



Alice Walker's The Color Purple From Being Silent to Having A Voice: Struggling to Achieve Self-Empowerment



Asst. Lect. Abd Alrahmain Badr Ibrahim Al-Wazir¹

¹ Iraqi Ministry of Education\Open Educational College, Iraq.

abd.badr2203p@coart.uobaghdad.edu.iq

Abstract. The colonial period is the starting point for America's long history of racism and violence towards people of color, particularly African Americans. The relationship between Whites and Blacks in this racist American culture was predicated on two principles: White hegemony and Black subordination. This case is why Black people have long fought for freedom in every arena. Because of this, black authors have retooled their writings to advocate for black causes and preserve African-American culture. Novelist and feminist Alice Malsenior Walker are included in this group. Her writings explore the significance of women of color throughout history. She is out as bisexual and accepts individuals of various orientations, backgrounds, and identities. She has detailed the racial, social, and ethnic subjugation that African-American men and women have endured. The Color Purple has shed light on the struggles of those at the bottom of society. This paper delves into the significant feminist themes and examines how a black woman can rebel and establish a voice away from a patriarchal society. In her book, Walker outlines the discrimination and suffering experienced by black women and offers some potential answers. The Color Purple features strong female characters like Celie, Shug, Nettie, and Sofia, who face challenges but ultimately overcome them. At the novel's end, Celie's transformation is remarkable as she becomes an independent and liberated woman, free from the oppression and abuse she once endured. She has transformed from her previous appearance to a stunning swan. She has made incredible progress, transitioning from burdening to





expressing her physical and mental independence and reuniting with her friends and sister.

Keywords: Patriarchal Society, Women of Color, Discrimination, Suffering, Subjugation.

1. Introduction

Afro-American author Alice Malsenior Walker, who was born in Georgia in 1944, popularized the term "womanist" to describe a black feminist who values and prefers women's cultures, emotional adaptability, and strength and is "committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" (Alice Walker- biography, 2018). She portrays societies that exhibit racism, sexism, and violence. The female characters in Walker's works demonstrate resilience, perseverance, ingenuity, opposition, innovation, and clemency when faced with and surmounting oppression in their experiences. However, they are candid and transparent in portraying the frequently catastrophic circumstances of dual burdens of discrimination based on race and gender. The Color Purple is considered to be "the perfect expression of what makes Alice Walker, Alice Walker" (Bradly 30).

Alice Malsenior Walker is a black feminist writer. The Color Purple, her third book, was out in 1982 and won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for Fiction the following year. This work is written from the perspective of a black woman who has been mistreated and lacks formal education. Its sophisticated black English vernacular and complex female protagonists have been lauded. As the story of a woman's victory against racism, misogyny, and social determinism, The Color Purple is a joyful and triumphant anthem. Her works explore the significance of women of color across history and society. Through the lives of her female characters, she has revealed the brutality, cruelty, and sorrow she endured as a child. These experiences have left an indelible impression on her heart and intellect (Jubair 938).

One of the mainstays of a patriarchal society, Celie's narrative exemplifies the marginalization of women in today's culture. Celie is a black lady who lost her parents and her sister. She "ain't smart either" (TCP 15) and has been ostracized by her community because she is black, a woman, and physically unattractive. Thus, she has never been allowed to be herself and has always been portrayed as worthless, deserving of neither love nor concern. The pain





and anguish of rural black women in the United States throughout the first part of the twentieth century are personified in her. Walker's grandmother, Celie, was an enslaved person who was raped by her master when she was twelve. Therefore, he based Celie on her. However, things seem up for Celie. Walker employs several techniques to aid Celie in her pursuit of pleasure, including the novel's epistolary structure, the characters of Sofia, Shug, and Nettie, and the act of writing itself (Shrivastwa 1126).

The language of the letters in *The Color Purple* seems so much like spoken English that the reader is fooled into thinking she is hearing the narrator's voice rather than reading her writing. Alice Walker's unique approach to the epistolary novel enhances the effect commonly regarded as this literary form's primary attraction. Epistolary narratives are frequently perceived as providing unmediated access to a character's unfiltered thoughts, offering a window into their psyche that is unencumbered by the presence of a narrator, whether this narrator is a third-person entity or an older, retrospective first-person narrator (Jørgensen 7). The novel titled *The Color Purple* predominantly employs a unique rural black dialect that closely resembles the narrator's speech, resulting in a written work that reads like spoken language. The primary progression in the novel involves Celie's discovery of an independent voice beyond her epistolary correspondence. However, upon the narrative's conclusion, the letters persist as a testament to this advancement, and it is through these letters that Celie endures until she can assert herself. The prominent theme of the narrative is foregrounded by the oral flavour of the narrative voice, specifically, the act of Celie speaking (Bloom 2008).

Eventually, Celie's resistance to using standard English or speaking "properly" comes out in the form of the employment of her dialect, both spoken and written. Her voice is an integral part of who she is, so altering it would be the same as giving in to the linguistic hegemony of the white majority in interwar America. In *The Color Purple*, Celie is not just a narrator updating the English language but also a writer revising the genre to which her tale belongs; this is not uncommon in post-colonial literature but is taken to a new level. This paper argues that Alice Walker, as an African-American woman writer concerned with the disastrous repercussions of European colonialism that endure even in the present, set out to reform the epistolary novel in Celie's and Nettie's letters.

Alice Walker and "Womanism"

The issue of race has consistently occupied a prominent role in conventional African American literature. The African American literary



tradition diverges significantly from mainstream American literature due to historical events such as the distressing experiences of slavery upon their arrival at the hands of white oppressors. The subsequent social ambiguity they faced following the Civil War and their migration to urban centres where their way of life became increasingly divided. Despite the abolition of slavery in America a century ago, contemporary society in the 21st century continues to witness discrimination against black individuals by white individuals. They are deprived of equal rights and hold a subordinate position in American society (Shi 653).

New women's literature countered postmodernism in the 1970s. The *Benefactors* (1963) and *Death Kit* (1967) by Susan Sontag and *The Bell Jar* (1963) by Sylvia Plath were notable experimental works by women authors. After Betty Friedan's influential *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) and Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970), the Women's Liberation Movement gave women's writing a collective consciousness and a committed political, moral, and aesthetic purpose not shown since the 1890s. By the early 1970s, a series of stunning books by women favourably examined the female experience in a society of male dominance. They announced independence—and frequently sexual openness and frankness—largely unprecedented to mainstream American literature, redefining sexual depiction (Bradbury 275).

Contemporary American writers are actively engaged in the creation of innovative literary forms and languages that reflect the unique and evolving experiences of modern society while also contributing significantly to established genres. Female writers have progressively asserted their autonomy to investigate and innovate the literary norms, dialects, and prototypes of an American legacy traditionally dominated by male representations. One objective of this written work has been to avoid common structures and redundancies. The primary challenge the individuals faced was establishing and advancing a tradition and discourse that appeared to have only just commenced instead of being fully explored (Taher 251).

One of these women writers is Alice Walker. She bridges the gap between male authors' focus on racial discrimination and female writers' focus on racial and sexual discrimination. In this favour, The term "womanism" was introduced by Alice Walker in the initial pages of her work titled *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*. This term refers to a sociological philosophy that centres on the lived experiences of black women. According to womanist scholar Layli Maparyan (Phillips), it aims to "restore the balance between





people and the environment/nature and reconcil[e] human life with the spiritual dimension" (p xx). Walker says,

I don't choose Womanism because it is 'better' than feminism... I choose it because I prefer the sound, the feel, the fit of it... because I share the old ethnic-American habit of offering society a new word when the old word it is using fails to describe behavior and change that only a new word can help it more fully seen. (Walker 94)

Walker's Womanism and its connotations placed black women in history and culture, removing her from American society's negative and erroneous preconceptions. First, Walker describes the black woman as a thinking subject who is always seeking knowledge, "wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered good for one," thus questioning her epistemological exclusion from intellectual life and feminist scholarship. Second, she emphasizes black women's power and independence. Womanism offers black women an alternative to gender-separate feminism. Black women's survival is tied to their community's survival (Walker 1983). The notion has shaped various theories and analytical systems—gender, religious, black, and literary studies. Walker's studies on black women and spirituality inspired many African American female theologians to use womanist viewpoints. Many African women academics and literary critics use Womanism as an analytical tool (Shi 654).

Womanism by Alice Walker has also been the source of heated discussion and controversy. Womanism has evolved and is widely accepted despite the arguments and issues surrounding it because it aims to give black women a voice and a position and unite the black community. Walker's formulation, however, manages to bring forth not one but three major competing ideologies that shape black social and political ideas. She introduces Black Nationalism by arguing that black women are inherently superior to white males on moral and intellectual grounds. As a second point, she details the many forms of oppression black women face. Thirdly, she emphasizes the universal love among women (Jain and Caroline 80).

The Color Purple - Significance of the Title

Writers often employ color when modelling characteristics of their characters because of the power of color to convey nuanced emotions. Alice Walker is, too. In the novel *The Color Purple*, Celie's feelings are represented by a spectrum of hues. Colors like blue, red, black, and maybe most importantly, purple all have significant symbolic value. The novel's title, "The Color Purple," has a significant meaning that develops throughout the story. At





the story's beginning, Celie is a devout Christian who says, "If I was buried, I wouldn't have to work. But I just say, Never mine, never mine, long as I can spell G-O-D I got somebody along" (TCP 23). After reading Nettie's letters, she no longer thinks that the Bible's deities, angels, and prophets are all white. When she learns that Jesus, like a lamb, had curly hair, she understands that God is more human than she previously believed (Gregory 365).

After hearing Shug, who values a reverence for the natural world and the appreciation of life's aesthetics above the dogmatic teachings of the church, completely alter her view of God by saying, "I think it pisses off God if you walk by the color purple in the field and don't notice it" (TCP 168). It is on this principle that the novel *The Color Purple* is titled. Even anything as seemingly minor as purple is a blessing from God that should be appreciated. Celie discovers a more emancipating faith by enjoying and honouring the natural world. As a genderless, faceless entity who takes pleasure in being praised, Shug encourages Celie to make full use of God's gifts. The revelation completely alters her future. Because of the hue, she realizes God is not a white guy but a mysterious being capable of incredible feats (Bloom 2008).

The title blends people, cultures, and worlds. The tale begins with Albert and his children enslaving Celie. Mister's sister, Kate, begs him to purchase Celie's new clothing. Celie initially acknowledges the color. She envisions Shug in this shade as lovely, regal, and accessible. This color is historically connected with royalty and status. Respectful Romans wore purple togas. Thus, in the West, this hue symbolized power. Celie and Kate seek but discover no purple fabric for her. Celie is still enslaved. Instead of crimson and purple, she wears drab hues at first (Ukessay 2018).

As the novel progresses, *The Color Purple* becomes a symbol for more than simply its title or its central hue. Thus, the title is relevant over the whole of the letters, providing context and helping the reader feel a sense of familiarity with the book and an appreciation for Celie's life and times. In one of the submissions from the book "The Freedom Writers", gathered by Erin Gruwell, a girl who is the target of racial prejudice and was sexually molested by her uncle as a youngster draws parallels between herself and Celie because of the title. She had seen her stepfather frequently beating her mother. When she finally had enough of her stepfather, she, her mother, and her sister went to another country. When she sees her mother's bruised face, she knows that purple is more than a color or a label; it is the truth and helps her confront it (Gurwell 2009).





As a result, The Color Purple seems to have a far more profound connotation than what may be understood at first look. The novel's name is not as straightforward as it would at first seem. It plays a significant role at various points during the story. Thus, it is there the whole time. Therefore, it becomes a recurrent theme throughout the book, so it is appropriate for it to be used as the title.

From Being Silent to Having A Voice: Struggling to Achieve Self-Empowerment

I. Desire For Selfhood: The Power of Narrative and Voice

In the first part of The Color Purple, Walker presents nuclear families that serve as reservoirs for unrelenting masculine wrath. Their patriarchs are angry because their fathers shaped their lives, and they could not escape the economic and social constraints that plagued African Americans at the turn of the twentieth century. As a result of their company's success, Celie's biological father and his brothers were lynched. When her mother remarries, her stepfather takes over the family business, and he can only keep it alive by "paying off" the local whites: "But the fact is, you got to give 'em something. Either your money, your land, your woman, or your ass" (TCP 157). The helpless members of this family must bear witness to all this rage and fury. Walker describes that women and children have no voice or agency within their homes. To those who agree to mainstream cultural ideals of masculinity, to win, to be superior, to dominate, and to control are demonstrations of masculinity; the men who exploit and mistreat them carry out this mystique. Even rape is not so much a deviant act as an over-conforming one committed by guys whose masculinity is challenged by their feelings of helplessness in other areas (Taheer 262).

The dominating masculine aggression is present in the story's opening lines: "You better not never tell nobody but God. I'd kill your Mammy" (TCP 3). These remarks blame women for their immorality and demand their silence simultaneously. After raping Celie, these words come from the mouth of the man she thinks of as her father. According to him, Celie's disobedience to his order, rather than his transgression of taboo, would ultimately prove fatal to the mother (Bloom, 2009, p 60). She must deceive her dying mother by telling her that the child fathered by "Pa" is God's and that "God took it." In Celie's reality, however, "Pa" does have godlike powers since he has absolute authority over his family and is free to do with them as he pleases. When he takes the infant away, probably to murder it, he gives Celie no explanation and no solace, yet she is neither startled nor horrified, "He took it. He took it while





I was sleeping. Kilt it out there in the woods. Kill this one too, if he can" (TCP 9). He should try to kill this one as well. The end of Celie's monthly cycles represents the mental and physical wounds she sustained after giving birth to and losing two children at the hands of her father when she was fourteen. When "Pa" proposes to a nearby widower, he touts the benefits of her sterility and servitude. He plans to use Nettie, her sister, as a surrogate for Celie. Thus, he is holding onto her. The widower emphasizes the potential benefits of Celie's sterility and ability to "work like a man," offering her the cow and linen as further incentives in the agreement (Farda 16).

The novel's epistolary structure allows Celie to convey her challenges as a young black woman in a primarily white and male culture. Celie tells her narrative in a sequence of letters addressed to God, then to her sister Nettie, and finally to God and the whole cosmos. Celie's life is a series of humiliations and degradations: she is raped by her father, witnesses her mother's death without being able to tell her about her victimization, and plays the role of protective mother for her sister Nettie to protect her from the sexual advances of their stepfather and later of Mr. ___ (Celie's husband, Albert), and so on. Celie feels she needs God's help to carry the weight of her secrets, so she writes to him. She puts these secrets on paper and sends them to God. Celie, unable to verbalize her feelings publicly, writes her first letter to God, in which she describes the beginning of her victimization: "I am fourteen years old. I am I have always been a good girl. May be you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me" (TCP 8). She cannot comprehend what is "happening to her." She is so ashamed of herself that she crosses out "I am" to emphasize the fact that she was once "a good girl" since that is what a "good girl" does—she does not have sexual relations with her father. She assumes she must have committed some heinous act to merit God's wrath (Jubair 940).

In reality, rape is one of the violent acts carried out by black males against black women, leading to the victims' dehumanization, hopelessness, oppression, and subjection. In other words, it destroys women's identity, subjectivity, and agency, causing bodily and psychological harm. The brutality of the rape has knocked the wind out of Celie. Celie has no sense of self or identity due to her father's oppression and her husband's violence. Her choice to replace "I am" with "I have always been a good girl" reflects a sense of identity loss or separation. Celie lost her ability to have an "I am" in the present because of the rape. Furthermore, Celie never uses her husband's name while discussing him throughout the novel's first half. Instead, she uses the title Mr. ___ (Bloom 2008).





Silence is the second form of dominance resulting from rape and physical exploitation. This book may be put into two parts: the first follows Celie, a mute lady who endures her tyranny by writing letters to God. The second is a more powerful Celie who, after much trial and error, has found her way and her voice and is now able to escape the savagery (Sveinsdóttir 2012). Every woman in the book has her unique narrative, yet they all share the experience of having their voices silenced by men. All of the female characters have been victims of verbal and physical violence. The story concludes with the female protagonists secure in their own identities. They defy the authority that seeks to quiet them and the powerful forces that oppress them.

Men are the ones who use their voices to silence those of women. Thus, the story focuses on three primary themes: the impact of silence on women, the dynamics of male dominance, and the power dynamics between the sexes. Walker demonstrates that black women have a deeper grasp of the concept of silencing than white women do, as for them, it refers not to a lack of speech but to societal oppression. They get it because they teach their children about slavery, so those children may make more informed decisions when they see societal cruelty. Each of the novel's female protagonists went through her silencing cycle (Farda 18).

Regarding the first interpretation, Celie's father and then her husband silenced her because they believed speaking was a sign of weakness and that silence would limit her independence. Celie's life was dictated by Fonso and Mr. ____, who urged her to keep mute. They see her as something to be bought and sold. After telling her she could not talk to anybody except God, Pa resolves to get rid of her since he thinks she is "ugly," "evil," and "always up to no good." He does this by convincing Mr. ____ to marry her instead of Nettie. Sadly, Mr. ____ turns out to be just another copy of Pa. He mistreats Celie and is adamant about her being quiet, striking her often for little infractions and sometimes for no apparent reason. Since she is not allowed to speak or demonstrate her disapproval of this treatment, she can only remain silent:

Dear God,

Harpo (Mr. ____'s son) ast his daddy why he beat me. Mr. ____ say cause she my wife. Plus, she stubborn. All women good for ... he did not finish. He just tuck his chin over the paper like he do. Remind me of Pa.... He beat me like he beat the children. Cept he don't never hardly beat them. He say, Celie, git the belt. The children be outside the room peeking through the cracks. It all I can do not to cry. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie, you a tree. That's how come I know trees fear man. (TCP 27)



This behaviour shows how Black women are looked down upon in the South (Sveinsdóttir 2012).

Concerning the second interpretation, Walker is concerned not just with political or civil rights but also with ethnic and cultural rights and the sensitivity of women. Her goal is not only to dominate or establish herself in this literary field but also to help Black women finally speak out after being silenced for so long. She forces her heroine Celie to speak up, reject her oppression, and set an example for the other women in the narrative. Walker demonstrates how the difficulties experienced by black women may be traced back to the era of slavery. Walker helps Celie (and other Black women) find her voice to break the silence from her experience with rape and find healing for her wounds. Thus, rape does not result in silence but instead marks the beginning of a protracted fight for the agency. Celie begins writing after her rape at the hands of Pa. Celie can cope with the trauma of her rape by channelling her emotions into an outlet such as writing. Because liberation "cannot come from the hollow shell of selfhood that Celie presents early on" (Ross 69), Celie has to speak out and express herself if she ever wants to feel confident. In the fight against rape, writing has been seen as a hopeful method of resistance (Abd Al-Salam and Amal 675-676).

Celie changes the silence into a new woman she creates by speaking out when no one else would. Celie uses forceful language to forbid the dominant position once again. She does not base her judgment on God's word but on the consensus of society. Ultimately, Celie improves her writing by using more standard Black English. However, she demonstrates that she is not as "dumb" as her father said. Celie finally finds independence and joy. She is independent, creative, and feisty; she sews, wears trousers, speaks her mind, and gets her way. In a nutshell, her whole appearance has changed (Cheung 167).

II. Women's Strong-Tie in The Color Purple

From its origins in eighteenth-century England, "the epistolary novel" is inextricably bound to the canonization of female friendship. The concept of the confidant—the correspondent in the epistolary novel—gave rise to fictitious female friendships. Letters, diaries, notebooks, and other forms of communication linked with the culture of individuals traditionally excluded from mainstream commercial publications have been rescued and reclaimed by current feminist studies. Black women writers have recently adopted letter writing as a literary technique. By writing in an epistolary style, like these writers, Walker can rely on a form that positions her work in a tradition



associated with women, permits a feminine narrative voice, and develops a relationship and closeness between women (Taher 264-265).

In a patriarchal culture, women are stigmatized as being too sensitive, illogical, weak, maternal, and subservient. Walker challenges this patriarchal norm by casting women in traditionally male characters in *The Color Purple*. Walker employs the epistolary structure to forge connections and closeness among her female characters. Therefore, the novel's protagonists challenge patriarchal ideals and break down barriers between the sexes. Celie's search for independence and self-actualization is bolstered by her closeness and affinity with the three female characters she meets along the way (Sofia, Shug, and Nettie). In contrast to Celie, Sofia represents the "Amazon" woman who is fierce and independent. She has the strength of character to stand up to her husband's attempts to dominate and control their relationship. She does not want to love, honour and amuse her husband as an obedient wife (Shrivastwa 1128).

Celie's allegation is startling because she has suffered from a sort of male authority that has been terrible to her throughout her life: control over words. Celie's declaration that "I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly, and can't cook.... But I'm here" (TCP 179) marks the beginning of her independence from her husband, which is a pivotal moment in the novel. Celie, who has been the victim of many rapes and beatings, alternates between ignoring and destroying her body. The latter is her method of protection from her violent husband. Celie's phrasing makes it evident that the ignorance of her body is far more frightening than her wish to destroy it. She uses childlike language to explain why she had a hysterectomy: "A girl at church say you git big if you bleed every month. I don't bleed no more" (TCP 12). Even such intimate information as this is conveyed to Celie is secondhand (Rose 70-71).

Initiating friendship among the novel's female protagonists is a vital connection that cures their difficulties. Nettie is Celie's first true friend and playmate. Nettie makes an effort to educate Celie in the written word. Celie's sister Nettie runs away, questioning traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms. Since she disappeared after her escape, everyone assumed she was dead. Later on, though, when Celie learns that Nettie is serving as a missionary in Africa, Nettie's letter takes on more significance. Nettie urges Celie to act in response to Mr. _'s wrongdoing so she may be set free. She instructs Celie to observe her surroundings and adapt her personality accordingly. Nettie introduces Celie to the broader world. She tells Celie about her time on the



mission field to encourage her and provide her with the tools she needs to explore the world (Abd Ali 574). She says,

Oh, Celie there are colored people in the world who want us to know, to grow and see the light, they are not as mean like pa and Albert, or beaten down like ma was. (TCP 112)

However, Celie answers, "I don't fight, I stay where I'm told. But I'm alive" (TCP 26). Nettie tells Celie that she thinks she is excellent and deserves love because of this. Because she must escape and protect herself, Nettie can no longer play the role of Celie's sister and friend (Jawad and Zainab 28).

The second one is Shug Avery. Before Celie marries Mr. ___ and meets Shug, she learns about her and sees a photo of her. Celie writes, "Shug Avery was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw". (TCP 13). Celie understands deep down that Shug lives in a different kind of universe than she does. The world that Shug inhabits is one of freedom, whereas Celie's is one of imprisonment. However, Celie also sees the pain in Shug's eyes, concluding that Shug has overcome her tragedy: "Her eyes serious tho. Sad some" (TCP 13). Celie instantly connects to Shug in her developing self-awareness as she recognizes their shared pain.

Even before Celie knows enough about Shug to befriend her, she behaves like a friend to Shug. Celie wishes she could stand up for Shug when she becomes ill and becomes the focus of rumors, but she has no one to help her. Mr. ___ takes in Shug, who is ill, into his home. As a result of Shug's illness and the temporary dependence it puts on her, the two women get close to one another. Celie tends to Shug like she's her long-lost daughter Olivia or her deceased mother. Celie talks about brushing Shug's hair, saying,

I work on her like she a doll or like she Olivia_ or like she mama. I comb and pat, comb and pat. First she say, hurry up and git finish. Then she melt down a little and lean back gainst my knees. That feel just right, she say. That feel like mama used to do. (TCP 51)

Celie lacks an interest in learning more about her body until her husband's mistress, Shug Avery, moves in. In the role of nurse to Shug, Celie has her first sensual stirrings and links them to her newfound spirituality: "I wash her body, it feel like I'm praying. My hands tremble and my breath short. " (TCP 48). Celie's unease foreshadows the arrival of a new God who frees her from guilt in pursuing sexual pleasure, which she will find with Shug's help. Celie's acquisition of language and liberation from male brutality is facilitated by Shug's opening up of the secrets of the body and sexual experience. However, Celie must first be able to view and touch her body parts to complete the



introduction. A hand-held mirror and Shug's confidence that anything is to be seen are required (Sarmah 12827).

Abuse from her stepfather and then her husband delays Celie's development from a child to an adult. The ongoing maturation process is made possible by Shug's presence and, subsequently, her companionship. Shug's initial anger against her lover's wife fades as Celie takes care of her, and the two develop a friendship. Celie and Shug's relationship evolves into a lesbian one over time. In the name of lovers, they go beyond the heterosexual ideal favoured by patriarchal culture and perform sexuality:

She say, I love you miss Celie. And then she hand off and kiss me on the mouth. Um, she say, like she surprise. I kiss her back, say um too. Us kiss and kiss till us can't hardly kiss no more. Then us touch each other. (TCP 97)

Thus, Celie surreptitiously defends Shug by spitting in Mr. __'s father's water glass when he calls her a "whore". Celie has now taken the first step toward developing their viewpoint. Shug shows her pictures of the globe in appreciation for Celie's generosity. She introduces Celie to new things by giving her periodicals, smokes, and music from the juke joint (Jawad and Zainab 30).

The final and strong influencer is Sofia. In contrast to other fictional black women, she is unique. She refuses to remain mute if someone disturbs or assaults her. Celie describes her in a letter writing,

I look out cross the yard. I see Sofia dragging a ladder and then lean it up against the house. She wearing a old pair of Harpo pants. Got her head tied up in a headrag. She clam up the ladder to the roof, begin to hammer in nails. Sound echo cross the yard like shots. (TCP 58)

Sofia is a lady who likes to work in a manner that suits her preferences. She is not patient with anyone who interrupts her. Her spouse Harpo, however, finds this approach repulsive since he was raised in a society that prizes masculine superiority. Harpo and Sofia constantly bicker about who is more important in the family. Harpo attempts to maintain control by hitting her, but she fights back (Farda 50).

Sofia is the first woman Celie has met who rejects the sexism and racism demanding women show their disapproval of their oppressors via physical protest. Celie, who lacks Sofia's capacity to resist, is inspired by Sofia's confidence that other women can. Celie, Sofia's mother, is envious of her daughter's independence, so she advises Harpo, Sofia's husband and Celie's stepson, to "beat" Sofia into submission if she ever seeks his help in making a



decision. Sofia's refusal to accept punishment has surprised her. Celie now understands how she differs from her (Abd Al-Salam and Amal 678-679).

Celie and Sofia become fast friends, soon including Shug in their circle of pals. Shug gives one of her gowns to Celie and Sofia so they may use it in their quilting project together. Celie describes her and Sofia's quilting efforts: "Me and Sofia work on the quilt [...] Shug Avery donate her old yellow dress for scrap [...] If the quilt turn out perfect, maybe I give it to her [Shug]" (TCP 56). Sofia confides in Celie and explains that she is leaving Harpo due to his abusive behaviour. Celie decided to give Sofia the quilt she and Sofia created when Sofia and the kids went to stay with Celie's sister instead of staying at Sofia's house.

Female characters lend a hand to one another and form an extended matriarchal community to fight against the patriarchal society's marginalization of women. Eventually, with the help of her female companions, Celie becomes a successful company owner and friend to other women. By giving Sofia a job at a dry goods business, she encourages Sofia to develop her independence. Sofia gets a job that's perfect for her unique personality. Moreover, now Shug has a successful singing career of her own.

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