



The Quest for Liberation: A Study of Women Characters in Alice Walker's Novels

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Abstract: - This paper explores the theme of liberation as depicted through female characters in the novels of Alice Walker. Walker, a prominent voice in African American literature, foregrounds the struggles of Black women against racial, gender, and socio-economic oppression. Through characters such as Celie in *The Color Purple* and Meridian in *Meridian*, Walker presents liberation as a gradual process of self-realization, resistance, and empowerment. This paper examines how Walker's female characters negotiate identity, reclaim voice, and challenge patriarchal and racist structures, ultimately achieving personal and collective freedom. Alice Walker's novels are celebrated for their profound exploration of the "quest for liberation" among Black women, navigating the intersections of race, gender, and class oppression. Through characters that are often initially marginalized, abused, and voiceless, Walker charts a journey toward self-discovery, empowerment, and spiritual wholeness, often labeled as "womanism". Her work consistently portrays women finding liberation through solidarity, education, economic independence, and the reclamation of their bodies and voices.

Keywords: - Liberation, female characters, racial, gender, and socio-economic oppression.

Introduction: - This paper aims to analyze how Walker constructs the theme of liberation through her women characters and how these characters evolve in response to oppressive social structures. Feminism is a theory concerning women's equality that holds that men and women should have equal shares in society, politics, the economy, and property. The characters of African women who struggle against an oppressive society are portrayed in the works of Alice



Walker, a subject that Walker frequently addressed in public throughout her life. She voiced her concern over various issues, including women's legal rights in marriage and education. She is a modern writer who captures the very ideals that spring from the hearts and souls of African women living in today's society. She admired Hurston's pride in black people, the way she followed her path, and the black people's perception of Hurston as a complex and undiminished being. However, some women dare to articulate their beliefs and then take action in accordance with those beliefs rather than cowering in submission to the intimidation of those in positions of authority. The short story "Everyday Use" is significant because it brings to light many of Walker's ideas and concerns. It clarifies what she means when she refers to her "heritage" as a particular aspect of black culture, specifically the art of quilting.

It is a fundamental work because it exemplifies the central idea of Walker's Womanism, which is that women may have to concede to one another to forge their own identities. It honors the unyielding spirit and creative contributions of black women artists. Her images of her mother tending to flowers in the sharecropper's shacks where she was forced to live and creating art from that effort became emblematic of the black woman's quest for empowerment and control of her destiny. Her mother was compelled to endure these conditions. Africa is a developing nation that maintains various cultures, ideologies, and traditional norms pertaining to women. The term "women" is most commonly used for women of African American descent. The time was first used in the essay titled "In Search of Mother Land," written by Alice Walker. Generally, women and motherhood are most commonly used by women from African-American communities. Mariama Ba writes a letter in her book so long that "As a black African, she ought to have been able to integrate herself without much of a struggle into a black African society." This is because Senegal and the Ivory Coast were both under the control of the same colonial power. However,



Africa is a complicated and divided continent. The protagonist transforms psychologically, which paves the way for the reader to understand her character. The ensuing problem is the Civil Rights movement for African American women. It ignored that they faced discrimination on multiple fronts, including racism, sexism, and classism. Despite tears streaming down her cheeks, she does everything with dedication and involvement. Meridian is given the directive to consider, as a starting point, the racist and misogynistic climate of the 1950s. On topics such as her sexual ignorance or sexist traditions, she is not compelled to address them. Throughout her investigation of the events preceding and occurring during the common right, she reveals to the reader various connections between bigotry and sexism, as well as the implications these attitudes have for the individual and society. Walker uses these novels to advance the cause of the civil rights movement. Many of the younger activists who participated in the early stages of the movement eventually became disillusioned and withdrew from public life. When rioters destroyed the entire section of American cities being replaced, television played a vital role in focusing young people's attention so they could face the antagonists bravely. Self-awareness comes to Ruth due to her upbringing, which includes the influence of her parents and the television coverage of the civil rights movement. The final words spoken by Grange to Ruth are, "he has no chance, but she does." These words have some bearing on the events that transpire in the book. The conclusion of the book focuses on what happens to Ruth in the end, as well as an elderly man who has transformed his own life and demonstrated that personal growth is within an individual's reach. The author conveys the depth of several generations through the various characters. Walker has decided to abstain from determining the future, even though the past has produced Ruth and Meridian. She comes to understand and define who she is as an individual. Remember the people from *The Purple Color* when you're playing *My Family's House*. The



author of the novel under study is the same as the novel that won the author the award for best novel, *The Color Purple*. Reading this book will bring the reader's ancestors back to mind, just as it does for the novel's protagonist. This reflects their parents' memories and those of their family's wives, aunts, and other female relatives. When they reflect on their history, they are reminded of their ancestors' struggles, misery, injustice, defeat, achievements, emancipation, and enlistment in the military, all of which inspired them to continue in today's society. Walker is adamant that African American women should be aware of their ancestors' past life. She also claims that if black women fail to acknowledge or fear the knowledge of their previous lives, they won't be able to fight or overcome their suppression. They are at risk of being continuously treated as enslaved by the white-dominated society. Readers can discover who they are as unique individuals after reading Walker's novels. The author's primary responsibility is to include the history of the past in their works so that black people can recall how those people fought for their rights against discrimination against individuals and gender. This allows black people to learn from the struggles of the past. The writer needs to concentrate on the past's religious and cultural life because it can potentially change our lives today. The current generation of black people benefits from the knowledge and insight their ancestors provided in developing their spirituality and achieving wholeness. The fiction written by Walker contributes to a renaissance of African cultural history, women's spiritual life and position, and their transformation and elevation. He asserts that playing *Temple of my Family* reawakens one's memory of the past and historical connections with others. In the book "*When God was a woman*," Merlin Stone writes. "The handling of heroes (Columbus) and their victims (the Arawaks), the silent embrace of conquest and assassination in the name of progress is only one dimension of a specific historical strategy in which the history has informed states, conquerors, negotiators, and rulers. "The handling of



heroes (Columbus) and their victims (the Arawaks), the silent embrace of conquest and assassination in the name of progress is only one dimension of an In addition, any other member of My Family who has a role The Carlotta's Temple should not forget its long and illustrious past. Walker tries to illustrate the significance of the connection between self-realization, interdependence, and relationships between people. Arveyda facilitates the development of a mother-daughter bond between Carlotta and herself. When Miss Lissie talks about her past, she recalls specific details, and in the process, she jogs her memory. She can sense her manifestation by inhabiting a variety of bodies. She knows she can look back at her previous life in Africa; she considered chimpanzees her cousins in the wilderness. Walker is attempting to make the point that there was an interaction between humans and animals in the past, whereas in the present, there are divisions and differences among people. There is a disparity in the race, gender, and economic status, and even people who are part of the human network have been gathered and separated from one another.

In *The Color Purple*, Celie's journey represents the transformation from a voiceless, oppressed woman into an independent individual. Initially subjected to abuse and silencing, Celie gradually discovers her identity through relationships, especially with Shug Avery. Writing letters becomes a powerful tool for self-expression, enabling her to articulate her pain and eventually assert her independence. Walker's female characters resist multiple layers of oppression. In *The Color Purple*, patriarchal domination is evident in the treatment of women as subordinate and voiceless. Celie's eventual resistance—leaving her abusive husband and establishing economic independence—symbolizes a significant step toward liberation. A significant aspect of liberation in Walker's novels is the role of female bonding. Relationships among women provide emotional support and strength. Shug Avery and Sofia in *The Color Purple* play crucial roles in Celie's



transformation, encouraging her to question and resist oppression. Walker highlights that liberation is often achieved through collective support rather than isolation. Sisterhood becomes a powerful tool for empowerment and resilience. Economic freedom is another important dimension of liberation. Celie's success in establishing her own business signifies not only financial independence but also psychological empowerment. Walker emphasizes that economic autonomy enables women to break free from dependency and assert their identity.

The Color Purple, written by Alice Walker, a prominent African-American woman novelist, and narrating the dilemma of a repressed black woman, was published in 1982 and won the American Book Award for Fiction and Pulitzer Prize in 1983. In *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker paints a sociohistorical portrait of the rural South in the 20th century, for which she has received widespread acclaim for her "womanist" stance. In a patriarchal social structure, women's cries for autonomy and equality have gone unheard, and continue to go unheard. Feminism seeks to dismantle this stereotypical and hazy image of women. Unquestionably, the vast majority of Alice Walker's novels revolve around female characters. In her very first novel, she attempted to reveal Celie's psyche. Alice Walker's writings demonstrate a broad range of skill and concern. It paves a clear path and evaluates the extent to which her roots in issues such as social activism, cultural representation, and the self. Her major novels provide in-depth readings, highlighting the pointed focus of her various writing aspects, such as women's independence and selfhood, resistance and settlement in human relationships, various patterns of narration, linguistic devices, etc. In her novel, Alice Walker demonstrates that racism influences every aspect of black life in the South. As Walker demonstrates, many women did not complete their education and instead married at a young age. In the novel, Walker also depicted the troubled lives of numerous black southern women. This paper is an attempt to contextualise Walker as a feminist and evaluate her



novel in light of fundamental feminism. As a social movement, feminism focuses on eliminating gender differences and promoting women's rights, happiness, and status in society. Feminism investigated patriarchy, stereotyping, objectification, sexual objectification, and oppression. As a life philosophy, feminism seeks to identify and alter the subtle and deeply rooted causes of women's dominance. Feminist Literary Theory recognises a fundamental continuity between text and world as interpreted through social and cultural production. Women are an essential component of society. The economic and social contribution of women is well known. Feminism is a serious effort to address the subordinate position of women in an endocentric world or the sex and gender-based discrimination that women experience. In her first novel, *The Color Purple*, she attempts to reveal Celie's inner psyche. A black woman named Celie tells the story in *The Color Purple* with openness and sincerity. At the age of fourteen, fourteen-year-old Celie was being raped by her stepfather. She was then married off to a man whom she neither loved nor desired. While living with him, she had to care for his children from a previous marriage and endure his beatings because he requires a hard worker on his farm. After experiencing the trauma, Celie appears to become overly concerned with the ethical implications of what she has done thus far and what she would have done but did not. Freud observes that bad luck—that is, external frustration—increases the power of the conscience in the super-ego significantly. As long as things are going well for a man, his conscience is lenient and he allows his ego to do whatever it wants; however, when misfortune strikes, he searches his soul, acknowledges his sinfulness, increases his conscience's demands, imposes abstinences on himself, and punishes himself. Alice Walker has painted a picture of black women's marginalisation at the hands of their husband. Alice Walker is the first African-American author to compose a novel in the form of letters. She imbues a reputable literary form with the tone of a poor African-American woman



and allows an uneducated black Southern woman to speak for herself. It is the process by which Celie writes herself into existence and awareness. Walker is a devoted author who rejects the concept of "Art for Art's Sake." Finally, Walker illustrates the struggle of black women living in the South, who must contend with racism and sexism, among other obstacles, such as raising children and maintaining a clean home. The title of Walker's novel, *The Color Purple*, encapsulates her fundamental worldview. Celie's existence is devoid of all hues. It is so difficult, and her spirit is so repressed, that she hardly notices the beauty of the world. In the beginning of the novel, Celie lacks the power and will to resist the childhood-imposed brutality. She is only capable of surviving and persevering. As soon as she becomes pregnant, she writes to God, "I'm huge." I cannot move quickly enough. When I return from the well, the water is already warm. By the time I prepare the tray, the food will be cold. By the time I get the children ready for school, it will be time for dinner. (3) A contemporary Black feminist statement defines the relationship between racial struggles and feminist issues, while simultaneously highlighting the differences between white and black feminism. Together with black men, we struggle against racism, and with black men, we struggle against sexism (Einstein 363). Walker recounts Celie's story through letters. Throughout the course of the narrative, Celie's struggle to find her, love, reassurance, independence, and the courage to fight for and defend her is depicted. The novel is written in the first person by Celie in the form of letters to God and her sister Nettie, as well as letters from Nettie to Celie. Through their letters, we gain an open and sincere understanding of their emotions, thoughts, and perception of reality. Celie begins writing letters to God after being instructed by her stepfather not to tell anyone else about the rape. Celie's letters to God, then to her sister Nettie, and finally Nettie's letters to Celie make up the entirety of the novel's text. Celie is completely alone after her children by her stepfather have been taken away and her sister



Nettie has been forced to leave. Ultimately, she grows a society, a large family, which includes Shug, the mistress of her husband who becomes her close friend, and others. She maintains her independence through creativity and love after overcoming dominance. The children of Nettie and Celie eventually return home and rejoice in their reunion. As an epistolary novel, *The Color Purple* employs the narrative technique of sentimental epistolary novels from the eighteenth century. Walker uses letters in *The Color Purple* as a means of selfdisclosure and as a rational process for Celie to comprehend herself and the world. The simple act of lecturing God suggests the protagonist's isolation and marginalisation: "As long as I can spell God, I'll be okay." (26).

The Color Purple, an epistolary novel by Alice Walker, is one of the best literary works that vividly depicts the sufferings of African-American women due to patriarchy, racism, and bigotry. In reality, Alice Walker's intention in writing this novel is not only to give black women a voice, but also to provide them with a path to liberation and independence. In *Sexual Politics* (1970), Kate Millett examines the term. 'Patriarchy' women's oppression: Sex is determined biologically, but gender is a psychological concept that refers to several identities that are culturally acquired. Through letters, the novel's main character expresses her thoughts, feelings, and emotions. She is an omniscient narrator; consequently, the reader is a keen, direct observer of her mental development. Her sister Nettie, her stepdaughter Sofia, and her close friend Shug are instrumental in her liberation. Celie has never experienced romantic love. She has only been harassed and abused, so it would be illogical for her to choose to have sex with a man given her history. Walker provides an excellent depiction of Celie's wandering awareness and the gradual disintegration of her understanding wisdom, Calm, as she approaches insanity. Through the image of an iguana, her psychic confusion reaches its peak, and she shrieks in terror, 'It's all I can do not to cry.' I make myself wood. I tell myself, "Celie, you are a tree." This is how I know that



trees fear humans. (23) As a result of repeated rapes by her stepfather, she is a stray and the fourteen-year-old mother of a son and a daughter. As the more unattractive of two sisters, she is literally sold to a widower who needs a woman to care for his two children and house. The children of Celie are soon placed with foster parents, a couple who become African missionaries. When the reader learns that the missionary couple is also bringing Celie's sister Nettie to Africa as a member of their household, the story takes a romantic turn. She is more of a passive victim of her environment: "But I can't fight. All I know is how to stay alive" (Walker 26), "I don't speak. I remain where instructed. But I am still alive" (29). Given Celie's violent instincts, a continuous deprivation of the body's sexual needs could be disastrous for her. A robust emotional and sexual life would have provided her with a sense of security and prevented her psyche from deteriorating. This view is supported by Freud's observation: Experience demonstrates that women, who are the actual vehicles of human sexual interest, are only partially endowed with the ability to sublimate their instincts, and who, when subjected to the disillusionments of marriage, develop severe neuroses that darken their lives permanently. Alice Walker addresses the issue of a wife's adjustment to her husband's home. The vision embodied in her novels is that the solution to a problem is not to continually find fault in the husband's behaviour, but to maintain an optimistic outlook. She addresses the issue causing discord in families, as in each of them the wife is despondent with her husband. Daniel Ross describes the significance of regaining control of one's body for self-affirmation as follows: One of the primary projects of modern feminism has been to restore women's bodies. Due to the fact that the female body is the primary target of male aggression, women have learned to fear or even despise their bodies. Consequently, women frequently view their bodies as torn or fragmented, as Celie demonstrates. To confront the body is to confront not only an individual's abuse, but also the abuse of women's



bodies throughout history, as the external symbol of women's enslavement; this abuse represents forewomen a reminder of her debasement and relegation to a subordinate position. (Ross 70) At the beginning of her journey, Nettie is dissatisfied with her own lack of knowledge, and by the end of it, her idealism regarding the role of missionaries has disintegrated. Celie, I had no idea I was so ignorant. I knew so little about myself that it wouldn't have filled a thimble! Miss Beasley always stated that I was the most intelligent student she ever taught. However, I am grateful to her for teaching me to learn independently by reading, studying, and writing legibly. And for keeping my curiosity alive in some way (123-24). The relationship between Shug and Celie is significant not only for Celie, but also for Shug, who, with Celie's assistance, is able to deconstruct the isolation caused by the black community's discrimination against a woman who can support herself as a bar singer. It is not coincidental that Celie begins to consider herself in a broader context during this activity: First time I consider the world. What does the world have to do with anything? Then I imagine myself quilting between Shug Avery and Mr.. The three of us assembled. For the first time in my life, I feel perfectly normal" (61). Her conversation with Mr. before departing for Memphis reveals a parallel expansion of consciousness. The novel depicts Celie's self-doubts, fears, shortcomings, and quiet indignation toward expression. Alice Walker is not only writing about Celie, who is attempting to escape her married life and struggle with the issue of selfdisclosure, but also, through Celie, about those women whose voices have been stifled, those who have been enslaved by recalcitrant culture and tradition, those who have been compelled to follow so-called patriarchal codes and conducts, and those who have been deprived of the opportunity to enjoy their lives. In response to her husband's remark, she said, "You're black, you're porous, you're ugly, and you're a woman." In her remark, Celie adds a brief but significant statement to the string of adjectives being used to describe her: "I'm pore. I am black;



I may be unattractive and incapable of cooking. But I am here" (187). Significantly, the novel's female characters Celie, Nettie, Shug, Sofia, and Mary Agnes developed a close sisterhood. Nettie, Sofia, and Shug, three of the main characters in *The Color Purple*, transcend the strict southern definitions of Black womanhood. In the novel *The Color Purple*, Walker appears to accurately depict the rural, black South. Each character's description of the land and the labour required to cultivate crops illustrates the strong work ethic instilled in black southerners after the Civil War. Throughout the novel, she demonstrates the uneducated nature of blacks through their conversation by employing improper grammar and spelling. Finally, Walker illustrates the struggle of black women living in the South, who must contend with racism and sexism, among other obstacles, such as raising children and maintaining a clean home. Therefore, Walker is able to present the dark shade in a colourful world, allowing the reader to create an almost exact mental image of the South, regardless of whether or not he or she has ever visited the region.

This article attempts to provide a critical analysis of black feminism and the oppression of women. In a number of different ways, the author's female characters have been negatively affected by the patriarchal society. This article brings to a close Alice Walker's books by describing a woman's descent into poverty and hypocrisy as a means of surviving male oppression and betrayal. Infidelity is discussed, both within families and within society. Alice Walker, who is also a poet and an activist, is making an effort to raise awareness within the organization through her writings. She endeavors to preserve the memory of the past in the hopes that others will learn from their mistakes and work together to establish equality. It is not fair to say that black women from middle-class backgrounds play an equal role in today's world. She is attempting to convey the message that one should not try to repress or eradicate memory but rather integrate it and infuse it with creativity consciously. The recollections of Miss Lisse's



previous lives provide helpful, albeit fictitious, methods for exemplifying the historical context of dark womanhood in a century dominated by solitary characters. She is well aware that once she has reached a state of satisfaction, she will return a few more times.

Similarly, in *Meridian*, the protagonist Meridian Hill seeks liberation through active participation in the Civil Rights Movement. Her struggle is both personal and political, reflecting a commitment to social justice as well as self-discovery. In *Meridian*, resistance takes a collective form, as women actively participate in political movements. Liberation here is not just individual but also communal, emphasizing solidarity among oppressed groups.

Alice Walker defined the struggle of Black women through the story of Meridian. The Black girl grows up in a hostile and violent environment from birth. The only way she can survive in the harsh environment around her is to become resilient within herself. These young girls learn how to defend themselves at a young age by being very tolerant and determined to live, since their parents and other black males are unable to keep them safe. At the beginning of the book, Meridian appears to be on the verge of disintegration. Her hair has fallen out, and she has episodes of fainting. Her face alarmed him. It was wasted and rough, her skin a sallow unhealthy brown, with pimples across her forehead and on her chin. Her eyes were glossy and yellow and did not seem to focus at once. Her breath, like her clothes, was sour. (11) The reason she is killed by her husband is because she “had gone outside the home to seek her pleasuring, while still expecting him to fool the bills.” In her capacity as a “human rights crusader,” Meridian aggressively challenges this perception of women as pessimistic, thoughtless bodies, sex objects, and objects to hang fake hair and nails on. In addition to having a masculine appearance, Meridian behaves like a man. Her steadfast leadership qualities, often associated with men, determine her “place” as a woman. In this way, her success in challenging tradition serves as a



sharp critique of America's reliance on roles. She embodies Toni Cade's claim: You find yourself in destroying illusions, smashing myths... being responsible to some truth, to the struggle. That entails ... cracking through the veneer of this sick society's definition of masculine and feminine. (26) Meridian started looking for completeness from a young age, even as a little kid. She was able to establish a link with the American people's shared history by following in the footsteps of her father and great-grandmother. This particular association emphasizes the feminist philosophy of striving for the collective survival of the community as a whole. By returning the property to its rightful owners, her father takes the injustice against the Native Americans one step farther. Her greatgranddaughter inherits the "outrageousness" from her great-grandmother, Feather Mae. After her blissful encounter at the mound, Feather Mae awakens to the everlasting existence in every aspect of this universe. She even goes so far as to start worshiping nature and rejecting the traps of established religions: Later Feather Mae renounced all religion that was not based on the experience of physical ecstasy-thereby shocking her Baptist church and its unsympathetic congregation – and near the end of her life she loved walking nude about her yard and worshipped only the sun. (50) Due to her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, Meridian receives a scholarship from a well-to-do white family in Connecticut. She transfers to Saxon College, which is located just across the street from Truman's school, R. Baron College, and only two hours away. The Saxon College greatly influences her life. She works as an assistant to a black professor named Raymond, who, like Truman, is a fervent defender of black people's rights and a champion of defending the virtue of black women from white males, since her scholarship is insufficient to cover upkeep and pocket money. But in his private life, he treats black women with the same oppression that white people do. Meridian manages to live with him by making concessions. They serve as a constant



reminder of the sex-related risks in her pursuit of identity and selffulfilment. Meridian is not prepared to make these concessions, at least not for now. After a year at Saxon College, Meridian rests under the Sojourner, the biggest tree on campus, and feels at peace with herself. She believes that no one can see her because she's invisible. Being invisible may cause her to forget that she has renounced her responsibilities as a mother and wife. She also feels guilty about her mother's death, believing that she is to blame for it. She struggles to understand why she feels the need to ask her mother for forgiveness. She also aims to get over her shame about being a black woman. Walker underscores this concept throughout the book by referencing Sojourner's story of the tree: Louvinie's tongue was clipped out the root. Choking on blood, she saw her tongue grounded under the hell of Master Saxon. Mutely, she pleaded for it, because she knew the curse of her nature land without one's tongue one's mouth or in a special spot of one's own choosing, the singer in one's soul was lost forever, to grant and snort through eternity like a pig. Louvinie 's tongue was kicked toward her in a hail of sand. It was like to think pink rose petal bloody at the root. In her own cabin she smoked it until it was a soft and pliable as leather. On a certain day, when the sun turned briefly black, she buried at under a scrawny magnolia tree of the Saxon plantation. (33-34) A well-known folklore surrounds the Sojourner tree. Naturally, a tall, slender, and powerful slave named Louvinie planted it on Saxon Plantation and later at Saxon College. Other slaves believed the tree contained power because of its history. Rumors circulated that the tree possessed the ability to generate music and communicate, and birds held it in high regard. People also claimed that the tree could block out light. Once within its branches, it was impossible to see a runaway slave. The Sojourner tree is an organic allegory. It offers a different interpretation of black history and language from that of white people. It provides historical context for Meridian's contributions to the movement. The tree's history criticizes



traditional black motherhood. Meridian knows that Sojourner is the live embodiment of Louvinie’s voice and narrative—the vitality and eloquence given to the black women who follow her by the deceased slave. Consequently, Meridian acknowledges Louvinie, who defies “to accept powerlessness or voicelessness, even though she is a slave who cannot speak.” (Collaham 230). Her path towards completeness and satisfaction begins when she discovers the hidden gems that have allowed the African American community to survive in the face of oppression from white America. The compelling and poignant tale of Louvinie highlights the oral tradition’s ability to maintain and reinforce the narrative. A slave named Louvinie had a terrifying talent for telling spine-tingling tales. The children of her Lord were very much looking forward to her tales. A weak heart caused one of the master’s children to fall and die one day in the midst of a narrative. In addition, Louvinie’s Sojourner tree honors Sojourner Truth, an escaped slave whose poignant plea and rejoinder, “And ain’t I a woman?” ignited the 1853 Akron women’s rights conference. Sojourner Truth questioned white women who attempted to deny her the opportunity to speak. Her legendary voice, like Louvinie’s, symbolizes the fight for equality and completeness. When Meridian was younger, the tree gave her the confidence to take on challenges that other black women would never consider or undertake. Meridian successfully raises an orphan daughter after sacrificing her own child. Even without the constraints of social norms that define motherhood, Meridian can fully fulfill the responsibilities of motherhood. Meridian’s personality took on a new dimension after learning about the wild child’s narrative. For her whole thirteen years, the little girl known as the “wild child” had survived without the support of her parents, relatives, or friends. As the saying goes, the wild child had already been five or six years old when she suddenly emerged one day in the ghetto that surrounds Saxon College. Meridian’s initial reaction to this child marked the beginning of a significant trend in



her life. The day Meridian saw the wild child she withdraw to her room in the honors house for a long time. When the other students looked into her room they were surprised to see her lying like a corpse on the floor beside her bed, eyes closed and hands limp at her sides. While lying there she did not respond to anything; not the call to lunch, not the phone, nothing. (24) Moreover, the act of having children is associated with both suicide and homicide. The untamed youngster demonstrates “how alone a woman is because of her body.” The young ladies at Saxon College come to understand that their destiny is intertwined with that of the wild child after she is slain. When the President refuses to allow them to hold the burial at the campus chapel, they turn to Sojourner, one of their protectors—the nation’s largest magnolia tree, known for its ethereal, maternal influence. Meridian presents new possibilities for black women. The black lady, who had been living her whole life on her knees and back, takes a firm stance against the brutality and decides to live up to her own beliefs. The novel’s female protagonist embodies universal themes such as self-awareness and self-realization. Meridian triumphs and develops into a more fully realized human person on all levels— mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Adolescent Meridian finds herself in an unhappy marriage against her will. After finding out she is pregnant, Meridian unwillingly marries Eddie, the child’s father, and tries to be a “proper” wife and mother. She harbors thoughts of killing her child due to the oppressive and limiting nature of her position, but ultimately, she chooses not to harm her own body and instead contemplates suicide. When her marriage finally fails, she believes she is saving both of their lives by giving her child away. Meridian then goes on to attend college, participate in the Civil Rights Movement, and join a revolutionary organization, where she learns that she cannot be slain in the name of revolution. Another step toward her liberation as a woman is Meridian’s refusal to accept the role of an “adopting mother,” which Christianity prescribes. Meridian’s resolve is such that not even



her mother's emotional pleadings can convince her to take on the responsibility of raising her kid. Moreover, unlike a typical mother, she refuses to be Truman's mother and aborts his child instead. She is able to achieve "the highest point of power, prosperity, splendor, health, vigor, etc." thanks to her new identity and way of life. She develops "a completeness of being" as a result (Washington 148). Her journey has taken her from an average high school dropout to a self-enlightened individual with a personal goal and purpose. Starting as a regular black woman and ending as a confident adult is not an easy journey. She must pass many trials and tests before she can see the full bloom of herself. Thus, she has evolved from a victim of racial and sexual oppression to a revolutionary leader, implementing actions and strategies to secure freedom for herself and other marginalized blacks in the South (Kubitschek 159). Meridian's sense of inadequacy in meeting the expectations of black motherhood actually serves as the impetus for her search for wholeness and participation in the civil rights struggle. In Meridian, black motherhood as an individual experience within the framework of historical black motherhood destroys women's souls and harms their offspring in a vicious circle of ever-greater damage. Meridian searches for a new identity that will free her from the confines of tradition-bound society and culture throughout the book. She travels through mysterious places in search of this other set of ideals before arriving at self-realization. According to Usha Puri, "Meridian is a maturing relationship to the world at large" (41-42). As a result, a study of Meridian illustrates the limits of the feminine gender that Walker attempts to accept. Her perspective on gender is more broadly based and addresses issues of personal liberty, independence, and self-awareness. As the previous discussion has shown, Meridian documents Meridian Hill's first experiences, which she goes through in an attempt to discover who she is, what kind of person she is, and how to become whole. After introducing her female character as a victim of abuse, Alice Walker goes



on to depict her attempts to demonstrate her social standing. Lastly, she uses an artistic examination of the link between a person and the community to explore the black women's quest for selfhood in the book. Through their struggle, they advance in life's journey and cultivate a cosmic perspective on it. With this perspective, they create a harmonious existence founded on mutual respect, tolerance, and trust. As a result, Walker's female characters come to symbolize the many facets of society that, when combined, contribute to the creation of a world characterized by democracy, love, and justice.

When Meridian learns to value her community and its positive impact on her life, she becomes complete. She discovers that accepting her past—both individual and societal—is the first step toward moving on to the future. The black church and its music persisted throughout history, but recognition of them was lacking. Meridian's journey comes to a triumphant conclusion as she uses the church to uncover who she is. She almost comes back to life and, after regaining her strength, chooses to continue healing similar individuals. She leaves Truman, who has at this point joined her in her current endeavour, to continue her social work. Meridian tells him about her quest for wholeness. After achieving completeness, she shares the knowledge with Truman and stirs his spirit to pursue his own fulfilment. "In passing this struggle for understanding to a man, Walker infers that the need for understanding of creativity and life in both men and women is a pre-requisite for revolutionary change," writes Barbara Christian (243), indicating that she agrees with the idea of including men in bringing about revolutionary change. Meridian has a very confused start to her adventure but eventually finds freedom from the demons that haunt her body and spirit.



Conclusion: - The novels of Alice Walker present a profound exploration of women's quest for liberation. Her female characters undergo significant transformations, moving from oppression to empowerment through self-realization, resistance, and community support. Walker's portrayal of liberation is multifaceted, encompassing personal, social, and economic dimensions. Ultimately, her works underscore the importance of voice, identity, and solidarity in the journey toward freedom, making her a vital figure in feminist and African American literary traditions. To sum up, it can be said that Meridian lays the path for many other black women who are forced to shrink Shrivel and die in the course of achieving their own liberty. By establishing new pathways for a common perspective of being a Black mother, she redefines parenthood. She walks the untrodden paths of selfhood, paving the road for her followers. Her fight comes to an end when she is finally free. Her tears are not for herself, but rather for the old gentleman's son who was killed in the Black church

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