

I. *The Color Purple* and Counterculture

This research analyzes Alice Walker's epistolary novel *The Color Purple* (1983) from the perspective of counterculture, as the counter-discourse to the various discourse perpetuated in the society of rural Georgia. It depicts the black women of rural Georgia fighting to get out of the sense of identity crisis and anonymity continually struggling against the masculinistic, racist, heterosexual discourse of the society eventually overcoming all the barriers of the discourse and coming together to the height of identity regaining their own feminine voice.

The troubled and pathetic life of the protagonist Celie has been depicted in *The Color Purple* that makes the readers see through the plights born by a black woman. She bears extreme violence like rape from her early girlhood by her stepfather and even refuses to believe her existence in the society as she keeps 'I am' into under erasure as the very outset of the novel and replaces it with – "I always have been [. . .]" (1) and thus, exposes the violent and suffocating nature of the society. Her life has been crushed under the masculinistic discourse in the society and she has also been deprived of the motherhood for her children conceived forcefully by the rape of the stepfather and she has been married to the man named Mr –, being forced out of the school. She, again spends the life in both the violence and emotional turmoil of marital dissatisfaction. Spending the life full of the patriarchal violence she grows to the resistant woman and starts finding her identity and comes out of the patriarchal discourse finding the continual love and resistant spirit from the other characters like Nettie, Shug Avery and Sophia. All the mentioned female characters show the strong sense of counterculture rejecting the masculinistic, white, heterosexual discourse.

Throughout the novel we are acquainted with the various instances of violence, domination, counterculture and sense of identity coming through the realization of the social position of female and other marginalized groups of the society. All the social problems and their solutions, discourse and counter-discourse are coupled with the black female writer Alice Walker her experiences in society and her rebellious activist life. The protagonist Celie is her mouthpiece and the major advocate of counterculture because she is formally uneducated and her letters which comprise the most part of the novel refuse. The discourse of standard English and come up with the Black English vernacular asserting her racial identity.

Walker uses basically four time frames in the novel. The first and second time frames of the protagonist are closely related. In the first period of her life, Celie experiences the misery and cruelty in the hands of her stepfather. In the second closely – related time frame, she experiences in the continual cruelty from her husband Mr –. Her strong apathy and insignificance of the male characters in her life is seen as she doesn't know their names and calls them as Pa and Mr –. They are enigmatic males who dominate and abuse her. Finally, she comes to know their name as Alphonso and Albert. In the third time frame, Celie awakens to the possibility of self realization through her loving relationship to Shug and her renewed contact with her sister Nettie. In this period, she realizes her virginity and lack of the sexual pleasure in her marital life. Male of the society don't care about the sexual satisfaction of the females but they just use the female body for their pleasure.

The realization lets her come up with the aversion to the heterosexual discourse and as the reaction to the patriarchal, heterosexual discourse, she enjoys

homosexual love with Celie. Celie also helps her to find out the Nettie's letters from Africa, concealed by Mr – for a long time to avoid their communication. Finally, Celie realizes herself and establishes a life under her control. From the self-realization she crosses the barriers of the long-born plights and she becomes content and happy. Another period, not directly a part of Celie's life, Nettie's time spent in Africa, that comes through the Nettie's letters. The letters from Celie serve as a contrast to Celie's life. They also enlarge Celie's perspective and help to universalize her life.

The activist writer Alice Walker is very radical in her writings and the writings are the vehicle for her activism. She writes in an anthology of essays *In Search of Our Mother's Garden*:

Each story or poem has a formula, usually two-thirds "hate whiteys guts" and one-third "I am black, beautiful, strong and almost always right". Art is not flattery, necessarily, and work of any artist must be more difficult than that. A man's life can rarely be summed up in one word; even if that word is black or white. And it is the duty of an artist to present the man as he is. (137)

The quotation taken from *In Search of Mothers' Garden*, acquaints us with the sense of counter-culture in her writings. Already in 1971, Walker held rather precise view concerning the qualities African American writings should have and shouldn't have. She criticizes any formulaic writings, discourses and superficial structures that close their eyes towards social realities rather than racism. *The Color Purple* is, thus, true to her radical activism within the African American wiring reuses to abide by the so-called sole discourse of racism and ghetto mentality in the African American writings these only deal with the problem of racism. Walker has

stressed this viewpoint in several essays and speeches before writing *The Color Purple* and proved her point with the novel.

The present research focuses on the counterculture advocated by various activists and theorists since 1950s that continued to develop in the Right Movements of 1960s America and kept on widening in 1970s and 1980s. The whole research work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter fundamentally deals with the introductory outline of the present study. It introduces critical review and the protagonist of the novel in various situations, domination violence and other social complexities. Thus, it presents the bird eye view of the entire research. The second chapter aims to provide the brief analysis of the theoretical methodology. It analyzes the development of the counterculture as movement, discourse and counter-discourse. It doesn't only show the development of the counter-cultural trend in literature but also analyzes those terms. On the basis of the theoretical methodology, the third chapter is the analysis of the novel. It will further sort out some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis of the research. This part serves as the core of the present research. The fourth chapter concludes the ideas put forward in earlier chapters focusing upon the social violence, domination and resistance of the various characters in the novel and the outcome of the research as the countercultural stance and refusal of the established social discourses giving emphasis upon the counter-discourses.

Born on February 9, 1944, in the small rural town of Eatonton, Georgia. Walker was the eighth and last child of Willie Lee Walker and Minnie Tallulah Grant, two sharecroppers. Walker's parents' experiences with the oppressive sharecropping system and the racism of the American South deeply influenced Walker's writing and life's work. When Walker was eight, one of her brothers

accidentally shot her, permanently blinding her in one eye. Ashamed of her facial disfigurement, Walker isolated herself from other children, reading and writing to pass the time.

In 1961, on a scholarship for disabled students, Walker enrolled in Spelman College in Atlanta, where she became active in the African-American civil rights movement. Two years later, Walker transferred to Sarah Lawrence College in New York and eventually traveled to Uganda as an exchange student. When she returned for her senior year, Walker was shocked to learn that she was pregnant, and, afraid of her parents' reaction, she considered suicide. However, a classmate helped Walker obtain a safe abortion, and she graduated from Sarah Lawrence in 1965. At this time, Walker composed two early landmark pieces: "To Hell with Dying," her first published short story, and *Once: Poems*, her first volume of poetry.

Walker continued her involvement with the civil rights movement after graduation, working as volunteer on black voter registration drives in Georgia and Mississippi in 1965 and 1966. In 1967, Walker married Melvyn Jeventhal, a Jewish civil rights lawyer, with whom she had one daughter before the two divorced in the mid-1970s. Walker's second novel, *Meridian*, explored the controversial issue of sexism in the civil rights movement.

In 1982, Walker published her most famous novel, *The Color Purple*. For the novel, which chronicles the struggle of several black women in rural Georgia in the first half of the twentieth century, Walker won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award. In 1985, a Steven Spielberg film based on the novel was released to wide audience and significant acclaim.

Upon its publication, *The Color Purple* unleashed a storm of controversy. It instigated heated debates about black cultural representation, as a number of male African-American critics complained that the novel reaffirmed old racist stereotypes about pathology in black communities and of black men in particular. Critics also charged Walker with focusing heavily on sexism at the expense of addressing notions of racism in America. Nonetheless, *The Color Purple* also had its ardent supporters, especially among black women and others who praised the novel as a feminist fable. The heated disputes surrounding *The Color Purple* are a testimony to the resounding effects the work has had on cultural and racial discourse in the United States.

Walker's 1992 novel, *Possessing The Secret of Joy*, concerns the marriage of Adam and Tashi – two characters who make their first appearance in *The Color Purple* – and the consequences of Tashi's decision to undergo the traditional African ritual of female circumcision. Walker has continued to explore the unique problems that face black women in both in the United States and Africa. Her novels, poetry, essays, and criticism have become an important part in a burgeoning tradition of talented black women writers.

The novel *The Color Purple* (1983) by the Civil right activist Writer Alice Walker depicts the conditions of Georgia in 1930s. It has become the most controversial, award winning classic of African American literature. Various critics of this novel has praised and criticized it in various issues.

One of the most positive reviewers of the book was Richard Wesley. Writing in *Ms. Magazine* Wesley says "As an African-American male, I found little that was offensive as far as the images of black men," (12) as they were portrayed in the book and the film. In the review, Wesley sees the character of Mr–

emblematic of "male privilege. As long as black men seek to imitate the power structure that crushes them and as long as black women submit them the morbid relationship of Celie, the oppressed, and Mr –, the oppressed oppressor, will continue to be played out in homes all across America." (13) In his article, Wesley criticizes those who fault *The Color Purple* for painting a negative image of black males. "Walker is airing dirty linen in public. She is reminding many of us men of our own failures. She is reminding women of *their* failures as well. A lot of people do not want to hear that." (13-14) His strong support of the novel concludes his review. "No one in America – and black America, especially – should be telling writer what they may or may not say. Writers are the antennae of any society. They have to speak when others dare not." (14)

Traudier Harris in *Black American Literature Forum* criticizes the media for dictating the tastes of the reading public. The book "Has been canonized," (9) she states. It has "become *the* classic novel by a black woman," (9) because "the pendulum determining focus on black writers had swung in their favor and Alice Walker had been waiting the wings of feminist movement." (9-10) Harris contends that the popularity of the book has been harmful because it has created "spectator readers," (10) and it "reinforces racist stereotypes." (10) Because of the book's popularity, Harris maintains that Black women critics are particularly reluctant to find fault with the book, even when they find elements in its disturbing. She also questions the novel's morality, which other critics praise. "What kind of morality is it that espouses that all human degradation is justified if the individual somehow survives all the tortures and ugliness heaped upon her?" (11) The morality other critics find in *The Color Purple*, Harris feels "resurrect [s] old myths about black women." (11) The critic cites Celie's response to her abuse as an example of the

myth of submissiveness of black women. She also criticizes the sections dealing the Nettie and Africa because she feels they "were really extraneous to the central concerns of the novel" (11) and accuses Walker of including them "more for the exhibition of a certain kind of knowledge than for the good of the work." (11)

Also writing in *Ms.*, Gloria Steinem finds much to praise and little to criticize in Walker's novel. "White women, and women of diverse ethnic backgrounds, also feel tied to Alice Walker. The struggle to have work and minds of our own, vulnerability, our debt to our mothers, the price of childbirth, friendships among women, the problem of loving men who regard us as less than themselves are major themes" (16) of Walker's writings. "She speaks the female experience more powerfully for being able to pursue it across boundaries of race and class," (16) Steinem maintains. She finds the author's storytelling style "irresistible to read." (17) Countering Traudier Harris's criticism, Steinem feels pleasure in "watching people redeem themselves and grow." (17) Its symbolism of purple, Steinem notes, represents "the miracle of human possibilities." (17)

However, the publication of the novel also unleashed a storm of controversy and criticism. It became a catalyst for heated debates about black cultural representation, as a number of male African-American critics and writers complained that the novel reaffirmed old racist stereotypes about pathology in black communities and of black men in particular. They charged Walker with focusing too heavily on sexism at the expense of addressing notions of racism in America and accused her of attacking black men in general.

One of the main problems was in all probability Walker's portrayal of different, not at all flattering side of the black community – first of all different from "I am black, beautiful, strong and almost always right" (18). Another problem

was detected in the novel's restricted domestic perspective. One of the book's critics, Elliot Butler-Evans, according to Linda Selzer's essay "Race and Domesticity in *The Color Purple*," criticized the novel's epistolary form as "a strategy by which the larger African-American history, focused on racial conflict and struggle, can be marginalized because of its absence from the narration" (8). The restricted viewpoint of the novel's main character, Celie, is seen as constricting the novel's ability to analyze racial issues. "Celie's private life pre-empts the exploration of the public lives of blacks" (8). The critic bell hooks even strongly rejected *The Color Purple* as "revolutionary literature" (9) because for her the novel's focus on the sexual oppression of women deemphasizes the "collective plight of black people" (9) and "invalid-dates [. . .] the racial agenda" (9-10) of the slave narrative tradition that it draws upon.

Eventhough, many critics have analyzed this novel from its positive or negative sides, commenting upon its controversies, this research tries to prove the issues of counterculture and counterdiscourse this novel builds up. Most of the critics of the novels have just discussed the various issues partly. This researcher proceeds with the examination into the various discourses and counter discourses.

II. Counterculture, Discourse and Counter-discourse

Counterculture

Counterculture refers to the literary movement that questions the dominant, traditional and canonical writings. In other words, counterculture is the production of counter discourses that challenge the established modes of discourses.

Counterculture challenges the so-called canonic discourses and the traditional myths that define the particular social mode and try to hyper correct the modes of existence that go beyond the traditional modes of existence. Counterculture is, thus, cultural criticism that encompasses all the possible discourses and counter discourses raise the voice for the particular cultural group or against the dominant discourses and ideologies inherent in them advocating the need of the new culture with the refutation of the old and established cultures. It is rooted to the vigorous anti-establishment and anti-traditional literary movements of 1950s America such as Beat Generation, Black Mountain, New York School poets accelerated, questioning the cultural conformity and complacency and voicing the need of new culture that can include the voice of minorities into the mainstream literature. In his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams highlights the situation through which counterculture began. Abrams writes:

The 1950s while often regarded in retrospect as a period of cultural conformity and complacency, was marked by the emergence of vigorous anti-establishment and anti-traditional literary movement [. . .] It was also a time of confessional poetry and the literature of extreme sexual candor, marked by the emergence of Henry Miller [. . .] and the writings of Norman Mailer, William Burroughs, and Vladimir Nabokov [. . .], the counterculture of the 1960s and early

70s continued some of these modes, but in a fashion made extreme and fevered by the rebellious youth movement and the vehement and sometimes violent opposition to the war in Vietnam (209).

Abrams further sees the development of counterculture with the expression of the voice of 'minority' or ethnic literary group in literature. He writes:

Many of the most innovative and distinguished literary work of the latter decade of the twentieth century have been written by writers who are often identified, as belonging to one or another 'minority' or ethnic literary group, [. . .] there is, however, much contention, [. . .], whether it is more just and enlightening to consider such writes simply as part of the American mainstream or to stress the identity of each writer as a participant in an ethnic culture with its distinctive subject matter, themes, and formal features. (210)

Thus, we can see counterculture as the counter discourse of minority cultures that counter the monolithic, unitary discourse of culture as a whole. Counterculture resists the domination of minority voices by the mainstream canonical culture of unity and seeks to establish the discourses of diversity of multiple, heterogeneous cultural voices of the minority or ethnic groups.

Primarily, the culture used to be regarded as organic unity and the collection of the best values. It is highlighted with the Arnold's definition of culture as "best that has been taught and known in the world" ("Sweetness and Light" 113). The idea of culture was monolithic and unifying in past.

Literature in past also became a political instrument to promote the unitary culture in the name of socializing of otherwise heterodox groups. It is further

clarified by Gerald Graff and Bruce Robbins in their essay "Cultural Criticism" collected in *Redrawing the Boundaries*:

The preeminence accorded to literature reflected its promise as a political instrument for the socializing of otherwise heterodox groups [. . .]. When late 19th century educators urged that English literature replace the classical languages at the centre of [. . .] curriculum, they were animated by the belief that the literature of the native tongue [. . .] was a superior means of acculturating the raw, uncultivated masses [. . .]. The campaign to replace Greek and Latin with English literature [. . .] seemed the perfect instrument for socializing a threateningly heterogeneous ethnic population into the values of Anglo-Saxon culture. (422)

It is for the imposition of the unified discourse of culture, the heterogeneous, ethnic, minority cultures are subdued. The tyranny of the monolithic idea of unified culture is, then, started to be challenged by various writers who advocated the heterogeneity of plural cultures and the democratic counter culture as antidote to the unified mainstream culture. Graff and Robbins see the ambiguity in the concept of culture and trace the history of counterculture. They see the analysis of culture in Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* as the analysis that traced the monolithic discourse of culture and Williams coupled the concept of culture with a critical standpoint that gives raise to the idea of counterculture.

Graff and Robbins further write:

The emergence of the idea of culture as told by Williams in *Culture and Society* is the story of the making of a counterculture. Williams explains how the word culture appeared only as the organic way of

life it denotes came to be threatened during the Industrial and French revolutions and how the word later came to serve, in the elaborations of the Romantics, Matthew Arnold, [. . .] George Orwell, and their successors, as "a court of human appeal" against the divisions and fragmentations of industrial society. (XVIII)

Graff and Robbins quote the Williams' concept of the culture that is the basis for the cultural criticism and counterculture. They agree with Williams and look out the critical development in the field of cultural criticism. It is because of such critical concept about the culture Williams has been awarded with the major cultural critic as the founder of cultural materialism. They cite the concept of culture as studied by Williams as 'made into entity a positive body of achievements and habits, precisely to express a mode of living superior [. . .]' and show how the traditional concept of culture demarcate the boundary between superior culture and inferior one and how the concept of culture hegemonized the other minority cultures. It is because of the discourse embodied upon the idea of the traditional culture the counter discourse or the critical concept of counterculture requires. Culture as the positive body of achievements and values is, thus, as Graff and Robbins also see is story or discourse that` locates the background in which the counter-discourse is necessary that lies in the very heart of the cultural criticism. Graff and Robbins point out:

This story, more or less as Williams tells it, has been for us the founding story of cultural criticism. At the story's center is a concept of culture that is presumed to be "critical", an antidote for a dissociated and disembodied social actuality. (422)

Thus, 'critical' concept of culture i.e. the idea of counterculture lies in the very foundation of the cultural criticism that came into prominence in English cultural studies with the publication of the book *Culture and Society* (1958) by Raymond Williams. The counterculture, thus, was bolstered by the British cultural materialists like Raymond Williams and accelerated forth with the advent of New Historicism in 1980s. Since the monolithic, unitary culture is associated with the power structures. "[. . .] many New Historicists and Cultural materialists have been profoundly concerned not only with situating literary texts within power-structures, but also with seeing them as crucially participating in conflicts of power between various forms of social and political authority" (Habib 762).

M.A.R. Habib in his book *A History of Literary Criticism and Theory* also traces out the subversive tendency and close connection to refuse the monolithic concept of the culture and its use and involvement as the tool to serve the various forms of social and political authority both in 'Cultural Materialism' and 'New Historicism'. New historicism as the term started to be highlighted with Stephen Greenblatt's use of the term in 1982 in an introduction to a journal devoted to Renaissance. Greenblatt and the subsequent critics see the tendency of New Historicism working not as the theory or doctrine rather as some persistence concern and approaches, such as:

[. . .] the rejection of the formalist notion of aesthetic autonomy and the situating of literature within a broader cultural network. Louis Montrose stressed that this contextualization of literature involved a reexamination of an author's position with a linguistic system. Montrose also points out that New Historicists variously recognize

the ability of literature to challenge social and political authority.

(762)

Though both New Historicists and Cultural Materialists see the subversive potential of literature that subverts the dominant ideology working inside the monolithic, unitary idea of culture, there is little difference between them too. The difference between these two culture approaches lies in their methodological ground as the former is influenced by Michel Foucault's analysis of discourse and its discursive practices while charging the dominant ideology imbedded within the concept of culture but the latter owes much to the Raymond Williams' idea of the 'structures of feeling'. Peter Barry suggests about the difference between the two approaches as:

[. . .] partly the result of their different intellectual frameworks.

New Historicism was much influenced by Foucault whose 'discursive practices' are frequently a reinforcement of dominant ideology. Cultural materialism, on the other hand owes much to Raymond Williams, whose 'structures of feeling' contain the seeds from which grows resistance to dominant ideology. (185)

Even though, both New Historicism and Cultural materialism differ in their intellectual frameworks, both advocate the resistance to the prevalent discourse of unitary culture and subvert the discourse of unitary culture with the discourses of various, diverse ethnic and minority cultures giving the emphasis upon the democratic counterculture.

Stephen Greenblatt, the precursor of New Historicism advocated for the plural counterculture rejecting the unitary culture located in the text by New

Criticism and unitary political vision emphasized by earlier historicism. As Habib writes:

Greenblatt differentiated what he called the "New Historicism" from both the New Criticism, which views the text a self contained structure, and the earlier historicism which was monological and attempted to discover a unitary political vision. Both of these earlier modes of analysis, according to Greenblatt, engaged in a project of uniting disparate and contradictory elements into an organic whole, whether in the text itself or in its historical background. (763)

Greenblatt, thus, rejected the totalizing tendency embedded in New Criticism and separated New Historicism from the any other fields having unitary tendencies.

Earlier historicism which was unitary trying out to find single political vision was also discarded and sought for the plurality and the multiplicity of contraditoriness. Habib further elaborates the subversive tendency of New Historicism that subverts the 'monological totalization' in the name of unified 'culture'. He writes:

[. . .] New Historicism [. . .] is less concerned with treating literary works as models of organic unity than as "fields of force, places of dissension and shifting interests, occasions for the jostling of orthodox and subversive impulses." New Historicism also challenges the hierarchial distinction between "literary foreground" and "political background", [. . .] acknowledges that when we speak of "culture", we are speaking of "complex network of institutions, practices and beliefs." (763-64)

Thus, the concept of New Historical framework at the very outset rejects the earlier appraocehs that treat literary texts as model of organic unity or organic whole and

valorizes the multiple opposing forces, and variedly shifting interests and plurality of subversive impulses. Culture is, thus, is not the mere collection of the best values of beliefs rather it is the complex network of institutions, practices and beliefs which are heterogeneous, diverse, contrastive and plural. Greenblatt elaborated his statements about New Historicism and its subversive tendency of monological construction of culture in his influential essay, "Towards a Poetics of Culture" (1987) in which he begins by noting that he will not attempt to define the New Historicism but rather to "situate it as practice" (764). Greenblatt asserts "that his own critical practice has been informed by Foucault, as well as anthropological and social theory" (764).

Thus, with Foucault and his discourse analysis New Historicism owes much and analyses the power operations, in genealogical way, in the entire monological constructions of discourses let alone the conception of culture. The conception of counter-culture is radically gets its momentum with the idea of discourse conceived by Foucault. Since this research focuses upon the genealogy of the monologic construction of culture it is better to analyze the Foucauldian notion of discourse.

Discourse

Discourse is the concept widely used in cultural and literary areas since its thrust upon the academia and literary criticism in the latter half of twentieth century by French philosopher Michael Foucault and his rigorous studies centered upon the social institutions like prisons, asylums and clinics. To define the concept itself is very hard since it encompasses the vast range of social bodies and institutions. According to Glenn Ward, the author of the book *Postmodernism*:

Discourse can be seen as a controlled system for the production of knowledge. Though regulated they are not completely closed systems and have to allow for change and limited dissent for example literary critics will disagree over the quality of a particular poem or the meaning of a particular play but this will not threaten the discourse of literary criticism itself. Indeed such internal disagreements are crucial in keeping the discourse up and running nevertheless discourses put a limit on what is sayable at any time: they define what counts as 'legitimate' or 'illegitimate' statements.

(143)

Discourse is, thus, seen as the controlled system of production of knowledge and they go on changing and with modification whenever there is some lack the authority finds. Power politics is embedded in any discourse and to exercise the power the knowledge is necessary and thus, it goes on changing accordance with its legitimization of the authority that produces them. Discourse always serves particular group or power structures producing particular knowledge thereby constructing the truth. Whenever a change comes inside the power structures, discourse changes and becomes modified so that it serves their interest. Thus, discourse is always controlled by the power centers and it helps them define any statement 'legitimate or illegitimate' on the basis of the power centers are benefited or not. Lois Tyson defines discourse in his book *Critical Theory Today* as such:

A discourse is a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place, and it expresses a particular way of understanding human experience. For example, you may be familiar with the discourse of modern science, [. . .]

liberal humanism, [. . .] white supremacy, [. . .] ecological awareness, the discourse of Christian fundamentalism, and the life. [. . .] Although the word discourse has roughly the same meaning as the word ideology [. . .] the word discourse draws attention to the role of language as the vehicle of ideology. (281)

Lois Tyson also agrees with Ward that discourse runs in society in systematic way and expresses the human experience in particular way or the production of human knowledge with particular interest of the power structures. It is similar to the Marxist notion of ideology but the difference between these terms is that discourse sees language as the vehicle of ideology. In discourse, the knowledge and truth are controlled with the representation in language. In the book *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, Thomas Mautner traces the development of Foucault's thought in three phases (154). The concept of discourse comes up with Foucault in his first phase, in his works of 1960s. Mautner writes:

In his work of 1960s, [. . .], Foucault reflects on the emergence of our present forms of knowledge. He finds the conditions of knowledge in anonymous, historically emergent 'epistemes', i.e. framework and practices of discourse. [. . .] Foucault also locates the emergence of the modern notion of the subject. The human sciences construct particular conceptions of human nature, which are then used as a basis for theories about how individuals and society should operate. (154)

In his first phase, Foucault views discourse as historically emergent epistemes. Situatedness of discourse with history and long-run practices continued and took shape as the modern form of social sciences. Modern social sciences constructed

human subjectivity with the definite concept of subject and, thus, control over the individual subject and society was ensured. In the second phase of the Foucault's thought, Mautner examines the shift in the Foucault's earlier focus on discursive practices. Mautner writes:

In the 1970s, [. . .] Discourse is located in a larger context of non-discursive practices, particularly, practices of power. [. . .] since the eighteenth century, the modern system of disciplinary power has emerged along with the human sciences. Discipline is a set of techniques for governing human beings which both enhance their capacities and ensure their controllability. [. . .] With this account of power as interwoven with forms of knowledge, and as productive of subjects, Foucault departs significantly from the more traditional liberal and Marxist understandings of power. (154-55)

In his second phase in 1970s, Foucault moved away from his earlier focus on discursive practices that were primarily considered as historically developed and proposed discourse in a layer context of non-discursive practices, within the framework of power operation. Disciplinary power, the power of human sciences enhanced and new controllability escalated. Power became interwoven with the form of knowledge and as productive force behind the new subjectivity. Mautner further writes:

In the last phase of his work in the 1980s, Foucault supplements his reflections on knowledge and power by developing further his analysis of subjectivity, particularly in terms of what he calls 'practices of the self' [. . .]. For Foucault, what we are in fact being encouraged to do here is to attach ourselves to a self that has been

made available through psychological and medical discourses, and thereby to participate in our subjection to the disciplinary order.

(155)

So, we can see the Foucauldian notion of discourse is interwoven with disciplinary power, knowledge, subjectivity and body politics. Peter Barry in *An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* relating Foucault with his study of prison describes Foucault:

Whose pervasive image of the state is that of 'panoptic' (meaning 'all seeing') surveillance. The panopticon was a design for a circular prison [. . .] which could all be surveyed by a single warder positioned at the center of the circle. The panoptic state, however, maintains its surveillance not by physical force and intimidation, but by the power of its 'discursive practices' [. . .] which circulates its ideology throughout the body politic. (175-6)

In his study of prison, Foucault shows the considerable degree of surveillance and control exerted upon the prisoner's body. Single Warder is representative of power structure who controls infinite number of the prisoners with surveillant gaze. He uses not only the physical force and intimidation, but also the power of discourse. Thus, the ideology of the power structures is circulated throughout the body politics. Body is the workshop in which the controllability is at work. For Foucault, 'discourses' are 'everywhere'. They are the very stuff of society and they mediate all aspects of life. But discourse is not just an abstract public sphere of words and images; it exists in concrete social situations and has very real effect'. Foucault reduces the author of the textual discourse to merely as an 'author function', to his 'ideological' status and discourses they generate are essentially

ideological irrespective of the questions: who really speaks or with what authenticity and authority? He writes in "What is an Author?" as such:

All discourses, whatever their status, form, values, and whatever the treatment to which they will be subjected, [. . .]. We would no longer hear the questions that have been rehashed for so long: who really spoke? [. . .] With what authenticity or originality? [. . .] Instead there would be other questions, like these: what are the modes of existence of this discourse? Where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself? What the places in it where there is room for possible subjects? Who can assume these various subject functions? (120)

Hence, texts are placed under discursive situations in which subjectivity is constructed irrespective of the author who writes it and are subjected to carry ideological functions.

Roland Turner in his book *Thinkers of the Twentieth Century* describes Foucault's position as having the view that "for any culture, it is never enough simply to speak the 'truth' if one wants to be heard, one must be 'within the truth' and embody its regime" (242). Every system of knowledge, we may say, establishes rules for exclusions and discriminations and it always implies taking sides. For Foucault, as for Nietzsche, any attempt to produce and control discourse is 'will to power'. Every instance of discourse embodies the power struggle, as Foucault himself argues that "discourse is a violence we do to things" (Seldon 60). Truth itself becomes not an unchanging universal essence but a perpetual object of appropriation and domination, constructed by its 'regime' of discourses. According to the book *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*:

Discourse is important, therefore, because it join power and knowledge together. Those who have power have control of what is known and the way it is known, and those who have such knowledge have power over those who do not. This link between knowledge and power is particularly important in the relationships between colonizers and colonized, and has been extensively elaborated by Edward Said in his discussion of Orientalism, in which he points out that this discourse, this way of knowing the 'Orient', is a way of maintaining power over it. (72)

Said also sees the construction of hierarchy because of the colonial discursive practices and defining them. With the circulation of colonial discourse by the means of literature and even using novels of 19th century actively in the formation of Empire ensured the empirical control of the colonizer over its colonies and the colonized. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* further states:

Said's insistence on the central role of literature in promoting colonialist discourse is elaborated in his later work (Said 1993), where he argues that the nineteenth – century novel comes into being as part of the formation of Empire, and acts reflexively with the forces of imperial control to establish imperialism as the dominant ideology in the period. This emphasis has made Said's work of especial interest to those concerned with post – colonial literatures and literary theory. (72)

Believing in the notion of discourse wedded with power, Said linked the Foucauldian theory of discourse with real social and political struggles. He extended the theory of discursive formations to studying the dichotomies of cultural forms

and political strategies of the expansion of empire. Said contends that orientalism depends on culturally constructed distinction between the occident and the orient and it is inescapably political. In 'Crisis in Orientalism', he maintains that "the Orient-European relationship was determined by an unstoppable European relationship was determined by an unstoppable European expansion in search of markets, resources and colonies" and that "orientalism had accomplished its self-metamorphosis from a scholarly discourse to an imperial institution" (297).

Cultural discourse, identifying itself with the state, differentiates and excludes everything outside the culture; and such cultural discourse has the power to silence, to dominate anything that does not resemble the definition given by that dominant culture. Culture, for Said, is not only the "positive doctrine of the best that is thought and known" but also "a differentially negative doctrine of all that is not best" (298). This double faceted view of culture makes one aspect of culture more powerful than other.

In the light of this line of thought, Said explored the discursive function of cultural discourse. Said, with Foucault, demonstrates how "certain attributes, certain others have been kept silent, outside, or [. . .] Domesticated for use inside the culture." ("The World" 12). Culture, thus, becomes a powerful means of domination and appropriation. Said writes on how culture putting itself in superior position, maintains hegemony over other culture:

The dialectic of self-fortification and self – con – formation by which culture achieves its hegemony over society and the state is based on a constantly practiced differentiation of itself from what it believes to be not itself. And this differentiation is frequently performed by setting the valorized culture over the other. (12)

Thus, we can conclude with the conclusion that discourse analyses are important to examine the power politics, knowledge, truth, body politics, ideologies of exclusions of other, constructions of subjectivity with the distorted representations of other and interpellation of the discourse of dominant ideology to silent the ideologies of the minorities. No area is free of discourses.

Foucault remarks that the constitution of discourse has internal as well external mechanisms which keep certain discourses in existence. One of the mechanisms is commentary. Those discourses which are commented upon by others are the discourses which we consider to have worth and validity.

We may suspect that there is in all societies, with great consistency, a kind of gradation among discourses: those which are said in the ordinary course of days and exchanges, and which vanish as soon as they have been pronounced; and those which give rise to a certain number of new speech acts which take them up, transform them or speak of them, in short, those discourses which, "over and above their formulation, are said indefinitely, remain said, and are to be said again" (57).

Commentary attributes richness, density and permanence to the text at the very moment when it is creating those values by the act of commentary. The Bible could be considered a text of this nature, upon which commentaries have been written and will continue to be written. In this sense, those commentaries keep the Bible in existence, ensure that it keeps in circulation as legitimate knowledge.

Because of this tendency to work on canonical texts, those texts which have been excluded from the canon tend not to be seen as worthy of analysis. Non-canonical texts are often not in print and are therefore difficult for the student or researcher to access. Thus, commentary serves not only to ensure that certain texts will always be in print, will always be taught in educational establishments and

will always be worked upon by researchers, but also makes it very difficult to legitimize the analysis of those texts about which little has been written.

Another internal regulator of discourse is the notion of the academic discipline. Because of the academic discipline, philosophers, psychologists, linguists and semioticians who are all engaged in the study of the same subject – language – may be largely unaware of each other's work. It demarcates certain types of knowledge as belonging to particular domains and also leads to the construction of distinct methodologies for analysis.

The next regulator of discourse is ritualization. Discourse is bound about by rituals which limit the number of people who can utter certain types of utterances for example, in Nepal, only a priest or lawyer can legally marry a couple. If someone who is not sanctioned uttered the same words, the statement would not have an effect. Thus, an actor who marries someone who marries someone on stage is not legally married to them. Foucault sees education system no other than a ritualization of speech, a qualification and fixing of the roles for speaking subjects, the constitution of a doctrinal group, however diffuse, a distribution and an appropriation of discourse rather than being seen as an enlightening institution where free inquiry after the truth is encouraged.

To conclude, discourse can be seen as the regulated corpus of knowledge that can't operate without imparting or concealing the inherent ideology and even the educational system, the writer etc are just the means to continue and appropriate the subject positions of the subjects constructing the illusory truths.

III. Exploration of Counterculture in *The Color Purple*

Scathing Criticism of Patriarchal Discourse

The most apparent issue Alice Walker handles in her novel *The Color Purple* is patriarchy. Walker radically violates the norms of patriarchal values and the false assumption males as high as God for the females of the society. The brutal, barbaric nature of patriarchy gets the tough and bold shock from the very beginning of the novel. The female body has been reduced to the commodity that gets raped without getting the orgasmic joy in the very beginning and the creator of such violence is male. For males, all the females are same. The character Pa is the representative male of the brutal patriarchy. Pa wants the body of the protagonist Celie at the very outset of the novel that compensates the body of her mother to satiate his sexual needs, as the mother of Celie is sick. In the form of the secret letter to God, Celie expresses the brutal nature of Pa as:

He never had a kine word to say to me. Just say you gonna do what your mammy wouldn't. first he put his thing up gainst my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then 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. (3)

Male treats female in society without emotion and care about their pain and sufferings. Whatever male forces upon them, they are compelled to bear and their life is sacrificed for the pleasure of male. They are reified, made tragic, emotionless commodity. The brutal nature males get bitter attack with candid exposition in the very beginning. Pa, the step-father of protagonist Celie abuses the fourteen years old celie and she is doubtful of her existence due to her exposition to the violence, the Pa forces upon her. This debt is highlighted by the under

erasure of her existence "I am" as her lack of freedom of expression has been suggested by the epistolary mode of expression in which she expresses her sufferings by the means of letters to the dubious authority "Dear God" whose existence is questionable.

The violence Pa imposes upon Celie is very dreadful. Even after the frequent rape, she bears acute pain of the pregnancy and denied of her motherhood after bearing the child. The child is taken by Pa presumably to kill in the woods and the mother before her death asks Celie about the father of the child. Celie's dread and lack of expression makes it unbearable to disclose the says dying mother that the baby is God's. This deconstructs the Biblical discourse of 'Virgin Mother', Mary in the one hand, and the Godlike supreme position of males in the society on the other. The pathetic picture of the protagonist, the lack of identity of females in the society who need to act submissive to the God-like male and its discourse, its myth, its Bible has been radically exposed and violated in the novel.

After the bitter abuse, the behaviour of Pa to celie continues and he remains the same brute who hates her presence, frequently rapes her, tries to appropriate her manner as per the patriarchal discourse. The deprivation of motherhood continues as Pa takes another baby "a boy this time" (5). Celie says of him in the letter to God, the questionable authority, of Pa, "He act like he can't stand me no more. Say I'm evil an always upto no good" (5). The continual charge upon Celie is unbearable, pathetic and her terminated motherhood is unbearable, pathetic and her terminated motherhood and post-pregnancy sufferings can be seen as she says 'I got breasts full of milk myself'. The appropriation of the manner of Celie as accordance with the patriarchal discourse comes a celie is directed by Pa, "[. . .]

Why don't you look decent? Put on something" eventhough Celie is utterly denied of the anything she can put on (5).

After such the dreadful abuse Pa brings another girl about the age of Celie herself and marries her. Male of the society is free to do whatever he likes with the expense of the freedom of female is marked with this. On the contrary, female is ever denied to look at men. This is highlighted in another letter with the episode of Pa beating Celie with the charge or blame that she winked at a boy in church. She writes:

He beat me today cause he say I winked at a boy in church. I may have something in my eye but I didn't wink. I don't even look at mens. That's the truth. I look at women, tho, cause I'm not scared of them. Maybe cause my mama cuss me you think I kept mad at her. But I ain't. I ain't I felt sorry for mama. Trying to believe his story kill her. (7)

Males always try to correct the behaviours of the females and they always have the excuses or the readymade reasons so that they always keep them superior. Pa beats up the protagonist just for the trifle reason. Celie gets the mistreatment in the hand of Pa for the so trifle cause of winking a boy in church eventhough she was just trying to remove the dust or something that had fallen to her eye. She pleads of her innocence but no avail. It is the example of the appropriating nature of males that lets us to peep through the barbaric nature males. Ma had also received the so cold treatment and apathy and died submissive to the stories or discourses of the male and she died devoid of love.

The patriarchal discourse has been presented with all its evils by Alice Walker in her novel. Time and again she is critical of the masculine discourses

perpetuate in the society. The chain that confines females to the domesticity and within the four walls of the house is started to be refuted with the attraction of female characters of the novel for their independent lives. Male lose their charm and the attraction to female and attraction between and among to female increases. Leaving the barbaric males behind, the characters get attracted with the genuine and mild feminine virtues. Celie develops the strong attraction to another character Shug Avery rejecting the patriarchal discourse from the beginning and she, in the course of novel, turns out to be a lesbian or homosexual lover to shug Avery. It is the major shift in the protagonist in which she gets real love and solace. Males never care about the fulfillment of the sexual needs of the female.

Female is continually regarded as enigmatic and the female body is just to fulfil the sexual needs of the male, without any orgasmic pleasure. Females are made 'other', 'mysterious' and the males are 'self'. Refutation of the heterosex an opting for the homosex in which the female characters establish the bond to help each other to gain the experience coming out of the ignorance forced by patriarchal values is presented by means of Celie's attraction to shug from the very beginning. The sense of counter-culture has been given to the female characters by Walker rejecting the heterosexual culture in which no identity of the female can be seen without agency. Homosexuality counters the so-called necessity of heterosex. Homosexuality or the unifying bond between the female characters keeps momentum upon the female revelation of self-identity and to lead them to experience from ignorance imposed upon them by the masculine culture.

Celie dreams of Shug Avery, a beautiful and self-dependent female singer as soon as she hears about her. Her curiosity has been shown with her inquiry of Shug Avery to her new mammy, the girl recently married by Pa. she asks her

picture and dreams of Shug that has been presented as "I ast her to give me the picture. An now when I dream, I dream of Shug Avery" (8). Thus, the attraction of female to female is the result of the bitter frustration and lack of identity of the protagonist in the confinement of the household of Pa and the continual abuse imposed upon her. It has the sense of counterculture that negates the essentialist patriarchal, masculine culture.

The bitter life of Celie continues as she is blamed of not being smart and she was taken out of school without caring about her love of knowledge. Only loving person in her family is her sister Nettie who tries to convince Pa not to take her out of school as she is as smart as herself but to no avail. Pa is seen considering the marriage of Celie. Nettie is also left tormented as Celie has been forced to marry the man who loves Nettie. But the two sisters care about each other much and there is the bond of love in them. Celie had been given to the man named Mr – who has four children with him. Celie has been given the charge of those children as their new the four children of Mr – and to satiate the sexual need of Mr – sacrificing all her life to the service of male.

Nettie has been portrayed as defiant character who fights against injustice inflicted upon her by masculine culture. She is more beautiful, smarter and rebellious than Celie as she wants Celie fight against Pa at first and fight against Mr – and his bullish son Harpo. The use of epistolary form to express her plights shows the lack of identity and the meek character of the protagonist. The protagonist has no one to express her plights but the God and one sees the patriarchal association of the God from the very beginning as Pa has been sarcastically assumed as God who can do anything upon her, her baby, her education and her future. Nettie is only one who brings solace upon Celie's life,

supporting her and continually encouraging her to be rebellious against the patriarchal discourse from the beginning. The bitter hatred of Celie to the patriarchal values are expressed throughout the novel. When Celie hears about Shug Avery she instantly gets attracted to her and with her photo in her hand she dreams of her.

Even the thought of males seems unbearable to Celie. Pa gives Celie's hand away to the aged widower named Mr – and she has no option but to abide by the law of Pa. She was taken out of the school and had become shattered creature emotionally with the sense of inferiority and helplessness. Male imposed rules were the only option for her to follow as she was lacking in her self respect and identity. Her plight doesn't end with the marriage but it increase. She has to take care of the four children of Mr – like housemaid and her sexual life is not better either she recounts her sad wedding day in which she was hit with rock by the eldest son of Mr – on her head with bloody cut. Mr – reacts only a little to his son verbally and the boy receives no punishment. The tired bride working with the children of Mr – whole day narrates more pathetic honeymoon night in which she gets no sexual joy but just thinks of the safety of Nettie in Pa's home back. For her, there is no orgasmic joy and her hatred to the male abusing her body has been expressed when she had diverted her thought away from the sexual activity to the females – Nettie and Shug Avery. All the males are the same tormentors for her. When Mr – is on top of her making the sexual relation with her she thinks of Shug Avery and wonders how she likes this kind of sexual act. She narrates, "I lay there thinking about Nettie while he on top of me, wonder if she safe. And then I think about Shug Avery. I know what he doing to me he done to Shug Avery and maybe she like it" (14).

The epistolary form gives voice solely to the females of the black society. Thus, this technique refutes the domination of male voice and characters are seen through the windows of letters solely through the perspective of Celie and Nettie, her sister. Celie's journey from the ignorant anonymity to the experienced pant-maker has been gradually established. By the means of those letters, the protagonist refutes the males of the society and encapsulates the sense of counter-culture against the discourses of patriarchal domination. The god has been identified as male with the help of another characters, Shug Avery. Celie starts to stir upon her pathetic condition and starts to unravel the God as masculinistic discourse. She is able to unravel it with the help of the love she gets from Shug Avery. She starts to grow strong to see through her condition in patriarchal black society and seeks to establish God with all feminine virtues like love, compassion, comfort and support as she says to Shug Avery, "I don't write to God no more, I write to you" (173). Shug Avery's love and compassion helps her to find her sexuality and she is protected from the years long beating and bodily torture of Mr –.

The discourse of heterosexuality has been countered with the counter-discourse of homosexuality. Celie is not loved by males and even her step-son Harpo follows the example of his father beating her and starts beating his wife Sophia. Sophia has been a strong-willed character unlike Celie and other characters as she hits her husband Harpo back. She is the representative female character who rejects the male domination and counters it physically. She refuses to abide by the values of males and refuses to work as the maid of the white mayor and as she is forced, she slaps him and ends up in the jail but the jail is far better to her than the jail of patriarchal values.

The development of the protagonist Celie to the experience of the identity and fighting against the established social discourses is supported with the continual motivation from other female characters like Nettie, Sophia, Kate and Shug Avery. The female characters are endowed with the strong sense of counter-culture to resist the established patriarchal codes. When Celie is married to Mr –, Nettie comes to study with Celie to avoid the mistreatment of their stepfather Pa. Nettie motivates Celie to fight against the domination that has been forced upon her by Mr – and his children. Celie recounts:

Don't let them run over you, Nettie say. You got to let them know who got the upper hand.

They go it, I say.

But she keep on. You got to fight. You got to fight.

But don't know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive. (18)

The very meek, innocent and submissive character of Celie comes out of these lines who wants to survive even in all the tortures and bears the pain and load forced upon her by Mr – and his four children just to live. She can't fight but Nettie encourages her to counter the values forced to the female by society and to fight them. Another character Kate, who is the sister to Mr –, visits Mr – and Celie's home and sees the pathetic condition of Celie with all the loads of children and household affairs of Mr –. Kate sees the patriarchal tendency in the Harpo, the eldest son of Mr –. Harpo, as the heir to the patriarchal father Mr –, learns the same code of female domination from his father the same code of female domination from his father and misbehaves Celie, his stepmother, thinking her as the rightful workers of the house as she is woman. Celie recounts Kate's critical tendency to Harpo and his cold behaviour to Celie as:

Harpo, she say. Harpo the oldest boy. Harpo, don't let Celie be the one bring in all the water. You a big boy now. Time for you to help out some.

Women work, he say.

What? She say.

Women work. I'm a man. (22)

Such degraded position of woman in household is the major patriarchal stance that can be seen in the males of the society. Women as worker is thus, the basic to patriarchal discourse. Kate suggests Celie to fight such discourse as; "You got to fight them, Celie, She say. I can't do it for you. You got to fight them for yourself" (22). Kate on the one hand, shows the transference of patriarchal discourse from father to son and thus, it continues to degrade the females and on the other hand, she shows the only solution to stop the flow of patriarchal discourse as convention from the higher to lower generation is to fight it, to refute the discourse with counter discourse; the resistance is a must to come out of such representation of the women. Women themselves need to be strong to cope with such situation fighting with it. To generate resistance and to form the counter-discourse, Celie needs to fight against the demosticity of Mr –'s household. Role given to her is not only the role of particular woman of the particular society but the whole social stereiotypication of the women of any society. The need to form the resistant stance and counterculture is, thus, voiced by the writer in her novel.

The strong sense of counterculture dawns in Celie befriending Shug Avery. Shug Avery saves Celie from the physical abuse of Mr –. Mr – had falled in the love to her. Before marrying Celie Mr – always used to go to hear the songs of Avery on local operas and they had physical union too. Shug is successful opera

singer who never went to church and church discarded her. Eventually, she falls sick and Mr – has good chance to bring the independent woman home. Celie cares Shug and in return she becomes the lover of Celie. It is her love that helps Celie in difficult times in the household of Mr -. Shug helps Celie to find her sexuality and eventually they become homosexual lover. Shug is independent character who is not abided by the patriarchal norms. She helps Celie to find the letters of Nettie written to Celie. Mr – hides the letter of Nettie. When she left the home of Mr –, out of the security concern, Nettie had promised to write her sister Celie but she never gets them as Mr – interpreted the letters and thus, Celie was deprived of the love of her beloved sister Nettie. Whenever Celie realizes such heinous offence of her husband, she starts to grow resistant and eventually finds her identity. She turns blasphemous and critical of the god itself whom she was writing so far to express her plights. She realizes God as patriarchal construct who had nothing to do the plights of female on the society and so, she wishes to replace the God by the name of Shug, who at least loves her and helps in her distress. Thus, the sense of identity and counterculture starts to develop in Celie.

Another factor which helps Celie to find the strong fighting spirit and countercultural stance is the example of the resistance she sees in Sophia. Sophia marries Celie's stepson Harpo, and starts to live separate from Mr – and Celie. Sophia is strong-willed character who doesn't like to be abided by the norms of Harpo and she defies her husband with the fight. She knocks her husband down whenever Harpo tries her to force his decision and Harpo and the patriarchal values he brings with him from Mr –, his father is crushed own. She eventually leaves Harpo with his five children. The sense of counterculture and feminine self-respect was always with her and the fighting spirit came to her from her household where

she and her five other sisters used to be united and fought with their brothers and their patriarchal codes. It is because of such strong fighting spirit Sophia slaps and knocks down the mayor who wanted to make her maid. In her such act, we see the refusal to both the patriarchal discourse and the racist discourse. She, on the one hand refuses to be the maid of the mayor's wife as per the wish of a male and on the other hand she refuses the racist discourse that the black women are just for the service of white's household. It is because of the strong sense of counterculture she ends up in jail for slapping the white mayor when she leave Harpo. Celie generates the sense of self-respect accordance with the resistance she develops from the company with Sophia. First, Celie gives suggestions to Harpo to beat Sophia if she doesn't comply with him but Celie laments when she realizes that she is letting a male to dominate female and she laments.

Walker herself is the civil rights activist and due to her stance for the rights of women, she underscores the need of female movement to counter the social injustice forced upon them. She highlights the need of female unity and thus, in her novel the female unity plays crucial role to counter the established social patriarchal codes. It is because of the unifying role of Shug Avery, Celie is taken to Memphis and there Celie grows independent entrepreneur of pant-making business out of the clutch of Mr – and Mary Agnes, the second wife to Harpo after Sophia leaves him and ends up in prison was also flourish her impendent career of singer.

Nettie also has been represented as the character who voices for the female equality from the beginning. When Celie was taken out of school by Pa, she protests the decision that deprives her sister of education. When Celie is married she refuses the law made by Pa and she is not afraid to leave the home she was raised refusing the patriarchal tranny of Pa. Nettie counters the domination

imposed on her by leaving the house of Pa and due to her love to her sister Celie, she goes to live with her to the house of Mr–, Even there, she finds the similar situation and Mr – is no different than Pa. She refuses to act as per Mr –'s wish and encourages Celie to fight against the patriarchal domination. Seeking to get out of the clutch of male she goes to the refuge of the missionary couple and thus, refuses the patriarchal domination.

This novel, thus, underscores the need of female unity and envisions the world of independent women who could challenge the patriarchal domination anytime. The counterculture comes from the Women Right Movement of 1960s America. The novel deconstructs the roles of the husbands of the society, deconstructs the masculine notion of god as represented in the Bible and undermines the heterosexuality by which the males think women their possession. For the female character like Sophia, the prison is far better than the society with patriarchal upperhand. The father teaches his son to beat the wife if she doesn't accept the rules of the husband as Mr – does to Harpo and thinks them as 'Children'. Such binarism has been refuted by Walker showing the alternative female possibilities and identity. The novel has, thus, been the bitter criticism to the patriarchal discourses with the countercultural vein.

Male characters are masculinistic in their tendency towards females and it is very ridiculous and ironic that character like Harpo turns glutton to outmatch his strong wife Sophia. Males never want the upperhand of their wives and want to outmatch them in every aspect and be able to control them physically. When Harpo can't face his big and strong wife Sophia, he wants to be stronger and bigger than her. Such attitude of male for whom gaining control over their wives have been criticized in the novel and it is made clear that male can do everything to control

their wives and it is due to this reason Harpo becomes glutton and tries to be fatter, bigger and stronger eating too much. But he is vanquished as Sophia knows his idea of getting bigger and stronger to control her and is ready to leave him. Sophia is strong, independent and takes strong decision whenever needed. Celie recounts Sophia thinking of leaving Harpo and her self-esteem as a good housewife not as the dog as, "I'm getting tired of Harpo, she say. All he think about since us married is how to make me mind. He don't want a wife, he want a dog" (62).

Thus, the characters like Sophia show strong aversion to the patriarchal discourses and strongly refute and criticize them. Due to such strong, independent nature of Sophia and the continual love and feminine self-esteem of Shug Avery, Celie also recognizes her potential and self-esteem to refute patriarchal domination of Mr –. She finds her independent identity and revolts against the patriarchal acolytes Mr – and Harpo and their discourses. Shug declares to take Celie with her to Memphis. Mr – is awestruck to hear that Celie recounts the change in Mr – and his shattering belief that he could control her forever as:

[. . .] he look over at me. I thought you was finally happy, he say.

What wrong now?

You a lowdown dog is what's wrong, I say. It's time to leave you and enter into creation. And you dead body just to welcome mat I need. (180)

As seen in Celie from the beginning, there lack self-esteem and the sense that goes against the male domination but finally she realizes her condition and everlasting domination of male like Pa, Mr – and Harpo and finds her own voice to refute the patriarchal discourse. This novel in this sense, unravels the plight of female of the society and underscores the need of criticism and refutation of the patriarchal

discourse. The novel shows, thus, the counter-discourse through which the female characters could counter the patriarchal discourse and work to find the society with the equality and harmony.

Counter-Discourse of Biblical Representation of God

In Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, the counterdiscourse on the Biblical representation of patriarchal, white God has been logically established. Celie, the meek and submissive protagonist, journeys from the innocence and submission to the male and white God of Bible to experience and independence and, thus, voices blasphemy and need of the refutation of the God to whom she writes letter to express her pathetic condition in the society. She wants to replace the god with feminine, mild and caring God as she sees the love she gets from other female character Shug Avery for surpassing the futile hope of getting the love and care of the male God. She says to Shug Avery when she starts to realize her futility of dependency on such God who does nothing to be compassionate and hear her plights "I don't write to God no more, I write to you" (173). Celie eventually finds her strong voice after the years-long abuse she gets from the patriarchal society and her prayers to the God lead her nowhere. She turns strong, independent and blasphemous when she says of God:

[. . .] he give me a lynched daddy, a crazy mama, a lowdown log of step pa and a sister I probably won't ever see again. Anyhow, I say, the God I been praying and writing to is a man. And act just like all the other mens I know. Trifling, forgetful and lowdown. (173)

Celie is blasphemous to the God and charges the God she is praying and writing so far has just giving her the everlasting pathetic status and identity. She blames the God as responsible to giving her birth out of the killed father and crazy mother

who marries with the barbaric sadist stepfather Pa and because of the barbarism of step Pa Nettie, her loving sister was compelled to leave the family and go to Africa as a missionary. God is responsible to putting her in such relations and her life has not been better and her identity has been troubled. It is because of such consciousness, she refutes the God and wants to replace it with female God, the God that is always soothing and loving in her distress. Due to her such revolting stance, she requests Shug to write her in place of God. Shug had been the only solace to her life who helps her finding the letters of Nettie written for her that were hidden by her husband Mr –. It is apparent in this sense that Walker's novel *The Color Purple* creates the countercultural discourse for the feminine loving and soothing God.

Celie accepts the blasphemy of the male God with the sense of revenge to whatever she had to endure in her whole life and she enjoys blasphemy without budging an inch in her stance even though Shug tries to convince her. As she recounts in, "she talk and she talk, trying to budge me way from blasphemy. But I blaspheme much as I want to" (173). Celie's joyous blasphemy is very remarkable as she gets her identity and self-esteem only in the expense of the male God. In contrast to the blasphemy of Celie, Shug is not so critical of the God but she counters the church and its proceedings. For her the people gather in "Church to share God, not to find God (174)". Shug sees absence of God in church but God is everywhere and with everybody for her. She divulges the perception of the biblical God as white, and a man, she lost the interest upon him. She has the more universal notion of God and strong faith upon the concept of God but she also refuses the male and white God. Celie recounts:

Ain't no way to read the Bible and not think God white, she say.
 Then she sigh. When I found out I thought God was white, and a
 man I lost interest. You mad cause he don't seem to listen to your
 prayers. (175)

Shug Avery also agrees to Celie that it is because of the biblical notion of God being private, patriarchal and racial, he doesn't hear the voice of a female and more than that he doesn't hear the voice of the colore people. The biblical representation of God is merely a discourse that is made to exercise the domination of male to female and white to black. Shug Avery is, thus, becomes very critical of the patriarchal representation of God and it is because the patriarchal representation of God and male voice runs in all the media, female are made to think the God as male and since the voice of male everywhere they are compelled think male as the God. So, male has been risen to the status of God because of the representation of their voice and is turn they are able to manipulate the mind of the female of the society and exercise the power over the female. God has been the patriarchal form of discourse that helps to hush the voice of female in society and to make them submissive and complaint to the male.

Nettie also is very critical of the representation of Ethiopians in bible. Writing her experience as a missionary, who is traveling to Africa, she writes to Celie as:

All the Ethiopians in the bible were colored. It had never occurred to me, though when you read the bible it is perfectly plain if you pay attention only to the words. It is the pictures in the bible that fool you. The pictures that illustrate the words. All of the people are white and so you just think all the people from the bible were white

too. But really white people lived somewhere else during those times. (120)

Nettie is critical of biblical representation of the white people and sense that Ethiopia was colonized by the white people due to the knowledge they gain about Ethiopians. They are dominated with the help of white discourse in the bible. When she continues as, "That's why the Bible says that Jesus Christ had hair like lamb's wool. Lamb's wool is not straight, Celie. It is not even curly (120); we sense that the identity of Christ as represented in the bible is doubtful. There is great confusion whether Christ was black or white and his race is not confirmed. But it is because of the white discourse the white produced, they are able to gain control over the Ethiopians.

Thus, while examining the novel *The Color Purple*, the sense of counterculture heightens. The characters grow critical of the social injustice they see and bear and they refuse time and again to be abided by the patriarchal, white and racial discourses. Nettie also narrates the experience as the only black missionary and woman also, she highlights the uniqueness of the culture of the native Africans called Olinka, who worship the roofleaf as their God instead of following the order of the biblical white God. Resistance to Christianity and firm affirmation of their native culture shows the importance of the preservation of the identity. Olinka people never believe the missionaries who go to their village with bible on their hands and they follow their rituals whatever inhuman or barbaric the missionaries of the Europe think of them. Even being unique in their cultural identity, they are not free of patriarchal discourses and female domination in their community.

The Counter on Colonial and Racist Culture

Nettie, the black missionary who goes to Africa with the missionary couple Samuel and Corrine writes to Celie, her sister, back about the experiences of the new places she visits on her way. As her first glimpse to Africa the missionary family stops in the place called Monrovia, that lies in African country Senegal. Nettie sees the colonial tendency and gives the details about the government and pathetic situation of the plantation workers there in which unequal racist and colonial relation can be analyzed. When the missionary family gets chance to meet the president for tea of presidential palace, Nettie observes the president and his cabinet. She writes, "[. . .] the president, whose last name is Tubman, has some (white people) in his cabinet. He also has a lot of white-looking colored men in his cabinet (126)". Those white-looking colored men are the representative of the colonizer.

The colonizer has been presented exploiting the natives of Senegal under the outlook of colored men. Even the seemingly black president Tubman uses the term 'natives' to the poor blacks and charges them of being unhelpful to develop the country. There is the big gap between the ruling black and native blacks in their lifestyle. The 'natives' as termed by the president are ignorant people who don't care about their countries. They aren't allowed to fight for the parliament. They aren't allowed to fight for the parliament. Nettie writes, "I didn't see any of these 'natives' in the cabinet. And none of the cabinet members wives could pass for natives" (127). Thus, we see the colonizer have created the hierarchy and making the discourse of racism and social inequality, they exploit the natives. Such racist and colonial discourse and their evils have been disclosed by Walker. She has the sympathy upon the causes of the natives.

The hierarchy and big difference between the colonizers and the colonized have been underscored and ironized by Walker through the Nettie's letters. The next day, Nettie visits the large cocoa plantation. She relates the pathetic life of the plantation worker and their toil ironically with songs. She examines their hard lives and their tiredness. She writes:

As tired as they are, they sing ! Celie. Just like we do at home. Why do tired people sing? I asked Corrine. Too tired to do anything else, she said. Besides, they don't own the cocoa fields, Celie, even president Tubman doesn't own them. People in a place called Holland do. (127)

Here, Nettie shows the hand-picked government is responsible for the colonizers, supposedly Holland, not with the natives and there is irony that seemingly black acolytes are being used as rulers to rule the natives by the colonizers. Thus, the colonial and racist discourse have been analyzed and countered by Walker from humanitarian vein.

IV. Conclusion

While examining *The Color Purple* (1983) by activist African American writer with the perspective of counterculture, this researcher has found various countercultural stances in the various parts of the novel. In the various development of the plot of the novel various counter-discourses are formed. The first and second time frames that encompass the Celie's life from her fourteen years age to the adult woman presents us with the bitter patriarchal violence upon the female body and the lack of identity of the black women in the 1930s Georgia. Such pathetic condition of women creates the sense of a version to the patriarchal discourse, thus, helps readers to come up with the counter-discourse to the masculinistic, barbaric social practices. Celie's voicelessness in such suffocating social practice is highlighted when she addresses to letters to the God who is the only help to express her feelings. When the novel advances, she feels awkward when she realizes the God listens to her no more. The discourse of God is constructed by the male of the society and the God itself is masculinistic, male God. As the Biblical discourse says God is everywhere and all-powerful it is clear to her that it should be male. Female character Shug Avery shows the protagonist the possibility as it is the only male voice that is voiced in radio and other means of representations so that women could be misled. Actually, not the God but the male is everywhere and the only upperhand and inclusion of male has been the basic feature of the biblical discourse. The counter-discourse and sense of counterculture has been highlighted with the refusal to be abided by the Christian discourse.

The sense of counterculture is yet overtly articulated with the rejection of heterosexuality as the discourse is responsible to create the hierarchy between the

male and female of the society, thus, giving way to the patriarchal violence over the female body. Celie realizes that if there is everlasting cold relationship between the heterosexual couple devoid of love, then, the heterosexual only becomes the bodily torture and there will be no orgasmic joy and conjugal bliss. Only the love justifies the pleasant sexual life. It is with this realization, she refuses the heterosexual discourse that forced her only the everlasting rape and with the sense of counterculture, she comes up with the homosexual counter-discourse. She turns the homosexual lover to Shug whom she loves and discards the heterosexual discourse that creates nothing but the hatred in her.

Another sense of counterculture is manifested with the strong female character Sophia who rejects the white discourse that always treated the black women as the maids to the white household refusing to the prospect of working as the maid to the white Mayor's wife and goes to jail knocking the Mayor down instead of being abided by white discourse and working as the maid to him. Colonial discourse also has been criticized in the letters sent to Celie by her missionary sister Nettie from Africa. Instead of being abided by the colonial discourse, the native African tribe called Olinka resist the prospect of worshipping Christ and being colonized rather they follow their own culture of worshipping the plant called roofleaf.

Thus, seen from various angles, *The Color Purple* proves to be the corpus of the variety of counter-discourses. It, at the same time, underscores the need of female unity and constructs the counterculture against the patriarchal, biblical, heterosexual, racist and colonial discourses which work within the society as the corporate institution, in all encompassing way in each stratum of the society.

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