

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

As discussed in chapter two, feminist literary criticism focuses on the analysis of women's roles in the social life found in the literary works. This analysis can be conducted through the depiction of women, women's thoughts, and social perspectives related to women in the literary works. In observing the phenomenon, this research focuses on black women's oppression and their efforts to get their right and voices.

A. The Oppression towards Cellie in *The Color Purple*

From the explanation above the writer focuses on the oppressions that Cellie faced in her family, it is oppression she gets from her step father, her husband and her step son just because she is a woman.

The Color Purple talks about the condition of a young black woman that becomes a victim of rapes and beats of her step father. Cellie, a fourteen years old African-American girl is sexually abused by her presumed father. Cellie manages to save her younger sister Nettie from being abused like herself. Cellie's experience is so horrifying that she cannot tell it to anyone, including her sick mother. She can only write her sad experiences in letters to God because she feels ashamed to tell people about her misfortunes. Cellie conceives two children out of her stepfather's constant

Cellie's oppression is God. Cellie begins writing her letter to God during many abuses she get.

During Cellie's mother sickness, Alphonso, presumed to be her 'Pa', rapes Cellie saying that she has to fulfill his sexual needs. Cellie rejects it because her father's want is senseless. But Alphonso kept abusing her and didn't care with what Cellie is talking about. He rapes cellie brutally and this condition bring bad effect for cellie's psychology. Cellie becomes afraid and hate all man because she thinks that all man is the same, that they like to abuse woman. "You gonna do what your mammy wouldn't.(11).

Cellie's mother is sick for a long time. During her sickness, she can not fulfill her husband's sexual desire. In the other hand, her husband is a typical rude man that often abuse her and her children, specially Cellie. He often abuse Cellie during her mother sickness. That condition makes Cellie depressed of her mental.

When Cellie does not know what she will do, she just expresses all about her oppression to God. She believes if God will change her condition to be better. she is waiting for sign from God about what will happen in her life because she never feels happy . She is the victim of sexist oppression from her step father. As a young black woman, she can only be silent about anything that happens to her.

" I am fourteen years old. I am I have always been a good girl. Maybe you can give me asign letting me know what ishappening to me " (8).

She asks for a sign to God in order to let her know what will happen to her. Her step father always gives oppression and Cellie doesn't know about what else to do because she has no voices to express her oppression. In her age that still young she gets many oppressions, from her step father not only physical but also biological.

After Cellie's mother died, she deliver the baby by herself because her step father forbid other people to come to their house. Even when she becomes a mother, her step father still tortures her by letting it her to deliver the baby by herself.

“She ast me bout the first one whose it is ? I say God's. I don't know no other man or what else to say. When I start to hurtand then my stomach start moving and then the little baby come out my pussy chewing on it fist you could have knockme over with a feather”. Don't know body come see us”. (9).

When Cellie's pregnant become big enough, she begin to feel hurt. Because this is the first experience she is pregnant and she feel her baby will come out. No one helps Cellie to deliver her baby, and she delivers it by her self. No one come to see Cellie because her father forbid the neighbor to see her.

Cellie oppression does not stop at it. She lost her two children when she is sleeping. Cellie's know if these all her step father's act. Alphonso sold Cellie's children to other people without telling Cellie. Alphonso took cellie's children without thinking what Cellie will feel being separated from her children. Although

Alphonso makes Cellie far away from her children, Cellie has no voices to oppose Alphonso. However she always hopes that some day she will meet her children.

“He took it. He took it while I was sleeping. Kilt it out there in the woods. Kill this one too, if he can”. “He act like he can’t stand me no more. Say I’m evil an always up to no good. He took my other little baby, a boy this time. But I don’t think he kilt it. I think he sold it to a man an his wife over Monticello” (9-10).

Alphonso took Cellie’s children. For the first, he took the baby when Cellie is sleeping and he told Cellie that he kill her baby. And in the other time, he took the second baby of Cellie. Like in the first situation, he tell Cellie that he kill her baby in wood. But Cellie did not believe that, she is sure that he sold her two children. After Cellie deliver two children, she can’t be pregnant again because she is barrent.

Cellie’s mother died when she is not strong enough to know the condition that happens to her family, especially to her daughter, Cellie. At the first time she is not suspicious about her husband. But when she knows that her daughter’s stomach is getting bigger in every months, she is shocked. Her mother think that Cellie has sexual relation with her father during mother’s sickness. Her mother is cussing and scream to Cellie. When her mother died, Cellie’s eldest brother is crying and say to his mother not to let him alone. Until her mother died, Cellie never tell her mother that Cellie is actually the victim of her father’s sexual abuse.

“My mama dead. She die screaming and cussing. She scream at me. She cuss at me. I’m big. I can’t move fast enough. Bytime I git back from the well, the water be warm. By time I git the tray ready the food

be cold. By time I git all the children ready for school it be dinner time. He don't say nothing. He set there by the bed holding her hand an crying, talking bout don't leave me, don't go " (9).

What happens to Cellie inside her family life portrays the oppression she gets because of her gender. With her stomach getting bigger in every months, she must keep doing her family's household, especially, to take care her mother and her sister and brother. She has to boil the water, cook and preparing for eldest brother to go to the school. Unfortunately her mother died when she knows that her husband raped her daughter, Cellie until she is pregnant. After her step father know that Cellie pregnant, he tells Cellie to drop out from the school and asks her to stay at home.

Cellie is one of the victims of abuse done by some men. She always get the oppression from men that she ever met. Mr- looks like a good man when the first time he comes to Cellie's home. Cellie has sufficient time to Mr- because he looks wise and say nothing when her step father saying him about Cellie. Moreover, Mr- defends Cellie when her father sold her. It makes Cellie appreciate him and she hope Mr- will give happiness to her. But this condition is different when Cellie have married with mr- . Her condition is the same as when she lives with her father. He is full of oppression.

"She ugly. He say. But she ain't no stranger to hard work. And she clean. And God done fixed her. You can do everything just like you want too and she ain't gonna make you feed it or clothe it. Mr. still don't say, I go to git rid of her. She too old to be living here at home. And she a bad influence on my other girls. She had come with her own linen. She can take cow she raise down there back of the crib. But nettie you flat out can't

Alphonso beats Cellie in the church with crowded situation because he cussing Cellie keep her eyes with other man. In the fact, Cellie get something in her eyes.

Mr- comes to Cellie's house. For the first he wants to ask Nettie to get married, but Nettie is too young and small. Cellie's stepfather suggest to mr- to marry Cellie. He told Mr- that Cellie can work like a man. She can keep the household, work in the field and do something like man do. Considering her step father's statement, Mr-changed his mind and decided to marry Cellie. Cellie can't do anything and she just follow what her father say. She marries to a man older than her.

“I ast him to take me instead of Nettie while our new mammy sick. But he just ast me what I'm talking bout. I tell him I can fix my self up for him. I duck into my room and come out wearing horsehair, feathers and pair of our new mammy high heel shoes. He beat me for dressing tramply but he do it to me anyway. Mr.come out that evening. I'm in the bed crying. Nettie she finally see the light of day, clear. Our new mammy she see it too. she in her room crying. Nettie tend to first one, then the other. She so scared she go out doors and vomit. But not out front where the two men is”. (14)

According to the quotation above, Cellie tells that her father beats her because she dresses up wearing her step mother wardrobe. Cellie also tells that Mr- comes to her house. In the beginning he wants to propose Nettie but Nettie is too young to get married. After he hears Cellie's step father explanation, he decided to marry Cellie. Mr- wants to marry with Cellie because in his mind he want Cellie to

her condition family that has many children and there is no peace of there, Sofia often fight with her sister and brother, in the other way they are too.

Cellie changed to be a woman that always has positive thought about something that she faced, specially in her family .when her step son asks Cellie how to give advice and control Sofia, Celie gives the response more mature and wise than the first time.

“Some womens can't be beat, I say. Sofia one of them.
Besides, Sofia loves you. She probably be happy to do most
of what you say if you ast her right, she not mean, she not
spiteful. She don't hold a grudge”(66).

Cellie says to her step son that it's wrong to make woman the victim of men to release their emotion, moreover to beat her. Because woman is not animal or tool. Woman is a person that must be respected by men and woman has many roles in family. Without woman that's all nothing. Cellie asks if Sofia love him although she is not happy. Sofia is amazed when Cellie says like that. It makes Sofia more respects Cellie as friend and her step mother in law.

When Sofia is in prison, Cellie visits her and takes care of her.Sofia's strong spirit is crushed when she is tortured in prison, and she begins to act like Cellie, Sofia tells Cellie

"Everytime they ast me to do something, Miss
Celie, I act like I'm you. I jump right up and do just what they
say"(88).

Cellie with an image of womanhood that she has not seen before . "Shug Avery was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw".(16).

Cellie's statement above is reflected about her reaction when the first time she meet Shug. Before Cellie meets Shug directly, Cellie just looked at Shug's photo and talked to it. Cellie is really amazed by Shug because she has beautiful face and voice. Although Shug has ever had scandal with her husband but it does not make Cellie to stop adoring Shug.

Cellie instinctively knows that Shug's world is completely different from hers. Shug's world is free while Cellie's world is marked by chains and constraints. However, Cellie also senses sadness in Shug's eyes which leads her to perceive that Shugas dealt with her own suffering. "Her eyes Sad some serious tho.(16)

Cellie thought that Shug is far away from sadness but Shug's eyes is reflecting sadness. It looks from her eyes. Cellie hasn't met Shug before, but Cellie can look Shug's sadness from her photo.

Cellie is amazed by Shug. Although Cellie actually does not know who is exactly Shug. however, when she gets abuse from her husband, she thinks about Shug and look at Shug's photo. She really want to meet Shug but her husband didn't give permission. And when Harpo asks Shug to work and sing in his place, she get a sick. Hearing about Shug's condition, Cellie says to Harpo that she can nurse Shug, because

Shug's sickness and the temporary dependency it imposes on her creates a mutual bond between the two women. Cellie nurses Shug back to health and takes care of Shug because Cellie is afraid if she will dead like Cellie's mother and Cellie doesn't want to lose Shug like she lost her baby.

“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 against my knees. That feel just right, she say. That feel like mama used to do”. (57)

Cellie describes Shug like her mother. She has beautiful face like her mother and her attitude also. It makes Cellie feel comfortable beside of Shug because she feel as if she is beside her mother. Cellie is afraid if shug died like her mother. Not only she reminds with her of her mother, but she reminds her of her daughter Olivia too. Cellie looks motherly when she nurses Shug. Cellie's growth from childhood to maturity is interrupted by the abuse of her stepfather and later by her husband. Shug's presence and later her friendship enable the continuity of the process of maturity.

Shug is now fully recovered from her illness and is grateful for Cellie's kindness towards her. Therefore, she is determined to help Cellie and show her gratitude. This is evident when Cellie wants to go to the juke joint to watch Shug's performance and Mr. refuses to let her go. Shug has a strong effect on Mr .and she forces him to permit Celie's attendance, or else she will leave him. By helping Celie

Cellie in order to be an independent woman and gain her equality in her home. When Shug tells Cellie that she will leave her and going to have tour with her band, Cellie is worried if this condition will make her husband abuse her again. But, Shug tries to convince Cellie that she will leave her in the right time.

Cellie as an independent woman and during this transformation she herself is transformed. Shug relates to Cellie her story with Albert and his dead wife. Shug loved Albert in the past, but their circumstances prevented them from getting married. Shug was mean to Albert's wife, Annie Julia. She tried to ruin their marriage in hope that Albert would come back to her. Nonetheless, when Shug encourages Cellie to recover her creativity in designing pants, she invests her time, money and love to help her friend to define herself and be financially independent. The friendship between Cellie and Shug changes them both to be better persons. Shug helps Cellie to transform herself into the late Annie Julia died, Albert married Cellie instead of Shug. Shug was also mean to Cellie at the beginning of their relationship. Cellie's friendship enabled Shug to let go of the past. She regrets her past acts and realizes that Albert does not deserve her love, "Anyhow, once you told me he beat you, and won't work, I felt different about him". (106).

Shug has relation with Cellie's husband (Albert) in the past and she doesn't receive his love, she is lucky after she knows that Albert is not good man. He often rude with a woman and he is a lazy man who does not want to work.

Shug and Cellie's friendship grows stronger when Shug knows about Cellie's past. One day, Cellie tells Shug that her father (in the meantime, she thinks Alphonso is her real father) has raped her many times when she was a young girl. This is the first time that Cellie speaks about her past. Both Cellie and Shug start to cry and Shug treats Cellie very kindly and tries to soothe her suffering. Cellie describes Shug's reaction and her own sadness.

“Yeah, I say, and gave me lynched daddy, a crazy mama, a low down dog of step pa and a sister I probably won't eever see again. Anyhow, I say, the God I been praying and writing to is a man. And act just like all the other mes I know. Trifling, forgetful, and lowdown”. (193)
 Don't cry, Celie, Shug say.
 Don't cry. She start kissing the water as it come down side my face”. (109)

First of all, Cellie doesn't know that she had a true blooded father besides pa. she thought that pa was her true father. Cellie never remembers her biological father. Cellie's mama was crazy and died because of an illness. Cellie's step pa raped and abuse her. In the other letter, nettie asks Cellie if her true father is a rich man and entrepreneur. And the home that pa lived is Cellie's own. But her step father never let Nettie and Cellie to know . Cellie feels hurt to hear that. And Shug tries to console Cellie in order not to be sad.

One day Shug asks Cellie about Nettie. Cellie assumes that her sister is dead, since she has not received any letter from her. But Shug notices Albert hiding letters and she is able to get her hands on one, the letter is from Nettie, and they find dozens of other letters from her in her husband's trunk. Cellie gets so mad at her husband

who hides the letters. When Cellie finds her sister's letters, she is so angry that she cannot even think properly. She needs support and Shug appears as Cellie's teacher and spiritual guide. First of all Shug prevents Cellie from killing her husband by taking the razor from Cellie's hand and placing a needle in it instead. She does not encourage Cellie to avenge herself, "Nobody feel better for killing nothing"(134).

Based on the Cellie's statement above, Shug is worried about Cellie. Cellie is really angry when she knows that her husband took and hid the letters from her sister, Nettie. Cellie thought that her sister died but fortunatly it's not true. Her sister always sends letters to Cellie and tells everything that happens in Nettie's new life to Cellie.

Shug wants to relieve Cellie from her anger and sadness. Therefore, Shug invites Cellie to make some pants in order Cellie not really over thought about.

"Times like this, for us ought to do something different. let's make you some pants". (136). Shug suggests Cellie to stir up herself to make some pants. Shug's thinks that if Cellie has many thing to do, she will forget about her problem. And Cellie agrees with Shug's suggestion.

At the first time, Cellie writes all her letter to the God. Because she think that God will give a new life and happiness to her. Beside that, she does not know where else she has to express all oppression that she gets and she has no enough brave to tell to other people. She writes everything about her experiences and everyone that she met. Cellie describes as if God has a big body and makes other people fear him.

But after many oppression that she gets and moreover when she lost her sister, she thinks that God is not hearing her oppression, and God will just help white people. But as a good friend for Cellie, Shug advises Cellie that she may not have bad thinking about God and all man. Shug also say that Cellie can't describe God like what she think before

“Well us talk and talk about God, I’m still adfrit trying to chase that old white man out of my head. I been so busy thingking bout him I never truly notice nothing God make. Not a bad of com (how it do that) not the color purple where it come from”.(198)

In the seventeenth-third letter of the novel, Cellie recalls this conversation with Shug. Cellie has told shug that she has stopped writing to God altogether. In response, Shug tries to help Cellie develop a new understanding of God, which involves sidelining Cellie’s notion of a God who is white and male and with whom she feels she has nothing in common. Shug gently suggest that instead of being mad at God for his injustice, Cellie should reimagine God as figure or entity with which she can more closely connect. Just because Cellie’s imagnotionist of an archetypal old, bearded white man will no longer do, Shug argues, Cellie doesn’t need to reject God altogether. Shug urges Cellie to be creative and to see the presence of God in everything and everyone, as a sort of disembodied it, with no race or gender. Shug shows Cellie that she doesn’t need to reject man altogether, she explains that Cellie can have men as friends and that her life doesn’t need to revolve around men exclusively.

Cellie gains back the statement from her husband. Cellie little changed become an independent woman and not hanged her life to her husband again. She is already to leave alone and work for herself.

Shug treats Cellie as good as she can do. Shug helps Cellie to gain her equality from her husband. Shug gives new education to Cellie about God, and convince Cellie that she is available and can do many thing. Celie's comfortable life with Shug enables her to discover her own creativity in sewing pants. Shug wants Cellie become an independent woman, in order not to get abuse from her husband again.

Cellie's changing from a small girl who is abused continuously in to a mature, young woman realized herself. She frees herself from her husband's repressive control, and her conditions improved dramatically. Improved by her friendships with other women, especially Shug Avery, Albert's mistress, and by her fondness for her younger sister, Nettie-who went to Africa with a missionary group with the help of Cellie, Cellie decides to leave Albert and moves to Memphis. She starts a business designing and making clothes, and becomes a business womanand earns her own money. Albert also changes and develops his character. He begins to ask Cellie's thoughts, and gives importance to her. In a letter, Cellie writes "One good thing bout the way." "Cellie, I'm satisfied this the first time I ever live on Earth as a natural man". (230).

