

77. Domestic violence and sexual abuse in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison: The crisis of Subjectivity¹

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Abstract

Black women are born and bred to be courageous, bold, and without pain. However, the strength they have had to portray is the abuse they endure in silence. In their fiction, Alice Walker and Toni Morrison portray black female protagonists who suffered domestic abuse and sexual violence. In this study, Julia Kristeva's theory of subjectivity is assigned to reflect how females regain their authentic and natural place in the culture and political language through active participation. Not only do they free themselves from oppression, but they also save the male subject from emptiness, instability, and immobility. However, the sheer honesty portrayed within the pages of *The Color Purple* and *The Bluest Eye* was not warmly welcomed by the black community mainly because they stray from the norm and portray the struggles of black women at the hands of fellow black men. For Toni Morrison and Alice Walker, silence is not the way to go, suggesting Kristeva's solutions to the problem of female subjectivity due to the edifice of participation. Hence, this study highlights domestic violence and sexual abuse in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison through the depiction of the lost subjectivity. Walker, Morrison, and feminist critics highlight the analogies between black-feminist authors who do not compete with other females or their mothers—but cause substantial competition at the academic level—and this is an ingenuous sense of human nature. Regardless of the economic difficulties of modern life, racial terrors, and the cultural background of African-Americans, they observe how the American society mirrors the untold truths of blacks who speak to the world about their sufferings. Being a global and well-known figure for Walker and Morrison leads to voicing African-American society's concerns and reflecting its culture and identity.

Keywords: Subjectivity, domestic violence, sexual abuse, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker

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Alice Walker'ın *Renklerden Moru* ve Toni Morrison'un *En Mavi Göz* romanlarında aile içi şiddet ve cinsel istismar: Öznellik sorunu⁴

Öz

Siyahi kadınlar cesaretli ve acıya dayanıklı olarak doğar ve yetiştirilirler, ancak sergiledikleri dayanıklılık, gizlice tahammül ettikleri tacize karşı olan tepkiden ibarettir. Alice Walker ve Toni Morrison edebi romanlarında, aile içi istismar ve cinsel şiddete maruz kalan siyahi kadın kahramanları tasvir ediyorlar. Bu makale, Julia Kristeva'nın Öznellik teorisini baz alarak, kadınların aktif katılımının özgün ve doğal taraflarının kültür ve politik açıdan tekrar kazandırma yollarını incelemektedir. Böylece kadınlar sadece kendilerini baskıdan kurtarmakla kalmayıp, ayrıca, erkek özneyi boşluktan, istikrarsızlıktan ve hareketsizlikten de kurtarabilirler. Buna karşılık, *Renklerden Moru* ve *En Mavi Göz*'ün sayfalarında tasvir edilen saf dürüstlük, siyah topluluk tarafından sıcak karşılanmamıştır. İletinin sebebi, esas olarak normdan sapmış gözüken siyahi kadınların mücadelelerinin siyahi erkeklerle bağlı olduğunu kurgulanarak gösterildiğinden kaynaklanmış olabilir. Toni Morrison ve Alice Walker için sessiz kalmak anlaşılabilir bir sorun değildir ve buna dayalı olarak, bu çalışma, Kristeva'nın kadın öznelliğinin yapısına dayalı olarak önerdiği çözümler ve tasvir ettiği dünya alternatif olarak sunulmuştur. Böylece, kayıp öznelğin tasviri aracılığı ile, Alice Walker'ın *Renklerden Moru* ve Toni Morrison'un *En Mavi Göz* romanlarında, siyahi toplumun aile içi şiddet ve cinsel istismar sorunu incelenmektedir. Walker, Morrison ve çoğu feminist eleştirmen, insanın doğasında olan başka kadınlarla veya anne ile rekabet etme duygusu ötesinde—akademik düzeyde önemli bir rekabete rağmen—siyahi feminist yazarlar arasındaki analogileri vurgulamaktadırlar. Modern hayatın ekonomik zorluklarından, ırksal terörlerden ve Afrikalı-Amerikalıların kültürel geçmişinden bağımsız olarak, her iki yazar da dünyaya acıları hakkında konuşan Amerikalı siyahilerin anlatılan gerçeklerin yansımaları sağlıyorlar. Onlar için küresel ve tanınmış bir figür olmak, Afrikalı-Amerikalı toplumun endişelerini, kültürünü ve kimliğini dile getirme ve yansıtılması için bir araçtır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öznellik, aile içi şiddet, cinsel istismar, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker

Introduction

American novelists Toni Morrison (1931-2019)—who won the Pulitzer Prize (1987) and the Nobel Prize in Literature (1993)—and Alice Walker (1944-)—who won the Pulitzer Prize (1982)—discuss the black woman's experience in common. The generalization of female originality due to the place of human beings in the world is Morrison and Walker's attempt to praise the love, dignity, and generosity—embodied in the natural world—which helps cure humanity's psychiatric trauma. Morrison and Walker's closeness to Native American culture inspired them to regain their broken bonds and, with their past, reconcile with natural elements. For them, self-actualization means accepting differences and crossing

⁴ Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

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boundaries. In the meantime, harmony with nature, empowerment of women, and spiritual development are strategies for achieving self-fulfillment. Morrison and Walker's writings are full of characters breaking down social, racial, and patriarchal boundaries, but this liberating is not exclusively feminist. The fundamental aspects of human survival and liberation is activated by creating a logical relationship between life elements.

Womanism is a social change perspective rooted in Black women's and other women of color's everyday experiences and everyday methods of problem solving in everyday spaces, extended to the problem of ending all forms of oppression for all people, restoring the balance between people and the environment/nature, and reconciling human life with the spiritual dimension. (Phillips, 2006, p. xx)

Collins (2009)—by examining the interrelationship between gender, race, and social class in the lives of black women—is recognizing the link between black women's consciousness and their experiences as the legacy to reconstruct images of humiliated black women and the struggle against sexism to redefine distinctive features of black feminist thinking. Besides, Hooks (1981) examines the impact of widespread sex discrimination in black societies and also white racism on the degradation of black women. Hooks describes the functioning of a system based on sex and racial discrimination that goes beyond institutionalized racial and sexual assumptions. Her main concern is to present a feminist theory of a society committed to eradicating all forms of oppression, reflecting the true history of blacks, and recognizing a society in which the desire for collective change takes precedence over the fulfillment of individual aspirations.

... human beings, for as long as we have written records of our thoughts and creative output, have always pondered the question "who am I?" However, the degree to which the pondering "I" is perceived as having any specific role in, or responsibility for, creating its own 'selfhood' has changed dramatically over time. (Hall, 2006, p. 6)

According to Hall (2006), subjectivity is semantically close to the identity. Each of us can have multiple and distinct identities, such as racial and sexual identities: "We may have numerous discrete identities, of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc., and a subjectivity that is comprised of all of those facets, as well as our own imperfect awareness of our selves." (Hall, 2006, p. 134) In examining the subjectivity of enslaved people, well-represented in Morrison and Walker's novels, it should be considered that blacks were under the control of white masters from birth to death. White power in slavery is exercised through physical violence and other means of subjugation, including discourse. (Lawrence, 1991, p. 190) These concepts make enslaved Black people hollow and unidentified human beings, lowering them to the level of commodity embedded in whites' pleasure, revealing the deep emptiness that ends in the enslaved people's consciences.

one's identity can be thought of as that particular set of traits, beliefs, and allegiances that, in short- or long-term ways, gives one a consistent personality and mode of social being, while subjectivity implies always a degree of thought and self-consciousness about identity, at the same time allowing a myriad of limitations and often unknowable, unavoidable constraints on our ability to fully comprehend identity. (Hall, 2006, p. 3)

Kristeva's Subjectivity

There are different suggestions to female subjectivity by the thinkers of gender studies—such as Julia Kristeva—on the possibility of releasing women from oppression and inequality. Kristeva is an interdisciplinary thinker who combines the philosophy of literature, psychoanalysis, linguistics, semiotics, and political theory to address the issue of female subjectivity. Kristeva's theory of subjectivity has created a new current in poststructuralism—far from the scourge of dominated Hegelian subjectivism—and deals with the multiple aspects of female subjectivity to ponder other theories.

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Kristeva considers the root of the crisis in the alienation of the female subject and the identification of the symbolic male subject over the maternal symbol. To solve the problem of returning the emotion to the language and the creative participation of women based on their distinctive characteristics, Kristeva proposes the masculine symbol. Her ideal society is a symbolic feminine-masculine society, with the essential features of balance, interaction, openness, plurality, fertility, happiness, forgiveness, and responsibility of male-female subjects.

The crisis of the modern subject for Kristeva is the loss of a sense of beauty limited by symbolic elements. (Kristeva, 1982, p. 25) Kristeva points out the danger of assimilation of feminine and masculine subjects: passivity, inactivity, and the domination of the masculine symbolic over language and the public sphere. Kristeva also warns of the danger of male, raggie, authority. (Oliver, 2002, p. 7) She laments the denial of the feminine subject and its transformation into a homogenous object and that the woman cannot emphasize her distinction and be assumed equal to the masculine subject. According to Kristeva, masculine characteristics have prevailed in the public spheres and were introduced as the only original criterion of the human subject, leaving no room for female identity. (Kristeva, 1991, p. 163)

The phenomenon that prompts Kristeva to ponder is the deficiency of the modern subject and the moral crisis, its stillness and lethargy as a matter of motherhood, and the similarity of the feminine subject with the masculine subject. Questioning why the female subject has been doubly repressed and women's role in causing it, Kristeva points the finger of blame at the society that turns reality upside down. In this capitalist society, instead of realizing the emptiness/meaninglessness, subjects gradually experience images/symbols as accurate. After the subject's destruction, the female identity is distorted, and her status is reduced to such an extent that it is tough to recover. For Kristeva (1981, p. 23), the symbolic contract has sacrificed women. She traces the root of the problem to the modern cultural-linguistic system, which suppresses language's aesthetic, emotional, irrational, and feminine dimensions.

For Kristeva, repression sacrifices both the subject and the object. Thus, marginalizing women in the political and social spheres or pushing them back into the private sphere not only oppresses women but also deprives men of a balance in dynamism and meaningfulness. Therefore, Kristeva calls on women to disobey the monotony and repetition, the homogeneity and absorption within the masculine subject, and prohibitions. However, this defiance is questioning inner rebellion against oppression and is accompanied by rethinking and rebirth. Here, disobedience is a form of self-awareness in which the female subject reconstructs her identity in society.

Domestic violence and sexual abuse question Kristeva's subjectivity

To answer how domestic violence and sexual abuse play a role in fiction, Jordan & Sered (2002) define domestic violence as an abusive behavior with harassment, humiliation, deception, manipulation, coercion, and force to keep power over an intimate partner. From the era of slavery to the present day, black women—since their youth—are more likely to face domestic violence and sexual abuse. They tend to write on topics they feel strongly about, and Morrison and Walker have this in common. Having been at the forefront of the black arts movement, first-hand violence against black women and their children has endured. Upon reading, *The Color Purple*, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown states, "I was afraid and insecure when I read this book. Families are not always sanctuaries. This book and a couple of others came at the right time to make me see it was possible to be strong and not choked up with self pity." (Lister & Tredell, 2010, p. 142) As such, instead of experiencing love and safety within their households, black women were abused with no place to be freed—during a period of discrimination against the black community—as Morrison and Walker's books depict. Williams (2022) explains women's situation as follows: "We end up clinging helplessly to this myth of indestructibility, often burying our own fears, our own voices and

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our own vulnerabilities, instead covering the soft parts of ourselves that need to grow and be nourished with some sort of impenetrable emotional armour.”

To adjust subjectivity, Kristeva defines an ideal society's structure. The first characteristic of Kristeva's desirable society is the balance between femininity and masculinity. Here, the feminine symbol is placed next to the masculine symbol. (Kristeva, 1991, p. 223) In this society, with no division between genders—women, as the representative of the sign, seek to represent the emotional role of the subject to fill the emotional dispossession resulting from the domination of patriarchal rationality. Unfortunately, to be a woman can be exhausting, but to be a black woman is even more exhausting. Black women were acting strong and liberated when they tended to face domestic and sexual violence of their intimate partners—more than white women. In order to survive, black women are taught from a young age that they cannot trust anyone, including the men in their family. Thus, they become hardened with no place to turn. Those who work as maids in the white men's houses see how their women are treated and compare it with the situations at home. Morrison (2007) writes, “White men taking such good care of they women, and they all dressed up in big clean houses with the bathtubs right in the same room with the toilet. Their pictures gave me a lot of pleasure, but it made coming home hard, and looking at Cholly hard” (p.123).

Walker also depicts what violence does in a household. Children are impressionable, copy what they see, and emulate their parents. Harpo grew up seeing his father abusing his mother and Celie. He wants his wife to be like Celie, and the only way he can achieve this is by establishing violence through dominance in the same way his father treats his wives. “Harpo ast his daddy why he beat me. Mr. - say, Cause she my wife. Plus she stubborn” (Walker, 1985, p. 23). Parents as teachers feel justified in teaching right and wrong; accordingly, Mr. ___ teaches his son to beat his wife: “Harpo ast me, How come you stubborn? He don't ast How come you his wife? Nobody ast that” (Walker, 1985, p. 23). Harpo learns to blame Celie instead of blaming his father for abusing a woman who helps to take care of his children and household. Consequently, he starts copying this behavior in his household. “They fighting like two mens [...] I don't know how long this been going on. I don't know when they specs to conclude. I ease on back out, wave to the children by the creek, walk back on up home” (Walker, 1985, p. 40).

Violence becomes the norm in this family, and nobody intervenes. It is not surprising that Celie refuses to intervene because all she has come to know is violence. Here, Sofia utters the most severe sentence: “A girl ain't safe in a family of men. But I never thought I'd have to fight in my own house” (Walker, 1985, p. 42). It is heartbreaking that black women realized that they were not safe among the men in their family—from a young age and into adulthood. Despite the abuse they endured in each other's hands, Sofia and Harpo indeed love each other but do not have the proper guidance for a healthy marriage. “I loves Harpo, she say. God knows I do. But I'll kill him dead before I let him beat me.” (Walker, 1985, p. 42). It is heartbreaking to see this sentiment expressed, and this is not far from the relationship between Cholly and Mrs. Breedlove in *The Bluest Eye*. Mrs. Breedlove refuses to let her husband beat her without fighting back. Moreover, it seems as though they enjoy the toxicity of their relationship. Mrs Breedlove worked as a domestic worker while her husband drank away their savings and abused her in front of her children.

Cholly had come home drunk. Unfortunately, he had been too drunk to quarrel, so the whole business would have to erupt this morning. Because it had not taken place immediately, the oncoming fight would lack spontaneity; it would be calculated, uninspired, and deadly. (Morrison, 2007, p. 40)

Celie's shield against Mr. ___ was Shug Avery, who made Celie realize that she deserved more and was destined for greatness despite what the men in her life said. Thus, Celie finally stood up to Mr. ___ and she managed to liberate herself through this. “I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly and can't cook, a voice

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say everything listening. But I'm here" (Walker, 1985, p. 214). Celie finally refused to accept rejection and hatred. "One in four black girls will be sexually abused before the age of 18" and "thirty-five percent of black women experienced some form of contact sexual violence during their lifetime" (Barlow, 2020). Here, Celie (*The Color Purple*) and Pecola (*The Bluest Eye*), faced sexual abuse at the hands of the men they knew as their fathers.

Told me he want me to trim his hair. He bring the scissors and comb and brush and a stool. While I trim his hair he look at me funny. He a little nervous too, but I don't know why, till he grab hold of me and cram me up tween his legs. I lay there quiet, listening to Shug breathe. It hurt me, you know, I say. I was just going on fourteen. (Walker, 1985, p. 116)

The noble society for Kristeva supports the activeness of subjects with an interaction between the symbol and the sign. In this society, the subject and the else are not closed to self. (King, 1984, p. 26) Here, the shared individuality is prevalent in society, and in public, individuals share their souls, mind, and language freely. However, Morrison and Walker's depicted societies neglect the image of active subjects, and an intrinsic symbol/sign in place of the general concept of an individual is defined. At the tender age of fourteen, Celie is abused for the first time, and thus, she starts writing her letters to God, the only one she can turn to with her problems as her father threatens her to keep things to herself. Black women probable turn to God intrinsically than law/family enforcement: "We take things to God," says Willett. "And sometimes in Black culture...That's what your church family is for, that's what God is there for. That also leads to why a lot of minorities don't seek counseling or therapy or don't address mental health issues." (*A layered look*, 2022). Black people see the church as a sanctuary because they know and feel like they can trust God more than men, which is evident in *The Bluest Eye*.

The other characteristic of Kristeva's defined society is pluralism, which no longer approves of monolithic authority. The poetic revolution in language sets the stage for such proliferation (Kristeva, 1984, p. 1) that takes a course contrary to rational order, and maternal creativity erodes the masculine symbolic order. To experience such an extreme form of abuse and not be aware of what is happening at the hands of someone who is meant to protect you, is vile. In *The Bluest Eye*, Frieda is not subjected to shame from the adults around her as she is abused by Mr. Henry: "He showed his privates at you?' 'Noooo. He touched me.' 'Where?' 'Here and here.' 'She pointed to the tiny breasts that, like two fallen acorns, scattered a few faded rose leaves on her dress'" (Morrison, 2007, p. 99). The adults in Frieda's life act swiftly to ensure that the abuse no longer occurs.

Morrison states that when she began writing *The Bluest Eye*, she was not interested in resistance to the contempt of others—but to the tragic consequences of rejection as legitimate self-evident (Morrison, 2007, p. xv). Celie (*The Color Purple*) and Pecola (*The Bluest Eye*) are labeled ugly and poor black children who can never amount to much. They are rejected, abused, and cast aside for not fitting the mold. On the one hand, Celie is impregnated at a young age, and her children are taken away from her. "He took my other little baby, a boy this time. But I don't think he kilt it. I think he sold it to a man and his wife over Monticello" (Walker, 1985, p. 4). She is then taken out of school at a young age. "The first time I got big Pa took me out of school. He never care that I love it" (Walker, 1985, p.10). Instead of receiving protection and love, she is then married off to a sexually abusive man because her 'Pa' wanted to protect and care for Nettie, who 'fit the desired mold.' "I can let you have Celie. She the oldest anyway. She ought to marry first. She ain't fresh tho, but I specs you know that. She spoiled. Twice" (Walker, 1985, pp. 8-9). After abusing Celie, he gives her away to another. From the beginning, Celie is never given a fighting chance.

Throughout history, the legal system did not notice sexual assaults against African American women (Sommerville, 2004) and even accused Black men of rapes involving White women. (Duru, 2004 as cited

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in West, C. & Johnson, K., 2013) Black men were not punished for the sexual violence they committed against black women but severely punished for the sexual crimes against white women. Hence, when black women experienced this happening within households, they tinkered. This is evident in *The Color Purple* when Mr. ___'s sisters attempt to help Celie. "You got to fight them, Celie, she say. I can't do it for you. You got to fight them for yourself" (Walker, 1985, p. 22). To a certain extent, it was unfair of them to expect Celie to fight when she was never taught to fight and stand up for herself. Instead, she was beaten into submission and made feel as though she was not significant. Unlike Pecola, Celie did not succumb to madness. She managed to build a sisterhood, and through this female solidarity, she broke the chains of abuse and stepped into her own. A need to be protected taught them to endure violence in silence.

To combat domestic violence...one needs not only physically to protect women, but to interrogate those cultural scripts or dominant patriarchal interpretations that mediate the meaning of specific experiences of rape or abuse. However, in challenging the dominant patriarchal script of gender violence...feminists in the past have universalized the standpoint of white middle-class women as the norm, creating a false sense of unity in the anti-violence movement, while obscuring the specific situation of low-income women and women of color (Knadler, 2015, p. 100)

The other characteristic of Kristeva's whole society is fluidity and dynamism. On the one hand, by adding symbolism and imagination to language, and on the other hand, by recognizing cultural diversity, monotony, stability, and inactivity of this society are removed. (Kristeva, 1995, p. 9) In this society, suppression is hard to achieve—due to the subject's fluidity, indeterminacy, and multifaceted nature. Even eco-feminist thinkers today equate nature with the woman and believe both are male-dominated subjects. (King, 1984, p. 11) Hence, the root of domination over women and nature is the male instrumentalist attitude, which should be replaced by the female attitude towards man and existence. (Plumwood, 1993, p. 33) Therefore, in society, the female subject can play a new role that provides the ground for the dynamism of society. However, Morrison and Walker demonstrate another aspect of an ideal society. Pecola is raped and becomes pregnant by her father. Instead of gathering around her and supporting her, the community shamed and blamed her for the rape that she endured. How can a child possibly know better than an adult? The way society reacts in terms of trouble represents who people are when things become difficult. In this case, Pecola's society failed her when she needed them the most. Pecola's friends, who are children themselves, know better than the adults around them.

Our sorrow drove out all thoughts of the new bicycle. And I believe our sorrow was the more intense because nobody else seemed to share it. They were disgusted, amused, shocked, outraged, or even excited by the story. But we listened for the one who would say, "Poor little girl," or "Poor baby," but there was only head-wagging where those words should have been. (Morrison, 2007, p. 190)

Black men were abused at the hands of white men, and instead of directing that anger toward the white men that oppressed them, they directed that anger toward their families. "When white men beat their men, they cleaned up the blood and went home to receive abuse from the victim. They beat their children with one hand and stole for them with the other" (Morrison, 2007, p. 138). Studies indicate that black people are disadvantaged in education, equality, and wealth. They are given the short end of the stick and expected to be happy with it. Some black men handle it better than others, but black men like Cholly in *The Bluest Eye* and Mr. ___ in *The Color Purple* cannot. Cholly turns to alcohol, and because he is constantly intoxicated, he mistreats his family. He is no longer protects them and becomes the devil in their household. Mr. ___ also turns to adultery and extends domestic abuse to establish dominance in the household.

Toni Morrison dealt with the serious problem of racism and sexuality of the black Africans who were living in America. They were much neglected and exploited by the men and women of white-skin against the black-skinned people in that great country. She was perfectly aware of and deeply

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concerned about the conditions of over-poverty, suppression and exploitation of those Africans in America. (Bhardwaj, 2016, p.103)

The other characteristic of Kristeva's noble society is fertility and creativity. In this society, creativity is the main feature of the female subject in society. The main context is a language that forms the three stages of female genius by questioning, defiance, and childbirth. (Kristeva, 1991, p. 220) First, what is taken for granted—including the superior masculine position in the symbolic order—is questioned. Then, a rebellion against self is formed within the subject, and a new thought is born. According to Kristeva, there is more questioning of disobedience and childbirth in women than in men. Hence, women pave the way to enter the symbolic order. In this society—as disruptors of the symbolic order—women will be the pioneers of political and social change. It is clear that Cholly does not prefer to see his wife working out of the home. One may infer that he wants her to rely on him and fully cater to him. Mrs. Breedlove says, “Cholly commenced to getting meaner and meaner and wanted to fight me all the time. I give him as good as I got. Had to. Look like working for that woman and fighting Cholly was all I did” (Morrison, 2007, pp. 118-19). Thus, instead of focusing on her children and becoming financially independent, Mrs. Breedlove has to fight her husband every day.

The other characteristic of Kristeva's ideal society is the experience of happiness through disobedience that violates modern thematic culture, the homogeneity disregardless of differences, gender definitions, and politics of the other. (Kristeva, 2000, p. 18) It also restores the mental health of the subject—especially women—who can directly confront self with the other in the context of sign-symbolic dual language, engage in psychoanalysis, and transform its subconscious into consciousness. (Guberman, 1996, p. 42) This society is transparent, and regular, and a genuine linguistic connection is established between the subjects. This revolutionary and transformational society fundamentally changes the subject's relation to the self-body, the other, and objects. (Kristeva, 1984, p. 16) Besides, this society forgives self and the other, which causes the subject to reborn, enter new attractive horizons, and pass over the mistakes of others—which provides the ground for intimacy and social hive. In this sense, forgiveness replaces violence in this society. However, for many from the black community, violence results from their poverty. Willett says, “[A] lack of opportunities along with financial barriers leads to domestic violence” (*A layered look*, 2022). Contrary to the domestic abuse, many black women like Celie in Walker's *The Color Purple* in a way to elevate themselves and surpass the poverty line; they are educated and educate others as such: “Oh, Celie, there are colored people in the world who want us to know! Want us to grow and see the light! They are not all mean like Pa and Albert, or beaten down like ma was. Corrine and Samuel have a wonderful marriage” (Walker, 1985, p. 138).

While enduring abuse at the hands of their husbands, women do not have the opportunity to raise their children with love. Many find them as a representation of fathers; thus, they resent their children, but their children are not all over because they are taught not to: “Couldn't be mad at my daddy cause he my daddy. Bible say, Honor father and mother no matter what” (Walker, 1985, p. 43). Their children love them but are not reciprocate accordingly. This is not because they are incapable of love, but they are not taught how to love their children in a stable relationship that allows them to do so. “Into her son she beat a loud desire to run away, and into her daughter she beat a fear of growing up, fear of other people, fear of life” (Morrison, 2007, p. 128). As she beat the desire to run away into her son, one could deduce that Mrs. Breedlove beat into him something that she was not capable of doing herself, and beating the fear of growing up into her daughter could be because she hated having to grow up herself and getting married to a man who became her prison warden.

In Kristeva's ideal society, politics is no longer dominated by masculine symbols and takes on a feminine-masculine aspect. (Kristeva, 1984, pp. 256-263) In this society—through the transition from

Zoe to bios—the responsibility of identification becomes an enduring feature of the subjects—for male/female. (Kristeva, 1991, p. 224) Men and women are present in society based on their distinctive characteristics (McAfee, 2003, p. 171), which is towards understanding between men and women, not their separation. (McAfee, 2003: 183) On the other hand, Pecola and her brother grew up watching their parents fight each other. “He fought her the way a coward fights a man.... She, in turn, fought back in a purely feminine way—with frying pans and poker, and occasionally a flatiron would sail toward his head” (Morrison, 2007, p. 43). Children should experience love and shelter, not violence and hatred at the hands of their parents. Watching their parents fight every day was not something Sammy could ignore. “Sammy, who had watched in silence their struggling at his bedside, suddenly began to hit his father about the head with both fists, shouting “You naked fuck!” over and over and over” (Morrison, 2007, p. 44). Despite this display of anger from his child, Cholly did not stay away from alcohol, nor did he stop hitting his wife in front of his children. He risked the developing brains of his children. “ACEs are adverse childhood experiences that harm children’s developing brains so profoundly that the effects show up decades later; they cause much of chronic disease, most mental illness, and are at the root of most violence” (Harris, 2020). This is evident in the madness that Pecola faced after giving birth to and losing her father’s child.

She, however stepped over into madness, a madness which protected her from us simply because it bored us in the end. Oh some of us “loved” her. The Maginot Line. And Cholly loved her. I’m sure he did. He, at any rate, was the one who loved her enough to touch her, envelop her, give something of himself to her. But his touch was fatal, and the something he gave her filled the matrix of her agony with death (Morrison, 2007, p. 206)

Moreover, *The Color Purple* represents the exact sentiment of a lack of parental love. Many black parents did not know how to raise their children with gentle or tough love; thus, like Celie, many only experienced love at an older age when they finally managed to escape the chain of abuse in their households. As Celie mentions, “Nobody ever love me, I say. She say, I love you, Miss Celie” (Walker, 1985, p. 117). Hence, Celie is lucky that she got to experience love in the form of female solidarity and through her relationship with Shug Avery. To clarify such an intense sense, the context oversees the mental, linguistic, psychological, and ideological space more than political, social, and economic reality. (Skinner, 1989, p. 66)

Conclusion

This close study of the text clarifies the hidden discrimination meaning of the context. In this method, by placing the author in the social context, intentions are investigated. It does not mean that authors are merely confined to the time frame; rather, there is a dialectical interaction with the context. The study seeks to reconcile Kristeva’s social, cultural, mental, linguistic, ideological, and psychological context with Morrison and Walker’s ideas to identify the regional implications of these ideas in the work of two prominent African-American female authors. Kristeva’s solution to female subjectivity and the possibility of freeing women from oppression and inequality contrasts with the image of Morrison and Walker, who depict the suffering of being a woman of color in society. To create life-like characters seen as objects contrasts with Kristeva’s ideal society in the realm of subjectivity. Walker gives Celie a better resolution than Morrison gives to Pecola. On the one hand, Celie finds peace within herself and forgives whoever hurts her while building herself up as a successful black businesswoman with the support of others. Pecola, on the other hand, without such an experience, endures her first sexual encounter at the hands of her father, who impregnates her and throws her to the wolves. The adults around Pecola blame her for misery, and Pecola is driven to a life of madness. According to her, the people avoid her because she finally gets something she always desired. Something she thought would make her more desirable

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to the people around her. However, the saddest part about Celie and Pecola's character is seeing them learn to accept rejection because of the abuse they endure at the hands of their parents and many others.

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