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From “Being” to “Becoming” and the Roles of Behaviors: A Psychoanalytic Study of Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*

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Abstract: This paper discusses Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*. Since its publication in 1982 it has caught attention of critics and researchers. It’s the story of a girl, Celie, physically and emotionally isolated, victim, quiet and submissive in the beginning of the novel but she later develops into a strong bold character. So this study works under the subject, “From “being” to “becoming” and The Roles of Behaviors: A Psychoanalytic Study of Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*.” Walker’s own life is a turn from a self-conscious thought “For a long time, I thought I was very ugly and disfigured” (Walker 2015) to an active social worker, teacher and mighty writer.

The study aims at recognizing the psychological motivations by specially focusing on patterns of behaviors, constructive and destructive, that play major roles in Celie’s journey from her dead, passive existence into her living bold, identified, and financially, spiritually and emotionally independent life. In order to carry this out the qualitative method of textual analysis is conducted with related theoretical framework of Psychoanalytic Criticism. The study investigates the primary text in terms of Sigmund Freud’s (1856-1939) concepts of psychology that behavior is determined by unconscious

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core issues. They work behind one’s acts and that the behaviors play unavoidable part in building one’s true self-image (Tyson 2006, 14-15).

Besides, the study seeks to draw attention with its findings, on the basis of textual analysis, to the fact that Celie’s mind and her journey is in all way an output of behaviors, to the fact that they unquestionably shape our spirit; and for such study Psychoanalytic Criticism befits more intensely. For psychology has got the immediate and sufficient goal of knowing individuals and groups by each researching specific cases and forming general principles and for most it eventually aims to help society through its findings (Types of behaviors 2014).

Keywords: Alice Walker, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Patterns of behavior, Freud, Celie.

Introduction

The unavoidable concerns of human relationship with literature evoked various methods of its analysis. It is this concern that dragged psychoanalysis theory into the world of criticism and by then insights of psychology have become important tools in criticism that help understand characters and their acts in deep way. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the history of psychoanalytic criticism is as old as criticism itself, no matter this is formally developed in recent times. In the pages of ancient literature we see Plato (429-347 B.C) was, whether consciously or unconsciously, concerned with psychological relationship of reader and text in 380 BC. Plato, with his law of “effect” of poetry on reader that appeared in *Republic*, “the power, which poetry has of harming even the good, is surely an awful thing” (600) declares one way or other a psychoanalytic criticism of poetry. Later on, Plato’s disciple Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC) wrote *Poetics* in the 4th century BC which developed for the first time the concept of ‘catharsis’ – a powerful emotional effect. Again this concept has a lot to do with fundamental psychological motivation of the reader. I will not hesitate in saying that the “catharsis” is a psychological process for it is

concerned with the human instincts of inspiration. Longinus’s *On the Sublime* is worth to be mentioned here for its concerns with the mind’s infinity. Stephen Halliwell in *Between Ecstasy and Truth* writes, “The sublime is ultimately an experience of the mind’s own infinity, its capacity to transcend even the boundaries of the cosmos in a heightened awareness of the processes of thought and feeling” (Halliwell 2012). So the traces, one way or other, of psychoanalytical criticism are available in ancient literature.

Freud’s Psychoanalytic Theory

As a theory it emerged in 20th century mainly associated with Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian psychologist, “whose profound and vigilant mind became the laboratory for psychological discoveries which have shaken the complacent conventions of western civilization” (Puner 1992), though later developed in the hands of Jacques Lacan, a French psychoanalyst. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) and later works, Freud argues that the motivations behind human behavior do not lie in our rational or conscious minds but it is in fact the irrational unconscious that drives our behaviors. Freud’s theory of unconscious (A mental process of which the person is unaware of) set the standards of human psychology. Freud asserted that people’s behavior is affected by their unconscious “...the notion that human beings are motivated, even driven, by desires, fears, needs, and conflicts of which they are unaware...” (Tyson 2006, 14-15). He further moves with the origin of unconscious by telling that the origin of unconscious lies in early years of human being or to maintain more exact, in childhood, where family performs the unavoidable role.

Freud demonstrates about the existence and nature of unconscious declaring it comes into being when we have a power to control on what we know will overwhelm us when we know it. It takes birth when we assume our place or to say more exactly we form a self-definition and we react in the result of it. This process of knowing the facts but not realizing and ignoring is called “repression.” Conscious relates to our instincts that we “want”; the unconscious to those we “need”. Hence the unconscious has the deep role in operating our life. The fact that “the unconscious wishes always remain active is quite true” (Freud 1920). This is Freud’s one of the insights.

Thus, Psychoanalysis theory is necessarily the study of human relationship and behaviors. To understand behavior this theory offers certain key facts. The psychological history of “being” is formed or built in childhood with the behaviors surrounding it, the family plays important role in forming foundation of “being.” Freud further maintains that this unconscious gives rise to three areas of the mind that wrestle for dominance as we grow from infancy, to childhood, and later to adulthood – id, ego and superego.

Freud’s Psychoanalytic Theory and Literature

We see these concepts have a lot to do with literature for literature reflects human life with various facts; characters’ behaviors and actions are driven by their psyche. “Freud’s early emphasis on an interpretation of the personality of the artist has given way to analysis of the fictional characters, of the relationship between writer and reader, or the study of the creative process itself” (Milton, Polmear, & Fabricius 2011). Freud’s influence with regard to these psychological discoveries is deep and long-lasting. His well-built theory advances solid styles to ponder over and inquire about human thought, action and interaction. As a result, these concepts, to some critics, provide fundamental principles of psychoanalytic criticism. For instance, Bijay Kumar Das in *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism* says, “Psychoanalytic theories facilitate the reading of literature in several ways. For instance, we can study a work of literature from the stand point of view of unconscious mind and we can study the text from the author’s point of view-that is, by studying the psychology of the author’s personality” (2005, 109).

Some of Freud’s concepts are widely used to interpret through literary texts. And in critical areas “Freud’s ideas on parapraxes and jokes, dream symbolism, myth of the primal horde, oedipal complex and concept of over determination have all been used by critics at various times as ways of approaching poems and novels” (Spitz 1993). We find Dr. Ernest Jones’s 1910 “*The Oedipus Complex as an Explanation of Hamlet’s Mystery*” was the first modern psychological study of literature inspired by Freud’s concept of oedipal fixation. Since then psychological insights have inspired literary criticism.

In this course, it seems natural to trace out as to what sort of questions psychoanalytic criticism deals with. The following objectives are, for the major part, the essential facts of psychoanalytic criticism.

1. To see what does the work suggest about the psychology of its writer.
2. To see in what way the work relates to the psychology of its reader.
3. To see to what extent and to what way whether psychoanalytic concepts operate the text.
4. To interpret the behaviors of characters, narrative events in terms of the psychological insights.

Literature Review

A huge amount of research has been conducted on *The Color Purple* from various perspectives. The novel has provoked numerous questions in the field of research paradigms concerning politics, human relations and behaviors, even controversial issues like sex issues, racial issues, and gender issues; in fact almost every side of human life has been touched in the proposed novel. As a result almost each side has been explored through application of various critical theories by scholars. Much of the existing scholarship discusses the novel through the lenses of Feminist theoretical framework. The recent study of the novel from psychological perspective has inspired researcher to read the novel with this perspective under some different insights of psychoanalytic criticism.

About two decades ago Daniel Ross’s research on the novel titled "Celie in the Looking Glass: The Desire for Selfhood in *The Color Purple*," discussed the novel with psychoanalytic critical theory. Ross draws upon Lacan, Kohut, and several other recent psychoanalytic theorists. He uses Lacan's theory of the mirror stage of development to reveal Celie’s need to recover desire and reappropriate her body with the role of shug only. He says, “The process of discovering or developing desire begins, for Celie, with the reappropriation of her own body... The crucial scene, I will argue, in initiating this process is the mirror scene, in this scene Celie first comes to terms with her own body, thus changing her life forever” (70). Various other external facts or roles like that of Nettie’s letters are left almost unmentioned by Ross.

A more recent than this appeared Charles Proudfit’s “Celie’s Search for Identity: A Psychoanalytic Developmental Reading of Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*” which discusses the novel through some insights of psychology explored by Donald Woods Winnicott (1896-1971), an English pediatrician and psychoanalyst. Drawing upon Winnicott’s concepts of Object Relation Theory, Proudfit finds Psychology development as the genuine cause of Celie’s emerging identity. He argues:

Drawing upon Winnicott’s concepts of the “good-enough mother”, the “mirror role of the mother”, “the holding environment, and the origin of the “true self” and the “False self,” I have traced the development of Celie’s “true self” and Nettie’s “false self” and, in the process, have addressed specific negative criticism of the novel, such as unequal narrative voices, unrealistic character development, faulty plot, unbelievable events, and the “fairy-tale” quality of lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug as well as Celie’s and Nettie’s reunion-arguing that a psychological reading of the text shows many of these negative criticism to be spurious. (1991, 108)

We see that some existing criticism on the novel provoked Proudfit; in the response he has had Psychoanalytic study of this novel. Using concepts of “good-enough mother” and “mirror role of mother”, Proudfit’s special focus is on the relationship Celie has with other female characters in the novel as surrogate mothers.

In the same year appeared Dennis Tembo’s *The Self and the Community in Alice Walker’s The Color Purple and Meridian*. For the major part, Tembo’s study applies Feminist Literary Criticism and some other psychological insights where necessary. Freud’s concept that early experiences affect the later life and American psychoanalyst Erik Erickson’s psychological stages, that of role of social world is important to form “self”, are discussed through Celie’s life example by Tembo. By the way, the findings of the work have a little to say about

these or other psychological insights. Tembo puts much weight to feminist concepts like that of patriarchal ideology, patriarchal constructions of religion, oppressions, sexual exploitation and violence.

The most recent study of the novel, “*The Female Signs in Celie’s Discourse of Desire: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Alice Walker’s The Color Purple*” by Norman David Marin Calderon, discusses Lacan’s mirror stage that of sight and desire. He applies this theory by putting the main character Celie exemplifying Lacanian principles of visual experience (gaze development) to that of desiring experience. He says about this insight of Lacan, “This cathartic process demonstrates how the protagonist moves from the paralysis of being an object to the plenitude of being a subject” (Calderon 2013, 125).

Thus, from the European scene the existing scholarship on *The Color Purple* with selected perspective serves as a model for the researcher and consequently provokes interest to work on the novel with Psychoanalytic literary criticism.

The Plot of the Book

The Color Purple (1982) is the story of Celie, a poor, ugly and uneducated girl, who has been suffering since her childhood. She never resists “just born that way” (22) nor does make any attempt to move on with “being” until a positive lively or constructive approach reaches her that gives her strength to turn her life from merely “being” into “becoming”. The story of the novel begins when Celie, the protagonist, is a fourteen years girl. She is repeatedly raped, abused and beaten by her father Alfanso (later revealed as her step father); she bears two children, one after other, but they are taken away from her by her father. Her mother dies due to sickness, cursing Celie. Her sister Nettie is the only one in the family she loves. Mr.____ (later named as Albert) asks for Nettie’s hand for marriage; but it is Celie who is given to him for marriage. Her father declaring Nettie too young gives away Celie to him. She is married to Mr.____ who has four children. Mr.____ is as bad to her as her father was. Nettie comes to live with her sister escaping her father’s evil eyes; but she is no more secure in Celie’s home with Mr.____. He has a lustful and brutal approach. Celie being worried for

Nettie’s security asks her to run away with a family she once met in a store. She asks her to write her to let her know about Nettie. But Celie never receives a letter at this stage. Celie’s life becomes worse than before because of her sister’s separation, Mr. ___’s children’s’ ill behavior, and Mr. ___’s worse behavior towards her. Her life changes when Mr. ___ brings her ill old mistress Shug to his home and Celie is assigned to bring her to health. Shug is what Celie is not – sexy, independent, bold and confident. Both women involve in quite mutual understanding and friendship. As a result they fall in love with each other and enjoy sex. It is at this stage that for the first time Celie enjoys genuine feelings of love, sex, and friendship. Shug helps her come out of her long silence and resist violence that she has been suffering throughout her life. Shug lets her know that Mr. ___ has been hiding her sister Nettie’s letters for long. Her sisters’ letters show her a new world. She is quite changed now with full of her spirit, she revolts and leaves Mr. ___ to live a new life with Shug. Through Nettie’s letters Celie comes to know that Alfanso was her step father, and the person with whom Nettie is living (Samuel) is the person who had adopted Celie’s two children from her father. Nettie has married Samuel to take care of her sister’s children after his wife is dead. They decide to return from Africa. Celie comes to know that Alfanso has died and now the house belongs to her. She has a home now. Albert has changed now; he has reformed. Nettie comes back with her husband and Celie’s children. The Novel ends with the happy reunion of both sisters, enjoying life they never had before.

Problem Statement

The study draws upon Freud’s fundamental psychoanalytic concepts mentioned below:

1. Existence and nature of unconscious, "...the notion that human beings are motivated, even driven, by desires, fears, needs, and conflicts of which they are unaware..." (Tyson 2006, 14-15).
2. The role of behaviors in building unconscious, “unconscious psychic process is the appropriate and justified expression for all established fact (Freud 1950).” The conscious, identity or

“becoming” are formed on the basis of behaviors-constructive or destructive.

3. The core issues, particularly that of low self-esteem, oedipal fixation, insecure or unstable sense of self, fear, unresolved conflicts and fear of abandonment: the core issues define our being; determine our behaviors, and reaction to destructive ways to which we are unaware.

The question this study is concerned with is to see whether and how Freud’s these basic psychological insights are operating in the text with special examination of Celie’s journey from “being” to “becoming”.

Standard of Application

To put it gently, the reasonable standard of applying this theory with particular concepts is designed through Qualitative Method of approach:

1. The study has a special focus on characters’ behaviors by analyzing how family dynamic and other external behaviors work in the novel.
2. The study explains narrative events in terms of psychoanalytic concepts.
3. The study relates psychological account of Celie's journey from “being” to “becoming” with specifically Freud’s discovery of psychological development.

Textual Analysis

After having defined Freud’s concept of role of unconscious, we can now dare to investigate how Celie’s mind works, assuming that she is to a greater degree controlled by unconscious mental processes.

Celli’s Actions and the Core Issues

Oedipal fixation, “a dysfunctional bond with a parent of the opposite sex that we don’t outgrow in adulthood and that doesn’t allow us to develop mature relationships with our peers” (Tyson 2006, 26–27), is originally used for male gender (and Electra complex is female

analog). Celie is a victim of this crisis. Her destructive bond with her father has shackled Celie’s self-respect in her developmental stage. She has been repeatedly raped by her father. It has snatched her voice; consequently she has zero confidence. It is this Oedipal/Electra fixation that murders her soul, and that doesn’t allow her to raise voice even after she is married against violent attitude that she has been continuously bearing.

Celie, in her fourteen, does not know or to say more exact realize what is happening with her; she is in questioning situations, the behaviors surrounding her have built her in the result it’s her “being” that is built. The behaviors patterns are destructive towards her at this stage, which have disfigured her spirit. “Not knowing” or “not realizing” controls her being. She has a self-definition - “just born that way” (12), “I don’t know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive” (17), on the basis of which her mind works. She believes she is failure, ugly, and born to suffer.

Celie’s insecure or unstable sense of self leaves her without voice, without power to resist violence because she is insecure, she has no one to tell, no one to support, and she has not received her mother’s love even. All that she has seen is life of violence, ignorance, fear, degradation, vomits, and beating. She “... just gives ’em everything they ast for, is the only problem” (11).

She never resists out of fear; she has failed to outgrow the conflicts that she has troubles due to fear. She has been injected that something like very disastrous would occur if she starts to speak. “It would kill your mammy” (1). Hence, she is too much scared to tell her mother or her new mammy what her father has done to her. She obeys Mr.____, even after humiliation and pain she receives there, only out of fear. She has been trying to save Nettie throughout her life only because of fear for her future.

Low self-esteem is the unconscious instinct that dominates Celie’s mind throughout her early life. It is on the basis of this low self-esteem that she has formed her “being”. She gives herself to her father with no question; in fact by submitting she spares her mother. Celie writes to

God for her mother, "She happy". Again when her new mammy is sick she submits herself before her father, “I ast him to take me instead of Nettie while our new mammy sick”, to keep Nettie safe from his sexual attack. “She scared. But I say I’ll take care of you” (3). She marries Mr. ___ due to this low self-esteem. She has been told that she is not fresh and that she is spoiled twice. Her instinct of low self-respect works in the same way as it worked before her marriage – with no voice, no resistance and no question. She takes her husband’s mistress normally, opposite to what usually other women feel about the mistress of their husbands, only because of her low self-worth.

She doesn’t know why she is beaten, abused for; rather she takes it for granted for her self-definition, of low self-esteem. She takes every abuse like “it bees that way” (letter 15).

The unconscious psychological instinct of emotional abandonment also plays its role in Celie’s mind. She is afraid of leaving Nettie alone in their father’s home. When Nettie comes to live with Celie she is quite content. But when Nettie leaves her due to low safety, fear of abandonment urges Celie to let Nettie stay with her but when she is forced to leave she forces her to let her know through letters.

Though this is self-defeating and distorting, Celie, not necessarily realizing the fact that the conflict against Sophia will not help her regain what she lost in her early days, driven by her unresolved conflicts asks Harpo to behave her the way she was behaved in her early days. She asks him to beat Sofia. This psychological instinct of unresolved conflict that lies in Celie’s unconscious drives her.

Thus, her unconscious is developed through these abusive cycles and her mind works in response to this.

Patterns of Destructive Behaviors and Celie’s “Being”

It has been mentioned earlier that in Freud’s theory of psychological development, family plays paramount role in maturing and establishing an individual’s identity. Consequently, if it is healthy, it develops worthwhile and pragmatic single, if not it would emerge as a distorting

image of a being. Behaviors (destructive/constructive) are the principle organizers there.

Celie’s “being” is built on the destructive cycles. Psychological wounds that she has been bearing since her childhood in her family have formed her as voiceless. At a very little age, when she doesn’t know what is happening with her or how to cope with the situations, she has been repeatedly raped by her father Alphonso (later revealed as her step father). The mighty tragedy is that in spite of quenching his sexual thirst, Alphonso continuously degrades and hates her. He beats her always without any solid reasons. She writes to God telling about him, “He never had a kind word to say to me” (01). In another letter she writes, “He acts like he can’t stand me no more” (03). He takes her both kids away from her. He marries Celie off to a man who is just as abusive and violent towards her as he himself was. He considers her as merely an object, like a robot that is fit to work all the day long.

The fact that the eldest daughter in a family often gets stuck with a heavy load of household chores as a child proves truth for Celie. She has been given huge responsibility of overall households at a very young age. Her mother died due to sickness screaming and cursing Celie for being twice pregnant. “She screams at me. She cuss at me” (02). She is the only big one to nurse and care other children and handle household chores.

After marriage, she expects attention from her current crush but he believes “wives is like children ... nothing can do that better than a good sound beating” (35). So, he leaves her to re-experience what she suffered in her childhood. He also punches her repeatedly and violently. She becomes used to all this humiliation. She writes, “just born that way.....it all I can do not to cry. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie, you a tree” (22). By asserting herself as a tree that bears all the day, she believes her “being” is just built in that way, for her this is the way things are. He married her only because he needed a woman who could handle his household affairs. “He tell me, wash this. Iron that. Look for this. Look for that. Find this. Find that” (24), Celie says. Celie is more a slave than a wife. This is why her personality, emotions and responses to everything are derived from such deforming behaviors.

Her early mental conditioning doesn’t allow her to function as a lively being.

Mr.____’s children’s behavior is offensive to Celie and Mr.____ does nothing to help discipline them. On her wedding day she is humiliated by Mr.’s young son Harpo. "I spend my wedding day running from the oldest boy ... he pick up a rock and laid my head open. The blood run all down tween my breasts" (12). Her life is structured through all these patterns of behavior –destructive, distorting, obnoxious and deforming. On these grounds her “being” is developed with a clear statement by Celie, “I don’t know how to fight. All I know how to do is to stay alive” (17).

Patterns of Constructive Behaviors and Celie’s “Becoming”

Celie and Nettie

Celie has only one in family who loves her consistently, her younger sister Nettie. They both study together to learn to handle the situations. Nettie keeps studying and tries to teach Celie what she learns. Before Celie’s marriage with Mr.____, Nettie tries harder to keep her sister attached with school and books. Letter 8 says, “But pa, Nettie say, crying, Celie smart too. Even Miss Beasley say so, think nobody like her in the world” (10). Nettie’s positive and loving behavior can’t help Celie to be strong at this stage, for Nettie herself is enchained through the same family parameters and that she herself is not yet an independent individual.

After Celie’s marriage, when Nettie comes to live with her sister, Nettie assists her overburdened sister with the routine house works and, more important, with her schooling. Nettie deeply wants to teach, and Celie is deeply appreciative of Nettie's patience and belief in her: "No matter what happen, Nettie steady try to teach me what go on in the world" (11). At this stage, if this optimistic and constructive approach of Nettie can’t help Celie to be free and bold but it is one way or other a productive aid for Celie for “Nettie, then, is largely responsible for Celie's being able to write these letters to God. Learning is synonymous with strength to Nettie, and she continually urges Celie to learn to be strong, to fight — and not to succumb to the "taken-for-granted"

burdens of the black woman's role” (Gloria 13). She consistently encourages Celie to stand up against all injustice she has been bearing. Nettie says, “Don’t let them run over you ... you got to fight. You got to fight” (17).

Their mutual love, patience for one another, and faithfulness keeps them united emotionally even when they are physically departed for decades. Nettie consistently writes to her. Celie becomes a woman filled with fury when she learns that Mr.____ hides her sister’s letters. Celie instantly turns to be an outrageous woman. With a newfound strength she is plugged in vengeance and is ready to kill Mr.____. The cause for the transformation of Celie from a meek and submissive to a strong woman with a loud voice, of course, is found in Nettie's powerfully written letters to Celie who has become missionary in Africa and has received high praise for her missionary services and as a teacher. Her African experiences have transformed her into a more radical woman. So, in the letters which she sends to Celie, “she uses her experiences to expand Celie’s view of the world. Relating her stories of Africa, gender politics, and religion to her sister, Nettie is a primary source of information that gives Celie pride in her African heritage and knowledge of the world outside of the American South” (Shmoop Editorial Team, 2008). When Celie learns about her children who are now with Nettie it helps Celie's heart to be hopeful. Nettie's revelation, in Letter 67, that Alphonso is Nettie's and Celie's stepfather and not their physical father brings as much joy to Celie as did the discovery of Nettie's letters.

This constructive and faithful approach teaches Celie in a great deal; Nettie’s account of African life and philosophies also aid in Celie's mental growth that eventually back her up to form her “becoming”.

Celie and Kate

Kate is one of two sisters of Mr.____ who come to his house. The sisters are stereotype women – observed commenting and back-biting others. But Kate keeps a positive behavior towards Celie. Celie writes about her, “She may be twenty five. She look younger than me. Healthy. Eyes bright. Tongue sharp” (20). She is a bold woman. She realizes Celie endures injustice. Her words of encouragement give her

in a way the strength to express her desire for the first time. Celie knows that purple is associated with royalty; that's why she says "purple" aloud when she and Kate are discussing the color of Celie's new dress. This little loving behavior becomes the cause of provision of strength to express something that is high and royal. Beside, Kate's words that become a part of Celie's spirit perform athletic part. She tells Celie that she deserves "more than this" (21).

In addition to this, Kate not only asks Mr. _____ but Harpo as well to be soft to Celie. Besides, she consistently asks her to fight back against Mr. _____ rather than submit to his abuses. She says, "You got to fight them I can't do it for you. You got to fight them for yourself" (21).

Celie and Sofia

Sofia is wife of Mr. _____'s son Harpo. She was reared in similar domestic situations like that of Celie's, but Sofia has always been filled with angry aggressiveness, a fighter, independent and sharply decisive. She says to Celie, "All my life I had to fight. I had to fight my daddy. I had to fight my uncles. I had to fight my brothers. A girl child ain't safe in a family of men, but I ain't never thought I'd have to fight in my own house" (40). She fights back if her husband Harpo fights her. She resists violence and moves out taking her children. Sofia also encourages Celie to fight back, "You ought to bash Mr. _____ head open. Think about heaven later" (42).

Celie and Shug Avery

Shug Avery is one of the most dominant characters who built Celie's "becoming" with constructive behavior with Celie. She is a singer, so she belongs to outside world – outside the domestic world of Celie. Celie chances to see her through her picture first. Shug's photograph fascinates Celie to a great level for she is the lively person Celie has ever seen as she is totally from a different world; of course it was the difference than that of Celie's. So, something lively leads her to dream for the first time. When Shug becomes sick and Celie gets a chance to nurse her to health Celie takes great care of her like a loving mother. The two women become attached to a great extent. They sing together, laugh together, cry together and share together. Shug's strength, care and love offer opportunities for Celie to grow and groom.

Shug sings songs for Celie, all the time expressing gratitude towards her for bringing her back to good health. She values Celie. For years and years she has never felt so special. The songs help Celie realize her worth. “One can never love another person or another body until one has learned to love oneself and one's own body” (Gloria 2007, 21), and this fact she learns from Shug. Celie begins to love herself. This sense of self-love she learns from a constructive and positive behavior of Shug towards her and ultimately this self-love and self-respect become the real cause of her internal joys.

Celie is in constant need of love, care and attention based on respect, the instincts of which she was kept deprived of in her early stages of development. Shug teaches her the genuine taste of love, sex and relations. Celie has emotionally grown. She is independent now. Her letters to Nettie are based on her bold expressions now, “I am so happy. I got love, I got work, I got money, friends and time” (215).

Above all, this newfound strength made Celie courageous enough to fight against injustice. This self-identity which has its roots in a positive and healthy behavior transforms Celie’s “being” into “becoming”; which results this loud expression, "I’m pore, I’m black, I may be ugly and can’t cook, a voice say to everything listening. But I’m here" (207).

Conclusion

Drawing upon Freud’s Psychoanalytic Theory and its basic insights that the human response is derived or motivated by unconscious, and that the real identity of a being is shaped through the patterns of behaviors-constructive or destructive, this study investigated how Celie’s mind works and how she transforms from “being” to “becoming”. The findings suggest that Celie’s initial response to people, things and situations around her is based on the motivations of her unconscious instinct – Oedipal crises, unresolved conflicts, needs, low self-respect, and unsecure sense of self; and her transformation from a meek, passive being to an independent bold and spirited woman, her mental and emotional rebirth, her journey from “I can’t fight. I don’t know how to fight. All I know how to do is to stay alive” (17) to "I’m pore, I’m black, I may be ugly and can’t cook, a voice say to everything listening. But I’m here" (207) is all caused by the behaviors

surrounding her. In fact, Walker’s epigraph in this novel, “Show me how to do like you, Show me how to do it” (from Stevie Wonder), is an echo of the fact that the behaviors are required to one’s grooming or other way round.

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