

> Colonization of women in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*

> A colonização da mulher em *A Cor Púrpura*, de Alice Walker

by Leila Almeida Barros

Docente do Centro de Ciências Humanas e da Educação na Universidade Estadual do Paraná - UNESPAR. Licenciatura em Letras Inglês. Email: leilalbarros@gmail.com. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0627-5713>.

by Raquel Silvano Almeida

Professora Adjunta da Universidade Estadual do Paraná - UNESPAR, campus Apucarana. Doutorado em Estudos da Linguagem pela Universidade Estadual de Londrina (UEL). Publicou, em 2020, o livro *Globalização do inglês: impactos mercadológicos e reflexos na formação de professores no Brasil*, pela Pontes Editores. Em 2022, organizou o livro didático digital *English Ebook: storyboards, tongue twisters, poems and didactic sequences*, com docentes da UNESPAR. É membro do Grupo de Pesquisa sobre Licenciaturas e Identidade Docente - GESID (Campus de Curitiba I da UNESPAR). Coordena o grupo de estudos *Technology in ELT*. Responsável pela coluna "Language & Culture" na Revista Contemporâneas da UFABC. Email: raquel.almeida@unespar.edu.br. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6771-5858>.

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide a comprehensive discussion of gender oppression and struggles in historically colonized cultures based on postcolonial literature. To this end, an analysis of the objectification and subjectification of women in Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple* (1985) is conducted. Concluding remarks will demonstrate how the black women characters in Walker's novel free themselves from the colonizing impositions of black men through female bonding, courage and perseverance.

Keywords: Postcolonial literature. *The Color Purple*. Gender oppression.

Resumo

A finalidade deste artigo é apresentar uma ampla discussão acerca da opressão de gênero e as lutas em culturas historicamente colonizadas a partir da literatura pós-colonial. Dessa forma, é realizada uma análise da objetificação e da subjetivação feminina no romance *A Cor Púrpura* (1985), de Alice Walker. Nas considerações finais, demonstra-se como as personagens mulheres negras do romance de Walker libertam-se das imposições colonizadoras dos homens negros por meio do vínculo feminino, da coragem e da persistência.

Palavras-chave: Literatura pós-colonial. *A Cor Púrpura*. Opressão de gênero.

> Artigo recebido em 25.02.2022 e aceito em 28.06.2022.

1. Introduction

American writer Alice Walker was born in Eatonton, Georgia, in 1944. Her poems, short stories, novels, and essays are best known for their insightful portrayal of black American culture.¹ Her epistolary novel *The Color Purple* was first published in 1982 and is Walker's best-selling novel to date, as well as her first Pulitzer Prize winner. In addition, this postcolonial, feminist work won both the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for Fiction just one year after its publication.

Structurally, the book can be divided into two parts, focusing on the unravelling of nearly forty years in the lives of sisters Celie and Nettie. Born and raised in rural Georgia, the black women struggle to cope in an environment where their bodies and minds are physically and psychologically abused on a daily basis. In the first part, Celie turns to God in carefully written and emotionally charged letters, showing the reader how entangled she is in a triple process of oppression, having been socially, financially and sexually objectified for most of her life. As for Celie's fundamental role in the novel, as Patricia Hill Collins puts it, it is only possible that the character, having found comfort in her letters addressed to God, can form significant bonds with other black women, whose voices eventually echo her written words in the character's epistolary communication:

Like Celie in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, some women write themselves free. [...] Sexually, physically, and emotionally abused, Celie writes letters to God when no one else will listen. The act of acquiring a voice through writing, of breaking silence with language, eventually moves her to the action of talking with others².

Thus, before moving on to a thorough description of the second part of the novel, it is vital to emphasize that *The Color Purple* also provides space for discussions of sexual politics of black women because of Celie's disclosure of her sexual abuse. In her essay "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (1978), Barbara Smith calls for "exploring how both sexual and racial politics and Black and female identity are inextricable elements in Black women's writing", which can be done through a systematic analysis of the first part of the epistolary novel. However, the focus of this study is on the analysis of Celie's sister, Nettie's story. In order to find love and respect and, ultimately, escape her sister's brutal fate of a loveless abusive marriage –, the character leaves the United States and goes to

¹ Merriam Webster's *Encyclopedia Of Literature*, 1995, p. 1178.

² Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 2000, p. 119.

Africa as a Protestant missionary. Nettie, as the reader gradually learns, goes from America to Africa as an assistant to a Protestant missionary couple, Samuel and Corrine, and their children Olivia and Adam. When they arrive in Africa—first in Dakar, Senegal—Nettie takes her first impressions of the people living there. She is intrigued with their black skin and with the large number of white French people who also live there. In Monrovia, they visit the presidential palace and have tea there. They also visit the cocoa fields, where Nettie notices that the African women work extremely hard and also carry their children on their backs. Afterwards, they head straight to the Olinka nation: first by ship, then, on foot. Therefore, Nettie's letters to her sister portray the second setting of the book: her daily life in Africa with the Olinka nation. By living with the Olinkas in Africa, Nettie manages to capture their cultural particularities through constant epistolary communication with her sister, while at the same time critically reflecting on them, which helps her find alternatives to free herself from a very strict patriarchal logic, and also help other women better navigate these constraints.

As Nettie lives among the Olinkas, she discovers the peculiarities of their costumes and traditions, and the way women are viewed and treated by their husbands and other males. Most of the women living there have only one husband: "A girl is nothing to herself, only to her husband can she become something the mother of his children"³. And not only that in a first conversation with one of the male members of the nation she learns that: "The Olinka don't believe in educating girls"⁴. Women could not go to school because primary education is only for male children. Being from the U.S., Olivia, Nettie's niece, is the only girl officially admitted to the school, as the *Olinkas* believe that younger and older girls must stay at home. When she meets Tashi, an Olinka girl whose parents disagree with Nettie's views on male/female education, the two girls begin a friendship that grows stronger over time.

Based on these considerations, the aims of this paper are: a) to analyze the objectification of women in the Olinka nation and their silenced voices; b) to get to know the transformation of the female characters (Nettie, Olivia, and Tashi) from an object to a subject status; c) to examine the female bonding in the Olinka in relation to Nettie, Olivia, Corrine, Tashi, and Catherine, as well as to the occurrence of female subversion to the multiple impositions and gendered

³ Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1985, p. 162.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 162.

expectation of society. To this end, we focus on the perspective of the events within the nation, and examine the objectification and subjectification of women in Olinka through the sixteen letters Nettie writes to her sister Celie.

2. Postcolonial insights into women's voices

Subjects who were forced to cope with European colonialism's constraints since the sixteenth century, as well as those who subsist as both witnesses and descendants of colonialism's aftermaths, as nineteenth and twentieth-century imperialism and twenty-first-century neocolonialism, suffer from a triple decentering process in terms of identity: a cultural, a social and a historical one.⁵ This can be understood as the result of a long-term restructuring process of social symbol systems which had taken place gradually but pervasively – particularly in African and Caribbean contexts – due to the various forced interactions between colonizers and colonized over the centuries. Single binary oppositions – such as culture/nature; civilized/wild; white/black; male/female; European/non-European – have historically and culturally been used as a means to offer systems of classification that contain and establish the boundaries between those who are included/absorbed into the colonial system and those marginalized by it. From these perspectives, it should be emphasized that one pole of the dichotomy is always defined as the norm, while the other is labeled as deviant, lowly and inferior.

Brazilian feminist researcher Lúcia Zolin notes that, in this sense, the works of male writers, explorers, scientists, and philosophers such as René Descartes and Jean-Paul Sartre, have contributed to perpetuate patriarchal societies, ultimately viewing men as the very nuclear pole from which women deviate – equating their otherness with resignation, passivity and objectification.⁶ Since the year of 1970, with Kate Millet's publishing of her doctoral thesis under the title *Sexual Politics*, it has become increasingly clear how women have also occupied secondary positions in literary representations which have traditionally been based on stereotypical and binary replications –

⁵ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths e Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, 2002, p. 14-26.

⁶ Lúcia Osana Zolin, "Crítica feminista", 2009, p. 217.

good/evil, moral/immoral, pure/seductive – aimed at serving male social and cultural domination at best.

María Lugones believes that gender, class, and race can still be seen as hallmarks of the worldwide capitalist system to which we are subjected, a system that has increased its power precisely by controlling and eliminating non-Western ontological views.⁷ Once a woman, especially in the case of a postcolonial subject, assumes the position of an engaged writer, it makes room for the unravelling of Eurocentric and phallogocentric tendencies that had served as the very foundation of past artistic expressions such as novels, short stories, and poems. Marked by difference and supported by nonessentialist views on identities, these emerging postcolonial or even decolonial women writers are constantly building, rebuilding and contesting symbolic systems under inherently ingrained relationships of power.

In this context, Cielo Griselda Festino emphasizes that once one is able to recognize the literary text as a social practice necessarily mediated by a situated context, awareness might also be raised to the fact that traditional concepts of literature/literary are not universal, but the very product of multiple and non-exclusive interactions between readers and texts within specific aesthetical epistemologies.⁸ In the deconstructionist philosopher Jacques Derrida's words, a literary work could be understood as "a place at once institutional and wild, an institutional place in which it is in principle permissible to put in question, at any rate to suspend, the whole institution"⁹. If, as female literary critics, the Derridean position of understanding the intertwining of these opposite and contradictory discourses within a single text as the very dismantling of the text itself is assumed, it becomes possible to envision, when analyzing a given literary work, the tireless hierarchic movements between hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses as ideological constructions which contain centers of meaning of which the entire fabric of Western thought is constituted.

The literary text must be perceived as both an individual and collective, local and global, oral and written source of sedimentation and reiteration of discourses, as well as a way of accessing a multiplicity of new collective meanings from the incorporation of black women's postcolonial voices and

⁷ María Lugones, "Rumo a um feminismo descolonial", 2014, p. 935.

⁸ Cielo Griselda Festino, "A Estética da Diferença e o Ensino das Literaturas de Língua Inglesa", 2014, p. 312.

⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Literature*, 1992, p. 58.

their historically neglected discursive worlds. Thus, it is possible to envision both Feminist and Postcolonial critiques as having a shared ultimate goal: challenging forms of oppression and exposing the worldviews that have been neglected or silenced throughout centuries. In accordance with the feminist and postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak:

The relationship between woman and silence can be plotted by women themselves; race and class differences are subsumed under that charge. Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effaced. [...] If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow¹⁰.

A fictional text such as Walker's *The Color Purple* has at its core the aim of destabilizing and resisting such reductionist views on pivotal gender attributions which have been by and large culturally and linguistically constituted, thus relegating the female subaltern to a double effacement in postcolonial conjunctures, by allowing Celie and Nettie to communicate and perpetuate their views in written words. The theoretical and critical implications of recent postcolonial and feminist readings on *The Color Purple* and its closely tackling of themes such as gender relations, gender oppression, and colonial subordination calls into question how reality or *the norm* have been artificially constructed, as well as laying bare the poles which have been assumed as *correct* or *true* at the expense of innumerable local and individual realities which ended up being left out.

3. African and U.S. women as an object in Walker's novel

This is how the Olinka nation is hit by colonization and its aftermaths: by the time the building of the road reaches the site of the nation in the middle of the forest, the Olinkas lose their rights to land and are forced to pay rent for it alongside with other questionable high taxes. When Nettie arrives, the whole territory belongs to a single rubber manufacturer from England. For that, the Olinkas' work consists of cutting down the old trees and planting rubber ones instead. Men go further away to find leisure, while women stay working in the fields, saying prayers and singing songs of love and farewell.

¹⁰ Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds*, 1987, p. 82-83.

It may be surmised that there are mainly two types of female objectification within the narrative: a) women who are considered objects, and b) women who consider themselves objects. Researches based on feminist criticism as this one must observe the relationship of women characters to their bodies and, more precisely, in the case of *The Color Purple*, of Black women with their own bodies, as well as those bodies' subjection to their societal configurations. Therefore, the novel calls its reader's attention to the historical objectification and dehumanization of Black women to Western thought by focusing both on the American and on the African context, while unveiling the double *otherness* status which has been imposed on women worldwide due to the combination of gender and race since time immemorial.

As already mentioned, Olinka women work in the cocoa fields carrying buckets and their children on their backs. As they do it, they sing, picking leaves and making the roof of their huts rainproof. Most of them are put to work for men's greed, having to handle all household chores by themselves while performing their jobs. Because her niece Olivia gets sick from the food prepared by any of the chief's wives, Nettie says: "It is as if Olivia fears the food from these wives because they all look so unhappy and work so hard"¹¹. Nettie also notices that they are all hard-working and self-sufficient in raising the crops and most of them are very industrious in their work, such as Catherine. When reporting this aspect to Celie, Nettie states: "It's true that I work harder here than I ever dreamed I could work, [...] but I don't feel like a drudge. I was surprised of this woman [who] saw me in this light"¹².

Therefore, an important dichotomy identified in the analysis revolves around male impositions *versus* women's silencing, especially when it comes to education; casual relationships; monogamy/polygamy; scarification; and women's own desires rejected by men. Nettie learns that Olinka women may be given to other men whenever their husbands are forced to go away. She also learns that the Olinkas do not believe girls should be educated, since they think they are nothing to themselves but to their husbands. Moreover, women were being forcefully sent by their male counterparts to white traders on a daily basis. As Nettie gets to know these women, who initially thought Corrine and her were both Samuel's wives, she realizes that polygamy is a much valued practice in there which benefits only the male, for each man had more than one wife. Still with

¹¹ Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1985, p. 163.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 162.

regard to marriage, the more boys an Olinka woman gives her husband, the more honored he is upon the Olinka's patriarchal tradition. Nettie soon realizes that, in a way, husbands had a life and death power over their wives: for instance, if they were accused of witchcraft or infidelity, they might as well be killed.

As Constância Lima Duarte points out, "the conditions of women's lives in the earlier centuries were those where women were always kept inside walls with no education, neither social lives"¹³. With the women of the Olinka nation it is not different. The story takes place around the 1920s when the entire African continent was still under European domination and black people were regarded as *slaves* of work and profit. For the Europeans, work was extremely important and to the Olinka male the female workforce had to be rigid and profitable. For men, the only way for women to show their importance and utility was through their hard work and fidelity to their husbands, as well as through their submissions to their husbands' impositions.

As it is clear now, the objectification of the female within the Olinka is centered on a solid patriarchal conjuncture in which what really matters is how much they are expected to satisfy men's desires according to their conceptions of the male and female roles in society. Because she is not married, Nettie is seen as an object of pity and contempt according to the Olinka's opinion. At the end of one of her letters, Nettie jokes with her sister about Tashi's father's opinion about her: "Good-bye until next time, dear Celie, from a pitiful, cast-out woman who may perish during rainy season"¹⁴.

Meanwhile, Nettie aims at teaching the little girl Tashi an alternative way of seeing herself as a woman: "The world is changing. It's no longer a world just for boys and men"¹⁵. In fact, when taking a closer look at Nettie, it is clear that in the story she tries to change the Olinkas' mindset on women multiple times, since she is aware of how far they are treated as objects as well as consider themselves to be objects within this conjuncture. Whenever she questions herself about the Olinkas' ideas on the matter, the same answer is given: the reason why women cannot be educated is because they serve the purpose of catering to men's needs.

¹³ Constância Lima Duarte, "Literatura feminina e crítica literária", 1990, p. 74.

¹⁴ Alice Walker, *Op. Cit.*, 1985, p. 167-168.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 166.

Being Nettie conscious of the female rule as an object, her character has an important role in constantly bringing out this matter to the reader's attention.

The young girls Olivia and Tashi both bring about the reactions that a patriarchal conjuncture is supposed to cause upon them through its many imposing social practices: fear and uncertainty with regard to the future and, mainly, a very strong desire to set themselves free from these constraints. Catherine, Tashi's mother, despite her minor role, turn up in the story in order to reinforce once again that women are seen as mere objects of work and pleasure. Catherine had given her husband five boys only to come to the conclusion that, for the Olinkas, Nettie and her shared Samuel in polygamy. Through Nettie's words to her absent sister, the reader learns that Catherine, a black woman living under several imposed conditions, had always been one of her husband's most hardworking wives: "Catherine is the most industrious of all Tashi's father's widows. It is in work that women get to know and care about each other"¹⁶.

Tashi, besides not being allowed to go to school, feels unable to be fully loved by her father just because she was born a girl, even though she "works harder than most girls her age. And is quicker to finish her work"¹⁷. When her father dies, she becomes conscious of this: "All her young life she has tried to please him, never quite realizing that, as a girl, she never could"¹⁸. Since her miserable life has been controlled by a strict hierarchy which one benefits men, Tashi has always done everything to obey her father's will and several impositions.

Although, in Nettie's words, an Olinka girl never talked about her private parts to her mother – "If you talk to an Olinka girl about her private parts, her mother and father will be annoyed"¹⁹ –, the Olinka women kept practicing the facial scarification ceremony and the rite of female initiation and mutilation, which was considered to be a pivotal initiation ceremony into the realm of the adult Olinka female life. Missionaries did not approve the Olinka's ritual of genital mutilation in their women, but Nettie reveals that Tashi felt pressured to practice that rite as a way of showing her nation she was still an original Olinka woman, one not corrupted by Eurocentric views on African bodies.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 172.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 166.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 171.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

On that matter, Walker states in her critical book *Anything We Love Can Be Saved* (1997) that even though she had heard for the first time about the practice of female genital mutilation in a trip to Kenya, East Africa, back in 1966, it took her decades to address the issue fictionally.²⁰ The cultural practice, which has for centuries been a chief aesthetic, religious, and social component in Africa, especially in sub-Saharan areas, is commonly taken as a pivotal rite of passage in one's life, such as puberty or marriage. To Nettie's view, in one of her letters to her sister, the act initially gives Tashi and her nation their marked identity back, one which Colonialism had been successfully trying to erase: "It's a way the Olinka can show they still have their own ways. [...] Tashi didn't want to do it, but to make people feel better, she's resigned"²¹.

With the arrival of the female missionaries in the nation, the little girl acquires a more *eye-opening* posture to her own condition as an Olinka woman. As Olivia and Tashi become friends, going to school together and sharing their secrets and ways of seeing life, Nettie reports to her sister:

Tashi's mother and father were just here. They are upset because she spends so much time with Olivia. She is changing, becoming quiet and too thoughtful, they say. She is becoming someone else; her face is beginning to show the spirit of one of her aunts who was sold to the trader because she no longer fit into village life. This aunt refused to marry the man chosen for her. Refused to bow to the chief. Did nothing but lay up, crack cola nuts between her teeth and giggle²².

By spending afternoons with Olivia and Nettie, Tashi learns a new way of living, one which "she will never live"²³. As Nettie told Catherine her daughter was able to become someone else – "Tashi is intelligent", I said. 'She could be a teacher. A nurse. She could help the people in the village'"²⁴ –, she reflected upon her own objectification within that conjuncture, while realizing that Tashi's journey could be different from hers: "When I went to visit her she made it very clear that Tashi must continue to learn"²⁵. After the death of her husband, Catherine manages to set herself free from some of the many impositions forced upon her as a woman subjected to those nation's rules and heritages. As a widow, she does not expect to get married anymore, since she has already honored her husband in life and death: "She is still in mourning and sticking close to her hut,

²⁰ Alice Walker, *Anything We Love Can Be Saved*, 1997, p. 39

²¹ Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1985, p. 245.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 166.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 167.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 167.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 172.

but she says she will not marry again (since she already has five boy children she can now do whatever she wants. She has become an honorary man”²⁶.

Once reading the passages from the book concerning Tashi and Catherine, it is notable the influence of Nettie’s voice upon the transformations of both mother and daughter. The relationship of Nettie and Olivia with locals Tashi and Catherine reveals the many layers of female objectification and silencing through female bonding and a vivid communion of perspectives. Through oral and written sharing and debating, pivotal feelings, ideas and behaviors change in those female characters once they create a microcosmic American and African female community in Olinka lands.

4. Concluding remarks

At the beginning of the narrative, Nettie is portrayed as a miserable girl who lives with her family in rural Georgia, and is disregarded by society, even though she is an exceptionally bright girl in school. After being separated from her recently married sister Celie, she becomes a member of the Protestant church by working as a babysitter for a missionary couple going to Africa. From then on, Nettie also undergoes a significant process of change. Living with the Olinkas, she learns about their cultural practices and beliefs in detail. As dealing with the Olinka's dominant viewpoint, which considers her to be a *cast-out* and a *pitiful woman*, subjected to the condition of a female missionary, Nettie starts to change her point of view about religion as well. In one of her letters to Celie she says that being in Africa for so many years has changed her mind on her concept of God: “Most people think he has to look like something or someone [...], but we don’t”²⁷.

Since leaving America, Nettie has changed her understanding of the world and of herself. During her process of change, she is accompanied by two young female characters: Olivia and Tashi. Since we have already dealt with Tashi, we would like to emphasize that in Nettie’s letters to Celie, she states that once living with the Olinkas, she expected her niece Olivia to learn a variety of things which might have helped her build her own concept of being a woman (womanhood) in another patriarchal configuration. In Nettie’s talks to Tashi's father about the close friendship between the girls not being accepted by the Olinkas, it is

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 171.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 264.

interesting to note how Nettie sees Olivia's living in the village as something important to her own life experience, as it would help the girl draw her own conclusions about the many ways women are objectified in different societies.

At the end of *The Color Purple*, Nettie and Samuel marry, while Olivia and Tashi continue their friendship by playing and learning together, as girls in Olinka are eventually allowed to attend school and receive a formal education. Although Tashi has changed her mind about some of the values of women in her society, Nettie reports that she still wants to undergo scarification, to prove that she is a true *Olinka*. Tashi disappears from the community for a few days and upon her return reveals several scars on her face that finally identify her as an integral part of both her macro (African) and micro cultural life (the Olinkas). After Nettie's constant encouragement and through female bonding, the young girls Tashi and Olivia are able to change their views regarding their social, cultural and gender identities.

As proposed at the outset, the second part of the novel was analyzed in terms of the three subjects who are fictional representatives of the women who are silenced and subjugated in both African and American nations. Some of the women's reactions to these multiple ideological, cultural and physical oppressions are consistent with Spivak's idea that:

Women in many societies have been relegated to the position of 'Other', marginalized and, in a metaphorical sense, 'colonized', forced to pursue guerilla warfare against imperial domination²⁸.

Thus, the rules imposed by the two patriarchal conjunctures state that the female is not considered a subject, but uniquely and exclusively an object which must always be available to men's will. In this sense, having had their autonomies denied, women are metaphorically colonized by men. When it comes to African societies, such as the fictional Olinka which indeed had been forcefully colonized in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although both male and female subjects are endowed with this marginalized *otherness* status, once women have historically belonged to the opposite sex, a double *otherness* stigma is at stake in here. In the essay "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" (1983), Walker focuses on displaying how Afro-American writers have been relegated to a double *otherness* status by having been historically denied, due to slavery and racism, their literacies and basic decencies, let alone the right to explore their creative

²⁸ Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds*, 1987, p. 45.

lives in a room of their own. In *The Color Purple*, Nettie, Catherine, Olivia and Tashi—who have been historically subjected to this double *otherness* status and who are constantly oppressed by their surrounding male counterparts—are strategically subversive in questioning and trying to break free from such restraints through their intergenerational Black female bonding.

References

ASHCROFT, Bill; GRIFFITHS Gareth; TIFFIN, Helen. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.

COLLINS, Patricia Hill. *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

DERRIDA, Jacques. *Acts of Literature*. New York and London: Routledge, 1992.

DUARTE, Constância Lima. "Literatura feminina e critica literária". In: GAZOLLA, Ana Lúcia Almeida. *A Mulher na literatura*. Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 1990, p. 70-79.

FESTINO, Cielo Griselda. A Estética da Diferença e o Ensino das Literaturas de Língua Inglesa. In: *Gragoatá* —, n. 37, p. 312-330, dez. 2014. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.uff.br/gragoata/article/view/33000>. Acesso em: 20 out. 2020.

LUGONES, María. Rumo a um feminismo descolonial. *Revista Estudos Feministas*. Florianópolis, v. 22, n. 3, 2014, p. 935-952, set. 2014. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/ref/article/view/36755/28577>. Acesso em: 21 fev. 2020.

WALKER, Alice. In: *MERRIAM Webster's Encyclopedia Of Literature*. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. Springfield, Massachusetts, 1995.

SMITH, Barbara. Toward a Black Feminist Criticism. In: *The Radical Teacher*, New York, n.7, 1978, p. 20-27. Disponível em: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/20709102>. Acesso em: 04 jul. 2022.

SPIVAK, Gayatri. *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*. London: Methuen, 1987.

WALKER, Alice. *The Color Purple*. New York: Pocket Books, 1985.

WALKER, Alice. *Anything We Love Can Be Saved: A Writer's Activism*. New York: TheBallantine Publishing Group, 1997.

WALKER, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*. New York: Harvest Books, 2004.

ZOLIN, Lúcia Osana. "Crítica feminista". In: ZOLIN, Lúcia; BONNICI, Thomas (orgs.). *Teoria Literária: Abordagens históricas e tendências contemporâneas*. Maringá: Eduem, 2009, p. 217-242.

Referência para citação deste artigo

BARROS, Leila Almeida; ALMEIDA, Raquel Silvano. Colonization of women in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. **Revista PHILIA | Filosofia, Literatura & Arte**, Porto Alegre, volume 4, número 1, p. 350 – 363, setembro de 2022.