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The Feminine as Societal Critique in Alice Walker's The Color Purple: A Black Feminist Reading Dr.Najlaa Atshan Khalaf Al-musawi, Collage of Medicine University of Thi-Qar, Iraq.

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الأنوثة كنقد مجتمعي في رواية أليس ووكر اللون البنفسجي: قراءة نسويه سوداء دكتورة نجلاء عطشان خلف الموسوي كلية الطب جامعة ذي قار

### نبذة مختصة

هذه الدراسة تركز على الرواية الرائدة اللون البنفسجي (١٩٨٢) لأليس ووكر، بينما تستكشف البناء الاجتماعي للأنوثة من خلال دورها المتكامل . هذه المقالة تبحث تصوير ووكر للنساء اللواتي يقاومن ويعطلن التمثيليات والهياكل التقليدية للسلطة داخل ثقافة الهيمنة العنصرية. هذا البحث ينطلق من منظور نظري نسوي اسود . من خلال القراءة الدقيقة لبعض اهم اجزاء الرواية ، ووكر تبين الطرق التي تستخدم بها استراتيجيات تخريبية ضد النظام الابوي لتحرير شخصياتها النسائية والتأكيد على قوتهن واستقلاليتهن. هذه الأطروحة تسعى لتبين ان اللون البنفسجي هو نقد قوي للهياكل التي تساند الظلم الاجتماعي وعدم المساواة من خلال دراسة العلاقات المعقدة بين العرق ،الجندر ، الطبقة الاجتماعية في النص . من خلال بحثها التقني والفلسفي في الانوثه، ووكر تزود تفسيرا جديدا للفكر النسوي الاسود. ستستمر المواقف التي تعبر عنها هذه الاستجابات الغريزيه المتعمدة ترسيخ الانظمه الاجتماعية القمعية ، التي تعتبر ثديين معاصرين ومخربين جزءا من النظام القمعي الجديد غير المرئي. عمل ووكر هو مساهمة مهمة في الدراسات النسويه السوداء المقدمة : اليس ووكر ، النسوية السوداء ، الجندر ، ديناميكيات القوة ، العنصرية ، الهوية ، الفاعلية .

#### **Abstract**

This study focuses in on the seminal novel The Color Purple (1982) by Alice Walker, as it explores the social construction of femininity through its integral role. This essay examines Walker's depiction of women resisting and disrupting traditional representations and structures of power within a culture of racial domination. This investigation is framed from a black feminist theoretical position. By closely reading some of the most important portions of the novel, Walker illustrates the ways in which she employs subversive strategies against patriarchy to liberate her female characters and emphasize their power and autonomy. This thesis seeks to show that The Color Purple is a powerful critique of the structures that sustain social injustice and inequality through an examination of the complex relations between race, gender and social class in the text. Through her technical and philosophical investigation of feminicity, Walker provides a fresh interpretation of black feminist thought. The attitudes articulated by these half glanced gut responses will continue to perpetuate oppressive social orders, for whom a contemporary and subversive pair of tits is all part of the new invisibly repressive regime. Walker's work is a significant contribution to black feminist studies. Introduction: Alice Walker, Black Feminism, Gender, Power Dynamics, Racism, Identity, Agency.

#### Introduction

This work contributes new perspectives to current issues of diversity, inclusion, and empowerment as feminist movements of popular culture continue to gain visibility and acceptance. Since Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced the term in 1989, intersectionality has become a buzzword. It shows how markers of identity, such as the

intersections between race and gender and class and sexuality, inform our/her life. Movement feminists harp on the possibility of mobilization and self determination among marginals. It is important to empower the downtrodden, for empowerment is what gives people the ability to take charge of their own lives and become involved in challenging existing systems Engaging in constructive alternatives. (Hooks, 1984) states that the most powerful and life-changing moment is when we truly listen and believe what others tell us is their experience. Our ability to make sense of existence and self-identity is bound up with social construction and cultural repertoire in representative evaluation processes and conceptual schemata. This is because the combination of these two ings causes this to occur. Citing Hooks (1984), the essay highlights the significance of representation, since every social group constructs its identity through different modes of self-representation. The study analyses The Color Purple of Alice Walker to demonstrate the feminine aesthetics, and seeks to dissolve how feminine features aggravate to the social confrontation in the Black Feminist movement. American author, Alice Walker who became known through literaty activism, produced unique work that battled for racial equality and gender rights and she further support social justice protest. Walker started working as a sharecropper in Georgia at the beginning of her life. It was there, that she gained the knowledge and skills necessary to overcome the racial discrimination experienced in her impoverished family. By overcoming her troubles, Walker became equipped to fight discrimination, and ultimately, she became a well-known literary figure within her community. Walker's novel, a Pulitzer Prize winner, placed her in the company of other major American writers. In addition to her literary legacy, Walker made a substantial impact on society and politics by advocating key social movements that promote animal rights and global environmental sustainability through transnational cooperation. The Color Purple discusses complex social and cultural things far beyond domestic violence, such as sexism and racism, and how they are intersectional with identity as well as those are still very relevant social issues. The key insights that can be drawn from the novel's representation of femininity serve the current debates about social justice, as well as racism and gender, among other themes.

#### There is a theory, there is a hierarchy

What is needed is a theoretical paradigm that draws from Black Feminist thought as well as critical questions on queerness, gender, sexuality, identity, and the female experience itself since Walker's 1982 book, The Color Purple, presents an intricate and overlapping of life issues. Collins (2000) argues that Black Feminist thought provides a separate epistemology that explores how race interacts with gender and class as well as other identity markers. A more systematic approach is required if we are to give a consistent interpretation of this complex narrative. This is because each pipe maintaining a connection has all related parts connected. Her own life and the injustices of the era (as a poor southern black woman that was sexually molested and beaten by men during the early 1900s) directly influenced the character of Celie, who is symbolic of all of these things as well. As to these issues regarding Celie's story, Black Feminist theory is essential as it shows the debilitating effect of oppression upon women of color who are trapped both within, and without, oppressive structures. A robust theoretical lens through which to understand persons in their various ways of living must be Queer Theorybased. Gender is itself deconstructed by queer theory. The exploration of these relationships by the novel leads us to explore Celie's sexual relations with other women. Monique Wittig's The Straight Mind (1978) challenges heteronormative assumptions working within social forms. The examination of female perspectives in this book opens the discourse for analysis of Simone de Beauvoir's statement in The Second Sex (1949) that women are not inherently marginalized to men. In Gender Trouble (1990), Judith Butler analyzes the ideas of power, subjectivity, and gender performativity. Butler elaborates the concept of gender as performative, a persistent ongoing performance of definitions and comparison. The book takes a model similar to Michel Foucault's The History of Sexuality (1976), seeking to study the sexual regulatory mechanisms of late capitalist society which enable pleasures while constraining them. Our notions of Celie's narrative of self-empowerment are further enriched by her dismantling of "stereotypes of black women that inform the dominant white mind," as analyzed within the framework represented by the book Ain't I a Woman (1981) (hooks 41). Feminist scholars and public intellectuals of all sorts of intellectual background have thoroughly researched and analyzed feminine identity characteristics. Scholars in the humanities have also tried to construct femininity out of social conditions and literal language naming. In Black feminist theory, oppressed women can use the power of their resistance to embrace their feminine identity as the starting point for participation. A vehement critique of the racism, classism and patriarchy of institutional ideology is expressed through Alice Walker's phenomenal The Color Purple. We will gain an understanding of the subversive and transformative role of Walker's notions of womanism and the feminine as a leadership tool for social justice, as articulated in Black feminist theory.

### Deciphering of the basic ideas

#### The convergence of

", Intersexuality refers to one form or thought intersecting with another. The concept of black feminism illuminates the complex interconnection of race-, gender-, class-and sexuality-based oppressions (Crenshaw, 1989). According to the intersectionality model, multiple social categories such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and class play off of and build upon each other to contribute to types of marginalization and oppression individuals experience. McCall describes intersectionality as "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations" (p.1771). In this manner, the complexity and reciprocity of several patterns of oppression in interaction with each other is highlighted, with the awareness that this is how people in reality are exposed to several types of oppressions simultaneously. Collins (2000) theorizes that the family provides the location for intersectionality. His concept of intersectionality is as follows: "Systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age establish the entwinement of these systems of social relations as being mutually interdependent, and logically shape Black women's social position and social relations but Black women's positioning and social relationships reverberate with these interdependencies within systems of social relations" (p.299). He explains that these interactions have an impact on the lived experiences of Black women. Intersectionality is the study of how various social systems, which may include but are not limited to race, gender, sexuality, class, and ethnicity, interact on different social levels to produce interlocking and distinct inequalities. This is Dhamoon (2011).16 Unlike another major philosophical stance, feminist philosophy does not view personal and or social revolts against political and economic institutions as eitheror choices of social transformation. It is, however, through the lens of the intersectionality model that we can see clearly how power is the means by which people are ranked, slotted or categorised into social groups such as gender or race. Racialisation and discrimination cause disparate life chances among different economic groups. Some of these social distinctions create adversities for members and non-members of the category. (2000), the current mechanisms work together to generate layered power relations which bestow a variety of forms of power and punishment to individuals. One may hold power in one context at one point in time while experiencing marginalization in a different place at another time (Collins, 1990). This rides on the possibility that power is inherently relational and context-specific, on an intersectional level.

#### **Oueer theory**

Queer theory as a movement grew out of the anti-essentialist contribution of the 1990s feminist and cultural studies that was reacting to Western cultural traditional values and to heteronormative practices. Queer (2000) serves to oppose traditional interpretations of power and gender, together with of the institution's sexual norms, and to explore new forms of identity and modes of collective. (Sedgwick 1990; Warner 1993). The frame employs developed identities through its process to generate other architectural forms used for other reasons (Calafell & Nakayama, 2016, p.1). According to this theoretical position, sexuality lies beyond its essence because it is a constructed act built by the social and cultural, and historical constructed acts. With the analysis of normal sexuality concepts using the queer theory, researchers are guiding the development of a broader sexuality acceptance and overcoming of the power-system barriers, which constitute the bases of the contemporary knowledge systems, being restricted only to margin populations. As explained based on Butler (1993), queer theory is a subversive discourse, through which the regular conceptions of power relations and gender relations with homosexuality are undermined to produce opportunities for the transformation of societies (Blumstein & Scott, 2001). These biological truisms may inform social systems that research the variable links among self-determining attributes (Jackson 2001). Queer theory also embraces a total denial of heterosexual/homosexual as well as male/female binaries as well as normal/abnormal binary systems, and involves deconstructing traditional philosophical beliefs about sex, gender and/or identity.

#### Gender

Gender is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon that is considered from social, cultural, psychological aspects of male or female. The term gender is sometimes utilized as a synonym for sex to determine the biology of men and women. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary tells people to think of "sex" in this sense as meaning male or female: "male or female: sex," says the dictionary with "gender" in this context recommended as a better word. In the words of Coates (1986, p.4), sex is part of a biological differentiation, but gender is a complex of social constructions built out of sex. Most cultures operate within a structure of two sexes: male and female. As Visser (2002, p.529) notes 'anything having to do with gender conceptions is big because it influences attitudes, behavior, and self-image, even if only to a great extent subconsciously'. She observes that such

conceptions are subjected to change with time. Gender is, however, an independent concept that includes more than just physical sex, but with social and cultural psychological attributes associated with being a man or a woman. As from Connell's (1995) perspective gender is the form of incremental organization of the practice at all levels of the social organization from identity levels through symbolic ritual to areal-scale deep structures everything within the realm of "reproductive arena" determined by "certain bodily structures and certain processes of human reproduction as well" (p.26). In Butler's own words (1999), "gender is performatively produced and compelled by the very regulatory practices that heterosexualize gender coherence." Gender is more subtle and multi-dimensional to Hochschild (1983) as it refers to the standards and expectations for behavior and relationships that are linked to a persons birth as a male or female. It is a cultural structure, role, or behavior appropriate and considered non-stoigmatized for women and men to play within a given society. The "basic anatomies of our biological sex given by natural assignment at birth" reflect "no matter social culture or personal will" (230). Milton Diamond, M. (2002). There is no binary system of sex and gender. Sex is defined by the UN Women Training Centre as "the physical, biological characteristics which define male and female." Gender is identified as "the roles, behavior, activities and other social categories or attributes which a given society considers appropriate for men and women; they are socially constructed and learned through a socialization process."

#### **Gender expression**

Gender expression: How a person performs or expresses his/her gender, in terms of clothing, communication patterns, interests, etc., regardless of whether he/she is following social norms for his/her biological sex and/or gender identity. For Carabez (2015) and Edelman (2020, p. 64), gender expression is the part of how someone's gender identity is communicated through their clothing, gestures and social behavior. It is a person's actions, gestures, and style of dress or grooming that society associates with that person's gender, femininity, or masculinity. How one appears on the outside in terms of character of a given sex in behavior, dress, haircut, voice, or characteristics is one definition of gender expression. As Bockting (2015, p. 234) states, gender expression refers to "how one presents oneself to the world, congruently or incongruently with one's biological sex". Although a person's gender expression might be somewhere in the middle, or neither of these things, it's typically conceptualized along a feminine-masculine axis. Following Disch (1999) and Grinspan et al. (2017, p. 6), (i) "the way you express your gender through your appearance, clothing, and personal presentation" including dress, hair, make-up or lack there of, accessories; 83 (ii) "including behaviors, activity preferences, speech patterns, etc," as well as one's behavior and the manner in which one walks, d and (iii) "even the name and pronoun a person chooses to use (or a person's best friends use to call them)" and including them (and or refuses to have applied) might be considered as acceptable demonstration of one's gender accordin to its formulation "Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identify".

#### Gender role

In short, a gender role (a.k.a. sex role) is a normative expectation for what is appropriate for an individual of a particular biological sex to believe and do (Kessler & McKenna, 1978). Most gender roles – including stereotypical ones – are rooted in concepts of masculinity and femininity, although there are exceptions and variations. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, "gender" is used to describe the "culturally and societally defined roles which males and females are expected to follow based upon ... ideas about masculinity and femininity" (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.). According to Woodward & Ashmore (1994), gender role is the socially prescribed scripts that direct individuals of male and female as to how they should think, feel and behave in value in one society. Besides, Wood & Eagly(2009) say that gender role refers to the expectation and norms which are set up to people based on their biological, it can influence the method they act and think. The gender roles are defined as societal beliefs regarding the self-identity of an individual in his/her socially attributed sex (Eagly, 2009). Gender Roles Gender roles are, according to Eisenschlas (2013), the well-defined social attitude and perception about the certain what is thought to be acceptable or what the society ascribes to be appropriate for each and every one of the sexes in a particular context and condition.

### **Gender identity**

Gender identity Gender identity refers to one's internal feeling of being male, female, neither, or a combination (not related to physical sex or gender expression) 3,4,5. Gender Identity Morrow (2006, p. 8) describes gender identity as "a person's internal sense of him or her-self as male or female or a man or a woman". Wood & Eagly (2009) use the term to refer t o "masculine and feminine self definitions," or the feeling of one's own gender as it or the same as sex or gender expression appearance may may not match other (p. 109). Bockting (2015) echoes

this line as gender identity as a "sense of oneself of one's gender identity" as being different from or similar to his or her biological sex or gender expression if it is different than his or her sex and gender presentation (p. 235).Butler (1999:23) argues that "identity is guaranteed by the stabilising concepts of sex, gender and sexuality". This is consistent with her theory of gender as performativity. According to Butler (1999, p. 33) gender is, hence, "performative; it is not determined by causality but meaning: It does not precede meaning, but comes to be meaning in its continual reiteration". In this view, "gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject". For Butler the point is that gender does not precede its identity, which would be "the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results (Butler, 1999, p. 33). As a gender identity is fulfilled as sexed behaviors and does not pre-exist these, it is inevitable that it'll become something of a shell.

#### **Feminism**

Feminism is presented as a movement that aims to dismantle and eliminate patriarchal institutions of oppression and that utilises multiple strategies and tactics to achieve gender equality. This philosophy seeks to ensure the same rights and opportunities from birth to female sex in all areas of life. A social movement, as a form of feminism, seeks to challenge and to change the existing power relations, institutions, as well as men established paradigm of society, and promote a more just society. Feminism is defined as "the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men". The inability to do so' (Oxford Dictionary). It is a socio political movement and's-ideology dedicated to protecting rights and obligations of women and conditions under which they are expected to live to have the belief in the equality between women and men and the idea that women have the same opportunities for access to resources and rewards as our society as men (Beasley, 1999; Mendus, 2005; Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2010, p.223). As Ferree (2006) says, feminism does not exist for a different purpose than it has no existence apart from the activism that sought to question women\'s subordinate to men and change that. Feminism is the "belief in social, political, and economic equality of the sexes" (Brunell & Burkett, 2024). Well yes, Feminism is a catch all term for numerous movements and ideologies that question established patriarchal systems of hierarchy and strive for gender parity. There has been some very different forms of feminism over the years- some of which are liberal feminism, radical feminism, marxist feminism and post modern feminism! (doi: 10.1016/j.scoms.2015.06.002) However (Humm, 1992) highlights that the history of modern western feminists' movement can be divided into three waves; the first wave which emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, focused on the right to vote and the ability to have equal rights with men, emerged in the 1960s-1970s and the third wave that spreading in the 1990s to encompass younger generation. Whereas the second wave focused on gender equality, □reproductive □rights and changed conceptions of gender roles, the third wave which emerged in the 90s demands greater diversity, intersectionality and nonnormative understandings of gender and sexuality. 

They have witnessed yet another wave of feminism, as the fourth wave became digitized and is now broadcast to the masses thanks to its popularity. Activist movements like the "Me Too" movement and "Every Sexism project" started in 2006 have surfaced in the quest for social justice and issues such as sexual harassment and attacks define this wave.

#### **Black Feminism**

Black feminism as a social and political movement seeks to expose the multiple discrimination and social oppressions felt by black women in the United States and elsewhere. Black feminism is unique; it is different from white feminism because its focus is to study the specific discrimination that is repeated time and again in the everyday lives of Black women. Black women created the movement in an attempt to realize their own social justice, as noted by Crenshaw (1989) and Collins (2008). The idea quantifies intersectionality-related matter that discusses how different types of oppressions that are discriminative in nature, for instance sexism, can intersect with institutional racism and classism it inflict upon an individual. As a philosophy and creative intellectual force, it is committed to ending all forms of oppression facing women of color, for in the words of the Combahee River Collective, "If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression." Combahee River Collective, 1978:300). The term "double bind" was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989 to explain how Black women are discriminated against by reliving this double identity — Black and woman. Racism remains a significant erosion force controlling women of color, for black women, dual race and gender oppression is a regular race-based sexual harassment (Désiré, 2016). According to Salzman (2006), black feminism has extended this definition to incorporate not only class and race questions, but also to address the ideologies of sexuality.

#### Womanism

Womanism, the feminist movement, is a result of Black feminist approval. Merriam-Webster Dictionaries describe "Womanism as a special feminist movement that was originated to address the unique needs and positions of the Black female, thus, the Black woman (Weakland, p. 1992). Womanism provides a theoretical feminist paradigm with which women of color's (specifically African American women) situations are to be evaluated (Weida, 2023). It was though borrowed as an academic concept for the first time by African American novelist, Alice Walker. Walker (p. xx-xix) 1983, 1983 In Search of Our Mother's Garden: They are instructing their daughters in the womanish line of behaviour, which they term 'You acting womanish' - meaning meek and mild is not for them. And so the women are the ones who take it beyond the psychological capacities you're allowed and will go searching for information on how to learn. That is, right into the very definition of womanist is written a someone who desires sex and non-sex interaction with a woman. The womanist enjoys and affirms female culture and strength as well as is concerned about the survival and wholeness of the entire community, male and female. Not separatist ... So are the womanist relationship-to-feminism and the purple-to-lavender. Womanism model Walker developed her womanism model from some of the oppressions experienced by black women and other marginalized communities, (Phillips, 2006). From the black matrilinear history, Walker discovered the word "womanish", which black mothers used for fearless, intelligent girls (Walker, 1983, p.igmatic figure of gratitude – a fount of ten love; as family relocates to Lion's House, Nevil becomes a model of (an impossible) masculine stoicism who can be relied upon to defend the principles of the family and to shake Hercule's hand the day (p.56). It is the fate that the scope of womanism had progressed to that of oftentimes resolute images and deed with tenderness and responsibility. The author uses the metaphor of "purple" for womanism in his essay "Womenist" in contrast to the "lavender" interpretation of behavior that is termed feministic (Walker, 1983, p. xii). While Hayat (2014) and Maparyan (2012) posit is an does definition of womanism that includes feminism, but instead prioritizes race- and class-based oppressions as supposed to the gender oppression as the aforementioned Walker's theme. The phrase, womanist is to feminist like purple is to lavender serves itself as an evidence, to reveal that feminism is a part of the broader womanism system. (Hinton et al, 1996). Womanism" In her essay, "The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English," the Nigerian literary critic Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, describes the womanist as one who wishes "to share power equally, on and between the oppressor and the oppressed (p.11). Her notion, independently of Alice Walker's notion, resembles the overriding conceptions of Blackness and womanhood presented by Walker. Ogunyemi characterizes black womanism as "a philosophy which praises black roots, the objectives of black life, but presents a balanced perspective of black womandom (1985, p.11) Phillips (2006, pp.xx-xix) states that, Womanist can be applied as a social theory base on the historical and everyday experiences of Black women especially women. He contends that womanist theory aims to "put right the balance between people and the environment/nature and bring human life back into harmony with the spiritual dimension". Womanism, therefore, is an inclusivity idea which decapitated exclusive systems and structures that excluded persons from full humanity (racially, class-wise and gender-wise).

#### **Feminine**

The term 'feminine' came in Middle French from 'feminin' which in turn had its beginnings in the Latin form of 'femininus', 'femina' being a term for 'woman', 'the suckling one' or the 'sucked one'. At the down Singapore Merriam-Webster Encyclopedic have a big the feminine as of the introduction of of characteristics features etc that of characteristics features etc that into (as or the introduction of into or appropriate for women. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "feminine" refers to females or sexually female, or is typical for a woman or women or anything which is linked with women. As Cameron (1998:271) puts it, 'feminine' and 'masculine' are not who we are nor the things that belong to us as characteristics, but are what we do, made up of a wide range of activities performed via things we interact with. Gender is a description of particular qualities and traits that are manifested in males and females. The purpose of this paper is to show that of all the social classifications, gender is one of the most visible, and still exists in history and in all societies, cultures and countries in the world. Stereotyped behavior and stereotyped traits of personality are part of the characteristics of all cultures which are identified as characteristic of one sex or the other, and usually are associated with only one sex (Twenge, 1999, p.485). Leaper (1995, p.360) concludes that whether traits are assigned more to females or males is a function of the cultural moment. From page 76 onwards, Claudia Breger discusses the transformation of the stereotype of masculine no longer standing for the female, but for the feminine played within the set that men are feminine as overdue as all women play their male sides. On this topic, Twenge (1999) verifies in her research that the current western culture shows a low association with gendered traits perceivable

in society (p. 485-6). Male bodies are not always dominant and women do not always embody traditional femininity as far as he is concerned. Femininity For the current study using a nonconformity perspective, one could argue that femininity could be easily associated with Connell's multiple femininities in that the woman(s) utilized both compliance and resistance strategies and cooperation. (p.185)

#### Femme fatale

The feminine is also quite broadly defined with the use of 'femme fatale. According to Britannica Encyclopedia, a femme fatale is said to be an attractive and seductive woman, typically alluring and dangerous, who is likely to bring disaster to men who become involved with her. A thousand years ago, I mean that literally, the femme fatale haunted the hard-boiled detective novels and movies of the 20th century. According to Martin and Engleberg (2016), femme fatale are sexually provocative women who use their physical appearance and wits to entangle men in ways that leads to the destruction or the undoing of these unfortunate characters. It's clear that these characters also have two lethal dimensions: a lethal dimension and another, some sort of intangible factor that gives them a certain mystique. The unsavory part of the femme fatale is in her manipulativeness as she reaches for one of the most common means of women's domination. It is described by Grossman (2009) as an act of being enticing and sexually appealing to men in which it seems that women are in sense taking advantage of men by over powering them. The iconography of the femme fatale is valuable in that helps articulate the society's anxiety regarding women's power, its attitudes towards sexually aggressive women, and the place of these women in society. All of these qualities are in the Femme Fatale, because it's what society wishes to rebel against- patriarchy. M.A Doane (1987) cited in Death (2002) femme fatale to be what women are, and what they make shallow for men are dangerous (p.91). To my mind, the women in "Femme Fatale" personality profiles raise a finger against the cultural mandate of what a woman should be: submissive, weak, in need a man to tell her where to go. As for morality, moral women have a known-and-accepted feminine etiquette to adhere to, but immoral women do not follow that code.

#### **Related feminist theories**

(Wo)men theorists (for example, Judith Butler), women in feminism, are included into postmodern feminism because thoseoeuvre provided a disruption of thought which has set off different discourses among scholars. In Gender Trouble: Judith Butler develops the principles for both the feminism and queer research paradigm and also serves as a reconstruction of the gay and lesbian perspective and the understanding of gender identity. Roughly, gender is a kind of performance and expression in Butler's view: the subject's identity is not formed from their anatomy but from the way they project themselves. Gender is more than the natural human nature but that one follows to some behaviors and patterns in the society and who are being forced by the society and / or cultural reality on that matter-Dyke and Butler. Society rolls the dice again in its nomenclature of gender as a social construct that complements the natural identity of a person. According to Butler identity can not be cemented, it can shift and change because people's process of redefining identity is ongoing. Focusing on the way in which institutions invent structures that delimit legitimate norms, Butler constructs her theoretical model of gender, rather than the one she terms "essentialist," that is in essence a Marxist one. We must recognize a biological gender as a norm, she explained, because gender means gender identity, with the use of institutionalized force and power. To win back control over those issues, along with asserting state power, the union must satisfy two conditions. In her deeply considered essay, she makes the case that one ought to make fun of or send up traditional gender roles as an effective means to work toward equality. 'You can argue with what 'masculine' is and what is female or you can create new kinds of gender.' She posits that the binary of male and female heterosexual is not only restrictive, but also inhibitive in the sense that it polices norms and culture in regards to compulsory heterosexuality. So she re-describes the notion of 'heterosexuality as a "female heterosexuality", as, performatively, there being a massedpeettywithin the discreet boundaries of the heterosexually normative grid. Feminist theory becomes intensely popular with the presence of the influentially famous social feminist scholars such as the Simone de Beauvoir and Monique Wittig. They broadened the concept or quantum of what women and femininity are. In The Second Sex, the female in The Second Sex is considered within a framework of being oppressed because of the socially constructed image of woman that men have made. The main locus of argument, likewise, in Monique Wittig, The Straight Mind (1978) is the construction of women as fixed subjects of the gender power regime. Among discursive theorists whose work has been highly influential in the analysis of femininity as criticism are also, Luce Irigaray, This Sex Which Is Not One (1977), Michael Foucault's 1976 The History of Sexuality, Kathleen Barry, Female Sexual Slavery (1979), bell hooks' Ain't I a woman? Tania Modleski's Feminism Without Women (1991). For Irigaray (1977),

femininity is not a thing or an essence, but a loose and puerile (maidienlichen) collection of structures that appear in a particular society. Swart (2007a:3) citing the same author quotes Foucault (1976) to the effect that femininity cannot be reducible to the female sex, but it is a constructed system, enforcing expected social positions. Berry (1979) – femininity becomes objectification and commodification, especially under the domains of prostitution and sex slavery; bell hooks (1981) – forsaking the dubious ideology of 'flash femininity' for an immovable identity, definition of women must be disempowering of their voice and impact upon society. Self-feminization could in this way be conceived as a tactic in which women acquiesce to constructs of femininity in order to neutralize the more repressive aspects of patriarchal culture— according to Modleski (1991), a system of social domination utilized for the legitimation of male power and control over the bodies and desires of women:

### The Feminine in perspective

Feminist theory has struggled with, and critiqued, ideas of 'femininity'. So in her 1949 writing de Beauvoir indicates that femininity (Icons 11 p 86) appeared as a second sex construct with the purpose of men satisfying his needs to dominate women. The feminine, as Butler sees it, is a product of social institutions that impose requirements that subjugate women, while maintaining patriarchy. Wittig (1978) explains that 'femininity' arises from disciplinary heterosexuality used by the dominant patriarchy to tame women. Speculum She argues at one point that femininity can be conceived of as a social construction marked by plurality, constituted by itself in duality. In his work, Foucault (1976) found that within a society, the norms of behaviour as well as power relations produce a femininity in order to regulate behaviour. p. 566) suggests that femininity performs the objectifying processes, dimensions of commodification or exploitation. In her humorous commentary on representations of women, hooks (1981) summarized her view with the assertion that being feminine still means "cooking and washing and gentle care and polite" (p. As Modleski (1991) explains, the social construction of femininity undermines the unity and disintegration of the subjectivity of woman. Drawing from these theories and critical perspectives the paper does a feminist critique of the Walker's use of what have been referred to as "feminine" motifs as figures of subversion in her examination of the social ills impacting Black American women. Against this backdrop, the objective of this essay is to analyze Walker's feminist strategy of writing which uncovers feminine concerns and re-purchase gender roles into power and silence.

#### The Feminine in the Color Purple of Walker

This paper takes it in view to have a closer look to how Alice Walker gives voice to the suffering and oppression of black American women in a society that discriminates them in a double sense, as victims of both sexism and racism. And through the novelist's tools, Walker conveys the unrelenting weight that constitutes Black life, but she also evokes the chance of the individual's transformative betterment. Therefore, according to her own restriction, Walker can be labeled a "womanist" because she is the originator of the term, which she used in reference to Black Feminist women who love women's culture and women's traditional strength and flexibility (Walker, 1983, p. xi). This implies that a womanist has decided where he/she stands and that position is to make sure that every woman and man lives out on the best in them for the greater good of society. Mukherjee has also suggested that in Walker's works, women are represented as resilient and resourceful with utility, inventive capabilities and ability to forgive even when confronted with challenges and problems on many of their life experiences (Barker 1999; Harris, 1984).(In all of Walker's books, the characters can be a little too can-do for all of me, but that's Walkersville for you: Not only do good women and Loving men stand up to racists, so do able, intrepid women and men, for that matter, who want to bust in first with the joy and the poetry and the combat against the emotional and sexual rampages of man against woman.) Walker, in all her work, calls change out from individual and collective people. Walker's focus on the transformation of people as the way to society transformation led her to be seen as a liberating political leader who is always championing and taking progressive positions (Henkinson, 1997). Regarding the idea of "the feminine" in (1982) her novel The Color Purple, Alice Walker offers social criticism by offering a counter discourse to the patriarchal hegemony and to tell the story of the black woman in early 20 th century America. Reading the novel, however, we can see that by "feminine" it adopts one of the fundamental concepts of womanism, a doctrine by Alice Walker, which in turn embraces some of the theories in The Second Sex (1949) by Simone de Beauvoir Gender Trouble (1990) by Judith Butler and The History of Sexuality (1976) by Michel Foucault. Walker keeps obliterating the line between the events described in a book and the story and personality of the author. The fact that it's a constant struggle changed the heroine's mind about what she's trying to accomplish in life which is not society-given or birth-given, but simply existence-given. Concerning the social factors of femininity, Beauvoir argues in favour

of the thesis which sees it as a situation in which women are oppressed. Worse, Celie, under the patriarchal dominance, is a youthful black woman who experiences suppression from her father and husband. This is because, as a society, we have set a standard for women that they need to live up to, and the fact that as a woman she's fighting who she wants to be. This is what allowed Beauvoir to claim that female qualities are derived from male growth, in the same way men had subdued animals; this caused women to be dominated. Gender roles and societal expectations are seemingly unavoidable in the novel The Color Purple and directly affect Celie in her life. In this society, they want Celie to cover up as a woman, but they encourage Nettie to speak up and do as she pleases. This is how answers are supposed to help us find our place in society, but at the same time keep the general power structures intact. Looking at the relations of power through a Foucaultian perspective, we can detect in the book the society represents the system that discourages the female bodies and their sexualities to conform to the culture it propagates. This tension, the book explains, forces women to have to match all their actions to gendered behaviors and expectations that do not mesh with their real needs or choices. As a response to these patriarchal discourses and practices, Walker employs the word womanism. The Color Purple abounds in themes of growth thru triumph of will or strength, by male ruling, the power of kindredship, and or heroic acts. So the person of Celie is studying that process of how to go from being a victim to the process of being free from all forms of oppression." Yet even more problematic is the 'search for voice' itself, the liberation of the black woman writer's subjectivity from the sometimes gentle, sometimes brutal but always imperialist regulation of white male culture. Faced with what is, after all, a particularly 'marginalized' black female voice (a voice further marginalized importantly by male black writers), Alice Walker has been more tactical and strategic in her work, and by that I mean, as Wayne Tucker has argued in his chapter 'The Black Woman as Creator', she has probed the issue of the black woman as creator." (Tucker, 1988, 1988, p.81) The term 'womanism' is used by Walker in her book when speaking of the woman, a relationship between female beings that is capable of being loving or friendly. These relationships as Walker describes, are meant to strengthen, support and perpetuate respect for the woman (Walker, 1983). In The Color Purple women's sexual and non-sexual relationships are presented as a complicated continuum. Consequently, using the characters of Celie, Nettie, and Shug, Alice Walker demonstrates that the female community must be built on the foundation of a "womanist way of living". This is the same old work by Walkerist and what it tries to show is how a woman in a patriarchal world, heightening the oppressive features of that power relation, yearns for a relationship, experience, strength, and power from a man that comes to her as a moulding force. Of all the female characters discussed in the novel, I think the one that plays a significant role in the novel would be the relationship of Celie and Nettie. That makes their connection as real as it would ever get even if they're physically separated by space and life circumstances. This is shown through the letters she writes to Nettie where she opens herself up about her feelings, the world around her, and her own situation. Of course, Nettie replies the letters in kind, with advice, guidance, heartwarming words. This talk is a great testament to what women can do to ensure that they bridge any gap and take care of their emotional needs. Another evident womanism in the book is the relationship between Celie and Shug. Shug is a man's young and wild lover who becomes a resident in the home of Celie's man, Albert. Celia is jealous of Shug and Just when they are with Albert at the start of the play. However, as the story progresses, Celie looks up to Shug as someone to whom she can aspire and desire, and in regards to the love and sexual worth of women. Credit: Shug's acknowledgment and encouragement of the nurturing, masculine female soul that inhabits Celie do wonders in stoking her sense of self-worth. So, as we can see, Walker's portrayal of the women in her novel illustrates the notion of how women can strengthen each other. For example, when Celie suffers physical and emotional abuse from her husband and feels shy and insecure as a result, Nettie is the one who writes her a letter lines of encouragement Also, when Shug is in dire need of an identity to hang onto, or having an identity crisis, it is Celie who will give her something such that she can feel that she has a role in society. This paper seeks to show and analyze how Walker persuades readers about the representation of the feminine in the novel and challenges the mainstream ideology of women. She demonstrates that women aren't just vessels that need to be trained to be men's companions but are thoroughly capable of deep, healthful relationships with other women. This gives rise to the issue of women's representation in literature right at the beginning, for, in her letters to Celie, Nettie breaches all factors of discourse. For example: "Girls must not be educated in Germain culture," she says. A girl is that to everyone, there is hope of her but herself for his journey in life as a place to rest in, and where he might taste repose when wearied of the world, as his own domestic paradise; but this is nothing to herself-it is only to her husband that she can be anything,-"the mother of his children. (Miller, 132) It is in this regard of sexual politics this quote is significant to the

entire play. The social context of the novel suggests that girls are brought up with the idea that if they act in a way that society tells them to (which involves dressing in a certain way) they will be able to get themselves a man who will provide them with money, but also love. This what Colette Dowling called the Cinderella Complex, it stands for the attitudes and fears held by women that prevent their brain and creative part to be maximized (Anggriany & Astuti, 2003). "The Color Purple" on Lifetime It shows the power of how such myth is used to justify and sustain one sex's dominion over the other sex but it also shows how it can be a get out of jail free card for women. Race and Gender The social relationships with clothes, manners, language and strength of character of the characters and progress of the novel depict the race and gender relations in the novel. Per Tate (1991), it is upon this that Alice Walker achieved what she had in mind when commenting about the society in The Color Purple in depicting how black women are victimized and how women must recover a sense that they have worth after they become emancipated out of teenagerhood. Shug and Sofia, and Squeak provide Celie with a reason to believe in a different kind of life, one that she can control given the social repression that existed at that time. In relationships, she makes her psychological framework to be rescued so that she can eventually become involved in development deals. Third, the friendship of friends, established between Celie and her friends, introduced positive cultural in which different from the patriarchy system. The rebellious black women that Hooks (1990) describes are Shug and and Sofia as such as women who do not adhere to traditional family roles as portrayed by men. This means the contested concept of 'the feminine' can be invoked to discuss a number of social problems in the text. The Womanist literary features of the novel present the way in which black woman is objectifying by society or the way that society or the refers to them sexually and non-sexually objectifying black women and black feminists (Walker 1983). As Stade (1985) discusses, there is an unbearable concentration on masculinity in Walker's writing; producing an 'unpardonable' masculinity that produces all of the badness in the world for no particular reason. Abbandonate (1993), for example, argues that The Color Purple can be considered an explicit reimagining of a male literary tradition in which African American women are absent from mainstream, white feminist renderings of the lives of women.honors the black woman subject by emphasizing her voice as well as the systems that have long oppressed the black woman. At the same time, it's a work of the black woman's imagination, history has been turned into fiction, exploring the suffering of black African women, who have been oppressed not just by racism but also sexism and homophobia. In doing so, Walker shatters the stereotype of black females as victims within the masculine narrative implied by traditional masculine literature, by introducing us to powerful and beautiful black women who face adversity and ultimately succeed. In terms of those portrayed in the book, for example, Celie is a very thought-provoking character in terms of the effect on African American women of a male power society. So in that way, there's also a humanitarian element to trying to stomp down on that ideal of toxic masculinity that is most likely painted by the book's depiction of men. (Bobo, 1989). The feminine corresponds to the society's representation of the social construction attached to the black women in the narrative. For example, the role of Shug Avery the prostitute personified 'womanist' the movement which celebrates the black woman who is not a slave to the traditional patriarchal society's rules. Shug Avery, a bold, brash African American woman who refuses to cover up her lust, to deny her sexual needs, and to follow the traditions of her race and sex, which demand that she be "respectable," a good Christian woman, submissive and obedient to men. The African American lesbians experience is presented intelligibly, particularly in a patriarchal society that separated and ran over the right of the sexually assorted. Deen's last argument is that lesbianism is a way to resist all other forms of relationships (Barry 2002). The portrayal of Lesbianism in the novel, thus, is two-fold – as sexual intimacy between two women and as challenge to the dominant culture and masculine hegemony. In the narrative, both protagonists break free of oppression and also connect in solidarity through relationships. Around the one thing events in the book are based upon, with the character design of Celie, this is well represented. She just needs an unconditional love from her stepfather and husband despite of being beaten and bashed by them. In this way the defenselessness of the lead character serves not so much to emasculate as to empower; her friendship with Shug, who acts as both a mirror and a model to the character, offers the protagonist the opportunity both to stand up for herself and to identify a language capable of communicating her emotional desires. But then she's also Nettie, who struggles to prove herself, because she deals with racism and sexism in her life. And in the book, too, the women also manage to rise above their shortcomings just by finding a comfort in the moral and mental support. By way of political activism, womanism evolved to introduce its principal concern for the racism and sexism of the 1970s and 1980s, classism. Montelaro also commented that womanism helps mothers to make a synthesis of their mother figure and their family history in order to evolve to a difference in the oppressive conditions in

which they have lived (1996:P. 71). Hence it may be arguable that when Walker uses the charater of Celie, she can acts as a metaphor, as a representation of the experiences of black women who don't know their self-worth, even while they are fighting against a campaign of mental abuse (Barker 1999, p.56). The last and perhaps most significant speech may well be Celie's commentary about her freedom and her right to live. "I am a pauper, a black pauper at that, perchance an unesthetic one, and can scarcely boil an egg. But I'm here" (p.176). The journeying toward desire starts when Celie retakes possession of the body violated by men. The first time, she endured abuse from a stepfather into whose care she was handed after her father died and later as, in effect, the sexual toy of her husband – Albert. But once the notion of personal identity and control over her body is established, Celie develops a taste for agency in her own life narrative and in the beginning of the novel she finds her voice. Examining herself in the mirror, she weeps: "it mine I say" (p.70). She Matures and accepts her sexuality and starts embracing her individuality and her independence. Reading and writing, Celie gains a sense of herself in the complex network of female relationships—most significantly Shug and the letter of Nettie -Sofia, and Mary Agnes. Based on the multiple points raised above, it can be inferred that in womanist theory, the use of self is a fictive one. About the importance of the mirror scene in the novel, Mitchell (1974, p.40) wrote that in the mirror or glass reflects the child at peace, and the child sees reflected for it, the possibility that it could whole and entire creature, not an inchoate being of ambition, action and feeling. In this way, the mirror is represented as the means for Celie to dream and the way to see a world with other possibilities into which she can break to the present state of her life. Struggling to find her identity as a woman, Celie sees in Sugar her maternal stand-in. Staring at the photo, Celie says, "You sure is a pretty shug Avery. Pritiest woman ever was in my life. Than my mama." By acquiring her own womanist perspectives, Celie can learn about and also be able to visualize in Shug, pictures and images of the woman, the female, femininity, womanhood, or womanism according to Walker. She adds: "I see her in blond furs. Her face rouged. Her hair is something tail. The woman sits with her arm resting on her legs, left foot propped up on a car, a look of sweet satisfaction on her face. Her eyes are serious, Tho. Sad some" (p.8). A free-willed, independent woman, Shug does not care for social conventions regarding action or lifestyle. The only thing Celie loves about Shug is what Celie thinks the character has lost. In one look we are able to see the story of Shug right from her early childhood to her adolescence to being a woman. She had lived everything she saw and even got to play out her own stunts. And now she knows" (p.228). The change in Celia in this novel ends up being that at some point in this story, Shug shows up in Celia's life. Shug gets mad when she plays the song for Celie, and for the first time, she realizes that some things are important enough to make it into such a song (Ross, 2008, p.10). A lot starts happening when Shug visits, and what happens more or less "transforms" (or creates) everything in a growing and maturing Celie's world and the way she lives and behaves for good. Her interaction with Shug is what starts her awakening her sexual desire in regard to her body. All the time Shug is stark naked, she-breast, her hips, and that is exactly what Celie is noticing about herself for the first time, sexual arousal (Barker, 1999, p.60). When Celie first saw Shug Avery naked, she saw for the first time that the body was a long black body with black plum nipples like my lips and so this man was so shocking because Shug transformed into one (45). She gains physicality, which I have to assume is more to establish the strength of being on your own in her characterization. Desire, as Daniel W. Ross argues in his own discussion (2008), begins in Celie's body as she learns to reclaim it for herself after being considered the possession of men (pp.3-4). It altered her perception of what she now sensed they were for, and so now they felt good and worthwhile, not something she could do without or should get rid of' (Ross, 2008, p.11). If we are on the subject of power, once more, what afro walks Black Boy Walker makes thoughts on power as a product and the bulwark against it. Here Albert is referring to Celie as a this that he can do anything to. By exerting his dominion, Albert chooses all that happens to Celie, in spite of her state. Mark-A Christophe(1999) also underscores that Celie is only seen by her master; Albert, but not as who she is (p.103). That is a form of slavery, as much as Celie is at Albert's service. Power relations are represented in this movie scene in such a way that it substantiates Foucault's (1976) claim that women's femininity becomes a part of regulation of the body and sexuality in women. This can be seen for by the language Celie uses to describe this, "Time for me to leave you and enter into the Creation" (Morrison p.170). As she stepped into her power hunting phase, she was forced to be jealous of Sophia. Show chosen: Their character both when truly they are foolish to themselves and to the audience when she is jealous of Sofia when she rejects being notion over by Harpo. It is so sad, yes, the words I'm speaking do not make sense now, as I said it before I only say it becasue I'm a fool." (p.38) The words originate from a feeling of despair when you work over my head, which you have stated: ...this is because of I am in need of a job of such a kind, and there is no doubt that I would do it beautifully and

you are not involved, ....."Translations 7(as cited in Ibid). p.57. In this sense Berlant (1988) claims that Sofia is the first woman who has the courage to reject the pressures of either patriarchal or racist mandates that black women must town their heads, and be victimized by their white master (pp.843). Therefore, by making pants, Shug enables Celie to show her her creativity. She knows this while making pants and she knows this when, before making pants she never felt like she was worth anything in society, and suddenly she can walk with pride can be proud, because she at least chose sewing as her weapon to carve a way out of society. For Ross (2008) "Stitching is employed as a weapon to merge both the male and the female sexes into one whole, with the able masculine will represented by the masculine will, with the masculine will itself being mimicked by sewing – by the female character Celie" (p.14). She is empowered by the knowledge that she is part of a community that will pick her up from her depths of despair. In her arduous journey to rediscover herself, the character of Celie learns three powerful lessons her life. "I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly, and I can't cook. (p.176). It is the moment when she wakes from her suicidal attempt and says, "But I'm here." (pp. 176). The reason she is in the world is that she is a free person, like any person in society (Barker, 1999, p.62). The corporal indignities recounted in the Missive of Nettie serve as her excuses to keep rising from subjection. The letters open with an effort to instruct the new black woman on why she should not stand for the same treatment as that of degrading and subservient creatures. Mary Helen Washington affirms this by saying ―The metamorphosis of the black Women's literary protagonist as a figurative Tent women is experienced as she moves from the category of the victim to the category of the conscious being.― (‹ 1980, p. 43.) Such a reflection phase is proposed for Celie by Pifer and Slusser (1998) who argue that "because of the sexual abuse, Celie is stuck in a reflection phase in the process of finding her identity" (p.250). Freed at the movie's conclusion, she takes the pen and writes the truth about who she is in a blog and all her fashion hang-ups lessen. Unlike the others of the pre-feminist novels of Manning's time on into the twenty-first century, in which one gains power by means of feminine and masculine 'aphonic rebellions' at Mr.- Mr., that what causes him to realize the failure at western-knowledge assimilation and to then discard the western-competitive privilege title of 'Mr.+'&253.. Celie throws out the dominant and resistant positions' distinction and puts them at odds with one another, then she nullifies her living, and is no longer on the signifying system's cusp. She succeeds in emphasizing that the' sexual difference' is greater than the 'sexual opposition'. And they can frame new ways of thinking about the social femininity; objectifying the feminine into projected "knowability" valorises women. In the personage of Celie Walker, the novel in question insists that when black womanhood accepts powerless, it is from a position of power to serve as antidote against disempowering forces. The coming out evolves to into her strength to change her kind of letters from those written to divinity into those to her sister. Linda Tate (1996) offers what she considered the primary impetus for her transformation: a voluntary refusal in naming personal self-identity (p.131). " I am so happy. Therefore to achieve love and career and being successful money-wise with a group of friends, with time? That's kind of me fulfilling my life mission. So that, when you return, all will be living and at home. With our children." (p.183). As a result, the life life story with its account of each woman's journeys reveals a great deal about personality (Walker 178). From the female elements in the environment (indicated) that influence Celie positively, she grows from a fourteen-year-old girl to a strong woman. As an independent woman, and older woman, by the end of the book Celie is able to rise above her poverty and this point will bring her happiness. Furthermore, physical partner abuse is another way in which Black women formed their power, as well as emotional and sexual abuse under Collins (2005, p208). Now, having given birth to her children, and freed from physical and spiritual oppression, there is a complete conversion in Celie and she emerges as a living, functioning sexual southern woman. The link between black female characters is unbreakable for two reasons: it brings them together so they can afford the same power against what men consider societally acceptable and it makes them want to stop, lose faith, be defeated or deny themselves. In discussing comments, Walker impetus can be determine in no uncertain terms as teaching the need for woman to indulge ina oneness of the body while pampering and have the opportunity to learn more than the typical child-bearers condemned by Donnelly (2010, p.90). Thus in The Color Purple Walker is contesting and contesting others representations of Black femininity. Walker gives power to the women in her fiction and reshape gender identity or binary opposition and complementarity of male/female, or even female/masculine symbolic system. Read in this way, Judith Butler (1993) conceived gender as an unstable form of being that does not require distinct forms of action. At this point women exceed the normal expectations of their 'place' to create their individualism. Celie and Shug refuse to play into the heterosexual centering of sexuality with which they must comply as it places them as 'nothing other than bodies that exist in response to men' (as quoted in Butler 1999: 39). Through her lesbian relationship, Celie

is able to experience her true self and to transition from a state of need to a new, other, and feminine state of being. Meeting Nettie and realizing what is expected of her by both Shug and Sofia, allows Celie to transform, not only her soul but also the woman she will become. Diana Fuss (1992), in a phenomenology of identity as a realm in which people figure their proximity, has written that the complexity of that realm to which we give the name identity is a register of the fact that people must find a way to dispose themselves different

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