a disagreeable little woman, no longer young, who had quarreled with almost everyone, owing to a temper which was self-assertive and a disposition to trample upon the rights of others” (Chopin, 2008, p. 29). Because of her age and appearance, she is not someone that men desire, and she lives quite separately from the rest of the community. To be independent, she

had to give up on things like love, sexuality, and even the company of others, as Mangueira (2012) suggests.

Madame Reisz is a single woman passionate about music. The fact that she is not married means that she is excluded from social circles and, therefore, she needs to be tough in her stances because her duty as a woman in society is to get married and obey her husband. By going against all this and choosing the path of art and independence – the opposite path to Adèle's – she challenges social norms.

The moment in which Mademoiselle Reisz crosses Edna's life is when she passionately plays her song on the piano. Edna then feels deeply touched by her art. Although Mademoiselle Reisz does not like anyone, she feels that Edna is worth it and seeks to get closer to her by stating that Edna is “the only one worth playing for.” (Chopin, 2008, p. 30). The friendship between Mademoiselle Reisz and Edna evolves to the point where Edna visits her at her home in New Orleans.

When Edna visits her for the first time, Mademoiselle Reisz expresses her fear “I sometimes thought: ‘She will never come. She promised as those women in society always do, without meaning it. She will not come.’ For I really don’t believe you like me, Mrs. Pontellier.”(Chopin, 2008, p. 67). This excerpt shows us that the price Mademoiselle pays for her independence is loneliness. We can also see the need for company, as she thinks Edna does not like her for not visiting her before. This makes us think that if a woman, at that time, was not accompanied by a man, then she had no right to accompany anyone because the social circle did the job of excluding her for being deviant from the norm.

Even though Edna wants the independence and freedom that Mademoiselle Reisz enjoys, she does not want to live in isolation like her. Edna does not see Adèle or Mademoiselle Reisz as role models for the kind of woman she wants to be. She seeks a new way of living that does not exist in her society yet (Mangueira, 2012). As a result, Edna experiences loneliness because her actions set her apart from the norms and the other female characters in the story.

3.2 Edna’s awakening

Mrs. Pontellier is described as someone who “was beginning to realize her position in the universe as a human being, and to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her” (Chopin, 2008, p. 17). This was part of her questions about marriage, love, and motherhood. Regarding her marriage to Leonce, for example, we discover that it happened more out of self-indulgence than love: “Her marriage to Leonce Pontellier was purely an accident, in this respect resembling many other marriages which masquerade as the decrees of Fate.” (Chopin, 2008, p. 22).

Edna is also pointed out as someone who is “not a mother-woman” (Chopin, 2008, p. 10). She does not focus on her children the way most mothers do. To Edna, not having to take care of her kids makes her feel relieved. She feels that “It seemed to free her of a responsibility which she had blindly assumed and for which Fate had not fitted her” (Chopin, 2008, p. 23). Moreover, Edna does not want to “sacrifice herself for her children, or for any one” (Chopin, 2008, p. 53). So, while Adèle Ratignolle follows what society expects, Edna rejects those norms and desires something more than the roles society imposes on women.

Throughout the story, the reader realizes that Edna does not love her husband, but only tolerates him. This becomes more prominent as she starts to

challenge him, such as when he calls her into the room and she refuses. She then thinks that

Another time she would have gone in at his request. She would, through habit, have yielded to his desire; not with any sense of submission or obedience to his compelling wishes, but unthinkingly, as we walk, move, sit, stand, go through the daily treadmill of the life which has been portioned out to us. [...] She perceived that her will had blazed up, stubborn and resistant. She could not at that moment have done other than denied and resisted. (Chopin, 2008, p. 35-36)

The first signs of Edna's awakening begin when she questions her husband's attitudes and her role as a woman in a marriage. We see this awakening when she imposes herself by no longer fulfilling his wishes. Furthermore, we realize that the love that Edna does not have for her husband becomes more evident when the narrator reveals that

It was in the midst of her secret great passion that she met him. [...] She fancied there was a sympathy of thought and taste between them, in which fancy she was mistaken. Add to this the violent opposition of her father and her sister Margaret to her marriage with a Catholic, and we need seek no further for the motives which led her to accept Monsieur Pontellier. for her husband (Chopin, 2008, p. 22)

This excerpt not only makes us understand Edna's feelings towards Leonce but also shows that, before her marriage, she existed as a woman with desires – a subject – through a love that would not become her future husband, in contrast to her current situation, where she has become an object in her marriage. As we discover more about the Edna of the past (her passions and freedom), we realize, together with her, how different both (the past and the present) are. And by also beginning to reflect on these memories, Edna begins to realize that something is changing:

She let her mind wander back over her stay at Grand Isle; and **she tried to discover wherein this summer had been different from any and every other summer of her life. She could only realize that she herself—her present self—was in some way different from the other self.** That she was seeing with different eyes and making the acquaintance of new conditions in herself that colored and changed her environment, she did not yet suspect. (Chopin, 2008, p. 45, our emphasis)

From the moment Edna starts to feel different, her process of self-discovery also begins. This process is shown in the book when Edna has moments of learning and uses different means to express herself. For instance, as Edna begins to interact with the Creole⁹ women, she begins to express emotions that she has kept hidden for a long time. These women, despite their conservative backgrounds, openly discuss their feelings. Initially, this openness surprises Edna, but she gradually appreciates it “She was flushed and felt intoxicated with the sound of her voice and the unaccustomed taste of candor “[...] like a first breath of freedom” (Chopin, 2008, p. 23). Her Creole friends help her realize that it is okay to talk about emotions and sexuality, giving her the courage to do so.

Art also plays a significant role in Edna's journey of self-discovery. This happens when she listens to Mademoiselle Reisz playing the piano. Previously,

⁹ This term refers, especially in New Orleans, to the descendants of French settlers in Louisiana.

music only triggered mental images for Edna. However, Reisz's piano touches her on a deeper level, making her experience a profound emotional response because when Reisz starts to play, Edna “saw no pictures of solitude, of hope, of longing, or despair. But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body” (Chopin, 2008, p. 40). As Edna's connection to music deepens, she feels a profound calling from within herself. This realization shows her the emotional power of music, which then influences the way she paints. Painting, once just a source of enjoyment, transforms into a means of expressing her feelings.

In the next stage of Edna's self-discovery, she learns how to stand up for what she wants and believes. A significant moment occurs when she declares that is “[...] no longer one of Mr. Pontellier's possessions to dispose of or not. I give myself where I choose” (Chopin, 2008, p. 53), indicating that she is no longer under Mr. Pontellier's control. This newfound independence means she does not need anyone else to make choices for her.

As the story unfolds and Edna feels the changes happening, she also becomes close to the young Robert Lebrun – a fundamental character in her awakening. The relationship between the two narrows and she falls in love “for the first time she recognized the symptoms of infatuation which she had felt incipiently as a child, as a girl in her earliest teens, and later as a young woman” (Chopin, 2008, p. 50).

Noticing how close they both were to each other, Robert travels to Mexico in an attempt to keep his distance from Edna. She, however, feels her lover's departure negatively: “Robert's going had some way taken the brightness, the color, the meaning out of everything. [...] her whole existence was dulled, like a faded garment which seems to be no longer worth wearing” (Chopin, 2008, p. 50). During her lover's absence, Edna begins to feel sad:

[...] she felt no interest in anything about her. [...] As Edna walked along the street she was thinking of Robert. She was still under the spell of her infatuation. She had tried to forget him, realizing the inutility of remembering. But the thought of him was like an obsession, ever pressing itself upon her (Chopin, 2008, p. 58-59)

When reading the scenes about Robert and Edna, it is interesting to note that, given the context of living in a society that has conservative ideas about women and her marital situation “making it impossible” for her to desire someone else, at no point do we notice any trace of guilt in Edna for being in love with someone other than her husband. On the contrary, Edna seems to have an aversion to traditional domestic life – taking care of the house, her husband, and children. This becomes clear in the following excerpt when she visits Madame Ratignolle:

Edna felt depressed rather than soothed after leaving them. The little glimpse of domestic harmony which had been offered her, gave her no regret, no longing. **It was not a condition of life which fitted her, and she could see in it but an appalling and hopeless ennui.** She was moved by a kind of commiseration for Madame Ratignolle,—a pity for that colorless existence which never uplifted its possessor beyond the region of blind contentment, in which no moment of anguish ever visited her soul, in which she would never have the taste of life's delirium. Edna vaguely wondered what she meant by “life's delirium.” It had crossed her thought like some unsought, extraneous impression (Chopin, 2008, p. 61, our emphasis)

Through this excerpt, we notice how uneasy about herself and about social norms Edna is. At this moment, she not only questions the life of a married woman with children but also feels sorry for Adèle never feeling anguish related to this – as she does –, as this means not living “life's delirium”, that is, thinking beyond what is imposed – what she wants. This is Edna's “life's delirium”: questioning herself about her desires. From then on, “she began to do as she liked and to feel as she liked” (Chopin, 2008, p. 61), and this implied no longer wanting to continue with the role of housewife, which left Mr. Pontellier completely dismayed, as we can see in the following excerpt:

Mr. Pontellier had been a rather courteous husband so long as he met a certain tacit submissiveness in his wife. But her new and unexpected line of conduct completely bewildered him. It shocked him. Then her absolute disregard for her duties as a wife angered him. When Mr. Pontellier became rude, Edna grew insolent. She had resolved never to take another step backward (Chopin, 2008, p. 61-62)

From that moment on, Mr. Pontellier starts to question Edna's sanity:

It sometimes entered Mr. Pontellier's mind to wonder if his wife were not growing a little unbalanced mentally. He could see plainly that she was not herself. That is, he could not see that she was becoming herself and daily casting aside that fictitious self which we assume like a garment with which to appear before the world (Chopin, 2008, p. 62)

Edna was not crazy, no matter how much her husband wanted to think so. He, however, saw her like this, because only in (an apparent) state of madness would a woman do what Edna was doing: imposing herself. Madness and women have a deep relationship in literature. According to Liane Schneider

[...] female madness could be considered as a political process, as it expresses all the biological, sexual and intellectual castrations suffered by women over the centuries. [...] Perhaps madness represents, in some cases, the only position from which women can express their revolt, but also their emotions, their enthusiasm and creativity within a patriarchal structure (2000, p. 123 – 124, our translation)¹⁰

Being seen as crazy, at the moment, was what allowed Edna to be who she wanted to be and do what she wanted to do without major retaliation. She, however, was still dissatisfied with living with her husband. Especially after becoming aware of the passion she felt for Robert and the discussions with Leonce. At a certain point in the story, when the children and her husband travel “Edna was at last alone, she breathed a big, genuine sigh of relief. A feeling that was unfamiliar but very delicious came over her (Chopin, 2008, p. 77).

In love with the feeling of being alone at home, Edna begins to reflect on what it will be like when her husband and children return. She then decides that she will live alone, because “I know I shall like it, like the feeling of freedom and independence” (Chopin, 2008, p. 85). This moment is significant in her story, as it

¹⁰ [...] a loucura feminina poderia ser considerada como um processo político, já que expressa todas as castrações biológicas, sexuais e intelectuais sofridas pela mulher ao longo dos séculos. [...] Talvez a loucura represente, em alguns casos, a única posição de onde as mulheres possam expressar sua revolta, mas também suas emoções, seu entusiasmo e criatividade dentro de uma estrutura patriarcal.

marks something that until then had not been seen among her peers: a married woman living alone. She, unlike Leonce, cared little about what people would say about her or whether she was conventional or not. Edna only had in mind that “ she had resolved never again to belong to another than herself” (Chopin, 2008, p. 85).

When deciding to move, Edna, very happy, makes an important comment about herself:

“One of these days,” she said, “I’m going to pull myself together for a while and think—try to determine what character of a woman I am; for, candidly, I don’t know. By all the codes which I am acquainted with, I am a devilishly wicked specimen of the sex. But some way I can’t convince myself that I am. I must think about it” (Chopin, 2008, p. 87)

This shows us that, even though Edna is fine with herself and her decision, she still feels like a different and perverse woman – it is worth mentioning – compared to the others. Different because she has thoughts that others do not have – or at least do not express – and perverse because, in a way, she is selfish: she does not take care of her children or her husband – on the contrary, she wants to have her private time without them. Closely following Edna’s changes, Mademoiselle Reisz warns her: “The bird that would soar above the plain level of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings. It is a sad spectacle to see the weaklings bruised, exhausted, fluttering back to earth.” (Chopin, 2008, p. 88). At this moment, Reisz shares something that she learned in her life of solitude and that Edna will need to learn too: you have to be strong to face the consequences of being free. Days after her move

There was with her a feeling of having descended in the social scale, with a corresponding sense of having risen in the spiritual. Every step which she took toward relieving herself from obligations added to her strength and expansion as an individual. She began to look with her own eyes; to see and to apprehend the deeper undercurrents of life. No longer was she content to “feed upon opinion” when her own soul had invited her (Chopin, 2008, p. 99)

Edna was feeling radiant about having her own space and the freedom/independence of being able to welcome whoever she wanted into her home or leave and come back whenever she wanted. As the story goes on, she is surprised to learn that Robert is back in New Orleans, so she is happy with the possibility of finding him. They then meet and after talking about each other’s feelings, Robert accompanies her to her new home, Edna then

[...] leaned over and kissed him—a soft, cool, delicate kiss, whose voluptuous sting penetrated his whole being—then she moved away from him. He followed, and took her in his arms, just holding her close to him. She put her hand up to his face and pressed his cheek against her own. The action was full of love and tenderness. He sought her lips again. Then he drew her down upon the sofa beside him and held her hand in both of his.

“Now you know,” he said, “now you know what I have been fighting against since last summer at Grand Isle; what drove me away and drove me back again.”

“Why have you been fighting against it?” she asked. Her face glowed with soft lights. “Why? Because you were not free; you were Leonce Pontellier’s wife. I couldn’t help loving you if you were ten times his wife; but so long as I went away from you and kept away I could help telling you so” (Chopin, 2008, p. 112)

In this fragment we can understand that the one who felt afraid of social pressures was Robert, even though he did not suffer from them; and that Edna was so self-absorbed, that she did not stop to reflect on what had prevented Robert from declaring his feelings – not because he did not feel them, but rather because he was conscious that she was Leonce's wife. He then states “Oh! I was demented, dreaming of wild, impossible things, recalling men who had set their wives free, we have heard of such things” (Chopin, 2008, p. 113). She then replies

“You have been a very, very foolish boy, wasting your time dreaming of impossible things when you speak of Mr. Pontellier setting me free! I am no longer one of Mr. Pontellier's possessions to dispose of or not. I give myself where I choose. If he were to say, ‘Here, Robert, take her and be happy; she is yours,’ I should laugh at you both” (Chopin, 2008, p. 113)

At this point in the story, Edna already feels free, especially from social constraints. When kissing her lover, in a house that is hers, she feels that she belongs to no one other than herself. This, however, changes when she is called by Madame Ratignolle's maid to help her with the woman's birth. Upon arriving at Adèle's house, seeing her giving birth, and asking Edna not to forget the children, Edna feels that she really is not free, because there she faces the problem from which she has no way to escape: the social roles imposed under the women. Dazed, she leaves Adèle's room and finds a doctor with whom she talks and answers when asked if she will travel with Leonce:

I'm not going to be forced into doing things. I don't want to go abroad. I want to be let alone. Nobody has any right—except children, perhaps—and even then, it seems to me—or it did seem—” She felt that her speech was voicing the incoherency of her thoughts, and stopped abruptly (Chopin, 2008, p. 116)

At this moment we can notice that Adèle's request to Edna begins to haunt her thoughts and she promptly confronts him, asserting herself as someone free. Upon arrival home, she looks for Robert, but he already left and left only a note saying “I love you. Good-by—because I love you” (Chopin, 2008, p. 117). Edna then feels sick and does not understand what is happening. The scene that follows is her returning to Grand Isle and reflecting on everything that had happened there, since summer:

Despondency had come upon her there in the wakeful night, and had never lifted. There was no one thing in the world that she desired. There was no human being whom she wanted near her except Robert; and she even realized that the day would come when he, too, and the thought of him would melt out of her existence, leaving her alone. The children appeared before her like antagonists who had overcome her; who had overpowered and sought to drag her into the soul's slavery for the rest of her days. But she knew a way to elude them (Chopin, 2008, p. 120)

Edna then walks to the beach, takes off all her clothes, being naked for the first time in the open air, and walks into the sea “how strange and awful it seemed to stand naked under the sky! How delicious! She felt like some new-born creature, opening its eyes in a familiar world that it had never known” (Chopin, 2008, p. 120). As she heads out to sea, she remembers Leonce with the children “they were a part of her life. But they need not have thought that they could possess her, body and

soul” (Chopin, 2008, p. 121) as if the fear of returning to the same place as before – submissive wife - caused her to move forward.

In previous moments, the narrator shows the intense relationship between Edna and the sea “the voice of the sea is seductive; never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander for a spell in abysses of solitude; to lose itself in depths of inward contemplation. The voice of the sea speaks to the soul” (Chopin, 2008, p. 18). She, however, did not know how to swim and was afraid “Edna had attempted all summer to learn to swim. [...] A certain ungovernable dread hung about her when in the water, unless there was a hand nearby that might reach out and reassure her” (Chopin, 2008, p. 31-32). Despite this, she tried, because “as she swam she seemed to be reaching out for the unlimited in which to lose herself” (Chopin, 2008, p. 32).

In her final moment, as she remembers her husband, children, and Robert's abandonment, Edna advances into the sea

She looked into the distance, and the old terror flamed up for an instant, then sank again. Edna heard her father's voice and her sister Margaret's. She heard the barking of an old dog that was chained to the sycamore tree. The spurs of the cavalry officer clanged as he walked across the porch. There was the hum of bees, and the musky odor of pinks filled the air (Chopin, 2008, p. 121)

According to Manguiera (2012), this last moment of Edna with the sea can be considered as a moment of death “of a woman who finds herself swallowed up by the conventions and obligations imposed on her by the patriarchal system that does not give her the right to decide the direction of your life” (p. 186 – our translation)¹¹ or birth through “reaffirmation of your inner desires” (p. 186 – our translation)¹².

It is then understood, at the end of the story, that Edna committed suicide (or freed herself?) because she could not be with Robert and also did not want to follow a life that would be imposed on her – being the wife of someone she did not love and being mother involuntarily. She, in a way, chooses her destiny because she does not need/want to belong to anyone other than herself.

4 FINAL THOUGHTS

In this article, we explored how a male-dominated society and culture influence women, and how they struggle against it. The book *The Awakening (1899)* serves as a perfect example of women's roles in this context. It reveals how women were treated, their concerns about their place in society, and their efforts to gain independence and freedom. We analyzed how the author depicts three different women's lives in the 19th century. Each character represented different roles women played. Adèle Ratignolle is the ideal woman according to society's standards. Mademoiselle Reisz faces loneliness and isolation due to her independence. Meanwhile, Edna Pontellier – the main character – chooses to create her own model of womanhood.

As Edna becomes more adept at expressing herself and her desires, she finds fewer people who can truly connect with her. Ultimately, her potential suicide is linked to her lack of meaningful connections and rejection by Robert. This feeling of

¹¹ “de uma mulher que se vê tragada pelas convenções e obrigações impostas a ela pelo sistema patriarcal que não lhe dá o direito de decidir os rumos de sua vida”

¹² “reafirmação de seus desejos interiores”

isolation is evident from the beginning of the novel when Edna observes a parrot that speaks French and “a little Spanish” but “also a language which nobody understood, unless it was the mocking-bird...” (Chopin, 2008, p. 5). This parrot symbolizes Edna's loneliness and serves as a reminder of friends who may seem to understand her but cannot truly speak her language. Furthermore, it is also possible to interpret Edna's swimming as a way to escape a patriarchal and oppressive society. When the narrator says that “exhaustion pressed and dominated her” (Chopin, 2008, p. 121) it is not just the physical exhaustion he is referring to, but, mainly, the emotional and social exhaustion that is being a woman and having her desires, choices and paths pruned by patriarchy.

With that being said, this work not only contributes to existing studies but can also encourage further research into the role of women in society through literature – especially women who defy gender prejudices imposed by a male-dominated culture. Future research could explore the female characters in *The Awakening* (1899) from different angles and historical contexts, showing how women's lives have evolved and how figures like Mademoiselle Reisz, for example, contributed to these changes.

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Dia 19 de fevereiro de 2019 eu entrei na sala 109 da Central de Aulas Paulo Freire e minha vida mudou radicalmente a partir daquele instante. Depois de um dia imaginando sobre como seria aquele primeiro dia, eu chegava a noite, na sala de aula, para assistir a primeira aula das outras tantas que viriam e conheceria as pessoas que dividiriam aquele espaço comigo pelos próximos 5 anos. Eu não podia estar mais feliz.

Portanto, expressar esses agradecimentos pode demandar várias páginas pois, muitas pessoas participaram dessa jornada junto a mim - e me atravessaram, mudando quem fui e quem eu sou.

A mim, a todas as Amandas que fui e a que sou agora: obrigada por não ter desistido quando as situações difíceis se fizeram presentes e pelo empenho não só durante o curso, mas durante toda a vida. Especialmente à Amanda criança e adolescente: quem diria que nosso passatempo (literatura) viraria parte da nossa profissão?!

A mainha, meu modelo de força e resiliência, agradeço pelo apoio incondicional aos meus sonhos – ainda que delirantes. Mainha foi a primeira pessoa que me incentivou a estudar, me apresentou à literatura e sempre destacou a importância da educação, mesmo durante muito anos não tendo nem a Educação Básica completa. Serei, sempre, eternamente grata a sua persistência, ao seu amor, cuidado, entrega e renúncia. Nada seria possível sem você. Esse diploma é nosso!

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Finalmente, a UEPB e ao Curso de Letras Inglês por terem, ambos, me proporcionado a melhor aventura da minha vida. Já durante o curso eu sabia que aquela era uma das minhas melhores épocas e por isso não fico saudosa. Fico feliz por esse ciclo que se encerra porque sei que aproveitei o que pude e fui muito feliz! Como minha analista uma vez disse, a mim foram dadas as Letras – quando, ainda na infância, eu lia os gibis da Turma da Mônica, lá no quatinho da empregada, no trabalho de mainha, e ficava por horas absorta nas histórias.

Isso me lembra o filme Matilda (1996) onde o narrador fala que os livros deram uma mensagem reconfortante a ela: de que ela não estava sozinha. Sendo uma criança muitas vezes solitária em casa, eu vi na escola e nos livros um meio de não me sentir tão só. Por isso, sempre me emociono ao falar de Letras e de educação porque eu sou fruto de pessoas – professores – que mudaram minha vida ao insistir em mim, mesmo quando não obtinham o retorno esperado e enxergaram algo em mim muito além daquilo que eu conseguia no momento – não a toa, também virei professora.

Letras me deu tudo.