



Celie's journey to individuation in Walker's color purple: A psychoanalytic study

Simran Das

Date of Submission: 08-06-2023

Date of Acceptance: 22-06-2023

ABSTRACT

The Color Purple by Alice Walker is the subject of this paper. It has drawn the attention of pundits and specialists since its 1982 distribution. Towards the start of the book, Celie, an adherent, is quiet, compliant, and genuinely and truly separated, and she later develops into a more autonomous person. Subsequently, "From acknowledgment to self-acknowledgment: A psychoanalytic investigation of Alice Walker's Purple" is the focal point of this paper. Reluctance has been killed from Walker's life. By focusing on personal conduct standards, both useful and negative, that assume critical parts in Celie's change from a day-to-day existence that is dead and detached to one that is alive, strong, recognized, and monetarily, profoundly, and genuinely free, the review expects to distinguish mental inspirations. To accomplish this, the connected hypothetical system of psychoanalytic analysis and the subjective technique for text-based examination are utilized. The review analyzes the principal text, considering Jungian and Lacanian theoretical speculations.

KEYWORDS: Alice Walker, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Individuation, self-realization, Jung, and Lacan, Celie

The undeniable worries of human associations with writing inspired different strategies for breaking down it. Because of this issue, psychoanalytic hypotheses entered the field of analysis. At that point, a mental chunk of knowledge had formed into pivotal devices for analysis, supporting the intensive comprehension of characters and their ways of behaving. Although psychoanalytic analysis has recently been formalized, it is not a misrepresentation to say that its set of experiences is as old as the analysis itself. Celie is presented in Alice Walker's third book, Purple, as a dependent and forlorn person. Celie's statement is bewildering on the grounds that she has consumed her whole time on earth living under a

savage type of male dominance in view of discourse control. The clever's first sentences inform us about Celie's father's speech restriction: "You should never tell anyone except God." It would kill your mom. Since she has no other person to write to and knows that she should never tell "anyone," Celie writes thusly, addressing her letters to God. By the by, Celie tends to her letter to the customary Christian God—one more name for the father. Since Celie comes up short on self or character, her language is basically inconceivable or uninitiated all through the whole book. She does, be that as it may form into a particular, dark female person over the span of the book. Walker shows in this book how Celie is helped in fostering her particular personality by what she would call "female holding."

The color purple has been the subject of broad review from various points of view. As a matter of fact, the proposed novel has addressed pretty much every part of human existence, bringing up various issues in the field of exploration standards relating to legislative issues, human relations and ways of behaving, and, surprisingly, petulant issues like sex issues, racial issues, and orientation issues. Subsequently, scholars have investigated pretty much every side, utilizing different basic speculations. Various works of existing grants break down the book utilizing a women's activist hypothetical point of view. Late scientists have perused the book according to this point of view and under different focal points of psychoanalytic analysis because of the mental examination, they conducted on it. As per Das, Pousali's (2015) study, "Investigating Womanhood through Female Cognizance in Alice Walker's Purple," women have been abused on account of their race, orientation, and variety. Through an assessment of the strength covered in their awareness, Alice Walker's books enable the dark female residents of their area to become women. The capacity to talk with certainty is one of Purple's focal subjects. The book also implies that Celie's



empty shell cannot generate discourse. Thus, I might want to focus on Celie's revelation of want — the longing for selfhood, craving for other people, craving for a local area, and craving for a significant spot in the Creation which should essentially happen before Celie's disclosure of discourse. For Celie, the most important phase in finding or making want is reclaiming the body that has been improperly taken from her by men first, by her horrible stepfather, and then by her better half, Albert. The point when Celie assumes command over her body, spurs her to foster a sense of personality and, later, to utilize language to spread the word. During this interaction, Celie figures out how to cherish herself as well as other people and to address her affections to a physical being, her sister Nettie, instead of the theoretical god that she has obliviously acquired from white Christian folklore. Shug is the main female character, directing Celie from self-refutation to self-completion. Shug takes care of Celie's psyche and urges her to track down her own voice throughout everyday life. Recovering women's bodies that a man-centric culture had long appropriated has been one of present-day women's liberation's fundamental goals. Being the most often utilized object of male hostility, women have come to fear, on the off chance that not disdain, their bodies. Adrienne Rich affirms that women should set over these biased perspectives up to customs advance mentally: "Yet dread and scorn of our bodies possessed frequently disabled our brainpower." Some of our most brilliant women are still attempting to think outside of their female bodies, which results in them essentially replicating past scholarship. She needs confidence and certainty because of dismissing her own self,' however she adores Shug, and their adoration permits her to recover her identity.'

My research aims to address the question, Whether Celie's individuation is a metaphor for the author, Alice Walker's own attempts of articulation of feminist ideology, where individuation happens with the negotiation of one's own desire.

Shug exemplifies Alice Walker's concept of womanism in that she can love herself as well as others, particularly other black women. Despite being Mister's mistress, Shug adores Celie and assists her in developing her empowered identity. Celie comments on Shug's photograph, saying:

Shug Avery was a lady. I've never seen a more beautiful woman. She is more beautiful than my mother. She's about ten thousand times more beautiful than I am. I notice she's dressed in fur. Her

cheeks were flushed. Her hair was formed like a tail. She was smiling, her foot up on somebody's cruiser. However, her look was serious. Ladies frequently regard their bodies as torn or broken, as Celie in Walker's Celie depicts. To stand up to the body, one must likewise defy the widespread maltreatment of women's bodies on a worldwide scale. From the outside, this misuse fills in as a suggestion to women of their corrupting and sub-par status and is an image of women's oppression.

According to C. G. Jung, individuation is the process by which an individual perceives his deepest uniqueness and forms into a mental individual, a different, inseparable whole. He connected this cycle with turning into one's own self, or "self-acknowledgment," which he recognized as coming from "inner self-centeredness" and independence. The focal point of insightful analytical psychology, otherwise called Jungian theory, is the singular mind and the quest for completeness on an individual level. Lacanian theory underscores that human subjectivity is heterogeneous and "other-subordinate," rather than our instinctual dread of having a bound-together and independent self. The texture of life in the 20th and 21st centuries is woven with change. Toward the beginning of the 20th century, individuals were pondering taking off; before the century was over, space travel was standard, and individuals could, at last, go to the moon.

Before Shug Avery, the admirer of her better half shows up, Celie profoundly wants to get comfortable with her body. While playing out the customary female job of medical caretaker for Shug, Celie feels her most memorable sexual stirrings and relates them to another worldliness: "I wash her body; it seems like I'm asking."

The stirrings in Celie demonstrate that she will find another God with Shug's help, one who gives her the opportunity to cherish sexual delight unreservedly. Shug assists Celie with finding discourse and breaking free from the ruthlessness of men by acquainting her with the secrets of the body and sexual experience. Celie, nonetheless, needs to initially see and feel her body for the presentation. This requires a hand-held reflector and Shug's affirmation that something is available. According to celie, "Ugh," in shock at what she finds in the mirror. A ton of hair, that. Therefore, my pussylips will become dark. From that point onward, she seems to be a wet rose.

The hair that covered her vagina, her dark lips, and lastly, her ladylike excellence, represented



by a rose, are the following three things Celie sees after her underlying nausea. Celie answered Shug's question with "I guarantee it" and "I proclaim," which went against her previous demolition and obliviousness of her body. This scene adjusts female engaging quality and want to moralistic designs. Sexuality is given worth inside the structure of profound quality.

Celie begins to long for selfhood by finding and tolerating her own body. She then, at that point, begins to sort out her character with the assistance of an organization of female family members that incorporates Shug, Mary Agnes, Sofia, Nettie (whose letters she soon finds out about), and Shug. Because of her newfound personality, Celie can join a local group of ladies, allowing her to escape the discourse denial imposed by men and free herself from reliance on and accommodation to male severity. Improvement doesn't comprise a line of verifiable events. Normal updates are made to the continuous cycle. This psychoanalytic formative point of view is by all accounts upheld by Walker's imaginary depiction of Celie's progress with improvement as she moves toward middle age. It wasn't immediately evident that Celie's change was the result of insubordinate ceremonies. One of Celie's revolutionary customs is to compose letters as an approach to communicating her freedom and giving the peruser access to her confidential world. In the wake of being pushed into a rich emblematic life by Celie's letters to God, she dismissed the existence she had been given and longed for a really satisfying everyday presence.

Drawing on Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalytic hypotheses and their key experiences, the individual changes herself to perceive her own value. To finish the excursion of individuation, she should go up against issues and results. Celie's psychological transformation from a dependent soul to a free woman was examined in this review. As per the discoveries, Celie's underlying reaction to individuals, things, and conditions around her is driven by an oblivious sense. Walker's book's epigraph, "Tell me the best way to do like you, Show me the best way to make it happen" (a Stevie Marvel tune), is really a reference to the requirement for prepping ways of behaving. Regardless of the chances, Celie has conquered her evil presences of self-loathing and an absence of self-character and made another life of embroidery. Celie has reconnected with her sister Nettie and their children, and she has learned to cherish herself significantly more because of her

affection for Shug. Shug's mischief causes a condition of separation or serenity. As she continued looking for a change, Celie found that it isn't generally important to remove all blemishes from one's life; rather, it includes seeing one's life's parts from a new point, with a new perspective, or from a distance—an improving of shadow and light that develops into a more veritable entirety.

Works cited:

BOOKS

- [1]. Walker, Alice, *The color purple* 1982, New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982.
- [2]. Monk, Patricia, *The smaller Infinity: The Jungian self in the Novels of Robertson Davies*, University of Toronto Press, 1982.
- [3]. Walker, Alice, *Taking the arrow out of the heart*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2018.

JOURNALS

- [4]. Blount, Marcellus. A woman speaks, 18. 118-122, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2930534>
- [5]. Ross W., Daniel. Celie in the looking glass: The desire for selfhood in the color purple, 34.1, 1988, 69-84, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2628240>
- [6]. Byerman, Keith. Desire and Alice Walker: The quest for a womanist narrative, 39, 321-331, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2931567>
- [7]. Tucker, Lindsey. Alice Walker's the color purple: Emergent woman, *Emergent Text*, 22. 1, 81-95, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2904151>
- [8]. Jones, Jacqueline. Fact and Fiction in Alice Walker's color purple, 72. 4, 653-669, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40581895>
- [9]. Walker, J. Robbie. coping strategies of the women in Alice Walker's novels: implications for survival, 30. 4, 401-418, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44329491>
- [10]. Cheung, King-Kok. "Don't Tell": Imposed Silences in *The Color Purple* and *The Woman Warrior*, 103. 2, 162-174, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/462432>
- [11]. Thyreen, Jeannine. Alice Walker's "The Color Purple": Redefining God and (Re)Claiming the Spirit Within, 49. 1, 49-66, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44313596>
- [12]. Proudfit, Charles L. Celie's Search for Identity: A Psychoanalytic Developmental Reading of Alice Walker's "The Color Purple", 32. 1, 12-37, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1208336>



-
- [13]. Hellenbrand, Harold. Speech, after Silence: Alice Walker's *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*, 20. ½, 113-128, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2904555>
- [14]. Harris, Trudier. On *The Color Purple*, Stereotypes, and Silence, 18. 4, 155-161, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2904291>
- [15]. Abbandonato, Linda. A View from 'Elsewhere' ": Subversive Sexuality and the Rewriting of the Heroine's Story in *The Color Purple*, 106. 5, 1106-1115, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/462683>
- [16]. Quashie Everod Kevin. The Other Dancer as Self: Girlfriend Selfhood in Toni Morrison's *Sula* and Alice Walker's "*The Color Purple*", 2. 1, 187-217, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40338815>
- [17]. L. McKeever-Floyd, Preston. TELL NOBODY BUT GOD": The Theme of Transformation in "*The Color Purple*", 57. 3, 426-433, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24462398>
- [18]. Harris, Angelique. Emotions, Feelings, and Social Change: Love, Anger, and Solidarity in Black Women's AIDS Activism, 6. 2, 181-201, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/womgenfamcol.6.2.0181>

OTHER REFERENCES

- [19]. <https://youtu.be/oByv7Wom-HY>
- [20]. <https://youtu.be/uRDy4M5jI-g>
- [21]. https://youtu.be/gnTj_hrCGog