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ISSN 2278-9529
Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

The Rise of Barbarism of Human Beast in *The Colour Purple*

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Abstract:

The existence of human being is a 'dry fountain' at the threshold of twenty First century. The excessive greed for luxurious life and momentary desires are leading 'human' towards the inferno. Today, the human being is rich in the form of discoveries and inventions which caused us to run behind the mirage. It is the human; who has been blessed by the power of 'thinking' which differentiates us from the animal being. It is considered; man is a social animal who worships humanity and morality. But when s/he loses this power, they become animal and gradually transforms into a beast. The present paper explores the height of savagery and dreadful barbarism of mankind through '*The Colour Purple*' by Afro-American writer Alice Walker. The novel exposes oppression of black women of Southern United State who remain at the lower position in American Society. Celie, a representative of black female, has been exploited her whole life by various men and raped by her own father, Alphonso. The savagery of society and the dread of sex abuse arises the chaos in the world. The Racism, sexism, women's oppression, sexual violence, sensuality, treachery, greed, tyranny are the central ideas of the novel. In short, Walker portrays the worst picture of human violence that 'the humanity is strangled'.

Keywords: Barbarism, savagery, Violence, sexism, racism, sensuality, women's oppression, greed for power.

Alice Walker in her Novel, '*The colour Purple*' uncovers the barbarity of human being which is being raised in the form of dreadful cruelty and the bloodthirsty nature of human beast. The phrase 'human beast' has been used in the title of the paper to emphasize the rise of barbarism of human being. The Novelist Portrays the picture of oppressed as well as oppressors through her novel. Celie, the protagonist of the novel, is a subaltern and is squeezed her whole life by male dominated world. They remain blood sucker in the form of human leech in her life. The protagonist of the novel is an narrator. She is an uneducated and fourteen year black girl who lives in the south. She has to suffer a lot because of her own father, Alphonso, who sexually exploits her. Alphonso beats her as well as rapes her frequently. He has already impregnated his daughter once. As a victim, Celie gives a birth to a baby girl whom Alphonso kills in the jungle and her second child as a baby son, snatched away from her. In the expectation of divine help, being oppressed, Celie writes letters to God. Through this novel, Walker represents the rising chaos and extreme cruelty of bloodthirsty mentality of human beast that has murdered the morality. They have gone away from humanity and involved in the 'self'. The relationship between father and daughter where father plays the role of oppressor / exploiter that resembles to Marathi idiom '*Kumpanane Shet Khane*'³.

In the modern age, the existence of 'self' has been increased a lot which causes a disorder everywhere in the form of the said realities. The climax of bestiality has been raised by the lack of virtuous thinking. The instable situation of humanbeing and the invasions of 'vice' create a great havoc in the universe. Here, Celie and her sister, Nettie, come to know that the man, known as Mister, wants to marry Nettie. The proposal was refused by Alphonso to let Nettie marry but sets to Celie. It is found that Mister got married to Celie because he wants to reduce the burden of his children by taking care of them and keep his house well. The women's oppression is also reflected through the marriage system. The violence is reflected in the novel when reader comes to know that the wife of Mister was murdered by a jealous lover. Though Celie knows the referred events, she does not pay attention at children because all of the children had treated her badly.

Nettie, comes to know the cruelty of her father and successfully runs away from him and takes refuge at Celie's house. Mister also makes sexual advances toward her. Celie then advises Nettie to seek shelter at the well-dressed black woman that she had seen in the general store. The woman had unknowingly adopted Celie's daughter and was the only black woman that Celie had ever seen with money of her own. Nettie is forced to leave after promising to write. Celie, however, never receives any letter and concludes that her sister is dead because secretly Nettie's letters are kept by Mister with him. He never discloses the letter series and remains unkind for Celie who was dying to talk to her sister because both were the fellow sufferers. Celie says,

"I don't say nothing. I think about Nettie, dead. She fight, she run away. What good it do? I don't fight, I stay where I'm told. But I'm alive." (22)²

Alice Walker rightly depicts the picture of the people through her observation and experience which help her to portray it into words. In her novel, she presents that Celie is amazed by Sofia's refusal to submit to Harpo. He is the son of Alphonso, who attempts to control Sofia. Celie advises Harpo not to try to dominate Sofia and informs him that Sofia also loves him. She admits that she only obeys Mister out of fear. Harpo temporarily follows Celie's advice but falls back under Mister's dominance. A momentarily jealousy for Sofia, Celie advises Harpo to beat her. When Harpo tries to do it, Sofia fights back and left the injurious mark on Harpo. She says,

"Harpo ast his daddy why he beat me. Mr. ____ say, Cause she my wife. Plus, she stubborn. All women good for—he don't finish. He just tuck his chin over the paper like he do. Remind me of Pa." (23)²

The referred incident proves the complexity of the Celie's mind because she is found the extreme cruel as well as a 'loving foe' for different men. Sometimes, she converts herself into beast and tries to seek the revenge on society. It is a kind of psyche, which is resulted from her worst experiences.

The barbarity of human being is exposed through '*The Color Purple*' in the form of images, strong words, and morally difficult concepts. Here, readers are shocked when s/he will come across the striking purposes and functions of vulgarity and violence while reading the novel. The novelist hammers the burning issues of the uncivilized societies of every age and borderless world. She rightly uses the title for novel which signifies the themes such as race, power politics, women's oppression, sexual violence, sensuality, treachery, greed for money, greed for momentary happiness and tyranny. At the end of the novel, the significance of the title, '*The Color Purple*', is revealed during the conversation between Shug and Celie. Shug (Mister) says,

"Listen, God love everything you love—and a mess of stuff you don't. But more than anything else, God love admiration....Not vain, just wanting to share a good thing. I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it." (203)²

Alice Walker, through her novel, highlights the power of communication through the letters. The letters to God that Celie writes and later to her sister Nettie symbolizes a certain voice. The symbolism of the voice connotes the oppression, sex abuse and savagery of human being. Celie expresses her true desires in her letters. She writes letters to God because once Alphonso had threatened her for sex abuse that she should not tell anybody but God. But she writes to her sister because she is angry with God because of her past and the people who hurt her frequently. She asks to God in the complaining tone. "Why?" Why does she suffer? But the question is remained unanswered. The last letter she writes to everyone, including God showing that she has forgiven 'Him' because God haven't done anything for oppressed which means that either there is no God at all or 'He' is also oppressed by evils as Celie and her sister Nettie are. In 21st century, Nietzsche's philosophy also reminds us the same that 'God is dead'⁵. Simply, here it can be just said, whatever is good / innocent is God and death of goodness is the death of god which has been caused to arise the havoc of human barbarity.

It is found that the voice of innocence is unheard because the chaos is reigned again in the form of barbarism at everywhere. The world, where violence sprouts out and reaches to the high, has been depicted by Walker which resembles to 'Ghasidom'⁴. The human being, in the skin of a lamb, approaches to the marginalized as a shrewd wolf and found that there is the absence of culture and civilization. So, Alice Walker tries to find out the solutions of the barbarism of human beast by provoking the revolution against the said problems which have been increasing in the borderless world.

Works Cited:

1. Tendulkar, Vijay. *Ghasiram Kotwal*. tran. Kolkata: Seagull Books. 1986. Print.
2. Walker, Alice. *The Colour Purple*. New York: Pocket Books, 1982.
3. 'Kumpanane Shet Khane', an idiom, connotes that there is an oppression of our keens by our own people.
4. Ghasidom, a portmanteau of 'Ghasiram and dome' with a reference to Tendulkar's '*Ghasiram Kotwal*', which connotes the place, where the capital of Peshwa is located

and it also connotes the evils' mansion and place of political disorder of the timeless age.

5. Nietzsche, Friedrich. *'The Gay Science'*.