

PORTRAIT OF WOMAN AS SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN IN ALICE WALKER'S *THE COLOR PURPLE*

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ABSTRACT : The thesis is about the portrayal of second-class citizen woman that founded in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. The portrait of second-class citizen woman is reflected by the main character, which is Celie. The thesis is only focus on the main character Celie as woman who represent the portrait of second-class citizen woman that can be seen by her experience. The research will show how second-class woman is portrayed by Celie by using qualitative research method and the data are taken from Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. The research analyses the portrait of second-class citizen woman represented by Celie in her life, as daughter, wife, and woman in society. The result of research shows that Celie is treated as unimportant person in her family, marriage, and social life. She is abused by almost all men in her life and by the others. Celie is forced to work like slave in her own house even have to take care her husband's woman. She is also own nothing such as money or good clothes and she is uneducated. Finally, despite of the purpose of feminism that fight for equality of women, the research finds that the life of Celie is different from the purpose of feminism because she abused, treated as slave, lack of property ownership and uneducated.

Keywords: *Second-class citizen woman, domestic violnce, woman slavery, woman propety ownership, uneducated woman.*

INTRODUCTION

According to *Hornby's Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2015:258), citizen is "a person who has the legal right to belong to a particular country" or "a person who lives in a particular place". Citizen can be whether first-class or second-class citizen according to themselves. A second-class citizen is citizen that considered as

immature citizen. They need to change so they can become a first-class citizen. Kraut & Skultety (2005: 211) states that "A second-class citizen, like immature citizen, is a citizen "under as assumption". The assumption in the case of a second-class citizen is that he or she would become a first-class citizen should such citizenship be maximally extended, as in democracy."

Second-class citizen portrayed as less important aspect that can be easily described by the women in the past. Women are discriminated and treated as less important aspect in their life. They are hurt and treated like slaves. This leads the emergence of feminism to aim at defending women and trying to fight for equality of positions between men and women. Family, marriage, and social life do not only go with men, but also with the existence of women. Human civilization is made by and for both men and women. Both of them live here in a coordinated social system. Both of the species have their own right and needs to live with modest admiration, but the history of human society does not tell us the equivalent existence of both men and women.

In the past, women only stay at home, who are prepared as housekeeper and mother. This is because women cannot work outside to earn money and only rely on their husbands. They must dedicate their life to their family and husband. Meanwhile, men are prepared as the head of family. The portrait of women in the past is very submissive women. Their position which is lower than men, throws them to be unable to do anything but obey and accept it, including the negative treatments from men.

The issue above can be found in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, that reflected by the main character, Celie. This novel is about a young African-American woman who has always been treated badly by her father. She is impregnated several times by her own father when her mother is very ill. But her father always takes her baby away. Then, she marries with a man with children. She takes her sister to live with her too, but in short time her sister leaves the house. In her marriage life, Celie is also treated badly by her husband and her stepson. There is a long journey before she reunites with her sister and even her children. By the journey of Celie, some of portrait of woman as second class citizen can be found and those can be discussed in more detailed.

The study is taken to understand more about the portrait of woman in the novel, especially focused on the analysis of woman as second-class citizen portrayed in the novel. In the other words, the objective of the study is to answer the problem that stated above, how the women as second-class citizen portrayed in the novel are.

In *Hornby's Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2015:1157), word 'portrait' has two definitions, a painting, drawing or photograph of a person, especially of the

head shoulders, and a detailed description of somebody or something. The second definition of 'portrait' seems more suitable with the topic of present work, which will deal with discussing the description of second class citizen woman. Word 'Second-Class' itself, in Hornby's Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2015:1353), has six meanings, but the most suitable meaning for the topic of the present work is (*disapproving*)(of a person) less important than the other people. From the brief meaning above can be concluded that woman treated differently (negative way), as unimportant person from the man. It also can be explained in Collin Dictionary by the meaning of second class citizen, a person whose rights and opportunities are treated as less important than those of other people in the same society.

Some of people still think that woman is always after men. Woman has right to be free from sexual violence, to have equal rights in family law, to work, to own property, and to education. This idea is supported by Lockwood (2006). Woman usually represents as person who is only doing housework and always has to obey her husband.

In this novel, she describes the main character in some of second-class citizen portrayal through her behavior, thought, and Walker's explanation in the

novel. The portrait of second-class citizen woman in this novel indirectly shows the condition of black women at that time. How woman is treated by others, in their family life, married life, and social life. As seen in the novel, the portrayal of second-class citizen woman can be found by their problem, such as Domestic Violence, Woman Slavery, Property Ownership, and Education.

According to Innocenti Digest No. 6 by UNICEF (2000:2) Domestic violence, includes violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, and manifested through: 1) Physical abuse; 2) Sexual abuse; 3) Psychological abuse; and 4) Economic abuse includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, etc.

According to Hornby's Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2015:1416), 'slavery' means "the state of being a slave", meanwhile 'slave' explained as "a person who is owned by another person and is forced to work for them". By the definition of the word 'slavery and 'slave' in Oxford dictionary, it can be concluded that Second-class citizen woman is in the state of being a person who is forced to work for another person.

Woman as second-class citizen, do not have the rights to aim any property of their family. It means that they are less important people. In *Do Inheritance laws make women second-class citizens?* (BBC, 2013) states that “many women are left poor because they do not know their rights. In many countries in Africa, men will still be the one who own the inheritance. On the other side, woman, if her husband dies and she does not have son, the property will be taken by the in-laws. This condition is hard to change because it is a tradition since a long ago.

According to an article entitled *Top 10 Reason Why Female Education is Important* by Lauren Stepp (2016) there are ten reasons why education is important to women, and it is shows that women really need education. Meanwhile, second-class citizen women whose education is not really good willingly to have worse life than those who have attend school to study. Second-class citizen women consider as they do not need education because things that they have to do are deal with the house work. Beside, boys and men as the head and future head of the family will work outside of the house to earn money.

RESEARCH METHOD

This work uses qualitative research method because there is no numerical data for the data analysis. This work focuses on description of analysis and quotations from the source items especially in Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*. This method is compatible with the theory from Loraine Baxter (1996), Qualitative research is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible. The primary data of the work is Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*. The review is from the references taken from some books and internet websites which support this present work.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Almost the whole of the story tells about how Celie is treated as a second-class citizen woman. In order to prove this statement, the present work will discuss more about the portrait of second-class citizen woman that reflected by Celie by looking at how Celie receives inferior treatment by the people around her, in her family, her marriage, and her social life.

The portrayal of second-class citizen woman that Celie represents is an easily dominated woman, poor woman, and uneducated woman. The portrayal of

second-class citizen woman can be seen from the problems Celie faces.

1. Portrait of Celie as a Second-Class Daughter

In Celie's family life, Celie is portrayed as second-class as daughter. Her step father, Alphonso, humiliates Celie verbally by humiliating Celie's appearance. "He says why don't you look decent? Put on something. But what I'm sposed to put on? I don't have nothing." (Walker, 1982: 13). It also shows that Celie is lack of money, or property ownership. She does not own anything to put on in order to make her look more decent as woman. There is one more quotation that shows Alphonso hurts Celie by his words. It can be seen from the following quotation. "Well, next time you come you can look at her. She ugly. Don't even look like she kin to Nettie." (Walker, 1982: 18).

Then he push his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it. (Walker, 1982: 11)

The quotation above shows physical abuse, choking, which is according to Innocenti Digest No. 6 by UNICEF (2000:2), choking is an example of psychical abuse. The worst, besides of physical abuse, is the scene above shows sexual abuse from father to his daughter,

even though she is her step-daughter. The scene is an example of sexual abuse done by Alphonso Celie. He forces Celie to do sex with him while in the other side Celie actually does not want to do that because it hurts her, but she cannot fight because Alphonso intimidates and forces her physically and verbally.

As a second-class daughter, Celie always get bad treatment from the others but it is different with Nettie, her little sister. Nettie is very different from Celie. She considered as first-class citizen. It can be seen by her education background. She is smart, pretty and well-educated. "I know I'm not as pretty or as smart as Nettie." (Walker, 1982: 19). Celie write that Nettie is smart and pretty she is not like that. Nettie does help Celie but she does not work as hard as Celie does as home. Nettie is the one who attends school.

The first time I got big Pa took me out of school. He never care that I love it. Nettie stood there at the gate holding tight to my hand. I was all dress for first day. You too dumb to keep going to school, Pa say. Nettie the clever one in this bunch. (Walker, 1982: 19)

Nettie is pretty and she owns good things for her appearance, not like Celie. Beside Celie, Albert also says that Nettie is pretty. "Your skin. Your Hair. Your teefs. Everyday it something else to make miration over." (Walker, 1982: 26). Albert

loves to compliment Nettie. Meanwhile he always says bad things to Celie because of her appearance. By the statement above, it can be concluded that Nettie is different from Celie. She is pretty, well-educated, and has nice things for her appearance. Thinking that Albert is her ex-boyfriend means she is doing good in her social life.

2. Portrait of Celie as a Second-Class Wife

Celie gets married in such a young age because of her father's order. On the other side, she also does not want to her sister Nettie marries in a very young age. She marries to a man nearly as old as her step-father. The name of the man is Albert, but almost in the whole story she writes her husband name by "Mr. ____". By calling him as "Mr. ____", it can be seen that she does not really know her husband.

The sad fact is that when Alphonso asks Albert to take her instead of Nettie, he always says bad things about her, about she is not fresh (which is mean that she is not virgin anymore) and she is ugly. All he says to Albert is the advantages that Albert will get if he takes Celie instead of Nettie, and mostly he trying to say that if he takes Celie, he will get a woman who can work for him and he does not need to worry about taking care of Celie. Implicitly, Alphonso just gives Albert 'permission' to treat his daughter as his wish even though

it will make Celie look like servant than a wife.

Unfortunately, at the very beginning of the marriage, Celie already gets abuse by her new family. It can be seen from the quotation below.

I spend my wedding day running from the oldest boy. He twelve. His mama died in his arms and he don't want to hear nothing bout no new one. He pick up a rock and laid my head open. The blood run all down tween my breasts. His daddy say Don'tdo that! But that's all he say.(Walker, 1982: 21)

By the quotation above, Celie starts her new life by getting abused by her step-son, and her husband does not care about her.

Albert does beat Celie because he thinks she is a 'woman' who is already known that her position is lower than man, moreover she is his wife. The thought of Albert that is implicitly telling that he can do anything to she because she is his wife can be seen by this quotation. "Harpo ast his daddy why he beat me. Mr. ____ say, Cause she my wife." (Walker, 1982: 30).

Celie does all of the house work even farming is not only by her desire but because of the woman role.

The kind of how marriage is supposed to be is cannot be found in Celie's marriage. As a wife she is too dominated by her husband, and she is too

weak to fight. This case can be proven by quotation below.

She say, To tell the truth, you remind me of my mama. She under my daddy thumb. Naw, she under my daddy foot. Anything he say, goes. She never say nothing back. She never stand up for herself. Try to make a little half stand sometime for the children but that always backfire. More she stand up for us, the harder time he give her. (Walker, 1982: 46)

The above sentences are from Sofia's dialogue, Sofie is the wife of Harpo. Celie has been never treated kindly by her husband. Celie always works, and does everything Albert needs without even saying. The above condition can be seen through this quotation.

He tell me, Wash this. Iron that. Look for this. Look for that. Find this. Find that. He groan over holes in his sock. I move round darning and ironing, finding hankers. (Walker, 1982: 32)

The next portrait of second-class wife that Celie is represented in her marriage life is a poor woman. Logically, as a head of the family, Albert has to ensure that his family members get everything they need. In fact, Celie is very poor as a wife although she works very hard in her life. The quotation that proves Celie is poor, "I don't have nothing to offer and I feels poor." (Walker, 1982: 23).

The situation of Celie is really different from Shug Avery. Woman that Albert loves so much even when he already marry Celie, that he takes care of her when all the people throw her from the society because of her sickness. Shug is considered as first-class woman because she is independent and has lot of money. It can be seen from her job that is not make her to do job like Celie at house and she wears good things for her appearance.

She climbing down tween Harpo and Mr. _____. And she dress to kill. She got on a red wool dress and chestful of black beads. A shiny black hat with what look like chickinhawk feathers curve down side one cheek, and she carrying a little snakeskin bag, match her shoes.

She look so stylish it like the trees all round the house draw themself up tall for a better look. (Walker, 1982:50)

Shug Avery is a stylish woman. She owns stylish things and wears them, makes everyone know that she has money. She does not work at home at waiting for men's money. She make it herself by singing with her orchestra. It is really different from Celie that is dependent to her husband and wears old clothes because she owns no money.

3. Portrait of Celie as a Second-Class Citizen Woman in Social Life

The lack of Celie's interactions with others makes her more isolated from her environment. Celie meets others when she is going to church. In church, Celie tends to only observe the surroundings without interacting actively. Due to her fear of her stepfather, Celie tends to be more daring to see and pay attention to the women around her. It can be proven by this quotation. "I don't even look at mens. That's the truth. I look at women, tho, cause I'm not scared of them." (Walker, 1982: 15).

Celie as a second-class woman, in her social life is not treated properly. It can be seen that Celie is not really a person who is considered important to her existence in the environment. Even after what happens to her like the violence from her stepfather, the forced marriage, and the suffering she has with Albert, no one cares for her. It can be seen from the quotation below.

They the ones didn't speak to me while
I was there struggling with my big
belly
and Mr. children. (Walker, 1982: 176)

The really visible interaction which is made by Celie with anyone other than her family is the first time with Shug Avery whom she and her husband love. Shug does have a big role in making her life better and happier. However, still at

certain moments Shug also treats Celie like a second-class woman especially at the beginning of their meeting. At the very beginning, when Shug meets Celie for the first time, she says something rude to Celie. "You sure is ugly, she say, like she ain't believed it." (Walker, 1982: 50)

The words that Shug says to Celie are pretty rude words. Shug insults Celie's appearance frankly. Insulting with words is one type of violence. The violence that comes from the sentence is one example of verbal abuse, psychological abuse. So, Celie is psychologically abused by Shug because Shug does not hurt Celie by beating her, but by saying bad things to her. Fortunately, from the beginning of their meeting, Shug never hurts Celie psychically.

Shug comes to Celie's marriage life when Shug is seriously ill and no one wants to take care of her. All the work that is the process of taking care of Shug's illness is done by Celie as if Celie is a slave. Shug admits to Celie when they are already in a good relationship that she treats Celie like a slave at the beginning they meet. It can be proven by this quotation, "And when I come here, say Shug, I treated you so mean. Like you was a servant." (Walker, 1982: 117).

Celie makes herself look like a slave to her master to Shug, and Shug is her master. Shug is sick, but that does not

mean that even the smallest thing must be done by Celie. Bringing food, bathing, even taking care of Shug's hair are done by Celie. The proof that Celie is doing the smallest thing for Shug can be seen through this quotation.

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. (Walker, 1982: 57)

Celie who adores Shug is extremely happy to do it. Celie does not realize that what she does makes her look so low, that looks like a slave. This happen because Celie is lack of interaction with others during her lifetime. So, when she finds someone else and is not likely to hurt her, she will do anything to please and care for that person very well. Although, without realizing, it makes her position lower.

In Celie's social life too, it appears that Celie is not an educated person. It can be seen from her interactions with the women who help her run the business of making clothes at Shug's house. The language that is used by Celie is considered less educated for the people around her. It can be seen from the quotation below.

Plus, Darlene trying to teach me how to talk. She say US not so hot. A dead country give-away. You say US where most folks say WE, she say,

andpeoples think you dumb. Colored peoples think you a hick and white folks be amuse.(Walker, 1982: 193)

....Every time I say something the way I say it, she correct me until I say it some other way. Pretty soon it feel like I can't think. My mind run up on a thought, git confuse, run back and sort of lay down.

(Walker, 1982: 193)

The quote above explains that the language that is used by Celie is not quite right in the other people sight. The lack of language skills can be an indication that the person is less educated. A person's level of education can be measured by how well the person speaks. Meanwhile, Celie does not even care about the fact that she is uneducated. Celie does not really care that her thought and act toward her education make her look even more stupid. Celie's attitude shows that Celie is a second-class woman, whose education is lack but still being unconcerned about it. The situation makes Celie as second-class citizen. Celie, as human must be treated equally. Every human being is born into the world with the same aspect. They have heart, brain, and even a same blood color. Although humans differ in race, gender, occupation, and social status, it does not mean that other human beings may discriminate against, humiliate, harass, and punish others as they want.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data, it can be concluded that Celie is treated as second-class woman by most people around her, especially by men. The treatment of people that make Celie less important and these treatments are really different from the purpose of feminism. Feminism wants women to be treated equally in their life, but what happens to Celie is that she is being treated less importantly by the others as woman.

Celie is being abused psychically, psychologically (in this case is verbally), and sexually. The bad condition of Celie's life makes her afraid of men because most men abuse her and treat her cruelly. The portrayal of second-class woman that is treated as unimportant aspect in society which is portrayed by Celie can be seen by her life. It shows in her family life as a daughter, marriage life as wife and step mother and in her social life as friend.

In her family life, Celie is abused psychically, psychologically and sexually by her step father, Alphonso and psychologically or verbally by both her parents. She is raped in such a young age by Alphonso and she gets her pregnant twice, whose kids are taken from her but she cannot tell anyone because Alphonso threatens her. Not only that, Alphonso usually beats her and makes her work like a servant. As a daughter, she does not get

appropriate treatments. She does not have good clothes and not go to school either.

Celie, as wife is also never treated kindly by her husband whom before is Nettie's boyfriend. As a second-class wife, she is abused, she is forced to every work in the house including farming, she is also sexually forced to serve her husband although she does not like it, she owns nothing such as money or good clothes, she is even told to take care her husband's woman, Shug Avery.

Lastly, she is treated as second-class woman in her society life. In the whole novel (before she decides to leave her husband and go with Shug Avery), she never seems to interacted to the other people except her family. People around her does not care even when she is struggling with her life. Also, at the first meeting with Shug Avery, she is treated rudely by Shug and Shug acts like Celie is her servant.

She portrays how second-class woman is treated. Unlike Nettie and Shug Avery, who is considered as first-class citizen woman. Nettie is well-educated woman and she marry person she loves, not by forced marriage, she is not abused by people and not work as slave. Shug, Avery, is a power full woman that she is rich and not easily dominated by others. Celie, in the other hand, is weak and abused, work like servant and she does not

own any money or property before Alphonso dies and leaves her the house. She starts to leave her old life and she is so uneducated. Of course it is different from the purpose of feminism that wants woman is treated equally in her life, but in the end of story, Celie finally lives happily without any discrimination by the others.

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