

Chapter 1

Introduction

Modality of the Research Paper: Quest for Emancipation in *The Color Purple*

The focus of this research paper lies in the quest for emancipation in Alice Walker's the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award winning novel *The Color Purple* (1982). In this novel, Walker skillfully presents the escalation of activities as to how black women get liberated from the very harsh treatment of the males, both African and American. Walker here dismantles the tradition-bound male supremacy and uplifts the status of colored women.

The objective of this detailed study of *The Color Purple* is to present the clear picture of the protagonist, Celie, who is the representative of all colored women. This novel looks into the strata of Celie in different phases of time: from her sadness to solace to unity and freedom. Celie makes use of the black vernacular and she equally emphasizes the homosexual relation in opposition to patriarchy for their (black women's) freedom from the patriarchal entrapment. To exhibit her mental torture when she was raped by Mr. —, who stands for the patriarchy as a whole, is the other significance of this study. To uproot the male chauvinism and improve the female stratum, she bears the complete responsibility to protect other female, i.e., her sister Nettie to protect from Pa, and she is ready to get victimized herself instead. This research will present a black feminist including black lesbian feminist reading of the text, *The Color Purple*.

In order to propel this research, it tries to exhibit various incidents of the text that are related to achieving liberation and freedom. The protagonist, Celie represents the whole race and gender, and her struggling against the anti-black hierarchy aims to enliven the subjectivity after having led an objectified life.

The modality of the research rests on the queer theory and the theories of black feminism. Queer theory focuses on the vitality of women and rejection of males. And

according to Adrinne Rich, it is lesbian continuum, the bondage between/among women. Similarly, the other theory of black feminism strongly opposes the patriarchal (white) domination and hegemonic role of males on black females.

The development of issues in the novel can be observed from the viewpoint of black feminism and lesbianism has progressed with the issues of black feminism and lesbianism. Celie makes use of black vernacular- representation of her originality. She draws attention of Shug Avery and as a result she gets light at the end of the tunnel. Here Celie's choice of black vernacular shows that she is in search of her identity and homosexual relationship between Shug and Celie refers to the resistance to patriarchy and their independence. The use of black vernacular and woman - woman relationship suggest the female desire to be liberated and self-reliant.

Based on the theories of black feminism and lesbianism of African-American literature, this research will not only try to see how the black minority women are resisting the patriarchy which is silencing them in different ways but they are also making their voice audible to widen their path to liberation. It concentrates on many ups and downs Celie faces. In other words, it studies the miserable conditions the black women have gone through. And ultimately it exhibits how Celie is able to get united with her family members and other relatives as well.

A Short Preview of Walker's *The Color Purple*

Walker's novel *The Color Purple* is based on the plight of the ex-slaves and how women get associated themselves to weaken the androcentric exploitation for their freedom and right. Walker skillfully explores the after- effects of life long slavery and how they direct themselves to liberation movement. The physical and mental torture inflicted on the minority black women left a tremendous impact on their psyche. In *The Color Purple*, Walker exhibits the shifts: from domination to solace to liberation, which undergo in course of the novel. *The*

Color Purple portrays the traumatic past and gradually hope, anticipation, a bright and prosperous future and a happily livable present as well.

Walker in her novel brings to light that aspect of slavery which had been most neglected during the period she published her novel. The situation of women as slaves was complex as their suffering was double of being black and female, and this brings out another aspect of racial discrimination. Walker's novel *The Color Purple* has proved to be one of the leading works in the African American Literature. It explores the range of a fourteen- year young mother's sufferings and her practice for the welfare of her children, sister and sister-like other women and her relatives as well. Walker intends to develop this issue as a myth. According to Martha J. Cutter in her *Revising Traditions Double Issue*, "Alice Walker is most interested in re-visioning this myth through an alternative methodology of language in *The Color Purple*" (163). We find a profound optimism in this particular novel of Walker. Her objective to write this novel seems to restructure the frame of the society. Martha also cites Abbandonato, who argues in her reading of *The Color Purple*, views that it is important to consider how a woman can "define herself differently, disengage her self from the cultural scripts of sexuality and gender that produce her as feminine subject"(163).

Walker amplifies the story of common issues of brutalities imposed on the minority black women by the white in particular in the beginning section of the novel. The novel gives the wider space for traditionally unaccepted medium of literature i.e. the epistolary form and both the Southern black vernacular by Celie, and the Standard English by Nettie. Thus there is a linguistic variety: colloquial and written language. It shows that the author is attempting to invigorate the voice for the subject position. In the novel, Celie's introduction with Shug Avery is the other crucial incident because it provides turning point for the novel- Celie's communication with her long-lost sister, Nettie, is possible; Albert's cruelty gradually softens to Celie. She comes to know fortunately the whereabouts of her offspring, whom Celie

thought to have been killed, were alive with Nettie. These aspects strengthen Celie's self-assurance for resolving the problems and widening the path to the designated goal i.e. to get united and get free livelihood. *The Color Purple* has the happy and hopeful ending.

Celie's sewing functions as an alternative methodology of language that moves her away from violence and victimization and into self-empowerment and subjectivity. The novel deliberately conflates the pen and the needle for deconstructing the binary oppositions between the masculine and the feminine, the spoken and the silenced and the lexical and the graphic. Walker's novel uses bird and blood imagery to suggest Celie's change not from human to subhuman, but from victim to artist heroine. The novel also differs from the original myth. It begins with Celie's rape, and in that, rape becomes not an instrument of silencing, but the catalyst to Celie's search for voice. After Celie is told to be silent about the rape, she confides the details in her journal structured at first as letters to God. In these letters Celie begins to create a resistant narrative version of events that ultimately preserves her subjectivity and voice, "He never had a kine word to say to me . . . First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold of my titties. Then he push his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it. But I don't never git used to it"(1).

The horror of this experience is evident, but it is also apparent that Celie narrates these events to resist her father. It is also the part that reveals the inhumanity imposed on the black women and perhaps the author tends to win the heart of the readers in her (the black's) support.

The Color Purple represents a reclaiming of a past that articulates at once a personal and historical transition for the black woman and her community. In a way to establish intimacy between women, Walker uses an epistolary structure filled with diaries, letters, and prayers as forms of female expression. Besides the use of the epistolary form, there is another

narrative strategy that seems to influence this novel although indirectly. That is the slave narrative, an important component of black literary tradition because, as a mode of discourse in which the first person narrator becomes central, it helps to re-possess subjectivity by means of the "I" or, as Susan Willis expresses it, "to wrest the individual black subject out of anonymity, inferiority and brutal disdain"(213).

Walker often speaks of song in connection with making of art and it is not accidental that one of the dominant figures of *The Color Purple* is a singer. But song is more than an art form. It is also a subversive text. Shug's song, for example, is described by Celie, as being "like that the preacher tell you its sin to hear"(48). Song is also a means by which Shug does battle with Albert's father, the root form of patriarchy. Song also plays a role in the development of Celie's self-image. For Celie, the song is important because it indicates that she has been part of the creative process.

Towards the end *The Color Purple* proclaims the ascendancy of a new mode of national and personal identity. Celie addresses not God who is everything but everything that incorporates godly spirit "Dear God. Dear Stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples. Dear everything. Dear God. Thank you for bringing my sister Nettie and our children home"(283). She writes of the fulfillment of the womanist promise as the community turns towards the future in expectation of more profit, pleasure and satisfaction from their labor and from each other. *The Color Purple's* strategy of inversion, represented in its elevation of female experience over great patriarchal events, had indeed aimed to comment the unjust practices of racism and sexism that violate the protagonist's complexity. It reduces her to a generic biological sign. But the model of personal and national identity with which the novel leaves us uses fairy tale explanations of social relations to represent itself: this fairy tale embraces America for providing the Afro-American nation with the right and the opportunity to own land, to participate in the free market, and to profit from it.

The Color Purple is closed with a celebration of kinship, its concluding action composed of a series of family reunion: Sofia patches things up with Harpo; Shug visits her estranged children (for the first time in thirty years); and the novel's two narrators, Celie and Nettie, are joyfully and tearfully reunited. Even Albert and Celie are reconciled. Celie, having both economic independence and emotional security, gets reunited at the end. The ending of the novel suggests an optimistic future of the black, particularly women.

Review of Literature

Alice Walker, as a minority writer talks in the issues of marginalities in her works. Walker, a prominent black writer takes into account the bitter experiences, concerns and Problems of the colored women and lesbians as imposed by patriarchal society.

The Color Purple, Walker's highly praised novel, however, can not remain untouched from common themes, i.e. race, sex, rape incest, ignorance and poverty, it tries to explore the means for upliftment of the dominated voice so as to attain freedom. About *The Color Purple* numerous critics and reviewers have critiqued in a horizon of perspectives. Luren Berlant writes:

Celie and Nettie's feminist fairy tale (the "Womanist" historical novel) absorbs and transforms the traditional functions of patrifocal- realist mimesis; and that transformation makes possible the movement of *The Color Purple* into its communal model of utopian representation in which a partnership of capitalism and sisterhood plays central role. (842)

To Berlant, Walker's this novel has been a model among the texts created with regard to the suppressed colored women to revolt against and overturn conventional deep-rooted patriarchy. Lindsey Tucker, keeping almost similar view with Berlant in her "Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*: Emergent Woman Emergent Text", says:

The Color Purple represents a more explicit turning towards the question of the making of a text by a black woman. With this work, Walker has created a truly modernist text; that is a text that manifests itself an artistic production in which language is essential to the shaping of vision. She has created a text that shows language as power and has also demonstrated through this work what the nature of black women's discourse might be. (82)

Tucker believes that Walker's this work is helpful for developing a new text. Furthermore, language plays a pivotal role to determine the status of the black women in future. In "Alice Walker's Politics or the Politics of *The Color Purple*", Cynthia Hamilton opines that the society existing was not pro-female. In such context, this work presents the pathos and agonies further: "Women are so degraded by this male aesthetic that it moves them to tyrannize. Their oppression is in essence the assumption that makes them submissive and delicate objects of beauty; that is- their oppression becomes psychological"(387). Hamilton exhibits the misery of the colored women in the land of the oppressors. The minority women have been squeezed and hegemonized.

Keeping her focus on the subject matter of this novel of Alice Walker, Linda Seltzer, in her review "Race and Domesticity in *The Color Purple*", mentions: "*The Color Purple* offers a critique of race that explores the possibility of treating all people as one mother's children- while remaining unremitting sensitive to the distance that often separates even the best of human ideals from real historical conditions" (70). To Seltzer, Walker's desire is to harmonize the people irrespective of race and sex. She opines that the women have been thwarted by their misfortune on the ground of humanity. They are no more different than males, however, they have been restricted within the narrow periphery formulated by males. In this novel, Seltzer finds the theme of brotherhood and sisterhood.

But Pepper Worthington assumes why the censors might initiate the different issues (for censorship) of *The Color Purple*. He states some of them: "the female initiation rites among the Olinkas in Africa, the reefer-smoking scenes, the intimation-talk of Anime Julia's murder by her boy friend and the drinking scenes at Harpo's club" (49-50).

Regarding the subject matter of *The Color Purple*, he puts his views forward that such offensive scenes set the censors into motion. Moreover, he adds some specific words/ phrases like "kine word", for kind word, "chilren" for children, "git" for get (50), "He set there" for He sat there (51) in grammar and the epistolary form also triggers some censors.

In "A View from Elsewhere", Linda Abbandonato includes many aspects of the novel, *The Color Purple* as the content of her writing. Characterization is one of the important concerns in her review. She is not ready to accept Celie as the protagonist, who lacks honor and respect in the initiation of the novel. Linda aims to demonstrate Celie's exploitation physically, mentally and psychologically. Linda mentions:

Physically and psychologically abused by step-father and husband alike. Celie is denied a status as subject. Her sexuality and reproductive organs are controlled by men, her children are taken from her, and her submission is enforced through violence. In her terrified acceptance to such deliberate male brutality, Celie symbolically mirrors everyone. (1111)

She presents Celie's pitiable condition in the novel. She has trouble about her subjectivity; she has completely been controlled. She seems very weak to stand as protagonist in the initiation of the novel. Her subjectivity is questioned. As the protagonist, she could have protested for her identity but she only accepts every brutal and violent activity done upon her. Celie is the portrayal of every black woman.

Martha J. Cutter believes that Walker's *The Color Purple* is the reusing of rape archetypes once already used in the ancient story of *Philomela*, in her "Philomela Speaks: Revisioning of Rape Archetypes in *The Color Purple*":

The presence of this myth in contemporary texts by African American women writers marks the persistence of a powerful archetypal narrative explicitly connecting rape (a violent inscription of the female body) silencing, and the complete erasure of feminine subjectivity. For in most versions of this myth Philomela is not only raped, she is also silenced. (101)

In this work, Cutter has compared *The Color Purple* with *Philomela* regarding the issues of characters: "like 'Philomela's tapestry', Celie's embroidery deconstructs the barriers between the pictorial and the lexical" (174).

Similarly P.K. Power in her "Pa is not Pa" deals with Celie's interpreting God as the strong oppressors: "whiteness and maleness she views. If whiteness and maleness signify a historical locus of violence, a god who is white and male represents the possibility of transcendent violence directed against African Americans as a whole and African American women in particular" (71).

In this work Powers precisely puts forward her view as to how Celie thinks the god to be. She exhibits the fact of Celie's interpretation of God as a male or a white male who upsets the black, particularly women.

Likewise, Valerie Babb, in " *The Color Purple*: Writing to undo What Writing Has Done", attempts to expand the views of the two sisters: Celie and Nettie with regard to their understanding the written word and changing it so that they, as the black women, are no longer, the complete victims of the racial and sexual oppression that the white use of writing can do. She is of the view that "by mastering and modifying writing, Celie and Nettie change it into an implement that is no longer solely the property of men and whites, but one used by

black women to gain a greater awareness of themselves and to preserve their oral history" (108). Babb lights on the two sister's interest to create awareness among them and to protect their oral tradition.

In the nutshell, it is worthwhile to demonstrate the critics and reviewers along with their modes of exploration in this typical work *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. Meanwhile, Luren Berlant presents the issue of race, gender and nation in much the same way Lindsey Tucker comes up with her view relating what sort the black women's discourse might be in future. Synthia Hamilton brings to light of the issues of how the black minority women were subdued and mal-treated. But to Linda Seltzer, Walker's *The Color Purple* is an illustration of harmony among the people regardless of race and sex: emphasis on the theme of brotherhood and sisterhood. Whereas Pepper Worthington rather looks into this novel from the linguistic point of view comparing between the syntactic structures of Southern Black Vernacular with Standard English. And Linda Abbandonato emphasizes in the characterization embracing the contexts of race, sex, incest and so on.

Likewise, Martha J. Cutter redraws the rape as archetypes once already used in the ancient novel *Philomela* in the level of characters and the comparative study relating the creative aspects of *The Color Purple*. Similarly, Peter K. Powers has chosen the theological ground as the subject matter of her criticism (how Celie interprets God). And Valerie Babb lights on the two sisters' awareness in protecting oral tradition.

However the critics and reviewers have observed *The Color Purple* from different perspectives in terms of race, sex, incest, family disintegration, reunion and so fourth. The vital issue of the novel is how language and female bondage play significant roles for the emancipation of African-American women including the emancipation lesbians. Thus this topic deserves a careful mention as the field of research.

Chapter II

Theoretical Discourse

Racism and the Status of African American Women

As European settlers moved to America, they imported a large number of Africans from the west coast of Africa to do the work they were uninterested to do themselves. Louis E. Lomax in *The Negro Revolt* traces the history of slavery:

Negroes- in large numbers, as explorers and as servants- came with first Europeans as they set out to exploit the resource of the New World. Thirty Negroes including Nuflo de Olano, were with Balboa when he discovered the Pacific. Crtez carried Negroes into Mexico and one of them is recorded as having reaped the first wheat crop of the New World. Several Negroes were with Nawaez on his expedition of 1527, and many more were with Cabeza de Vaca in the exploration of the South Western part of the United States. (9)

He further says that Negroes have been involved in the problems of America from its beginning. It is estimated that about ten thousand free Negroes and indentured servants were in the United States by the early seventeenth century period during which slavery became widespread.

According to him, slaves were introduced to America when the efforts to make slaves of Indians and white indentured servants failed. It was found that the Africans were hardly informed as to their rights and privileges but their fellow white servants were and they could easily save if they ran away. Thus, starting in 1619 Africans were imported in large numbers and in course of time they passed from indentured servitude into slavery.

This imported population soon increased and made a different group of human population. They found themselves living along with white but at a very different level. They

found themselves treated at a much lower level in the view of socio-economic level. The whites lived a life of comfort and luxury on the labor of the black slaves.

The credit of making America, particularly South America goes to the African-Americans who worked hard to give a new shape to the wild landscape and to establish a happy family life. They cleared the forests, built houses, planted and harvested crops but this did not help them in uplifting their general living standard, as they did all this for the benefit of their masters. The position of this class of people was no better than animals. The master had very high power over the slaves, they were easily bought and sold like commodities in the market, the masters severely whipped and brutally punished them without any fear of legal practice. The slaves' identity was in crisis; they were numbered like the goods for sale and not even called by name. For the blacks the family by the relation of blood, love and affection did not exist.

The condition of African-American was critical. They were the double victims, as being the black and the female. Due to disintegration, the husband, wife and the siblings were thrown away from the warm lap of the family. The wife being wildly raped in front of husband and the husband being mercilessly whipped in the eyes of wife and children resulted both physical as well as psychological torture upon them. Their white masters assumed the slave's familial unity would be detrimental to them. So such families were separated. Their labor was valued but they were dehumanized. Thus, the African-American were brutally punished and sold by the white whereas the women were additionally tortured from rape by the white androcentrists, their masters.

The plight of the women slaves was really very pathetic. They were not only placed at the lowest possible strata of the socio-economic aspect, they were also treated in a very inhuman way. Children were separated from their parents and siblings as early as possible. As a result, children did not know who their parents were and what family life was like. They

were treated like animals and were severely whipped if they failed to perform their duties properly.

Despite the increase in the number of the slaves, the blacks could do nothing except submitting to their masters. They played a major role in the colonial conflict that resulted the American Revolution. Later, they used their participation in the war in the hope of demanding a better role in the American mainstream.

After Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation proclamation in 1863 freed many slaves, these ex-slaves started migrating to the North with the hope of a better life but social prejudice was even greater in the free states. The social, political, economic and racial oppression experienced by the blacks in the North developed more pessimism to their hopes and aspiration of living a decent life. These factors restrained the effort made by the blacks for their general upliftment. The type of discrimination and mass violence thrust the blacks to a miserable condition of illiteracy, hopelessness and poverty.

Despite being physically free, these freed slaves were psychologically bounded. They were much confused about themselves. They had deep psychological problems over the apparently simple ethnic questions. They were rather confused about their identity and were incapable of raising their voice for what they were seeking. In the North, they had to make a place a home for themselves, a shelter where they could possess a peaceful milieu. It was not easy for them to cope up with the urban life; they felt alienated and concealed their identity. The ex-slaves felt displaced and alienated in a completely new environment and their belief that the North was their promised land that proved to be wrong.

The life of African-American women after the Emancipation Proclamation was full of turmoil and uncertainty. Their life was no better then during the slavery. Only few opportunities were allowed to them and they continued to live a life of oppressive discrimination. During slavery their life was complicated by racial and gender issues, their

sexuality was equaled to commodities, exploitation and abuse whereas their life was full of uncertainty.

Above all the ex-slaves had to reconstruct not only a healthy physical environment to live in but also maintain a mental balance as this wild and violent milieu had left a majority of them mentally disturbed. In spite of being physically free, they were psychologically confined in the traumatic past. The torturous effect of slavery can be seen in the works of African-Americans even to these days.

The African-Americans had no alternative but to identify themselves with the American norms, values, ways of life and culture. The intermingling of two/many races and culture gave rise to multiculturalism in America. The African-Americans have made their presence felt strongly in present America and they have excelled in whatever they have undertaken, in fact they have surpassed the white Americans in many fields.

Protest Literature

Literature cannot be isolated from the society and the environment in which it evolves. Literature depicts the society in its best as well as the worst form. Society's beliefs, practices, culture, history, hopes, aspirations and intuitions find its expression in literature.

When the concept of race was realized by the black, there developed a wide and deep crack between the people belonging to the so-called superior race and the inferior race. The oppressors got many benefits from the oppressed race. Social norms, values and laws were formulated to the best advantage of the oppressors and they aptly manipulated their causes and actions. The pain and suffering of the oppressed found its release in their writings. These expressions gradually became a voice of protest. The minority group began to realize that their plight was not their fate and they became aware of their rights.

The worst from of racial discrimination can be observed in the dehumanizing tradition of slavery. In America the whole race was imprisoned and tortured in terms of skin color.

Slavery has got a long lasting impact on American culture. It caused a national turmoil - it caused a war. Slavery existed in America till the end of civil war. Blacks were not included in this proclamation though the constitution declared to free the blacks. Blacks were denied of having mental capacity of reading, writing or intellectual thought. This idea is however proved to be very much wrong in the recent times.

Black American writing started as a medium of expressing the experiences of slaves. Black American literature is a narrative of the cruel deeds of the whites on the blacks. This type/body of writing gradually became a way to search and ensure their identity, a way to portray their reality, which was often distorted and misrepresented by mainstream literature.

From the very beginning African-American literature has travelled a long way. We can say that it has exceeded the mainstream literature in many ways. As Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury in *From Puritanism to Post Modernism; A History of English Literature* say that the debate regarding what should be the content of this body of writing and to whom it should address got prominence in the early 1920s. The writings during this time mainly covered the political dimension of slavery that was carried as a tradition. In the 1960s, the black rights organization gave pressure to the black authors to ". . . write first as blacks, to fashion a black sensibility, a black aesthetics. The search for a black tradition led to renewed interest in the writers . . ." (400).

The blacks took literature as a medium to prove that they were not inferior physically, emotionally or intellectually. The European and American intellectual tradition had always undermined the mental capacity of the blacks. This issue maintained by the dominating class came to be challenged by African-American writers. The mainstream literature has always marginalized the presence of Afro-American literature and has denied its contribution to American literary tradition.

Black literature continued in America as autobiographical works of the slaves. These writings were basically narrative of slave life. It can be said to be a flow of their feelings and emotions. It can be a record of their experience as slaves. Even after the abolition of slavery their position in American society remained very bad. Especially in the South, government laws were used to push the black Americans backward in various social phenomena. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, large number of blacks started moving from the South to the North. In the North the artists and writers began their long struggles for social justice for their people.

African American writing started to become central after the First World War. And since 1950, black writing has developed in the United States. Black female writers have remarkable achievements in the field of literature-especially in the genre of fiction. These writers have explored and dealt with that aspect of slavery that had been hardly dealt with. That is the experience and feelings of females as slaves. The prominent black female writers of our time are: Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou and Alice Walker. They have widely studied various aspects of black issues: physical, social, psychological and racial aspects of women in special. In their writings, they portray the women empowerment and , thus getting victory over the males; their writings include the various dimensions of lesbianism too so that they can utilize their freedom and rights.

Charles Johnson in *Being and Race* says that the writers should write about what they know. The Afro-American authors write about the "Black" experience (3). He further discusses Andre Malraux's ideas of creativity. Malraux is of the view that, ". . . artists do not stem from their childhood, but from their conflicts with the achievements of their predecessors; not from their formless world, but from their struggle with the forms which others have imposed on life"(4). So, the case of black literature is their experience of life lived as slaves. As Toni Morrison in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and Literary*

Imagination says, “The black American writer begins his or her career with and continues to exhibit - a crisis of identity. If anything black fiction is about the troubled quest for identity and liberty, the agony of social alienation, the longing for a real and at times a mythical home”(79). Black literature is no doubt an instrument for change. The writers are concerned with creating a meaningful life with a complete freedom.

Southern Black Vernacular: The Vitality for Colored Women

With the passage of time, the female black authors sought the alternatives to androcentric tradition so that they could break the shackle of interdependence with males in writing literature as well as in their survival. They not only began their writings with autobiographies, which could only embrace the domestic issues and a narrow territory of women but also they thought of a medium of expression, i.e. language because it could differentiate them from the tradition bound and suppressive language of mainstream literature.

They prioritized their own vernacular (i.e. southern black vernacular) which, they thought, could draw a line between the black and the white in case of language use. They preferred their own vernacular to the standard language because they believed, it would evolve the originality. And the originality within which they could explore their identity. Due to lack of original identity, they were trapped in gridlock of racist, sexist and heterosexist oppressions. The minorities struggled towards linguistic self-definition. Linda Abbandonato quotes Luce Irigaray, “If (women) keep on speaking the same language together, (they’re) going to reproduce same history. Begin the same story all over again” (1108). She urges women to come out of (men's) language.

She urges the women to change their linguistic track if they tend to create their ownness and if they use the similar language with males, they only light and highlight the male supremacy about which they are standing against. It is easier said but it is no easy for

women to isolate and authorize themselves as women. It is really difficult to keep away their feminine identity untouched from the males because their identity mingles with males'. Linda cites de Lauretis' argument:

Feminist discourse itself is inevitably corrupt, deeply implicated in the sexism of language and in patriarchal constructions of gender. Women's theories or reading, writing sexuality, and ideology are based on male narratives of gender . . . bound by the heterosexual contract; narrative which persistently tends to reproduce themselves in feminist theories. (1108)

But the challenge facing feminists are no less than to "rewrite cultural narratives"(1109). The Afro-Americans do not constrict themselves regarding the patriarchal domination and hegemony as their fate; they oppose the hindrance of mainstream culture in the most possible ways. And they employ language as one of the bases of the movement. M.H. Abrams presents the worth of black Arts Movement, which forms a model in and outside the black community. This is the matter of pride among blacks. As Abrams says:

The revolutionary impetus of the black Arts Movement had diminished by the 1970s and some of its pronouncements and achievements now seem undisciplined and too blatantly propagandistic. But its best writings survive, and their critical rationale and subject matter have served as models not only to later African American writers, but also to Native American, Latin, Asian, and other ethnic writers in America. (24)

Abrams views that creativity of the black, in diverse fields, is able to develop a model. The black authors' and artists' such practices also contribute to initiate the women's movement in an earlier and wider way. They are dedicated to safeguard their identity at any cost. They do not make concessions in anything that seems anti-black. Abrams cites Addison Gayle:

The black Aesthetic that was voiced or supported by representative writers in the movement rejected, as aspects of domination by white culture . . . Instead the black aesthetic called for the exploitation of the energy and freshness of the black vernacular in rightness and moods emulating jazz and the blues, applied especially to the lives and concerns of lower class blacks and addressed specifically to a black mass audience. (24)

The black authors are so vigilant that their art and literature are not misused and exploited by the white, the most perilous enemy for elevating the status of the black. They are not easily deceived to give advantages to the white in their pretension of developing energy and freshness of the black vernacular or their culture as a whole.

The black are discovering their own methods and medium instead of depending upon the white's literature and arts. A number of black authors, both males and females, have emerged and involved in their development of culture and establishing their identity making literature a medium. And as far as the black female literature is concerned, they read and revise so as to maintain the standard of their writing to secure a sacred position for their identity. In *Redrawing the Boundaries*, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. points:

Black literature, recent critics seem to be saying, can no longer simply name "the margin". Close readings are increasingly naming the specificity of the black texts revealing the depth and range of cultural details for beyond the economic exploitation of blacks by whites. This heightened focus of specificity of text has enabled us to begin to chart the pattern of repetition and revision among texts by black authors. (308)

The black are searching to get the root of the originality in their writings for which the black authors are involving to chart in patterns of repetition and revision among texts. At the same time, their purpose of doing so is to keep away the economic exploitation of blacks by whites.

Henry cites Baldwin, who described his own obsession with "race" in his fiction *In Notes of a Native Son*, says, "I have not written about being a Negro at such length because I expect that to be my only subject, but only because it was the gate I had to unlock before I could hope to write about anything else"(308).

Accordingly, many black authors read and revise one another, address similar themes, and repeat the cultural and linguistic codes of a common symbolic area. For these reasons, we can think of them as forming literary traditions. Henry Louis nicely puts further,“. . . The black arts movement, whose leading theoreticians were Amiri Baraka and Larry Neal. The leadings of these critics were broadly cultural and richly contextualized; they aimed to be "holistic" and based formal literature firmly on black urban vernacular, expressive culture” (309).This shows that black vernacular has been prioritized among many black authors, for it is a reality that separates their writing from that of the white. It characterizes the radical features of black writing which they aim,too.

However, the entire domination and the discernful manner in various dimensions of black movement of being liberated may linger but it does not shelve in its course because they are very much tactful in their rights and in the whites' exploitation on them. Apart from art and literature, the language (Southern black vernacular) has also been practiced to institutionalize their medium. It shows the black's steps to have undergone for a complete transformation for the removal of the past trauma and for welcoming the optimistic and bright present.

Women's Awareness for Independence

The studies of homosexuals began as a "liberation movements" during the anti-Vietnam war. It started as an anti-establishment and counter-cultural system of the late 1960s and 1970s along with the Afro-American and feminist liberation movement. According to M.H. Abrams in his *Glossary of Literary Terms*, "Since the time 1960s and 1970s this studies

has maintained a relation to the political activities to achieve political, legal, and economic rights equal to those of the heterosexual majority" (254). However homosexuality would be regarded as transgressive human act, immoral and illegal activity previously, it gradually ensured a certain path for achieving the rights in parallel with the heterosexuality, a powerful means of patriarchy for exploiting women through marriage. Thus lesbianism, the unity of same-sex women, insistently stood against the heterosexual norms and values and set out the journey of liberation movement.

Lesbian feminist theory appeared as a response both to the heterosexism of mainstream culture and to the sexism of the male-dominated gay liberation movement. The chief concern of this theory is to keep away the structures of gender and sexual oppression and its consequences on women. According to Selden, Virginia Woolf, one of the most prominent European feminists principally deals with "women's material disadvantages compared to men . . ." (128). However, women are no different than men on the ground of humanity, they are trivialized while treating. Virginia Woolf as Seldon quotes from her celebrated essay *A Room of One's Own*, says, "Women are supposed to be very calm generally; but women feel just as men feel: they need exercise for their more privileged fellow creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting, stockings, to playing on the piano, and embroidering bags" (822).

Woolf clearly views that women are as equal as men and they can perform equally as well. They have as equal sense and sensibility as males'. But they are contemptuously regarded and dealt with accordingly as the mere sex object for the fulfillment of sexual passion of males. They are regarded as a second sex and confined in a narrow periphery of domestic issues. They have been dehumanized and hegemonized because neither there is any certain provision of making their standard of living nor they got a natural living with freedom.

Selden cites Virginia Woolf from *A Room of One's Own*, where she opines, "women's writing should explore female experience in its own right and not from a comparative assessment of women's experience in relation to men's" (128). She argues that maintaining a balance between male and female is a must. We achieve such balance exposing ourselves through literary works. We can attain balance between a 'male' self-relation and 'female' self-annihilation.

Slightly differing from Virginia Woolf, the radical lesbian feminists target to invert the system of heterosexuality as it strengthens patriarchy, which is one of the dominant aspects of the male's oppression upon female freedom. An emphasis on woman identification, and the creation of an alternative women's community is the focal point of Adrinne Rich but it was first articulated by Gayle Rubin (1975). The concept of 'Compulsory heterosexuality', which Rich emphasizes for 'woman identification', "challenges the common-sense view of heterosexuality as natural and therefore requiring no explanation, unlike homosexuality" (258). She argues that heterosexuality is a social fabrication supported by a range of power authorities. The fact of lesbian existence, in spite of such authorities, is evidence of a powerful current of woman-bondage which cannot be suppressed. She further views, "the source of lesbianism in fact are girl children, who are of woman-born' and have an original same-sex attachment to their mothers" (258). She finds woman-bonding natural, thus imagines a women's society because, as she believes, it can only be availed with the complete freedom and rights. On the one hand, female-bonding is the denial of the male where on the other, it is an empowerment and their self-consciousness for their independence.

Selden and friends put Wittig's rejection of Adrinne's concept of woman identification and say, "It remains tied to the dualistic concept of gender which lesbians challenge. She claims that in an important sense lesbians are not women, for what makes a woman in a specific social relation to a 'man' and 'woman' acquires meaning only in

heterosexual system of thought and heterosexual economic system" (258). Wittig argues that there is a close connection between the two genders where one cannot remain in isolation from the other. So women have to seek meaning in heterosexual systems rather than invert it.

Seldom keeps Rich's insistent claim, "Woman-bonding is an act of resistance of patriarchal power, and advances the concept of lesbian continuum to describe a range of woman identified experience" (259). She called the lesbian continuum as a way of expressing how far-ranging and diverse is the spectrum of love and bonding among women, including female friendship, the family relationship between mother and daughter and women's partnerships and social groups, as well as physical same-sex relations.

Apart from the various ways of resistance either by voicing out for independence and freedom in parallel with males or for the establishment of their identity, the women make their own association which directly denies the andocentric presence from different angles of physical, social, biographical relationship. This shows that the women seek to a separate alternative to that which only highlights the traditional norms and values and is not pro-female. Among the black women writers the issue of lesbianism has been a primary aspect of their literary writings. Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Adrinne Rich are the chief proponents of this theory by different means.

In "Charting the Waters of Lesbian Literature", Lamos presents Zimmerman's approach of detailing what she sees as four phases in the development of the lesbian novel. As she mentions:

. . . beginning with its golden age of experimentation and political passion in the mid-seventies, through an inward turn the late seventies towards utopian fantasies, followed by a self-critical stage marked by debates over racism and identity politics, to finally, the current apolitical moment in which lesbian

fiction is abandoning its founding beliefs for increasing commercialization.

(309)

Colleen Lamos tried to show the development of lesbian fiction in different phases of time. She presents Zimmerman's *The Safe Sea of Women* which offers a wealth of information regarding how the lesbian novel travelled the different steps in history over the past twenty-five years in the united states. Laura Cottingham's attempt to construct a lesbian history involves confronting silence, erasure, misrepresentation, and prejudice - all of which present great obstacles to historical research writing. Zimmerman presents the status of lesbian history in the different times and Laura says that the practice to establish lesbian history stands to confront the various types of pressures and domination over it. Laura further comments about the superiority of patriarchy in the society which attempts to wrap up the reality about lesbianism. She, in her "Notes on lesbianism", says,

Although the traditional historical practices of excavation and re-contextualization have yielded valuable contributions to the understanding and construction of European and American lesbian history by scholars . . . , published texts by those scholars and others invariably begin with an enunciation of the particular problem raised in rendering lesbians visible given how deliberately and successfully patriarchy has made us invisible. Even more often, patriarchal societies have disallowed women the possibility of being lesbian at all, in which case it is extremely difficult to produce and leave behind lesbian documents.(72)

Laura is not fully satisfied with the scholars who have taken down to amplify the voice of lesbians, however some ancient practices have given the supportive output to the understanding and construction of lesbian history. It is so because the male praising society has set up a framework like the web which traps lesbians and make them prey of the males.

The androcentrists have ceased their original identity. They have willfully barred and rendered the lesbians so as to hegemonize them. So, lesbian history always confronts the most mysterious aspect of history, for it must address not only what has or has not been left behind by way of documentary remains but must confront the successful assimilation of women into heterosexuality and ask why this has occurred.

This kind of novelty in thoughts and practices began to speed up after the decades of 1970s. As Laura, in her “Notes on lesbianism”, views:

A significant historical turning point for lesbian history in the United States is the period during the 1970s when lesbianism was chosen, celebrated, and culturally enunciated within the women’s liberationist organizing of second wave feminism. Although individual lesbians had decreased themselves as such before 1970, it was within the public discourse of the women's liberation movement that lesbianism was verbalized, aestheticized, collectivized It was during the women's liberation movement, and despite the effects of mainstream feminism's self-defined heterosexualists, that lesbianism became, quite simply an issue, and sought to escape from the taxonomies of personal idiosyncrasy, scandal, gossip, or cause for recantation within which lesbianism had previously dis-functioned. (75)

Lesbianism which was eclipsed before the decades of 1970s got a new movement and their voice also got space amidst the deeply rooted heterosexuals and they ensured their identity at least in oral form i.e.lesbian history. Laura opines, “The personal and collective energies lesbian exercised on behalf of lesbianism during and with the 1970s women's liberation movement also helped to produce an increase in the number of women willing and able to live as lesbians” (75).Laura mentions that many black minority women have been in a bondage for an erasure of the patriarchal suppression over the minority women.

According to the analysis of the above- mentioned critics and reviewers, *The Color Purple* is the illustration of lesbians seeking to get freedom. Alice Walker presents women's association is on the way to liberation of colored women.

Chapter - III

Analysis of the Text

The Focus and Nature of the Novel

The Color Purple (1984) belongs to a politics that conceives of resistance and social reform as dependent on a critique of representation. It revolves round the quest for liberation that relies on an analysis of the dominant discourse and the empowerment of black feminist speech and free existence of the black lesbians from the white and the heterosexual. The ex-slaves attempt to reconcile and accept their free existence from patriarchal dependence resisting on the traumatic past and lesbians desire for their self.

The novel shifts from the enslaved past and its consequences on the female characters to the present free and blissful moment. The novel presents the story in an epistolary form, a black narrative. The characters in the novel - Calie, Nettie, Shug Avery, Augnes and Sophia stand in opposition to Mr_, Pa, Harpo and the whole patriarchal society so as to set up female identity and independence. However the central character Celie - a sexually brutalized victim who is tortured by the harsh situations of rape, racial discrimination, and segregation of her kids and her dear sister, Nettie - struggles throughout the novel creating an adaptable environment for getting reunited to her nearest and dearest and for securing peace and freedom. She sends a number of letters explaining the incidents in the novel, however she gets no response in the early portions of the novel. Celie, though, is compelled to live in isolation, gets identified to Shug Avery who helps Celie to unlock the shackles of pains and pathos imposed by the males and heterosexuals. Shug, who supports Celie both mentally and physically, gives her a new light of life. Developing bondage between them, Walker provides the novel with a different mode of resistance to patriarchy and lesbian movement in opposition to heterosexual contempt.

Traditionally designed, this novel exhibits the story in the letters explained and exchanged between sisters: Celie and Nettie. Celie, a hardly literate, is the protagonist of this novel and she makes use of southern black vernacular that mirrors the black identity; and Nettie, the other important character (both sisters are addressors and addressees at the same time in course of the novel), uses Standard English language in communication. Thus this novel embraces the blending of two types of linguistic expressions.

This novel treats slavery in such a way that it universalizes the theme rather than it deals with a very personal and individual level. It not only studies the physical and material distortions but also the aftermath brought about by the institution on the psychological strata of the black, especially women. *The Color Purple* includes diverse issues of race, sex, family disintegration and so on but the central themes are rape, bondage between/among women. The consequence of these incidents on the central character, Celie, is unpredictable and her steps escalates from a very brutal sexual violence to the apex in the achievement of success in her life. Berlant compares between Walker's *The Color Purple* with her earlier work *Meridian* in *Critical Inquiry*. She notes:

The Color Purple retains the positivity of *Meridian* toward national identity but also reproduces the negative, antipatriarchal, and antielitist tone of the stories by rejecting, or so it seems, a specifically political (in narrow sense: discourse that takes place about power) articulation of African-American identity for an aesthetic and symbolic construction of the new national subject . . . Walker also addresses the problem of representing the complex of racial, sexual and national issues also at the forefront of *The Color Purple*. (835)

She views that *The Color Purple* encircles the contexts of negative, antipatriarchal, antielitist tone, the problem of representing the complex of racial, and sexual matters along with national identity. *The Color Purple* employs some positive aspect as in *Meridian* i.e. the

issue of national identity. Walker, additionally includes the part of political power so that it would lessen the torture and maltreatment upon the black women. Along with the issues of black identity, *The Color Purple* exposes the racial, sexual, incest and so on into light.

Besides, Walker frames this novel as a sacred history. Peter Kerry Powers views:

Walker participates in the proliferation of sacred histories that has been ongoing since the sixties. Contradicting academic pronouncements of the death of meta-narratives, not only have traditional religions been reconfigured and revived, but new religions sprouted and matured. Indeed, what would seem most typical of post-modern culture is not the absence of meta-narratives, but rather the reinvention of meta-narratives as primary tools of political practices. (69)

By examining *The Color Purple*, Powers understands a great deal about Walker's particular revision of African-American religious tradition and about the political potential of creating sacred history of fiction as well. The center of Walker's sacred history, Celie, symbolizes the domesticated status of black women in a patriarchal and racist history.

The novel also manifests a theological or cosmic rather than a sociological problem. Celie's God, God of her church, is white and male. Late in the novel, Celie's lover and spiritual advisor, Shug Avery, asks Celie to describe God.

Okey, I (Celie) say. He big and old and tall and graybearded and white. He wear white robes and go barefooted.

Blue eyes? She ast.

Sort of bluish-gray. Cool. Big though. Pallid lashes, I say.

She laugh . . .

How come? I ast.

Cause that's the one that's in the white flocks' white bible.

Shug ! I say. God wrote the bible, white folks had nothing to do with it.
 How come he look just like them then? She say. Only bigger? And a heap
 more hair. How come the bible just like everything else they make, all about
 them doing one thing and another, and all the colored folks doing is getting
 cursed? (176-177)

Celie here questions the Bible and she disagrees with the general concept of God. She believes that this historical concept is the white's development to evoke their racial supremacy. If whiteness and maleness stand for violence, God who is white and male represents the possibility of a supernatural violence directed against African-Americans as a whole and African American women in particular.

Criticizing the cruelties of white males and regarding God in parallel with them, Walker herself wants to extend the theme of wild sexual violence. She defines her objective as "finding Celie's voice" in *Ms*: which Synthia Hamilton cites:

(I) describe the brutal sexual violence done to a nearly illiterate black woman child who then proceeds to write down what has happened to her in her own language, from her own point of view. She does not find rape thrilling; she thinks the rapist looks like a frog with a snake between his legs. How could this not be upsetting? Shocking? How could anyone want to hear this? (282)

It is the voice of the victim, particularly the victim of rape. In finding this voice Walker has attempted to universalize victimization so that the inhuman, and unlawful deeds are disclosed and she hopes for the support of her (black) rightfulness.

Walker's the other important aspect directs the resistance of male chauvinism by opposing androcentric norms and values and by constituting the unity of women themselves as well. Shug Avery says in *The Color Purple*, "Us each other's people now and kiss me" (183). The wroth of this sort of unity brings a point of departure to strengthen the female role

in the novel. Celie, who is trapped and kept in upheaval by the cruelty, gets strength and this unity empowers Celie's course more confident and more courageous. It is an indispensable incident in the novel because it gives Celie's tough experience of life " . . . he grab hold my titties. Then he push his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying you better shut up and git used to it (1)" into a surprisingly developed state of life, successful ending of the novel. Celie expresses her high extent of happiness in uniting with her kith and kin and extends her gratitude to all the things and bodies of the universe. Meanwhile it is Walker's tactfulness to coincide Celie's happy mood due to reunion with American's happy celebration of Independence Day. It implies the happiness of all irrespective of race and sex.

Language: The Vital Means to Liberation

Language holds a significant role to protest against the existing patriarchal subordination to the black female. Since language is a medium of expression of thoughts and views, it plays a dominant role in portrayal of the abstract ideas into words. In *The Color Purple*, Walker makes use of black vernacular that is the origin and the originality of the black in whole. Walker, a minority black writer, strongly anticipates the 'self' or seeks to possess identity. The black have been the 'Other' amid the circle of the white. The minority group has identity crisis and their rights as human being are marred; they are deprived of freedom and liberation. Thus they implement language as one of the measuring rods to invert the prevailing contempt on them and to reach the destination of liberation.

Through Celie, Walker uses black narrative in *The Color Purple*. The use of it clarifies author's intense desire for the protection of her identity and, meanwhile, it is the denial of the standard language. Celie is presented as a very submissive character, though in the beginning, she searches and applies the different possible ways to get liberated from repression and domination towards the end of the novel. Linda Abbandonato views, "Walker

shows her heroine trapped in the whole range of the possible oppressions. Celie's struggle to create a self through language, to break free from the network of class, racial, sexual and gender ideologies to which she is subjected, represents the women's story in an innovative way"(1107). Linda opines that language which Celie uses can help to establish her own norms and values away from the white ideologies to keep her free from class, racial, sexual and gender issues. This novel presents the women's experience in a novel way. It clearly exhibits how Walker prioritize the value of language i.e. the southern black vernacular.

Walker seems to have applied the black vernacular to express intense love of her language on the one hand where on the other she gives the prime importance in the vernacular as it possesses her original identity. Celie's burden in building a self is shared by any woman who attempts to establish an identity outside patriarchal definition. If women are constituted as subjects in a man made language, it is only through the cracks in language and in the places where ideology fails to cohere, that they can begin to reconstruct themselves. Luce Irigaray, from whom Linda cites, points out, "If [women] keep on speaking the same language together, [they're] going to reproduce the same history. Begin the same stories all over again" (1108). Alice Walker urges women to come out of standard (white) language. Walker takes the issue of language use seriously. She believes that the use of black vernacular deserves much worth rather than the use of so-called standard language, which is adverse to the black. Therefore the language is must as they are along the way to liberation resisting the white norms and values.

Walker draws the attention of the women and suggests them to develop the vernacular so as to displace the standard language because it is the masters' tool to segregate themselves from the minorities and to exploit the black. Their pure thoughts get marred instead of promoting it (the black vernacular) because the tendency of the white is to suppress and reign over them. But the standard language, as it contains the qualities of whiteness and maleness,

rather ignores the black's vernacular, the root of their culture, tradition, norms and values. When the culture and language of a race are entrapped, the identity of that race hardly exists. The matter of the 'self' always gets imprisoned. Thus identity, liberation and freedom are shaded by cloud of white supremacy. And the dreams of the black to have happy and prosperous life remains unfulfilled like the dream or lags behind more.

The standard language always represents the aspects that directly credit the white, the masters. To aware the black about their right to freedom, Walker applies literature as a powerful medium and language (black vernacular) as the measuring rod to draw sympathy and make them realize the fact (attaining self) through Celie .

Indeed, Walker seems to intend this myth of creative inspiration literally, and it is attractive because we certainly experience the novel as filled with voices that address us being taken on her own terms. As Linda argues regarding Walker's emphasis on using language:

Walker's language is indeed so compelling that we actually begin to think as Miss Celie - like Shug, we have her song scratched out of our heads - because by participating in her linguistic process, we collaborate in her struggle to construct a self. For various reasons, then, we are distracted from the extreme skill with which Walker exploits her formal and linguistic resources, and thus we underestimate the degree to which the text is language as performance.(1108)

The linguistic process Walker employs in the text wins sympathy of many readers and makes them feel attached to that of Celie. We, as the readers, assimilate our sentiments with Celie and make efforts to meet a real ground of the self. However, Walker's handling of the novel with various incidents keeps us here and there, her play with language suggests very

significantly in the view of identity. By using the vernacular, she heightens the value of language more in the novel.

In order to differentiate the worth of southern vernacular from that of standard language and to enrich the vigor of the vernacular, Walker uses the form of meta-communication. There is a clue that is commonly perceived as a flaw in the novel - the sequence of letters from Nettie, which constantly disappoint readers. Abbandonato views again: "If signifying is a form of meta-communication, where the surface expression and the intrinsic position diverge, we can regard *The Color Purple* as an elaborate act of signifying, since the apparently impoverished and inauthentic language of the illiterate turns out to be deceptively resonant and dazzlingly rich" (1108).

By incorporating Nettie's letters into Celie's text, Walker illustrates the contrast between Celie's spare suggestiveness and Nettie's verbosity. Thus the expressive flexibility of the black vernacular, as it appears to be inferior speech, is measured against the repressed and rigid linguistic codes that Nettie has conformed, the position of standard (white) English is challenged, and Celie's vitality is privileged over Nettie's unnatural correctness. Nettie has been undermined, her language praised white and her ethnicity almost erased. Like the other woman, one who lacks an identity of her own, Nettie is cast in the backward role of a black missionary who attempts to impose the ideology of her oppressors onto a culturally self-sufficient people. Nettie's story perfectly illustrates the way how society takes women: neither represented within the white mainstream nor able to construct a selfhood outside it, Nettie is internally divided, experiencing her subjectivity as otherness.

Celie is committed not to use the linguistic codes and patterns of the (white) standard English. She believes that the southern black vernacular is the vital aspect of their life; they have blood and flesh relation with it. As Linda Abbandonato argues, "Celie, by contrast, refuses to enter the linguistic structures (and strictures) of white patriarchy, commenting that

'only fool would want you to talk in a way that feel peculiar to your mind' and so retains a discourse that is potentially subversive" (1109).

We might compare Walker's technique with Irigary's artistic use of language, fragmented phrases, and rhythmic patterns in language, which are similar in purpose, though not in style, the sharp wit, and the compression of the black vernacular: each mode of expression represents both resistance to the hegemonic discourse and the deliberate use of linguistic code to ensure the self outside the dominant system.

In *The Color Purple*, the dialect is both naturalistic and symbolic, and if we try to confine the work to realism, we may easily miss reality of Walker's Womanist aims. Her deliberate use of epistolary form, although, has been perceived as the lack of artistic style in language, it highly contents with the then feminist practice, and some of the criticisms directed at Walker suggest a hidden form of racism - an assumption that black novelists should write only in the realistic vein.

In this novel, both Celie and Nettie learn to master the written word and to modify its form and function. So they, as black women, are no longer complete victims of the racial and sexual oppression. By mastering and modifying writing, Celie and Nettie change it into a practice that is no longer only the property of men and whites, but one used by black women to gain a greater awareness among the black and to preserve their oral history.

The main characters, Celie and Nettie, are not the completely oppressed ones as the black women as they are capable of exchanging the language. They have implemented language as a strong means and by grasping and transforming it, they enable themselves to empower and search for unity among the black. It is the empowerment of black women resulted from language, by which they can strengthen themselves in the white's circle and thus direct the whole black women into the liberation movement.

Although the sisters lead very isolated lives, writing (language) is important to each of them. The more Celie writes, the more she is able to analyze her experience and ultimately herself. She uses writing to fix the events of her life, thereby leading them in coherence and making their review and understanding possible. Like Celie, Nettie, too, feels compelled to explain her experience in written form, as she assumes she may gain a greater extent of relief from misery caused due to isolation and other troublesome situations; while Nettie does this she also records the larger experience of Afro-American, giving it the tangibility of a written text so that its oral history is not lost. However Nettie employs the standard language in her written discourse, she is equally conscious of the oral tradition prevalent to the black culture. It is Walker's manipulation of character's manipulation of characters that the two protagonists of the novel in this regard are able to protect their self.

The role of language is especially towards the end of this novel that proceeds with intense hope and expectation for it brings a change in the life of oppressed black. It makes the twenty years long disintegration possible to be integrated. It brings a delightful moment for the black on the 4th July, the date when the white /America celebrates the Independence from England.

Why us always have family reunion on July 4th, say Henrietta, mouth poke out, full of complaint. It so hot. White people busy celebrating they independence from England July 4th, say Harpo, so most black folks don't have to work. Us can spend the day celebrating each other. Ah, Harpo, say Mary Agnes,. . . , I didn't know you knowed history. (287)

The July 4th, the date that deserves the day of white's celebration of Independence from England; and the novelist has also coincided her reunion with her relatives on the same date. Perhaps the author did so to validate their integrity as equal as that of the white's

independence. Walker seems to imply equity and equality between the white and the black. This incident in novel centers on the black's liberation from the white in the way America was liberated from Britain.

The both sisters choose to write after they feel being imprisoned in a male dominated rude culture where the males arrange their marriages, and men decide how much access they will have to the written word. Though the most evident male dominance in the sisters' world takes a sexual form, suggestive aspects of literacy as an element of power are present. When the stepfather is motivated by sexually selfish desires, he makes the transparent excuse to a possible suitor, "I can't let you have Nettie. . . . I want her to get some more schooling. . . . But I can let you have Celie" (17). Here her stepfather shows that he not only has the power to possess them through marriage, he should also choose, the power to decide on the availability of literacy (language) to them.

The power of literacy to provide an escape from sexual subjugation is also evident as illustrated by the events following Celie's rape. When Nettie seems to be next in line for the same violation, Celie vows to protect her sister, and realizes the best way to do so as to insure that Nettie has power, the power of literacy: "I see him looking at my little sister. She scared . . . But I say, I'll take care of you . . . I tell Nettie to keep at her books" (13-14).

Though initially aware of their potential to mold reading and writing into tools to benefit their purposes, Nettie and Celie enjoy an intimate relation with literacy, and the image of literacy is often present as a background to the sisters' lives and daily routines. It is the language, however only literacy, which gives solace to Celie in her difficult times and due to which language is regarded to have blood and flesh relation in the completion of the whole text. Walker has an attempt to display the black vernacular as an alternative language to standard language so as to subvert their dependence on the white in case of literary production and protection of their identity and to respect their dignity as well. She tends to

break the shackles of hegemony, domination and exploitation upon the oppressed group. In other words, she wishes to get liberated attaining the self through language.

Thus *The Color Purple* represents a more explicit turning toward the matter of the making of a text by a black woman. With this work, Walker has created a truly modernist text, that is, a text that manifests itself as an artistic production in which language is essential to the shaping of vision. She has created a text that shows language as power and also is demonstrated through this work what the nature of black women's discourse might be.

Celie: From Submissive to Sovereign Character

Celie, the protagonist of the novel and representative of the whole Afro-American women, is a round character. She appears to be very submissive in the beginning portions of the novel whereas she is the same character who gets others to be submissive to her especially the oppressors to be oppressed. The novel exhibits a very harsh, bitter and heart-throbbing threat "you better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy" (1). An immature, young and innocent female has no way out except accepting such threats and wild and violent acts of rape. As mentioned in the novel, Celie herself explains: "when that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it" (1). This expression clarifies that she was entrapped miserably and pitifully, like the frog in the mouth of a snake, between the legs of Pa, her stepfather.

She is not only tortured through rape but also isolated from her dear sister, Nettie and her own offspring. Celie suspects to her stepfather for killing her kids and says, "He took it. He took it while I was sleeping, kilt it out there in the woods. Kill this one too, if he can" (2). Apart from presenting herself angrily, she could make no effort so as to protect herself from rape and her children from being sold. Physically, biologically and mentally victimized, Celie helplessly accepts when her sister was taken away and her own kids, whom she had born,

were sold. This is perhaps the most torturous point of the novel where Celie suffers much and at the same time it implies the common pain and sorrow of the whole minority black women.

Celie is compelled to remain in a complete isolation after her sister, Nettie's separation from her. Hardly literate, Celie is doomed and has no idea about her sister's location and she assumes that her siblings were killed. The letters the two sisters correspond to each other are ceased by Mr., the representation of patriarchy and with whom Celie is sold to marry. She is thwarted by her fate that she has to submit herself and tolerate anything hard and brutal.

Celie is charged with punishment in the blame of illicit attraction with other people: "He beat me today cause he say I winked at a boy in church. I may have got something in my eye but I didn't wink. I don't even look at mens" (5). But Celie's severe experience of life gets promoted to a golden sunrise by her accompaniment with Shug Avery. The most mentionable achievement Celie ever gets from her bondage with Shug was a change in Albert's treatment on Celie from harsh and cruel to a normal one. Shug's effort enables Celie to open the gate through which she could go to her sister's approach at least through letters and which eventually ends with the family reunion, the most important theme of *The Color Purple* for the black minority women's liberation. She expresses her gratitude to all after reunion: "Dear God, dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples, dear everything, dear God. Thank you for bringing my sister and our children home" (214).

There is an inversion in the end of this novel that the oppressor becomes the oppressed and vice-versa. Celie has her own business, money, home. Celie, a black woman, gives order to a white man, Albert, and white women develop a dependence on the black woman, Celie. Africans return "home" to America. Celie, who represents the whole black women, makes herself a sovereign among those who suppressed and dominated her in the earlier portions of the text.

Celie, preserves the details of her isolated life in letters to God and her sister. A victim of sexism, racism, ignorance, and poverty, the narrator retains her integrity while reuniting with the people she loves, and learns serenity. However Celie's desires are overshadowed in the initiation of the novel, Celie empowers herself to achieve a liberated status in course of the novel. Shug Avery's support to Celie is a point of departure to get liberated and shatter the entrapment of the patriarchs. Celie's liberation signifies the liberation of the entire race and sex.

This novel highly succeeds to exhibit black women getting victory over white male. It is a successful novel because it illuminates the author's attempt to express the heart of America during racial discrimination. Perhaps it is not intensified that *The Color Purple* is the historical record of racism in America where the black race gradually got entrance to the path to liberation and freedom. Celie exemplifies it well in the novel.

Women Association: Unity for Liberation

The patriarchy dehumanized and mal-practiced the black women. As a result it brought forth the formulation of a newer type of relation in the community of black women. The then South America was proved to be hell for the majority of black race especially female. It is because they did not get the minimum humanly treatment/value from the white, they were exploited socially and politically. Celie, the victim of the white folks, is regarded with contempt; she realizes no more freedom and no rights she gets to utilize. She is not only treated but also named as a non-human character. "Mr.- says, that cow still coming? He say, Celie cow" (213). These expressions question the level of humanity that the white showed to, a minority black. The white patriarchs viewed that the black women as the things to be used no matter how severe and painful it was to them. Celie expresses her severity, I spend my wedding day running from the oldest boy. He twelve. His mama died in his arms and don't want to hear nothing bout no new one. He pick up a rock and laid by head open. The blood

run down all between my breasts"(160). This shows a very apathetic demeanor of the oppressors upon the oppressed, the white's treatment upon the black women.

But Alice Walker develops the lot of the protagonist, Celie, in *The Color Purple* in such a way that she comes in contact with Shug Avery, a very close friend and a strong advisor of Celie. Shug, who avails Celie with the Nettie's letters which were ceased from Mr.- for long: "Saturday Morning Shug put Nettie letter in my lap, little fat queen of England stamps on it plus stamps that got peanuts, coconuts, rubber trees and say Africa. I don't know where England at. Don't know where Africa at either. So I still don't know where Nettie at" (102). These letters make Celie extremely happy and there develops a new vision in her life, a newer planning for the meaningful existence begins and she also develops confidence within herself thereafter.

Shug assists Celie to relieve the inflictions to a greater extent. Shug's company in Celie's brings a new change because there appears a significant change in Albert's treatment on Celie, who was highly subordinated by him before. He would dehumanize her both in saying and doing. But Shug's capacity to melt Albert's iron-hearted nature on Celie to a mild one, really proves to be significant. Shug enables herself to convert Albert's cruelty upon Celie to soft and to come under Celie as a fellow-worker in the sewing which Celie herself has been leading. Towards the middle of the novel Celie gets Shug to listen the complaints:

. . . He beat me when you not here, I say.

Who do, she say, Albert?

Mr. —, I say.

. . .

What he beat you for ? She ast.

For being me and not you.

Oh, Miss Celie, she say, and put her arms around me. We sit like that for may be half an hour. Then she kiss me on the fleshy part of my shoulder and stand up. I won't leave, she say. Until I know Albert won't even think about beating you. (75)

Celie, a young and innocent woman has hardship of life and she has no way out except submitting herself and accepting anything that occurs upon her by the white. She is Shug Avery who widened Celie's horizon in the novel, and brought a broader change in Celie's thought about how to propel life through the activity of sewing into independence.

The Color Purple offers an alternative to the heterosexual paradigm of the conventional marriage plot. This very novel is lesbian in the much broader sense implied by Adrienne Rich's concept of the "lesbian continuum", which spans the whole spectrum of women's love for women is centralized and incorporated into a more general model of women identifying women.

It is Celie's love for Shug that enables Celie to bury her sad double narrative of paternal origins, black and female, and construct a new identity within a feminine domain. In an earlier scene of the novel, Celie tells her story to Shug, breaking the father's order of silence and discovering a sister-lover, compassion and passion combined. Significantly, that first erotic encounter involves both women in a reciprocal mother - infant exchange , "Then I feels something real soft and wet on my breast, feel like one of my little lost babies mouth. . . . Way after a while I act like a little lost baby too" (109). The great satisfaction represented here suggests a symbolic return to an idealized stage of innocent sexual desire.

Celie is rescued from an identity crisis by Shug, who says to Celie, "Us each other's peoples now kiss me"(183). The two women have mothered each other and elect to be a woman - identified woman. It gives a positive and empowering effect on Celie. Implicitly here is an escape from patriarchal law. In breaking the taboo against homosexuality, Celie

symbolically exists the master narrative of female sexuality and abandons the position attributed to her. Linda Abbandonato describes, "In loving Shug, Celie becomes a desiring subject, and being loved by Shug, she made visible to herself as an object of desire"(112). Both Celie and Shug Avery have reciprocal relationship. Celie loves and is loved by Shug. Her sexual parallelism reminds us, the readers, that sexuality is not only the aspect of objection but also the subversion of rooted ideology of heterosexuality. Celie's beginning into eroticism is linked with her growing sense of self and her capacity to see the different world with full satisfaction and far from domination and contempt.

The pounding optimism of the novel completely depends on Celie's association with Shug Avery and her full-fledged support for Celie. "He ain't beat me much since you made him quit, I say" (109). Walker is capable of developing the course of the novel in such a way the protagonist not only defeats her rivals, the patriarchs, but also draws them under her grip. The greatest dominator in Celie's early life, Mr. — is overlooked by her "Fine, I say. I look in his eyes and I see he feeling scared of me" (223). Celie gets permission for the entrance to the houses of the white. Besides, she involves in social works. She helps other pregnant working on their pants. This success in the life of Celie with support of Shug Avery promotes Celie to get liberated.

To oppose the injustice imposed upon black women by the white and to avail them with complete freedom and utilization of their rights are the main theme of lesbianism. The association made by Celie and Shug Avery keeps away the conventional belief of heterosexism. They want to prove that the women can have self-dependence physically, biologically and even socially. By the analysis of Celie's character, we clearly find that males are the rivals for women's freedom. As Celie expresses, ". . . Wherever there is a man, there is trouble" (205). So, keeping this view in mind, if we analyze the text, we can draw a conclusion that it is the author's deliberate choice to depict the women's independent society

from males and their relation with women. However *The Color Purple* embodies various interpretations, it grabs hold the interpretations of lesbianism in the view of black women's social and political change for achieving justice and liberty.

Creative Elements in *The Color Purple*

The Color Purple embodies the different sorts of creative elements so as to facilitate to untie the loop of the protagonist's troublesome situations. The creative aspects have played the key role in compiling this text as a success-oriented work. The minority group was prohibited to carry out any deed that was pro-black. Any fruitful job of the repressed group would cause them pain and suffer, however, the song, sewing, wearing and spinning are the helpful elements, and they were at least allowed.

One way Walker makes the reader perceive Shug differently is through the use of song, which is a kind of subtext. Addressing the problem of creativity for black people, Walker asks us to consider, "What might have been the result if singing, too, had been forbidden by law. Listen to the voices of Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Roberta Flack and Aretha Franklin among others, and imagine those voices muzzled for life" (Tucker, 86). Walker often speaks of song in connection with making of art, and it is surprising that one of the dominant figures of *The Color Purple* is a singer. But song is more than art form; it is also a subversive text. Shug's song, for example, is desirable to Celie as being "like what the preacher tell you its sin to hear" (48).

Song is also a means by which Shug does battle with Albert's father, the main representative of patriarchy. During the old man's visit (he speaks most while the women remain silent), Shug can be heard humming inside the house in the novel. What she uses her song against is the old man's categorizing her deficiencies : "She black as tar, she nappy headed. She got legs like baseball bats" (49). Song also plays a role in the development of Celie's self image, for, as she combs Shug's hair one day, Shug makes up a little song that

later becomes meaningful. Shug says, "She scratched it out of my head when I was sick" (65). For Celie the song is important because it indicates that she has been the part of creative process : "First time somebody made something and name it after me", she says (65). In the view of the rigid signifier-signified relationship, Celie has somewhat become free from being only something signified to being more of a creative participant, and hence a kind of signifier. In other words, the creativity has assisted not only to protect Celie's self in isolation but also presents Celie as the representative, thereby leading the liberation movement ahead.

A minor character who first appears as "Squeak" serves another example of a woman liberated through song. In the beginning of the story, she is silent and submissive. Her only claim to a positive identity is through her body, her yellow skin, which creates her as a more sexually, racially, and hence socially acceptable object: "Honey colored curly hair . . . cuteness" (220). Furthermore, she has been named by Harpo, who, Celie observes, "coo at her like she a baby" (74). She only becomes a real individual when she decides to help her 'rival' Sophia gets out of jail. (Since a rivalry exists only when the male is the control figure, the establishment of female bonding has the effect of avoiding that rivalry and uniting everyone). In her attempt to help free Sophia, Squeak is raped by a white Sheriff, who is really her uncle. Her white identity turned against her, or more accurately, this identity is shown to be a source of illegal power and violence – the cruelty imposed on her.

Furthermore, when she returns home, she insists on telling her story. Her words to Harpo, "Shut up Harpo . . . I'm telling it" (83), already indicate a change in her. The rape has separated her from a false identity, while her utterances about it create a new identity for her, one which helps to unite her with her family. Walker enforces this new identity by declaring : "My name Mary Agnes" (84).

It is after this experience that Mary Agnes begins to sing. Explicitly, Shug serves as the source of her first song, but soon Mary Agnes is making her own songs. And in one of

these, her own body becomes a creative source. As Lindsey Tucker cites nicely exemplifying Cixous's words, "Text: my body-shot through with streams of song" (882). And the song composed by Mary Agnes presents the denial of the whites subordination to black women in various ways:

They call me yellow
 like yellow be my name
 They call me yellow
 like yellow be my name
 But if yellow is a name
 Why ain't black the same
 Well, if I say Hey black girl
 Lord, she try to ruin my game (85-86)

In the above song, black and yellow are signifiers created by a white patriarchal world that would impose hierarchy in terms of color and sex. But Mary Agnes is able to deny both her nickname and her "color" name, by creating a newness of her self.

Besides song, Walker incorporates into the other forms of art and they also become a text. Spinning, sewing, and weaving have long been associated with women, but less with art. Lately, however, Walker and a number of feminist critics have begun to point out that many of the so-called decorative arts are devalued, much like letter writing because they tend to be associated with women.

Quilting in particular functions as a rich metaphor of fabricating for Walker because it involves the making of a useful object from material which is usually regarded as worthless: Scraps and throwaways. These worn bits and pieces of clothing which have belonged to individuals, can create a story with themselves. For Walker, quilting or the making something is here to be taken literally. Just as the worn pieces make up a complete whole of something,

one is composed of bits and pieces of family history. In a sense this is a story of the mothers torn from their kids and expecting to unite.

Consequently, Walker associates her own writing of *The Color Purple* with quilting: "I bought some beautiful blue-and-red-and-purple fabric, and . . . a quilt pattern my mamma swore was easy . . . My quilt began to grow. And of course, everything was happening. Celie and Shug and Albert were getting to know each other" (In Search 358). In the novel, it is not Shug but Celie who is practicing the art of needle work. Sewing for Celie begins, as it does for most women, as a necessary activity; but it takes on deeper meaning as it objectifies bonding. For example, as a powerless and abused fourteen year-old, Celie embroiders the name of her girl child, Olivia, into a cotton fabric and then she not only manages to maintain her connection with the child, but also her power to name her. Sewing is also involved in the establishment of a genuine bond between Celie and Sophia and dismantle the whole patriarchal system. It symbolizes the female bonding, sisterhood, and a mutual commitment among the black women characters.

The Epistolary Style and *The Color Purple*

The epistolary style of the text captures a worthwhile position in *The Color Purple*. It is effective because it has been a convention used mostly by women. Jossephine Donovan describes it as a "semi-private" genre, used primarily by women because of their education and because of the fact that such writings were not expected to be published. "Less used by males, who were exposed to a classical education and whose writing style was patterned after classical models, letter writing was a means of describing domestic life, and was informal, artless" (Donovan 212-13). Celie, sexually violated and barely literate at the age of fourteen, has only letters to God as a means to giving voice to her pain. But the fact that impelled to articulate her experiences is Walker's way of showing the need for language. Perhaps Celie is saved from that "numb and bleeding madness"(13) because she is able to write.

This text embodies an utterance that requires a speaker or narrator, and a listener or reader. It sets up within the smaller context of two speakers, Celie and Nettie, who are also the addressees. Their texts combine to make a larger text in which we, as readers, view the disruption between speaker and listener (Albert appropriates Nettie's letters to Celie) and the ways in which patriarchal society appropriates black discourse (Celie can only write to God, who as a white male listener, is indifferent to hear what she has to say). The larger text, presented in the epistolary form, displays the weaving of more than one woman's voice and demonstrates the means by which women have been silenced and their linguistic powers appropriated.

Besides the use of the epistolary form, there is another narrative strategy that seems to influence this novel, however it has been presented indirectly, that is the slave narrative. It is an important component of black literary tradition because, as a mode of discourse in which the first person narrator becomes central, it helps to re-possess subjectivity by means of the "I" 'or' as Susan Willis expresses it, "To wrest the individual black subject out of anonymity, inferiority and brutal disdain" (213).

The epistolary form deserves a vital role in *The Color Purple*. It is Walker's technique due to which she not only integrates the textual elements of two different places, but also unites the sisters and their offspring, whom Celie thinks to have been killed. Peter K. Powers views:

Nettie not only embodies a different history, her letter, tell Celie different stories about their childhood, creating a new consciousness that is a precondition for change. Until Celie discovers the letters from Nettie that Albert has hidden, Celie has imagined herself as a victim of incest, her sibling/children dead in the forest somewhere at the hand of her/their father. Nettie's letters begin to create a new imagination and a new material presence.

When she first begins reading Nettie's letters, Celie says, "Now I know Nettie alive, I begin to strut a little bit, thank, when she come home us leave here.

Her and me and our two children". (78)

Walker's epistolary form deals with a new horizon of thoughts and links of the two sisters who represent the whole black women in the novel. The letters have become the source of inspiration for uniting and selecting the path of liberation subverting the tradition-bound racial history. Nettie's letters shatter Celie's pessimistic life and exceeds in the pounding sense of optimism which succeeds to the formulation of a new history among the minority black women that calls at liberation.

Chapter IV

Conclusion: From Misery to Merriment in Minority Black Women's Life

Alice Walker, a minority writer, intends to ensure the marginal black women's identity to be protected and their dignity to be respected. As a result, she is entirely serious for the black's availability of their human rights through liberation and freedom.

Unlike many black writings, *The Color Purple* distinctively handles the issues of black women liberation movement. It embraces the African-American history; various aspects which one way or the other relate with the women's concern are portrayed in snaps, however it is offensive and undesirable to introduce. Celie, a young girl of fourteen and barely literate, collects the sympathy from the readers. However Walker presents this character lowly in terrible incidents in the novel, Walker provides Celie with a wide space all around: from obsequiously submissive to a sovereign. Celie's story is not the story of an individual, rather it is a historical record of the whole black women instead. Walker utters the words of suppressed group for taking down their 'self' through Celie. The novel, *The Color Purple*, is trying to present a young girl's longings - her struggle with the androcentric repression, domination and ultimately her reintegration with her dears and liberation from the whites.

In fulfilling Celie's desires, the novel evokes the history of the black; the painful history that no one wishes to remember is brought to light. The most painful and humiliating experience of the female slaves is depicted through the experiences of Celie. Her bitter experience of sexual violence leads her to get isolated from her dear sister, Nettie. To protect her from the same kind of humiliation, she is ready to get victimized more in order to protect her sister. But the action of the novel does not end here rather it proceeds with many twists and turns. The marginal women are suppressed from the enormous difficulties imposed by the deep-rooted tradition bound thoughts beliefs and their demeanors accordingly. Celie

continues to live with it in the initiation of the novel. Celie is treated as no different than the animals and is brutally dealt with until she succeeds to draw Shug Avery in her own support. The relation between them is resulted to be an important event for Celie to progress herself and to invert all undesirable deeds that create barrier for Celie's (suppressed colored women's) desires and aspirations. To raise the female voice is the main claim of this text.

The major focus of the novel is to revolutionize the traditional male chauvinism and to convert the evils into an adoptable sustenance for the colored women. They are to be equally treated with the males for which this novel has been a model to set up a new system. It provides the marginal groups with equity and equality.

Celie manifests the repressed thoughts and desires for liberation of the black minority women. The whole novel centers on Celie's longing for reunion and it unfolds as the character resolves the tension between what she is experiencing and wants to achieve. And *The Color Purple* represents all that Celie wants to overturn the prevailing disparity and to establish a favorable situation. Unlike the desire of the white patriarchs, Celie tends to forget her past and desires to reform the present for her bright future. Celie does not allow the intense past to emerge and live in her extended moments of grief and torture but in a hopeful and independent status. The novel presents a black history - a history that includes a long-tormented mind of the ex-slaves and their gradual steps for liberation movement.

Celie experiences extreme physical and mental torture, and she expresses it in words to the letters to Nettie. She embraces Shug Avery to solace herself while in her hard times, "Tears meet under my chin"(73) and Shug, who comforts Celie in different ways: making Mr. – soft to Celie, providing Celie with the letters from Nettie and more importantly making an association with Celie, the vital event for the liberation oriented female movement of this novel.

Walker wants to make a female unity so as to struggle against the white's domination over the black female. The bondage among women, as Walker's *The Color Purple* implies, bears the soul purpose of overturning the white and the male based ideologies and heterosexual disparity as well. It also saves women from the humiliation of being raped and wildly brutalized violence. Celie always desires to reunite with her sister and her offspring one day. Her desires are very strong and they come true in practice.

The Color Purple employs the multiple aspects of Afro-American life. Many critics and reviewers have given a horizon of perspectives in the different issues of the novel. Walker has used two different types of languages: Southern Black Vernacular and Standard English, which express various incidents. The incidents, which occurred in the two different places, the content of the novel, are well sequenced and the author of this novel prioritizes the southern black vernacular.

However Standard English is thought to be supportive and valid for linguistic expression, Celie uses the black vernacular. Since she is a black lady, she always views to promote the black vernacular because it is her originality and its conservation can protect her identity and keep her independent. As Lindsey Tucker views: "*The Color Purple* represents a more explicit turning towards the question of making of a text by a black woman. . . . Language is essential to shaping of vision. . . . She has also demonstrated through this work what the nature of black women's discourse might be" (82). The words of Lindsey Tucker display her views that *The Color Purple* not only employs the black vernacular but also tends to shape a vision and formulates the nature of black women's discourse.

This work of Alice Walker attempts to dismantle a hierarchy between a tradition bound and deep rooted patriarchy and the black female marginalities. Celie's self-dependence can be taken as the greater evidence of this fact.

The characters especially two sisters, Celie and Nettie, exchange their views which are saturated by domination, repression and brutality. Nettie imprints her sorrows while in Africa as a missionary and Celie portrays a real picture of inhuman deeds carried out by Mr. — and Pa. The other female characters also have become the puppet in the hand of patriarchs. But Alice Walker does not limit this work only within the periphery of male - supremacy, she adds an important incident of how minority black women get the utmost position of the hierarchy and they draw the dominating group in their hands. Walker precisely displays the reversal of the actions: the dominators as the domineering and vice-versa. However Celie catches hold of the respected position she does not show rudeness and cruelty, she rather softens herself and considers the relation of brotherhood and sisterhood. Linda Seltzer views: "*The Color Purple* offers a critique of race that explores the possibility of treating all people as "one mother's children" - while remaining unremittingly sensitive to the distance that often separates even the best of human ideals from real historical conditions" (70).

Walker takes support from some creative aspects to make her views more forceful. The song, which ties up the relation between Celie and Shug Avery, and the act of knitting and weaving which symbolizes the chain of relationship, are the other important elements of this novel. They help in one way or the other, to give the thematic conclusion of this novel. The stitching and weaving of clothes also assists Celie for the entrance in the white's houses and the same profession gets her to stand as a social worker. Thus she is able to present herself as an apple of the eyes among the poor when she helps them and among the white as well when they depend upon Celie.

Considerate and modest, Celie wins the heart of those who are the rivals to her and ensures an adoptable environment to widen her scope. She uplifts the suppressed voice so as to make end of disparity between male and female, white and black. Walker's *The Color Purple* is the first hand source for many minorities to voice out and to concretize a hope and

aspiration a part from the entrapment in the net formed by the white. This novel takes down the overall history possible for the colored ones. Therefore, *The Color Purple* keeps the record of black movement for their free and liberated life.

To amplify the marginal voice (the voice of the black women and black lesbians) in opposition to the white and heterosexual disparity and repression, *The Color Purple* aptly incorporates a theoretical instance as to how the minority should be treated. Walker, presenting *The Color Purple* as a mini history of American racism, she arouses the awareness for their rights among the black, particularly women. Walker stresses on equity and equality between the white and the black as she illustrates it through Celie, the protagonist of the novel and the representative of the black minorities, avoiding the grave injustice done by white males and the heterosexuals. Walker imagines of the happy and prosperous livelihood through the systematic change in the social and political phenomena.

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