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“Audacity” in the Representation of “Intimacy” in Malika Mokeddem’s
***The Forbidden Woman* (1993) and Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening* (1899)**
A Comparative Study

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DEDICATIONS

To my dear parents, to my two sweetheart brothers,
to my precious sister and to all the persons with whom I share good moments.

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Abstract

*This dissertation is a comparative study of the two novels *The Awakening* (1899) written by the American writer Kate Chopin and *The Forbidden Woman* (1993) by the Algerian Francophone author Malika Mokeddem. The research topic explores 'the audacity of Kate Chopin and Malika Mokeddem in the representation of the intimacy in their selected novels. In both narratives, the female narrators reveal a part of their intimacy and sexual life. In fact, describing intimate relations between man and woman was to challenge the phallocentric rules that are based on the mechanism of honor, and modesty that limit woman's liberty in the society. Both Chopin and Mokeddem have used writing as a means to revolt against the phallocentric rules that control the feminine body and assign to the woman a passive gendered identity. Therefore, the main concern in this dissertation is to find whether Mokeddem and Chopin, as feminist authors succeeded in freeing themselves from an assigned gendered identity through audacious writing about the intimacy? For the theory, it's relevant to use Hélène Cixous's 'Écriture Feminine' introduced in her book *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1975). The theorist urges women to deconstruct the patriarchal system that are governed by the phallocentric laws to recuperate their bodies and affirm their identity. Their audacity to write about intimacy and the feminine sexuality is a means to express their rebellion and their perpetual quest to liberate the woman's body physically, morally and sexually.*

I. Introduction

Writing is a means of expression and liberation that enables women to make the necessary change and transformation in the history of the reconstruction of women's rights and their perpetual quest for freedom. The feminine writing is considered not only as a new style of writing but also as a movement of transformation of the social and cultural standards. In fact, feminists use writing to change the status of the woman in the society and free her from the masculine parameters that dictate to woman her actions, gestures, and even words.

Women have understood that they should have their emancipation against the boundaries that are premised upon the construction of the gendered identity. Gender identity refers to the female's role in the society which is restricted of being the beautiful wife and mother. Woman is obliged to sacrifice her life to accomplish her duties towards her husband and children. The Gender role is a term first coined by the psychologist John Money in 1955. He defines the Gender role as: "All those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man, girl or woman, respectively." (Money, 1955: 34) In fact, Gender identity is a social construction, they are the behaviours that are appropriated to men and women in the society.

The masculine parameters prevent not only the progress of women in the social and intellectual level but also prevent them to express their body, desires, pleasure and sexuality. In fact, in the traditional society, speaking about the woman's body is considered a taboo subject that should be avoided and veiled under the notions of honour and modesty. It is a provocative subject that refers often to one's emancipation against the social structures. To avoid being rejected by the society, the woman find herself obliged to submit to the social laws that are constructed by the masculine order.

The laws that contribute to the female submission are called by theorists the phallogentric laws. The word Phallogentrism is the assumption that the phallus is the central element both in the sexual development and in the ordering in the social world. To liberate the female body from the phallogentric laws, feminists imply in their writing notions such as body, pleasure, intimacy, sex and sensuality. In fact, exploring the body, speaking about the desire and intimate relations is a means to escape the limiting concepts as honour, modesty imposed by the traditional society. It is an audacious act to deconstruct the forbidden and the taboo in the patriarchal society. Many critics see that having the audacity to speak about intimate relations between man and woman is a revolutionary act that can help women to affirm their identity, which is chased by the passive traditional codes of the patriarchal society. The intimate literature is a kind of literature in which the narrator reveals a part of his intimacy by sharing with the reader the most secret corners of his life, anxieties, thoughts, joys, sorrows and his revolts by the implication of the autobiographical act or by the roles it attributes to his heroines. (The Linguistic and Language Science Larousse Dictionary)

One can recognize that a woman writer needs audacity to write about intimacy. In fact, there are few women authors who refer to the intimate literature to free themselves from the morality and mechanisms of honour that register the traditional society and dare to speak about the body and the sensual moments shared between man and woman. One of these authors is Malika Mokeddem, a Francophone writer who has the audacity to appeal to intimate writing in order to revolt against the phallogentric laws and cross all the limits and constraints imposed by the society. In her autobiographical novel, *The Forbidden Woman* written in 1993, Mokeddem took her pen to denounce all the social injustices and to revolt against the traditional norms that exist in the Algerian society.

Malika Mokeddem dares to write about the intimacy freely and breaks all the taboos, rejecting all the limits imposed by the Algerian society especially in the South of Algeria

where the author was born. To free herself from an assigned gendered identity in all senses of the term; physically (release), intellectually (right to knowledge) but also sexually, Mokeddem writes in audacious manner about intimacy.

Mokeddem considers that writing is a means to deconstruct the socio-cultural authorities that forbidden intimate relationship between male and female. She advocates the reconstruction of an emancipated female identity. She appealed to writing to be able to destroy the barriers set up by the traditions by having the audacity to indulge in the domain of the intimate writing.

The second author is Kate Chopin. She is one of the American writers who has also written in the domain of intimacy. The author is among the nineteenth century feminists who participated in the emergence of a new image of the American woman. She dares to cross the social codes imposed by the patriarchal system. In fact, Chopin's writing was published during a period of time where woman's role is restricted to being a wife and a mother without a mind or a wish of her own. In her novel, *The Awakening* written in 1899, Chopin deals with the struggle of Edna against the patriarchal society.

Kate Chopin started writing very late. After the death of her husband and mother, the author took refuge in writing to overcome her sorrows and fill the lack they left on her life. Chopin faced death that took her dears and returns to life by writing. In her novel, *The Awakening*, the author began to write in audacious way, evoking moments of love and fulfilment of sexual desires to remind society that woman must be free from all the codes and taboos which limits her choice in the society. she describes the experience of the American woman during the late of the nineteenth century, where the ideal woman was the one who took care of her children and husband without worrying about her needs and desires.

For the theory, I opted for Hélène Cixous's theory 'Écriture Féminine' introduced in her book *The Laugh of the Medusa* written in 1975. In her theory, the feminist calls women to write in order to be able to deconstruct the phallogocentric discourse in order to be able to affirm themselves. She writes: "It is by writing, from and towards the woman, and by rising the challenge against the discourse governed by the phallus, that the woman will affirm the woman." (Cixous, 1975: 46-47). The term phallus is first used by the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud which denotes the masculine sexual organ. In his theories, Freud equates masculinity with activity and femininity with passivity. Freud wrote in 1925, in an article entitled *The Psychological Consequences of the Anatomic Distinction Between the Sexes*: "Women oppose change, receive passively, and add nothing of their own." Later, the term was coined by the British psychoanalyst Ernest Jones to Phallogocentrism. Hélène Cixous writes by using new codes leading to a feminine writing. For her, women must seek to write their bodies, own feelings and desires. Thus, to free oneself from codes considered phallogocentric, she confirms that: "It must be written because of the invention of a new, insurgent writing which, at the moment of its liberation, will enable it to carry out the ruptures and transformations indispensable in its history ". (CIXOUS, 1975: 43). In fact, Cixous called women to break away the chains of the social camisoles and write about their femininity, their pleasures and their sexuality in order to be able to liberate the female body.

Malika Mokeddem and Kate Chopin seem to go in the same direction as Hélène Cixous in her theory 'Écriture Féminine'. Both writers use writing to assert themselves and be able to integrate into a society so long dominated by man by their audacious writing about the intimacy, sexual life shared by woman and man. Their aim behind their writing in intimate literature is to free themselves from their desires, their sexual enjoyment, and to laud high that the female body is not a taboo. Whereas, it is time for women to free themselves from all

these codes and rules imposed by the society on the social, cultural and especially on the sexual level.

The Review of Literature

Malika Mokeddem is an Algerian writer of the nineties who imposed herself by writing autobiographical novels. The socio-political situation of her origin nation, culture, sex and identity are the main themes dealt in Mokeddem's novels. In her third novel *The Forbidden Woman*, Malika Mokeddem fights the stereotypes, prejudices and taboos which are mostly supported by the religious fundamentalism that oppress women in the Algerian society. The literary critic Yvette Bénayoun-Szmidt in his book entitled *Algérie: nouvelle écriture* (2001) studied Malika Mokeddem's *The Forbidden Woman*. He writes:

The Forbidden Woman can be read as a new concept, a marking of the condition of women, which is more to be, hence the temptation to consider it as an ideological support to guide the reader in his interpretation or decoding of the following text. He discovers that in his native village, now in the hands of the fundamentalists, a woman evolved, modern, educated, and in addition doctor, as Sultana " is prohibited " of stay, " forbidden " of love, " forbidden " compassion and " prohibited " profession

(Yvette, 2001: 75)

The above quotation refers to the living situation of the emancipated Algerian woman during the Black decade in the nineties. Women suffered from marginalization because of their status of being females. They were prevented from knowledge, work and even love.

Journalist criticism also takes place. The Algerian journalist Salima Ait Mohamed writes about *The Forbidden Woman* in the newspaper entitled: *Algérie- Actualité* published in 1993:

Sultana opened her eyes to a hard universe, without fantasy, which represses the impulses of the Heart, devoid of all color, all heat. A

universe that teaches a woman, from the first mornings of her life, the shame of being a woman.

It can be deduced from this quotation that the journalist focuses on the male supremacy that saps the hopes of the Algerian woman. Sultana is like millions of women who are taught since childhood the shame of being a female. It can be understood by the quotation that being a female in Algeria is to live like a prisoner of the religious and traditional restrictions.

In the same context, the first Algerian stories are life stories, testimonies about journey. However, according to the literary critic, Christiane Achour, in his book entitled: *Noûn, Algérienne dans l'écriture*, written in 1998:

These writers mask this testimony in one way or another, which is not surprising given the imperatives of reserve, modesty, silence that their education has instilled in them. The transgression of these precepts exposes to the social sanction and can go until the expulsion of the group and the death.

(CHRISTIANE, 1998: 97)

In the above quotation, the writer speaks about the social stereotypes that the Algerian woman must follow to avoid being rejected by the society or killed by her family.

Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899) received a lot of criticism. Initially, at the time of its publication, the novel was not appreciated but later it becomes a classic. Being written in the late nineteenth century, *The Awakening* didn't gain its popularity until the 20th century. In this respect, Per Seyersted announces in his book entitled: *Kate Chopin: A Critical Biography* written in 1969:

what makes the novel feel so modern is Edna Pontellier's realization that the physical component of love can stand apart from the spiritual one, that sensuous attraction is impersonal and can be satisfied by a partner she does not love. (SEYERSTED, 1969: 39)

It is obvious from this quotation that the Awakening of Edna was more spiritual than physical. Edna wants to liberate her desires. To accomplish a spiritual freedom more than a physical one.

Harold Bloom's interpretation focuses on the autoerotic nature and sexual Awakening of the female protagonist Edna Pontellier, he articulates:

The Awakening, a flawed but strong novel, now enjoys an eminent status among feminist critics, but I believe that many of them weakly misread the book, which is anything but feminist in its instance.

In his citation, Bloom asserts that the novel which is misread by many critics is no more than a feminist. In fact, reading the novel, one can deduce that the protagonist Edna is instable character who is shared between the submission to the traditional laws to keep safe her children or to follow her revolution to get free from the phallocentric laws.

Fox Genovese, an American historian who is known of her writing about woman in society refrains from whole heartedly that "The Awakening addresses a social problem; the condition of woman." (FOX GENEVESE, 1994: 34)

In her review, she said: "The Awakening's individualistic portrayal of the surfacing of Edna's sexual self from the depths of suppression seeks to treat the protagonist's sexuality "independent of gender relation" (FOX GENEVESE, 1994: 38)

It can be understood from this statement that Edna establishes an order outside the phallocentric order, she seeks to liberate herself from an assigned gendered identity of being not more a mother-wife.

Another critic is the writer and professor of English in western Michigan University who had claimed in her book: *Find the Self at Home: Chopin's The Awakening and Cather's The Professor's House* (1992):

This new woman was determined to become more independent, educated and sexually liberated in order to transcend her traditional role and find a new self in order to realize her position in the universe as a human being (JOSLIN, 1992: 179)

From reading this statement, one can understand that Edna wanted to break away from the authority of men as well as from the societal reinforcements of the dominant patriarchy, and therefore, to be a modern woman, independent and sexually liberated.

Issue and Working Hypothesis

From the review of some of the literature on Kate Chopin and Malika Mokeddem, one can notice that many critics have dealt with the two selected novels *The Awakening* and *The Forbidden Woman* that are written in two different periods of time. To the best of my knowledge, Chopin's novel *The Awakening* hadn't elicited a multitude of scholarly responses until the beginning of the 1960. In fact, at the time of his publishing, it was seen as a provocative novel since it calls women to emancipate against the traditional norms of the society. Although feminist critics find that Chopin was among the first feminists that had struggled for the Woman Cause. In fact, she was audacious to write about the social and sexual liberation of women. Being educated in a patriarchal society, Mokeddem had also been audacious in describing sexual relations in her novel *The Forbidden Woman*. As feminists, Chopin and Mokeddem wrote in order to rise up against social oppression, taboos, to claim sexual freedom, to express themselves on sexuality and by the same taken Freedom from an assigned gendered identity.

In this sense, the Algerian writer Malika Mokeddem and the American Kate Chopin create a relationship between sexuality and writing, two activities that women should use to evoke their enjoyment. Claiming that women are free in the writing of their intimate life and sexual experience, thus being liberated from the phallogentric laws and freed from a gendered identity that is built under the traditional yokes of society.

My dissertation will therefore focus on the works of the selected writers who have distinguished themselves by having the audacity to write about the intimacy not only to fight

against the limits imposed by a traditional society that rests on male dominance but also to free oneself off an assigned gendered identity and break the phallogentric laws. Cixous claims that women must have the audacity to dominate their fears in order to free themselves from the camisoles imposed by society, culture and religion. She says: "It is by making their bodies and their minds one that they can express themselves". (Cixous,1975: 53).

Therefore, my main concern in this dissertation is to find if Mokeddem and Chopin, as feminist authors succeeded in freeing themselves from an assigned gendered identity, through audacious writing about the intimacy? For that, parallels will be drawn between the two novels under the theory of Hélène Cixous's 'Ecriture Feminine' in her work *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1975). To achieve my task, it is relevant to analyze the social and political context in which Mokeddem and Chopin produced their novels, their aims from their writings and the different affinities that they disclose.

Methodological Outline

To carry on my study, and be able to answer the raised issue and working hypothesis, I will try to apply Cixous's theory on the selected novels for the analysis of the issue of the liberation from a gender identity by the audacious writing in the realm of intimacy. The 'Discussion' section will divide into three chapters: The first chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the female characters in both works and how they stand for their emancipation and their rebellion against the society? The second chapter explores the content of the two novels, focusing on characterization and the intimate audacious writing in each. The third chapter, consist of the analysis of the language used by the two selected authors in their works as a means to express the need to bring out the social codes that imprisoned women and realize their freedom. Finally, a general conclusion which sums up the main findings dealt with in this work.

II. Method and Materials

This section is devoted to our theoretical framework which consists of a summary of Hélène Cixous's theory 'Ecriture Feminine' in her book *The Laugh of the Medusa* written in 1975. The materials include the biographies of both authors and a brief synopsis of the selected novels.

II.1. Method: Hélène Cixous's Theoretical Concept 'Ecriture Féminine'

As for methodology, it is relevant to make reference to Hélène Cixous's essay *The Laugh of The Medusa* written in 1975. The appropriate concepts and ideas of Hélène Cixous about women's writing seem to be pertinent to the selected novels. In fact, Cixous calls women to write in order to break the silence and forget the past built according to phallogentric laws. Referring to the title, *The Laugh of The Medusa*, Cixous explains the subjugation of the female voice by exploring the myth of the Medusa and the various connotations associated with the "deadly" but otherwise "beautiful" Medusa. According to the Greek myth, Medusa was cursed by the goddess Minerva, transforming her into a monstrous figure with snake like hair and a gaze that could turn any one into stone. She was latter killed by Perseus by slaying her head. (Cixous,1975 :23).

Cixous interprets this myth of Medusa's death as men's attempt to silence the voice of woman, to cut off woman's language. Verena Andermatt Conley in his book entitled: *Hélène Cixous: Writing the Feminine* (1992), writes:

Medusa is that mythic being whose petrified, snakelike hair terrifies men who in defensive response accede to erection and enter into the symbolic, Freud's castration is destroyed through laughter. woman is not that terrifying being that men would like to make of her in order to dominate better. to the contrary, she undoes the law of meaning through laughter and gives herself to be seen in her beauty and splendor. (Conley,1992,34)

For Freud, the Medusa who is a repulsive creature is a symbol of female castration (i.e. Castration means Complex and fear of the male children of the removal of their penis) . Cixous reads the myth of the Medusa as a triumph of the masculine order to subjugate the female body and her expression. Cixous attempts to portray the Medusa as smiling and beautiful with multiple serpents highlighting the multiple feminine erogenous zones which displace with a rebellious urge to deconstruct the phallogentric laws. Laughing at the constraints placed on her, the Medusa expresses joy to redirect the language of oppression into the language of the body that is boundaryless.

The Laugh of the Medusa is an attempt that aims at the liberation of women and has prompted the evolution of feminist's ideas to the present day. The theorist calls women to write in order to identify and integrate into a world so long dominated by man. In her theory, Cixous develops the concept of the 'Écriture Féminine'. For her, the feminine writing permits women to express their own desires and feelings. In fact, she confirms that according to feminine writing, women seek to write their bodies. Thus, they want to free themselves from the codes judged phallogentric. As she tells us:" It is by writing, from and to the woman, and by raising the challenge of the discourse governed by the phallus, that the woman affirmed the woman." (Cixous, 1975:46)

The theorist asserts that the feminine writing is the expression of the female body and sexuality in writing. Besides, she argues that the subject of female sexuality has always been repressed by men and should therefore be a starting point for a new female discourse. Her appeal to find a language that can speak the body means that women should start to contemplate their relationship to their bodies. They should be orientated towards the multiple sexual impulses of their bodies to find a liberating way of writing. In fact, she elaborates her idea that writing is a continual search for meaning, and a means of freeing all the suppressed desires, impulses and to liberate the woman from an assigned gendered identity.

Cixous revolts against the oppressive phallogentric laws that shackle the female body and sexuality through her formulation of a new form of writing known as 'Écriture Féminine' through *The Laugh of the Medusa*. In fact, 'Écriture Féminine' is about the representation of the feminine body as a path towards thought, a thought that would question the male thinking. She writes: "Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring them to writing- woman must put herself into the text- as into the world and into history by her own movement". (Cixous,1975: 48)

Reading the two author's novels articulates that Malika Mokeddem and Kate Chopin are taking up the same project as Hélène Cixous's theory. In fact, both authors have used writing as a means to revolt against the stereotypes and prejudices of traditional society that have limited the freedom of women on the physical and intellectual level. These authors have thus claimed the domination of the man who deprived the woman of her body and sexual freedom by assigning a gendered identity since her birth. In order to free themselves from this assigned gendered identity, these writers enter into the audacious writing in the realm of intimacy.

II.2. Materials

The materials that are used in my investigation of audacity in the representation of the intimacy, are two novels entitled: *The Forbidden Woman* (1993) written by Malika Mokeddem and *The Awakening* (1899) written by Kate Chopin. But first of all, it's necessary to give the biography, the social atmosphere in which the two authors had been raised, and what pushed them to rebel against the patriarchal rules. My objective is to offer a brief account of the main social events that have influenced the two authors to be audacious in their writing about the intimacy.

II.2.1. The Biographies of the Two Selected Authors: Malika Mokeddem and Kate Chopin:

Malika MOKEDDEM was born on 05 October 1949 in Kénadsa in Béchar. Algeria. It was at the Faculty of Medicine of Oran that she studied, before leaving Algeria in 1977 to settle definitively in Montpellier. France. In France, she began practicing medicine as a nephrologist. In 1985, she left her work as a nephrologist to devote herself exclusively to writing. Malika Mokeddem was born in a conservative Muslim society that is based on traditions that have always oppressed women. From her childhood, she suffered from the frustrations and oppressive attitudes that rage in the Algerian society. Indeed, the author is grown up in a space full of excitement, a space invaded by the pains of colonialism and the darkness of ignorance. She grew up in a family that venerates traditions. This situation has given rise to feelings of rebellion which have prompted her to assert herself and make her voice heard.

Mokeddem has left her country to escape the blackness of her own, but she is never satisfied because her anguish has gone to the chronic stage although she enjoys all forms of liberty personal, intellectual, and even sexual. In her novel, *The Forbidden Woman*, the author seeks a new identity attributed to woman, and in order to achieve social but also sexual freedom, Mokeddem has dared to drive away all the taboos and prejudices of a traditional society with the audacity to speak of the intimacy.

The second author is Kate Chopin. Katherine O'Flaherty, later Kate Chopin was born in St. Louis Missouri state in America in February 8, 1851. At the age of five, she was enrolled by her father at the St. Louis Academy of the Sacred Heart where she was exposed to Catholic teachings. The Academy taught the author to think independently, but to be subjected to men. Few years later, her father died in a train accident, so she had to go home to

live with her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who are all widows. At home with the family and at school with the nuns, Kate was surrounded by intelligent and independent women. Her childhood lacks dominant male roles, which is the opposite characteristic compared to Malika Mokeddem's childhood. Thus, it has rarely been a testament to the tradition of female submission and male domination that defined the end of nineteenth-century marriages. This leads me to believe that the themes of female freedom and sexual awareness that dominated *The Awakening*, Chopin's novel is undoubtedly the result of the atmosphere in which she was raised.

II.2.2. The Summary of the Two Selected Novels: *The Forbidden Woman* (1993) and *The Awakening* (1899):

The Forbidden Woman is the third novel of Malika Mokeddem. After many years in exile to France, Sultana Medjahed returns to her native village in Ain Nakhela in the southern Algerian to attend the funeral of her friend Yacine. This return brings about a tearing caused on the one hand by the mourning of her friend and on the other hand by the drama of his country devour by fundamentalism.

Malika Mokeddem evokes the journey of a woman, Sultana facing an Algerian society torn by her own demon, the fundamentalists. Sultana confronts the roughness of the people of her village upon her arrival. Besides, the title of the novel *The Forbidden Woman* expresses the refusal for a feminine subject which refers to Sultana. The return of the latter is marked by a whirlwind of events: the death of her impossible love, Vincent's encounter, and then the recognition and support of the women of her village.

The narration is supported by two characters: Vincent and Sultana who occupy five chapters out of nine. Vincent a French woman who underwent a kidney transplant of a young Algerian woman. Vincent feels invaded by a double identity; that of French origin

and the other of Algerian origin which was reborn thanks to the graft of the kidney of an Algerian young woman. In the novel, Sultana is described as a seductive woman desired by Salah and Vincent. So, she represents a danger in the village, her behavior is judged as a lust for her family. Dalila is an important personage, she represents the dream girl on the dune who never ceases to evoke the life of her sister Samia, and she goes to France where she continues her studies because she refuses the yoke of men. Her family rejected her because she dared to transgress the rules of her village according to which women are subjected to their father and then to their husbands.

In her novel *The Awakening* written in 1899, Kate describes the discomfort of Edna Pontellier, in her life as wife and mother, a life that does not suit her and from which she flies step by step in order to finally find her freedom and personal fulfillment in love for the man who seduced her, Robert Lebrun. Married for six years to Léonce Pontellier, Edna considered herself happy and well established. Yet her inner being begins to pull her, to force her thoughts to awaken, "an indescribable feeling of oppression, no doubt coming from a dark corner of his consciousness, filled his whole being with vague anguish was a shadow, a mist crossing the clear summer day of his soul, it was strange and new, it was a mood". (Chopin, 1899:65). The summer she spent in New Orleans will mean to Edna a great turning point in her awakening. Her attraction to Robert will push her to free herself from the restrictions of her husband. Edna Pontellier will know "The Awakening" of his body and her heart. For the time, it is a desire for emancipation that arouses indignation and to the end conduct Edna to commit a suicide.

The main perspective behind her book was to unveil the problems of women in the family and society. As the title suggests, *The Awakening* represents the realization of Edna who realized the vanity of her desires, a woman who fled her family to take refuge in the love of a lover in order to liberate her body and his heart

III. Results

In this part of the dissertation, light will be shed on the results reached through the comparative study of the American and Algerian literature through Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening* (1899) and Malika Mokeddem's *The Forbidden Woman* (1993).

The comparative study of the American and Algerian novels has shown that even if the two novels were written in different two periods of time, they have produced literary works that have the same aim which is to liberate woman from a gendered identity assigned to her by the social codes. Chopin wrote his novel during the late nineteenth century while Mokeddem's novel is written during the late of the twentieth century background and social context, they have produced literary productions that have the same objective. The analysis of the two novels through Cixous's view and interpretation of the 'Écriture Féminine' shows that both Chopin and Mokeddem aim to liberate women from an assigned gendered identity. In fact, both authors used writing to communicate their revolt against the phallogocentric laws that privilege men in all the domains and relegate women to a lower status.

The two feminists have sought to establish a basis for a different social order that has always differentiate between the female and the male. They assert that gender difference is a cultural construction as Simone De Beauvoir well explained it in *The Second Sex* (1949). It is organized and conducted in ways to subordinate woman and man in all the cultural domains; familiar, religious, and social. The distinction between male and female can be biological but not more than that.

The analysis of the emancipation of the female characters in the first chapter leads me to understand that in *The Awakening*, Chopin use Edna to express her revolt and emancipation against the social codes that chain the liberty of woman. through, Edna Chopin shows that marriage and motherhood can be an obstacle for woman who wants to free

herself from these norms. In *The Forbidden Woman*, Mokeddem uses Sultana to declare her revolt against the traditions, social norms, and the living situation of the Algerian woman.

The thematic analysis on the audacity of the two selected authors in the representation of the intimate in their novels leads me to understand that both authors try to destroy the phallogentric laws in creating emancipated characters who defy the social manipulations of the feminine body in having the audacity to describe their intimate relations freely.

In the third chapter, Chopin and Mokeddem use language as a means to express their rebellion against the social codes. In *The Forbidden Woman*, Mokeddem uses harsh words to unveil the sad living conditions of the Algerian society. these words are used to attract the reader's attention and invite all the Algerians to unite against the enemy of Algeria to eliminate all evils and obtain freedom. Malika Mokeddem had perfectly chosen these words to describe the violated Algeria. In *The Awakening*, Chopin uses symbolism as a literary technique to describe the dream of the nineteenth century woman to free herself from all the social codes that limit her liberty and progress in the society. in fact, both authors have well chosen the literary techniques to touch the reader's soul to be able to understand the daily sufferings of a woman whose life is controlled by gendered identity assigned to her since her birth.

III. Discussion

I. Chapter One: The Emancipation of the Female Characters

In the present chapter, I analyze the emancipated female characters: Edna and Mlle Reisz in Chopin's *The Awakening* and Sultana, Dalila and Samia in Mokeddem's *The Forbidden Woman*. These female characters were used by the authors to express their Emancipation against the social codes that featured the traditional societies.

I.1. The Emancipation of Edna in *The Awakening*

Edna is the main protagonist of *The Awakening*, she is a woman in search of her female identity. She is uncomfortable in her role as mother-woman. After the move of Edna from Kentucky to New Orleans, she started to loosen a little mantle of reserve that she had before; the sensuous way of behavior of the Creole have influenced her, but in the same time, she didn't change her understanding about the patriarchal rules. At the beginning of the novel, Edna is a submissive woman, who follows the role of the mother-woman whose duty is to be ideal wife for her husband and mother for her children.

Living by her father's rules as a child and young woman, Edna learns that patriarchal rules must be followed. That the role of the woman in the society was restricted to be a charming obedient wife who takes care of her children. In a conversation with Mr Pontellier, her father said: "Authority, coercion is what is needed. Put your foot down good and hard, the only way to manage a wife, take my word for it". (Chopin, 1899: 186). This passage shows that Edna's father was a believer of the patriarchal system and that he has enforced these beliefs upon his daughter throughout her childhood.

When Edna marries, she chooses Mr Léonce Pontellier. She believes that he has a different view on women, but he was not different. "Her attempt to marry a man who would

offers her a marriage of equality and a sense of freedom fails. So, she decided to do what is expected of her and denies her own sexuality and desires”. (Chopin, 1899: 47). It is obvious that Edna has a very hard time hiding her true feeling and she is very uncomfortable trying to be a mother-woman: “In short, Mrs Pontellier was not a mother- woman”. (Chopin, 1899:18). Mr Pontellier feels that Edna doesn’t fulfill her duties as a mother and as a wife. From that, it is clear that Edna was very unhappy in her life. Her unhappiness can be seen by her nightly tears: “she could not have told why she was crying. Such experiences as the foregoing were not uncommon in her married life”. (Chopin, 1899: 33). Edna has always trouble accomplishing her role as a wife and as a mother. Thus, she lives a hard time playing the role of a submissive woman.

In *The Awakening*, Chopin portrayed Edna as a non-believer in the social codes. Often, her husband reproaches her for not successfully fulfilling her duties as a mother and as a wife. Edna and her husband don’t share the same beliefs when it comes to a woman’s role and therefore don’t have the domestic harmony. The problem that Edna encounters with the patriarchal society is that she, as a woman should have no ideas and thoughts of her own, but instead be totally devoted to the needs of her husband and children. In fact, Chopin portrayed Edna as this unhappily married woman who is not willing to give up her own emotional, sexual life as requested by patriarchal norms. In a conversation with Mme Ratignolle, Edna confesses that she cannot accept that “they possess her body and soul”. (Chopin, 1899: 122)

The kind of relationship that Edna wants is the kind that the modern woman aims for one of equality. It’s during her visit to Grande Isle that Edna finally comes to realize that she cannot accept being just a mother woman. She feels pity for women that she sees at Grand Isle and their ability to ignore themselves.

Being awakened, she starts to show her discontent in not being in the kind of relationship that she desires. With the realization that she is failing as a mother-woman and that, in her marriage with Léonce, she can never be a modern woman, Edna decides to break free from her female role and embark into emancipation. The first action she takes on her new path is to ask Robert Lebrun (her lover) to come to her in order to go with her to Cheneiere for mass. Edna is breaking social codes and following her own desires. In the traditional society, sexual desires are not allowed for women, and Edna 's infatuation with Robert is away for her to break one of the social rules. Mme Ratignolle describes her as follows: "For the first time, she recognized a new 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,1899: 65)

Edna also goes against the program of social conduct that her husband has planned for her; she cancels meetings and goes against his will. When she eventually moves away from her home, Mme Ratignolle questions her actions: "In some way, you seem to me like a child. Edna, you seem to act without a certain amount of reflection which is necessary in this life". (CHOPIN, 1899 :202). Edna's way of freeing herself from her family and moving away from her home is disturbing to Mme Ratignolle, who adheres to domestic rules. Thus, to break the rules is considered as immature and imprudent.

Later, Edna doubts her own actions, as she confesses to Robert:

I am 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. (CHOPIN,1899:220)

This quotation shows her concern with not being able to withstand the social codes surrounding her without disliking herself too much. Edna is full of conflicting feelings. On the one hand, she knows that the road towards emancipation is not easy in a traditional society

because she will affect the reputation of her children but on the other hand, she wants to live her life liberally without any restriction. In describing herself as a devilishly wicked specimen of sex, she was audacious to confess that she is a sexual addict.

After having sexual relation with Arobin, a seductive Creole man who becomes the lover of Edna who satisfies her physical urges while her another true love Robert Lebrun was in Mexico. Edna began to feel remorseful because she has been unfaithful to her own feelings of love towards Robert. The problem is that Edna does not want to belong neither to her husband nor to Robert as his wife: "I am not longer one of Mr Pontellier possession to dispose of or not. I give myself where I choose" (Chopin, 1899: 151). Edna realizes that she can no longer be the possession of any man. So, when Robert says that maybe her husband will let her go, she laughs and tell him that she chooses for herself now. Her choice is never to remarry again, but Robert cannot handle that kind of a relationship and that is why he leaves her with one word. He tells her: "Good bye because I love you". (Chopin, 1899: 156). Edna now realizes that not even love can give her the relationship she desires.

In a conversation with her friend the emancipated Mlle Reisz, the latter tells Edna that she is not strong enough to break free:

The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings. It is a sad spectacle to see the weaklings, bruised, exhausted, fluttering back to earth. (Chopin, 1899: 233)

In the above quotation, the use of bird serves to symbolize freedom, and flight off the social restrictions. Mlle Reisz instructs Edna that she must have strong wings in order to survive the difficulties she will face if she decide to act against the social codes imposed on woman.

Edna also finds Mlle Reiz's solitude frightening and is instead portrayed as someone who actually longs for a friendship, but has a hard time finding anyone who will support her

new-found ways. Her doubts are expressed when she is talking to Robert about how she does not know who she is anymore. Edna was living an emotional conflict, she has been taught something throughout her life that she is now going against, in following her own beliefs. In fact, Edna had struggled to find her place in the society, to be a free woman but at the end, she does not want to hurt her children, she explains to the doctor:

I don't want anything but my own way. This is wanting a good deal, of course, when you have to trample upon the lives, the hearts, and the prejudice of others but no matter still, I should not want to trample upon the little lives. (Chopin, 1899: 301)

In above quotation, Edna seems confused about her female role. Her confusion leads her to really think about her situation and how she should solve her problem and deal with her conflicting feelings. Edna is portrayed as a woman who struggles to find herself in the society but she does not want neither to hurt her children nor to give up her own person.

Edna's decision to commit suicide is a well-planned act. She thinks all night about what she is going to do. She shows a great deal of reflection on her part.

Edna walked on down to the beach rather mechanically, not noticing anything special except that the sun was hot. She was not dwelling upon any particular train of thought. She had done all the thinking which was necessary after Robert went away, when she lay awake upon the sofa till morning. (Chopin, 1899: 320)

When Edna dies in the Ocean it is well known to all who knew her that she was a very poor swimmer and the whole incident can easily be perceived as an accident. She does not leave a note or explanation to her actions, so people cannot know that she intended to kill herself. By hiding her suicide, she saves her children's reputation from the disgrace of having a mother who is a social outcast. In committing suicide, Edna finally gives herself the freedom she so desires but cannot achieve in her life and at the same time save her children's reputation.

I.1. The Emancipation of Mlle Reisz in *The Awakening*:

Mademoiselle Reisz is an unpopular old woman who serves as an inspiration to Edna throughout her awakening. In *The Awakening*, Mlle Reisz stands out as a disagreeable and seemingly unintelligible female character. She is a woman who does not conform to the traditional expectations of a female. She remains a single, eccentric musician, who never considers marriage or motherhood as a central element in the female's life. Precisely because Reisz does not conform to the female's role in the society, her behavior is unacceptable within her community on Grand Isle and in New Orleans. Those who conform to the traditions of society like Mm Ratignolle cannot understand her and therefore they avoid her.

Chopin's description of Mlle Reisz leads me to understand her as an emancipated woman who does not conform to her female role in the society, or a person who does not perform her gender correctly:

Reisz was a disagreeable little woman, no longer woman, who had quarreled with almost everyone, owing to a temper what was self-assertive and a disposition to trample upon the lights of others (...) she was a homely woman, with a small weazened face and body and eyes that glowed. She had absolutely no taste in dress, and wore a batch of rusty black lace with a bunch of artificial violets pinned to the side of her side. (Chopin. 1899: 70-71)

This description of Reisz focuses on her temperament and appearance. She therefore becomes disagreeable because she does not fit the profile of an idyllic gendered female. Reisz is described by the author as an easily recognized character who is not fully delineated but is useful in the narrative purpose. Chopin uses Reisz to describe the living situation of an emancipated woman during the late of the nineteenth century.

The Awakening is written at the end of the nineteenth century in America. During that period of time , men and women were expected to fill the distinct domain of the society,

where men were expected to live a public life, responsible for taking care of the family financially. They took their jobs as sole providers very seriously. They also had the responsibility for guiding the family. While they may listen to what their wives had to say, they made the final decisions. Men did not do household duties or childcare. They felt the need to be strong and refrained from showing too much emotion or sharing too many personal feelings, especially with that outside of the family. Women were supposed to do the household duties such as the housebound, cooking, taking care of the children and husband. In fact, woman's role was limited to a wife and as a mother.

I.3. The Emancipation of Sultana in *The Forbidden Woman*

The novel is the testimony of a society torn between prejudice and progress, religion and fanaticism. Indeed, the author depicts the painting of the woman with all the violence she endures and all the sacrifices she makes to wrest her freedom. She recounts the fate reserved for women in Algeria in the nineties marked by obscurantism, fanaticism and violence or a free woman like Sultana. the heroine deserves death in the country of the fundamentalists who have ravaged lives and the spirits. As the title indicates, the presence of the heroine Sultana was forbidden in her native country after her voluntary exile, for socio-cultural and religious reasons. Recognized as a foreigner, she is banned from the group.

The Forbidden Woman is the story of Sultana Medjahed, an Algerian woman who left her country because of the overwhelming traditions, she decided to come back to Algeria to attend the funeral of Yacine, her lover. In fact, Sultana's return was not only for her lover but also in solidarity with all the Algerian women with the desire for freedom. In a conversation with Salah, Sultana claims that she is returned with the determined intention of confronting others and settling all accounts with her enemies as well as all the inhabitants of Ain Nekhla. She tells him: "To tell the truth, I'm not aware of the exact reason or reasons for my return.

Everything is so interwoven, confused in my mind (...) Do you think I'm representative the people here? (Mokeddem,1993:104). But even if she has spent many years away from her village, she has not forgotten the bad habits that prevail in the village, as soon as she has returned, she said:" I have forgotten nothing. Neither this biting curiosity nor this meddling that asserts its rights over all". (Mokeddem,1993:06)

Sultana knows that she is forbidden in a society where all the behaviors are considered taboos, but she remains amazed at such social behavior. This same woman is forbidden, because she has not been able to endure the social constraints, and she declared herself rebellious. Having attended the funeral of Yacine was the first act by which sultana drew the wrath of those of FIS (Le Front Islamique du Salut: a radical Islamic party and movement during the Black Decade in Algeria).

Sultana broke the traditions and even dishonored her tribe because she dared to attend the funeral. Drinking whiskey, driving a car, going out at night, and staying overnight with foreign men under the same roof are provocative acts, as this society does not usually find such behavior among women. In doing so, Sultana wanted to express her refusal and rejection of this society. In fact, she has always tried through its ideas to annihilate everything connected with traditional codes that aim is to stifle women, to marginalize them, to transform them into being without consistency and without utility.

The grief of which she suffers is in strong relation with the situation of the country. The instability experienced by Algeria, particularly during the spread of terrorism, destabilized the psychological state of Sultana, reflecting in this sense the image of a fragmented Algeria. She denounces the leaders of the country who are at the origin of her suffering and discomfort because they have ignored the rights of women and they have even

marginalized them and despite her remoteness, she has failed to erase the traces of the injustice due to ignorance.

Throughout the reading of *The Forbidden Woman*, I attend to a constant presence of varying meanings of the forbidden, it invades society, and it reigns in families imposing false traditions on their wives, and daughters. In the below quotation, Sultana refuses the idea that she can't assist the funeral of Yacine. She shows a strong resistance in front of the Islamic rules which forbidden woman to the graveyard:

It's the mayor, Khaled whispers to me.
'Madam, you can't come! It's forbidden!'
Salah takes me by the arm. 'Forbidden? Forbidden by whom?
'She can't come! Allah doesn't want her to! (Mokeddem, 1993:15)

The first forbidden, explains the idea of confinement in a religious context. the word followed by an exclamation point that no longer suffers from discussion.

Another significance of the Forbidden is described by Sultana when she told Salah the reasons that pushed her to leave her country:

'I had just been reborn and I left, suddenly, such a great hunger for life... Little by little, Algeria's threats and restrictions became so frightening to me. So, I fled from everything. An irrational flight when I felt other nightmares dawning.'
(Mokeddem, 1993: 35)

The word in this quote is used to describe the moral values of the Algerian society that restrict the woman from her liberty in the social, intellectual and development level. It's the desire to live freely without any moral restriction of the Algerian society that pushed Sultana to leave her country.

Sultana's personality reveals an identity in crisis. Being surrounded by the unfavorable environment tries to change her destiny, but this has caused her a lot of trouble because of the

traditional conventions that characterized the society. The woman has always been devaluated the woman in considering her a weak being. therefore, she decided to do her best to make her rebellion, refusal. Sultana wants to attack her society, which is based on social codes that have always oppressed women in society.

In *The Forbidden Woman*, a masculine aspect is felt in sultana's character through her way of acting and speaking, as well as her reactions that reveal the strength and courage to face the other. In the novel, Sultana is described as a rebellious woman who revolts against all the social codes, in breaking all the taboos that stifle the Algerian woman as drinking alcohol, have intimate relations with men. She is an emancipated woman who is ready to do anything to achieve her infinite liberty. The scene of her meeting with the mayor who wanted to send her away from official accommodation is a perfect example of this behavior because Sultana did not care and didn't give him any importance:

‘what are you want?’
‘I am the mayor!’ He screams ‘I am the mayor’ as if to say ‘watch out!’
I unabashedly burst out laughing.
‘what do you want?’
‘You, who are you?’
‘A friend of Doctor Yacine Meziane.’
‘But who are you?’
‘That’s none of your business.’
‘You are lucky that I need you. Otherwise I would have sent over the police.’
‘Why the police?’
‘Prostitution!’
‘Oh, really? Why do you say that?’
‘You drink alcohol and sleep with him!’ he says haughtily, indicating Salah with his head. (Mokeddem, 1993: 46)

In fact, drinking alcohol, sleeping with strange men in the same house are provocative acts because in the Algerian society, women don't have the habit to do such behaviors. Mokeddem declares her refusal and revolt against the social, moral values as honor and modesty that limit the liberty of the Algerian woman.

Sultana had succeeded to make the woman understand that the secret of their power is their union in order to be able to change their status in the society and defeat the socio-cultural codes that are often supported by Islamic discourse. They tell her:

We didn't approve of all the reprobation that fell on you. But we had no means, no influence, to intervene in your favor.
'Uh-huh', and you've acquired this power that you were missing?
When you're backed into a corner, you're forced to counterattack.
Maybe that's where our strength will come from. They can enslave us or break us one by one.
They will think twice about it if we unite. (Mokeddem,1993:146)

It is clear from the above quotation that Sultana succeeded to make hear her voice that she was an emancipated woman who is in solidarity with women of her village.

I.4. Dalila: The Miniature Image of Sultana

Dalila is a key personage, she represents the dream girl on the dune who never ceases to evoke the life of her sister Samia, who goes to France to continue her studies because she refuses the yoke of men. Her family rejected her because she dared to transgress the rules of her village according to which women are subjected to their father and then to their husbands.

She says to Sultana:

'She doesn't like to obey and doesn't want to marry. They've found a lot of husbands. But she always says no. she's still studying; now she's studying in LaFrance. And afterward she doesn't want to come here anymore. She didn't come...' (Mokeddem, 1993: 26)

Reading the above quotation, one can feel the pain that Dalila feels in regard to her sister who was rejected by her family, just because she rejected the social norms that limit the liberty of the woman. the quotation shows the harsh living situation of the Algerian woman who was supposed to be not more than a wife and a mother.

The childhood of Sultana proved of undeniable importance. Mokeddem evoked it by identifying with the little Dalila or when Sultana spoke in its state of unconsciousness. Mokeddem has featured clearly the resemblance between Sultana and Dalila that surpasses

the physical features, for even their characters are similar. Vincent meets the little girl and realizes that this girl resembles Sultana. He says:

She smiles to me. She is no more than nine or ten years old. She has dark, long eyes that look at me obliquely. Curly hair surrounds her delicate little face. I let myself drop onto the dune a few steps from her, my body covered with and flowing into the sand.
(Mokeddem, 1993: 23).

In describing also Sultana, Vincent says: “Thin, chocolate-colored skin, curly coffee-colored hair like Dalila’s with an ardent mystery in her eyes”. (Mokeddem, 1993: 52). Mokeddem gives the character of her novel the same physical resemblances as her own to attract the attention of the reader to Dalila.

Dalila is a special child, different in her preoccupations and ideas. She likes reading just like Sultana. In a conversation between Sultana and Dalila, the latter tells Sultana that Yacine was supposed to bring her a book to read from France. She says:

He was supposed to come the morning before yesterday. But, he didn’t come. I came here to wait for him, even in the evening and even yesterday. He didn’t come. He was supposed to bring me the book from an Algerian man from LaFrance, a migrant. (Mokeddem, 1993: 24)

Dalila wasn’t like the other girls. She likes reading at her age, especially in a family whose main objective is to teach the girl how to be a good future wife and mother. This love of reading has allowed Dalila to develop and have a new vision of the world, which reminds us of Malika Mokeddem who looks for a space of freedom while reading, as she writes in her autobiography *Mes Hommes*:

J’ai beau voir le souffle pollué par les épices maternelles, le fly-tox, les vapeurs de crésyl, le corps éreinté par toutes sortes d’intox (...) Il me suffit d’un livre pour que surgissent des mers, des océans, toutes les rumeurs de l’eau. (Mokeddem, 2005: 38-39)

Through the choices of her readings, Dalila declares her rebellion and does not want to reduce her ambitions to the concerns of women of her village, for her, the role of women can

no longer be limited to helping the mother and obeying orders of the brothers, but the woman can play the same role of man, that they have the possibility to develop and to free themselves from all the mentalities that slow down their desires. In fact, Dalila reflects a distinguished personality that goes beyond the trivialities of everyday life and ends up asking questions of extreme importance about the female's role in society.

The house of Ouarda represents for Dalila an area of freedom and a position taken because in this woman's house, she can speak freely of her sister Samia the forbidden girl to which she cannot even allude to her in front of her parents. Mokeddem describes the house of Dalila where everything is prohibited to the Algerian society in miniature where the aspirations of the women are stifled and radicalized. A society that reflects Algeria during the nineties, threatened by terrorism. In speaking with Vincent about her brothers, Dalila says to him:

You say it's quiet in her house. Is there a lot of noise at your house?
Yes, I have many brothers. They make too much noise. They fight all the time. They fight with me, and they even fight with my mother.
(Mokeddem, 1993: 27)

Towards the end of the story, it is this little girl who will keep the paintings of Yacine because it represents the new generation, that can be the new Sultana healing of the malaise that she endured in her childhood.

I.5. Sultana / Samia: The Eyes of the Future Generations

Dalila is an Algerian girl among others who refuse the current situation of the country. She is influenced by the story of Sultana, Dalila venerated Sultana to the point of imagining her being her sister but granting her another name: Samia. In fact, Samia exists only in the dreams of Dalila who gave her a portrait based on her perseverance to change the fate of all the Algerian women.

‘Why we must not speak about Samia?’ I ask suddenly remembering her plea.
‘Because!’
‘if you don’t tell me why, I ‘ll ask your mother some questions about her.’
‘No, no! Don’t do that! Samia doesn’t exist.’
‘What do you mean, she doesn’t exist?’
‘ Samia’s just a sister eyeballed in my dreams. It’s just that all the girls who leave Algeria, people talk about so much that they come into my dreams. (Mokeddem, 1993: 151-152)

Sultana and Samia symbolize all Algerian women who have revolted against the society that has weakened them and puts limits on their rights.

In fact, Samia is only sultana who lives in this child's mind. Through her coming back, Sultana tries to raise awareness and eliminate the stereotypical images that exist in the society about the woman who defends her beliefs. Moreover, the departure of Sultana left an ineffaceable impact on the girls of her village, such as Dalila. However, Sultana's reaction is neither destructive nor negative; on the contrary, she contributes to the moral education of women who suffer from ignorance, because she teaches them how to take a stand and how to get her rights.

The route that Sultana, Dalila and Samia follow is a path that allows them to expose their desires to change the living situation of the Algerian women. These women whose minds are full of light, and knowledge choose a new way of struggle that corresponds to their feminine nature. They opted for a soft fight by using their feathers to describe the sufferings of all the Algerian women.

II. Chapter Two: Audacity in the Representation of Intimacy in Chopin's and Mokeddem's Selected Works

In the second chapter, the authors' content of the two novels will be explored, focusing on characterization and the intimate audacious writing used by the two authors to liberate the woman female's body from the phallogentric laws as well as to free women from a gendered assigned identity that prevent the progress of woman in the social and intellectual level.

II.1. The Use of Audacious Writing in the domain of intimacy to Liberate Women from the Phallogentric Laws

Hélène Cixous writes in *The Laugh of the Medusa*: "It is by writing, from and towards the woman, and by rising the challenge against the discourse governed by the phallus, that the woman will affirm the woman." (Cixous, 1975: 46-47). According to her, society is controlled by theories made up by social customs which are elaborated by men. She calls the women to write in order to break the phallogentric laws to be able to affirm themselves in the society. Writing is a means to challenge the passive interpretation of the body. Malika Mokeddem and Kate Chopin are among the feminists that have the audacity to write about the intimacy, sex and the feminine body to liberate the woman from the phallogentric laws that obliged the woman to dedicate her life to be a wife-mother.

II.1.1 Malika MOKEDDEM's *The Forbidden Woman* (1993)

In her third novel, *The Forbidden Woman* written in 1993, the writer depicts the status of the Algerian during the Black Decade where woman had suffered from physical and moral violence in a large scale, especially the ones who do not adhere to the dress code

instructed by religion. Women were raped through forced marriages, and assassinated if they were accused of support for power or related to members of the security services.

The denunciation of the patriarchal system is also a subject which is mostly treated by Malika Mokeddem. Indeed, the writer had suffered like the other Algerian women from the phallogentric laws that limited her liberty. It's for that reasons that she had rebelled very early against the traditional society that had oppressed the woman under the name of honor, taboos, prejudices and religion.

Mokeddem enters a new form of literature that is the intimate literature where the narrator dares to reveal all of her intimate sexual relations. Indeed, the author sought to break away from all confinements that limit her social and sexual freedom. In fact, she denounces the situation of the woman who lives in a violent society, trapped by a phallogentric culture.

In *The Forbidden Woman*, the author defies all the social codes that have been determined by the society and religion that aim to limit the liberty of women at the social and sexual level. In fact, she was audacious in describing the sexual relation that gathered Sultana with Vincent (a Frenchman who came to Algeria to discover the country of his kidney donor) and also with Salah (the friend of Yacine). In fact, reading Mokeddem's novel, one can notice that she was very audacious in describing sexual relations, feminine body and the sexual organs, especially when the reader live in a country where intimate display is not acceptable, modesty in Muslim society is very important. It is a constituent element of societal identity.

Malika Mokeddem is ahead with Cixous's theory 'Ecriture Féminine' in her book *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1975). Indeed, Cixous challenges the phallogentric rules which privileges hierarchical sexual dichotomies of mind and masculinity over body and femininity.

She writes: “ It is by writing, from and towards the woman, and by rising to the challenge of the discourse governed by the phallus, that the woman will affirm the woman ” (Cixous, 1975: 46-47).

Cixous lauds that it should be gratifying for women to write, as feminine writing gives her bodily pleasure through breaking hegemonic authority. The author has resorted to bold writing in the field of the intimate, in order to liberate the female body from all social prejudices and religious prohibitions, and to destroy the phallogentric system which considers that the woman's body is a fantasy that must be veiled and hidden between the walls of tradition. Through her audacity, the author tries to extract an infinite freedom, social, religious and even sexual. In fact, her purpose behind her audacity was to rebel against a gendered identity attributed to the woman since her birth which consists of a role built by the society which considers that man is superior comparing to woman.

Here are some passages that represent the audacity of Malika Mokeddem in the representation of erotic scenes between Sultana who is described as the seductive woman, desired by both Salah and Vincent.

His hands, trembling a little, moves across my face as if it were a sculpture. I give in to it entirely. the wet yellow of his eyes causes exciting agitation. Out of our bodies glued to each other, from our looks that scrutinize each other, a dizziness arises. In spite of myself, I rest my hands on his back. The arms wrapped around me are no longer those of a child. I feel his erection against my belly. I make an effort to tear myself away from him. (MOKEDDEM,1993:39)

After the funeral of Yacine , Sultana and Salah met in the deceased's home, and after a long conversation,we assist to a sexual relationship that occurred between the two characters. Indeed, mokeddem describes these intimate moments in an open way, she describes how Salah touches the body of Sultana and how both live a moment of pleasure.

In the Arab-Muslim society, woman represents the honor of the family, so men would do all they could to preserve this honor, by forbidding the woman from knowledge, going out or to speak with a foreign man, they were obliged to veil their bodies. Mokeddem had the audacity to talk about sex, intimate affairs in his novel, published in a dangerous national crisis. She dared to overcome all taboos that limited the freedom of the Algerian women and false traditions that are often supported by religious discourse. In fact, she defies the traditional and Islamic rules by rebelling against their prohibitions.

Yacine was Sultana's first love, he was Kabyle who worked as a doctor in Ain Nekhla, Sultana loved Yacine but she preferred to leave him to flee Algeria and all the social codes that were imposed on her. When she returned to Algeria after the death of Yacine, she settled in his house where she lived with the memories she had with him. In a nostalgic moment, Sultana imagines herself doing sex with Yacine:

I close the door. Lying flat on his stomach, his torso propped up on his elbows. Yacine smiles at me. A folded blanket is placed at the foot of the bed. I close my eyes. I move toward the blanket, bend down and get it. I unfold it next to the bed and stretch out on it. I keep my eyes closed. Yacine's hands, mouth, and body immediately take hold of mine.

(MOKEDDEM,1993:43)

In the above quotation, one can understand that Mokeddem creates Sultana to express her rejection of the phallogentric rules which forbid the woman to have sexual relations with a strange man. The audacity of Mokeddem in her representation of intimacy catch the reader's attention and push him to ask questions about her main purpose in using such audacious words and expressions that are shameful in the Algerian society:

AIDS only gets people who fuck from behind and who've got sick Western morals! he objects sententiously.
So, what are sick Western morals? I ask naively.
You, you lick all over, even down below, like dogs! We, we do it clean, fats and right. And anyway, rubbers are for people who have one with a

fragile head. Mine, mine is honest to God, a desperado. May Allah protect it!

(Mokeddem, 1993: 51)

In this passage, Mokeddem describes the moments of weakness that gathered Sultana and Vincent. In fact, while reading the passage, the reader realizes that Malika Mokeddem has dared to destroy all the phallogocentric laws that are imposed on the Arab-Muslim woman and behaves like a French woman who lives her social and sexual life freely. Mokeddem describes these moments as follows:

She caressed my Kidney, my lips, my cock. I unbuttoned her coat, took her breasts in my hands. We drank from each other until delirious....my hand makes a careful incursion to the side of my penis and pulls back immediately as if burned. I throw back the sheet. I look, I see my cock. It's standing up like an acanthus blooming again after months of wilt. Reanimated phallus, a life again revived by a milky dawn against the darkness of my libido

(Mokeddem, 1993: 65)

The above quotation shows that Mokeddem aims through her audacity in describing intimate relation to deconstruct the idea that both sexes should be maintained and oriented to a close traditional system. Mokeddem shed to break the phallogocentric laws that forbid the feminine body and sexuality.

II.1.2. Kate CHOPIN's *The Awakening* (1899)

The Awakening is published during the late of the nineteenth century in America. It takes place during a time when a woman was still considered as her husband's property. Louisiana situated in North America was a catholic state where women were expected to remain devoted to their husbands and children from marriage until death. In fact, the main perspective of Kate Chopin's novel was to unveil the problems of women in society. As the title suggests, *Awakening* represents Edna's awakening to her desires, her new cravings for

personal and sexual fulfillment, which drives her to take refuge in the love of a lover to free her body and her heart.

From the beginning of the novel, Edna is described by Mme Ratignolle as being uncaring woman. she says: "In short, Mrs Pontellier was not a mother-woman." (Chopin,1899: 9). In fact, Edna violates every expectation of being a good mother and wife. In doing so, she depicts her rejection to be submitted to the phallogentric rules which order the woman to fully sacrifice herself for her husband and children. She tells her also: "I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, but I wouldn't give myself." (Chopin,1899: 98).

It can be clear from reading this quotation that Edna tries to communicate her idea as being separate from being ensconced as a mother. In rejecting her motherhood role, Edna is rejecting one of the most important phallogentric rules that imposed to the woman. As an emancipated woman, Edna expresses her quarrel through sex, she challenges the view that the woman performed the act of sex just to have children.

Its depiction of a young wife and mother discovering her own identity outside the familiar and societal rules is considered as a scandalous artwork in that period of time. Within the novel, I find that Chopin was very audacious in describing the rebellion of Edna against the patriarchal restrictions imposed by her husband and her implication in the sexual affair with her two lovers: Arobin and Robert.

In this passage, Edna is described in a sexual situation with her Lover Robert:

She 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 (Chopin, 1899: 104)

In the next passage, Chopin depicts how Edna enjoys her relation with her lover, rejecting the traditional restrictions that forbid her to have a sexual relation with another man except her husband. “It was the first kiss of her life to which her nature had really responded. It was a flaming torch that kindled desire” (Chopin, 1899: 81)

Edna seems able to open herself to the possibilities of sexual arousal. Edna cannot imagine herself without her lover. It is by fulfilling her sexual desires with him without caring of the social codes that she will find the individuality and liberty that she is searching for.

II.2. Woman’s Liberation from a Gender Identity

Gender Identity is a socially constructed system of classifications that inscribes qualities of masculinity and femininity to people. It is an individual behavior or the way he or she is described as masculine or feminine. It is the opposite of sexual identity which is genetic and biological. The gender identity is formed by the society, parents are the first to teach their young the habits that make him masculine or feminine. In fact, men and women in society are judged based on their physical appearance, choice, teachings and practices. This concept is intimately related to the concept of gender role which is defined as the outward manifestations of personality that reflect the gender identity. Having gender expectations is the reason why gender discrimination still exists in the societies until now.

In the traditional societies, the word masculine has a positive connotation in the opposite of feminine. The woman is devaluated and unappreciated. She is defined as incomplete, inferior, passive whose role is restricted to take care of her family and the household. Whereas, man represents the supremacy power that keeps the charge of the world. Gender identity has been the hotly- debated subject dealt with and discussed by a great number of feminists around the world. The feminists struggle to free woman from a

gendered identity assigned to her since her childhood and to claim that woman is not that passive person who should submit to the man's authority and restrictions.

Kate Chopin and Malika Mokeddem are among the feminists who have used writing as a means to free woman from a gendered assigned identity based on the inferiority of the female body in relation to the male body in the social context. According to the two authors, the education which is based on the patriarchal rules and cultural rites participates in the gendered distribution of social roles. So, inequality occurred between man who is seen as the one who commands and the woman who is considered inferior and the one who should submit.

In *The Awakening*, Chopin describes Edna as a woman who refuses to devote her life in accomplishing the needs of her family because of her gender. She realizes that she is a woman who does not fit into the gender identity that was assigned to woman. Edna seems to revolt against the old social conventions in dismissing the world of the mother-woman as restrictive. She revolts also against her husband. In fact, the latter treated his wife as such thing that he possessed. He didn't think of his wife as an equal and cannot participate in her feminine world. "In short, Mrs Pontellier was beginning to realize her position as a human being, and to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her." (Chopin, 1899: 25) For this reason, she crossed the boundaries of woman gender roles. She refuses her husband's control and she no longer thinks that her husband's authority is a must for her to do.

'This is more than folly', he blurted out. I can't permit you to stand out there all the night. You must come into the house instantly.
'Léonce, go to bed. She said. 'I mean to stay out here. I don't wish to go in, and I don't intend to. Don't speak to me like this again; I shall not answer you. (Chopin, 1899: 54)

The above quotation shows how Edna didn't like to be instructed, especially by her husband. She wants to be free from any kind of oppression. Edna refuses to be merely only

one of his husband's possessions. She rejects the norms and roles of male dominant society and showed her reaction towards them. Edna's change is the result of men oppression, as when she realized the values of her own identity, she starts neglecting her household works, used to quarrel with her husband, she talked about her own identity and own rights, and she refused to sleep with him. Mr Pontellier considers Edna to be mad because she doesn't act like a traditional woman. she acts outside the normative frameworks of the traditional society; she rages at her husband when she is angry, and ignores her household and children.

Edna describes herself as being: "devilishly wicked specimen." A wicked example of femininity because she refuses each and everything that society demanded from her. She declares that she was no longer a devoted wife, and the sacrificed mother. She sacrifices many years of her life in satisfying the responsibilities as a daughter, wife, and mother, but she wants to identify herself and wants to free herself from all these relations and society oppressions. Her reaction toward that oppression was so much strong that even she refused to go to attend her sister's marriage and she thought that marriage trapped women and due to which woman spend her whole life as slave: "She won't go to the marriage. She says a wedding is one of the most lamentable spectacles on earth." (Chopin,1899:65)

Edna's suicide decision is also a liberation from the binding life. In fact, Edna ends her life because she wants to free herself from the oppression she suffered both from her family and her society. The suicide of Edna can be read as it is Edna's final rebellion against the society, it's the only solution to live the peace and freedom that she desires. She commits suicide because she didn't want to look back and became again a traditional devoted woman and she realizes that there is no position in society for such woman , she decides to celebrate her freedom and peace by committing suicide.

Kate Chopin portrayed Edna as an autonomous, self-centered and ambitious being who desires a life that is free from restrictions, limitations imposed on her by the family and the society. She strives to discover her identity as an independent being; she tries to discover herself as a free human being. She wants to live freely. The family duties and traditional beliefs are not as important as her personal life. She wants to be a free individual who can enjoy his liberty.

In *The Forbidden Woman*, Mokeddem describes the religious fundamentalism that appears in the nineties in Algeria that leads to the systematic negation of the status of women. This socio-political situation is only the tip of the iceberg of a patriarchal society where references to the tradition of historical Islam and obedience to customary traditions regulate the conduct of the woman both inside and outside the house, condition her in a role of dependence constituting the basis of balance of the Muslim family. So, the education of the girl is based on the concept of honor, modesty and shame that control the behaviors, the choice of the words, the actions of the woman in the society.

In *The Forbidden Woman*, Malika Mokeddem wants to transgress the forbidden behaviors, to revolt against the patriarchal laws and denounce the situation of the Algerian woman during this period of time. Indeed, *The Forbidden Woman* was also a novel that attempts to destroy the social codes which are supported by religious restrictions that impose for women the totally submission and men obedience. The return of Sultana into her native village had been of great influence for more and more women who had understood that the revolt of Sultana against the social injustices and restrictions was of great necessary in her progression to affirm herself in the society.

We know who you are, my daughter. We're pleased that Sultana Medjahed became a beautiful woman and in addition, a doctor. We mustn't give in to these tyrants! We women need you. Until now

there've only been male doctors here. You, you're one of us. You can understand us. (Mokeddem,1993:141)

The women of the village are proud of Sultana who succeeded to defeat the male in realizing exactly what he can realize. Sultana calls women to break the chains of the society and struggle to achieve once liberty. She defeats the social restrictions in doing the opposite. She drinks alcohol, and sleeps with stranger men. Malika Mokeddem's novel *The Forbidden Woman* like Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* is a reflection of the patriarchal society where women are mostly obliterated.

III. Chapter Three: The Use of Lexical Freedom in Chopin's and Mokeddem's Selected Novels

In this chapter, the analysis will be based on the literary techniques used by the authors to express their aim of changing the woman cause in the world. In *The Forbidden Woman*, Mokeddem, uses audacious words to bring out her liberty and anger about the sad reality of the Algerian woman. Whereas, in *The Awakening*, Chopin uses symbolism as a literary technique to illustrate the research of Edna for freedom.

III.1. The Use of Audacious and harsh Words in *The Forbidden Woman*

The Mokeddemian writing in *The Forbidden Woman* is featured by the use of harsh and audacious words that attract the attention of the reader. The audacious words start from the beginning of the novel with the children who don't miss an opportunity to hurt Sultana.

Some of them immediately congregate around the taxi. 'Madam! Madam! Madam! Madam!'
Long French- sounding onomatopoeic tirades from which emerge, here and there, a few rare words identifiable in Algerian and French: 'I love you...fuck...dick', accompanied by gestures that couldn't be any more suggestive. (Mokeddem, 2005: 7)

Saying these words both in French and in Arabic, these children tried to make understand the insults to Sultana. This reaction reflects an eagerness of some Algerians to hurt others, but it also reflects the conflicts that are causing the birth of segregation between women and men or the onset of social ills.

The Algerian children express their complexes and bring out their inner desires in using harsh and audacious expressions. Sultana says that these insults are an undeniable mark of the sickness of these children. In fact, Mokeddem reflects to the miniature image of

Algerians living one between the seduction of modernity and nostalgia for tradition. she specifies:

I have not forgotten that the boys of my country had a sick and gangrenous childhood. I have not forgotten their clear voices that ring only with obscenities. I have not forgotten that from the youngest age, the opposite sex is already a ghost among their desires. (Ibid)

Sultana returns to Ain Nakhela after many years to cure herself from all the evils that she had lived there, she returns also for a settlement of accounts that she left without issues. she was considered a badly reputed girl. they always called him 'whore'. This word is etched in her memory, and when she returned to the village, she decided to revenge all these people who hurt her by pronouncing it without complex. She states:

How many times as an adolescent, still a virgin and already wounded, did I have this word vomited onto my innocence. Whore! Treacherous word, for a long time I was able to write it only in capital letters, as if it were women's only destiny, their only divinity, the lot of rejected women. (Mokeddem, 1993: 7-8)

Through these audacious words, Mokeddem expresses her anger and rage. In her autobiography *La Transe des Insoumis*, written in 2003, she said: " les mots de la révolte, du déssaroi me poursuivent jusqu'au dans mes draps." (Mokeddem, 2003 : 35)

Dealing with violence of the nineties in Algeria, Mokeddem was able to involve her reader in history by making this aggression felt through words. The use of these vulgar violent words is a strategy used by the author to implicate her reader to the social situation of Algeria.

Mokeddem uses also these violent words to criticize those who claim to be Muslims, those who want to apply religion in their own way. Through, Ali Merbah a fundamentalist who live in Sultana's village, Mokeddem highlights this negative personality who insults Vincent because the latter refuses to take a taxi whose driver is bearded: "I refuse a taxi whose driver is bearded and wearing a Chechia.' Yan âl dinn oumek!' he shouts out."

(Mokeddem, 1993:123). This audacious expression is used as an irony, because the author wants to show that those who claim to protect religion are those who violate it.

The fundamentalist could not prevent Sultana to express her anger towards Bakkar. Using harsh words. She tells him:

I don't give a damn about you! And I'll come back one day to tell you so." Yes, you said that, and you even repeated, "I don't give a damn about you!" then you got into the car and you both left. (Mokeddem,1993:146)

The underlined expression shows that Sultana had expressed her anger towards these religious men who stifled the Algerians with their religious discourses. She shows a great determination to continue her struggle against these unjust persons to achieve the infinite liberty.

Mokeddem had used these vulgar, violent words to attract the reader's attention, and describe the cruel social living of the Algerians during this period of time. Through using violent words, Mokeddem calls the Algerians to find adequate solutions to solve their country.

III.2. The Use of metaphors to Express Symbolism of Freedom in *The Awakening*

Symbolism is one of the literary techniques used by Chopin in her novel. In *The Awakening*, Chopin clearly describes that Mademoiselle Reisz's windows are always open, and that Mlle Reisz is an independent, self-sufficient, expert pianist and unconventional woman who serves as an inspiration to the heroine Edna Pontellier throughout her awakening in the novel. Thus, like Mlle Reisz's open windows which symbolizes the open path to a new inspiration leading to a new enlightenment and to a new spirit for a new life.

The ocean also is the central underlying symbol of freedom in the novel. The beginning of the story is set on an island surrounded by the sea. Several times, the ocean is

used in reference to an awakening of Edna Pontellier. While walking to the beach with her husband, she says: “A certain light was beginning to drawn dimly within her, the light which showed the way forbids it” (Chopin, 1899:26)

Chopin uses bird in *The Awakening* to symbolize the freedom and imagination. In his flight, it can soar above earthly rules and social inhibitions. In a Passage where Edna listens to Mlle playing piano, she feels like a bird who can fly high in the sky and go beyond the patriarchal system that imprisoned the women. She says:

The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings. It is a sad spectacle to see the weaklings bruised, exhausted, fluttering back to earth. (Chopin, 1899:82)

Chopin has used metaphors to symbolize freedom and to describe the dream of the nineteenth century’s woman to liberate themselves from the inhibitions imposed by society.

Mlle Reisz statement was initially used to bolster Edna’s confidence on her journey while also demonstrating the different forces that pull Edna towards both metaphoric freedom and captivity. Chopin chose to make the ending of *The Awakening* open for the reader. She allows the reader to come to his or her own conclusion writing.

All along the beach, up and down, there was no living thing in sight. A bird with a broken wing was beating the air above, reeling, fluttering, circling disabled down, down to the water. (Chopin, 1899: 118)

Though this last image seems like a direct contradiction of Mademoiselle Reisz’s feminine soaring bird. The bird over Edna is only partially injured on a wing is still very much functional. Because the bird is falling, it becomes a metaphor for Edna herself, illustrating her own bruised journey in the authoritative society. In fact, Chopin provides her character the potential to escape while her maintaining, she symbolizes it with the bird potential to fly upwards with one good wing once more.

Art also becomes a symbol of freedom to Edna. Through her process of trying to become an artist, she becomes able to express herself and also acquire a certain economic independence. Hearing Mlle Reisz who is described by Chopin as the woman who represents a structured form of art playing piano, Edna's passions are aroused. She is described by Mme Ratignolle:

She saw no pictures of solitude, of hope, of longing, or of despair. But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body. She trembled, she was choking, and the tears blinded her.
(Chopin, 1899: 27)

Edna is a sensual woman who had discovered her unexpected emotions through music.

she decides to take up her painting once more in spite of her husband's admonishment that she lets the family go to the devil while she paints. She works with great energy and interest and energy; thus, she feels herself accomplishing important thing in her life. Often, she sings 'Oh, si tu savais' the song that Robert sang in Grand Isle, and she recalls:

The ripple of the water, the flapping sail. She could see the glint of the moon upon the bay, and could feel the soft, gusty beating of the hot south wind. A subtle current of desire passed through her body, weakening her hold upon the brushes and making her eyes burn.
(Chopin, 1899: 62)

The passage shows that Edna is a romantic person, and its romance is her source of inspiration. In fact, romanticism catalyzes her imaginative power.

Edna receives much harsher judgment from Mlle Reisz about her artistic capacity. In reply the question of what she has been doing, Edna tells her "I am becoming an artist." (Chopin, 1899:70) Mlle Reisz warns her:

To be an artist includes much; one must possess many gifts- absolute gifts- which have not been acquired by one's own effort. And moreover, to succeed, the artist must have the courageous sou.
(Chopin, 1899: 78)

Reading this quotation allow me to understand that during the nineteenth century, art was used as a means for social rebellion and self-expression. Therefore, Mademoiselle Reisz's

piano playing places her as an outsider in the Creole society; she is rejected and disparaged by this society and for that reason, she warns Edna from the -special gift- solitary and social rejection that she could face because of being an artist.

Chopin establishes the sea as the central symbol for Edna's birthing of a new self. The connection in her mind between the grass and the sea foreshadows the autonomy she achieves by learning to swim, as well as her final walk into the sea at the book's end. Symbolically, the sea is both a destructive and a source of rebirth in *The Awakening*. In fact, it represents the source of life and rebirth, so Edna in her first moments of being able to swim feels like a child who has learned to walk. She says: "But that night she was like the little tottering, stumbling, clutching child, who of a sudden realizes its powers, and walks for the first time alone, boldly and with over confidence." (Chopin, 1899:27). It can be clear that Chopin associates the beginning of Edna's awakening with the sea. Thus, the sea is used in the novel as the source of freedom, imagination and even romanticism. In the novel, Edna is describing the sea as a sensual person who seduces her with his voice. She says: "The voice of the sea is seductive, never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander in abysses of solitude." (Chopin, 1899: 113) In fact, Edna claims that the sea has a seductive voice which of course foreshadows Edna's final destination as she embarks on her voyage of awakening.

Ironically, Chopin refers to the sea as a source of life and death, since it was the means of her death. In fact, Edna views the sea as both pleasure and pain, life and death. It is her escape from all the social restrictions that limit her liberty. Just before her death, the narrator describes Edna could not submit to the social codes that obliged her to sacrifice her life to her children and husband: "She thought of Léonce and the children. They were a part of her life. but they need not have thought that they could possess her body and soul." (Chopin, 1899: 113). The suicide of Edna was the solution to her problems of not being able to fill the role

she was given or being able to find the satisfaction that she yearned for. Edna felt helpless and did not belong where she was at and her only solution was suicide.

The sea is a continuing reference point to infinite temptation, passion, and forbiddance. The danger of its massive flowing body, the long stretch of its waves reaching out for someone to seduce, and the way that it surrounds a body whole taunted Edna with the satisfaction she had always searched for. Giving herself to the sea was her last venture into the world of passion, as it slowly seduced her and silently killed her; carrying her off to eternal sleep. At the moment of her death, last encounter with the sea provided her with a sense of security and satisfaction that no man could provide her.

V. Conclusion

The comparative study of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Malika Mokeddem's *The Forbidden Woman* shows that both authors participated greatly to liberate, correct and give more importance to the status of the woman. In fact, through their writings, the feminists have tried to bring light to the living situation of the woman in all domains of the social life. They assert that woman should emancipate against the phallogentric laws that put the Woman in lower position than man. In fact, the phallogentric laws assert that the woman's role in the society is to be a beautiful mother-wife who should be submitted totally to the male instructions. The male is the masterful gender and the female is the passive, weak gender who must approve her submission to the male, worship and love him.

In the phallogentric society, le feminine body is also controlled by the social restrictions in order to ensure his function as a fertilized and a reproductive body. Marriage and motherhood are two notions of extremely importance in the phallogentric society. Often, they are the only destiny for the girl. For that, the girl is taught from her early age how to be a beautiful and obedient woman to her husband and an excellent woman in housework.

The emancipation is essential for women, it's by their emancipation against the social codes that they could affirm themselves as complete humans. Their aim is to be able to deconstruct the phallogentric laws that chased the liberty of the woman not only from her social and intellectual rights but also to control her own body to guarantee her marriage and to protect the family honor. Feminists have understood that they should pave the road towards a greater freedom cleared from centuries of submission and inequality. In fact, both selected feminists had the same aim. Through creating emancipated characters in their novels, they manage to deconstruct the system of patriarchy that league to the discrimination and devaluation of women through the laws called phallogentric.

What results from this comparative study is the expression of “Gender identity” is no more than a social construction in opposite with “Sexual” identity which is biological. A woman is not born a woman, but made up by patriarchal society with restrictions that ensure the subordinate status for them. As Simone De Beauvoir writes in her book *The Second Sex* written in 1949:” On ne nait pas femme, on le devient.” In fact, Chopin and Mokeddem tried to demolish the notion of gender identity assigned to woman since her birth, by creating emancipated characters and including audacious description while speaking about intimacy. Since one of the phallogocentric laws is to consider that the female body is the property of man.

The Awakening and *The Forbidden Woman* seem completely different. Concerning the stories, they are held in period of times which are completely different. Kate Chopin’s novel was written during the nineteenth century where women were expected to perform the mother-woman ideal. Edna is a complex character who had confessed that she had chosen to commit suicide to save her children from a bad reputation of having a mother who commits an adultery act. But on the other hand, she asserts that woman has to live throughout her convictions in life. She says just before her suicide:” the voice of the sea, speak to the soul. The touch of the sea is sensuous. Unfolding, the body in its soul, close, embrace”. (Chopin, 1899: 162)

In fact, Edna struggles to realize her independence, but on the other hand, she is described uncomfortable living emancipated against society. So, she finds that committing suicide is the solution to preserve her children’s reputation from the disgrace of having an emancipated mother. Thus, Chopin explains that the emancipation is difficult for a wife-mother. She describes Mlle Reisz as being a woman who had succeeded to manage her life as an emancipated woman outside the chains of the traditional life in refusing to marry and having children. Whereas, in *The Forbidden Woman*, Sultana is described as being an emancipated woman who rejects all the social and religious codes of the Algerian society.

Drinking whisky, driving a car, going out at night, and staying overnight with foreign men under the same roof are provocative acts, as this society does not usually find such behavior among women. In doing so, Sultana wants to express her refusal and rejection of the social codes that are imposed to women.

Through both selected authors, one can witness to a new kind of literature, where both authors had the audacity to describe intimate relations between male and female. In fact, both authors manage to destroy the gendered sexual identity that has been assigned to women for centuries, and to give the woman the bravery needed to liberate herself from the discrimination made up by the society in using writing as a means of rebellion and revolt in creating strong, emancipated women who had succeeded to make their voice heard and affirm themselves in societies dominated by the masculine authority.

These novelists sought above all the difficulties to reconquer a body that had been neglected by the traditional codes governed by the phallogentric. Exploring the body, speaking about the desire and intimate relations is for them a means to escape the limiting concepts as honor, modesty that exist in the traditional society. In fact, the representation of women's body in their writings shows a will to change the living situation of the woman. In fact, their audacious writing about the intimacy can be considered as a political act to interpret the world and change the mind of the reader who considers that woman is the second sex.

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