

Delving the Film Conversion and Bloom's Taxonomy in *The Color Purple*

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Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to compare the novel *The Color Purple* written by Alice Walker with the movie *The Color Purple* directed by Steven Spielberg. This article explores the film with Bloom's Taxonomy along with the similarities and dissimilarities between the novel and the film. Though cinema and literature have been parallel mediums in our society they have a little difference and the difference is what makes them unique from one and another. The purpose of converting a novel into a film is to make the society aware and educated, the success of the film *The Color Purple* marks how well it has reached. Alice Walker is a prominent writer it is evident in the way she has sketched the protagonist Celie. She has also won the Pulitzer Prize for this novel.

Keywords: *Film conversion, Male chauvinism, Racism, Patriarchal black culture, Suppression of women, Education.*

Introduction

Alice Malsenior Walker is an African American writer. Through her writings one can sense the number of struggles and trauma, the African- American community has undergone. She was the only person amongst her siblings who was sent to school. She has been a social activist since her adulthood and most of her works concentrated on the main theme of gender and race. The core themes in this novel are identity crisis, violence, slavery, racial discrimination, marital rape, denial of education, extra marital affair, adolescent pregnancy.

The Color Purple holds a special place for the author. She is a well-known after this novel and she has won many awards for this particular novel. The protagonist Celie was sketched in the finest way. Whoopi Goldberg who played the role for Celie in the movie *color purple* has very well matched the

imagined figure that one has in mind while reading the novel. Despite the differences between the movie and the novel, they both were successful in their own mediums.

The color purple is about an African American woman Celie who had been impregnated by her father twice and made to believe that her children are no more. Celie and Nettie are sisters and she is the only person in the whole world who loves Celie. She gets married to Mr. who is no less than her father in torturing. He makes her do all the field works and all the chores. He constantly puts her down makes her feel inferior and he imagines of Shug who is the mistress of Mr. and has intercourse with Celie in a way he does marital rape. One fine day Nettie escapes from her father and finds Celie and seeks shelter though initially Mr. allows he tries to seduce Nettie when she tries to escape from Mr. and beats him very badly. Mr. kicks Nettie out of home. Nettie and Celie plead Mr. but he is least bothered about these two. Nettie will all heavy heart promises to Celie that she would write letter to her.

Years pass by no letters have been received from Nettie, so Celie considers Nettie is no more. Shug arrives one fine day with poor health and mocks at Celie for her appearance. Mr. tries to take care of her and fails in that attempt. Celie wins Shug's heart. Shug is grateful to Celie for taking care of her so she guides Celie to love herself and to smile without hiding her lips. Shug leaves and Celie misses Shug she thinks of what Shug has said to her. It's not just the Mr. who is in love with Shug but Celie too. One fine day she Shug comes back to the Mr.'s house with her husband. Celie and Mr. aren't happy about her husband. During one afternoon when the mail man arrives Shug overruns to the postbox and collects the letters. She finds a letter from Nettie and she slowly calls Celie stunned and ecstatic Celie wasn't even able to tear the letter. Shug and Celie start to find the other letters that has been written by Nettie after long thorough research they manage to find the bunch of letters Mr. has been hiding for years together. Angry Celie one day bursts out at Mr. and is leaving the house with Shug and her husband. She starts to earn from the designer shop which she kept all by herself and she gets her ancestral property all to herself and sister Nettie. Celie slowly became the woman she wanted to be Mr. had become pathetic by then and realizes the value of Celie. And finally, Nettie and Celie meet she brings along with her the children of Celie and she has been living with the rich African couple for years. The family finally reunited and Nettie explains that their father was not their real father and this reduced the long-time burden Celie had in her heart. Mr. observes everything from far away feels happy for Celie.

Film Conversion similarities and dissimilarities in *The Color Purple*

The movie the *Color Purple* was directed based upon the book the color purple. Even though the movie was quite successful it bared a few similarities and dissimilarities. The process of converting a novel to a film has never been a piece of cake, both are different mediums with different perspectives. When a conversion is made from a novel to a film it isn't abruptly taken as it is. There are always a few changes made for the screenplay.

The director has done Justice to casting it has been aced so well in the movie. To start off with Oprah Winfrey she has done an outstanding masculinity role as Sofia personally I admired her a lot than the protagonist because she has done role at the 80's which proves her audacity. Our protagonist expresses well through her hidden smiles behind her fingers, her body language and through her captive acting, Actress Whoopi Goldberg brings the character Celie to life. If not for her no other actress can suffice this great role. Shug's role both in film and the book are very well balanced. Spielberg has done excellent choice in terms of casting and expressed their characters well as in novel.

Moving on to dissimilarities when the instance was taken the lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug was not portrayed to its fullest as it is in the book. There is just a scene where they both kiss and also there are scenes where female kiss each other. Even in the climax scene Nettie and Celie kiss each other on lips. Characters like Celie's mother, Celie's step mother and Albert's sister have been terminated in the film. Albert's sister according to me has a short vital role played in the book because she expresses Celie that she has to stand for herself. When we compare these both scenes without reading the book both these scenes may sound similar if we just watch the movies. But there must have been some other scene to portray the relationship between Celie and Shug to make it more significant. But whereas when the novel is read, the readers can understand what kind of friendship they had. In the movie there is no much of a reference to Celie's mother and also even a picture is not shown in the movie. Most of the struggles and the slavery part where not shown clearly in the movie. For the sake of screenplay, we can just see the sprinkles of the main themes of the novel here and there but not a detailed description though. This not just happened to this movie the famous south Indian Tamil film *Asuran* directed by Vetrimaaran a film conversion of *Heat* by Poomani also missed Chidambaram's aunt's character for the purpose of screenplay, it becomes a necessity to crop certain character, theme or particular emotion. Even if an emotion is portrayed it isn't

shown overwhelmed like how it is in the book one such example was the lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug. Adding on the sexual oppression undergone by Celie was never screened well. It's just that the movie is subtle with all emotions or not over poured as it is in the novel. Walker even didn't want Spielberg to direct this movie as he is a white person and that it's hard for him understand the problem from its roots. This could be also one reason behind the subtleness of the movie. The director tries to utmost stick on to the book even he tries to quote the exact dialogues in the particular dining table scene where Celie angrily opens up about leaving Mr., she calls him as "lowdown dog" (*The Color Purple* page no 99). There are no scenes of showing Celie writing letters but they are turned to dominant scenes. At the end of the movie, we have a soft corner towards Albert but he remains the same throughout the novel. These are the tiny variations that are made to create a movie from a book.

Applying Blooms Taxonomy to *The Color Purple*

Mostly Bloom's Taxonomy is used for the better understanding. It is mainly applied by the teachers to teach concepts in an easier way. Chiefly Blooms Taxonomy is used to simplify the complicated concepts in a much easier way. *The color purple* book was made into a movie to show how black women were slave of slave. After this movie people worldwide are able to know the struggles what black women undergo and how she is not even considered as a person. Pants were not worn by women mostly during at the time of nineteenth century but after this movie few women started to wear it and that's how women are worn till today. Pants were symbolically shown as a process of transformation. At the end of the movie Harpo and Sofia were the same kinds of pants this can also be taken to indicate that women and men are the same. My perspective on Celie's store is that it made me realize that women should be economically sound to escape from the clutches caused by men. Back then not everybody was sent to school so reading of texts is pretty hard for them. Movies like these enlighten the illiterate minds. And it is much easy for them to understand when they watch and the ultimate aim of the book to preach many people and make them aware is also done through this way but in a more effortless and time consumption way. At the end the main motto is achieved but through a different medium is turned to movies. Screen translation is done to show the other side of the weaker class or weaker race people. Sensitive topics are made to films to depict the sufferings of those people. The most sensitive topics are made to films is because it's a powerful medium which has the

power to transform the mind to a better human. It does the process of purgation to the viewers as said by Aristotle.

The work *Devaram* written by Thirunavukarasu is a famous literary work. The lines of this work have appeared in the movie *Thalapathi* for the intro song of the heroine. The same work was the portion of that particular year Tenth board exams and many students were able to easily write that particular memory work well because it was a famous song during that period. So, this is the power of movie it has a pictorial and colorful representation that holds a strong position in the human brain. So here ultimately blooms taxonomy is achieved. The director also claimed in an interview that this is what he calls the success of the movie that it has reached so many students. By transporting a literary work into a film or a song, the creator strives to popularize the goodness of the work. The ultimate aim behind the conversion of film from a literary work is to make people aware and educated about the integrity of the work. Film conversion on one hand is pretty risky for this movie because it almost spans 40 years of Celie, so the director has to strictly follow with the timeline and also with the little-by-little transformation Celie undergoes. As readers we mostly have our own perception apart from what we read similarly this film can be taken as Spielberg's perception of book. As a movie it's a fine work but as a film conversion it's a tolerable piece work but not a masterpiece. Movies have to stick on to certain boundaries whereas novels have no limitation and that's what makes these different medium unique and special.

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