

**SELF-ACTUALISATION IN TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED* AND ALICE WALKER'S
THE COLOR PURPLE: A WOMANIST APPROACH**

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Abstract

Alice Walker and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and *The Color Purple* are examples of self-aware narratives depicting the post-slavery lives of African women. The narrative approach of conveying an enslaved experience in America has faced several obstacles since slavery was abolished. Any portrayal of slavery's atrocities must fill in narrative gaps produced by illiteracy. By gathering the women into a unified voice, Morrison and Walker empower that voice to identify those things in the past that are useful and those that are not. The problem of depicting terrible occurrences in a narrative tradition marked by the paradox of constantly putting bare the horrors of slavery creates extra barriers. The paper tries to depict the self-actualisation of women who struggle with the world but finally express themselves.

Keywords: womanism, Self-actualization, emancipation, African Women's writing, slavery, Black-feminism

Introduction:

Black literature, sometimes African-American literature, is a modern genre developed in the 18th century. Afro-American women who wrote spiritual stories in early America had to balance being black and female. Being black and female is like committing double sin; hence black women suffer more than black men due to forced childbearing, abuse, and housework. The patriarchal society encourages males of all races and social groups to demonstrate manhood by abusing women and children. "Masculinity" refers to men and their effects on keeping women repressed, frustrated, and powerless. Traditional masculinity refers to a white male-dominated culture where women are underrepresented. This notion of masculinity as male allows us to discuss conventional masculinity due to patriarchy. The narrative approach of conveying an enslaved experience in America has faced several obstacles since the institution was abolished, not the least of which is illiteracy among those most touched by it. Any portrayal of slavery's atrocities must fill in narrative gaps produced by the fact that many enslaved people were illiterate or were not given a chance to tell their stories. The problem of depicting terrible occurrences in a narrative tradition marked by the paradox of either constantly putting

bare the horrors of slavery or ignoring and avoiding the uncomfortable representation of slavery creates extra barriers.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* connect with slavery's traumatic history through personal, intimate, and subjective narratives. Alice Walker and Toni Morrison write on women's issues. Both authors reflect on the agonising experiences of Black African women. The horrible treatment these women receive from Whites and inside their communities increases their vulnerability. The paper tries to depict the self-actualisation of women who struggle with the world but finally express themselves by using two well-known works by both authors, *The Color Purple* and *Beloved*. These books challenge the typical slave narrative, favoring a linear narrative from the viewpoint of a single person whose horrific experiences lead to escape from captivity and isolation from family and marriage bonds. Both novels connect with the heritage of slavery by introducing readers to the imagined post-slavery lifestyles of African women. The narratives prioritise psychological time over actual, historical time, focusing on a poor black lad and a runaway slave's inner lives.

The plot of *Beloved* is disclosed gradually by mixing past and present or interjecting memories into the present. *The Color Purple's* epistolary structure presents the story through Celie's limited perspective, without hindsight. The novel is based on Celie's letters, reports, and observations. The outcome is a narrative that deals with trauma in a direct and focused way, relying on history as memory, shaped by a young black woman's inner existence rather than an objectively confirmed occurrence. *Beloved* characters define themselves by verbalising their life experiences. Toni Morrison and Alice Walker depict black female post-slavery lives through self-aware storytelling. "Actualisation" refers to actual lines of sight or viewing locations, not reader-created thoughts or beliefs. These texts consider perception. *Beloved* adapts Margaret Garner's true story of an escaped enslaved person who killed her daughter to prevent her return to slavery for fictional purposes. Toni Morrison adds her own experience to the story to provide alternative perspectives. The story shows how the subject of a narrative can be demeaned and objectified in a competing, antagonistic narrative.

Approach: Feminism

Our civilisation has marginalised women historically. They have always been subdued by patriarchy. Since ancient times, women have been subjugated, discriminated against, and abused. Simon De Beauvoir said in the 1950s, "A woman is not born, but made." (1). Due to their biological superiority over women, men no longer feel like monsters. Women are today vulnerable and marginalised worldwide. Alice Walker and Toni Morrison are well-known Afro-American novelists with feminist themes. They have tackled women's difficulties, including the scarred selves of Black women abused by whites and other Blacks. Since black men could not overthrow white rule, black women have emphasised the struggles of black Afro-American women in their writings. Walker and Toni Morrison's writings are referred to as "womanist" (Phillips 23) writings. Walker combines racism and misogyny in *The Color Purple*. It is about a Black lady facing tyranny in a male-dominated environment. Walker's essay says that Black women are the world's mules because we carry the loads others refuse to carry.

The Womanist idea was first proposed by Layli Maparyan, who provided a theoretical and practical

framework. Maparyan defines womanism by citing Alice Walker's "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens."

Womanist' encompasses 'feminist' as it is defined by Webster's, but also means instinctively pro-woman. It is not in the dictionary at all. Nonetheless, it has a strong root in Black women's culture... Womanist 1. From womanish. (Opp. of 'girlish,' i.e., frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) a black feminist or feminist of color. "A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually... Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually... Not a separatist, except periodically, for health.' (Philip 20)

More people will understand what a woman, and a black woman, entail with this definition and claim. In a society that values classification, grouping, and identities, womanism is essential. It gives women information and strategies for self-advocacy and change. Its values include love, caring, protection, partnerships, development, and support. The Womanist theory addresses womanism's social and individual aesthetics and ethics. Womanism emphasizes self-actualisation. Unlocking one's true self and trusting one's inner light and vision helps many people understand structures and take them down. Maparyan's text applies several womanism strategies and axiologies through her testimony, which helps readers understand it.

Walker sees "womanism" as an approach for black women to distance themselves from mainstream white American feminism by challenging essentialist male and female paradigms. Walker's subjective awareness of black womanhood differs from cultural conceptions. She says that when the male gaze places women in negative space as objects of desire, they cannot identify their subjective identity. Linda Abbandonato, in "Rewriting the Heroine's Story in *The Color Purple*," called Alice Walker a womanist. Celie, like all women, tries to break free of patriarchal categorisation and "ideological master narratives" in *The Color Purple* (Philip 298). Womanism allows black women to address gender oppression without criticising black males, says Patricia Collins' *Black Feminist Thought*. Cynthia Robinson mentioned her as the "first and foremost womanist" in *The Evolution of Alice Walker*, and "her literary works and political efforts come from this identity" (Philip 293–4). Renowned womanist theologian Jacqueline Grant uses Celie's evolution to illustrate the womanist "spirit." Echoing Grant's criticism of Walker's womanist spiritual attitude, the novel, "By the Light of My Father's Smile," features a female protagonist. While Walker's concept of spirit goes beyond that of Christian Orthodoxy, it has been adapted to Christianity by feminist theologians.

Toni Morrison: Guilt of 'nonmother' in *Beloved*

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a post-Civil War novel about women (1861–1865). It is based on the true story of Margret Garner, an enslaved African-American who escaped slavery in Kentucky by migrating to Ohio in 1856. Instead of letting her 2-year-old daughter be found, she killed her. When a Posse arrives in Ohio to take Sethe and her four children to the Kentucky plantation, she flees to Sweet Home. Sethe murders her daughter and attempts to murder her other three children. *Beloved*, considered the best American novel, portrays slavery as a Tragedy-like holocaust. *Beloved*'s Mother, Sethe, struggles to rediscover her value as a mother and woman in the book. As slaves, African-American mothers faced several challenges. Unfavourable situations hindered women from caring for their children and harming their mental health. The mother's inability to provide a firm physical and psychological basis for her children affected their relationship. Patricia

Collins writes, "Black women raised by moms in hostile situations must reconcile the gap between their strict and often dysfunctional mothers and the idealised images of maternal love in popular culture." (34) Toni Morrison examines this in *Beloved* through the character of Sethe, who rescues *Beloved* from slavery. Many African-American women writers emphasise women's frailty. Sethe is disgusted that Black women are forced to submit to their masters sexually. She sees the scenario as a plan by the intellectual and racial patriarchal frameworks that led to the sexual and political enslavement of Black women by White and Black. Sethe must murder her daughter due to horrific circumstances. Sethe's baby love is tough and back. She defends her actions by declaring, "If I hadn't killed her, she would have died, and I couldn't bear it" (124).

Beloved shows the link between persecution and the American bourgeoisie. Most enslaved people depict their memories to forget enslavement—repression, and alienation from the past cause self-fracture and identity loss. Denver, Paul D, and Sethe all felt lost. Sethe's maternal relationships with her children limit her individuation and growth. She abandons herself. Sethe's investments in mothering are all attempts to make up for her loss as a daughter and to position herself as the possessive, strong, ideal mother. Sethe tries desperately to obtain *Beloved*'s understanding instead of admitting her remorse. *Beloved* strangles her mother ironically. *Beloved*'s love for her mother is horrific.

As "nonmothers," slave women could not rear their own children. "The dissolution of the family, the denial of a mother's right to love her daughter," says Barbara Hill Rigney. (130) Sethe realises that her mother's aggression is also selfless love because it focuses on ownership and acknowledgment. Sethe, unaware of the strange roots of familiar ownership, asks her mother to share her mark so they will look alike. Her mother slaps Sethe for the remark but does not elaborate. Sethe learns that hitting a child can be a sign of ownership, affection, and caring. Sethe later gets mother-like marks. They force her to act out infanticide and create wounds to symbolise servitude's savagery. She does not perceive any difference between her daughter and her "self"; therefore, she believes she takes perfect control over her. All the women in the book attempt to end their children's lives or leave them behind, demonstrating both the cruelty mothers endure when pushed and a unique form of love, which Paul D calls "too thick love" (314). Baby Suggs does not murder her children; she does not care about them.

By abandoning her children at birth, Baby Suggs is in a better moral position than Sethe. Sethe never abandons her children despite her severe parenting style. Ella respects Sethe's decision and has her secret mother fierceness; she gives birth to "a hairy white creature" (492) but does not milk him. While Sethe is criticised for her violent decision, numerous parents make similar judgments that could spell life or death for their children. These options of maternal ignorance show mother violence's diversity—*beloved* calls all women "domesticated animals" (Patricia 541) since they must produce human capital. Enslavers profited from forced partnerships with African women that resulted in pregnancy. They sold slaves and boosted their workforce without paying high fees "European masters considered black pregnancies as an excellent business." (Patricia 124). Women are worthless unless they raise their owner's stock in this circumstance like animals. Slaves were not meant to be mothers. They were only respected as breeders and stock raisers. Cows sell their calves despite having more offspring. Sethe's mother-in-law cannot remember her eight children. Paul D recognises that mothering an enslaved person is risky.

Beloved wants Sethe's vengeance for her murder. She kisses Sethe's neck to drain her life power. Denver recognises she must save herself before saving Sethe, says Denver. Denver fits Walker's definition of a womanist who loves herself first. Womanists, says Alice Walker, "Love themselves." Regardless" (Layli 4). Denver is victimised by Sethe, like Beloved, but she overcomes it through community and strength. Denver fits Walker's definition of a womanist as "outrageous, audacious, courageous, or willful" (Layli 3). When Denver looks for food, the neighbourhood realises 124 Bluestone is like them. Denver's community provides food and jobs. Denver's strength is the community's fight for wholeness. Denver helped Sethe become a successful mother and overcome past trauma. Denver and its surroundings save Sethe's life. They serve and go, beloved. Sethe's peers help her recover control. This last deed shows how Sethe atoned for her sins. Denver ends her babyhood and becomes a vibrant adult. She reinvents herself by accepting family responsibility. She liberates her inner self by interacting with others and joining the community. Paul D. is puzzled by Denver's sudden maturity. She's confident and kind. She's working to support her mother. She prides herself on her newfound development, decency, honesty, and liveness. She becomes a strong, competent, self-assured, tenacious young working woman from a shy, quiet, introverted girl at the novel's beginning.

Denver's womanist philosophy preoccupation reflects her curiosity. Alice Walker defines a womanist as someone who is always inquiring. Later, Denver will teach social reform. In African American communities, education is a powerful instrument for connecting individuals and the first step toward transformation and empowerment. Denver will be able to deny the teacher the right to express and appropriate Afro-Americans' past, spirits, and humanity as a teacher. The book indicates Sethe and the other survivors will be happy. Black women who survived sexism and racism maintained black communities together. Toni Morrison's depiction of homes and communities as places to recharge, plan, and rest is encouraging and corroborative. Community is a haven of healing, consolation, and caring for characters caught in a society that denies black people human status. Reconciliation with her daughter, the neighbourhood, and Paul D's homecoming are all great. After finding Paul D, Denver returns to Sethe to save her soul. They can all start over by focusing on the future.

Beloved's rebellious moms assert their freedom, take responsibility, and are proud of it. This section will explain how caring for children after slavery could empower moms and children. Sethe tries to care for her kids in Morrison's story. Sethe's parenting shows she's trying to be a good role model for her child. Denver asks how long Paul D plans to stay. "He understands what he needs," she says as he considers leaving (43). Sethe tells her daughter, "You don't [...] and you don't know what you need" (43). Sethe says Denver does not comprehend Paul D's importance to her. His value to her can be perceived as a father figure or a second adult who can aid them financially. Sethe was reared without parental guidance and with patriarchal ideas typical of African indigenous culture. Therefore, these variables are significant but not crucial. Denver probably sees Paul D as a mother's companion.

Despite knowing Denver's loneliness, Sethe does nothing. Sethe and the free slaves cannot come to terms, not even for Denver's sake, presumably because it would force Sethe to reconsider the infanticide. She "returned their censure with abused pride" (96). Her pride and 124's spirit keep everyone away until Paul D arrives. Sethe cannot convince Denver to appreciate love and company before Paul D. arrives. Paul D's business "made other Negroes smile" (48). Sethe notes Denver's happy sway after a day at the carnival and

"decides it's a good omen" (49).

Denver is happy Paul D has arrived yet envious of her mother's company. Sethe begins to picture a future for them after realising his good impact. Sethe accepts a man despite the odds. She may act this way because her daughter is happy about his arrival. Mother-daughter relationships are special. They have both lived as women and share similar anxieties and pleasures. Sethe is her daughter's protector, leader, mentor, and role model for younger women. Sethe, a grown woman who has witnessed how unstable relationships can be in a confined atmosphere, acts on her mother's advice to improve herself. Mother-in-law's Baby Suggs says newly-freed slaves must treasure their bodies since no one else will. Only they could fathom grace; thus, they must own their body and let their flesh relax, dance, and be loved. To be possible, things must be imaginable.

Sethe puts her personal needs above those of her daughter so she can learn to love herself and be accepted, especially in a culture where people evaluate her based on her appearance. The love between spouses can serve as a psychological wall between them and the institution, allowing them to survive. The connection is both a road to healing and remembering. Sethe says of Paul D,

Maybe this one time she could halt in the middle of cooking a supper [...] and feel the pain her back ought to." Why shouldn't you believe and remember? The final Sweet Home men were there to save her if she sank. (18).

Being with Paul D motivates Sethe to overcome her sad history. Moms counteract the psychological effects of slavery by telling children that slaves deserve affection. Sethe's parenthood experiences reveal how a former slave mother parented. Morrison shows how mothers may empower their daughters in a racist environment by becoming compassionate role models. Sethe's twofold identity as mother and daughter is needed to read her as a becoming subject. Sethe's imagined -real ties with her mother nature, her future, present, and past. Sethe seeks to replicate the mother-child attachment she lacked as a child due to enslavement by mothering others.

Morrison's use of omniscient perspective defines the work. Each segment is written from a different character's or group's perspective and employs their language. She penetrates their thoughts in the third person (likely alluding to the fractured sense of self in formerly enslaved people). The repeated use of his name shows his pride. He uses useful to characterise his visits. Despite charging a minimal fee for an open door, he is humble. Despite this, he continues to benefit from them by meeting a similar need. The fact that he persists in making his visits "useful" after the door has been opened suggests he gratifies a deeper, self-contained, if not selfish, emotional need. However, he encounters more problems afterward. He realises something is awry at 124. He can hear the hauntings from afar. Despite his guilt and desire to help the people of 124, he does not knock since he is proud of his good efforts and the wonderful reactions they have created. Even though 124 and Paul D. have evident needs, knocking on one of their doors is a loss for him. Systematic racial servitude, which is on life support, could resurface and wreak harm. He has an existential crisis and cannot live in 124. In the next scene, he discusses it with Sethe and is nasty about an untenable situation. Sethe withers under the Beloved's strength. Sethe would have died sooner, and Beloved would have disappeared without Denver's progress. Denver establishes her personality and achieves self-actualisation; she is no longer the housebound

girl.

Paul D seems unaffected by his speech because he must act immediately. Love fulfills him. Denver's guardian angels showed Paul D. the article clipping. Sethe must accept another identity to reach self-actualisation. By the end, she has surrendered to her own self-imposed lunacy, which is easier for her than everything that has happened since Paul D arrived and hurled *Beloved's* spirit around the kitchen as Baby Suggs did. Sethe's pride and shame left her helpless after the community destroyed *Beloved*. She chooses mother or nothing. Paul D is her sole opportunity at a different life now that Denver can support himself. Paul D. and Sethe may be able to heal each other from their slavery traumas. They will achieve self-actualisation as Stamp Paid did after changing his name rather than killing his wife.

When Sethe and Paul D engage, it infuses life into the essence of feminism. Sethe is clearly resolving to maintain her resolve to kill her child. One of the principles provided in the womanist axiology, self-actualisation, is hinted at by her assurance. Her acts may be frustrating, but she is confident in their justness. She knows how to shield her children from the dangers of the outside world because of her insight into these dangers. Sethe could dissociate from Paul D's claims that her behaviours were bestial and horrible. To put it simply, she disagreed with him. She recognised the strength of her affection and how to employ it. But her thoughts, emotions, and physical body were all confined by a framework that prevented it from seeing Sethe's love in a more nuanced light. No one gave her the benefit of the doubt, thinking she lacked sanity or was a monster, and nobody gave her a chance to demonstrate her considerable abilities and insights.

Morrison undertakes the challenging work of welding such cracks, allowing the characters in *Beloved* a chance at coherence and recognition via freedom and association with the community. However, as Sethe points out, "freeing oneself was one thing; claiming ownership of that emancipated self was another" (76), which is why many of the characters continue to be bound by the past, which they find unutterable. In order to reclaim their homes, Sethe and the other characters must confront their demons and tell their truths. *Beloved's* protagonists gain the freedom to yoke together their tales and bodies, spirit and flesh, and to begin constructing a sense of self that carries the promise of the future through the process of remembering and retelling their life stories and by moulding them into a cohesive whole. Morrison's main protagonists are emotionally and psychologically damaged persons who have lost touch with themselves, their families, and their communities. A sense of overwhelming emptiness emerges from this kind of isolation. At Baby Suggs's core, where the self that was not self-built is home, there is grief. Sethe's glazed-over eyes didn't even register a shadow.

Being black women sets Sethe and Aliyah apart from their oppressors. These ladies are bursting with positive, resonant energy. Through the love flowing through them, they could see things that most people either do not see or cannot see. This leads us to wonder how wrong Aliyah's transition and Sethe's murder of her daughter were. After getting past Morrison's style and substance, it becomes possible to see Sethe as a literary prophet because of the story's core ideals and profound messages. All the evidence of her life—her tale, her love, her acts, her motherhood, her energy—provides a springboard for investigating the possibilities and the enchantment of the black slave lady and, by extension, the black woman. Black women have consistently proven their ability to endure hardship, provide for their families, build strong communities, and

keep the family unit together throughout history. Many people simply gape in wonder at work. However, authors and intellectuals like Toni Morrison and Layli Maparyan provide the framework we need to give voice to our admiration and fully appreciate their contributions to society as fully functioning human beings. Thanks to the ideology of womanism, fictional female protagonists like Sethe might be viewed and considered the same way as others, like Christ, the Prophet Muhammad, or the Buddha. They are able to look past stereotypes of black women as crazy and dehumanized in order to draw conclusions that celebrate black women in all their complexity, whether as slaves or as free people.

Alice Walker: 'pseudo-existence' of Celie in *The Color Purple*.

The Color Purple is epistolary with first-person narrations, creating a symphony of voices. Because the book contains so many stories, it is unclear if Celie's story is the only one or part of a wider picture. This formal destabilization of a dominant narrative shows how a person's identity is generated through integration into a social identity and how an individual cannot be understood without their web of ties. The characters are knitted together into a unity of power and brightness that are contingent on each person's connection with and distinction from others, like Celie's patchwork quilt. Priscilla Leder says quilts embody Walker's concept of unity in variety. The characters endure injustice, violence, and cruelty. Celie's struggles and growing sense of self depend on her integration into an encouraging social friends network that shares personal experiences that attest to the uniqueness of suffering and act as connecting threads that knit together fragmented lives into a more solid whole. Walker examines how Black males harmed their women in *The Color Purple*. Sofia, Celie's daughter-in-law, says, "A girl child isn't safe with men." (23). Celie's harshness toward males begins at age fourteen, which she shares with earlier women. She's compared to a one-eyed mule sold to a customer who thinks he's gotten good meat. Mr. Albert rapes Celie's spirit while Pa her father rapes her body. Celie's sister Nettie is smart enough to avoid her disaster. Albert took her home to be his spouse and mother in the mail-order bride tradition; she was to care for his home and kids, be sexually available to him, and be seen for sexual pleasure but not heard. Her arrival in the juke joint bothers him because wives aren't allowed. Due to her apathy, Celie accepts her lowly status and consents to beatings. She doesn't concentrate on Albert's mistreatment because she calls him my husband. Shrug. Heaven will last forever, but this life will not.

In the book, Celie is fought over by various guys. Celie is the only one working hard on the farm when Pa marries her because she can labour like a guy. Celie is the nexus of all oppressions—sexual, physical, societal, and economic—but also emotional and spiritual. Despite being Mr. Albert's wife, she is unaffected by his impassioned attempts toward Shug, his old love who is recovering with them. She hides that she's emotionally and spiritually broken. Celie's vision of a woman's position has always existed for Black women in America. She is steeped in patriarchal sex roles. Celie suffers in silence and sacrifices for the cult of authentic womanhood. *The Color Purple* is about race, capitalism, gender inequity, and God. Celie, the existential heroine, suffers the most. There is no Dou ex-Machina to soothe her difficulties or pain. She resolves personal conflicts. Celie asks, "What has God done for me?" (78) He handed me a lynched father, mad mother, and lowlife stepfather. My God is male. Like every other male I know. Always low-key and thoughtless.

Celie's acceptance of her helplessness at the whim of an external force justifies her stepfather's

victimisation. The narrow realm of Celie's connections leads her to play a passive position, which reinforces her acceptance of victimisation, despite her desire to tell of her understandings and purify herself of them. According to the book, Celie's gradual assimilation into a network of at first female companions assisted her in overcoming numbness and regaining a sense of connection to herself and the world. Celie is able to talk about her experiences with someone other than "God" as a result of her interaction with Sophia, which in turn makes it possible for her to cut ties to the vengeful, incomprehensible power that is associated with Him. When Celie contrasts Sophia's audacity to her own submissiveness and observes Sophia's surprise at her perspective on life, she begins to question her passivity and becomes aware of the power of her feelings. "You ought to bash Mr. head open, she says, Think about heaven later" (44).

Sophia's tale changes Celie, helping her to perceive herself as a proactive warrior and survivor. As they share their stories with one another, the women find comfort in knowing that their pain has been heard and understood. As the two women talk, Celie begins to heal from her emotional wounds and "create quilt pieces out of these messed-up drapes" (44). Judith Elsley and others stress the significance of quilting as a symbol of pain and healing. Patchwork quilts cannot exist without tearing. The patchwork both excuses and depicts the characters' suffering and messed-up pasts. The formal development of the novel parallels Celie's maturing sense of agency; when her letters to God and the events of other characters' lives are woven together, they become part of the novel's wider narrative, like patches sewn together to make a patchwork. Celie learns the truth about her parentage from Nettie's letters, which also help her become enraged by her stepfather's unfairness. Shug Avery's friendship with Celie helps her accept her sexuality and shows that humans can form themselves via responsive interactions with others, not external gods.

Purple symbolises pain and agony. Sophia's bruised, swelling appearance is "eggplant-colored." (45). Celie's purple privates are where she was sexually assaulted. Nettie's description of Africans as "blue-black" (49) shows that their oppression has left physical wounds. Scars and bruises on the characters' bodies tell their experiences and unite them. Thadious Davis notes that these traumas can be considered badges of each character's courage to tell her story. In Walker's book, suffering is also artistic survival. According to the book, pain is inescapable, but expressing and accepting it helps the sufferer transcend themselves.

In a patriarchal system that alienates women from their bodies and spirits, Celie has never had sexual pleasure, as she discloses to Shug, Albert's mistress, when she complains about Albert's frigid and unfeeling sexual relationship. Celie attempts to escape the masculine god by loving herself and nature. Celie's idea of god grows from a white male deity to self-love, self-expression, and spiritual knowledge by respecting her feminine sexuality and body. Celie regains her imagination by writing to her sister instead of a distant, "masculine god" (277) about her husband, stepfather, and tough existence. She wants a life free from men-dominated society's limitations. Celie builds her subjective identity as an independent black woman through letters to her sister in which she communicates her sentiments and confronts patriarchal society's limits and boundaries.

Walker shows Celie's physical and spiritual abuse at the hands of men. "I'm poor, I'm black, I may be ugly, and I can't cook," a voice tells Celie when she wonders "who I am" (Walker 176). I'm present. She rejects

the notion that she lives in a phallogocentric society. She opposes abuse, examines patriarchal interpretations of her female sexual identity, and uses her feminine body's secret force to gain self-awareness. Irigarayan's "feminine divine"(456), which contends that a woman would not have to abandon her body to leave herself, her breath, and the planet, is comparable to Walker's notion of feminine energy as a source of spiritual knowledge and interconnectedness with the world. Her mission is to make the world divine as a body, universe, and connections. Celie develops self-awareness by embracing, caressing, and caressing her body in the mirror. Celie's trip begins when she stares at her genitalia with Shug's help. Irigaray depicts the "specificity" of female desire in her "feminine divine" as a "wet rose" (Walker 69). Celie draws on a reservoir of power to esteem herself. Because of her newfound belief in a benevolent it, she is free to embrace the feminine divinity and higher state of spiritual awareness rather than the repressive masculine deity that had previously dominated her life once she realises that her feminine body is holy and that she can love all of her sex-based body with Shug's help.

Shug's idea of divinity in everything affects Celie's vision of the masculine god and motivates her to seek her deity. Walker rewrites the masculine perspective on women's bodies. She modifies God's representations to leave androcentric to communicate "new life stories of God... the numerous sacred presences of God in history and established religion" (76). Celie's recovery comes through combining sexuality with religion, turning a harsh, aloof God into an omnipresent Spirit. Shug said, "God is inside everyone." (77). Patricia describes womanist spirituality as "embodied, incarnational, holistic, and a challenge to injustice" (202). This affirms black women's spirit. Walker proposes a God who fosters sensuous pleasure and beauty in Celie and the universe. Harmony and beauty recall feminist spirituality. When Celie prays, she opens herself to a deeper connection with a divine presence that transcends the patriarchal Christian God. "Dear God, dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear people, dear everything." (12). Anything in nature has the potential to be a divine manifestation. This female cosmic energy can reconcile body and spirit and produce a microcosm-macrocosm union. It combines supernatural and human might. Celie transcends a patriarchal God and finds enlightenment through her physicality and denial of a patriarchal God. She gained strength and self-assurance on her path to self-actualisation through exploring her sexuality. Celie's spiritual development is driven by her appreciation for her body, the outdoors, and other women. Walker's feminine divine and self-love define women's status, which is diminished by symbolic discourse. For her, god becomes immanent only through returning to bodily-fleshly values. She appreciates the new deity she has found within herself. Celie sees god everywhere, not as a masculine figure.

Celie attains self-enlightenment via meditation in nature, where she encounters the divine. To Walker, god is not the same as the god of the church. Walker depicts the God/ess as existing at the intersection of matter and spirit, in perfect balance with the individual and the physical world. She argues that the incarnate energy of the cosmos is present in every person and that this belief in a greater power is part of what makes us divine., similar to expressions of divinity in sensible transcendental. According to Walker, the feminine form is the cradle of enlightenment. The author describes her spirituality as "eclectic," including elements of both Buddhism and shamanism. Walker's feminism brings harmony to the whole person. Her primary concern is the harmony between human sexuality and the natural order. Whatever their physical differences may be, she thinks all individuals are spiritually equal. What Simcikova means when she says, "Expressing honest emotion

liberates you," (45) is that it allows you to let go of emotional suppression. Our deepest longings, feelings, and emotions are all manifestations of our spiritual selves. To deny or suppress them is to act dishonestly, to reject a part of one's identity, and to restrict one's freedom. Rather than expressing women's physical and corporeal urges, she loves men and women as individuals, sexually and/or nonsexually, and is dedicated to their existence and fullness. She thinks that happiness can be achieved via interaction with others and the natural world.

Summation:

Beloved and *The Color Purple* are personal, intimate, and subjective accounts of slavery at varying degrees of proximity to the institution. Toni Morrison and Alice Walker write about black women during slavery as well as post-slavery period. Both authors dwell on Black African women's physical and mental suffering. The horrific treatment these women experience from Whites and inside their communities makes them vulnerable. Toni Morrison and Alice Walker provide self-aware stories about post-slavery black women. "Actualisation" refers to actual viewing locations, not reader-created notions. Mixing past and present or interjecting memories into the present reveals *Beloved's* plot gradually. *The Color Purple* tells Celie's experience without hindsight. Celie's letters, reports, and observations inspired the work. The result is a narrative that deals with trauma in a clear and focused way, depending on history as memory rather than an objective event. She says each human has a divine quality, including a connection to nature and other people and a belief in the universe's incarnate force. Walker believed a person's bodily and spiritual wholeness is not complete until they view themselves in connection to others.

The only way to subjective identity is through engagement with others because self-recognition is tied to other recognition. There is no limbo between this world and the next where spirituality can be found waiting to deliver us. Celie's awakening to her own body, nature and other women led to her awakening to her spirituality. By gaining independence from the oppressive patriarchal culture and coming to terms with her own body as sacred, Celie experiences a spiritual rebirth and subjective reinvention. Her maturation and self-awareness parallel shifts in her understanding of God. Celie demonstrates her feminine divine by fostering divine awareness through her body love. The paper uses *The Color Purple* and *Beloved* to portray the self-actualisation of women who struggle with the world but finally express themselves. These stories defy the usual slave narrative by focusing on a single person whose traumatic experiences lead to escape and isolation from family and marriage relationships. Both stories connect to slavery by imagining post-slavery African women's lives. The stories focus on an impoverished black woman and a fugitive slave's inner lives, not historical chronology.

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