

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in the previous chapters, it can be concluded that there are two major factors for women's oppression, those are racial discrimination and male-dominance or patriarchal system.

*The Color Purple* tries to portray a general description of black American, especially black American women, during the first half of the twentieth century. In this period American society practically apply segregation or color line system in which the whites are to be superior and hold on supremacy over the colored. This kind of system has been unadvantageous for the colored people, the blacks in this case, and has given them a very complex impact. The whites not only dislike, even they try to hamper black's development in order to keep their supremacy, and what has happened to Celie's real father is a clear example. This condition is unseparated from black's historical background that they have been brought from Africa to America to be slaves, and although slavery has been abolished, the attribute of slave, at least the descent of slaves, remains to attach on them.

Racial discrimination has been the major obstacle

for black's self-development. They lose opportunities to gain a representative education causing them not to be able to survive against the whites in any fields of life. Such condition has placed blacks at the lower class in the society then they are considered to be inferior. Especially for black women, it has become the first major factor for their oppression.

The second major reason for black women's oppression is male-dominance or patriarchal system. Black women, in such situation actually need a kind of protection from black men but, ironically, the black men just oppress them both physically and sexually. In *The Color Purple*, the social setting is described that the society is to be to men's world. The women are merely "the product of system". Women are only viewed as object who have to passively obey what the men tell them to do, and accept what the men do to them without complaint. It, as if, becomes the unchanged truth and every women having such obedience is considered to be a good woman. This can be seen from the way Alphonso and Albert treat Celie. They tell Celie to work hard everyday and even make her to be their sexual object, as if she is not a human being but a working-slave and sexual slave. It is true that not all black women are like Celie but, in this novel, Celie is described to be in the most complete description of a black woman as a

reflection of black women's condition generally in the society during that time.

That not all black women are like Celie can be seen from the characterization of Sofia and Shug Avery. The two black women reject any kind of domination over themselves. They are going to fight against anything which tries to control them. Their attitude at that time, is considered to be something bad, deviant, and wrong by the society even by black women themselves generally. We can see that from Celie's attitude, at the beginning, that tends to blame Sofia.

Celie's realization about her true condition that she is actually dominated by men, is obtained from learning through Sofia, Shug, and Nettie. It constitutes a long process and takes a long time. This learning-process coincides with one of the feminist's claims that is a better education for women. With a good education women are expected to have a broader mind and capability to develop themselves. Celie's successful business is not separated from her broader new mind she gains after examining other worlds then comparing them with her own world so far. This indicates that women need to have as broad knowledge as possible.

Another important factor causing women's dependence is their economical dependence. If women can make money

is their economical dependence. If women can make money they are expected to be able to survive by themselves and they do not have to wait for men's decision because they should be able to decide anything for themselves. It is also a way to avoid or to reject male-domination over themselves. Celie's decision to leave Albert is caused more by her economical independence. This does not mean that women, with good education, have to work to make money but they are expected to be able to decide wisely whether they work or not. The basic point in this matter is that women have to have an opportunity and freedom to decide for themselves. Opportunity and freedom, in this case, coincide with another feminist's claim for woman-suffrage.

At the end of the story, a new characterization of Celie is to be an ideal black woman, that is a brave, tough, independent, full of love, and self-confident one. She is also cooperative with men indicating that men and women should be in a good relationship. However, Celie's changing-process is not in a simple way but in a long process with a hard struggle. She would apparently like to show women generally, and black women specially, an example of an ideal (black) woman and to say that to reach something, and anything, needs a struggle.