

**THE SEXUAL OPPRESSION OF WOMEN CHARACTERS AS
REFLECTED IN ALICE WALKER'S *THE COLOR PURLE***

A Thesis

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ABSTRAK

Dalam skripsi ini, penulis menganalisa novel *The Color Purple* karya Alice Walker, karena didalam novel ini sangat jelas adanya dominasi pada perempuan yang dilakukan oleh lelaki dimana lelaki sangat berkuasa terhadap perempuan. Novel ini mengangkat topik mengenai penindasan seksualitas terhadap perempuan di dalam keluarga. Seluruh adegan di dalam novel ini menggambarkan tentang dominasi laki-laki terhadap perempuan yang berujung pada kekerasan domestik dalam keluarga. Hampir seluruh tokoh perempuan di dalam novel ini mengalami hal tersebut. Alice Walker secara detil menceritakan penindasan seksualitas yang dialami para tokoh perempuan sejak mereka kecil hingga dewasa. Topik-topik yang berkaitan dengan seksualitas perempuan seperti pemerkosaan, pernikahan, melahirkan, hubungan seksual dengan suami hingga pemerkosaan dan mutilasi klitoris (genital mutilation) menjadi fokus utama cerita dalam novel ini. Ditambahkan dengan adanya pernikahan, perempuan justru tidak merasakan efek positif. Bahkan dengan adanya pernikahan, perempuan hanya dijadikan sebagai orang yang mengatur kehidupan rumah dan pemuas nafsu suami. Sehingga penulis dengan jelas dapat memaparkan apa yang terjadi dengan perempuan dimana perempuan merasa tertindas karena lelaki bahkan didalam keluarga.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Research

Domestic violence towards women is a problem that is usually overlooked and is almost not noticed by our society today. So many women are abused by men. They are often verbally abused, beaten, raped, and even killed by their man.

Most people often picture the abused woman as a small, weak, and fragile person. She has several children and comes from a poor family. Though some abused women have this description, the domestic violence may happen to all women. In fact, the domestic violence occurs in all racial, religious, ethical backgrounds, and economy levels.

The domestic violence is indeed a public matter. Nevertheless, nothing is done to correct this situation. Women always meet this situation with hostility and cynicism. Domestic violence is not treated as a crime but as a common matter. The society always believes that they should not get involved in so-called family problems. They always consider the domestic violence as a private matter.

This situation happens because the power of the society is in the men's hands. De Beauvoir (1952: 301) says that the society looks everything in the men's perspective. As the sovereign of the society, men describe everything with their point of view, including the women. To maintain their sovereignty, the men see this domestic violence as an unimportant problem.

Millet (1972: 31-33) adds that family, as the smallest unit of society, gives a great contribution in reinforcing the patriarchy ideology. The woman and the man strongly believe his and her roles in the family. They believe the hierarchy position of man and woman in family. They believe that a man is superior to woman. A husband is the sovereign in family while a wife is only the housekeeper. They also believe that force and aggressiveness is the man's nature, while weak and submissiveness is the woman's nature. Moreover, women are also economically dependent on men. Although they have jobs, their money and assets are controlled by men. It is difficult for them to live without the men. Because of these reasons, the women often cannot fight back and prefer to stay in a violent situation.

In Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, we can find the domestic violence happens to women characters. This novel is about the process of struggles of women characters to escape the domestic violence of the patriarchal family. The women characters are often beaten and verbally abused by the men characters.

The sexual oppression of women characters becomes the focus of domestic violence of this novel. This oppression occurs to women characters almost in every phase of their life. From the beginning of the novel, the reader is introduced with the subject of rape. This subject continues along the story even when the women characters are already married. The women characters are also violated by having their body. They are oppressed with menstruation, pregnancy, and genital mutilation.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the novel, the writer can conclude that women get the sexual oppression because of the women feel in inferior situation. This novel shows the sexual oppression happened because the patriarchal in family. This patriarchal family makes the women get the sexual violence from the man in their family. The women just follow and run the role based on the men asked.

Because of the patriarchal family, man can do anything, as they want. It makes women get the sexual oppression. The sexual oppression happens in childhood, puberty and adulthood. There are many sexual oppression that happened in women in this novel, such as being rape since they are young, sex abuse when they get married, feeling of inferiority because the man always superior, marriage that not solved the problem but makes more problem, pain of pregnancy, and giving birth. They are also economically dependent to the men. The women characters in this novel also become the victim of the domestic violence. It happens because they are considered as the men's property. Their lives are in their husband's and father's hands.

The sexual oppression in this novel happens also in Georgia, the place where this novel written. They are no laws to forbid the man oppressed women. Here, the sexual oppression of women shows since they are young. The women raped by the man in family, they can tell to anybody. Until they are adult, they always get sexual oppression. It seems that the women shamed to being them.

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