

818.023
Ra 2372
C.3

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WOMEN'S STRUGGLES AS PRESENTED
IN THE COLOR PURPLE AND THE WOMAN WARRIOR

A THESIS

BY

RATTIYA SIRIWONG

213.9.2540

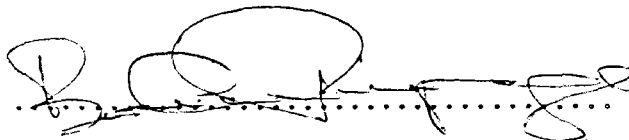
h 19110
20/11/1997
Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
Master of Arts degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University

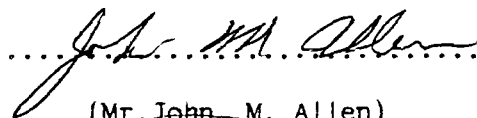
May 1997

Copyright 1997 Srinakharinwirot University

The Thesis Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University

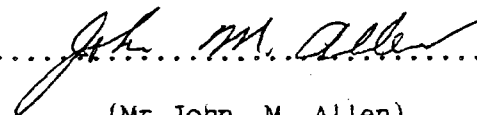
Thesis Committee

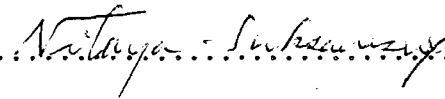
 Chair
(Asst. Prof. Dr. Banlue Tinpang-nga)

 Advisor
(Mr. John M. Allen)

Oral Defense Committee

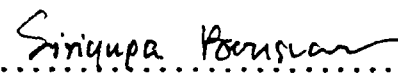
 Chair
(Asst. Prof. Dr. Banlue Tinpang-nga)

 Advisor
(Mr. John M. Allen)

 Reader
(Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup)

 Reader
(Mr. Thomas Radzienda)

The Graduate School has approved this thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

 Dean of the Graduate School
(Dr. Siriyupa Ponsuwan)

..... May 1997

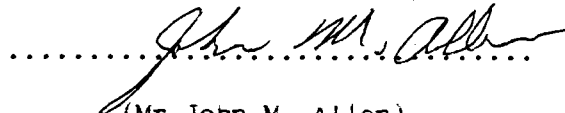
คณะกรรมการควบคุมและคณะกรรมการสอบได้พิจารณาปริญญานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้แล้ว เห็นสมควร
รับเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ
ของมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒได้

คณะกรรมการควบคุม



ประธาน

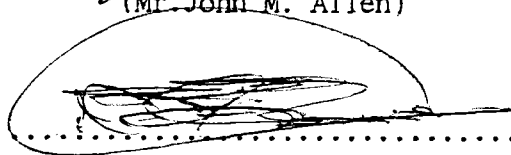
(พศ.ดร.บันลือ ถิ่นพังงา)



กรรมการ

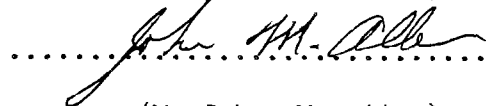
(Mr. John M. Allen)

คณะกรรมการสอบ



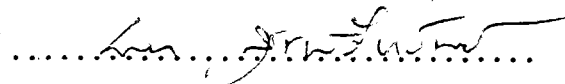
ประธาน

(พศ.ดร.บันลือ ถิ่นพังงา)



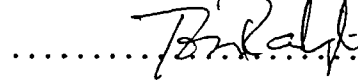
กรรมการ

(Mr. John M. Allen)



กรรมการที่แต่งตั้งเพิ่มเติม

(ดร.นิตยา สุขเสริทรัพย์)



กรรมการที่แต่งตั้งเพิ่มเติม

(Mr. Thomas Radzienda)

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัยอนุมัติให้รับปริญญานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตร
ปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ ของมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ



คณบดีบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย

(ดร.ศิริยุภา พูลสุวรรณ)

วันที่.....เดือน.....พฤษภาคม..... พ.ศ. 2540

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this thesis was made possible by many individuals to whom I am greatly indebted. Deep gratitude is given to Asst.Prof.Dr.Banlue Tinpang-nga, my chair, and Mr.John M. Allen, my advisor. Their guidance, valuable comments and encouragement made this thesis possible. Much appreciation is expressed to Dr.Nitaya Suksaeresup and Mr.Thomas Radzienda, my readers, for their constructive and untiring comments.

I am very grateful to the former Fulbrighters of Western Languages Department: Prof.Dr.Thomas Erskine and Prof.Dr.Edna Quinn for their inspiration and fruitful assistance throughout my study program.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr.Jarunee Maneekul, Miss Kelly Palovsky, Mr.Keith Bryan, and Mr.Robert Browne for their kind assistance.

I would also like to thank Srinakharinwirot University for providing "Bhumipol Scholarship" to support the expense of this thesis.

Finally, immeasurable indebtedness is expressed to my beloved parents, spouse, sisters, brothers, cousins, friends, and colleagues for their unfailing encouragement during my study.

Rattiya Siri Wong

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	13
Significance of the Study.....	13
Scope of the Study.....	14
Definition of Terms.....	14
Procedure.....	15
1. Accumulation of Information.....	15
2. Information Analysis.....	16
3. Report of Findings.....	17
4. Conclusion and suggestions for further study.....	17
II BACKGROUND LITERATURE ABOUT <u>THE COLOR PURPLE</u>	19
Part I: Females in African-American Culture.....	19
Part II: A Biography of Alice Walker.....	29
Part III: Celie's Role in <u>The Color Purple</u>	39
III BACKGROUND LITERATURE ABOUT <u>THE WOMAN WARRIOR</u>	51
Part I: Females in Chinese-American Culture.....	51
Part II: A Biography of Maxine Hong Kingston.....	58
Part III: The Narrator's Role in <u>The Woman Warrior</u>	64

IV	A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROTAGONISTS' STRUGGLES IN <u>THE COLOR PURPLE</u> AND <u>THE WOMAN WARRIOR</u>	77
	Sex-Role.....	77
	Education.....	81
	Marriage.....	85
	Career.....	88
	Beliefs.....	93
	Values.....	100
V	A CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY.....	114
	Conclusion.....	114
	Suggestion.....	119
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	121
	VISTA.....	126

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Unlike many nations, the United States is a nation of immigrants (with the exception of the Native Americans). Because the Euro-Americans, the earliest immigrants, were intent on domination of the newly "discovered" territory, they were not concerned with being assimilated into another culture. Furthermore, there was no other culture to assimilate into than the American Indian culture, which the Anglo-Saxons considered inferior. Their culture became dominant, and more recent immigrants, many of them not Euro-Americans, have had to adapt their cultures in order to be accepted as "Americans." Such cultural integration has not been achieved without a price. Because many immigrants want to be assimilated and yet keep their "roots," they lost some of their cultural heritage. In order to adjust themselves to be accepted as "Americans," they ignored or released some of their ethnic identity. Since women have traditionally been the guardians of their culture, passing it on, often orally, to each new generation, they have perhaps experienced the cultural changes in attitudes and values more directly than have men. Minority women novelists, aware of rich oral histories, have captured them in their writing, transformed them in response to dominant "American" culture, and described the effect of such transformations on individual women and their societies.

While many minority groups experienced similar struggles in cultural integration, the groups varied in terms of when and why

they went to the United States. Chinese-Americans and African-Americans, as examples, differ considerably in terms of their immigration history in the United States; but they have both suffered from racial and sexual discrimination. In the sixteenth century, African women were first transported to the U.S. as indentured servants and slaves to meet the demand for cheap labor and economic gain in an agricultural society. They could not prevent themselves from being transported because of the preponderance of British and other African and Arab powers engaged in the slave trade (Dinnerstein, Nichols and Reimers. 1990 : 26-29). In America, their problems were caused by both racial and sexual discrimination (Tarntip Tongpanchang. 1995 : Abstract).

Unlike African women, Chinese women went to the U.S. in the industrial mid-nineteenth century under different circumstances. The few Chinese women who did endure the arduous voyage across the Pacific Ocean arrived to face an alien and often hostile environment. Many were taken to America and forced into prostitution, virtual slaves who lived under such brutal conditions that few survived. Chinese wives could not initially go together with their husbands, according to the immigration laws and Chinese culture, although they later joined their husbands with or without the husbands' consent. Later, the Chinese-American women's problems were also caused by both racial and sexual discrimination (Yung. 1986 : 8-44).

In short, African-American women and Chinese-American women experienced similar problems related to their race and sex although they were from different backgrounds. However, the strategies they used to overcome their obstacles varied because of some differences

relating to their situations. For instance, from reading African-American and Chinese-American novels like Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), The Color Purple (1982), The Woman Warrior (1975), and The Joy Luck Club (1989), African-American women seem more aggressive and more violent than Chinese-American women, who seem to rely more on verbal than physical weapons.

For both African-American women and Chinese-American women, the core situation that causes their problems is culture. Both African-American culture and Chinese culture consider males more important than females, and their societies provide more opportunities for males. In America, from the Colonial Era to the twentieth century, "women's lives in America have been shaped by theories of male superiority," although over 50 % of the population in the United States are women (Quinn. 1994 : 1-12).

Consequently, Chinese-American women and African-American women must struggle for self-identity and gender equality by recognizing and differentiating their problems concerning gender, culture, and social values through their reality, experience, or consciousness, as Perez-Torres indicates in American Literature:

... configurations of "race," or "gender," or "ethnicity" involve a self-transformation and self-recognition for all subjects moving within connected networks.

(Perez-Torres. 1995 : 819)

Chinese-American women and African-American women have to

realize cultural conflicts within cultural integration. They must search for their personal rights while maintaining cultural unity as women of color. In light of such significance, it should be interesting to analyze African-American women's and Chinese-American women's struggles against cultures. This analysis will cover sex-role, education, marriage, career, values, and beliefs, with specific focus on gender problems.

Background

Women in the United States have been more deprived than men in many areas, and "culture is the main condition" of their deprivation (Lips. 1989 : 211). American society is a sexist society that emphasizes the male's superiority. In a sexist society, women are assigned to be the followers or supporters of men. In the Colonial Era, women's status depended on their husbands. Women could not own property or sign an official contract. Black women's status was further dependent on their masters. Later, although the American Declaration of Independence states that "all men are equal," that declaration did not include women. Equality, especially for females, remains a myth. Ethnic African women were even more repressed and discriminated against because of their race and because of their sex-role in African-American culture. Ethnic Chinese women were also suppressed and discriminated against by white Americans and by Chinese traditions. Further, when the Nineteenth Amendment extended suffrage to women on the same basis as men in 1920, all other civil and political rights were hypothetically included; however, in reality, few women achieved such rights, and

the struggle continued (Freeman. 1989 : 371). In the 1930's, African-American women were more assertive about their rights than Chinese-American women. During World War II (1941-1945), women began to take men's work, but they did not earn equal wages. Both ethnic African women and ethnic Chinese women worked outside the home; some even participated in the army. The war caused major changes in women's economic and social roles, especially in traditional sex-role stereotypes. After the War, women, including African-American women and Chinese-American women, still went to work in order to afford better living conditions. In the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Liberation Period (1950's-1960's), an African-American woman, Rosa Parks, challenged traditional sex roles and racism, refusing to go to the back of the bus. As women fought for the rights of African-Americans, women began to struggle against unequal treatment of women in American society. Black women openly participated in the struggles while Chinese-American women emotionally supported the activities. However, ethnic African women and ethnic Chinese women realized that their struggles for their rights and gender equality were different from those of white American women. Then the National Organization of Women (NOW) demanded an end to occupational and political discrimination and to bias against women in all institutions of society. "The movement was ridiculed by men and rejected by conservatives, but the majority of American women supported many of its programs" (Quinn. 1994 : 14).

Since 1960, however, the women's movement has progressed, women's status has improved. Women's studies programs have been established at American universities, and women including ethnic

African and ethnic Chinese have begun writing about themselves. Multi-cultural literature regularly appears on the best-seller list in the United States. Minority women writers have expressed their problems relating to both their own culture and American culture. The writers present protagonists who search for identity within their own ethnic culture or in conflicts between one's own ethnic group and American culture.

In multi-cultural novels, African-American and Chinese-American women writers describe sexual, racial, linguistic, and social concerns, presenting female protagonists the opportunity to mature and come to terms with themselves and their "communities." These developing protagonists appear in such works as The Bluest Eye, Sula, Their Eyes Were Watching God, The Color Purple, The Joy Luck Club, and The Woman Warrior.

In Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye (1969), the writer shows women's problems caused by the patriarchy in her own culture and by racial discrimination in the American culture. She explains the search for identity as black women (Drapper. 1992 : 1442). Pecola Breedlove, a young black girl, desperately wants blue eyes, thinking that they will make her more "American" and more beautiful. She drinks several quarts of milk at her friends' houses just to use their Shirley Temple mugs and gaze at young Temple's blue eyes. After being raped by her father and having the subsequent child die, Pecola went insane believing that she had the bluest eyes of all. In Sula (1973), Morrison points to what can be lost when community disappears. She suggests that black Americans "will only survive whole if they nourish, and are in turn nourished by their own com-

munity" (Birch. 1994 : 163). In the story, Sula Peace, the heroine is "the embodiment of paradox and ambiguity, and is an inspiring symbol of freedom in her community" (Drapper. 1992 : 1423). Her community regards Sula as a deviant who has disregarded communal commitments. She has broken Nel's marriage and rejected family when she institutionalized her grandmother. The women see her as a sexual threat; the men indirectly suggest that she sleeps with white men. They simply think of her as bad medicine and a source of problem. She is completely isolated. Comparing death to the National Suicide Day, she drops a young boy, Chicken Little, to his death; watches with interest as her own mother dies by fire; and seduces Jude, her best friend's husband. Indeed, her presence eventually has a beneficial effect on the community who nurture children and husbands with greater attention. Sula has problems of living in her community and being deprived of love.

Apart from The Bluest Eye and Sula, Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God (1986) examines her people's class-consciousness and expresses her contempt for a social organisation she found deplorable in its divisiveness (Birch. 1994 : 70). The work shows the search for a black female self. Hurston demonstrates that when black women unify, they can help each other and can even organise their community. She emphasizes that it is unfair for "a nigger" to be uneducated, poor, underprivileged and segregated from the mainstream of white American society (Birch. 1994 : 63-64).

Further, Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior (1975) and Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club (1989) portray women's problems caused by cultural conflict. The novels explore mother-daughter tensions

which are both results of the women's movement and the means of specifying the distinctiveness of Chinese and Chinese-American cultures. Kingston and Tan want their readers to understand women who confront cultural problems (Shear. 1993 : 194).

Hence, through reading these multi-cultural and feminist novels, we can hear women's voices commenting on racial and sexual discrimination. An exploration of Alice Walker's The Color Purple and Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior will show that as minority women, they cannot search for their identities like white women. But the ethnic women must search for their individual independence as maintaining their cultural unity.

In Alice Walker's The Color Purple (1982), Celie, the female protagonist, is an African-American who was raped by a man who she thinks had fathered her. Celie's step father does not love her. He prevents her from being educated. She has mothered two children whom the father sells to missionaries. Moreover, he marries her off to a husband who does not love her. He only marries her to gain a cow and have somebody to do his domestic work. She has to work hard in the house and in the field--she has to be available as a slave and a wife. She does not complain about her treatment, except writing to God in her own language. Celie, however, stops writing to God when she realizes that God is a man's image. Assisted by her friend, Shug, Celie becomes self-confident. Later, she develops self-esteem, accepts herself and earns her living by quilting.

Walker wrote the novel from her own experience as an African-American woman in the southern United States (Homan. 1983 : 186 -205). The Color Purple portrays women's problems and struggles (Marowski,

Pollock and Young. 1988 : 428). As an ethnic African woman, the protagonist fights for her personal rights while keeping the unity of African-American culture. She gains her self-esteem through revolutionary strategies against her husband, against her deprivation in education, and against some traditional beliefs, and she shows the unity of black language and community values.

Likewise, Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior (1975) shows sexual discrimination in Chinese mainstream culture and the double-consciousness of living in America. The novel is a "talk-story" that presents the female side of growing up in a culture, perhaps any culture. Kingston's idea of autobiography involves her vision of a stuttering girl, a woman of whom nothing is known, a girl who refuses to speak, one with a cut tongue, one whose throat hurts, one who quacks like a duck, and one who talks so much that she is considered insane. Each of these visions relates to the struggle between Chinese culture and "American" culture.

The Woman Warrior is presented in five chapters: "No Name Woman," "White Tigers," "Shaman," "At the Western Palace," and "Song for the Barbarian Reed Pipe." The narrative begins with the narrator's mother's brief warning concerning "No Name Woman" who is left in their village by her emigrant husband. "No Name Woman" becomes pregnant by rape and is forced by the villagers to drown herself and her baby. Affirming traditional attitudes, the narrator's mother describes such practices as foot-binding and the sale of girls as slaves, and she threatens her daughter with servitude and an arranged marriage to a retarded neighborhood boy. In "White Tigers," the mother provides an example of a good daughter, wife, and daughter-in-law called Fa Mu Lan. The legend is

a daydream of a young girl who has practiced fighting with an old couple in the wild. Mu Lan becomes strong, tough, and good at fighting, and she takes her father's place to be a soldier. At the battle field, she marries her husband, who is also a soldier, and she gives birth. The baby boy is sent to her parents-in-law for child-caring. After the war, Mu Lan visits her parents and moves to live with her husband, later taking care of domestic work, her child, and the husband's parents. Similar to Fa Mu Lan, the narrator's mother in "Shaman" is intelligent, diligent, tough, and kind. Brave Orchid, the mother, is independent enough to become one of rural China's few female doctors (midwives). She then returns to her submissive role upon joining her husband in America. Brave Orchid as a very strong woman--well educated, a doctor in China, the owner of slaves, independent and self-sufficient--is able to adjust herself to being a poor immigrant woman, a laundress, a field hand. Unlike the narrator's mother, Moon Orchid, Brave Orchid's sister in Chapter four, "At the Western Palace," becomes mad and has to be in a mental hospital, going to America to claim her husband because of Brave Orchid's comment. Since Moon Orchid cannot adapt to living in America, she dies. Lastly, in Chapter five, "Song of the Barbarian Reed Pipe," the narrator tells something about herself and Ts'ai Yen, who are second generation, and they are like the woman warrior and a symbol for the woman artist. In America, the narrator has to struggle for her identity as a Chinese-American woman. As she gets older, the narrator becomes mature. She understands her mother's situation and intention, retells the stories of her mother, and wants to discover her "roots" in China.

To overcome her problem, the narrator has to absorb and synthesize the experience of her two cultures, and come to understand her alienation from American life and the particular cruelty towards women in Chinese culture. This idea is significant to consider when one has to live in a bicultural society:

Women may reject the culture that rejects them, but such brave and rare disassociations are not without serious cost. Kingston is dealing here with the fears and rebellions that recur in much women's writing.

(Bryfonski and Senick. 1980 : 314)

In The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior, the protagonists reveal their problems and struggles related to their rejection of some African-American culture and some Chinese culture. In The Color Purple, Celie rejects the traditional sex-role that denies her the opportunity to gain self-esteem and earn her living. In The Woman Warrior, the narrator rejects Chinese values and traditional beliefs, demonstrating that a female child can act and can study and lead her own life.

Alice Walker's The Color Purple and Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior are worth studying in order to investigate minority women's problems and struggles in contemporary American society. From the researcher's point of view, there are four important reasons to study The Woman Warrior and The Color Purple: presenting courageous efforts to combat sexism and racism, addressing minority women's problems, concentrating on multi-culturalism, and analysing two famous

feminist writings.

Firstly, the works brilliantly describe their protagonists' courageous efforts to combat sexism and racism. Although The Woman Warrior combines fantasy and reality, and The Color Purple includes an unrealistically happy ending, the protagonists' struggles are revolutionary strategies to address feminist issues: matriachal society, sisterhood, and unconventional beliefs.

Moreover, the women's problems presented in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior include patriarchal society, racial discrimination, language, religious and traditional oppression, and family relationships--these are crucial to Chinese-American and African-American women.

Furthermore, the novels concern multi-culturalism, a trend of contemporary literature. The heroines in both novels fight for their personal independence while maintaining cultural unity.

Lastly, Walker and Kingston are famous feminist writers who have established themselves as experts on the problems of minority women. Walker is an African-American who won the Pulitzer Prize for The Color Purple in 1983. The award changed Walker's life and also provided Americans with a better understanding of African-American women. Kingston is a Chinese-American who received the National Book Critic Circle Award for The Woman Warrior in 1976. The award made Kingston a popular guest speaker who has given her audiences a better understanding of Chinese-American women.

Accordingly, the researcher wants to study the protagonists' multi-cultural struggles in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior concentrating on sex-role, education, marriage, value, and beliefs,

with specific references to gender problems.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this research are as follows:

1. To analyze and compare the female protagonists' problems and struggles in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior in terms of sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values.
2. To study women's problems in African-American and Chinese culture through the examination of The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior.

Significance of the Study

1. The study of women's struggles in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior will help the audience to better understand problems and attempted struggles of African-American and Chinese-American women in terms of sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values.
2. The study will provide a better understanding of feminist issues regarding matriarchal society, sisterhood, and unconventional beliefs.
3. The study will help the reader to better understand the critical value and biases of African-American and Chinese culture.
4. The study will help the audience to better appreciate the value of African-American women and Chinese-American women.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study covers the following :

1. Alice Walker's The Color Purple (1982), focusing on the female protagonist's problems of and struggles against sex-role, education, marriage, career, values, and beliefs about Christianity;
2. Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior (1975), focusing on the female protagonist's problems of and struggles with sex-role, education, marriage, career, values, and traditional beliefs;
3. Literature related to the biographies of Alice Walker and Maxine Hong Kingston;
4. Literature related to the mainstream cultures of African-Americans and Chinese-American, centering on women;
5. Literature related to African-American and Chinese-American writers, with specific references to women's issues.

Definition of Terms

1. "Confrontations and Problems" refers to problems which cause inequality in cultures, especially about sex-role, education, marriage, career, values, and beliefs.
2. "Struggles" are strategies to deal with confrontations and problems.
3. "Culture" includes practices, habits, customs, values, beliefs and traditions of a particular group of people.
4. "Gender" refers to male and female.
5. "Sex-Role" refers to the functions of male and female

according to African-American culture and Chinese culture.

6. "Education" refers to a formal or informal system of training and instruction designed to give knowledge and develop skills.

7. "Marriage" is a legal union or a union by custom between a man and a woman as husband and wife.

8. "Career" refers to a profession or occupation with opportunities for advancement, promotion, or progress through life.

9. "Values" refers to worth and importance of or respect for gender according to Chinese culture and African-American culture.

10. "Beliefs" includes religious and traditional beliefs that function to maintain and perpetuate cultural guides for moral practices.

11. "Female Protagonists" refers to Celie in Alice Walker's The Color Purple and "I" or the narrator, in Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior.

12. "Feminism" is the belief in the principle that women should have the same practical rights and opportunities as men.

13. "Feminist" is a supporter (man or woman) of feminism.

14. "Prejudice" is an opinion of like or dislike regarding matters of gender that is not founded on reason or intelligence.

Procedure

This is a descriptive research study to be conducted in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Accumulation of Information

Information will be collected on the following topics:

- 1.1 The biographies of Alice Walker and Maxine Hong Kingston
- 1.2 The mainstream cultures of the ancient Chinese and the African-American, focusing on the female's role in The Woman Warrior and The Color Purple
- 1.3 The major problems of African-American women living in the twentieth-century U.S. relating to sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values, with specific references to gender problems
- 1.4 The major points of the history of Chinese immigration to the U.S and problems thereof, especially those about culture--sex-role, education, marriage, career, value, and beliefs, with specific references to gender problems
- 1.5 The protagonists's problems and struggles in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior

2. Information Analysis

- 2.1 The texts of The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior will be examined focusing on the protagonists' problems of culture--sex-role, education, marriage, career, values, and beliefs.
- 2.2 The protagonists' struggles against culture, gender, and values in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior will be analyzed in terms of feminism.

2.3 The information of 2.1 and 2.2 will be treated comparatively.

3. Report of Findings

The findings of the study will be reported in expository form.

4. Conclusion and suggestions for further study

A conclusion will be drawn from the findings and suggestions made for further study.

This thesis is divided into five chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction

- Background
- Purpose of the Study
- Significance of the Study
- Scope of the Study
- Definition of Terms
- Procedure

Chapter Two: Background Literature about The Color Purple

Part I: Females in African-American Culture

Part II: A Biography of Alice Walker

Part III: Celie's Role in The Color Purple

Chapter Three: Background Literature about The Woman Warrior

Part I: Females in Chinese Culture

Part II: A Biography of Maxine Hong Kingston

Part III: The Narrator's Role in The Woman Warrior

Chapter Four: A Comparison of the Protagonists' Struggles

- Sex-role
- Education
- Marriage
- Career
- Beliefs
- Value

Chapter Five: A Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Study

- A Conclusion
- Suggestions

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND LITERATURE ABOUT THE COLOR PURPLE

In this Chapter, the researcher divides information on background literature about The Color Purple into three parts: Part I provides a description of females in African-American culture, Part II gives information about a biography of Alice Walker, and Part III presents Celie's role in The Color Purple.

Part I Females in African-American Culture

This thesis aims to study minority women's struggles in that they cannot struggle for their identity like white American women, but they have to fight for their personal rights within their own culture and keep their "roots" as well. For minority women like ethnic African women, culture is the main condition to fight for identity. For instance, in Alice Walker's The Color Purple, the protagonist is an African-American woman who struggles against inequality and burdens within the African-American culture. To get a better understanding of her character, it is necessary to learn about females in African-American culture.

The African-American people developed their culture during colonial times, influenced by African, European, and Indian-American cultures, and from the realities of eighteenth-century slavery in the southern and northern colonies (Horton. 1993 : 98-120). Women in African-American culture confronted burdens

related to their sex and their race (Birch. 1994 : 13-29). They were limited to and responsible for their sex-role: leading their household, doing domestic work, caring and educating children, finding employment, teaching religious values, providing moral example, and being ^{nowhere to go} self-reliant because most African-American husband did not have full rights to protect them. Further, they could not vote because they were females, and they could not travel because they engaged to their masters and had to look after their own children.

Culturally, African-American women were responsible for their households because of their husbands' absence. Since African-American husbands could not live together with their families, and since they worked hard on farms for their masters, they could visit their families only on holidays or with the permission of their white masters. The black women lived in villages or in the white master's house, working in the fields or working as servants or baby-sitters. As a result, African-American families were single-parent families, and the wives had to manage their households, including handling living expenses, domestic work, and child care. In addition, black families headed by females were likely to be poor because of low income--females received lower wages than males. The African-American family structure was different from the white American's: "If blacks were not so poor and did not suffer from racism and discrimination, their families would be much like white families" (Edelman. 1988 : 135). Until now black women still head households because most black women do not marry before giving birth so that black children live with only a mother (Edelman. 1988 : 130-141). Edelman's opinion is quite different from Celie's life in The Color Purple. Celie's parents and

husband are not slaves. They are not so poor because they have their own houses, fields, animals, and some black men are responsible to lead their families. Before she was married, Celie lived with her mother and her step-father. Celie's step-father, Fonso, led the household and her mother was powerless. Celie, however, helped doing house work and was sent to school. Fonso was the man who stopped her education. After Celie marries Albert, Albert leads the household, commanding and controlling all matters in his house. Celie does all domestic work in the home and in the fields, but she has no financial or legal rights. Celie's life is like African women in Olinka, an African village in England, mentioned by her sister, Nettie, in The Color Purple. The African women have to work hard under patriarchy. Noticeably, ethnic African women were much more deprived than ethnic African men whether they were slaves or not. African-American women are tough and responsible in many situations, i.e. heading households or following their husbands. This inequity shows the situation in which African-American women have to struggle for their individual rights as presented in The Color Purple.

Apart from leading the household, African-American women have been responsible for domestic work and childcare. In African-American families, either in a single-parent family or a two-parent family, wives have been expected to do domestic work and child care. The women have done house work, cooking, cleaning, and washing besides looking after their children. African-American women have to send their children to school, teach them moral lessons, and domestic skills. Education for children has been a top priority, and parents are strongly advised by the National Convention of Colored

Citizens (NCCC) to get their children into school. However, the mothers have particular responsibility, and they are urged by the NCCC to spend significant amounts of time with their children. Moreover, the mothers have to improve their minds so that they can educate their children (Horton. 1993 : 103-104). This practice is followed by African-American women. However, it has been difficult to be successful because their duties take time and money, and they are busy and they do not earn enough money for family expenses. In The Color Purple, Walker implies that domestic work and childcare are duties of both males and females like Harpo, Celie's step-son, who has to look after his children and housework. Also, Celie makes Albert do house work as her self-esteem increases.

In terms of education, in the Slavery Era, African-American women received a better chance to study than African-American men, but the women were not highly educated. Since black men had to work far from their village, they were not well educated or literate, either. Black women had more opportunities to study while staying with their white masters. Their masters taught them many useful skills in order to make them better equipped to work in the whites' houses and to teach both white and black children. However, the women were not well-educated since they were only servants, and they were black. Traditionally, with their white masters, the African-American women's education in the Slavery Era was concerned with proper manners, moral beliefs, and domestic skills (Dinnerstein, Nichols, and Reimers. 1990 : 148-175). At present, their educational opportunity is better. However, there are still fewer ethnic African women than white women who have received an education because of racial discrimination and

their poor situation. Education is an important matter to help African-American women find their rights and their cultural unity. In The Color Purple, Celie is informally educated by Nettie, and by Shug concerning her rights, abilities, beliefs, values and community. Celie learns that she has the right to lead her own life, she can use her abilities to work and earn her living, she is worthy to live for Shug, for Nettie, and especially for herself. Moreover, she is concerned about her children, her ancestors in Olinka, her friends in her village, and her dialect.

Apart from receiving a better chance to study than African-American men, African-American women could work for various employments. African-American women traditionally worked as field-workers, servants, and baby-sitters. In the Colonial Era, women had to work hard either in their masters' houses or in the field. According to Jacqueline Jones, the African-American women would have had no shelter if they were punished by their slave masters. The female slaves were "never too pregnant or too young or too frail to be subject to the harsh demands of their insensitive owner." They shouldered the work load of their race and could not avoid sexual harassment (Horton. 1993 : 100). However, when there was vocational training for the black women, some domestic work and occupations like sewing and quilting, doing laundry, practicing mid-wifery, teaching, doing public service, and being a missionary were undertaken. It seemed that their careers were limited because they were females and they were African-Americans. They had fewer life choices than whites in the same situation. Further, their wages in the private sector were lower than white women's (Higginbotham. 1988 : 74-83). Unlike Higginbotham's

and Horton's information, Walker presented various careers for ethnic African women in The Color Purple. For example, Shug Avery and Mary Agnes (Harpo's mistress) are blues singers; Celie is the owner of a pants' business; Nettie is a missionary; and Sofia (Harpo's wife) is a clerk. In addition, there are important incidents in Walker's work which show cultural unity in that blues songs are the identity of black people; Nettie's mission is for her African ancestors in Olinka village, England; Celie has her private business applied from traditional work (quilting); and Sofia does not want to work for a white master like Miss Eleanor Jane but she loves to be a clerk in Celie's store. Beside pointing out African-American traditional careers, all of the women's careers in The Color Purple are independent works, not under men's command.

Apart from being ^{not (without the benefit)} deprived in employment, African-American women were limited in travel. In the slavery era, husband and wife often belonged to separate masters, and they could be together only during periods when one or both were allowed to be free from their duties. Usually, the husbands journeyed to the African-American wives' homes. The women could not travel because of their childcare responsibilities and their masters retained ownership of the children of slave marriages (Horton. 1993 : 99). In African-American culture, men had a greater advantage in travel than African-American women because they did not take care of their children and they earned more wages. At present, however, African-American women have equal rights in travel. For instance, females characters in The Color Purple like Shug, Nettie, Celie, and Squeak (Mary Agnes) can travel as far as they like; they have individual independence in travel.

As male slaves were dependent on their masters and they often stayed apart from their wives, the white men or other black men might have raped their wives. African-American women had to be self-reliant^{independent} because they were rarely protected by their men. Black men could offer little protection to their wives, especially when they were threatened by their masters. The African-American male slaves lacked even the ability to control their own lives (Horton. 1993 : 100). Accordingly, African-American women had to be self-reliant and to learn to protect themselves. Consequently, compared to many women, for instance, white women and Chinese-American women, African-American women seemed tougher, stronger, more courageous, and consequently more independent than other women. Self-reliance is obviously portrayed in most black female characters in The Color Purple, i.e. Shug, Nettie, Celie, Mary Agnes, and Sofia. All these women can lead their lives and earn living expenses. Moreover, they are proud of being African-American women.

In addition to the limitation of black men protection, African-American women could not vote for their leaders and could not participate in competitive games and leisure. The African-Americans had a festival which involved the election of a "governor" or "king" of the slaves. During the festival, which included competitive games, food and drink, and singing and dancing, women prepared the food and arranged the location, but they could not vote for the office holders. Besides, the women could not compete in the sports competition during festival days (Horton. 1993 : 101). This culture has since changed. Male dominance in law and politics are less followed than in the earlier time. They provide most African-American women equality in voting, but the

women rarely get a chance to be leaders. In The Color Purple, Albert is conservative in female leisure--he thinks Celie must be home, she needs no fun, and she has no choice. On the contrary, he wants to have fun drinking, dancing, and listening to Shug's songs, but he does not want Celie to go to Harpo's Lucky Star (a night club). However, Shug insists on taking Celie with her. Moreover, when Celie is at the night club, she sings "Miss Celie's Song," which makes Celie feel self-esteem and happiness. *a good opinion of one's own character and abilities*

The inequalities in festivals and entertainment were also evident in terms of morality. Women are supposed to be the gentle sex, more moral, more loving, and more caring than men. Gender ideals of black society were heavily influenced by middle class black males who related them to the population at large. Also, the ideals included gender inequalities that were burdens for black women. As Horton says:

Man is strong--Woman is beautiful
 Man is daring and confident--Woman is different
 and unassuming
 Man is great in action--Woman in suffering
 Man shines abroad--Woman at home
 Man talks to convince--Woman to persuade and please
 Man has a rugged heart--Woman a soft and tender one
 Man prevents misery--Woman relieves it
 Man has science--Woman sensibility
 Man is a being of justice--Woman an angel of mercy

(Horton. 1993 : 103)

The message shows not only social expectations for black women, but also for all women. The differences between men's and women's situations, suggested by the above ideals of males and females established gender inequality and burdens for women, especially black women because the situations limited their role and rights, and black newspapers largely supported this idea of passivity and dependence. In The Color Purple, Celie follows these social expectations strictly. She works hard and tries to be good to everybody although sometimes she is not willing to do so. Celie is like traditional women in Olinka mentioned by Nettie that a girl or a woman "is nothing to herself; only to her husband can she become something" (Walker. 1982 : 162). Furthermore, Harpo states that women are weaker than men, and women should be gentle, not be offensive (Walker. 1982 : 225). This notion obviously makes Celie lack self-esteem.

The conventional black female-role not only extended their responsibilities, but also limited their public display. African-American women had to be careful of any public display of sexuality. The idea made African-American women sensible women who realised the wisdom of proper manners and simplicity in dress. They needed no ornamentation, only clothes designed not to "seduce by her appearance, but only to please." They thought that only foolish women were "led astray by fashion and splendor" (Horton. 1993 : 105). The notions about women's proper dress and manner in public seemed to help protect black women from sexual harassment, but these also pointed out the inequality in dress since men could dress and act as they pleased. It also suggested that women had no self-control without the protection of proper attire. However, traditional black

women still followed the rules about dress and behavior to show their morality. For example, Celie always dresses modestly and never thinks of being the first one in her own dress (Walker. 1982 : 22). After Celie achieved her identity, however, she totally changes her dressing--she wears pants or whatever makes her feel comfortable.

Apart from being careful of public display of sexuality, a moral African-American woman had to be religious and charitable besides being kind and knowing how to nurse others. They had to be religious and had to distribute money for the poor and for religious or community activities, but they could not be preachers or ministers. They also had to learn how to nurse the members of their families and people in their community. These are women's roles not only in African-American society, but also in every society. Now many black women are the major supporters of their churches, and they often sacrifice themselves for their communities. Further, many become missionaries as mentions in Nettie's role in The Color Purple.

Finally, African-American women should be good wives. To be a good wife, a woman needs so many qualifications: ^{modesty, self-control} reticence, helpfulness, ^{kind} obedience, diligence, politeness, thoughtfulness, sympathy, wisdom and skills as a good cook, and a good mother. Horton states that the proper behavior for good African-American wives should be:

Black woman should rise early, prepare breakfast for her husband, allowing time to listen to his conversation, express interest in his work, and provide sympathy for his problems.... keep her house neat and clean, insure that her family always has clean clothing to wear,

be sensitive to the unspoken problems of her children,
and take time to plan nutritional and tasty meals....
never gossip about her husband, keep his secrets, and
always receive him with a smile.

(Horton. 1993 : 107)

This shows how demanding the roles of wife and mother were for ethnic African women. Also, the idea was similar to traditional African woman as mentioned by Nettie in The Color Purple, in that women had to work hard for their families and had to be responsible. In addition, their value depended on their husbands' status (Walker. 1982 : 162). Indeed, it was very difficult if not impossible to meet all the qualifications. It took time and effort for African-American women to be good wives, good mothers, good friends, and good slaves--all at the same time.

Consequently, African-American women have been expected to shoulder too many responsibilities because of their sex and their race. The African-American culture has controlled their emotional and physical roles. An additional demand for black women was to maintain the highest moral standards themselves and to be responsible for the morality of their men and white society. Indeed, this information is useful for the researcher to better perform and analyse a comparative study in Chapter Four, and to relate Alice Walker's biography to Celie's role in The Color Purple in Part II and III of this Chapter.

Part II A Biography of Alice Walker

Apart from the information about females in African-American culture, in order to better understand The Color Purple, the author's biography should be studied because "literature is a language art showing human life, society and culture during the writer's era" (Sermjit. 1985 : 13-18). This part will provide a biography of Alice Walker so that the researcher will be able to relate Walker's viewpoint and her background to The Color Purple.

Alice Walker is an African-American novelist, poet, short-story writer, essayist, educator, biographer, and editor. Born on February 9, 1944, she was the last of eight children of sharecroppers, Willie Lee and Minnie Tallulah (Grant) Walker.

In her childhood, she learned to defend herself, despite her family's poverty and the existence of racial discrimination. Growing up with her five brothers, Walker learned to survive as a poor African-American girl. She learned how to make her life in a world of cotton fields, hogwire fences, sharecroppers' shacks, overpriced food under the authority of white Americans, and landlords who believed that "Black men were invisible, black women could be theirs for sexual harassment, and black children did not need education" (Hine, Brown, and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1205). In The Color Purple, Walker uses her childhood experience to portray Celie's life--working in cotton fields and facing sexual oppression and racial discrimination. In The Color Purple, Celie works hard in the cotton fields and in her house and is subsequently raped by her step-father. She also encounters racial discrimination from a white woman at the fabric store.

Further, because of the blindness in her right eye and her childhood poverty, she felt lonely and alienated. When she was eight

years old, her older brother accidentally shot at her right eye with a BB gun (Votteler and Young. 1990 : 400). Walker's parents did not have access to an automobile so she did not receive medical treatment until several days after the accident. The resulting scar tissue that completely covered her eye remained until she was fourteen years old. As a result of her injury, Walker became reclusive and considered suicide. Fortunately, she discovered her love for books and began to read texts written by some famous writers. She spent most of her childhood withdrawn from others because of her disfigurement, and she began writing poetry to combat her loneliness: "She began really to see people and things, to really notice relationships and to learn to be patient enough to care about how they turned out" (Votteler and Young. 1990 : 400). In The Color Purple, Celie uses writing to overcome her loneliness and unhappiness. This example shows that a black girl whose informal education and friends gain self-confidence and become mature through reading and writing.

When she was growing up, Walker's mother gave her three significant and meaningful gifts: a sewing machine, an exquisite suitcase, and a typewriter (Hine, Brown, and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1205). These gifts were particularly important because her mother had never owned such items, but she had bought them for Walker. Although her mother was a maid and earned less than twenty dollars a week, she looked after Walker very well and taught her about the world. The sewing machine meant that Walker could make her own clothes, which would allow her to be self-sufficient and independent. Next, the suitcase gave her the ability both to travel the world and to come home whenever she needed to touch base with her family and community.

Lastly, the typewriter was an item which Walker regarded as a commitment to write not only her own, but also her mother's stories. These gifts are implied in The Color Purple. Celie writes letters to God and Nettie, telling her life story. Celie ^{eye in st} revolts against her culture showing that she does not rely on her husband--women must be self-reliant. She has the right to lead her own life, to see the world, and to defend herself. Celie leaves Albert when she attains self-esteem and fights for her individual rights. She is ready to travel and be economically independent by leaving him to go to Memphis and establish her own business making trousers.

In 1961, as senior class valedictorian, Walker was awarded a "rehabilitation" scholarship from the state of Georgia, and she was given seventy-five dollars which were collected from her poor community. Along with the three gifts, from 1961 to 1963, she went to study at Spelman College in Atlanta. In this all-women college, she was conscious of ^{disorderly} racism and politics, and she interacted with black females across the country who wanted to change the world. As an activist, she became disappointed with the middle-class students who were materialistic. During the 1960s, Spelman's aim was to produce "ladies." Walker, however, did not want to be a "lady" but a sister warrior like her black ancestors (Hine, Brown and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1206). Although being an activist does not appear in The Color Purple, Shug, Celie and Nettie portray black women's rights to be educated, to defend themselves, and lead their own lives.

Walker transferred to Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, in 1963. It was a move that provided her an opportunity to see the world as a global village. She traveled to Africa in her senior

year, storing up experiences that would later appear in her literary works: for example, Nettie's story about the African people in England in The Color Purple. In addition, this shows a woman's role in society in that she transfers her cultural unity or her "roots" from her experiences to her present situation. One experience at Sarah Lawrence that inspired Walker's writing career was an unplanned pregnancy. She thought of committing suicide as she struggled with her decision to keep the child or to have an abortion. If she committed suicide, her parents would be shocked; but if they learned of her pregnancy, they would be disappointed and ashamed. She chose to have an abortion, that decision led her to write Once, a series of poems published in 1968, about her ordeal. An unplanned pregnancy also appears in The Color Purple. Celie's pregnancy humiliates her mother, and Celie herself is terribly unhappy and confused. Nevertheless, she keeps the children until she gives birth, but her step-father sells them off to missionaries.

After graduating from Sarah Lawrence with a bachelor's degree in 1965, Walker returned to the South to register voters and promote welfare rights in Georgia (Christian. 1984 : 33). In Georgia, she married Melvyn Rosenman Leventhal, a Jewish civil rights lawyer, in 1967. In her work, she had made contact with the state's poorest and least educated African-Americans. She began to observe the impact of poverty on the relationships between black men and women and on their family members. Her experiences in African-American situations inspired her to write about their poverty and their need to find their identity. In The Color Purple, Walker writes about the devastating effects of poverty on Celie and Sofia and their families.

Apart from being an activist and publishing a series of poems named Once, Walker published two significant collections of poetry--Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems (1973) and Good Night Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning (1979). Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems was her second volume of poetry, which won the Lillian Smith Award and was nominated for a National Book Award. While the poems in this collection describe the decline of the southern revolution, there are heroines whose rebellious acts establish the role of black women in the civil rights movement. Like Revolutionary Petunias, Good Night Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning is about the vital connection between love and lasting change, focusing on the changing of love relationships between women and men as the foundation for a radical and irreversible transformation in society. Walker portrays a woman who is able to love and insist on being loved, without possessiveness or fear, through forgiveness. Also, this volume shows black women's history and understanding of love (Christian. 1984 : 268).

Early in her writing career, Walker held several teaching jobs, including writer-in-residence and teacher of Black Studies at Jackson State University (1968-1969) and Tougaloo College (1970-1971). In 1971, she received a two-year Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, she left Georgia and became a lecturer in literature at Wellesley College and at the University of Massachusetts in Boston in 1972-1973 (Hine, Brown and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1206). Experience in teaching has been useful for Walker's sources in writing and for her understanding of black people.

While she was teaching, Walker also published literary works.

Her career was well on its way by the time she was awarded the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in 1977-1978. However, in 1979, she moved from New York City to a ranch outside San Francisco, where she currently resides and writes full time (Hine, Brown and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1205). Actually, Walker's career as a writer has proved that the typewriter given by her mother has inspired her literary works, concentrating on herself and her "roots."

Apart from writing literary works and poetry, Walker has published a biography for children, Langston Hughes, An American Poet (1974). The biography is about an artist who believes in recovering the lives and texts of African-Americans. Later she would publish her research on Zora Neal Hurston's rich legacy to American literature. It is noticeable that whatever Walker does, she has specific focus on her ethnic unity and identity of African-Americans. Both the biography for children and her research on Hurston are related to her ethnic Africanness.

In addition, Walker's writing career includes short stories. Her significant short stories are In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women (1973) and You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down (1981). In her first collection of short stories, In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women, Walker focuses on the violence that pervades the lives of black women and the mechanisms they use to fight back. One story in the collection that is frequently anthologized is "The Revenge of Hannah Kemhuff," in which a black woman has a conjurer cast a spell on a white woman who denied her food during the "Depression;" the spell results in the deaths of the white woman's children. The collection won a Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Award from the National

Institute of Arts and Letters (Hine, Brown and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1207). In Walker's second collection of short-stories, You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down, she looks closely at pornography, abortion, inter-racial rape, and the politicization of relationships. Unlike heroines in her previous works, the women in these stories are more optimistic, spirited, and determined to survive as whole persons (Christian. 1984 : 268). Both of her short stories show that Walker really wants to drive African-American women to search for identity as colored women.

In her literary writings, Walker's works involved four famous novels--The Third Life of Grange Copeland (1969), Meridian (1976), The Color Purple (1982) and The Temple of My Familiar (1990). The Third Life of Grange Copeland was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. It centers on a father and son, Grange and Brownfield, who turn to alcohol and violence as a means of surviving in a society in which they have no power. Walker's second novel, Meridian, is a study of personal development and sacrifice set during the civil rights movement that is regarded by many critics as one of the best novels of that period. She creates the novel to symbolize not only African-American motherhood, but also the concept of "sisterhood," stressing the closeness of all African-American women (Christian. 1984 : 262). With the publication of The Color Purple, Walker became nationally known. The novel was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award and won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1983. In 1985, the book was made into a movie which had mass appeal. ^{interesting} Using ^{written in the form of letters} "epistolary style," Walker has Celie write to God, Nettie to Celie, and Celie to Nettie. What occurs in these letters is a dis-

cussion of the gross abuse of black women, suppressed by their men in both America and Africa. Focusing on incest, women's explorations of their bodies and souls, wife beating, and other violence, The Color Purple illustrates "the dehumanization of women" (Hine, Brown and Terborg-Penn. 1993 : 1208). Walker's most recent novel is The Temple of My Familiar (1990). It is a mystical dreamlike structure, and is filled with rich symbols, myths, legends, and fantasy. Walker addresses issues of self-knowledge, humanity, and man's destiny. Walker is particularly concerned about her African-American people, both males and females and both youths and adults. Indeed, she presents her identity and her cultural unity--she improves herself and her community as well.

Walker has become more prolific with each passing year, and she has been one of her projects since winning the Pulitzer. Writing essays is one of her projects. She published a collection of essays called In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens (1983). The essays introduced the term "womanist," as opposed to "feminist," to separate black feminists or feminists of color from white feminists, who often have different ideas about issues of race and gender. These essays essentially bring together her ideas about art and its relationship to life, reflecting the idea that art should improve life, not just entertain readers (Marowski, Pollock and Young. 1988 : 423). The researcher agrees with her idea about art because art influences our thought about living.

Besides working on literary works, poetry, and essays, Walker wrote several other texts, including Horses Make the Landscape Look More Beautiful (1984), a book of poems; To Hell With Dying (1987),

a book for children; and Living by the Word: Selected Writings, 1973-1978 (1988), a book of essays. All texts written by Walker are useful for African-American children to know their folklore and culture. In addition, she expects the children to realize and help maintain African-American cultural unity.

In short, Alice Walker is one of the greatest African-American women writers who treats a variety of subjects, including individual and collective freedom for the black community and black women, the endurance and will to survive, ancestor worship, the transformation of impoverished illiterate people, and the impact of racism and sexism on black relationships. With the release of the movie The Color Purple, Walker's vision for women and black people became accessible to millions. Perhaps no other black author has touched as many lives as Walker. She often writes about possibilities, and her very life gives testimony to the blossoms that can grow strong and tall when a woman finds her personal independence and her own "roots" in her community.

The researcher considers Walker's biography significant because it helps the researcher understand her works, social ideas, and her intention. Walker herself had searched for identity from her young age to her university life. When she developed her self-esteem and realized her potential, she felt confident and independent. Moreover, she has devoted her potential for black people, through her career. The researcher will use Walker's biography to study her life and her protagonist in The Color Purple, in Part III of this Chapter and in Chapter Four respectively.

Part III Celie's Role in The Color Purple

In addition to information about females in African-American culture and a biography of Alice Walker, Celie's role in The Color Purple in terms of sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and value is discussed. This part is aimed at providing a better understanding of the protagonist's struggles and helping to analyze the female protagonists' role in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior in Chapter Four.

Celie, the protagonist in The Color Purple, changes significantly in the novel. She develops herself from being uneducated and lacking status to become an accepted woman with self-esteem. She struggles bravely against many obstacles and becomes mature.

In terms of sex-role, Celie is initially a conventional African-American female. When she is young, she is a good girl. She helps doing domestic work--cleaning, cooking, preparing water. Celie adores and loves her mother. She even sacrifices her body and tolerates her step father's sexual intercourse in order to save her sick mother. She also protects her sister, Nettie, from being raped by the father. As Celie tells God about her step-father who rapes her:

You gonna do what your mammy wouldn't... When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it.

But I don't never git used to it. And now I feels sick every time I be the one to cook. My mama she fuss

at me an look at me. She happy, cause he good to her now. But too sick to last long....

(Walker. 1982 : 1-2)

The quotation shows Celie's tolerance of her father's sexual harassment. She does not like the situation but she keeps quiet. Celie dares not tell her mother because the mother is too sick to have sexual intercourse with the father or to learn that he is ^{in a bad way} abusing Celie. It is obvious that Celie loves her mother and her sister so much. She allows many bad situations to happen to her as she saves her mother and sister. order to save them.

Apart from being a good daughter to her sick mother and her step-father, Celie is studious and is good to her sister. She wants to go to school even though she is pregnant. When her father stops her from being educated, she learns informally from her sister, Nettie (Walker. 1982 : 11). Celie is good to her sister, too. Besides saving Nettie from her father's rape, she encourages Nettie to study instead of having a boy friend. When the sister runs away from home, she is willing to provide Nettie a shelter (Walker. 1982 : 18-19). From Celie's qualifications, Walker implies that African-American women are kind, patient, and literate.

Besides being a good daughter and sister, Celie is a good and conservative wife. She follows her husband's (Albert's) order, and works hard in the house and works in the fields besides looking after Albert's four rotten children. Celie never complains about her responsibilities. Even Albert's sisters, Kate and Carrie, admire Celie

for being a good housekeeper, cook, and step mother (Walker. 1982 : 21). Further, they say their brother, Albert, could not find a better wife than Celie even if he tried to . Apparently, many women in the book and in general are conventional people as they appreciate a conventional woman, like Celie.

Apart from being a diligent wife, Celie is a caring mother. Although her pregnancy was unplanned, she never thinks of abortion. She is happy to have her babies whether they are male or female. When her children are sold off to missionaries without her knowledge, she worries about them. She is happy and excited to meet her daughter, Olivia, at the fabric store. "She recognizes the girl's face, name, and age at first sight" (Walker. 1982 : 14). She is glad to know that her children are in good hands. She warmly welcomes her children when they return even though they have not met for years.

Further, Celie is a good friend and a good nurse. She takes good care of Shug Avery who has a nasty disease. Although Shug is Albert's mistress and Shug says Celie is ugly, Celie is willing to look after Shug until Shug recovers from her sickness. However, she feels confused about her role and believes that a husband must dominate his wife. So she tells Harpo, her step son, to beat his wife, Sofia. Sofia gets angry with Celie. Celie realizes her mistreatment of Sofia, and begs her pardon. Celie and Sofia understand each other later. Walker implies that African-Americans should have sisterhood and be kind to their friends.

However, when she is mature, she is a liberated woman, refusing to be Albert's wife and slave. She does not work for him or his

children, and she does not let him beat her or scold her. In addition, she refuses to have sexual intercourse with him, and she even thinks of killing him.

With Shug's assistance, she attains self-esteem, becomes economically independent, and cares for her community. Shug loves her, singing the song "Miss Celie's Song" and helping her to know real sexual pleasure. Shug helps her to dress decently, find Nettie's letters that have been hidden by Albert, and to try making pants for her living. Further, she has her own house given to her by her real father.

Celie struggles against her conventional sex-role by refusing patriarchy but absorbing sisterhood and matriarchy. She ignores her relationship with men, and thinks that males are no good. On the contrary, she feels that females, like Shug, Sofia, and Mary Agnes, are sincere and helpful. So she loves female friends and trusts them.

In terms of education, Celie loses her chance to attend school when she is a teenager. She is raped by her step-father, Fonso, who later prevents her from being educated. Because of her initial pregnancy, she cannot attend school. Fonso says that Celie is too dumb to keep going to school (Walker. 1982 : 11) Realising the significance of education and having a strong will to study, Celie can read and write in her non-standard English dialect through the assistance of her sister, Nettie, as indicated in Celie's letter:

Helping me with spelling and everything else she think I need to know. No matter what happen, Nettie steady try to teach me what go on in the world. And

she a good teacher too.

(Walker. 1982 : 17)

This shows that Celie receives informal education through sisterhood, with diligence and strong intention. Further, her writing has developed, from the first letter through to the last one.

In terms of marriage, it extends Celie's responsibilities. She cannot avoid marrying a widower, Mr. _____, because her father forces her. He marries her off in exchange for a cow. Mr. _____, who she later knows as Albert, does not love her, but he loves Nettie. The man just wants someone to take care of his house work and look after his rough children. As he is choosing her, it seems that he thinks of her as a slave or an animal that will be good at working hard in his house and in his fields (Walker. 1982 : 11-12). Nevertheless, she does everything to meet Albert's and the children's commands, but she does not love them. She only makes herself as emotionless as wood in order to survive and experience no feeling at all. Her marriage is not based on love or understanding. Mr. _____ and his children physically and emotionally hurt her. She never defends herself, as Celie writes to God:

I don't say nothing. I think bout 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.... He beat me like he beat the children. Cept he don't

never hardly beat them. He say, Celie, git the belt. The children be outside the room peeking through the cracks. It all I can do not to cry. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie, you a tree. That's how come I know trees fear man....

(Walker. 1982 : 22, 23)

The message portrays Celie's burdens and her lack of self-esteem. She needs love and feeling. She should not let her husband abuse and beat her. She should defend herself and ask for her rights when he is cruel and unreasonable to her.

Normally, marriage unites wives and husbands, and the couples give one another love, understanding, caring and sexual pleasure. Celie and Albert have none of these criteria. She particularly has no idea about finding sexual pleasure, and she is scared to look at herself. Shug thinks Celie is still a virgin because she does not know how to make love or how to meet her sexual desires. Being taught by Shug, Celie later learns of her body and having sex (Walker. 1982 : 81-82). Celie uses dirty words without embarrassment. She feels love and self-esteem from Shug, not from her husband, especially when Shug sings the song "Miss Celie's Song" (Walker. 1982 : 67).

Walker portrays a peculiar marriage between Celie and Albert. Celie cannot refuse her conventional status in being engaged by parents or being chosen by men. Also her husband hurts her feelings by bringing his mistress, Shug, to his home and he even asks his wife to take care of his sick mistress. Shug's first look at Celie is not impressive but disgusted:

She look me over from head to foot. Then she cackle. Sound like a death rattle. You sure is ugly, she say, like she ain't believed it.

(Walker. 1982 : 48)

From the quotation, it is obvious that Albert has told Shug something bad about his wife. Shug agrees with what Albert told her about Celie (Celie is ugly). Shug has a sharp tongue, but she is sincere.

This shows that although African-American women do not have beautiful gestures, they have warm hearts and are reasonable. For example, although Shug does not like Celie's gesture, she loves Celie's behaviour. Further, it is unbelievable that Celie is not jealous of Albert's mistress. She loves Shug and welcomes her warmly. It is the first time that Celie feels good:

Come on in, I want to cry. To shout. Come on in. With God help, Celie going to make you well. But I don't say nothing. It not my house. Also I ain't been told nothing.... Then I see myself sitting there quilting tween Shug Avery and Mr._____. Us three set together gainst Tobias and his fly speck box of chocolate. For the first time in my life, I feel just right.

(Walker. 1982 : 47, 60)

The above information clearly shows that Celie loves a woman

who has self-esteem and self-confidence. She feels love and happiness. Her strong love for Shug makes it possible for her to change her character later because Celie believes that Shug is good to her. It is obvious that Celie considers a woman, like Shug, to be more reliable than a man, like Albert. Indeed, Celie believes in matriarchy. She implies that women are important, truthful, and helpful.

Later, when she discovers that Albert hid Nettie's letters, she changes her mind and her behavior. Assisted by Shug, Celie can cope with her marriage. She fights for her individual rights, argues with her husband and then leaves him.

Celie's role in her marriage is not successful. She is only her husband's and his family's slave. She needs love and understanding from the family, and she needs to feel wanted, too. At the end of the story she experiences the love and affection that a real family can provide when Nettie and Celie's children come home (Walker. 1982 : 292-295). Celie fights against her conventional marriage while retaining sisterhood, neighbourhood, and motherhood in her cultural unity.

As to Celie's career, at the beginning of the story, she is like all conventional African-American women in the Slavery Era in that she has to work very hard doing everything. Even Albert's sisters who inspect her housework say that Celie is a good house keeper, good with children, and a good cook (Walker. 1982 : 21). However, she cannot own her life or have an income. Because of her endurance and diligence, the woman she loves, Shug, helps her attain self-esteem, and supports her so she can open a business making trousers. Finally, she succeeds in owning her own business, making trousers. Celie's letter to Nettie substantiates her self-confidence

and ability in operating the trousers business:

Then I feel Shug shake me. Celie, she say. And I come to myself.

I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly and can't cook, a voice say to everything listening. But I'm here.

Amen, say Shug. Amen, amen....

Then finally one day I made the perfect pair of pants. For my sugar, naturally. They soft dark blue jersey with teeny patches of red. But what make them so good is they totally comfortable....Then orders start to come in from everywhere Shug sing. Pretty soon I swamp.

(Walker. 1982 : 214, 219-220)

Noticeably, Celie is successful in her career even though she she is not well-educated. A strong will, diligence and a friend's support are the factors that assist Celie in her occupation. Again, this information shows sisterhood--women help other women, and it shows matriarchy in that a woman like Celie can operate her life and her business successfully.

Besides Celie has sisterhood and identity to own her economic independence, she finds her individual right in terms of Christian beliefs. Initially, Celie is religious. She practices Christianity faithfully. She believes in God and directly and openly writes to God about whatever happens to her. As she writes to God about Netty's concern about her, and her faith in God:

I sure hate to leave you here with these rotten children, she say. Not to mention with Mr. _____. It's like seeing you buried, she say.

It's worse than that, I think. If I was buried, I wouldn't have to work. But I just say, Never mine, long as I can spell G-o-d I got somebody along. ...

(Walker. 1982 : 18)

This shows how religious Celie is. She believes that God will always stay with her and help her overcome any problem. However, God is not exactly what she expects, so she alters her beliefs to relieve her own feeling.

After meeting Shug, Celie changes her image of God to one that makes she feel happy and independent. This new idea is unconventional, and it even shocks her friends. Earlier, she thought that God was a male image and that females had to respect God and follow God's commandments. Later, Shug insists that in reality God is everything that makes them feel good and happy. After Celie finds out that Albert has hidden Nettie's letters in order to make her sad and lonely and to make her wonder if Nettie is alive, she stops writing to God but continues to write to Nettie. At the end, she prays to God and writes to God as she is successful in her life having every one unite at her house like a complete family. From Celie's role in terms of religious beliefs, she is a good Christian although she changes her image of God. Indeed, her alternative idea lets her feel love and happiness. Celie's notion implies that some old beliefs must be changed for women's independence.

Through Celie, Walker states that African-American women must refuse some immoral and unequal religious beliefs. In the late twentieth century, they must be reasonable. The women should believe in the beliefs that are moral, equal, and useful to themselves, in order to achieve their individual rights.

Lastly, in terms of gender value, in The Color Purple, a female-born child or a male-born child are of equal value, but females have more responsibilities than males. For instance, Celie is happy to see her children, no matter what sex they are. Her community also has no prejudices about babies. However, when a baby grows up, there are more limitations for females. Conservative blacks, for example, Albert and Harpo, do not like a woman who is independent in publicity and sexuality:

Young womens no good these days, he say. Got they
legs open to every Tom, Dick and Harry....

A woman need a little fun, once in a while, she say.

A woman need to be at home, he say.

(Walker. 1982 : 32, 86)

The above message shows the struggle for equality in gender values. Traditional men think women must be kept at home, doing what their husbands command. On the contrary, Walker thinks that women should go outside having fun, they should see how the world goes, and they should be educated by direct experience. Both males and females should have the same rights for entertainment.

Accordingly, Celie's role in terms of sex-role, education,

marriage, career, beliefs, and values is concerned with her personal consciousness and her African-American cultural situation. She becomes mature by struggling bravely against her own culture, which suppresses women, and she attains her identity through cultural and economic independence. The information about Celie's role will be useful for the researcher in a comparison of the protagonists' struggles in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND LITERATURE ABOUT THE WOMAN WARRIOR

In this Chapter, the researcher divides the background information about The Woman Warrior into three parts: Part I provides a description of females in Chinese culture; Part II gives a biography of Maxine Hong Kingston; and Part III presents the narrator's role in The Woman Warrior.

Part I Females in Chinese Culture

In Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior, the narrator is a Chinese-American woman whose parents are Chinese immigrants. The protagonist has to struggle against Chinese culture, which Kingston identifies as ambiguous, burdensome and unequal. Thus, to get a better understanding about the narrator, it is necessary to learn about females in Chinese culture.

✓ Females in Chinese culture have been dominated by patriarchy. Chinese women were qualified by the four virtues: chastity and obedience, reticence, pleasing manner, and domestic skills. In China, females committing adultery were severely punished. A Chinese male child were preferable to a female one. Chinese women were not expected to be educated because Chinese thought education was for males. Also, in Chinese culture, girls were either married off or sold. They had no political rights and no public life. They were limited in ancestor worship and travel. Their possible careers were limited

to being house wives, midwives, servants, and match-makers. Finally, Chinese women could improve their status only through marriage.

✓ In Chinese tradition, good Chinese women possessed chastity and obedience, reticence, pleasing manner, and domestic skills (Yung. 1986 : 10) called "the four virtues." In "chastity," Chinese women had to be pure in thought, word, and deed and especially sexually pure. Women in Chinese culture had to be obedient. They obeyed their fathers at home, their husbands after marriage, and their eldest sons when they were widowed. In terms of reticence, they had to have soft voices, saying little, being patient and calm. They had to obey their men and their parents. Pleasing manners referred to politeness in gesture, especially towards Chinese males either young or old and adult women. Moreover, in terms of domestic skills, women had to practice cooking, cleaning, child-caring, sewing, basic nursing, and caring for and pleasing family members. Chinese women in every class were judged in terms of the four virtues. To the women, the virtues amounted to emotional and physical suppression because they followed the example of Boji in 580 B.C. (Yung. 1986 : 10). Chinese patriarchy limited females's physical and emotional independence. Their long lives were dependent on males' pleasure. Hence, Kingston wanted to initiate Chinese women's individual rights. The notion was pointed out in The Woman Warrior through the stories concerning Brave Orchid and Fa Mu Lan.

✓ Apart from the four virtues, a female-born child was not appreciated in Chinese culture. Chinese people considered males more valuable than females. The Chinese community mentioned in The Woman Warrior considered that "Girl are 'maggots,' and feeding girls is

feeding 'cowbirds.' There's no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls" (Kingston. 1976 : 46, 191). In Chinese culture, women were sources of problems. If they did something wrong, especially committing adultery, their families would be humiliated and the women would have to commit suicide, drowning herself in a well, like Kingston's "No Name Aunt." In contrast, Chinese men were the ones who led ancestor worship and were responsible for family expenses. Thus, a female baby might be killed or sold off, but rarely a male. The different values placed on males and females, and the strict role definitions for women were revealed in Book of Songs regarding Chinese celebration on the birth of a son and the misery of a female baby :

So he bears a son,
And puts him to sleep upon a bed,
Clothes him in robes,
Gives him a jade sceptre to play with
The child's howling is very lusty;
In red greaves shall he flare,
Be lord and king of house and home.

But when a daughter was born, the reception of the baby was very different:

Then he bears a daughter,
And puts her upon the ground,
Clothes her in swaddling clothes,

Gives her a loom-whorl to play with.
For her no decorations, no emblems;
Her only care, the wine and food,
And how to give no trouble to father
and mother.

(Yung. 1986 : 10-11)

This poetry shows the prejudice and bias value in the comparison of a baby boy and a baby girl. A daughter is considered a source of problems, despite her innocence.

Kingston's family educated her about this, and her community also reinforced the tradition. She, however, was not satisfied with this bias so she presents this matter in her "story-telling" in The Woman Warrior.

Besides the bias in Chinese culture, Chinese women also had no political rights or opportunity in public display. A woman could not own property even if her husband had already died. The property would be passed on to her eldest son. Chinese women also could not hold important roles in religious worship or community leadership. When there were religious activities, women prepared food, arranged the place and followed their male leaders in the worship.

This notion presents the patriarchal society that drives parents to appreciate males over females, due to male economic dominance. This viewpoint is mentioned by Kingston in The Woman Warrior in the stories of Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid, and the narrator's community.

Apart from being deprived of political rights and public display, Chinese women were deprived of education (Duke. 1983 : viii).

Because education was the only means for those born in the lower classes to rise above their circumstances, the common people usually educated only their sons. Rarely did the families do so for daughters. Yet, an illiterate girl was considered a virtue. If she was educated, it was so that she would be better able to teach her son and her family. Only a girl from a rich family was privately tutored or placed in a private boarding school to be trained in proper behavior and the domestic arts of sewing and cooking. Inequality in education deprived Chinese women of the opportunity to be self-reliant and economically independent that were necessities for their identity. A Chinese-American girl like the narrator in The Woman Warrior realizes the significance of study so she insists on studying math and science, which are not domestic skills.

However, if Chinese women wanted to be appreciated as good mothers, good wives, and good daughters, they had only two role models available to them. The role models: Boji, was a wise mother who nurtured her son through the right neighborhood though she had to change houses three times in order to find a proper place (Yung. 1986 : 11), and Hua Mulan, another role model, a girl who took her aging father's place in the army. Though Mulan was a brave general, she later became a good daughter-in-law, a good wife and a good mother (Lim. 1991 : 28-29). Also her demonstration earned a distinctive place in Chinese history. The two role models show that Chinese women should be brave, wise, responsible and gentle. This is the identity of Chinese women that Kingston presents in "White Tiger" and "Shaman" in The Woman Warrior.

Apart from the positive role models, Chinese women were taught

about negative role models through history that stressed the result of willfulness and ambition. Yung (1986 : 11) explained about the history:

Daji, a concubine, was said to have caused the fall of the Shang Dynsty by influencing King Ahou to pursue pleasure rather than the affairs of state, and the collapse of China during the Empress Dowager's rule in the Qing (Ching) Dynasty was blamed on her selfishness and lust for power.

(Yung. 1986 : 11)

Chinese women should not be selfish and use their beauty to their advantage. This notion seems to make Kingston ignore beauty; she wants to be a boy because her parents and grand-parents appreciate boys more than girls, so she is naughty in her childhood.

Chinese women were taught about both positive and negative role models through story-telling, like the narrator and Brave Orchid in The Woman Warrior, who tell about themselves through story-telling.

Further, in terms of marriage, Chinese women had no choice in their husbands (Duke. 1989 : 6). Chinese women were betrothed at a young age through matchmakers. The couple were not allowed to meet until the wedding night. A Chinese woman who gave birth to a baby boy and served her husband's family was considered a valuable wife. If the marriage brought unhappiness, a woman had no right to divorce under traditional laws. The only way to get away from her unhappiness was to commit suicide. After death, the spirit could return to haunt

its oppressor and his family. This notion is presented by the narrator in The Woman Warrior in "No Name Woman."

Besides having no choice in marriage, Chinese women were more deprived than men sexually. Men were freely permitted to commit adultery, divorce, remarry, and keep as many concubines and mistresses as they could afford (Duke. 1989 : 6). Women were severely punished for adulterous behavior. A woman who was widowed was expected not to remarry. An example in The Woman Warrior, "At the Western Palace" shows the inequality in sexual relations between White Orchid and her husband.

Lastly, Chinese women could only improve their status in life through marriage (Duke. 1989 : X). Those who married into wealth were rewarded with lives of leisure. In contrast, marriage to a peasant meant a lifetime of tiresome work and poverty. Hence, a peasant who hoped to marry his daughter off to a rich family tried to have her feet bound. Bound feet were considered a symbol of gentility called "lily feet" (Yung. 1986 : 11). It was widely followed from the tenth century until the end of the nineteenth century as Yung insisted:

This practice began in the tenth century when a Chinese prince became delighted with the small feet of his concubine. Until foot binding was outlawed at the end of the nineteenth century, many girls suffered pain as their feet were tightly wrapped until the arches were broken and the toes permanently bent under. The ideal size of the foot was

said to measure no more than three inches.

(Yung. 1986 : 13)

The foot binding affected women's appearance and prevented them from wandering while it also identified them as being of gentle birth. Women were limited in travel as well. According to Chinese tradition, it was improper for a Chinese lady to be seen in public or to be in the company of men. Kingston presented her opinion on "foot-binding" through the narrator's memoirs in The Woman Warrior relating to her mother's and her community's "story-telling." She wonders why the women in her family have split nails on their little toes (Kingston. 1976 : 198) and she feels sympathy for them.

Females in Chinese culture were physically and emotionally dominated by patriarchy. However, these women rarely struggled against their limitations, especially when they were in China. Kingston, as a Chinese-American, did not believe or follow every Chinese custom, and had the double consciousness of being a Chinese and an American. She tells about her story in The Woman Warrior. The information in this part will be useful for the researcher in an analysis of the narrator's role in Part III of this Chapter and in a comparative study of Chapter IV.

Part II A Biography of Maxine Hong Kingston

Maxine Hong Kingston used an autobiographical style in The Woman Warrior. It is useful to understand Kingston's biography in order to interpret how Kingston relates her life to her writing.

Maxine (Ting Ting) Hong Kingston is a Chinese-American autobiographer, novelist, journalist, and short-story writer. She was born on October 27, 1940, in Stockton, a California Chinatown. When her parents were in China, her father, Tom Hong, was a scholar, and Ying Lan Hong, her mother, was a midwife. Tom Hong had been in America for many years before his wife joined him when she was forty-five. In America, before the couple became laundry workers and field hands, the husband was the manager of a gambling house. "Maxine" was named after the father was impressed by a lucky blond American gamester in the gambling house Hong managed. Since the family wanted to have their own business, every member had to work hard. Kingston became good at mathematics through counting money in the laundry (Brown-miller. 1977 : 210). Some of her family struggles and her own story were presented in The Woman Warrior.

✓ In America, Kingston grew up surrounded by "ghosts" (Metzger. 1989 : 289). Her mother told tales about their ancestors, Chinese legends, and foreigners, so the spirits of her ancestors, Chinese role models, and black and white Americans often haunted her in her life. As the narrator in The Woman Warrior tells in her childhood, there are ghosts everywhere. To her, "ghosts" means her ancestor spirit, white American, black American, and every unseen thing.

The experience of working hard and growing up surrounded by "ghosts" made Kingston long for higher education and an independent career. She initially wanted to be a writer. However, she did not think that she could make her living in that career, so she decided to major in engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, because she was good at mathematics. She later changed to major in

English. Kingston said that she was able to finish her studies under eleven scholarships (Brownmiller. 1977 : 211). Like Kingston's biography, the narrator in The Woman Warrior is good at mathematics, and she also wins scholarships to further her study. The heroine initially wants to be a mathematician but she later becomes a writer.

In 1962, Kingston graduated with a B.A. in Education, and in 1965, she received a teaching certificate. She did not continue and work on a master's degree in English because she felt that it would interfere with her writing. Kingston believed that writing formal papers on literary criticism in the university complicated her work because she would look at her writing too critically (Brownmiller. 1977 : 211). This information shows that Kingston strongly wanted to be a writer, and not a critic. In The Woman Warrior, the narrator wants to be either a mathematician or a scientist because she is good at mathematics, and both professions earn a lot of money. These autobiographical details are included in "A Song for a Babarian Reed Pipe" in The Woman Warrior. In addition, the story presents the protagonist's struggles for education and career. She points out that a Chinese-American woman must be highly educated and be able to work in various careers.

After her graduation, Kingston was a teacher of mathematics, English, English as a Second Language, and language arts in schools and colleges, mostly in Hawaii, before she became a writer. In Hawaii, she married Earl Kingston, a Caucasian actor, in November 1962. They have a child named Joseph Lawrence Chung Mei (Metzger. 1989 : 290). It is noticeable that although Kingston is a Chinese-American, she can be a good teacher of many subjects, i.e. English

and math, that her parents and community consider difficult. This shows that an ethnic Chinese woman, like Kingston is smart, independent, and worthy. She has the ability to be educated, work, and can choose her spouse. She can lead her own life and deserves fame because she is a good model for Chinese-American women.

Kingston's work includes three significant writings: The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts (1976), China Men (1980), and Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book (1989). In her writing, she combines autobiographical elements with Asian legend and fictionalized history to describe the cultural conflicts that confront Chinese-Americans (Lesniak and Trosky. 1993 : 207-210).

The Woman Warrior is a personal, unconventional work that seeks to reconcile Eastern and Western concepts of female identity. Kingston keeps away from chronological plot and standard nonfiction techniques in her memoirs. She synthesizes ancient Chinese myths and her imaginative biography to show the constantly changing pattern of the female character. There are five chapters. Chapter One, "No Name Woman," presents a woman who is forced to commit suicide because of an unacceptable pregnancy. Chapter Two, "White Tigers," presents the daydream of a young girl who yearns to be respected and loved by her family. Chapter Three, "Shaman," presents the narrator's mother as a very strong woman who is a well educated doctor, the owner of slaves, independent and self-sufficient in China; but the mother is a poor immigrant woman, a laundress, and a field hand in the United States. The mother is assimilated--she knows how to adjust herself to her situation in the States, and she is particularly good at passing her cultural unity on to her children about folklore. Chapter Four, "At the

Western Palace," is about the narrator's aunt who becomes crazy as she attempts to reclaim her husband in America. Lastly, Chapter Five, "Song of the Barbarian Reed Pipe," tells about the similarity between the narrator and Ts'ai Yen, who are like women warrior and symbols for the female artist (Bear. 1991 : 27-28). The Woman Warrior won the National Critics Award for nonfiction, the Mademoiselle Magazine Award, and the Anisfield-Wolf Race Relations Award in 1976, 1977, and 1978 respectively. Further, the novel was named one of the top ten nonfiction works of the decade by Time magazine in 1979 (Metzger. 1984 : 289). A critic commented:

The Woman Warrior shocked its readers out of their facile rhetoric, past the cliches of their obtuseness, back to the mystery of a stubbornly, utterly foreign sensibility. Yet its sources were dream and memory, myth and desire, and its crises were crises of a heart in exile from roots that terrorize and bind it.

(Matuz. 1990 : 307)

The Woman Warrior clearly shows Kingston's cultural identity. She retells her mother's stories and what she absorbed about Chinese culture from her community. Although she is not sure if the stories are reliable and reasonable, she tries to make them understandable besides fighting against female deprivations within the culture.

In addition, Kingston uses similar techniques to describe the difficult situation of the male immigrant in China Men. While her first autobiographical writing represents a daughter's effort to com-

prehend her mother's alien character, China Men is her attempt to describe her relationship with her silent, angry father. Further, she presents a multi-generational struggle to integrate cultural inheritance. In China, her father was a handsome, gifted school teacher who longed for the "Gold Mountain," a fanciful name for gold-rush California. After settling in Stockton's Chinatown, however, he was reduced to unemployment, poverty, and depression. She complements this narrative with imaginative, epic biographies of earlier male forbears, laborers in Hawaii and California. Despite strictly enforced anti-Chinese immigration laws and legalized abuse by their overseers, they endured to establish family citizenship before returning to China. At the end, she concludes her history with an account of her younger brother's experience in the United States Navy in Vietnam. China Men won a National Book Critics Circle Award and An American Book Award in 1981.

Kingston is concerned with not only Chinese females, but also Chinese males. She shows Chinese men's identity in China Men. The story portrays how initial Chinese immigrants fought for their own survival in the States and how the male immigrants loved their families and society in China. Her works reveal that Chinese-Americans, both males and females, must fight for their individual rights in order to survive in the States and to overcome their ethnic cultural problems.

Moreover, Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book humorously presents Chinese history and myth through the protagonist, Wittman Ah Sing. This reveals Kingston's experience as a dramatist during 1960s in California. The protagonist investigates his unclear Chinese heritage,

which has faded over the generations. He reacts violently against white Americans who regularly ask him if he speaks English. Wittman Ah Sing is one year out of college and confused about his future. He imagines himself an incarnation of the legendary Monkey King, a trickster hero who brought Buddha's teachings to China. Travelling around San Francisco, Ah Sing creates turmoil with his boundless energy as he reads poetry aloud on buses, marries on a whim, and convincing everyone he knows how to perform his improvisational play, which critics praise (Lesniak and Trosky. 1993 : 210).

Tripmaster Monkey also substantiates Kingston's ethnic identity. Although she is a female writer, she tries to explain her readers about a Chinese-American man who searches for identity in American society. She uses sources from her family members' situations to show their identities and her cultural unity (knowing their ethnicity and minority tradition).

To sum up, Maxine Hong Kingston is one of the greatest Chinese-American women writers who uncovers the conflict of cultural integration, racism and sexism. Her protagonists search for personal identity while keeping their ethnic cultural unity. The biography of Kingston provides the audience with a better understanding between Kingston and her Chinese culture. Furthermore, the description will be useful for the researcher to analyze the narrator's role and her struggles in Part III of this Chapter and Chapter Four respectively.

Part III The Narrator's Role in The Woman Warrior

Since The Woman Warrior is an autobiographical novel and the

researcher will compare the protagonist of this work to the heroine in The Color Purple, the audience should understand the narrator's role for further analysis. The narrator's role in The Woman Warrior will be respectively presented in terms of sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values.

The narrator or "I" in The Woman Warrior is an unconventional character. She has struggled against conventional culture that suppresses Chinese women. She is very independent with regard to her sex-role, education, marriage, career and values, and she is logical in some traditional beliefs. Further, she tries to take advantage of her traditions. When she matures, she learns how smart her mother is and how to survive as a Chinese-American woman.

About sex-role, the narrator rejects the qualities of being a good Chinese woman who has to live under patriarchy and cultural traditions. She is independent and believes in individualism. She is not quite a good daughter--she is as naughty as a boy. She hates doing house work. She learns from her mother how to be a good wife, and from the story of Mu Lan, she learns to be a good wife and a good daughter.

✓ Apart from promoting women's rights, Kingston shows sisterhood. She feels sympathy for her "No Name Aunt" who has to commit suicide because of an unplanned pregnancy. She shows her sisterhood through accusing the aunt's husband of leaving his wife; she accuses a Chinese man who is a member in her aunt's family of raping the aunt. Kingston holds that opinion because her aunt never associates with any stranger and she believes that her aunt is an innocent and moral woman. The narrator in The Woman Warrior does not believe that her aunt agrees

to do such an immoral act. She blames her community including female villagers for their cruel punishment according to Chinese tradition. Kingston thinks it is unfair for her aunt because the aunt does not have a chance to defend herself. Yet, Kingston creates a new story that the aunt does not die from drowning herself in the village well, but rather she takes revenge on the community so that the villagers cannot drink the water from the well and fear of her ghost--her aunt is a victor (Kingston. 1977 : 7-16). Besides feeling sympathy for her "No Name Aunt," the narrator in The Woman Warrior forces one of her Chinese friends to speak out loudly and clearly in order to gain a personality. She says to the girl that "if you don't talk, you can't have a personality....I'm doing this for your own good" (Kingston. 1977 : 180-181). The narrator, however, fails to make the friend talk, and the narrator herself falls sick for eighteen months, "The world is sometimes just, and I spent the next eighteen months sick in bed with a mysterious illness" (Kingston. 1977 : 182). Moreover, her sisterhood is implied as she wants to save her younger sister from being betrothed. The narrator in The Woman Warrior tells about her intention in "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe:"

"This one," he said, picking up my sister's picture.

"No. No," said my mother. "This one," my picture.

"The oldest first," she said. Good. I was an obstacle.

I would protect my sister and myself at the same time....

I kept my sister with me, protecting her without telling her. If she hadn't noticed, then I mustn't scare her.

(Kingston. 1977 : 194,196)

It is remarkable that the narrator in The Woman Warrior is worried about her sister as well as herself. She is afraid that the sister will be married off into a traditional sex-role (becomes a wife or a slave of her husband and his parents) so she protects her sister from being engaged by taking the girl with her and performing bad manners. The protagonist considers her younger sister to be saved if she keeps her eyes on the sister and if she herself is not betrothed to a young immigrant or an FOB (Fresh-off-the-Boats) because the older sister must marry first, according to Chinese culture. This shows that Kingston refuses the tradition to be married at young age. She wants to choose her own spouse; meanwhile she takes advantage of the tradition that "the older must be married off first," to save her sister.

Apart from showing sisterhood and taking advantage from her Chinese tradition, the narrator in The Woman Warrior substantiates that education is important for Chinese-American women. Education is the most important thing that she longs for. She goes to school continuously, both American schools and Chinese schools. She is good at studying and is lucky because her parents support her studying. However, there is a Chinese tradition that a daughter ought to be less educated than a son. In her education, she uses diligence and self-confidence to fight for education because English language and Chinese "reticence" are her problems. In an earlier stage, she could not speak out loudly and confidently because she is not fluent in English and Chinese tradition did not appreciate a female who speak out loudly. In addition, she hesitated to express her thoughts because Chinese culture preferred women who were obedient and reticent.

On the contrary, in American classroom, all students must be logical, reasonable and confident, and must know how to defend themselves intellectually. Fortunately, the heroine is good at mathematics and is courageous. Her parents, who were highly educated in China, support her study, and she also gets scholarships to further her study. The narrator always tells her mother about her strong intention and ability to study:

I may be ugly and clumsy, but one thing I'm not, I'm not retarded. There's nothing wrong with my brain. Do you know what the Teacher Ghosts say about me? They tell me I'm smart, and I can win scholarships. I can get into colleges.... I can do all kinds of things. I know how to get A's, and they say I could be a scientist or a mathematician if I want.

(Kingston. 1977 : 201)

The narrator states her ability, intelligence and confidence in education. If her parents cannot support her because of their poverty, she can further her education with scholarships. She strongly struggles against bias in female education. She is sometimes confronted with a psychological conflict. For instance, because of a generation gap, Kingston's mother misunderstands that her daughters are immigrants like her so she suggests that Kingston attend a typing school in order to find a job easily. In reality, Kingston is an American so she has the right to attend any school or work in any organization; the immigration law does not affect her. Kingston considers that her mother

does not realize her educational ability, but in reality, Kingston is smart and capable of being an educator, so she is mad at her mother. However, the mother states that she realize the girl's educational ability:

And I know about college. What makes you think you're the first one to think about college? I was a doctor. I went to medical school. I don't see why you have to be a mathematician. I don't see why you can't be a doctor like me.

(Kingston. 1977 : 202)

Her mother obviously wants her to study. However, the woman tells her daughter that to survive in the States she should not dream of being a scientist or a mathematician but she suggests that the daughter go to a typing school (Kingston. 1977 : 203). This shows that there is no educational equality in China, but in the States everyone including a Chinese-American can study what one likes and is able to study.

Besides refusing Chinese educational inequality, Kingston refuses Chinese unequal and traditional marriage. In The Woman Warrior the narrator does not mention whom she marries. When she grows up, her community tries to bethroth her to either an FOB or a retarded boy. The community tells her parents to prepare her to be a good woman who is easily married off. But she refuses to be a traditional woman. Because she believes she may be sellable or marriageable, she makes herself messy and impolite. The narrator thinks if she gets

married, her life will depend on her husband and she will have to work hard serving the husband and his family. She is afraid of what her father reminds her:

Chinese smeared bad daughters-in-law with
honey and tied them naked on top of ant
nests. A husband may kill a wife who dis-
obeys him. Confucius said that.

(Kingston. 1977 : 193)

According to what her father tells her, the narrator in The Woman Warrior feels that Chinese wives must be patient, allowing their husbands and the husbands' parents to mistreat them. Their ancestors' belief in Confucius is unfair for wives because husbands are like bosses, but in the States the couple is equal. Apart from her father's description of Chinese wives, the protagonist learns more information from the noisy women in her community:

Marry a rooster, follow a rooster.
Marry a dog, follow a dog.
Married to a cudgel, married to a pestle,
Be faithful to it. Follow it.

(Kingston. 1977 : 193)

Both her father's and the women's information affects the narrator's view of marriage in that Chinese wives must obey their husbands and families, and the wives have no self-reliance. She therefore does

not want to get married and plans to behave inappropriately in order to avoid being married off. When she realizes that her parents try to arrange for her and her sister to marry some young Chinese immigrants or FOB's, by showing the men photographs of their daughters and inviting them to see Kingston and her sister. Kingston absolutely hates this tradition, and she does not like those men. She tries to avoid being married off. First, the narrator shows bad manners, keeps quiet, and stays far away from the FOB:

I discovered the next plan to get rid of us:
marry us off here without waiting until China....
I raised dust swirls sweeping around and under the
FOB's chair--very bad luck because spirits live inside the broom. I put on my shoes with the open flaps and flapped about like a Wino Ghost. From then on, I wore those shoes to parties, whenever the mothers gathered to talk about marriages. The FOB and my parents paid me no attention.... I told nobody about the monster. And nobody else was talking either; no mention about the laundry workers who appear and disappeared;... Maybe I was making it all up, and queer marriage notions did not occur to other people. I had better not say a word,... Keep quiet.

(Kingston. 1977 : 193-196)

The narrator's aggressive manner saves her from being betrothed.

Her refusal of reticence and proper manners are strategies to struggle against traditional marriage. In addition, she is confident and self-reliant, telling her parents that she can earn her own living, and she does not need a protector or a master:

So you don't have to find me a keeper who's too dumb to know a bad bargain. I'm so smart, if they say write ten pages, I can write fifteen. I can do ghost things even better than ghosts can....I am not going to be a slave or a wife.

(Kingston. 1977 : 201)

The narrator is self-reliant and thinks that if marriage is only finding a man to be a master or a keeper, then she rejects the matter. This is a significant point to address Kingston's feminism. She perpetuates women's right to choose their spouses and to lead their own lives. She reveals that to fight traditional Chinese marriage, she must be confident and aggressive in order to refuse the unsuitable marriage. Nevertheless, her mother insists that she does not think of marrying her daughter off, "Who'd want to marry you anyway?" Noisy. Talking like a duck. Disobedient. Messy" (Kingston. 1977 : 202). It proves that Kingston's inappropriate manners save her from the traditional Chinese marriage, and Kingston's mother realizes that her strategy does not work in the States.

Apart from struggles against traditional marriage, the narrator in The Woman Warrior also struggles against conventional female careers. Culturally, women's careers include being housewives, servants, midwives

and matchmakers, but the protagonist does not want to do such work because the works are just males' supporters. She wants an independent career, earning much money and gaining fame as well. According to Chinese culture, she must be less educated than males and find domestic work. As a girl, the narrator helps her mother do housework, laundry and sewing. However, since her parents were educators in China, they educated her quite well. They cannot use their educational careers in the States. So the mother convinces her daughter to be a typist because it is easy to find a job, but young Kingston states that she is smart and able to be either a mathematician or a scientist who can make much more money. She confirms that she can take care of herself, finding a career that suits her potential and is financially independent (Kingston. 1977 : 201). The narrator absorbs American values of individualism and materialism. She wants to have a private life, living separately, which is different from her culture in which the Chinese have extended families. In addition, young people must take good care of their old parents, but the narrator in The woman Warrior does not care about this tradition. Being a mathematician or a scientist, she could earn a lot of money and afford what she needs. Her notion is very different from a conventional Chinese woman because a Chinese woman does not long for education and has to rely upon her husband and serve his family. This is a revolutionary struggle against a traditional career for females in China.

In addition to young Kingston's notions about an independent career and an individual life, she is a heterodox person. The narrator is logical and thoughtful, in terms of beliefs. She does not adhere to traditions that look down on a woman or are illogical.

For instance, her "No Name Aunt" causes the narrator to feel sympathy for the aunt and find some reasons for her behavior. She thinks her community has bias towards and prejudice against the aunt who cannot defend herself (Kingston. 1976 : 1-16). As to religion, the narrator does not believe that "if they didn't get baptized they'd go to a hell like one of the nine Taoist hells forever." She does not think it is sinful to kill animals or insects, and to be jealous (Kingston. 1976 : 197-198). In addition, she does not believe in Confucianism that considers everything to be related to one another and that one must be grateful serving and staying with her parents. Although young Kingston loves her parents, she does not want to live with them. She sometimes visits them and tells them not to worry about her, as presented in "Shaman." Unlike her mother, the narrator in The Woman Warrior does not believe that the length of a day in China is longer than the length of a day in the States. The girl assumes that her mother is confused since in the States, the old woman is busy working so hard, while in China, she used to have much more free time to relax and had several servants serving her. Kingston's reason with regard to the length of a day, Confucianism, and Taoism proves that she is logical and able to understand the different conditions living in the States and China. Her notion implies that it is significant to adapt ourselves to a proper life style in each society.

From the protagonist's opinion in terms of sex-role, education, marriage, and career, it is obvious that Kingston wants to ^{preserve individuality} perpetuate equal gender value. The narrator in The Woman Warrior considers males and females to be equal. Despite her own experience through her grandfather's behavior, her mother's talk-stories and the villagers' comments

on the significance of baby boys and male dominance in Chinese culture, the narrator believes that girls are important, too (Kingston. 1977 : 52-53). She insists that both Chinese-American and Chinese women are valuable, and this is an important point to be addressed. She perpetuates feminism in that Chinese women have to struggle against Chinese gender prejudices. Women are important. Young Kingston shows that women, like Mu Lan, can save her father and family just as well as a man. Her mother, Brave Orchid, is highly educated. She can work for her family both in China and in the States. In addition, young Kingston, as a Chinese-American woman is smart and able to be highly educated and self-reliant. The narrator in The Woman Warrior points out that to signify women's values, women have to be brave, have self-esteem, and they have to overcome their cultural deprivations.

Young Kingston, therefore, values Chinese females to be equal to Chinese males, as pointed out through the examples of Fa Mu Lan in "White Tigers" and Brave Orchid in "Shaman." To promote the value of Chinese women, she states that the women must help themselves initially. they must be independent and logical, and they must clarify what is true, untrue, appropriate, and inappropriate regarding Chinese traditional beliefs. Chinese women must know when to ignore or follow their tradition. Also they should know how to apply or take advantage of their culture in order to have a better living condition. The narrator in The Woman Warrior proves that to confront unequal gender values, Chinese-American women sometimes have to refuse illogical or unfair culture, and they sometimes have to assimilate their individual ideas to their culture or some new cultures.

Consequently, as a Chinese-American girl, most of the narrator's

problems with regard to sex-role, education, marriage, beliefs and value are unconventional. Most of her Chinese-American's problems are concerned with cultural integration. Sometimes it is not an actual conflict but an internal conflict. In case of an internal conflict, Kingston initially needs parental and logical supports to overcome her confusion in the cultural ambiguities between American culture and Chinese culture. In The Woman Warrior, it is obvious that the narrator's situations at schools and her community are different. She has to adjust herself, as a Chinese-American girl in order to survive in American society. The strategies to struggle against each own problem are different with regard to each age, place, and potential. For example, in her girlhood, Kingston's struggles are quite violent especially the struggle against her mother's notion, but when she grows up, she assimilates her double cultures (Chinese and American cultures) and understands her mother much better. The narrator's role in The Woman Warrior in this part will be useful for an analysis in the comparative study in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER IV

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROTAGONISTS' STRUGGLES IN THE COLOR PURPLE AND THE WOMAN WARRIOR

In Chapter Two and Chapter Three, the background literature on The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior is informatively presented to provide a better understanding of the protagonists and their cultures. In this Chapter, the researcher will relate and compare the protagonists' struggles with reference to sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values, respectively.

Sex Role

Celie's struggle in The Color Purple is more obvious than the narrator's struggle in The Woman Warrior in terms of sex-role. In both African-American and Chinese cultures, the female-role stereotype is to be "a wife or a slave." Celie violently struggles against the condition by which she is enslaved and goes to her new world. Celie firstly sacrifices herself to Albert as a slave and a wife, doing house work, field work, and child-care; she is also raped and beaten by the man. However, she is able to search for her identity later because she has got a friend's help. This happens after she realizes how cruel her husband is--he hides Nettie's letters from Celie even though he knows that Nettie is the most important person and the one whom Celie loves most; and he keeps Celie wondering if Nettie is still alive. With Shug's support, she revolts against being a wife

and a slave. At first, she wants to kill him, but Shug reminds her that Celie will not feel better if she kills Albert, and Shug says that she is another person that Celie must think of. Later, Celie does not let Albert sleep with her anymore, as the reader can observe from the conversation between Celie and Shug (Walker. 1982 : 151). Finally, Celie improves her self-esteem and leaves Albert.

Apart from thinking of killing Albert and refusing to have sexual intercourse with him, ^{dealing with people} Celie searches for her identity regarding her sex-role, gaining economic independence and leaving her husband. Celie practices sewing trousers starting by sewing an army uniform (Walker. 1982 : 153). In her letter to God, Celie shows how she breaks the silence to fulfil her personal rights, saying she will leave her husband, blaming him for hiding Nettie's letters, and cursing the man (Walker. 1982 : 206-214). Nevertheless, Albert does not believe that a woman like Celie can be independent, until Celie finally leaves him. Celie's most important sentence that proves the heroine's identity is "I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly and can't cook, a voice say to everything listening. But I'm here" (Walker. 1982 : 214).

From Celie's expression and her struggles against traditional sex-role, her strategies are very tough and revolutionary. She does not ask for a divorce or to go back to her father's house. Incredibly, the protagonist takes her revenge on her husband, i.e. thinking of killing the man, refusing to have sex with him, earning her own living, and leaving him. In addition, she does not fight alone but she receives Shug's assistance. This shows that an African-American woman, like Celie, must be brave and self-confident to overcome traditional

sex-role problems. A friend's help is also necessary for Celie to search for her identity.

In finding her identity relating to sex-role, Celie needs other women's help to find herself. Ruth D. Weston substantiates that "Celie, in The Color Purple, learns both psychological and literal touching of the self. Through her relationships with other women in the novel, she gets in touch with her moral and physical self" (Weston. 1992 : 52). Indeed, in helping one another, women feel love and understanding, and their love and understanding come through a different sort of literal touching of the self. Sometimes, they feel that they are wives but sometimes they feel they can be husbands, in terms of sexual awakening. For instance, Celie, according to Shug, is still a virgin. She has never known, or even realized that there could be, sexual pleasure for a woman. Thus her most significant initiation into human sexuality is by her husband's mistress, and the lesbian lovemaking that follows is Celie's first experience of erotic love (Weston. 1992 : 53).

Unlike Celie's struggles for identity in sex-role, the narrator in The Woman Warrior verbally fights against the traditional sex-role. She recalls her childhood the female role stereotype. The narrator in The Woman Warrior does not get direct experience of such sex-role. She only feels the notion about female-role from her community. She does not fight for a better sex-role, but she tells her mother: "I am not going to be a slave or a wife. Even if I am stupid and talk funny and get sick, I won't let you turn me into a slave or a wife" (Kingston. 1976 : 201).

In The Woman Warrior, the young narrator is concerned about

a Chinese females' role in that they must be initially conscious of their individual rights. Women must perpetuate the better female role. For instance, Kingston's awareness of her ethnic cultural deprivation makes the girl feel gender inequality. She realizes that she will lose her identity if she is a conventional woman. So she refuses to accept the unfair practices and beliefs such as "A Chinese wife's status depends on her husband," or "Choosing a spouse through a match-maker." Kingston states that Chinese women or Chinese-American women have the rights and potential to live, marry, and work independently. To achieve such rights and abilities, the women must recognize themselves, knowing their background and abilities, which is the main condition to combat problems in sex-role. With regard to Kingston's consciousness about her sex-role, Sau-Ling Cynthia Wong also supports the point that the protagonist is aware of her problems since she was young:

Maxine sees a clear parallel between her aunt's tragedy and her own deprivations as the daughter of immigrants. Even as a little girl she felt silently reproached whenever she submitted to the natural instinct to play, to do something just for the sake of doing it...

(Wong. 1988 : 6)

From the above information, the protagonists' struggles against sex-role in The Color Purple are more apparent than The Woman Warrior

because Celie's character has definitely changed from her early life to maturity at the end. In The Woman Warrior, the heroine does not face the condition of "a wife or a slave" because her consciousness of female deprivation saves her from being a victim of a Chinese man. It is noticeable that both protagonists are presented as victors of their sex-role instead of victims. Women's role is not only trying to win for their own sake, but also for other women. Also women's freedom is no longer stuck to historical heritage but it must be created with mythical potential" (Johnston. 1993 : 142).

Education

Both heroines in The Woman Warrior and The Color Purple realize the significance of education, that it is the key to reduce unfair disadvantages associated with poverty and low social status. However, sometimes there are limitations regarding each one's condition. The narrator in The Woman Warrior bravely fights for education, but Celie in The Color Purple has no struggle. The protagonist in The Woman Warrior is sent to American school in the States even though it is against Chinese tradition. Parental and economic support affect her potential for education. Further, her strong will helps her achieve educational success. In The Woman Warrior, the narrator's parents send her to both American and Chinese schools. Young Kingston initially feels it is difficult to study in an American class because she lacks self-confidence and American ^{accent} pronunciation. Such self-confidence cannot apply to Chinese culture, and American pronunciation is unfamiliar to the Chinese girl. Further, she is tired of studying

the Chinese language. As a poor female immigrant, her mother thinks that the narrator should attend a typing class instead of studying math and science. The old woman considers that typing is best for a young Chinese woman to find a job. On the contrary, the heroine has a more ambitious point of view. Since she is good at math, she longs to be a mathematician or a scientist. She states that she can get a professional career although her parents do not support her. She wins scholarships. She also blames her parents for their conservative thought of matching her with a retarded boy or driving her to be a typist:

Do you hear me? I may be ugly and clumsy, but one thing I'm not, I'm not retarded. There's nothing wrong with my brain. Do you know what the Teacher Ghosts say about me. They all tell me I'm smart, and I can win scholarships. I can get into colleges. I've already applied. I'm smart. I can do all kinds of things. I know how to get A's, and they say I could be a scientist or a mathematician if I want.... It's your fault I talk weird. The only reason I flunked kindergarten was because you couldn't teach me English, and you gave me a zero IQ. Things follow in lines at school....I've brought my IQ up, though....I can figure them out by myself. I'm going to get scholarships, and I'm going away.

(Kingston. 1976 : 201)

The narrator revolts against the tradition that Chinese women

should not be educated, but in America, she wants to be highly educated not only to earn her living, but also to achieve fame. With her educational potential, the narrator in The Woman Warrior has tried her best in education as Wang mentions:

Like all youngsters educated in American public schools, Kingston was given heavy doses of the American ideals: democracy, freedom, equality, the primacy of individual, the inalienable rights and freedom of expression.

(Wang. 1985 : 28)

Unlike the heroine in The Woman Warrior, Celie does not struggle for education although she loves it. She accepts her situation--being prevented by her step-father from going to school as a teenager, because of her pregnancy. She only wants to be literate in her dialect through Nettie's assistance. In Celie's letter to God, although Nettie tries to help Celie to be educated at school, it fails because she gets pregnant (Walker. 1982 : 10-11). It is apparent that Celie is a conventional character in education in that she is not enthusiastic enough to study or to fight for her knowledge. She accepts her condition without any complaint. Celie is a poor southern black woman who is victimized physically and psychologically in education (Marowski, Pollock and Young. 1988 : 422). To the researcher, Walker wants to substantiate that a woman can fight for her rights, through a strong intention and proper action. A poor girl, like Celie, explains her patience and long-suffering of educational deprivations.

In Celie's case, her pregnancy and her lack of parental support create a difficult situation. This should be addressed as parental support is necessary for children education. Also, there should be a special school or a training institute for pregnant female students who want to study while having or raising babies.

Apart from the educational limitation in Celie's character and the educational capacity in Kingston's character, the plots and themes in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior must be addressed by comparison. Celie in The Color Purple is plotted to be illiterate and quite ugly, but diligent and strong, while the narrator or Kingston in The Woman Warrior is created to be smart and self-assertive, and aggressive. Celie's educational deprivation somewhat implies that even though a woman is not smart, not beautiful, and illiterate, she can survive when she attains self-esteem morally, and is concerned about others. It shows that informal education and traditional skills are useful for her identity, and economic independence and self-esteem. On the contrary, Kingston's ability and self-assertiveness show that if a girl actually wants to study, she can overcome her cultural barriers, and education is the essential key to her self-confidence in work and living. In addition, both heroines are not portrayed to be beautiful women; it is implied that beauty is not important for education or self-reliance.

Accordingly, the protagonist in The Woman Warrior presents a clearer struggle for education than the heroine in The Color Purple. The former has personal independence and parental help so that she is successful in education. In contrast, the latter lacks individual rights and social understanding so she misses her chance to study.

Education is essential for all minority women, but if they cannot formally attend schools, they should be trained in vocational skills. This is portrayed because it is a significant criteria to gain self-confidence and knowledge in order to defend ourselves.

Marriage

Celie's struggle in The Color Purple is more obvious than the narrator's struggle in The Woman Warrior regarding married life. Celie confronts major marriage problems. She does not want to marry Albert, but she has no choice. The marriage is not based on love or understanding. Her father forces Celie to get married and he even gives her groom a cow. Marriage extends her responsibilities. After she gets married, she had to work harder and endure more burdens. Before getting married, although Celie was not happy to stay with her cruel step-father, she still had her sister to play with and consult about each's problems--she sometimes had personal independence. But after getting married, the heroine is under Albert's and his children's commands. Celie never finds sexual pleasure from her husband. Celie never senses a warm family relationship. She never defends herself. However, when she gets her identity, she struggles against her married life, sleeping with Shug like lesbians, masturbating, and leaving the man to go to Memphis.

The protagonist finds that she can tolerate married life, and she has the right to search for a better life. Celie's defending behavior dignifies herself, and the behavior is a revolutionary strategy because she used to be under Albert's command (Walker. 1982 :

83, 118, 213). Nevertheless, some critics comment that "Walker's excessively negative portrayal of black men, and the lesbian relationship was problematic" (Harris. 1984 : 157). In the researcher's opinion, Walker reveals that a lesbian relationship is not a crucial problem because a female couple understands and helps each other in work, life, and love. She shows how female treatment towards female is warmer and more understandable than male's, and that creates a better understanding between men and women in terms of love and married life.

Unlike Celie, the narrator in The Woman Warrior does not confront real problems in marriage. She is only a teenager, but she has learned a lot about being a wife from her family and community. The Chinese wife-role stereotype affects her consciousness regarding marriage. She, therefore, proactively protects herself from being betrothed. She makes herself noisy, messy, clumsy and ugly. Afterwards she keeps quiet until one dinner where she senses that she cannot stand the retarded boy and the silence of her parents. The young heroine even shouts at her parents, asking her mother to drive the retarded boy whom her parents and community expect to marry her off (Kingston. 1976 : 200-201).

The woman warrior considers that she is going to be married off or sellable to an FOB or the retarded boy. She verbally combats the notion. Her mother, however, is tired of her behavior, and she says that nobody wants to marry a young woman like the narrator (Kingston. 1976 : 202). Yet, the old woman substantiates that people cannot be sold in the U.S., and her daughter is not smart because she cannot differentiate a joke from real life (Kingston.

1976 : 202).

Kingston presents a protagonist whose awareness of traditional marriage problems shows her individual rights in marriage decisions. Also her notion and decision on marriage are against Chinese culture. Being independent and refusing some ethnic culture are crucial to Chinese-American woman, like young Kingston. This idea is supported by Malini Schueller that:

It is vital for Kingston to treat race too as a play of differences.... The immigrant experience is an integral part of the book.... In China, the girl fears she will be married off to a Fresh Off the Boat Chinese. Indeed, the structure of hierarchical oppositions is so cleverly set up that the narrator's growth might be equated with being fully "American."... The Woman Warrior is a book about an essential, abstract, female self beyond culture and society...

(Schueller. 1989 : 426-429)

Accordingly, both heroines are aggressive regarding marriage, but Celie's actual struggles are clearer and more aggressive strategies than young Kingston's oral strategies because Celie is married, while Kingston is not yet married. Celie has no other choice about avoiding marrying a man whom she does not love because she is the oldest daughter that has to marry first, according to her culture, and because she wants to marry Albert in order to make Nettie further her study.

Obviously, to overcome marriage problems, Celie initially finds her self-esteem, leaves her spouse, and tries to be economically independent, while Kingston initially refuses to be traditionally betrothed or to marry a man in order to be only a wife or a slave; in her revolt she affects a strange manner and argues with her parents. Both characters present personal identity over biased traditions: Celie struggles against Albert's maltreatments, and young Kingston combats an undesirable engagement or marriage. Celie and Kingston imply that women can live happily and independently without their spouses' support so that a woman has no need to marry a man without love and understanding.

Career

Both Celie in The Color Purple and the narrator in The Woman Warrior struggle for economic independence through a career. Celie's business comes from her domestic skill in sewing and Shug's assistance. Meanwhile young Kingston's occupation generates from her educational success. Traditionally, domestic work for Chinese and African-American women is almost the same, i.e. house work, child-caring, nursing, cooking, and sewing. Nevertheless, the protagonists' careers in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior are different from their social expectations. When Celie realizes that Albert hides Nettie's letters, Celie is very angry and almost out of control. She even wants to kill the man. But through Shug's help, Celie feels better and practices making trousers, beginning from a free piece of cloth (Sofia's husband's cloth for a soldier). As the heroine practices making pants, she

feels happy because she realizes that she will be able to make her living very soon and she has some time to read Nettie's letters (Walker. 1982 : 152-153).

After learning how to make pants and leaving Albert, Celie stays with Shug in Memphis, Tennessee. Shug confirms that she loves Celie and wants to help Celie to be self-reliant and to get self-esteem. Shug's hospitality and inspiration make Celie feel love and gain self-esteem that is internal drive for Celie's career, as Celie writes:

You not my maid. I didn't bring you to Memphis to be that. I brought you here to love you and help you get on your feet.

Then finally one day I made the perfect pair of pants. For my sugar, naturally.... Then orders start to come in from everywhere Shug sing. Pretty soon I'm swamp.... I say, You know, I love doing this, but I got to git out and make a living pretty soon. Look like this just holding me back.

You making your living, Celie, she say. Girl, you on your way....

I am so happy. I got love, I got work, I got money, friends and time. And you alive and be home soon. With our children.

(Walker. 1982 : 218-223)

From Celie's expression, it is noticeable that love and in-

spiration from Shug and her own strong intention to work are important drives for her economic independence. Also, when an African-American woman like Celie feels good and has a career, she is not selfish.

Celie gains her identity and happiness when she can work for her own living. Further, it is noticeable that as she writes to Nettie about her success, Celie achieves self-esteem and begins to sign her name and address in the letter. This proves that when a woman finds her identity through economic independence, she will be happy and proud of herself, and she will attain self-confidence to accept who she is.

In connection with Celie's character about economic independence, Walker implies that African-Americans, like Celie, are working women, family women, and community women as well. The women are not selfish when they can make their living. They are kind, and are concerned about their families and community. They want to help others. Walker's The Color Purple relating to Celie's work points out essential responsibilities of independent women who are concerned not only about their individual survival, but also about their community's survival. With regard to Walker's implication, Pinckney, a critic, substantiates that the protagonist in Walker's The Color Purple is a model of working women apart from being a model of family and community women:

Alice Walker herself came of age during the debate in the Sixties over whether black women were the punching bags of black men. But Walker is so intent on

investing drudgery with romantic properties that she loses sight of the fact that black women simply had to work. The black woman entered the lower professions faster than her white counterpart and this was crucial in a society that kept black men out of the labour force. Indeed the valor of the black woman lay in her history as a wage earner.... Black women's concerns had earlier belonged to what was considered the private, rather than the public, as if the kitchen range could not adequately represent the struggle. But it turned out that the concerns of the kitchen were big enough to encompass the lore of struggle and survival. The black woman's story of family, community, ..., was a welcomed departure from highly publicized apocalyptic writings...

(Pinckney. 1987 : 17-18)

The above information states that Celie is a heroine who is able to achieve economic independence within her community. Her condition is a good example of minority women who want to retain cultural unity and perpetuate the women's rights. Moreover, Celie's life can be an inspiration for African-American women who are much more deprived than their men or other women in education, married life, and career.

While Celie's struggle for a career is obvious, the narrator in The Woman Warrior is unclear about her career. She does not mention in her writing if finally she is a mathematician or a scientist.

Indeed she refuses to be a typist, a wife or a slave (Kingston. 1976 : 201, 203). The researcher assumes that she is a writer because she longs for an individual life, she is smart--she is good at math and science, and she mentions in "Song of the Barbarian Reed Ripe" that she is a story-teller:

Here is a story my mother told me, not when I was
young, but recently, when I told her I also talk story.
The beginning is hers, the ending is mine.

(Kingston. 1976 : 206)

Apart from considering the protagonist in The Woman Warrior as an independent writer, the researcher also thinks that she hates racism because she refuses to work for racist bosses at an art supply house that sold paints to artists and at a land developers' association. Also she hates the tyrants who refuse to provide her family with food and work (Kingston. 1976 : 48-49).

Regarding young Kingston's career, she is self-confident, besides being better educated, so that she is able to find a good and independent job. She has the American ambition, longing for a successful career. Luckily, the girl does not face any violent problems in working or in her intention to work. Although her mother suggests that to be a typist is best for her, young Kingston considers that she can be better than that, and with her ability, she does not want to be a man's follower or a man's supporter (Kingston. 1976 : 203). She verbally combats her confrontations, and confronts her former racist bosses. Her qualities show her personal identity and her relationship

with her ethnic group. Baker-Nunn says that young Kingston's identity is from knowing herself, her imagination, and her background:

On the daughter side, there is an acute need to separate from the mother; ...we see the daughter fleeing the mother's world in order to seek an authentic self, to move from a received identity to an independent adult identity.

(Baker-Nunn. 1987 : 59)

From the protagonists' struggles in their respective careers, they are successful. They achieve independent careers. The narrator in The Woman Warrior is much more self-confident and educated than Celie in The Color Purple so that she is able to struggle for a stable and independent career alone. Her work (writing), however, shows her concerns for her traditions and community. On the contrary, Celie in The Color Purple initially lacks self-confidence and a good education; she needs Shug's assistance in her struggle for a career. It is noticeable that self-realization, personal ability, and a friend's support are essential for minority women to gain economic independence. Some women, like young Kingston, are able to find an independent career, while some women, like Celie, develop their domestic skills into a business or independent work.

Beliefs

The protagonists in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior face

actual struggles in beliefs. Celie struggles against Christian beliefs in God, while the narrator in The Woman Warrior struggles against Confucianism and superstition. At first Celie is conventional. Earlier, she believes that God is a White man, and she cares about God. She tries to follow God's commandments in order to be a good Christian. Because she is religious and because of her father's order, "You better not never tell nobody but God" (Walker. 1982 : 1), Celie tells God whatever happens to her. However, later, when she feels that God allows many cruel things to happen to her, Celie reduces her faith in God. In her letter to Nettie, Celie writes that she does not write to God anymore because "God gives her a lynched daddy, a crazy mama, a low-down dog of a step pa and a sister who she will not see again" (Walker. 1982 : 199). Further, Celie says God never shows sympathy for her, but, God, who she has been praying and writing to, is "a man who acts just like all the other men--trifling, forgetful and lowdown" (Walker. 1982 : 200).

Celie is angry with God. She refuses to be a good Christian, and struggles against conventional beliefs--she stops being religious. She decides that she will not let her life rely on God. She becomes self-reliant. Celie, however, listens to Shug's opinions about God in that God is not male or female, but it is something inside herself, everybody, and everything. Further, God loves all feelings and every feeling that she loves, especially admiration (Walker. 1982 : 202-204).

Celie's new notion of God softens her emotions. Celie feels love and happiness at the same time. Certainly, Shug influences Celie's idea of God because she believes in the person who treats her and loves her sincerely. Moreover, Celie even shocks Harpo and Sofia

(Celie's step children) about making love with God and talking to God when she smokes a reefer:

Do I look like a fool? I ast. I smoke when I want to talk to God. I smoke when I want to make love. Lately I feel like me and God make love just fine anyhow. Whether I smoke reefer or not.

Miss Celie! say Sofia. Shock.

Girl, I'm bless, I say to Sofia. God know what I mean.

(Walker. 1982 : 226-227)

Celie's new beliefs about God totally change her behavior and shock her community as well. However, breaking her traditional beliefs in Christianity makes her feel self-confident and happy. This implies that women sometimes need to struggle against cultural beliefs in order to find personal independence.

About Celie's God in The Color Purple, Felipe Smith points out "Walker's critique of Christological model as a specific aspect of her redemptive art" (Smith. 1992 : 442). Walker wants to teach Celie (and the reader) that religious observance is a matter of social convention. In addition, Smith thinks that "Walker's alternative to the Christ model, ...is a collective female agency (so-called 'woman-bonding') that stresses self-help and group support" (Smith. 1992 : 422). This proves the researcher's argument that in order to attain individual rights, women sometimes have to refuse traditional beliefs.

Apart from Smith's critique on Celie's belief in God, Priscilla

Leder also substantiates that the protagonist in The Color Purple is able to struggle against traditional beliefs with friends' support:

Celie's relationship with Shug Avery is crucial to her redemption, and that relationship resembles key relationships between characters in both the wilderness and domestic traditions.... Such friends and counselors often help the heroine to develop the Christian virtues which she needs to endure the trials of her existence.... The "high natured" Shug Avery possesses the assertiveness and sexuality which are latent in Celie.

(Leder. 1989 : 85)

The quotation reveals that a woman, maybe every woman, needs a close friend who really understands what she needs and how she feels. Further, some women, like Celie, need a counselor and a guide to learn how to deal with "religious and prejudice beliefs" and "sexual desires."

It is not only the protagonist in The Color Purple that struggles against traditional Christian beliefs, but also the heroine in The Woman Warrior that resists traditional beliefs in Chinese Confucianism and superstition. Confucianism is the "Five Relationships" between ruler-subject, father-son, husband-wife, elder and younger brother, and friend and friend (Watcharee. 1996 : 96-97). The responsibilities of relationships are given and received in return. Chinese people believe that all things are related and rely upon one another. The narrator in The Woman Warrior, as a girl, does not

believe in Confucianism because it is complicated, but she believes in individualism (Kingston. 1976 : 201). She wants to be independent and to work for her own income and her personal rights. She does not want to get married or to stay with her parents. She is not quite grateful according to Chinese culture because she does not carefully look after her parents. However, when she is mature, the heroine gets a better understanding of her mother's concern for herself. Kingston realizes that Confucianism extends strong relationships between Chinese people and Chinese culture, and the tradition differentiates Chinese from others. So she wants to investigate her ethnic culture and the truth values of her mother's stories and Chinese folklore.

Apart from not believing in Confucianism, the narrator does not believe in superstition concerning disgusting food, making witches, killing animals, and supernatural events. She believes in American life, which is logical, concrete, free, and guarantees individual happiness. The American school teaches that "an eclipse is just a shadow the earth makes when it comes between the moon and the sun;" the Chinese mother prepares the children to "slam pots and lids together to scare the frog from swallowing the moon." Further, she contemplates the phenomenon: "the Chinese who eat disgusting food from fresh animals are hungry or crazy" (Kingston. 1982 : 93). When a druggist gives her mother a wrong medicine, the mother thinks the owner of the drugstore wants to make members in her family sick, and she tells her children to get some candy to stop the curse. The children go to the drugstore asking for some candy, in Chinese-English, and the owner of the drugstore does not understand her pronunciation

or the Chinese tradition. However, they get some candy because he thinks they are poor and starving (Kingston. 1976 : 170-171). The protagonist in The Woman Warrior hesitates to follow her traditional beliefs. She only takes some candy with a different purpose.

To overcome confrontations in traditional beliefs, Maxine creates a new center for herself. Instead of perceiving things from her mother's point of view, she now has a new synthesizing center from which her perceptions emerge to encompass both her Chinese and American heritages. From her mother's talk-stories, on the one hand, she must sort out the essential Chineseness in herself despite all those shadowy ghosts that intoxicate as well as frighten her. On the other hand, she must also puncture the stereotyped image of the Silent Oriental, the taboo against speech, to reclaim her birthright as a free speaking Chinese-American. She confirms her identity, telling her mother, "'I am,' that firmly establishes her identity as a self-expressive, vital human being, or in her unique case, a Chinese-American woman" (Wang. 1985 : 31).

The protagonist's maturity regarding her traditional beliefs points out the identity of minority women who need to have personal independence to believe or examine any belief. At the same time, the women must understand the unity of their traditional beliefs in order to clarify what is suitable or unsuitable in the States. For instance, as a Chinese-American, Kingston has to interpret her ethnic Chinese heritage through stories told by her mother in order to understand what the Chinese are like and the deep implication in each Chinese tradition, and to preserve their ethnic culture. Further, since she was born in the States, she has the rights to believe in any re-

ligion, study what she likes or is good at, and have individual right to defend herself as an "American." In addition, Chinese-American women sometimes assimilate their own beliefs to their ancestors' beliefs in order to reduce aggressive relationships between their elders and themselves.

With reference to Kingston's struggle against traditional beliefs with reason and logic shows her identity, and Veronica Wang thinks that the girl has double-consciousness and understands her "roots" and her own identity as well:

Maxine, unlike her mother, has her roots in America. Though strongly attached to and influenced by her mother, she cannot be her mother; nor can she be Fa Mu Lan or either of her aunts. With all of these women fused into her consciousness, she must develop her own identity, identity that grows out of her American birth and Chinese ancestry, out of the suffering and isolation necessitated by the juxtaposition of conflicting heritages, and proclaim her voice.

(Wang. 1995 : 28)

The above information states the importance of knowing one's own background and one's situations in a new society, in order to search for identity as a minority woman.

Apart from Wang's critique, Joan Bischoff also agrees with the heroine's strategy to overcome her problem regarding cultural beliefs:

Kingston disapproved of many of the customs and behaviors of her community. She resented having to lie and say she had already eaten when offered food, instead of bluntly admitting, "I'm starved, Do you have any cookies? I like chocolate chip cookies."

(Bischoff. 1989 : 64)

From Wang's and Bischoff's opinion, young Kingston individually develops her identity independent of Chinese beliefs. Similarly, Celie may want to do likewise with respect to her traditional beliefs, but she cannot do that alone; she needs Shug's support together with her own intention and alternative beliefs in God. In the protagonists' emotional struggles against their cultural beliefs, they do not absolutely cut off their ancestors' beliefs, but they successfully alter the beliefs to be appropriate to their lives.

Values

Both Celie in The Color Purple and the narrator in The Woman Warrior face prejudice and bias regarding their gender. The bias value on female babies is violent in Chinese culture; meanwhile, there is no bias on the sex of a baby child in African-American culture. Thus, the gender value in African-American culture is quite similar to that of American culture. Females in The Color Purple are more valuable than females in The Woman Warrior. African-American women, like Celie, are acceptable by their capacity to work in a house and

in a field. They can improve their children's status if their fathers have whiter skin. Adultery is not a serious matter for females. For example, Celie gets pregnant two times, but her community does not punish her. Celie, however, is looked down by the men who are her step-father and husband. Fonso, her step-father, offers Celie to Albert, together with Celie's cow. Albert beats Celie just because she is a woman (Walker. 1982 : 23). Anyhow, this happens to African-American women who do not fight for themselves, Nettie and Albert's sisters tell Celie that she has to fight back. Since Celie does not initially fight against Albert's maltreatment, she is a victim. When she comes to herself and claims her rights, she is a victor. It is obvious that African-American females are equal in value to males when they are babies. When they grow up, however, the women must learn how to fight against conservative males; otherwise their husbands can dominate their lives. Gloria Steinem states that The Color Purple portrays an equal gender value although the heroine is a poor woman:

Alice Walker has written an empathetic novel about the poorest of the poor.... But, unlike most novels that expose race or class, it doesn't treat male/female injustice as natural or secondary...

(Steinem. 1982 : 90)

In The Color Purple, African-American women and men are of equal gender value if the women stand up for themselves. On the contrary, the gender values portrayed in The Woman Warrior is not comparable in Chinese culture, where females have much lower status.

For instance, young Kingston's "No Name Aunt" is violently punished by villagers in her community, both male and female. Her "silent birth" is against the community's practices and beliefs, and she has to drown herself and her child, which the heroine thinks is a female, "It was probably a girl; there is some hope of forgiveness for boys" (Kingston. 1976 : 15). This implies that the Chinese value males more than females. The notion confuses the narrator in The Woman Warrior and makes her unhappy because she is in the States, and American people have equality for women and men. So she tries to struggle for gender equality.

Apart from the effect of gender value upon young children, in both The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior, unplanned pregnancy is mentioned. The protagonist in The Color Purple confronts the situation herself. Although her father sells her children, she is not punished by her community nor does she have to commit suicide. The heroine in The Woman Warrior does not confront actual problems. She knows about the pregnancy of her "No Name Aunt" through her mother's story. The heroine feels the inequality of Chinese males and females. Further, from the story, her mother reminds young Kingston about being female in Chinese culture: "Girls are unworthy and unwanted. Chinese girls are marriageable or sellable when they are young, and girls have no outward tendency" (Kingston. 1975 : 46-47).

Besides the story of her "No Name Aunt," Kingston's parents and immigrant villagers say, "Feeding girls is feeding cowbirds....there's no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls. And girls are maggots in the rice" (Walker. 1976 : 46, 190-191). Further, the heroine experiences female deprivation from the treatment of her

parents and relatives. A woman cannot choose in China, and in the States her parents and great-uncle welcome and give her brother better toys, furniture and food, but they do not appreciate her straight A's because they think that when they raise girls, they are raising children for strangers. The unequal treatment over girls makes young Kingston unhappy, and tends to make her naughty like a boy. For example, she refuses to cook, cracks one or two dishes when she has to wash dishes. Unless she is happy, she burns the food when she cooks, she does not feed people, she lets dirty dishes rot, and she eats at other people's tables but won't invite them to hers, where dishes are rotting (Kingston. 1976 : 47-48). Kingston's behavior is unsuitable though she is a boy or not. This implies that the need to avoid being deprived sometimes affect influences a person's manner from a youth through an adult. It substantiates the necessity for adults to have equal treatments on boys and girls.

According to the narrator in The Woman Warrior, she needs parental and social support to interpret female role in Chinese and the States logically. As a girl, Kingston does not want to listen to complicated stories nor does she want to be threatened by the superstitions, folklore, and people in her community. The girl wants clear explanations about female roles and her value. She believes that gender equality points out the capacity to distinguish appropriate values from inappropriate values. So initial parental support is important in order to understand sex-roles, as Joan Bischoff reveals that the narrator of The Woman Warrior needs such support:

Kingston keenly felt the unfairness inherent in Great-Uncle's pleasure in taking her brothers out for candy and new toys while refusing to take her and her sisters because they were girls....Kingston's social experience lacked many of the parent-arranged boy-girl activities that were common in life....Kingston didn't understand boys very well....

(Bischoff. 1989 : 64-65)

Prejudice and bias about the unequal treatment emotionally influenced the narrator in The Woman Warrior. She becomes aggressive and hates Chinese males and her community that unequally treat women. The narrator confirms that girls are important too: they can earn their living, and they can be educated (Kingston. 1976 : 50-51). She refuses to get married. Yet, she takes revenge on her community by reporting the crime concerning stories about her Chinese culture giving severe punishments to females.

American females have a better situation than African-American and Chinese-American females. Females in the States can choose their spouses, they are not sold or married off, and they can obtain abortions if they are the victims of adultery. Hence, young Kingston wants to be independent and to get equal opportunity like American women. Celie has got the right to choose her spouse, but she is conservative. She volunteers to marry Albert instead of Nettie because she wants to save her sister for an opportunity to further her education.

It is apparent that both protagonists have to struggle for

equality. Although African-Americans value male and female much more equally than Chinese-Americans, Celie must fight for her value because her husband is conservative and he treats her as a slave. Fortunately, she has a friend's assistance. On the other hand, young Kingston must struggle for gender equality alone because her community and parents do not accept her rights and capacity. Inequal gender value affected on her emotions leads to her hating Chinese men and every one who has bias towards women.

The researcher has analyzed Celie's struggle in The Color Purple and young Kingston's struggle in The Woman Warrior in order to show that despite the protagonists' differences in background and education, they both have to confront their problems regarding sex-role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values. From these conflicts the protagonists moved through their own strategies to resolutions, ultimately a measure of liberation.

To the researcher, Celie and young Kingston were different in their environments. Celie was an African-American woman living in her black community which worships God in Christianity. She had a broken family because her real father passed away, and her mother married Fonso. Fonso did not love Celie. He made her work hard besides frequently raped her. Her mother did not know about the matter because she was ill and Celie did not tell her. Her parents did not take good care of her though they were not poor and were not busy working. They never thought of Celie's further education or of her future career. On the contrary, Kingston was a Chinese-American girl, living in a Chinese community in California. Her parents were immigrants from China who used to oblige to immigration laws.

The couple lived together. In the States, her parents were initially very poor, and they had to work hard for their living, although they were rich and were educators in China. The parents were concerned about Kingston's future and her manners. They tried to train her in accordance with Chinese tradition. Kingston's family worshiped their ancestors. Accordingly, the researcher thinks that Kingston's family's relationship was warmer than Celie's, and Kingston's milieu was better than Celie's, too.

Apart from being different in their environments, Celie and Kingston were different in education. Kingston got better education than Celie. To the researcher, Kingston was well educated supported by her parents and scholarships. Although she was initially confused about showing her opinion and acting between Chinese and American schools, she was clever and able to overcome her obstacles. She got good grades, particularly at math and science. Her educational capacity affected her opportunity to further highly education and independent career. In contrast, Celie was not well educated. She was only literate. The researcher considers she did not finish secondary school because of her physical obstacle. She lost her chance to continue formal education so that it was difficult for Celie to use her little knowledge in a career. Hence, the researcher assumes that Celie did not attain as much knowledge as Kingston, but it does not mean that Kingston was clever than Celie. If Celie got the same opportunity in education and lived in the same milieu like Kingston, she would be able to work or achieve self-assertiveness as well as Kingston.

Because of the protagonist's enviornmental and educational

differences as mentioned above, the researcher thinks that they would have different strategies to struggle against their problems. The researcher will analyze how they struggled to survive.

Celie initially confronted incest rape by her stepfather, Fonso. She did not struggle against the incest, but she reconciled it as her burden, telling God about her sadness. Further, she let the incident frequently occurred until she got pregnant twice and until he was bored with her. She did not tell her mother or anyone because her father threatened Celie with her mother's condition. Fonso said that her mother would get angry and be seriously ill if she knew that Celie was not a good girl. Celie wanted to be a good girl and wanted to save her mother from his sexual intercourse. She felt pity for the woman because she was very sick. Hence, Celie tolerated Fonso's incest.

After being raped by Fonso, Celie was faced with pregnancy. She did not know about abortion, and she kept the babies till she gave birth. This matter happened twice. Celie still reconciled with her pregnancies. She did not tell anyone who the father was. Further, she let Fonso take her children. She only considered that the former one was killed, and the latter one was sold off. Thus, Celie had no struggle against her unplanned pregnancies. She did not attain personal independence or retain her cultural identity in which an African-American was brave and was able to lead her life.

Apart from not being self-assertive in her pregnancy, Celie lacked self-assertiveness in education. When Fonso stopped her from going to school and her teacher agreed with the man when she noticed Celie's pregnancy, Celie expressed no struggle. She did not say that

she wanted to study and her physical obstacle was not her fault. Only Nettie, her sister, tried to argue that Celie was not dumb and could be educated.

Besides being restricted in education, Celie had no independence in marriage. When she was stopped to go to school and her mother passed away, Fonso had a new wife. He was tired of having sexual intercourse with Celie and tried to get rid of her. The incident happened when Albert wanted to marry Nettie. Fonso did not allow Albert to marry Nettie saying Nettie was a younger sister and had to continue her study, and Albert could have Celie instead. Although Celie did not love Albert, she was selfless in living with him. Celie agreed to be Albert's wife though he did not initially want her and he married her for a cow and for having somebody to take care of his four children and do domestic work. She married without love or understanding.

After marriage, Celie confronted a wife-role which the researcher assumes is like a slave or a servant. For instance, she had to do house work and field work besides looking after Albert's four rotten children. Particularly, on her wedding day, there was no celebration. But she was busy with Albert's children until it was late at night. The oldest boy, Harpo even bashed her head with a rock. After finishing her house work, she had to sleep with Albert though she had no sexual desire. In addition, Albert beat her only because he wanted to do that, and he said a woman or a wife was good for beating. Celie had never defended herself from his beating. She worked harder than every member in the family. Anyway, she never complained about the burdens. She only reconciled her confrontations by

writing to God and being patient, as she said that she tried to feel like a piece of wood. She knew that she was powerless, and she could not struggle against their violence.

Another confrontation occurred when Albert took Shug Avery, his mistress, home. Shug was very sick, and he told Celie to take care of Shug. Celie loved Shug even before she met her so she would like to welcome the woman. But she did not say a word to welcome her because she considered that the house was Albert's and she had no right to host the woman. Celie kept quiet and tried her best to take good care of Shug. Celie wanted to make Shug love her and be satisfied with her hospitality. It was difficult, though, because Shug was moody and arrogant. However, Celie finally won Shug's heart with her patience and assimilation. When Shug recovered from her sickness, they understood each other deeply, even about sexual desire. Celie learned from Shug how to get pleasure from her body. They did like they were lesbians. Anyway, Shug still slept with Albert. Celie's struggle for Shug and her sexual desire were revolutionary. The strategy brought her individual independence.

In this approach, Celie was courageous, and the strategy brought her happiness. She and Shug helped each other. And the matter shows that women understood one another much better than their men understood them.

One important point is that after Celie met Shug, she attained self-esteem because Shug took her to a night club and sang her a song named "Miss Celie." However, she was not really happy because she missed her sister, Nettie. She told Shug about Nettie. Shug helped her find Nettie's letters which were hidden by Albert. Knowing that

Albert had hidden Nettie's letters for a long time, Celie got angry with him because Nettie was the one she loved and cared about most. Celie burst out. She wanted to kill the man but Shug forbade her. Then she dared have a violent argument with him. She ignored doing field work but went out every day in order to practice making trousers with Shug's assistance. At last, she left him. Celie had a revolutionary struggle against Albert because she realized his cruelty and because she attained her self-esteem. She achieved her individual right and showed that a black woman with little education like her could be independent. Celie had a gift for sewing and designing so that trousers-making business was going very well. This success really completed Celie's individual dependence because she did not rely upon Shug anymore. She had a factory of her own, and at last she could own a house which was her natural father's heritage at her village.

For Celie as well as for many women, to be totally independent is to lead one's life with one's income and ability. It is noticeable that Celie had totally changed from being humble to being self-assured and self-assertive. Her success needed no highly education, but her gift because she applied her domestic skill, with Shug's assistance. This is one kind of strategy.

In The Woman Warrior, the protagonist initially faced a problem of traditional bias against women. For instance, Kingston's no-name aunt was punished cruelly because she got pregnant while her husband was away in the States for years. The aunt's community, both male and female, chased her and took her properties besides hurting her. The aunt had to give birth in a pigsty and later drown herself in the

village well. Kingston did not face the situation herself. However, she considered that it was unfair for her no-name aunt. So she made a case for her aunt by saying that the woman took a revenge on the community was afraid of her spirit and nobody could drink water from the well. Kingston's struggle was only a verbal strategy, but it may be considered symbolic for all women so suppressed.

Besides being concerned about her no-name aunt, Kingston rebelled against the unequal treatment Chinese boys and girls. Her community, her parents, and her grandparents told that they preferred boys to girls. She could not practically confront them, but she thought that was unfair to girls. Sometimes she ignored doing what a girl should do, for example, having a submissive manner.

Apart from confronting the bias for Chinese boys over girls, Kingston struggled for equal education between male and female. Since Chinese considered females did not need high education because women would soon marry and then their status would depend upon their husbands'. To Kingston, a woman should be educated as far as she was able to study, and a woman had to study what she was good at and what would lead her to an independent work. To struggle against the educational problem, she argued with her parents that she could further her study without the parents' support. She was good at math and science which only clever students were good at. Further, she confirmed that she could get scholarships. She would leave them in order to see the world. Kingston's struggle was quite violent because Chinese people respected their parents, but Kingston dared argue with her parents.

Besides fighting for equal educational right, Kingston struggled

for equal marriage right. In Chinese tradition, a girl would be engaged at young age, and she could be only a slave or a wife. Kingston did not accept the tradition. She refused to marry an FOB or a retarded boy who frequently came to see her. She stated that she was smart, could lead her life, and could work for her living so she needed no protector, boss, and husband. She confirmed that she would not marry and that she would leave her family. Her struggle was revolutionary in that she did not seek to marry in her tradition. She attained her personal independence. Kingston confronted not only the problems of equal right in education and marriage, but also a conservative tradition about women's careers. Her parents suggested that Kingston not seek high education, but that she should attend a typing school. They considered being a typist was the most popular and easiest work for a female immigrant. Kingston did not take their suggestion, saying she could find a better job which would give a high salary and a better status. She would be a mathematician or a scientist. Kingston's struggle for a career was contrary to her Chinese tradition. Her notion showed that she wanted to work independently, and she wanted fame and money. She supported liberation to equal opportunity.

At the end, Kingston did not mention which career she chose, but she said that she lived and worked independently. She wrote that although she missed, respected, and loved her parents, she separately lived in her own place because she could not bear their conservative behaviors. However, Kingston did not totally cut herself from her parents and her traditions. She visited them frequently, and she wanted to examine Chinese culture in order to prove what was true or untrue according to her mother's stories. Kingston's struggle for

independent career and modified living was necessary for a life of equal opportunity, not in conflict with the new way. She achieved her personal right while retaining the aspects of her culture. She understood that some parts of Chinese cultures were not appropriate in the States.

Comparing Kingston's outcome of her struggles to the result of Celie's struggles, the researcher found that both finally attained their individual rights particularly in working and living although they had different milieu and education. Further, they were back to their society expressing their impressive culture.

In sum, the protagonists in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior struggle with regard to sex role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and value. In the struggles they use their own strategies based on their background, experiences, and capacity to learn as plotted in the novels. They are depicted as women who are adjustable to a lifestyle that enables them eventually to cope in their own ways, but to the same end, i.e., survival in setting where one is initially disadvantaged in some way. The main point is that through struggles and strategies, however different, liberation is attained. The same paradigm may then be applicable to women anywhere, Thailand included. Thus in this sense, it is a powerful instance of human behaviour.

CHAPTER V

A CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In Chapter V, the researcher divides the information into two parts: a conclusion from a comparative study of the protagonists' struggles in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior and suggestions for further study.

Conclusion

According to this analysis, the researcher can conclude Celie's struggle in The Color Purple and the narrator's struggle in The Woman Warrior in terms of sex role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and values as follows:

a) Sex Role

Celie aggressively struggles against her burdens in sex role with Shug's help, but the narrator in The Woman Warrior symbolically combats her traditional sex-role as told by her parents and community. Also both characters state their rights of independent sex-role.

b) Education

The narrator in The Woman Warrior both practically and orally fights for her education together with parental support and by scholarships, while Celie's struggle for literacy in The Color Purple is light by comparison because she has a physical obstacle (she is pregnant), and she lacks parental and social supports. Only her younger sister

tries to educate Celie informally. Kingston is offensive regarding her ability and her right to be educated, but Celie has no self-assertiveness in doing so. Yet, Celie learns more and more through life.

c) Marriage

Celie strongly struggles against her burdens in married life, with Shug's help. The young narrator in The Woman Warrior, however, struggles against marriage violently although she does not face practical situations.

d) Career

Celie seriously struggles for a career with specific assistance from Shug, but young Kingston can fight for a career with her own ability even though she is not an adult, and does not face practical obstacles.

e) Beliefs

The narrator in The Woman Warrior struggles against Confucianism and Chinese superstition with her reasonable and independent character, but Celie initially takes Shug's notion about God in Christianity to overcome her problems.

f) Values

Young Kingston aggressively struggles with bias against females in Chinese culture from childhood to adulthood. But Celie does not struggle against such bias of females. Later, she verbally and prac-

tically combats the prejudice against female adults, with Shug's help.

It is obvious that Celie in The Color Purple and the narrator in The Woman Warrior are mature in the end because they gain their identity as well as maintaining their "roots." To confront cultural problems, they sometimes need to change or adopt traditions which are unfair to them. Indeed, in order to overcome these obstacles, both literary works present the significance of matriarchy, sisterhood, education, family-relationship, cultural concern, and economic independence.

As to matriarchy (females head a family or society), both Kingston and Walker point out that women, like young Kingston and Celie, can be independent if matriarchy appears in their society. Though matriarchy illustrated in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior depends on plots and themes in both literary works, it is a revolutionary strategy which addresses feminism. Also literature is based on real life in that women want leaders or friends who are understandable and sincere, not aggressive or prejudiced. Both Celie and Kingston consider females understand females much better than males do. In The Color Purple, Celie is not mature under her father's or her husband's commands, but she becomes mature when Shug helps manage her life. Likewise, The Woman Warrior shows that young Kingston has a tough mother who comments on everything. Although the narrator in The Woman Warrior sometimes does not like her mother's comments and argues with the old woman, later the girl matures and knows that her mother sincerely wants to help her.

Apart from matriarchy, sisterhood (women's support) is mentioned in both works, too. Some women, like the narrator in The Woman

Warrior are smart and self-confident so they can survive by themselves and can even assist other people. For instance, she helps a girl (her friend) at school to achieve her personality. Although, she fails to make the girl confident, she knows that she tries her best and the source of the girl's problem is Chinese reticence. Celie in The Color Purple is taught to read and write by Nettie, and is also encouraged to go on by Nettie. Further, Celie gets love, happiness, and self-esteem through Shug's help.

Besides sisterhood and matriarchy, education is an important factor for identity. Both formal and informal education appear in The Woman Warrior and The Color Purple. Education and being literate make the protagonists feel confident. Young Kingston is smart and able to get scholarships to further her study so she dares defend herself and searches for the career she wants. Although Celie is not that smart, she is literate and she knows what is going on in the world through Shug and Nettie. Thus, Celie dares argue with Albert and leaves him to go to Memphis, starting sewing.

About family-relationship, it is noticeable that the narrator in The Woman Warrior is in a warm family--both her father and mother work hard for the family, and her mother teaches her by "story-telling," besides having the good opportunity to study in both American and Chinese schools. So she is happy to simply gain her identity. In contrast, Celie in The Color Purple grows up in a broken family--her mother is sick living with Celie's step father. She had nobody to take care of her. In addition, she has to do the housework and is raped by the father. Celie never feels love and she never samples good living. Hence, to Celie, it is difficult and it takes time to

achieve her identity.

In terms of cultural concern, since every society is a patriarchal society, women are much more deprived than men. Women, therefore, have to differentiate proper culture from improper culture. They have to refuse to practice the culture that treat women unequally. Like the narrator in The Woman Warrior, she rejects whatever mistreats women, and gains her personal independence. Similarly, Celie in The Color Purple realizes that her husband mistreats her and she also knows that her idea about God is not appropriate. Hence, she leaves Albert to go to Memphis and she refuses to be a slave-wife. Further, Celie alters her image of God. Then she feels happy and gains her self-esteem.

Last, but not least, economic independence is important for women's identity. If women can earn money of their own, they need not rely on their husbands, and will be able to lead their own lives. For instance, Celie in The Color Purple gains her identity after she is successful in her business. In addition, she can help her community and her family. The narrator in The Woman Warrior can work for her living so that she does not have to get married in order to find a master or a protector. She can afford whatever she wants for her individual life. Kingston and Walker point out that women need to be economically independent to gain their personal independence. They prove that women can work, lead their own lives, help their communities, and can be the retainers of cultural unity.

In summary, women's struggles concerning sex-role, education, marriage, career, belief, and value appear abundantly and usefully in both Walker's The Color Purple and Kingston's The Woman Warrior.

Relevant to these variables are the factors of matriarchy, sisterhood, education, family-relationships, cultural concerns, and economic independence for minority women in their search for their liberation.

Suggestions

With reference to the conclusion in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior, Alice Walker and Maxine Hong Kingston substantiate the significance of women's struggles for themselves as well as their community through searching for individual identity in sex role, education, marriage, career, beliefs, and gender value. In order to promote further study of women's struggles for personal rights and retaining cultural unity, which will lead to better understanding and appreciation of minority women, the following topics are suggested:

1. Women's struggles in other Chinese-American and African-American novels, such as Amy Tan's The Kitchen God's Wife and Alice Walker's Possessing The Secret of Joy, should be studied.
2. Ethnic women's quest for identity, such as Annie Dillard's American Childhood and Toni Morrison's Tar Baby, should be studied.
3. Sisterhood in literary works written by minority writers, like Paul Marshall's Praisesong for the Widow and Morrison's Song of Solomon, should be analyzed.
4. Ethnic men's search for identity written by ethnic women, such as Kingston's China Men and The Tripmaster Monkey, should be studied.

5. Cultural identity of certain ethnic women in the United States and other countries should be studied.

6. Problems about unequal right and opportunity for women in many cultures should be studied.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bear, Elizabeth. "The Confrontation of East and West: The Woman Warrior as Postmodern Autobiography," Redneck Review of Literature. 21 : 26-29 ; Fall, 1991.
- Baker-Nunn, Jeanne. "Telling the Mother's Story," Women's Studies. 14(1) : 55-63 ; 1987.
- Birch, Eva Lenox. Black American Women's Writing: A Quilt of Many Colours. London : Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994.
- Bischoff, Joan. "Fellow Rebels: Annie Dillard and Maxine Hong Kingston," English Journal. 18(8) : 62-67 ; December, 1989.
- Brownmiller, Susan. "Susan Brownmiller Talks with Maxine Hong Kingston, Author of The Woman Warrior," Mademoiselle. 84 : 143-216 ; March, 1977.
- Bryfonski, Dedria and Gerard J. Senick. (ed.). Contemporary Literary Criticism Volum XII: Young Adult Literature. Michigan : Gale Research Company, 1980.
- Christian, Barbara T. "Alice Walker," in Dictionary of Literary Biography Vol. 33. Michigan : Gale Research Company, 1984.
- Dinnerstein, Leonard, Roger L. Nichols and David M. Reimers. (ed.). Natives and Stranger: Blacks, Indians, and Immigrants in America. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Drapper, Jame P. Black Literary Criticism Volume III. Detroit : Gale Research Company, 1992.
- Duke, Michael S. (ed.). Asia's Cultural Mosaic. New York : An East Book, 1989.

- Edelman, Marian Wright. "Black Family in America," in The Black Woman's Health Book. Ivelyn C. White, ed., n.p., n.d.
- Evans, Grant. (ed.). Asia's Cultural Mosaic. New York : Prentice Hall, 1993.
- Freeman, Jo. (ed.). Women: A Feminist Perspective. 4th ed. California : Mayfield, 1989.
- Harris, Trudier. "On The Color Purple, Stereotypes, and Silence," in Black American Literature Forum. 18(4) : 155-161 ; Winter, 1984.
- Higginbotham, Elizabeth. "Employment for Professional Black Women in The Twentieth Century," n.p., 1988.
- Hine, Darlene Clark, Elsa Barkley Brown and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn. Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia Vol. 2. New York : Carlson Publishing Inc., 1993.
- Homan, Margaret. "'Her Very Own Howl': The Ambiguities of Representation Women's Fiction," Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 9(2) : 180-205 ; 1983.
- Horton, James Oliver. Free People of Color. Washington : Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.
- Johnston, Sue Ann. "Empowerment Through Mythological Imaginings in Woman Warrior," Biography. 16(2) : 136-146 ; Spring, 1993.
- Kingston, Maxine Hong. The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts. New York : Vintage International, 1976.
- Leder, Priscilla. "Alice Walker's American Quilt: The Color Purple and American Literary Tradition," Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas. 20 : October, 1989.

- Lesniak, James G. and Susan M. Trosky. Contemporary Authors: New Revision Series Volume 38. Detroit : Gale Research Company, 1993.
- Lim, Shirley Geok-lin. Approaches to Teaching Kingston's The Woman Warrior. New York : The Modern Language Association of America, 1991.
- Lips, Hilary M. "Socialization in Adolescence," in Women : A Feminist Perspective. California : Mayfield, 1989.
- Marowski, Daniel G., Sean R. Pollock and Robyn V. Young. Contemporary Literary Criticism. Michigan : Gale Research Company, 1988.
- Matuz, Roger. Contemporary Authors: New Revision Series Volume 58. Detroit : Gale Research Inc., 1990.
- Metzger, Linda. Contemporary Authors: New Revision Series Volume 13. Detroit : Gale Research Inc., 1984.
- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. The Chinese Americans. Singapore : Chelsea House Publishers, 1987.
- Perez-Torres, Rafael. "Chicano Culture Reclaiming Our America: Coyotes at the Border," in American Literature. 67(4) : 823 ; December, 1995.
- Pinckney, Daryl. "Black Victims, Black Villains," in The New York Review of Books. 34(1) : 17-20 ; January, 1987.
- Quinn, Edna. "Gender Inequity in The United States: Historical Perspective," in Paper Presented at the American Studies Conference. p. 1024. Bangkok : Western Languages Department, Srinakharinwirot University, 1994.
- Schueller, Malini. "Questioning Race and Gender Definitions: Dialogic Subversions in The Woman Warrior," Criticism. 31(4) : 421-437 ; Fall, 1989.

- Sermjit Singhasanee. Introduction to English and American Literature.
Bangkok : Ramkhamhang University, 1985.
- Shear, Walter. "Generational Differences and the Diaspora in The Joy Luck Club," Critique. 34(3) : 193-199 ; Spring, 1993.
- Smith, Felipe. "Alice Walker's Redemptive Art," African American Review. 26(3) : 437-451 ; Fall, 1992.
- Steinem, Gloria. "Do You Know This Woman? She Know You: A Profile of Alice Walker," in Ms. 10(12) : 35-94 ; June, 1982.
- Tarntip Tongpanchang. A Search for Identity in Richard Wright's native Son and Alice Walker's The Color Purple. Master's Thesis.
Bangkok : Srinakharinwirot University, 1995. Photocopied.
- Votteler, Thomas and Shannon J. Young. (ed.). Short Story Criticism.
Washington : Gale Research Company, 1990.
- Walker, Alice. The Color Purple. New York : Pocket Books, 1982.
- Wang, Veronica. "Reality and Fantasy: The Chinese-American Woman's Quest for Identity," Melus. 12(3) : 23-31 ; Fall, 1985.
- Watcharee Phoonphiphatphon. Mother-Daughter Relationships in The Joy Luck Club and The Woman Warrior. Master's Thesis. Bangkok,
Srinakharinwirot University, 1996. Photocopied.
- Weston, Ruth D. "Who Touches This Touches A Woman: The Naked Self In Alice Walker," Weber Studies. 9(2) : 49-60 ; Spring-Summer, 1992.
- Wong, Sau-Ling Cynthia. "Necessity and Extravagance in Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior: Art and the Ethnic Experience." Melus. 15(1) : 3-26 ; Spring, 1988.
- Yung, Judy. Chinese Women of America: A Pictorial History. Seattle :
University of Washington Press, 1986.

VISTA

NAME: Mrs.Rattiya Siriwong

DATE OF BIRTH: December 22, 1961

PLACE OF BIRTH: Maung District, Chiang Rai

ADDRESS: 70 Mu 6 Rarchyotha Road, Maung District,
Chiang Rai 57000 (Tel) 053-718582

POSITION: Teacher of English Language

OFFICE: Wiangchai Wittayakhom School, Wiangchai District,
Chiang Rai 57210 (Tel) 053-769214

EDUCATION:

1997	M.A. (English) from Srinakharinwirot University at Prasarnmitr, Bangkok
1984	B.A. (English) from Payap University, Chiang Mai
1981	M.S. 5 Certificate of Arts (English-French) from Damrongrartsongkhraw School, Chiang Rai

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WOMEN'S STRUGGLES AS PRESENTED
IN THE COLOR PURPLE AND THE WOMAN WARRIOR

AN ABSTRACT

BY

RATTIYA SIRIWONG

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
Master of Arts degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University

May 1997

The purpose of this study is to compare and analyze women's struggles as presented in Alice Walker's The Color Purple and Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior to better understand African-American and Chinese-American women in the twentieth-century U.S.

This is a descriptive research study, concentrating on the female protagonists' problems of culture--sex-role, education, marriage, career, value, and beliefs, with specific references to gender problems.

The result of the study shows that despite their different strategies and background, both women attained their individual rights as retaining their ethnic culture. Walker's heroine confronted more actual problems than Kingston's heroine who mostly confronted psychological problems. Also, Walker's protagonist used more violent and various strategies than Kingston's protagonist who generally used verbal strategy. Relevant to these variables are the factors of matriarchy, sisterhood, education, family-relationships, cultural concerns, and economic independence for minority women in their search for their liberation.

บริณญาณิพนธ์นี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาเปรียบเทียบและวิเคราะห์การต่อสู้ดิ้นรนของสตรี
ในนวนิยายเรื่อง เดอะคัลเลอร์เพอร์เพิล ของ อลิซ วอล์คเกอร์ และ เรื่อง เดอะวูม่น-
วอร์ริเออร์ ของ แมกซีน ฮอง คิงส์ตัน เพื่อจะได้เข้าใจผู้หญิงอเมริกันเชื้อสายอัฟริกัน
และผู้หญิงอเมริกันเชื้อสายจีน ในศตวรรษ ที่ 20 ได้ลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้น

การศึกษาวิจัยนี้ใช้วิธีการวิจัยเอกสารโดยเน้นปัญหาของตัวละครเอกหญิงในประเด็น
ปัญหาสตรีอันสืบเนื่องจากวัฒนธรรมเกี่ยวกับบทบาทหน้าที่ของสตรี การศึกษา การแต่งงาน
การประกอบอาชีพ ค่านิยม และความเชื่อ

ผลการศึกษาพบว่าแม้ตัวละครเอกหญิงทั้งสองคนจะมีภูมิหลังแตกต่างกัน และใช้กลยุทธ์
การต่อสู้ดิ้นรนต่างกัน ตัวละครเอกทั้งสองก็สามารถต่อสู้ให้ได้มาซึ่งสิทธิเสรีภาพของตน และ
ในขณะเดียวกันทั้งสองได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรมเดิมของตนเองไว้ด้วย ตัวละคร
เอกหญิงของวอล์คเกอร์ต้องเผชิญปัญหาโดยตรงมากกว่าตัวละครเอกหญิงของคิงส์ตันซึ่งส่วนใหญ่
จะประสบปัญหาทางด้านจิตใจ นอกจากนั้นตัวละครเอกหญิงของวอล์คเกอร์ใช้กลยุทธ์ที่รุนแรง
และหลากหลายกว่าตัวละครเอกหญิงของคิงส์ตันซึ่งใช้กลยุทธ์การพูดเป็นส่วนใหญ่ ในความ
แตกต่างกันของตัวละครทั้งสองคนนี้ มีองค์ประกอบร่วมที่ช่วยให้สตรีซึ่งเป็นชนกลุ่มน้อยในสังคม
ได้มาซึ่งสิทธิเสรีภาพส่วนบุคคลได้ คือ สังคมที่มีสตรีเป็นผู้นำ กลุ่มพลังสตรี การศึกษา
ความสัมพันธ์อันดีในครอบครัว การตระหนักเรื่องวัฒนธรรม และการพึ่งตนเองด้านการเงิน