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J M Coetzee Special Issue

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Dear Readers and Contributors,

It was a thought that refused to leave me from the moment the journal was started. The thought is to have a special issue exclusively for the works of J M Coetzee. But, then it was just a budding journal learning its first faltering steps. Now, IJELLS is an established and recognised body of research. The time seemed right for starting to trot. This J M Coetzee special issue was something of a trot in that direction. For the first time, we have ventured to go for a print version to understand how the logistics would work out.

I have taken the sole responsibility to edit this issue as J M Coetzee's work is a major part of my PhD thesis. When I was reading *Waiting for Barbarians*, I had to put down the book many times, to take a small walk, to recover from the all-gripping narrative. But the small walk led me back to the book.

This is one among many series that I am going to edit on various major contributors to English Literature. Kindly pour in with your suggestions and remember that all the errors that might have crept into the volume are all mine!

Happy Reading!

Dr. Mrudula Lakkaraju
Editor, J M Coetzee Special Issue
IJELLS

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Display of Psychosomatic Scenario in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Anju E R

Conflict is a situation in which people, group or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument. During the post-apartheid period, violence increased significantly in South Africa. Incidents of car stealing increased and many commercial farmers either emigrated or gave up farming because of violence committed against them. From 1989 to 1994, the murder rate doubled and a young South African woman could be expected to be raped twice in her life time on average. The changing landscape encouraged many of the wealthier South Africans to move into gated communities. Whites, however innocent, can be victims of black revenge. As a result of these atrocities, conflicts arose among the races to the people in family. People even suffered from inner conflicts within them.

Coetzee in his novel *Disgrace* focuses mainly on the life and character of the protagonist David Lurie. Lurie teaches communication at the Cape Technical University. The opening chapter of the novel introduces him as a man of 52yrs and twice divorced. So he leads a solitary life and this is the reason for conflict in his life. In order to escape from the loneliness and the struggles of his life, he seeks pleasure through satisfying his physical desires sexually. Every Thursday afternoon, he visits a woman who calls herself Soraya for professional purposes. They make love at a leisurely place. He spends ninety minutes with her and pays R. 400. He is content for another week. But these pleasures he experience are temporary. They make him more sorrowful in life and never give him peace and happiness. He shares with his daughter Lucy that, "I wasn't made for marriage" (69), and he reveals his failure and conflict in marriage life. Lurie further says, "Every woman I have been close to has taught me something about myself" (70). According to Lurie, Soraya is a loose woman and he trusts her within limits.

Being a Professor of communications, he teaches his students the idea that, "Human Society has created language in order that we may communicate our thoughts, feelings and intentions to each other" (3-4). But in his real life there is lack of communication and between other characters in the novel and this gives rise to conflicts in his life. The novel explores the difficulty of communication between men and women, between parents and children and between humans and animals. Lurie cannot speak about the attack on his daughter, Lucy, because she says that he will never understand what happened to her. He turns to other forms of communication: first, he tries to find a way to commune with animals, which can sense subtle, non-verbal emotions; at the same time, he attempts to write an opera about the poet Lord Byron, told from the perspective of Byron's Mistress Teresa. Lucy is portrayed in the novel as a sturdy settler and her existence gets subsequently crushed. So she states that she will not want, "to come back in

another existence and be a dog or a pig" (74) in the society surrounding her. She resolves to, "live like a dog" (74) at the end of the disgraceful dismantling of her life.

The mental agony and problems in the life of a man may give rise to conflicts in his inner-self. The protagonist Lurie experiences such inner struggles within himself. The conflicts in Lurie's family and professional life lead him to develop a mental agony within himself. The main reason behind his inner struggle is his lack of communication and having none to share his thoughts and feelings. He once says, "But if not to her, then who can he speak" (69). The question about Lurie, "Is he happy?"(2), in spite of his sophisticated life and reputed position make a reflection of his mental struggle. Lurie works on a project about Byron and through Byron, he tries to portray his own distressed life and situations. The inner conflicts within Lurie drive him away from the knowledge and recognition of real situation. In the case of Melanie, he struggles to accept the fact that Melanie complains against him.

The life with his daughter Lucy in the Eastern Cape makes him to accept a new system of life with farm and animals rather than with students and classroom. He accepts his new life in country "as reparation for past misdeeds" (77). He even tries to identify with the dogs in Lucy's house. He tickles the ear of a dog and says sadly, "Abandoned are we"(78). He experiences a higher tension within himself, when he was unable to save his daughter from the three intruders who raped her. Finally Lurie serves to work in Bev Shaw's clinic and helped Bev to put unclaimed, unwanted or unwell animals to sleep. A dog with a bad back leg claims Lurie as his master, following him around and wagging his tail while he plays the banjo. In the last part of the book, Lurie decides to get the job and have him lethally injected along with the others. He justifies this act by saying that he has relieved the dog from the disgraceful situation of the world. As a way to escape the inner conflicts, he wishes to encounter death in his life. Lurie never forgets the last chorus in Oedipus, "Call no man happy until he is dead" (2).

Like other post-apartheid novels, *Disgrace* portrays racial conflict that prevailed in South Africa during the post-apartheid period. The novel begins in the far western reaches of South Africa in Cape Town, where Lurie has been Professor at the University. Cape Town was generally considered to be the part of 'White' South Africa during apartheid period. In *Disgrace*, the situation is more developed and cosmopolitan. When Lurie leaves to go to visit Lucy in Salem, he has headed to a completely different part of the country, the Eastern Cape, which was long considered to be the part of 'Black' South Africa and where the Bantustans were established.

When Lurie goes from Cape Town to Eastern Cape, he is not just leaving the city and entering the country. But he is also travelling from a place that is secure for him with fewer racial tensions to a place where for decades systematized segregation has oppressed its inhabitants and informed their political views, their life styles and perhaps most importantly their opinion of others. Lurie the formerly a well respected professor from the

Technical University of Cape Town, undergoes a development which leaves him as a mad old man sitting among the dogs, singing to himself, and invests his last saving and continuing his work as an undertaker.

Quite contrary to the changes in Lurie's life, an assistant on his daughter's smallholding in rural South Africa, Petrus, undergoes the life of changes throughout the story. The narrator illustrates this by introducing him as "the dog-man" (64). But life is on the upswing for the dog-man. Being able to own his own land in New South Africa, Petrus undergoes a transformation and finally declares, "I am not anymore the dog man" (129). In order to illustrate the positive development Petrus undergoes, Coetzee portrays him as, "the gardener and the dog man" (64), during his first conversation with Lurie. This description of Petrus signals his inferiority. Lucy who introduces him as an assistant to her and Lurie now exclaim the same Petrus as her own master by appointing him as the farm manager. Thus Petrus clearly climbs up on the social ladder and becomes what a black could not become under the strict apartheid regime, an independent farmer with his own arable lands. By attaching the label the dog man first to the uprising Petrus and then to the stumbling Lurie, Coetzee illustrates perfectly how one can perceive the role reversal the past decade has brought about among the races in South Africa.

Lurie, at the Cape Town University College also offers a course on the Romantic Poets. He illustrates the greatness of his profession in the following words, "He continues to teach because it provides him with a livelihood, also because it teaches him humility, brings it home to him who he is in the world" (5). Lurie notices a girl by name Melanie Isaacs from his Romantics course. To him she is, "not the best student but not the worst either: clever enough but unengaged" (11). Lurie gets fascinated and attracted towards her. She ignites his interest and he finds something to be passionate about. Lurie invites Melanie to his place and the whole intrigue begins. Once they start having sex, he finds the passion that has been lacking in his life and for a while he is on the top of the world. Ryan, Melanie's boyfriend, shows up telling Lurie what he has done, is wrong. Soon the whole University is at excitement and is in the state of dilemma. This is because Melanie files a complaint against Lurie, who can't believe what is happening. A pamphlet is slipped under his office during the Rape Awareness Week at University, bearing the messages, "WOMEN SPEAK OUT"(43) and "YOUR DAYS ARE OVER CASANOVA" (43).

A committee has been set up to investigate the whole complaint filed against Lurie. Even though the committee sincerely wants to help Lurie; he decides not to give in and refuses to offer an apology to the public. He also rejects the prepared draft statement the committee offers for this purpose. This act of Lurie reflects his stubbornness and makes it clear that no one is to blame for his professional fall from grace but he himself. He loses his job, his name is maligned, his friends avoid him, and he hides out like a tortoise afraid to stick its neck out of its shell.

Family is one of the most important means through which the characters of the novel supports and protects each other. *Disgrace* presents the family life through the father and daughter relationship. Lurie and Lucy portray a unique father daughter relationship from the beginning of the novel. Even though Lucy, being raised in a home of two academics, she has chosen a life of farmer and loves country life. Her livelihood comes from the sale of flowers and vegetables and the housing of dogs on her farm land. As a white lesbian woman, she lives by herself in Salem. Lurie on the other hand lives in Cape Town. His livelihood comes not from the work of his hands but from the generation of ideas. He has written three books and currently hopes to compose an opera about Byron. These two, Lurie and Lucy, cannot be more different, yet they both find themselves caught in devastation that forever changes their lives. Having lost his job, Lurie goes to stay with Lucy at Eastern Cape. Lurie rediscovers his role as a father to Lucy both when she welcomes him into her home and when he finds that he has no choice but to take care of her after being raped.

During Lurie's visit to Lucy, she acts as an adviser to her father than as a dutiful loving daughter, "She reminds him about not wasting water, about not contaminating the septic tank" (61). She even advises him to help Bev Shaw and says, "You will have to do it out of the goodness of your heart" (77). Lurie thus lives a life as if in the way ordered by his dearest daughter. The peace of the country does not last for long. As Lucy and Lurie take some of the dogs for a walk, they encounter three interlopers on the road who ask to use their phone. Lucy makes the mistake of putting the dogs up in the kennel and within moments the men have taken Lucy into the house and locked the door behind them. Lurie is knocked unconscious by a blow to the head. Lucy is raped by the three men. Before they leave, the robbers shoot the dogs in the kennel, ransack the house, set Lurie on fire and steal his car. Lucy refuses to report this incident to the police. The crime committed by the three who used her like dogs in a pack, crushes Lucy's confidence and happiness. Lurie cannot understand why Lucy does not want to lay real charge against the intruders and shows no interest in pressing Petrus for answers concerning his probable involvement. This results in a conflict between Lucy and her father. When Lurie asks her to file a complaint, she says, "Don't shout at me, David. This is my life. I am the one who has to live here. What happened to me is my business, mine alone, not yours, and if there is one right I have it is the right not to be put on trail like this, not to have to justify myself-not to you, not to anyone else" (133).

The bond of love between them further loosens when Lurie tries to hit Pollux, a boy among the three rapists at the party arranged by Petrus. The conversation of Lurie with Bev Shaw portrays the nature of relationship existed between Lucy and her father, "Between Lucy and myself? Nothing, I hope. Nothing can't be fixed. The problem is with the people she lives among. When I am added in, we became too many. Too many in small a space. Like spiders in a bottle" (209). Lurie further imagines, "What will it entail being a grandfather? As a father he has not been much of a success, despite trying harder than most. As a grandfather he probably scores lower than average too" (217).

Like the racial conflict between the Whites and the Blacks, the novel also depicts the conflict existed between the male and female characters in the novel. The main character focused in the novel is Lurie, a man. The important question that arises on the heart of the novel through the character Lurie is, "what is it exactly that makes a man a man?" (Kossew. 159.) In *Disgrace* Coetzee pushes the readers to look at something of the more complicated issues that spring from masculinity, particularly through the ways the male characters treat female characters. When Petrus says that he wants his first born to be a boy, he explains that boys should show the girls the proper way to behave. This shows an attitude about masculinity in opposition to femininity. The incident of Lucy's rape by three intruders shows how masculinity can be used as a means of suppressing femininity.

The women characters in the novel, Melanie, Lucy and Bev Shaw portray the experience of women and the distinct ways they are treated by men. Lurie during his conversation with Melanie puts forward his view of women, "A woman's beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings to the world. She has a duty to share it." (16) Bev on the other hand is plain but she is wise, motherly and experienced. Lurie's perspective of having sex with Bev is out of pity. Lucy emerges as a strong and forthright woman. She brings a different quality to the table in terms of sexuality. She is a lesbian. She hates depending on man and wishes to lead a happy independent life. But her life becomes desperate when she is violently raped by three men. When Lurie enquires her about the reason for why she decided to have the child of one of those intruders, Lucy says, "I am a woman" (198). This proves her as a lesbian and her feminine voice turns the masculine nature in the novel.

Often the conflicts may result to violence. In *Disgrace* also the conflicts by various ways result in the act of brutal violence. The conflict in race results in the gang rape of Lucy and it changes the life of Lurie and Lucy. The conflict in the life of Lurie makes him wander in loneliness and displeasure throughout his life. The conflict within himself in Lurie makes him to identify himself with that of a wounded dog. The conflicts in the profession of Lurie results in disgrace and lose of job. The conflict that have existed between Lurie and his daughter, results in break in the pure and sacred relationship between them. In whole the conflicts in *Disgrace* presents the result of stealing, execution, murder of animals and human beings and sexual harassment.

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J. M. Coetzee's *Dusklands*: A Psychological Novel

Archana Singh

John Maxwell Coetzee, a novelist, essayist, linguist, translator and above all the recipient of the 2003 Nobel Prize in literature. He is a writer of South Africa origin and in all his writings; there are glimpses of effects of racism and colonial oppression. *Dusklands* (1974) is his debut novel, divided into two parts, first one, "The Vietnam Project" and the second one is "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee", the first, an American military psychologist's report of propaganda efforts during the Vietnam War, the second, an early Dutch South African explorer's report of a journey into the unknown regions of the continent. In the opinion of Dr. Paul, "This novel is a presentation and critique of the violence inherent in the colonialist and imperialist mentality of the Western world."¹ Eugene Dawn is the protagonist of the first part "The Vietnam Project" of the novel, whose mind is the platform, on which the story develops. This novel should be analysed as a psychological novel. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, psychological novel is a work of fiction, in which the thoughts, feelings and motivations of the characters are of greater or equal interest than is external action of the narrative. In a psychological novel the emotional reactions and internal states of the characters are influenced by and in turn trigger external events in a meaningful symbiosis. The emphasis on the inner life of characters is a fundamental element of a vast body of fiction.

American military involvement was increasing in Vietnam, in early 1965, an open war broke and America had deployed 148,300 troops in Vietnam. When J. M. Coetzee was studying Literary Criticism and Linguistics there was an atmosphere of war and hatred all around him. "In *Dusklands*, Coetzee exposes the white writing of Eighteenth century colonial history and the mythological use of this history by the 'fathers' of South Africa."² In *Dusklands*, "The Vietnam Project" opens with a quotation from Herman Kahn, the former Rand Corporation consultant,

*....films of fighter-bomber pilots visibly exhilarated by successful napalm bombing runs on Viet-Cong targets, react with horror and disgust. Yet it is unreasonable to expect the U.S. Government to obtain pilots who are so appalled by the damage they may be doing that they cannot carry out their missions or become excessively depressed or guilt-ridden.*³

Above statement becomes the major theme of the novel *Dusklands*. Eugene Dawn, the protagonist is a psychologist in the novel who has to prepare a report on the use of propaganda in Vietnam. The novel is completely in the Stream of Consciousness technique where the continuous flow of Eugene's thoughts and its variation is depicted. The novel begins with, "Coetzee has asked me to revise my essay." (*Dusklands*, 4) Coetzee is the boss of Eugene in the novel and he suggests him to change some part of his report as it should be suggestive rather than authoritative keeping in view the readers of the report who are

actually army people. Though his boss appreciates his writing, "I enjoyed reading your first chapters. You write well. It will be a pleasure to be associated with so well-finished a piece of research." (*Dusklands*, 8) and further praises his work by saying that "For my part, I find mythography fascinating and I think it has a great future. But don't you perhaps misread your audience?" (*Dusklands*, 11) In the novel, the novelist clarifies the dark side of the warfare and that it leaves negative impact on the psyche of the human beings and enhances their negativity. Negativity is a pessimistic attitude that always expects the worst and it's a tendency to be downbeat, disagreeable and skeptical. While working on the issue of psychoanalysis of war affected people, Eugene's negativity is so enhanced that he cannot take the positive side of his boss' remarks and thinks that his boss lacks vision and intelligence, "He fears vision, has no sympathy for passion or despair." (*Dusklands*, 8) and not only this but Eugene thinks to the extent, that his boss wants to dismiss him from the job, "Sentences are queuing behind his neat red lips. I will be dismissed, and dismissing according to form." (*Dusklands*, 9) Eugene is so much embedded with the negativity that he smells conspiracy everywhere against him. See his words at the moment of despair, "Coetzee hopes that I will go away. The word has been passed around that I do not exist. His secretary smiles her grave smile and looks down. But I do not go away. If they refuse to see me I will become the ghost of their corridors, the one who rings the telephone, who does not flush the toilet." (*Dusklands*, 42) Defending his writing, Eugene says; "As you know from your dealings with them, the military are, as a class - to put it frankly - slow-thinking, suspicious, and conservative, convincing them of something new is never easy." (*Dusklands*, 9)

J. Hoffman writes, "The stream of consciousness technique is characterized by the most intimate thoughts, those which lie nearest the unconscious; in its nature it is a speech which precedes logical organization, reproducing the intimate thoughts just as they are born and just as they come."⁴ The stream of thought is focused on one part of its object and it selects rejecting many things. In the continuation of the chain of thoughts, Eugene, who selects only negative aspects of everything, now thinks of his married life and suspects that his wife Marilyn is not loyal with him and she is having an affair with someone and also their son is not his son but 'her child' and says that their conversation always disturbs him. Despite the fact that he loves his wife very much, he suspects her having affair with someone and whenever he hugs her, he sniffs at her, trying to catch the scent of another man.

"Coetzee is able to critique warfare and its effect on the human psyche. Coetzee uses the characters' distorted psychology to illustrate that humans must dissociate from reality in order to carry out acts of violence without conscience. This dissociation comes in the form of desensitization, self-absorption and delusion of grandeur, inflated sense of purpose and lack of empathy."⁵ Rosemary Gray is of the opinion that, "The novel reinforces the ideas that history repeats itself and that civilized man is naturally parnicious."⁶ Even his wife, Marilyn is of the opinion that owing to his involvement in the Vietnam Project, her husband is lacking all his soft feelings for their child as well as for his

wife and becoming violent. "She lives in the hope that...my psychic brutalization will end with the end of the war and the Vietnam Project, that reinsertion into civilization will tame and eventually humanize me." (*Dusklands*, 14) Coetzee, the novelist is successful in sketching the character of Eugene to show the dark side of the warfare and its effect on the human psyche. Eugene is not only suspicious but also takes pleasure in the violent acts. The most brutal example of Eugene's violent act is that when he stabs his son and in a very cool way describes the killing of his son, "Holding it like a pencil, I push the knife in. The child kicks and flails. A long, flat ice-sheet of sound takes place." (*Dusklands*, 42)

Despite all the negativity, Eugene has some qualities which he wants to be acknowledged and appreciated by the people. Eugene is directed by his boss to rewrite his report and he prepares the report in the library. Whenever he is surrounded by the books he feels the closest to happiness, an "intellectual happiness". The library clerk, Harry, gets angry if people don't keep the books in order and Eugene always keeps the books in orderly form, for this, he hopes that the clerk should appreciate him. "I like to think, too, that the tasks I steep myself in the afternoon are such as he would approve of if understood." (11) He is also very orthodox about his face direction while preparing the report. He sits in a particular direction. He likes to work only in the early hours of morning. "My creative spasm comes only in the early hours of the morning when the enemy is too sleepy to throw up walls against the forays of my brain." (*Dusklands*, 11)

Before readers get to know about Eugene's personal life, Eugene talks about the Vietnam report that he is preparing and around which the story revolves. The report is very frightening though real and has a rational feel. "There is a military air-war with military targets; there is also a political air-war whose purpose is to destroy the enemy's capacity to sustain himself psychically." (*Dusklands*, 35)

We live no longer by tiling the earth but by devouring her and her waste product. We signed our repudiation of her with flights toward new celestial loves. We have the capacity to breed out of our own head. When the earth conspires incestuously with her son, should our recourse not be the arms of the goddess of techne who springs from our brains? (*Dusklands*, 34)

Second part of J. M. Coetzee's novel *Dusklands* is "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee", which is set in the 18th century South Africa. Again this part of the novel has been written in the Stream of Consciousness technique, where a bigoted Dutch farmer Jacobus Coetzee shares his experiences with the readers about the native tribes of South Africa, Hottentots, while he hunted game and secured footholds for the empire. Jacobus is of the view that Hottentots have not fully submitted themselves to the Dutch colonists. This part of the novel has been divided into five sections. "This part is accompanied by a framing device, a preface by a presumed translator, J. M. Coetzee and an afterword by a South African academic historian, S. J. Coetzee. This framing device directs our attention to the ongoing propagation of the Afrikaner master myth of history."⁷

When Jacobus Coetzee with his followers goes to the interior of South Africa to the Great Namaqua, they see the tribes of that land and for those tribals these white men are aliens. In the words of Jacobus Coetzee, "No longer can you get a truthful answer to a simple question, his only study is in how to placate you, and that means little more than telling you what he thinks you want to hear.....They had never seen a white man." (*Dusklands*, 101) Suddenly, Jacobus Coetzee falls ill and has to submit himself to their care. They kept him in a menstruation hut for treatment. Jacobus feels humiliated and after getting well he goes to a pond to take bath and squeezes his wound to keep his wound green. Immediately out of extreme pain, he bites the ear of a boy who steals his clothes while he was taking bath. Francis Bacon, famous essayist observes in his essay *Of Revenge*, "A man that studieth revenge, keeps his wounds green, which otherwise would heal."⁸ By squeezing his pus-knob he does not want to forget the humiliation that he had to face while entering the village. There are many theories that drive people to seek revenge, one of them is that you need to be punished for what you did, and it is my responsibility to make sure you get punished. Ian Mckee writes, "People who are more vengeful tend to be those who are motivated by power, by authority and by the desire for status." He says. "They don't want to lose face."⁹ Same is the case with Jacobus who thinks of himself a God; "Perhaps on my horse and with the Sun over my right shoulder I looked like a god, a god of the kind they did not have yet." (*Dusklands*, 71) Thinking of himself like an 'equestrian status', he wanted to be welcomed by the chieftain but on the contrary, they humiliate him, hurt him and keep him in a menstruation hut for the treatment. He says. "I was being handled roughly. Rough men were lifting me, wrapped in blankets like a corpse. My hands were locked at my sides: my face was wept with weeping." (*Dusklands*, 90) After the biting incident people of Namaqua set him free. On the way back home he lost Klawer, his loyal servant. "I was alone. I had no Klawer to record. I exulted like a young man whose mother has just died.....I yodelled, I growled, I hissed, I roared, I screamed, I clucked, I whistled; I danced, I stamped, I grovelled, I spun; I sat on the earth, I spat on the earth, I kicked it, I hugged it, I clawed it." (*Dusklands*, 114) Unlike Eugene of "The Vietnam Project", he does not want to be appreciated or loved and says; "I love you too, God. I love everything....But God, don't let them love me. I don't like accomplices, God, I want to be alone." (*Dusklands*, 114) "I was casting off attachments." (*Dusklands*, 111) In this state of happiness, he compares himself with a black beetle, "If you block every path, or if you pick him up, he will curl his legs under his body and feign death. Nothing can trick him from this pretence." (*Dusklands*, 115) Jacobus finally arrives home but with an army of men he returns Namaqua village to take revenge. His men burn their huts and kill them brutally. Jacobus personally points out the persons who betrayed him and kills them and seems to relish in the act of killing.

"*The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee* comes with an afterword by S. J. Coetzee, the editor (it was once a foreword, the translator J. M. Coetzee says, but seemed to be more suitable as an afterword). In this afterword, S. J. Coetzee cannot help but reduce the narrative to a story about how Jacobus Coetzee went into the interior and discovered new rivers and

landmarks. The rest of the chilling narrative is irrelevant to him and, essentially, he passes it off as an idle curiosity.”⁹

One thing that is notable here that Jacobus takes revenge on the people of Namaqua who helped him while he was ill and cared for him, fed him but Jacobus did not like their hospitality because he thinks of their life as meaningless. It is only due to his feeling of supremacy over the African people. When speaking about killing the Hottentots: “I then pronounced sentence of death.” (*Dusklands*, 101) This statement shows that as a colonizer he got the control over the lives of others. He started thinking of himself as a ruler to dominate the colonized people of Africa. One more example when he falls upon an innocent lamb, “like God in a whirlwind I fell upon a lamb, an innocent little fellow who had never seen his master and was thinking only of a good night’s sleep, and slit his throat.” (*Dusklands*, 100) He gives himself psychological permission to exert power and violence over others.

Both the novellas are psychological study of the protagonists and the effect of warfare on their human psyche. In the first part of the novel, which is completely written in the Stream of Consciousness technique, readers can explore the mind of Eugene. In the second part of the novel, the protagonist is himself an explorer, “I am an explorer. My essence is to open what is closed, to bring light to what is dark.” (*Dusklands*, 126) In *The Vietnam Project*, the protagonist Eugene was of the opinion that his boss wanted to humiliate him and he was showing his power. On the other hand, in the second novella *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee*, the hero Jacobus was himself an epitome of power who exercised his power on Africans. But more or less the psychic condition of both the protagonists is same. They both become violent at the end of the story. It’s their negative conceptualizations that make both of them violent. Eugene’s boss has all the authorities to correct his subordinate or order him but its Eugene’s negative thinking and lack of confidence, compels him to feel insecure and he thinks, “He is going to reject me.” (*Dusklands*, 9) This negativity leads him to the violent deed of brutal killing of his own son. Jacobus, the protagonist of his second novella is an arrogant white man who looks down on all black Africans. This feeling of superiority heads him to take revenge on people who takes care of him while he was ill. Hence, both the novellas are very beautiful, analytical and intelligent journey in the minds of protagonists.

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Representation of Women in the novels *Things Fall Apart*, *A Grain of Wheat* & *Waiting For Barbarians*

Divya Choudhary

Research means a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. There are many types of research and one of them is descriptive research which is used in this paper. Liberation and increased literacy since most African nations gained their independence in the 1950s and 1960s; African literature has grown dramatically in quantity and in recognition, with numerous African works appearing in Western academic curricula and on "best of" lists compiled at the end of the 19th century (wikipedia). Women play variety of significant roles in our society from their birth till the end of life. Even after playing her all the roles and the entire job timely in efficient manner in the modern society, she is weak because men are still strongest gender of the society.

The objective of this research was to ascertain the role and the status of the women in the African society. Another objective was to know their perspective towards the society. How women look towards the society and how society look towards women. How they find difficulty to accept each other. What problems they face while they are fronting each other.

In simple words Literature is the mirror of society or we can say that literature is the mirror of our self and it reflects our thinking also. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose; it can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama; and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (Wikipedia). Simple definition of Literature is written works such as poems, plays and novels that are considered to be very good and to have lasting Importance. —Literature is a vital record of what we have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language... it is in life itself that we have to see the sources of literature..."

An Act to prohibit indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Representations of women in the media have developed and changed with time to reflect the cultural and sociological changes in society. However, female stereotypes continue to appear in some media texts. Representations of women are often defined by how men see women (termed the 'male gaze'), or by how society expects women to look and behave. Many representations of women concentrate

on sexuality and emotions. Others focus on their relationships with their children or romantic partners. (Representation of Gender)

Women's place in society is thought a lot in contemporary studies. As well in literature, women's representation is observed and criticized with feminist approach. Like most literature around the world, African literature also portrayed women in different shades. Incomplete and inaccurate female characters littered early African works.

Imperfect and inaccurate female characters marred early African works. The fact, like other literature, African literature was first written by men. Educated African men not only come from patriarchal society but were educated by colonizers, who in turn come from patriarchal society. Some feminist critics say that male African writers routinely depict their female characters in the category of a burdened and dominated wife who has little if any say in molding her destiny or transforming the system that withdraws and dominates her.

Feminist critics argue that male writers represent female characters as "defined by their relationships to men – someone's daughter or wife, or mother, shadowy figures who remain on the bounds of the plot, suckling babies, cooking, rooting their hair ... they fall into a particular category of female stereotypes of... men attachments, and prostitutes, or courtesans."

Female characters have not their own identity or story to be called or notable. But they are always showed as less daring than men and always in periphery. "Black male writers portray women as 'passive' mothers with no individuality no character or difficulties, accepting their circumstances and thus displaying no spirit of revolt or freedom." Male writers consistently portray "voiceless submissive and passive woman." But still in some cases, as a stereotype, the idea of an 'African dilemma' is there with representation of women. African women have to choose between being true to their traditional culture and acceptance the colonizing western culture and having equal rights is an interesting one.

The study of women characters, portrayed in African colonized literature is an interesting, with that, one can know human nature of colonizing, marginalizing or making other race gender religion subaltern. Does African culture do the same with their women? Do they also colonizing women? How is she portrayed in African literature, how is it capturing their woman characters and men's behaviour with them?

For that, three famous novels were picked, *Things Fall Apart*, *A Grain of Wheat*, and *Waiting for Barbarians*. The novelists of these novels are well-known and much popular. Let's see how woman is represented by these writers one by one.

***Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe**

In telling an African story, it is impossible to do so without mentioning the women who take part in many of the activities in a society. This is why different stories bring out women and their roles in the society although the stories may not be talking about a woman as the main character. *Things Fall Apart* is no different in bringing out the role of the women in a traditional African setting. (Role Of Women In Things Fall Apart)

One of the earlier and well-known writers is Chinua Achebe. His novel 'Things Fall Apart' is also famed one. He has been criticized for overlooking to represent women almost entirely. Many women in the novel are flat characters who are satisfied with repressive structures like polygamy like Okonkwo's wives. (He has multiple wives !) While critics judge Achebe for being too male-focused, there might be many ins and outs for this absence of female representation. One is that, person who reads are partially sighted the beliefs and occasions essentially from Okonkwo's point of view, who might be supposed to have superstitious gender visions by Ibo standards.

For example when he is sent to his mother's village, he cannot answer to his uncle why a common name and says "mother is extreme", Uchendu, his uncle, answers, "A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is distress and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is around to look after you. She is buried there that's why we say mother is extreme." In these words women, as mother are respected.

The portrayal of Okonkwo's daughter, Ezinma, is the only noticeable rounded female character in the novel. There is an indication in the novel which indicates that Achebe was showing absurd nature of a tough patriarchal society. Ezinma was intelligent enough to eventually run the family the way Okonkwo wanted. As Okonkwo says, "She has the right spirit".

Okonkwo is unable to think outside of his cultural paradigm, when Ezinma offers to carry Okonkwo's chair to the wrestling match, traditionally a boy's job, Okonkwo says, "No, that is a boy's job." Instead of finding a way to let Ezinma run the home, he only comments that, "she should have been boy."

It shows Achebe's deficiency in describing woman character in patriarchal world. Still there was not much female representation in the novel. It is important to realize that Achebe wrote this novel to justify his native culture, where women become victims, to European audiences, who were patriarchal themselves. Overall, with the exception of Ezinma, Achebe's female characters in the novel were not rounded or visible. In the novel, Okonkwo carries more space and female characters are marginalized in narrated patriarchal culture.

The name Agbala in the Ibo community means a woman or a title less man. In his early childhood, Okonkwo felt disrespected when called the name Agbala as the peers were teasing him and more so his father who was seen as a weakling. This really tormented him and made him become obsessed with consideration of social status above everything else. Okonkwo struggled so much never to be associated with anything weak as anything weak was likened to a woman and vice versa. Nwoye who is the son of Okonkwo from his first wife is also insulted by being viewed as woman-like just because Okonkwo is reminded of his father when he sees him. In this context we see the woman being looked down upon by the whole Ibo community as a weak being. The men who are not courageous and violent are also seen to be as weak as women meaning that the society's perception of women is that of a person who is not strong and is weak (Role Of Women In Things Fall Apart)

It is therefore, within this kind of community, for instance, that Achebe's Okonkwo is created. He is described as a fearless young man of great strength, whose fame is known across the nine villages and beyond as one, whose back has never touched the ground in any wrestling contest. As a result of these qualities, though "still young, he was already one of the greatest men of his time." The society had no time to waste with the womenfolk whose significant contributions to communal matters centered on singing and dancing during ceremonies. The women did not fit much into the heroic cadre of the society at that time and, therefore, were not subject of literary imagination or creativity. Indeed, in such a society, being a woman was like being sentenced to a life of insignificance and subsidiary existence. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Okonkwo's mother hardly exists while his father, Unoka, an efulefu or worthless man who has never cleared even a footpath of his own, receives a mention even if it was collocation to his son. (Muhammed)

***A Grain of Wheat* by Ngugi Wa Thiongo**

Ngugi Wa Thiongo is an internationally praised African writer and human rights activist. He has usually championed for the promotion of African women and other marginalized groups in African society.

A Grain of Wheat is political description talking about Mau Mau Kenyan movement placed in forest. The movement included both men and women against British colonizers. Women played extraordinary role directly or indirectly in that rebellion. Ngugi pays respect to these women and celebrates their boundless sacrifices, their contribution and struggle for freedom of the native land in this novel, *A Grain of Wheat*.

The novel describes daring women as providing the undistinguishable support to the movement. The writer also made use of traditional African values of womenfolk to fight with the opponents. Wambui, the major character in the novel, is a model of the

resistant woman during emergency; she carried secrets from the villages to towns. Incident of Wambui and policeman is very significant in portraying her character.

Charles A. Nama argues that, "Ngugi's protagonists occupy a special place in his fiction, especially with respect to their function as defenders and protectors of traditional Gikuyu culture." For example when Karanja, Kihika and Gikonyo encounter Mumbi at Gikonyo's workshop, she is addressed respectfully as Karanja calls her "mother of Men, we have come make us some tea." Kihika, the Mau Mau conqueror in the novel, refers to the homeland as mother as he proudly says, "With us, Kenya is our mother".

Female identities and structures become symbolically bound to motherhood and to the nation. We can find privileging of motherhood in Ngugi's fiction. In the novel, where Gikonyo has subordination, Mumbi is more confident and skillful of action. Gikonyo's mother, Wangari, refuses to accept defeat when her husband beats and rejects her, accusing her of sexual coldness. She displays undaunted courage when she settles in Thabai with her baby son. As already described, Wambui introduces the active role of women in the movement, while Karanja's mother mirrors Nyokabi's disobedience of the traditional female role, as she queries the action of men.

So, Ngugi Wa Thiongo enrich African literature with portraying his woman characters strong, courageous and patriotic who equally, sometimes more, than male characters, participate in struggle for freedom. Ngugi's this novel is the best example of women's heroic portrayal and his women characters become inspirational from traditional one.

***Waiting for the Barbarians* by J. M. Coetzee**

One of the most daunting tasks that literature of the postmodern period undertakes is negotiating the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. *Waiting for the Barbarians* set in an uncategorized place and time. It is an allegory about the evils of colonialism. The story is told with point of view of a Magistrate. To set the stage for the contact zone, Coetzee presents a colony of an unnamed empire, situated on the frontier of a wilderness from which the barbarian natives of the land are pushed to the periphery. This contact zone is also permeated with different utilizations of the gaze. By expounding Coetzee's novel through Pratt's contact zone terminology, and analyzing its various demonstrations of the power of the gaze, *Waiting for the Barbarians* demonstrates how the gaze functions both actively and passively to reinforce cultural discrimination and dehumanization, and comes to the conclusion that any attempt to recognize the other as human will be a failure as long as there is an imbalance of power in the contact zone. (Dyslexacon)

As protagonist of the novel, the magistrate attempts to perform the function of intermediary between empire and barbarian tribesman. The magistrate's narrow method

of interpretation is also applied to the human subject, embodied by the native girl. The narrator says, "It has been growing more and clearer to me that until the marks on this girl's body are deciphered and understood I cannot let go of her." He then attempts to explore the marks on her body, adopting the blind girl's method, reading her like brail. This method proves unsuccessful as well. He asks himself, "is it the case ... that it is the marks on her which drew me to her but which, to my disappointment, I find, do not go deep enough? Too much or too little; is it she I want or the traces of a history her body bears?" The only history the magistrate can decipher in the marks on the girl are the marks of his empire. The marks run too deep into her to allow for any evidence of an alternative history to show. What he thought was an endeavor to understand the barbarian is a failure because she has been emptied of her culture and filled with the narrative that was inscribed on her through Colonel Joll's method of pressure. The magistrate approaches the girl in the same way that he approached the parchment: by seeking to know it by imprisoning it. He concludes, "I have not entered her." (Dyslexacon)

The magistrate is still unable to understand her because as long as he imprisons her within the confines of his contextual framework, she will be inscribed by his significance. Coetzee asks, "What bird has the heart to sing in a thicket of thorns?" The reality of this is demonstrated by the fact that the magistrate is only able to "enter" the native girl once he views her out of the framework of his contextualization, when they venture outside of the colony. In a conversation between the girl and the men who accompany their journey, the magistrate remains passive listener, and is surprised by how the native girl conducts herself. He says, "I am surprised by her fluency, her quickness, her self-possession." (Thomson)

The novel has one woman character, Barbarian girl, with whom portrayal of woman character can be studied. Actually Barbarian girl is a symbol of colonized. Her relationship with Magistrate is of slave and master. She is tortured by colonizers much. She is not only colonized by empire but as a woman by the Magistrate as well. He uses her body as an object. The narration never gives the view point of the Barbarian girl, but the magistrate attempts to understand feminine viewpoint. He is even at one point dressed as a woman by his torturers who are servants of the empire. This event can be very symbolical. The empire and the barbarian culture are symbolically represented by the magistrate and the barbarian girl and their relationship the same. The magistrate sometimes sympathizes with the girl but it is also true that he uses as an object, he becomes cause of her sorrows. Sometimes the girl plays a role of catalyst for the change that takes place in the magistrate; she fulfills the role as colonized woman. Coetzee's choice to put a girl as symbol of colonized, slave and subaltern indicates woman's position in society and in men's mind. Choice of woman instead of man like Robinson Crusoe symbolically shows gender inequality. It also fulfills men's wish to see women as slave or inferior with portraying these two characters.

Waiting for the Barbarians demonstrates how the gaze can work both actively, by subordinating through the clinical and colonizing gaze, and passively, by witnessing demonstrations of power. It also demonstrates how any effort to understand or to give voice to a colonized people is a failure as long as the colonized is subjected to a context dominated by the colonizer. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* presents an allegory not only of failed trans-culturation, but also of failed auto ethnography. But is Coetzee daunting the intermediary's task or calling forth the bird from the thicket? In spite of everything, he is urging us to cut the bird free. (Coetzee)

Conclusion

To conclude, it is pertinent to commend efforts made by second generation and contemporary writers for the positive shift in women's roles in our literatures from the traditional portrayal of the status of women as persons relating always to others and depending on others especially the men, for every decision, to the 'new woman' image who possesses a well-controlled determination to get what she wants through her own articulations. It is heart-warming therefore, that this generation of writers have seen the significant contribution of women to society as to want to break historical, cultural and mythical barriers as to represent them in their proper perspectives. Women are no longer accepting representations in our literature as mere biological species but as a social class to be reckoned with.

"Is this how her torturers felt hunting their secret, whatever they thought it was? For the first time I feel a dry pity for them: how natural a mistake to believe that you can burn or tear or hack your way into the secret body of the other. The girl lies in my bed, but there is no good reason why it should be a bed. I behave in some ways like a lover – but I might equally well tie her to a chair and beat her, it would be no less intimate."(Litcharts)

The story however shows some respect for few female figures that seem to be very significant to the society, for instance, the women spiritual leaders. The respect shown to them is not because they are women but because the society demands that they be respected for their important roles in divine intervention. The women also show strong leadership, power and prowess in their work. Although the woman is not the main character in this story, it is clear that she plays a big role and cannot be ignored when talking about the story. The roles discussed above show clearly that the woman plays a pivotal role in Educational, Religious and Social issues. (Role Of Women In Things Fall Apart)

These three famous African novels represent women differently. One has no significant space for women. One made women courageous, strong, and even greater than men; and one made it slave, colonized, inferior. These different portrayals shows women's role in different situations and different cultures, which is moving not static.

"It is I who am seducing myself, out of vanity, into these meanings and correspondences. What depravity is it that is creeping upon me? I search for secrets and answers, no matter how bizarre, like an old woman reading tea-leaves. There is nothing to link me with torturers, people who sit waiting like beetles in dark cellars. How can I believe that a bed is anything but a bed, a woman's body anything but a site of joy? I must assert my distance from Colonel Joll! I will not suffer for his crimes!" (Litcharts)

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Transition of Power Politics in the Oppressor and the Oppressed: Reflections on J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Utpal Deka & Jitamoni Phukan

Introduction

Burdened with cruel or unjust impositions or restraints of any sort, sometimes some people are subjugated under the umbrella of human totalitarianism. An exercise of harsh or burdensome authority or power on so called the inferior part, represents the saga of those human kind whose told or untold history echoes time to time. It is, in fact, the other side of human life. Some exploits and some are exploited in the game of gaining power and authority on others. The first brain child of J. M. Coetzee, in 'Novel' form, *Disgrace* is a master piece from the writer's pen, impregnated with many themes within 220 pages long book. Revolving around the 'white' protagonist David Lurie, the novel is set in post-apartheid Africa. Coetzee has brilliantly incorporated his themes like; racial hierarchy, sexual violence, inhuman treatment of animals in the hands of human beings etc. Apart from all these, the novel, very skillfully portrays the transition of power by way of delineating the shifting power between Blacks and Whites and their dilemma of identities. South Africa, a country, which had been reigned by the authorities of Europe for over three hundred years, had experienced a drastic change after Nelson Mandela shook hands with F. W. Klerk in 1992 for the transition of policies and government. Coetzee, perhaps, used this historical incident as the background of his novel, to address the fundamental issue of power politics and shifting of the same from stronger to weaker.

The aim of this paper is to assess the power politics in the novel *Disgrace*. It has been designed to analyze the transition of power in the post apartheid Africa in the first and secondly to show as to how the oppressor became oppressed.

Methodology

The methodology that has been adopted in this article is analytical and rather theoretical. The analyses would be made through the characters of David Lurie, the main protagonist of the novel, Lucy- David's daughter, Petrus- the black servant at Lucy's small holding at Eastern Cape and the harsh realities of new South Africa predicament and some related incidents that took place in around the novel.

Discussion of the topic

Mr. David Lurie, the Professor of The Technical University, in Cape Town; who teaches English literature and Communication; considered himself as an attractive man and a man of high position. He allured his student Melanie, a black South African, with

whom he spent some loved moments in their short relationship. The Professor, at first thought that he was the predator since he is a white grown man and Melanie is just a young innocent and helpless prey under his manipulation, however things got soured. On the enquiry, David Lurie had justification to support his nexus with Melanie. His attitude speaks of the prodigality of European exploitation in a victimized society. His trial and his refusal to apologize are analogous to the attitudes of white South Africans during apartheid. They rather abuse power vehemently. But the post apartheid scenario of South Africa taught the oppressed to stand up against the oppression. And the victims started to fight back. On the ground of the case filed of sexual harassment, David Lurie is cast out of the university. The incident reveals the incompetence of David to control the whole incident in his favor and symbolized the power exchange between whites and blacks. During the apartheid, Mr. Lurie's position as a white man was dominant and superior under the European power structure. However, the apartheid policy was lifted in 1992, the power of those mainstream people as oppressor on the weaker one has been worn down. The once oppressed Blacks are no longer silent; instead they will take actions to any unjust affairs of the oppressor.

To get away from the situation that's heavy on him, David retreats to his daughter's house in the rural area of South Africa, where he expects a quiet and peaceful life. Unfortunately, his living with Lucy was not the end, but was just the beginning of a series of adversities in his life. The gang rape of Lucy by the relatives of Petrus, her pregnancy as a consequence of that, Lucy's selling of land to Petrus, her acceptance to be one of Petrus' concubines, her submission to the ex-oppressed and the like reveal the shifting of power from the Whites to the Blacks. The white oppressor had been taught the lesson from the transition, that, life is for everyone; irrespective of color, race, and gender etc. In a nutshell, under the post apartheid society in South Africa, the whites became the minorities due to the shifting of power. So, at the end of the story, David's and Petrus' lives are totally different from, that, they were in the beginning. David loses all his power and Petrus gains everything he wishes for.

The novel unfolds the shift in social order in a post apartheid South Africa, exemplifying the status of the Blacks in rising day by day as evident in the character of Petrus. Petrus initially refers to himself as the 'Dog-man' and he indeed used to be that once upon a time; a disenfranchised black man who did nothing but work Lucy's garden and fed Lucy's dogs. But now in the 'new' South Africa he is the one who is in power; the one with majority of the lands and influence over the area. Despite this transition from the old to new, the black people in South Africa seem not to have forgotten their sufferings in the past, as some remarks of enmity keep popping up in the later part of the novel. Once such instance is when one of the Commission members claims Lurie's sexual harassment of Melanie to be racially motivated.

"We are going round in circles, Mr. Chair. Yes, he says, he is guilty; but when we try to get specificity, all of a sudden it is not abuse of a young woman he is confessing to,

just an impulse he could not resist, with no mention of the pain he has caused, no mention of the long history of exploitation of which this is part." David's loss of power and his acceptance of it can be well explained with the following Quote from the novel, which also shows his transformation.

'He does what he feels like. He doesn't care if it is good or bad. He just does it'. He does not act on Principle but on impulse, and the source of his impulse is dark to him. (Coetzee 33)

In order to become the sacrificial offering to the uprising power of the oppressed, Lucy let the people who raped her utilized her, for pleasure, for revenge, and for profit. Lucky submitted herself under the oppression of the black South Africans. She regarded her action as a collective apology or a way of reconciliation. She reconciled herself to forget the colonial past. David Lurie himself thinks that Lucy's reconciliation is due to her 'wish to humble' herself 'before history'. He believes that she thinks, she has to compensate for the past atrocities on the blacks all by herself and they are even allowed to take revenge from them. She just sees the rapists as 'debt-collectors.' This is indeed a bleak picture of the 'new' South Africa where although the apartheid has ended the oppressed has become the oppressor.

Lurie experiences loss of power and Petrus gains all power. Melanie, with whom Lurie had an affair and was a student, caused great upheaval in Lurie's life. It caused rejection even from his colleague and a black lash from media also. He had to face and sustain the animosity and pressure from Melanie's boy friend and her father, who vehemently oppose and expose the exploitation of sexual harassment made on Melanie. Lurie felt his disempowerment better when they were attacked by the blacks in Lucy's garden. He was physically assaulted and locked in the bathroom. He experienced failure in his patriarchal duty of protection. So, we see in all these instances, the other, i.e. the blacks, who were oppressed once, are now oppressing Lurie. These people were suppressed once and were sub-ordinates because of the racial classification and the political regime.

Again, Petrus shared Lucy's garden. He and his class were sub-ordinates to their white counter part. But the transformation in the political regime of Africa empowered him and led his position to the owner instead of being subjugated. He even raped Lucy and impregnated her. Finally, losing all, Lucy also submitted herself to the hands of Petrus and acknowledged the fatherhood of Petrus for the baby lies in her womb.

Conclusion

Post-apartheid, a new political regime empowered the blacks, who were oppressed once. But this transition of power that led to 'empowerment' has been viewed differently and in diverse directions. However, if we look at the novel *Disgrace* itself, we would see

that both David Lurie and Petrus use power on the weaker women in order to have control over them. They even put them in unwanted situations. This was again done in order to have whatever they want. In both cases difference lies in different situations.

To conclude, the study on the basis of the story presented in *Disgrace*, we can repeat one of the earlier sentences that, 'the white oppressor had been taught the lesson from the transition, that, life is for everyone; irrespective of color, race, and gender etc.' Life brings forward opportunities of various kinds, to all, but misuse of it may be perilous at any time that leads the change of fate. The story of oppressor and oppressed may thus carry forward the story of life 'beyond'.

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The Interpretation of Dreams in Coetzee's *Waiting for Barbarians*

Mrudula Lakkaraju

Waiting for barbarians is Coetzee's comment on how Empire could have coexisted with the 'barbarians' at the frontier. The book is a heart wrenching narration of the events that unfold in a nameless frontier town in Africa and the narration happens from the point of view of the Nameless Magistrate who is an administrator of this town. The Magistrate is an aging man who has spent many years in the same post at the frontier. He has learnt the ways of the town people and the other tribes around. This frontier town has learnt to coexist peacefully with the nomads and tribes around. The Magistrate has even become a kind of a decadent, wilful and complacent governing member.

The Empire launches a new line of defence at the frontiers in order to strengthen its boundaries. This town then has visits from the younger military force well versed with the art of war. Now the Magistrate has lowered his guard with the local people as he understands that though they may be different but they are harmless. The young visiting officers believe otherwise. Raids are conducted, prisoners brought in and methodically tortured to 'reveal the truth' which can be recognised by a specific 'tone'. Many people killed, tortured and released. These prisoners try to go back to land trekking through treacherous landscape. Some prisoners who are severely maimed during the torture are left behind.

The Magistrate notices a blinded, crippled, abandoned, nomadic, young girl on his visits in town. He grows curious about her and brings her to his quarters. A ritual of cleaning the girl and massaging her feet with various kinds of oil becomes a routine with him. He feels an urge to return her to her people. He undertakes a journey and returns her. This effort is branded as 'treason' by the new military order officials. He is imprisoned and now faces the same treatment given to the prisoners.

More barbarians are captured and tortured for truth that the Empire has already decided upon to hear. This event becomes the backdrop of the Magistrate's rebellion against the Empire and he is further tortured and almost killed. From this near death experience a new man is born, who now lives life with ore conscience, humaneness and sensitiveness to the differences between people. He faces an unsure, uneasy and uncomfortable future. But now he is prepared.

The etymology of the word 'Barbarian' goes like this...

The term originates from the Greek 'Barbaros' pl. 'Barbaroi', which in turn originates from the incomprehensible languages of early Anatolian nations that were heard by the Greeks as "bar..bar.."

In Ancient Greece, the Greeks used the term towards those who didn't speak Greek and follow classical Greek customs. (Wiki, Barbarian)

The etymology of the word does not have such a devastatingly negative connotation in its inception. But the evolution of language which is an extremely social, political, historical and cultural process has in the colonial sense has taken on a meaning which evokes extremely violent images.

The entry of "barbarians" into mercenary service in a homeland or central territory of a colonial Empire repeatedly occurs in history as a standard way in which peripheral peoples from and beyond frontier regions relate to "civilised" imperial powers as part of a (semi-) foreign militarised proletariat. (Wiki, Barbarian)

One such example is 'Nomadic frontier tribes'. Now, frontier is an interesting place. It becomes a kind of a border where both the parties are 'barbarians' to one another. Coetzee's brilliance is expressing innocently the two versions of the word 'barbarian' through the Nameless Magistrate and Colonel Joll. Colonel Joll is a representative of the Empire and the Magistrate is a resident administrator who has spent his whole adult life running this frontier town. In choosing an opposite meaning of the word as perceived by the Empire, unknowingly or intentionally the Magistrate chooses the opposite side. The novel's conflict is between the two extremely opposite interpretations of the word barbarian.

What is also interesting in this novel is the expression of the subconscious of the Magistrate through his many dreams.

Psychologists are genuinely divided over the function and meaning of dreaming. Some psychologists think that dreams are nothing more than the result of random brain activity that occurs while we are sleeping – others accept the perspective of people such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung that dreams can reveal a person's deepest unconscious wishes and desires.

Freud's and Jung's analysis of dreams is a defining parameter for this paper. Both have differing (not different!) theories and these are used to interpret the dream sequences of the Magistrate.

Freud's interpretation of dream is

- *The dream is the (disguised) fulfillment of a (suppressed, repressed) wish.*
- *The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind.*
- *The dream unites the grossest contradictions, permits impossibilities, sets aside the knowledge that influences us by day, and exposes us as ethically and morally obtuse.*

(Sigmund Freud. *Dream Psychology: Psychoanalysis for Beginners*.)

And Carl Jung's interpretation of a dream is

- *This whole creation is essentially subjective, and the dream is the theater where the dreamer is at once: scene, actor, prompter, stage manager, author, audience, and critic.*
- *In each of us is another whom we do not know. He speaks to us in dreams and tells us how differently he sees us from the way we see ourselves.*
- *Dreams are impartial, spontaneous products of the unconscious psyche, outside the control of the will. They are pure nature; they show us the unvarnished, natural truth, and are therefore fitted, as nothing else is, to give us back an attitude that accords with our basic human nature when our consciousness has strayed too far from its foundations and run into an impasse.*

(Carl Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.)

Freud basic premise is that a dream is a manifestation of repressed desire, a window through which the unconscious can be analysed and it is a kind of a bridge which unites the impossibilities. On the other hand Jung calls dreams subjective, an opportunity to see ourselves and a medium of showing us 'natural truth'. Taking pieces of both their arguments there is a way that we can bring them together exploring the facets of dreams in analysing the real intent of the message that is otherwise latent. Dreams also will tell the dreamer what they want to hear, and also believe dreams can aid a person in realizing the truth or solution to a problem.

Dream on Page 10:

The landscape is filled with snow from horizon to horizon. The sky's light is diffused and everywhere. The Magistrate passes through the barrack gate and passes by the bare flagpole. From an unrecognised place he knows recognises that it is the town square. All he can see is the town square with no houses or trees on the rim. Town squares are power centres where most of the public announcements and meetings are held. In a way the landscape in the dream is the power centre of the Empire. He glides over the square and sees children playing at the square. He is objectively involved in the colonial process, a mere observer. He watches the countrymen at the town square as the children. They are playing in the snow and building a castle, maybe their own little castles, literary and figurative. He is aware of his bulk and shadowiness, burden of guilt and sense of wrongful administration. The children melt away is a symbol of people staying away from him, not out of respect but out of avoidance. There is only one child left at the town square and it is a little girl, whose face he is unable to make out. It is a kind of a premonition of things that are in future for the magistrate.

I stand behind her. She does not turn. I try to imagine the face between the petals of her peaked hood but cannot. (Pg. 10. WfB.)

Dream on Page 14:

The Magistrate dreams of this after he witnesses Colonel Joll's killing of an aged prisoner and the torture of the prisoner's grandson. The young boy is tortured with the method of using a little knife, which is thrust into the body and is twisted left and right to cause maximum pain. The young boy's belly and both the groins are filled with the marks with trickles of blood.

There is music coming from the Town square. The magistrate is unable to sleep soundly. He finds a dead body lying on the back in the square. There is some black and gold hair on the body, glistening. When he reaches down to touch, he realises that it is a dense cluster of bees, honey drenched, sticky, crawl out of the furrow and fan their wings. He envisions the boy dead with the life giving force of blood oozing out of him like a swarm of bees. For the tortured boy, death would come as a relief to the inhuman methods of interrogation applied to him. The cluster of wounds, become a cluster of bees and the oozing blood becomes honey to the Magistrate in his dream.

It is not hair but bees clustered densely atop one another: honey-drenched, sticky, they crawl out of the furrow and fan their wings. (Pg.14. WfB.)

Dream on Page 24:

The Magistrate is visiting a prostitute and falls asleep in her bed. She accounts to him on two occasions that he is having very disturbing dream where he pushes the girl onto the floor. A physical revulsion to the very act he chooses to perform. Our personality is two faceted, of the general perception of who we pretend to be and of who we really are in our sleep. The magistrate puts up an appearance which he cannot consciously hold on to in his sleep.

She laughs at my dismay: 'You pushed me out with your hands and feet. Please don't get upset. We cannot help our dreams or what we do in our sleep.' (Pg.24. WfB.)

Dream on Page 39-40:

The magistrate brings the crippled, blind barbarian girl into his quarters, washing her feet, looking at the scars of torture trying to understand this silent girl, unwilling to talk. Each day he spends the evening, washing the girl and in a way finding peaceful sleep.

The landscape in the dream is similar to his earlier dream where the town square is covered with snow. The magistrate's attention is focused on one child and she is hooded like the barbarian girl whom he found wandering on the streets. The magistrate circles around the child trying to catch a glance of her. He also tries this in his earlier dream; he

cannot catch a glimpse of her. But in this dream, the face comes to view and he sees an embryo, a tiny whale or a bulging under the skin all symbols of young human being or an animal. Then he sees that the face is made of snow understanding that the girl belongs to the nature. The girl is incomprehensible to him. There is no definite shape and it lacks definition. He hands out a coin to the girl...the realization that what he is doing to alleviate her suffering is next to nothing, a pittance. He tries to understand her suffering.

The face I see is blank, featureless; it is the face of an embryo or a tiny whale; it is not a face at all but another part of human body that bulges under the skin; it is white; it is the snow itself. (Pg.40. WfB.)

Dream on Page 56:

The precursor to this dream is the conversation the magistrate has with a young officer who has been sent to this small town to replace the earlier batch of soldiers. The Magistrate tries to convince him of the harmless living of these nomads. On being provoked by the officer, he launches into an anti-empire and pro-native tirade of passionate speech in trying to prove to him that there are no 'barbarians' in reality.

The dream after this encounter takes the shape of something like this. The magistrate struggles his way towards the group of children playing in the square. The path he had chosen to reach his countrymen is very difficult. The difficult path is also an indication of the decision he has taken to protect the girl from the harsh town life of a beggar.

His paternal attitude towards his countrymen springs from the fact that they are incapable of causing any intentional harm. He tries to communicate with the other children playing along with the hooded girl but his face is frozen, as the appearance he has to put up in front of the Colonel Joll or other soldiers who are for him the representatives of empire. He tries to tear the mask of ice he is wearing but is unable to.

With much difficulty he reaches the girl. He tries again to communicate with the girl and no sound comes out and yet the girl turns her face and responds to him. With the girl the magistrate stands a chance of proving his real intentions after living for so long an artificial life. Earlier the girl's face was featureless but now it has taken shape and it is bright and smiling. It is a small child. The Magistrate is able to see her childlike innocence in this vicious plot of the empire to tame the 'barbarians'.

After the magistrate's outburst with the officer his dream becomes less sad. He feels that now the girl would understand him better. He dreams the same dream repeatedly.

"The dream has taken root. Night after night I return to the waste of the Snow-swept Square, trudging towards the figure at its center, reconfirming each time that the town she is building is empty of life."(Pg. 57. WfB)

The girl in the dream though by the physical features is the barbarian girl but represents the magistrate's conscience and is in a way prophetic that the town would be lifeless.

Dream on Page 95:

The Magistrate is imprisoned for his treason and he is satisfied that he now stands on the other side. He now dreams of the town square again to find the girl under the shelter. This comes after he confesses to the reader that he is forgetting the girl deliberately.

I am forgetting her, and forgetting her, I know, deliberately. (Pg.95. WfB.)

The girl shows her injured ankles. He unfolds the bandages to reveal disembodied feet. The Magistrate then hugs her ankles to keep her warm in the cold wind that blows. He carries her through an endless yard with an intention to protect her.

This dream has become a recalling of the past events. He remembers that the barbarian girl was in pain and he had wanted to extend help. The surroundings are harsh and the magistrate braves the weather to help her. The empire was against barbarians and the magistrate's helpful gesture towards them has brought him trouble. He starts to have nightmares where the girl in the dream turns into different shapes and sizes.

Dream on Page 119:

In trying to speak for the inhumanly imprisoned barbarians, the magistrate is given a harsh beating, badly injured and further punished without food and that's when he has this dream.

The girl has finished what she was building all this while. The magistrate realises that it is a clay oven and she is making bread. She offers him one and he cannot even taste it in the dream. He sees the girl dressed in her best. He appreciates her and he finds her very beautiful. He wants to embrace her and the dream breaks. At the height of his career, at times when he enjoyed good health, respect from his colleagues the barbarian girl looked ugly.

The barbarian girl stands for his image. By calling her ugly he was in fact calling himself ugly. Now at the worst times of his life, in his huge suffering she appears beautiful. The magistrate has stood up for the suffering barbarians and he finds release

and happiness in doing so. He is able to respect himself. Like the barbarian girl he too has turned beautiful in his own eyes.

She becomes aware of me and turns. I am mistaken, it is not a castle she has built but a clay oven. Smoke curls up from the vent at the back. (Pg. 119. WfB.)

Dream / Vision / Near death experience on Page 131:

The magistrate is tortured; his suffering made a spectacle for the town people and is hung on a tree left to die with his tired feet resting on a wooden ladder. As he chokes with the rope around his neck he has this following vision/near death experience and since it is about the girl, maybe a dream.

I am standing in front of the old man, screwing up my eyes against the wind, waiting for him to speak. The ancient gun still rests between his horse's ears, but it is not aimed at me. (Pg.131. WfB.)

He stands in front of the barbarian man, who aims a gun, not at him. He is old and tries to see him through a dusty gust of wind. The vast desert and sky surround them. The magistrate expects the old man to say something as an answer to a question which he hasn't yet asked. Each thing is visible to the magistrate with its utmost clarity.

The girl is on a horse also waiting for the old man to speak. The dream resembles the Christian myth of facing god on the judgment day, waiting for him to judge if you were good or bad. The old man doesn't speak indicating that he is neither good nor bad, like life everything is grey, hence the silence.

Dream on Page 149:

He is in the same snow filled square trudging towards the figure in the center. The figure is hooded and we come to understand that it is the barbarian girl. He is approaching her with much speed. The wind carries him to her. He is almost floating. He is about to collide into the figure and the girl turns around in time. He still bumps her but the bump is so small and soft. The wind and the snow are the harsh conditions of the imperial rule. The anxiety not to hit the girl is the magistrate's paternal attitude towards the girl. After the bump he is relieved, as he has convinced himself that the girl was not harmed.

The bump is as faint as the stroke of a moth. (Pg 149)

This line can be interpreted in two ways. The Magistrate's full force collision did not harm the girl and could be easily fended. And how a little effort from the girl can

launch the Magistrate so far away, an indication of the true potential of the nomads, which is usually under restraint.

Dream on Page 162:

This is the final dream of the Magistrate in the novel. The events that lead to this dream are as follows. The army vacates the town for the fear of an attack from the 'barbarians'. The fear also makes people of the town leave for safer grounds. The Magistrate stays back with those few who choose to remain in the town. The Magistrate returns to his hobby of digging up ruins, finds an ancient burial site.

He dreams that night of a damp pit. He is standing in it and is searching for bones under his feet. He picks up a jute sack, rotten and dips his hand into it. He finds in it a bent fork, a dead parrot. The parrot's eye sockets are empty. It is, maybe a kind of a ritualistic curse on the town by the barbarians. And the magistrate makes a mental note about poisoned water and not to drink water from that pit again. The fear of a barbarian attack manifests itself in this dream.

I feel under the surface, searching for the bones. My hand comes up with the corner of a jute sack, black, rotten, which crumbles away between my fingers. (Pg. 163. WtF.)

The dream is finally free of the barbarian girl. He does not face any troubled consciousness. He is free to think of the practical matters on hand like the burial site that day. He is clinically precise about the details, free from the conflict and anxiety that was always present in his earlier dreams.

Realisation of the dream on page 170:

He is watching the town square from his window. It is snowing, and the children are playing. He approaches them slowly. They are oblivious to his presence and they are building a snowman. The Magistrate feels an inexplicable joy watching them.

He observes that this was not what he dreamt of but is content with the changes in it. He doesn't interfere with the children and moves on.

This is not the scene I dreamed of. Like much else nowadays I leave it feeling stupid, like a man who lost his way long ago but presses on along a road that may lead nowhere. (Pg 170)

Conclusion:

A nameless place, a nameless magistrate, a colonial power control are some of the ingredients to this tale which can be applied to every colonial town across the different colonial empires. We have a tale not between a black and a white but between a white and

another white. One white man, the Magistrate, was earlier a supporter of the empire because it provided him with a job and livelihood. He turns a blind eye to the empire's proceedings at the frontier town. He now grows old and finally learns from his experience. He grows distant from the empire's rhetoric, softens and responds with humanity which somehow the other employees have lost during their military training. This very humanity of the magistrate brings him trouble. This conflict between what is right and what is projected as right sends the Magistrate into a tizzy of confrontations with the Empire.

The Magistrate has been putting up an appearance all along and the day he discovers his humanity the mask drops. His mental angst caught between the opposites can be seen in the slew of dreams he has throughout the novel. He dreams of the same place, the frontier town square, he sees the group of children playing, innocence, and carefree play. His approach changes each time. Some days he can see things clearly and some days he cannot. These dreams correspond with the previous events.

Some recurring symbols are the town square, snow, children playing in the snow, a hooded girl, barrack gates and an un-flagged pole. He tries to communicate with the hooded girl, who does not have a definite shape but slowly evolves in his dream where he starts to see her clearly, even the golden thread woven into her braid. As he moves away from being a coloniser, he understands the 'barbarians' better. The last dream is of the town, snow and the children. It is of some relics he has been uncovering earlier. The guilt complex is free and hence we see a realisation of the dream he had been having all this while. He now sees real children, without fear, building a snowman in the town square.

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A Critical Analysis of J.M. Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*

Nilima Meher

John Maxwell Coetzee, primarily the South African novelist is also an essayist, linguist, and translator. He is the recipient of Booker prize for two times in 1983 and in 1991. He brought the glory to Africa and himself after winning Noble prize in the year 2003. His *The Lives of Animals* was published in 1999 in the form of a novella in around sixty pages. Here he has advocated on the reason of human being for which cruelty on animals should be stopped. This feeling towards animal led him to rail against the modern animal husbandry industry in Sydney on 22 February, 2007. The same day on his behalf Hugo Weaving gave a speech for Voiceless, the animal protection institute. It was a non-profitable organization working for the protection of animals. Coetzee himself joined it as a patron in the year 2004. His other works dealing with animal cruelty and animal welfare are *Disgrace*, *Elizabeth Costello*, and *The Old Woman and the Cats*. *Elizabeth Costello* is the extended version of *The Lives of Animal*.

The Lives of Animals is an autobiography which has been given the touch of a fiction. It is a speech first delivered by Coetzee as guest lectures at Princeton on 15 and 16 October 1997, part of the Tanner Lectures on Human Values. It consists of two chapters, "The Philosophers and the Animals" and "The Poets and the Animals". In this fictionalized lecture Mrs. Elizabeth Costello, a novelist unlike Coetzee is the invited guest to give a speech in Appleton College, Waltham. She chooses not to speak of her novels rather chooses to discuss animal rights, just as Coetzee does.

The story is framed by a narrative involving both first and third person point of view. John Bernard, the son of Mrs. Costello who happens to be a junior professor at Appleton is narrating the story from his perspective. Costello's relationship with Bernard is strained, and her relationship with John's wife, Norma, even more so. The university's faculties were unaware of Bernard's relationship with Costello when they issued the invitation. Bernard fears that his mother's presence and opinions will be controversial which may destroy the enthusiasm of the seminar. In his private thoughts, he more than once wishes she had not accepted Appleton's invitation because her stay at home also creates a conflicting situation because he confesses that his mother had decided not to like anyone he will marry. Even on her arrival she does not receive warm welcome from her daughter-in-law Norma. Her vegetarian nature is termed as "delicate sensibilities"(114), her books on animals are "overrated, that her opinion on animals, animal consciousness, and ethical relations with animal are jejune and sentimental" (115) by Norma.

Costello's first lecture begins with an analogy between the holocaust and the exploitation of animals. Costello makes the point that, just as residents in the neighborhoods of the death camps knew what was happening at the camps, but chose to

turn a blind eye, so it is common practice today for otherwise respectable members of society to turn a blind eye to industries that bring pain and death to animals.

I return one last time to the places of death all around us, the places of slaughter to which, in a huge communal effort, we close our hearts. Each day a fresh holocaust, yet as far as I can see our moral being is untouched. We don't feel tainted. We can do anything, it seems, and come away clean. (133)

This turns out to be the most controversial thing that Costello says during her visit, and it causes a Jewish professor of the college to boycott the dinner held in her honor. In her first lecture, Costello also moves to reject reason as the preeminent quality that separates humans from animals and allows humans to treat animals as less than the equals of humans.

... because man alone is made in the image of God and partakes in the being of God, how we treat animals is of no importance except in so far as being cruel to animals may accustom us to being cruel to man. (120)

The universe is built upon reason. God is a God of reason. The fact that through the application of reason we can come to understand the rules by which the universe works, proves that reason and the universe are of same being. And the fact that animals, lacking reason, cannot understand the universe, but have simply to follow its rules blindly, proves that, unlike man, they are part of it but not part of its being; that man is godlike, animals thing like. (121)

At the same time Costello does not agree on the point that reason as the main human distinction. She also challenges the assumption that animals do not possess reason. Her argument rests on the fact that, while science cannot prove that animals do abstract thinking, it also cannot prove that they do not. In support of this argument, Costello summarizes an ape experiment that was conducted in the 1920s by Wolfgang Kohler. The ape used in the experiment was Sultan who was not given his bananas until he finds his way to obtain them. Faced with the challenge of stacking several crates into a makeshift ladder, in order to reach the bananas that have been suspended above his reach,

Sultan succeeds in demonstrating this elementary form of reasoning. What Costello objects is the basic inanity of the exercise which in no way explores any higher intellectual functions that Sultan might be capable of. The experiment, Costello objects, ignores any emotional hurt or confusion that the ape might be experiencing in favor of concentrating on what is, after all, a very elemental task. The ape might be thinking about the human who has constructed these tests. Animal experiments, Costello concludes, fail to measure anything of real interest, because they ask the wrong questions and ignore the more interesting ones. In her second lecture, Costello suggests that humans can come to understand the nature of animals through poetic imagination. As examples, she invokes

Rilke's "The Panther" and Ted Hughes's "The Jaguar" and "Second Glance at a Jaguar". Costello says,

The body is as the body moves, or as the currents of life move within it. The poems ask us to imagine all the way into that way of moving, to inhabit that body.

With Hughes it is a matter- I emphasise not of inhabiting another mind but of inhabiting another body. That is the kind of poetry I bring to your attention today; poetry that does not try to find an idea in the animal, that is not about the animal, but is instead the record of an engagement with him. (147-48)

This is nothing but the empathetic attitude of Costello. She not only cites Ted Hughes but also in her earlier lecture she expresses, "I want to know what it is like for a bat to be a bat." (129). People do not possess such empathetic attitude. A kind of fighting is going on between men and animal. It is the fighting for survival, "We had a war once against animal, which we called hunting, though in fact war and hunting are the same thing (Aristotle saw it clearly)" (155). In that war man is always winner and the animals are prisoners:

The prisoner of war does not belong to our tribe. We can do what we want with him. We can sacrifice him to our Gods, we can cut his throat, tear out his heart, throw him on the fire. There are no laws when it comes to prisoners of war. (156)

But these dumb, mute, innocent creatures sometimes make their voice audible to the people. It is possible when one thinks from the animal point of view by putting their body and soul in them. The sensitivity of this point is well argued by Costello with a citation of one life experience of Albert Camus. Once she saw his grandmother cutting a hen in kitchen with a knife. She collected its blood in a bowl so that the kitchen's floor will not be dirty. This put a great impact in his mind and he did something commendable later in his life.

The death cry of that hen imprinted itself on the boy's memory so hauntingly that in 1958 he wrote an impassioned attack on the guillotine. As a result in part of that polemic, capital punishment was abolished in France. Who is to say, then, that the hen did not speak. (160)

In a debate with Thomas O' Hearne, Appleton Philosophy professor both of their opinion varies. For Henry animal right movement is a western trend and a recent concept of nineteenth century Britain. Non-western cultures do not require them to observe the same respect for animals mandated by Western animals' rights activists. But she is not agreed with it. To this assertion, Costello responds that kindness to animals has been more widespread in the form of keeping of pets, which is universal. And she notes that children enjoy a particular closeness to animals as they are more innocent and they hardly understand the distinguishing border line between man and animal: "And of course

children all over the world quite naturally with animals. They do not see any dividing-line." (158)

Argument on the abstract thinking of animals begins among them. To O' Hearne animals do not perform abstract reasoning, as demonstrated by the failure of apes to acquire more than a basic level of language, and are therefore not entitled to the same rights as humans. In response to it Costello argues about the value of animal experiments. She refers to such experiments as anthropocentric and imbecile.

On the death consciousness of animals when O' Hearne proposes that animals do not understand death with the full consciousness of self with which humans regard death it is ethical to kill an animal. He says:

There is certainly in animals an instinctive struggle against death, which they share with us. But they do not understand death as we do or rather, as we fail to do. There is in the human mind, a collapse of the imagination before death,.. That fear does not and an not exist in animals since the effort to comprehend extinction and that failure to master it, have simply not taken place. (160)

O' Hearne's final point is that people cannot be friends with animals because they do not understand them. As an example, he uses the bat. A human can't make friendship with a Martian or with a bat because of differences. In her response, Costello equates the belief that animals are not entitled to equal rights, because they do not reason abstractly, with racism. Then she, once again, rejects reason as a valid basis for the animal rights argument, concluding that, if reason is all she shares with her philosophical opponents, then she has no use for it.

Coetzee's novella discusses the foundations of morality, the need of human beings to be merciful, ethical, and sympathetic in treating animals. He argues that, "Human beings don't die on a vegetarian diet." (155) When all the discussion concludes that it is only reason through which one's conception can be changed the ultimate principle of Coetzee comes from th mouth of Costello when she says:

Regarding reason she says it is neither the being of the universe nor the being of the God, rather it is like the being of human thought, even worse than that it seems to be the tendency in human thought. (121)

In our thought process when one will be able to sensitize the feelings of other there will be no bounds to the sympathetic imagination. This ultimate change has been projected through the John Bernard, son of Costello in a dramatic end. While the son is taking her mother to airport he immerses in a thought:

Yet everyday I see the evidences. The very people I suspect produce the evidence, exhibit, offer it to me. Corpse. Fragments of corpses that they have brought for money... I look into your eyes, into Norma's into the children's and I see only kindness, human-kindness. (166)

This signifies that human compassion is flowing in a perennial river inside the heart. Again it is transferred from one generation to other.

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In Search of Fulfillment: J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Pavan Barelia

First published in Britain in 1980, J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* was proposed as an metaphorical attack on Apartheid South Africa. Coetzee avoids the limitations imposed by specificities of progressive, environmental and ancient background and flourishes in attaining a profusion to which all writers seek but which is achieved only by a skilful writer.

From horizon to horizon the earth is white with snow. It falls from a sky in which the source of light is diffuse and everywhere present, as though the sun has dissolved into mist, become an aura. In the dream I pass through the barracks gate, pass the bare flagpole. The square extends before me, blending at its edges into the luminous sky. Walls, trees, houses have dwindled, lost their solidity, retired over the rim of the world.(9).

The novel opens with the arrival of Colonel Joll at the border town where the magistrate is the chief administrator. His proposed definition of the nation is: —an imagined political community —and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign! (6). *Waiting for the Barbarians* is the contemplative and miserable tale of an aging colonial magistrate's fruitless struggle against the foolishness, harshness, and discrimination of a government which he has served contentedly all of his life. A magistrate in charge of administering the law in a colonial town witnesses the torment of the invaded indigenous population. The colony or the place is unspecified. Most characters have no names, although the circumstances surrounding the events indicate that the colony is South Africa while the barbarians indicate the black population. The Empire defines itself and reinforces its identity by constructing a distance from the barbarians on many grounds. While the dominant elucidations of the novel focus on torment and the body and the novel brilliantly analyzes the involvement with imperial state building and nationalism. They are about "a microcosmic examination of the failures of sympathetic imagination that make these things possible" (McDunnah 23)

The unnamed magistrate is unwilling to take any action which would interrupt the pleasant and secure course of his life; he wishes to serve out his days "on this lazy frontier, waiting to retire," spending his time engaged in "hunting and hawking and placid concupiscence." The magistrate is released from prison without any means of survival. He is forced to live on the street. The barbarians hide while their huts are destroyed. They reappear in other places, being cheated when they try to trade with fish. Policeman Mandel wants the magistrate to work. When he responds that he is still awaiting his trial, he learns that there are no records of him. Coetzee problematizes and allegorizes the question of history and tyrannical regimes right from the start by giving us an ahistorical setting, an anonymous frontier settlement belonging to an anonymous Empire that is itself rootless in time and place.

Yet he goes gradually from being the hesitant associate of Colonel Joll, one of the Empire's "new men," to being an enemy and then a victim of Joll and the Empire. *Waiting for the Barbarians* charts the course of the magistrate's curious rebellion and records his emotional and philosophical struggles with his changing role. The Empire has a limited geographical stretch with a capital in the metropolitan centre and some distant territories beyond which alien people live. Moreover, the subjects of the Empire see themselves as loyal subjects serving their Empire and attending its interests against a common barbarian danger.

Joll has come under "emergency powers" to investigate reports that the barbarian tribes are preparing for war. Joll, a specialist in interrogation, investigates the rumors by torturing first an old man and his grandson and then a pitiful group of nomadic peoples and aborigines whom he has captured on an expedition into the frontier wilderness. Coetzee understands that it is against the image of the diabolical dark barbarian that Eurocentric cultures have constructed their own fragile sense of civilization and identity. Take that away, and the proponents of the colonial mission to civilize find themselves disoriented and redundant, deserted in the desert.

My last act of courtesy is to ride out with the Colonel as far as where the road turns north-west along the coast of the lake. The sun is up and glares so savagely from the surface that I have to shield my eyes. The men, tired and queasy after their night of revels, straggle behind us.(13).

When Joll completes his inquiries into the "truth" and departs for the capital, the magistrate attempts to repair the damage done by Joll and to revive the old, peaceful ways of life. He also argues that the nation is imagined as a community because—regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship¹ (7).

One barbarian woman, whose ankles Joll broke and whose eyes he perforated in his search for the truth, is left behind when the prisoners are released and return to the barbarian lands. The magistrate takes her into his household and focusses on this abandoned young woman his obsessive efforts both to dissociate himself from the Third Bureau and to atone for the sins of the Bureau and his complicity in those sins. The Empire in Coetzee's novel is similarly busy with maintaining and establishing itself as an imperial power with distant territories along its borders and a metropolitan center in its heartland. The setting of the novel is a frontier outpost overseen by an anonymous imperial Capital. Furthermore, he is, at his age, increasingly concerned about what makes life worth living, about how and if one can resist torture or evil or complicity with evil. As a member of a civilized, patriarchal society, he has been led to believe that value is associated with reason, power, and material comfort. He is desperate to understand how this barbarian girl could have lived through the pain and humiliation of torture; how she, in her crippled state, is able to laugh, to smile, to accept her fate, and to live in a positive way.

However, the Empire's men overpower him immediately and assert the dominance of the Empire over its subjects. On the other hand, Foucault argues that public torture teaches people by example and fear (58) His ritualistic care for the girl (every night he bathes and dries her, massages her feet and ankles, and anoints her naked body with almond oil) is on the surface the opposite of Joll's brutalization of her, but the magistrate comes to recognize that the reality of the situation is not so simple. Each man uses his power, each imprisons, each questions, demands: The girl lies in my bed, but there is no good reason why it should be a bed. I behave in some ways like a lover—I undress her, I bathe her, I stroke her, I sleep beside her—but I might equally well tie her to a chair and beat her, it would be no less intimate. (16)

In this regard the magistrate begins to take a clearer stand in defence of the barbarians:

Where civilization entailed the corruption of barbarian virtues and the creation of a dependent people, I decided, I was opposed to civilization; and upon this resolution I based the conduct of my administration. (I say this who now keep a barbarian girl for my bed!) (38)

Colonel Joll and his army have taken over the town and "the promised campaign against the barbarians" has begun. Gayatri Spivak in the text of her paper, *Can the Subaltern Speak? Analysis* the question of female whom she describes as doubly marginalized subjects in Colonial/ Post-Colonial discourse:

Within the effected itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effected... it is rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the female is even more deeply in shadow.(3)

The magistrate asks for a trial according to the law and Mandel responds: —But you are not a prisoner. You are free to go as you please^{ll} and then continues —How can you be a prisoner when we have no record of you? Do you think we don't keep records? We have no record of you^{ll} (125).

Curiously, the magistrate is elated by this turn of events: "My alliance with the guardians of the Empire is over, . . . I am a free man." Initially, he spends his days of confinement in the grip of "appetite and physical functions and the boredom of living one hour after another"; his nights are troubled by dreams. After a time, he manages to escape, but no one seems to care. He finds the town desolate, the fields neglected, the streets empty. Driven by hunger and a sense of hopelessness, he returns to his cell, to his "absurd incarceration." It is really interesting that Coetzee takes the pains to reveal the bygone of the characters through their colonised minds."A normal Negro child having grown up within a normal family will become abnormal on the slightest contact with the white world". (Fanon, 111)

Colonel Joll finally returns from his campaigns with twelve naked barbarian men strung together by “a simple loop of wire [which] runs through the flesh of each man’s hands and through holes pierced in his cheeks.” Directed by Joll, the soldiers and then the townspeople beat the prisoners mercilessly. When he can stand this barbaric spectacle no more, the magistrate demands that the beating stop. Nomads and fisher folk use animal products and migrate every spring with their flocks. They live in tents, do not wash, and neither read nor write (p. 140). He is silenced brutally and returned to his cell. Following this episode, Colonel Joll begins in earnest to interrogate the magistrate, whose life becomes a blur of pain, humiliation, and perplexing dreams; the prisoner is sustained only by a fierce will “to live and live and live no matter what.” He finally learns about power and powerlessness; Joll teaches him what “humanity” is. When Joll goes forth on another campaign, Warrant Officer Mandel continues the interrogations until he tires of the magistrate and releases the old man to a life of homelessness and beggary. The very meaning of the word –barbarian! entails an alien land, people, or culture. The word becomes an embodiment for foreignness, lack of refinement, learning, or artistic and literary achievements.

Uneasy about the conduct of the “war” and troubled by rumors of barbarian victories, people begin to abandon the town; even Mandel and the small garrison flee. In the absence of any other authority, the magistrate returns to his quarters and begins to organize the remaining townspeople and to prepare for the winter; he even recovers his pleasure in the simple beauties of life: sunshine, pleasant evenings, neighbors. Joll, with a ragged escort, returns seeking help; he is a defeated man. His army is “Gone. Scattered.... We were not beaten—they led us out into the desert and then they vanished!” Joll flees into the darkness of civilization’s future, and the magistrate remains behind living from day to day, preparing as best he can for an uncertain future. At the end, he is a “man who lost his way long ago but presses on along a road that may lead to nowhere.”

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What is in J M Coetzee’s *Disgrace*?

Rajeev Nair N V

Disgrace, being a popular work of J M Coetzee, along with the other works like *In the Heart of the Country*, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Dusklands* and his popular essays and letters, basically talks about the transition of power from the racial hegemony of whites to the native African tribalism. However, the work does not restrict itself to the theme of colonizer and colonized as one can usually find in any post-colonial writing trend. Many socio-cultural and psychological elements affecting the lives of characters David Lurie, Lucy Lurie, Petrus and Melanie Issacs have crept into the narrative elements of the fiction. Initial incidents and narrative technique used in the novel fill in the reader a feeling that a hope for a new world order which can bring a good life to live is no more. The fiction appears to be a very disturbing narrative of events connected to both city life, which is the University and rural life, which is the farm, depicting a world empty of hope for the characters at different levels and at different stages of their lives.

However, as the novel progresses, readers can feel that J M Coetzee has technically integrated the idea of hope in between the lines of the story. Each and every movement of all the characters in the story is a wishful hope for a better life or to find a meaning and purpose in their lives. Incidents in their lives do not permit them to escape from the harsh realities of shame and disgrace in their lives but help them hope for a change and find somehow a new space and a new relation to live with. Thus psychological preparations of these characters show at times that it is not all about end but an attempt to begin a new life. It is an endeavor of the characters, both the superior and inferior, as represented by the color in terms of apartheid norms, to hope for freedom from the shackles of harsh realities created by their own socio-cultural identities and psychological complications. For example, David and Lurie are haunted by the losing white supremacy, Petrus is in his trials to get back to roots and own his land and Melanie is on her path to achieve what she has always desired breaking out all complications created by sexual relations.

The expectation of a new world by the characters to live in takes different dimensions. However, at the same time, there are a lot of contrasts in the ways Coetzee depicts this idea of hope. Incidents in the farm clearly show that there is a high chance of rooting out white racial order. Petrus raping Lucy and Lucy's final submission to him is evidence. Here in contrast to the norm of apartheid, neighborhood as a concept takes different dimension and characters share intimate relations though not in a straight manner. In fact, white-black supremacy theme is evident in the beginning, contrastingly in the later pages one can see that white characters are losing their western social elements and events portray eradication of western culture from African soil. Surprisingly when one looks at the post-colonial element, one can see that racial inequalities and prejudice fails towards the end and the powerless triumphs in different ways.

Thus, the narrative is a mixture of conflicts between cultural values and political dogmas. This is supported by the locations of the fiction, the University atmosphere as well as the farm atmosphere. During these conflicts one understands that characters are so tied up in their fate that they lack the power to acquire rights on themselves and what is

their own. This is seen both in the colonized and colonizers. This results in various life changing events like dismissal of David from his job, rape of Lurie by a black etc. in the fiction but the hope to live after such dreadful realities does not evade.

University and farm, both these locations have immense significance in understanding the socio-cultural aspect and psychological aspect of the times the fiction is representing. University depicts the idea of reintegrating moral values in this world which T S Eliot stated as *The Waste Land*. Farm as a location represents refuge for the disgrace faced by David and for Lurie it is a transcendental transformation of understanding and identifying herself after the rape incident. It also represents the diminishing feudal values when Petrus take over white mistress Lurie sexually and the entire idea of apartheid and white supremacy gets shackled. Another dimension is the barrenness of farm is the psychological state of mind of the characters. Therefore, one can see that locations depict absence of family bonding and disturbed relationships. These have even affected the emotions of these characters that they fail to sympathies with each other. Relationships whether it is teacher-student, father-daughter, master-servant, boyfriend-girlfriend, all these are disturbed, complicated and sometimes beyond the norms.

The idea of inter-generation sex is prevalent in the works of J M Coetzee. Disgrace has got the same element to bring in the tension of understanding what results in the end of pure romance in the postmodern world. The element of sex, which is explicit throughout the story, brings in a lot complication between power and personal relations. The relationships shown to be developing between David-Melanie and Petrus-Lurie seem to be of such nature. The characters get attached to each other but power play in between act as villain and break their attachment. Through these acts incest is being predominantly employed and thus relationship is quite complicated in nature. Thus in general terms men-women relationships depicted are in a very problematic way and there is always an atmosphere of doubt in the relationships which is a kind of struggle to understand oneself and one wants. Therefore, Psychoanalysis gives enough platform for one to study the emotional transformation and emotional upheavals faced by characters in different situations.

Each of the characters in the fiction is in process of a search; searching for their identity. Characters are made to feel that their life is incomplete and they have to strive to realize their identity; a kind of self-actualization motive. This idea of struggle between natives and foreigners and even in their own lives is evident in almost all the works of Coetzee and the ways characters react to such struggles are also depicted in the same manner, the author has just skillfully created a difference in the time frame and location of the stories. Ultimately the readers can understand that the lead characters David and Lurie try to adjust with their new circumstances and hope for a better world with their new identity. Though the loss of inherent identity creates difficulty to fit in with the new atmosphere, the characters try to reconcile with the demands of the situation, a kind of survival strategy.

Overall, the fiction talks about the requirement for a radical transformation both in the social life and in the individual life of people. Needless to say that Coetzee's passion is evident in the pages as a lot of autobiographical elements can be traced out. His childhood experiences have helped him sense what colonized and colonizers go through in this post-modern world. Towards the ending of the novel, Coetzee creates an atmosphere that brings back a sense of hope in the country and people in it. The beginning is characterized by destruction and devastation that lead to disillusionment but at the end there is an element of hope at all spheres whether it is social, political or psychological if the characters can reconcile with others to reconcile with their own self. Further philosophical, psychological, spiritual, social and semantic exploration of the fiction is possible with the application of the ideas of critics like Derrida and Roland Barthes where one can understand how the techniques of narration have been employed to give meaning to the whole fiction at different levels of interpretation.

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Nature of Apartheid in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Sachindra Nath Mishra

A large body of literary output from the African continent has emerged which has caught the attention of the literary world and academia alike. Much of the credit for the shift towards the black experience goes to the foregrounding of the major premises put forward by the postcolonial theorists since 1960s: foregrounding a new dimension of the African Experience, which had hitherto been defined, by white interpretations of Africa and its people.

This black experience forms the canvas for writers from the African continent and origin. Writers such as Chinua Achebe, Nadine Gordimer, Ngugi Wa Thiongo' and Wole Soyinka among others have based their creative work on this experience of oppression and subjugation which remains the same in any part of world, including their own homeland which is tainted by the colonial rule.

It was through the works of Alan Paton, Nadine Gordimer, Andre Brink and JM Coetzee that the apartheid as well as post-apartheid South Africa received global attentions. However, it is the handling of the black experience at the hands of Coetzee, which imparts uniqueness to his novels. While Gordimer and Brink are quite vociferous in taking up the political issues explicitly and often standing for the black cause, Coetzee has set a vantage point from where he merely observes yet seldom takes sides. Coetzee's works are received as being more 'aesthetic' given to their allegorical significance and author's distancing from political commitments. On the other hand, Gordimer's political commitments and sound depiction of grim realities in apartheid Africa often mars her fiction and her political inclinations are often "seen to impinge upon the quality of the novel's writing". (Barnett Clive, *Constructions of Apartheid*, pp. 291) They are "too banal and too explicit to be good art". (Annan. G, 'Love and Death in South Africa, pp. 8-10). Coetzee's fiction is remarkable for having allegorical qualities. For Bernard Levin, 'Coetzee eludes the trap imposed upon South African Literary writing of having to deal with immediate political realities by literally dis-locating his narrative.' (Barnett. pp 291) This feature of Coetzee's fiction not only makes him distinct and deeper than his contemporaries but also provides timelessness and universality to his works. The explorations of human conditions in his novels are not exclusively South African but rather more concerned with human nature in general. Clive Barnett observes

This interpretation of the allegorical qualities of Coetzee's novels allows any particular reference that they contain about culture or politics in South Africa to be written as simply another lesson of general moral significance. (Barnett pp. 292)

In the opinion of Andre Brink, writing about the South African history and society was a natural option for the South African writers because "it was a force that determined

the most immediate and urgent choices of our daily lives: whom to love? Whom to marry? What career to follow?. All of which means that, even then, we are aware of the intensely personal lurking within the public domain of experience." (Brink. Andre, *Post- Apartheid Literature*, pp. 12). In this regard, Coetzee emerges as a regional writer as his works resonate with the local history and concerns of the land to which he belongs. This balance between the private and the public and the political and the private is evident in his works such as *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), *Waiting for Barbarians* (1980), *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) and 'his last obviously South African Novel' *Disgrace* (1999).

Andre Brink notes a remarkable change in the literature produced in old South Africa (apartheid years) and the New South Africa (post-apartheid era). He notices that while the literature (specially fiction) produced during the apartheid era had a sense of 'balance between the private and the public', the literature produced in post apartheid era 'is being driven more by human and individual than by the 'situation', which may also imply a move from the socio-political towards the ethical and subjective.' (JM Coetzee in *Context and Theory*, Chapter 1, pg 11) However, the implication here is not that writers rejected or refrained from dwelling over the political, but rather there is reimagining the political, the social, the public, wherein the private becomes the political.

South Africa was torn between accepting and letting go; accepting the fresh breeze of equality and letting go off the scars of apartheid times. While the whites clung to their self -proclaimed superiority, the natives awaited the opportunity to exchange places. South Africa as a nation, fails to embrace and acknowledge its ethnic and racial diversity. 'In a culture obsessed with skin color, Coetzee's writings slice beneath the skin, to expose the very nerves and sinews defining those pathologies of power and perversion called South Africa.' (Irlam, Shaun, *JM Coetzee: Voicing the Heart of the Country*) Coetzee himself has maintained that South African literature is a literature in bondage, literature written from prison.

In the post-apartheid era race became an important and integral part of every aspect of an individual's life, social status, identity and power .The cultural rift between the two races became so deep that Coetzee himself calls it deeper than pity, deeper than honourable dealings. (Coetzee J.M., *Scenes from Provincial Life*, pp. 157)

Coetzee spent his formative years in the Karoo at a time when apartheid was at its peak. David Atwell notes that Coetzee's concentration on issues of race and colonialism to the exclusion of the other themes is the mark of his being primarily a regional writer within South Africa. As a regional writer, he uses the myth of the region as narrative in his fictions. The post apartheid era was a period of great socio-political turmoil as the power equation was shifting from the hands of the white minority who until now held "vast power and privilege over a disenfranchised black majority". (Clayton Cherry, *White Writing & Postcolonial Politics*, pp. 155) Thus, 'the South African scene was ripe for Coetzee's applications of the European absurdist fable to colonialism'. (Clayton, pp. 155)

At the crux of almost all the novels of Coetzee lay the multifold complexities arising from both the 'contact' of diverse cultures and the lack of it while existing together. The apartheid and the post-apartheid situations depicted in Coetzee's works manifest race as the biggest barrier within the African society, even in the post Apartheid era. The noble ideology of striking the right chord to achieve racial equality remains an unfulfilled enterprise in Coetzee's world. The post apartheid predicament, as disclosed to Coetzee goes a foot deeper into the racist smug.

Disgrace illuminates two of the key concerns of Coetzee's work: the historical motivations behind colonialism and its legacies in the post-colonial era .For Coetzee the post-colonial or the post Apartheid regime does not signal the formal disintegration of empire, but rather a new, and in many respects more insidious phase of colonization. (Raj, VP, Protagonist as colonizers in novels of JM Coetzee, pp. 127)

The novel revolves around the life of David Lurie, a fifty two year old professor of literature who gets sexually involved with one of his students, Melaine Issacs, who though compliant initially, reports the matter to the university administration. As a result, Lurie is asked by the discipline committee to either make a public confession of his guilt or leave the college of which Lurie chooses the latter. He goes to live with his daughter Lucy in Eastern Cape, who lives in a farm and breeds dogs. In an unfortunate turn of events, three black men from the neighbouring farm rape Lucy. However, despite Lurie's insistence, Lucy is reluctant to report the matter to the police though she knows the rapist's identity. She takes it as the repentance for some 'historical' guilt and chooses to live an undignified life like the dogs. Lurie too gives up his thoughts of redemption and accepts the dog like existence.

Disgrace continues to be an influential work in the canon of post-apartheid literature. Depicting the South Africa under transition during the years of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the novel has for its backdrop a rapidly changing and evolving South Africa. The book created much political furore giving way to animated discussions in the parliament wherein the African National Congress (ANC), then in power felt that the novel has portrayed SA in too cynical and hopeless light.

Coetzee conceived of *Disgrace* as early as 13 December 1994 as suggested by his first notebook entry for *Disgrace*. This was much before the legislation for TRC was passed through Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No 34 of 1995. However, it can't be denied that the hearings conducted by TRC (started in 1996) did have significant influence on the development of the novel which was published in 1999. It was during this period that Coetzee "conceived of a novel about a distinguished writer who is invited onto a truth commission but baulks at the prospect because he is about to be publicly exposed for sexual harassment". (Atwell David, *Life of Writing*, pp. 197). Equally important in the development of the novel, if not greater, was University of Cape Town's booklet concerning the 'Academic Staff Disciplinary Procedure.' A clause in the booklet read 'If

the misconduct warrants dismissal and the COI (Committee of Inquiry) decides upon dismissal but considers an alternative to dismissal acceptable, the COI may offer an alternative. If the offer is accepted by the staff member it shall apply'. A reference to this procedure is made in the novel when Lurie, during the disciplinary hearing, instead of being dismissed from the college is offered an alternative of confessing his guilt in public. However, Lurie refuses to show in public any sign of remorse or repentance.

Since the early 1990s was Coetzee was travelling all across the globe for delivering academic lectures. This was the time when Coetzee was grappling with questions such as "his relationship to realism, the bewildering challenges of representing cruelty and evil, the fortunes of the humanities in Africa" and to "test the ways in which historical guilt impinges on a writer's freedom". (Atwell, pp. 190). The repercussions of this 'global mobility' led to his withdrawal from the South African scene, which is unmistakably evident in *Disgrace*. The disenchantment from South Africa was further fostered by the socio-political transition following the democratic elections of 1994 that touched and influenced every sphere of public and personal life. Even the public institutions such as the universities did not go uninfluenced by the upcoming change wherein the academia took a backstage to make way for immediate political concerns. Lurie remarks 'These are puritanical times. Private life is public business.' (Coetzee J.M., *Disgrace*, pp. 66)

Disgrace takes up the issue of this change, in universities in particular and South African society in general wherein the "deep-psychology of colonial history lingered on". (Atwell, pp. 191) Coetzee was quite sure that the new constitution was not capable of addressing the problems confronting the rainbow nation (multi-colour), with race at its backdrop and that the "realities of apartheid society lay beyond a political solution". (Barnett, pp. 291) In *Disgrace*, Coetzee illustrates the "social and psychic toxicity that he must have felt could manifest itself at any point". (Atwell, pp. 291)

In the opinion of Abdulrazak Gurnah

Coetzee's writing, is firmly rooted in South African realities, in its history and its history and its political complexities and ironies, in the failure of human sympathy that is the consequence of colonialism and apartheid. (Gurnah, Abdulrazak, 'AWriter's Writer, pp. 13)

He also adds, "*Disgrace...is a reflection on post-apartheid South Africa and the choices open to whites.*" (Gurnah, pp. 13)

Dawn, the department's new secretary with whom Lurie sleeps, speaks of the troubled times in South Africa quite early in the novel. She says 'Now people just pick and chose which laws they want to obey. It's anarchy. How can you bring up children when there is anarchy all around?' (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, pp. 9). The anarchy that Dawn hints at is the upshot of a rather unsmooth socio-political and economic transition as South Africa entered in to post apartheid era. Lurie fails to come on terms with the devastating effects

of shift in power equations wherein the blacks turned hostile; while he hangs on to his self-superiority in being a white man. Demented and displaced, he is not able to accept this 'unprivileged' identity in a new South Africa. His liking for 'exotic' women, disappointment with Dawn who unlike Soraya was not compliant enough during the sexual act and later on sexual relationship with his student much younger to him; these traits stipulate a typical colonial attitude of a white man at work who seeks domination. His treatment of Melanie, especially when he forcefully enters her apartment and makes love to her, is akin to the treatment of black women by white men during the colonization or apartheid period. Though acknowledging his sexual relationship with Melaine, whom he calls the 'dark one', Lurie asserts that it was 'not rape, not quite that'. (*Disgrace*, pp. 25).

With its publication, *Disgrace* was "accused of racism, feeding national hysteria, and of reflecting white anxieties in post apartheid context". (Graham Valerie, *Reading the Unspeakable*, pp. 433). Valerie Graham argues that the novel performs a subversion of 'black peril narrative by concurrently framing, in words of Sol Plaahte a 'white peril'-the unvoiced sexual exploitation of black women by white men that existed for centuries (Graham, pp. 437). Media reports indicate that the incidents of sexual violence, increased considerably during late 1990s. However, what made the matters even worse was denial on government's part of such incidents and refusal to accept it as a social problem. The rape of Lucy allegorizes rape of white women by black men in post apartheid era, which did not go unnoticed in the media circles often as sensationalized accounts. According to Charles Van Onselen these "sensationalised media accounts of white women raped by black men were symptoms of the 'black peril' hysteria of the early twentieth century and contributed to oppressive legislative measures against black people in South Africa". (Onselen Van Charles, *The Witches of Subarbia*, pp. 50-52) African National Congress (ANC) contested against this sensalisation of crime by white media. Public Enterprise Minister Jeff Radebe in ANC's report made a reference to Coetzee's *Disgrace* and remarked "In this novel J.M. Coetzee represents, as brutally as he can the white people's perception of the post-apartheid black man." (ANC, News Briefing, April 2000) The ANC refuted the idea the black characters in the novel are representative of the majority of black people in South Africa. In its report submitted to South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in 1999 held that:

What is remarkable about the pieces of unashamedly racist journalism we have cited is that they do not go further to portray Mr Mbeki (then President) as an HIV-positive rapist of white women. (ANC, News Briefing)

Unlike David, Lucy has accepted the altered socio-political scenario in South Africa. She is completely aware of the fact that South Africa is plagued by vengeance, which is "like a fire. The more it devours, the hungrier it gets". (*Disgrace*, 112). She is able to come to terms with the mysterious and the ungovernable, which are beyond comprehension and therefore accepts the given state of affairs. It is this realization that checks her from reporting her rape to the police and makes the rape unspeakable for Lucy. The late 90s

was the period when treatment of rape survivors (especially white woman) by the police was making headlines. While David wants his daughter to report the unfortunate incident to the police, Lucy is not even direct in confronting her father. She says, "I think they do rape." (*Disgrace*, pp. 158) In response to David's consistent exhortation to seek police assistance, Lucy insists that

what happened to me is purely a private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business; mine alone...This place being South Africa.' (Disgrace, pp. 112). However, the shock has reached her soul, she is bewildered by the fact that the rape 'was so personal...done with such personal hatred.' She has no clue as to why 'they' hate her so much. However, at this moment, David has his moment with reality for the first time in the novel. He says, "It was history speaking through them...A history of wrong... it may have seemed personal, but it wasn't. It came down from the ancestors. (Disgrace, pp. 156)

David suggests Lucy to leave the place but she refutes the idea by stating that the mishaps that took place were "the price one has to pay for staying on." (*Disgrace*, pp. 158) This is akin to the price the black people paid for staying on their own land. A little later, she adds, "I will become a tenant on his land." (*Disgrace*, pp. 204) Her decision to marry Petrus is rather a practical one because she needs protection and patronage. She says "Objectively I am a woman alone. I have no brothers. I have a father, but he is far away and anyhow powerless in the terms that matter here. To whom I can turn for protection, for patronage?" (*Disgrace*, pp. 204). She realizes that the only way out for white people in South Africa is to accept the new reality as they are "left with nothing. Not with nothing but. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity...yes like a dog" (*Disgrace*, pp. 205). At the end of the novel, a dejected Lurie shows signs of similar kind of transition that South Africa was experiencing. Though reluctant and bewildered, he appears to make a move towards coming on terms with the post-apartheid South African reality and is seen euthanizing animals; "a self-sacrificial gesture" (Atwell, pp. 207), shedding off his inflated sense of racial superiority.

Conclusion

Despite facing criticism for its representation of black people and "exemplifying the white experience in post-apartheid South Africa" (Graham, pp.443) ; the novel continues to be a groundbreaking work in the canon of post-apartheid literature. *Disgrace* is, but a social document of the time and society in which it was written. Coetzee, in the novel, seldom takes an exclusive stand and deftly portrays the atrocities committed by both the 'whites' and the 'blacks' as the power dynamics gradually shifted in the rainbow nation. Coetzee was always apprehensive of the TRC achieving its objectives in a country like South Africa. Expressing his views about the TRC, Coetzee had said

In a state with no official religion, the TRC was somewhat anomalous: a court of a certain kind based to a large degree on Christian teaching and on a strand of Christian teaching accepted in their

hearts by only a tiny proportion of the citizenry. Only the future will tell what the TRC managed to achieve. (Poyner, Jane. J. M. Coetzee and the Idea of the Public Intellectual. pp. 130-133)

Andre Brink has called *Disgrace* as Coetzee's last South African novel. Coetzee was 'unimpressed by the moral climate in South Africa' and it was "in the gap that was opening between aspiration and reality, he [Coetzee] saw the potential for a novel". (Atwell, pp. 197.) Though the novel breathes in South African environment, the experiences it conveys are more human, more universal and "the real significance of Coetzee's writing lies in an apparent move beyond politics to universal themes of art or morality." (Barnett, pp. 291)

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Dominant Motifs in Writings of J. M. Coetzee

Simhachalam Thamarana & Kallepalli Mounika

Introduction

'My name is Eugene Dawn. I cannot help that. Here goes' begins the first novel of J. M. Coetzee which is a fictionalised history centred on the motif of power which Coetzee explores in many of his novels. The two parts of the novel, *The Dusklands* (1974), are set in twentieth century and eighteenth century respectively. Protagonist Eugene Dawn narrates the first part called 'The Vietnam War', which is introspective and sensitive. Eugene is a specialist in psychological warfare working for United States military during the Vietnam War. Eugene reports to his superior named Coetzee. As the novel progresses, Eugene under the pressure of his work stabs his son Martin, ending the narrative. The second part, 'The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee' is narrated by the megalomaniac and aggressive title character Jacobus Coetzee, a Boer who goes on a hunt expedition into the forests of South Africa, invades the lands of Hottentot tribe, who had once saved his life. Coetzee through his first person narratives succeeds in portraying the imperialism and power thirsty nature of men. Both the narrators of the novel, even though belonging to two different generations, shun the humanity within them and rebuff the feeling of guilt within them.

Reviewed as 'A powerful study of lust, degradation and Fantasy' by The Observer, the second novel, *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) by Coetzee is a twin novel of *The Dusklands*. Most of their literary works (postcolonial writings) were "representing interrelations between the coloniser and the colonised, such as *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *Midnight Children* (1981), *The Waiting for the Barbarians* (1990), *Disgrace* (1990) and *The English Patient* (1992)". (Thamarana, pp. 537-338). In fact, the novel was written in Afrikaans language translated into English by J.M. Coetzee himself. It is narrated by a claustrophobic unreliable narrator Magda, spinster daughter of a widowed white farmer. The novel is experimental kind of writing in a form of journal. As the journal progresses Magda's consciousness disorients and the fine line between reality and fantasy breaks. Coetzee hints that the narrator's madness could be the product of South African farm itself. The novel is constructed from the interior monologues of Magda which many times is not based in reality. This gives a multi-layered texture to the novel.

The theme of a hostile environment and isolation producing mental imbalance in characters is again explored in the next novel *Waiting for Barbarians* (1980). The novel centres on life of the Magistrate, who works for the Third Empire. The third Empire is a fictional entity and the novel is set in unspecified historical period showing the racism and fear of colonisation. The Magistrate acts as a mediator between the Colonel Joll from the Third Empire and the barbarians or the natives. As 'the Empire' tries to invade the land of Barbarians by waging a war, Magistrate starts to sympathise with the Barbarians and

when he tries to help them, he becomes an enemy of the Empire and is tortured and imprisoned. In this novel too, the motif of power is explored as the Magistrate falls from man of power to oppressed man.

Characters in novels of Coetzee at times identify their role to stop cruelty from advancing. While some characters like the Magistrate act to their instinct, other characters choose to vanish from society. This is apt to the character Michael of the novel *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983). The novel inspired from the work of Franz Kafka had earned Booker Prize for Coetzee. It begins with quote 'War is the father of all and king of all. Some he shows as gods, others as men. Some he makes slaves and others free.' The novel is set in Cape Town from where Michael begins his journey during an imaginary civil war that takes place in Apartheid era. The theme is the exploration of South African history through the inner narrative of a young gardener, Michael K, who has untameable determination to reach the village where his mother had spent her girlhood. He overcomes all the barriers put by the war to reach his destination. The novel ends with a note of optimism that people can live with sense of morals even under severe pressure.

The post-colonial theme is explored in the novel *Foe* (1986), which is retelling of Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). The female protagonist Susan Barton who is marooned on the island along with Crusoe and Friday narrates the novel. The issues of relationship between colonizer and colonised, relation of gender to power and race are explored in this novel. 'He does not know what freedom is. Freedom is a word, less than a word, a noise, one of the multitude of noises I make when I open my mouth' (Coetzee, 1987,p. 42).

Age of Iron (1999) has a female narrator, Mrs. Currens who is like Susan Barton and other characters is deeply troubled and affected by the society in which she lives. The novel is written in form of extended letters, which the narrator, Mrs. Currens writes to her daughter living in America. Set in Cape Town during the times of Apartheid, Mrs. Currens a retired white professor, like the Magistrate in *Waiting for Barbarians* empathises with the oppressed, i.e., the Black population in the country. After witnessing the violence taking place against Blacks, she becomes a surrogate mother to a vagabond Vercueil and her house keeper. Susan like other characters sees that cruelty is within all humans. The novel again, like the others show, the inward journey of the central character and realistically portray the South African condition during Apartheid.

Considered as "A fascinating study of dark mysteries and creativity, grief, relationships between fathers and sons, and of great Russian themes of love and death" by The Wall Street Journal, *The Master of Petersburg* (1994) goes back to 1869, to cover the life of Russian writer Fyodor of Dostoevsky. The central character alienates himself from the society that is dominated by fascism. Dostoevsky returns to St. Petersburg from his hometown Dresden, after coming to know the death of his stepson. The novel further is about Dostoevsky's attempts to know if his dead son had loved him or despised him while

he was alive. The story here again takes place within the psyche of Dostoevsky and not externally.

Disgrace (1999), hailed as the “greatest novel in last 25 years” by The Observer, and had won for its author the most coveted Booker Prize for second time. The novel is set in post-Apartheid South Africa where blacks have taken over whites. David Lurie a womanizing white professor, teaching romantic poetry is dispelled from his job for seducing one of his students. Lurie moves to live with his daughter Lucy in Eastern Cape where he experiences the violence caused by blacks during the post-apartheid era. Lurie sees his daughter being raped and their farm being taken over by their black farm help. Lucy like Coetzee’s other vulnerable characters becomes passive and agoraphobic after the attack on her. The motif of power is shown in this novel, as to the end the future of Lucy is bleak. Lucy will now have to marry and surrender her farm to her black servant who has impregnated her. Lucy, thus, transforms from the oppressor to the oppressed. David starts working in an animal shelter along with Bev Shaw, where they dispose the abandoned dogs. David realises that both he and dogs possess souls. His journey of humiliation and fall makes him sympathetic towards suffering animals. ‘So if we are going to be kind, let it be out of simple generosity, not because we feel guilty or fear retribution.’ (pg 74, Penguin pub) The novel shows the inner journey of Lurie, who to the end beings his spiritual journey as he tries to do his penance by working at the animal centre.

It is in *Disgrace* (1999) where J.M. Coetzee had begun to use the motif of his characters empathising and considering themselves one with the animals that is seen in his next novels. Coetzee who is a critic of animal cruelty and a supporter of animal rights movement propagates his ideas through his characters. ‘One must love what is nearest. One must love what is to hand, as a dog loves.’ (*Age of Iron*, 89) Further, the characters in novels like *Age of Iron*, *Life and Times of Michael K*, *Elizabeth Costello* and *Slow Man* show how morality inspires people to lead a good and meaningful life.

Elizabeth Costello (2003) is a novel where Coetzee promulgates his ideas of animal rights. In this novel, Coetzee had created the character of Elizabeth Costello who acts as his alter ego. Elizabeth in the novel is a renowned writer who is lonely and confused old woman. Elizabeth understands that people find her opinions annoying which makes her to isolate herself even more. Elizabeth writes *The House on Eccles Street*, which is the retelling of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* from the perspective of its character Molly Bloom. The novel divided into eight chapters has chapters talking about the cruelty against animals, criticises the slaughtering of animals and criticises the philosophy that gives more importance to humans over non-speaking creatures. Apart from these, there are lectures on the topics, the duties of the author, the ethical potential of fiction, relation of art and politics and the continuity between the aesthetic and the erotic.

The first novel written by Coetzee after receiving the Nobel Prize in 2003 is *Slow Man* (2005). The setting of this novel unlike the previous novels is Australia, the country to

which Coetzee had relocated in 2002. The story explores the relationship between the central characters and the people around him. Paul Rayment is another troubled character who loses his leg in his middle-age after meeting a bicycle accident. He engages a nurse, Marijana to take care of him. Marijana comes to live with him along with her son Drago whom Paul treats like his own son. Tension builds up in the novel as Paul's feelings towards Marijana and Drago becomes complex. To make the novel more complicated enters the character Elizabeth Costello, who tries to expose the inner thoughts of Paul. This novel successfully discovers the interior thoughts of Paul and journey of his life.

The motif of South African history is best brought out in the semi-autobiographical trilogy memoirs of Coetzee compiled in his work *Scenes from Provincial Life* published in year 2011. The volume is a combination of *Boyhood* (1997), *Youth* (2002) and *Summertime* (2009). The history of South Africa is narrated straight by the author who had the first-hand experience of it. Each stage of life of author parallels with the stages of African history. The Daily Telegraph writes about *Boyhood* (1997) as 'Boyhood is a deeply-felt and utterly compelling account of a South African childhood: the narrative style is as spare and lean as the Karoo flatlands which form its backdrop'. Coetzee in this book writes of South Africa half a century. He shows how the Apartheid and colonialism existing in Africa of his childhood had made impact on his life and his relationship with others. Being the minority he faces facial prejudices and identity crisis.

Youth (2002), the second part of the volume begins with famous quote 'Wer den Dichter will verstehen, muss in Dichters Lande gehen' by Goethe which means 'whoever would understand the poet, must go into poet's country'. As the quote says, the author to escape from his life in South Africa like Mrs. Curren's daughter in *Age of Iron*, moves to London in search of better life. However, even there he finds himself as an outsider struggling to fulfil his dreams. *Summertime* (2009) is the final part of memoir in which John Coetzee returns to Cape Town from London. The struggle to the author to write his first book is narrated along the background of tensions that South Africa had underwent in middle 1970's due to its Nationalist Government. Therefore, a reader of Coetzee's novels, with necessary background knowledge about the author including biographical as well as colonial concerns in terms of dominant motifs, is helpful for a better understanding and critical appreciation too.

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Paradoxical truths in Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Vaishnavi. P

J. M. Coetzee, South African novelist and Nobel Laureate has received fame as a significant writer in the twentieth century. He is often termed as an elusive writer and he explores the ontological issues in his fictional works. Through his simple style he reveals the mood of the speaker in clear terms. The novel *Disgrace* deals with the paradoxical truths that exist in a society. An attempt has been made to present the paradoxical truths, namely the game between the power and powerless, the educated and the mundane, city and the country, theory and reality, internal beauty and external beauty, man and woman, ego and submission.

Apartheid and post apartheid

The novel deals with the supremacy of the blacks in the post apartheid era. At the beginning of the novel, Dr. Lurie, 52 year protagonist, a well-settled professor of communications at Cape Town Technical University loses his position as he takes advantage of a black student. Having lost his job he decides to spend some time with his daughter, Lucy in the country of South Africa. Lucy stays in a simple home and farms her "piece of earth" in Grahamstown. She is dependent on Petrus the black farmer who was initially her assistant-the gardener and "dog-man", but now her neighbor and a successful farmer. Lucy depends on Petrus to cultivate and sell her produce. Towards the end of the novel she becomes dependant on Petrus in order to protect herself, and her yet to-be-born child (out of a sexual assault by three black men). Lucy becomes a victim and a minority in the post apartheid era and refuses to report the rape to the Police. Lucy's words to her father, David "... as far as I am concerned, what happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business, mine alone" (48) clearly state that the tables have turned against the minority whites in the post apartheid country of South Africa.

David continuously coaxes Lucy to report the assault to the police so that the intruders and rapists would be punished. He states "Then help me. Is it some form of private salvation you are trying to work out? Do you hope you can expiate the crimes of the past (apartheid era) by suffering in the present? (49) David feels that Lucy is suffering today as a minority in the black dominated post apartheid South African countryside. Lucy becomes the victim she hides herself and refuses to lead a normal life. "She does not reply. She would rather hide her face, and he knows why. Because of the disgrace. Because of the shame." (50) She is even ready to become the third wife of Petrus and is ready to give her land to Petrus for protection in the future. David finally realizes that "It is a new world they live, Lurie's elderly father and David Lurie, disciple of nature poet William Wordsworth and until recently professor at the Cape Technical University." (50) Dr. Lurie

(David) a well learned white professor who took advantage of a timid young black student is now forced to be on the side of the victim and suffer the pain in the post apartheid era. An important fact that Dr. Coetzee apparently tries to present is that the inequalities continue in the post-apartheid era but the victimized have now become the victimizers.

Educated and the mundane

Dr. Lurie considered him as an educated and influential professor at the Cape Town Technical University. He did earn a lot of respect from the students' parents. Melanie's father's words "Professor... But if you talk to her, maybe you can persuade her to think again. She has such respect for you" (17) reveal the respect that Dr. Lurie had. The respect and fear could be considered as the two reasons that silenced the girl into submission. Professor Lurie considered himself above the committee and refused to condescend before the jury. He was hypocritical and andro-centric in his attitude. This is revealed through his conversation towards his second ex-wife.

However, the situation is opposite during his stay at the countryside. During David's stay at the countryside he watches soccer on television. The commentary of the game is in Sotho and Xhosa languages, both of which David cannot apprehend. Thus a professor is as good as an illiterate as he does not know the regional language. David despises the life and the occupation of the Shaws. However, he later understands that "there is ... no higher life. This is the only life there is which we share with animals. That's the example that people like Bev try to set." (32) The simple, mundane but ambitious people like Petrus succeed in the countryside thus challenging the concept the academic credentials. Dr. Lurie considered him above the committee or his peers and despised the Shaws and the sick animals at their clinic. Lucy expresses the real status of man in her words, "... there is no higher life. This is the only life there is. Which we share with the animals." And that humans should be kind to animals and that kindness should not come of guilt or fear of retribution" (74)

City and country

Dr. Lurie resigns his job in the city, after he is accused of molesting a student. He decides to visit his daughter, Lucy, in the eastern landscape. Dr. Lurie is specialized in teaching Wordsworth, the nature poet but finds the country, unpalatable and different from Wordsworth's beautiful description of Nature and the greatness in simple living. David is unable to appreciate the simple living style of his daughter. "This is how she makes a living from the kennels, and from selling flowers and garden produce. Nothing could be more simple." (27) The villagers resorted to grueling labor on their fields growing roots, flowers and generally sold them at the weekend market. Dr. Lurie himself states that both these places (Cape Town and countryside) were like two countries two opposite places-one the fast, modern and alluring city, while the other, a silent, slow and

remote countryside. David does not have a positive opinion of Petrus or the Shaws, when he first meets them. He despises their simple dressing and modest living. But later he learns that Petrus is “a man of substance” and that he is considered successful according to the country standards. Bev Shaw later acts as the foster mother to Lucy (especially after the assault) and also as the bridge between David and Lucy. Bill Shaw readily helps David and Lucy when they were attacked and Bill’s statement “What else are friends for? You would have done the same” (43) rather surprises David.

When David returns to the city, Cape Town, he is at once at home. His sexual desires creep-in the moment he sees Desiree, (Melanie’s sister) and the moment he thinks of young Melanie. David immediately appreciates the food offered by the Isaacs that he so long missed at the countryside. David is at once at home with the people and the manners of the city. He strongly condemns the countryside as unsafe for Lucy although his home at Cape Town is looted and he himself is accused of victimizing a student. David is unable to recognize that problems are the same in the city or in the country the only difference is that he is the problem creator in the city and his daughter is at the receiving end in the country.

Theory and reality

Dr. Lurie the narrator throughout the novel finds the dichotomy between theory and reality. Dr. Lurie boasts of being the fan of Wordsworth, the greatest Nature poet. On the other hand he finds it very difficult to work on the small patch of earth that Lucy owns. The beautiful descriptions of country life in Wordsworth’s Prelude is absent in the back bending work at the countryside. He finds country life boring and very slow. He is not able to feel one with the country people especially Bev Shaw and Bill. Dr. Lurie finds Lucy’s dressing style as plain and asexual and Bev Shaw’s as poor. He also feels that the country does not run by just rules and coaxes his daughter to settle in some other place. As the novel proceeds Lurie is able to understand that Bev Shaw is more sensible, capable as she is able to provide enough support for the physically and morally suffering Lucy. Dr. Lurie is surprised at the ease with which Bev Shaw is able to communicate with the dogs and other animals that come to her clinic. He feels that she almost controls them. Finally even Dr. Lurie confides in Bev Shaw and has a temporary relationship with her.

Dr. Lurie, in fact, openly agrees that he is a womanizer and he also plans to write a chamber opera on Byron’s affairs with his mistress. Gradually, he loses interest in his pet project as he slowly matures after his daughter’s molestation as he finds reality far from theory. Thus, professor Lurie transforms from an over-confident impulsive womanizer with a strong attraction to artificiality of the city to a simple, down-to-earth father of a boer vrou, Lucy. It is the unconditional love for his daughter that brings in the transformation.

Beauty-physical and internal

The most interesting part of the novel is the revelation of Dr. Lurie's feelings towards woman. The reader gets a sensuous picture of the woman that Lurie meets, a woman described from a male point of view. Physical beauty is another important theme in the novel. It is David's uncontrollable desire to the physical beauty of women that has led to his 'disgrace'. The prurient David is immediately attracted to the beauty of Soraya; to the perfect figure of Melanie and he recollects the exciting escapades with his ex-wife, Rosalind. He clearly explains the enjoyment he has experienced with these three women and many others, some much younger than him. David's eye for beauty makes him an admirer of Wordsworth and his lasciviousness inspires him to write a chamber opera on Byron's libidinous escapades. David has an eye for dressing and is unimpressed when he first meets his daughter Lucy, a lesbian in asexual clothes. He is in fact attracted to Melanie for her perfect figure and gaudy clothes. David is very unhappy with Bev Shaw as he states that he despises women who do not take care of themselves. However, as the novel proceeds he begins to help Bev Shaw at her clinic and even has an affair with Bev Shaw. He is able to appreciate the internal power, mercy, care and understanding that Bev bestows on Lucy, David and the soulless animals that come to her clinic. He amusingly states that he would no longer call her "poor Bev" because if she was poor he was bankrupt.

Powerful and the powerless

The novel *Disgrace* is in fact a game between the powerful and powerless. Dr. Lurie is in a powerful position as a professor in a reputed college. He has control over the students thus coaxes one of his students to succumb to the "Eros" in him. Petrus, once Lucy's helper becomes a symbol of rising black power in Grahamstown, South Africa. Bev Shaw runs an animal clinic that does with the disposal of weak, unwanted pets. She occupies a powerful position as she can put an end to these hapless creatures. On the other hand, Lucy is a white farmer cultivating her small holding at the country. She is proved powerless before the mighty blacks that dominate the area. Although she is sexually assaulted by three angry men whom she does not even know refuses to report the matter to the police because she knows that she would never get justice. The hate that Lucy confesses to have seen in the men might also mean the hate that an androcentric world has for females. She succumbs and agrees to marry Petrus in order to protect herself from such attacks in the future. The hapless Lucy has to bear further humiliation as she become pregnant from the sexual assault and has to bear the child of the powerful men who took advantage of her weak position. Moreover, the weak, sick, unwanted and hapless animals are at the mercy of their owners and are put to death by Bev when they approach her.

The powerful and raw animal instincts of David are controlled towards the end of the novel. Dr. Lurie's relationship with Melanie is described as "undesired to the core. As though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when

the jaws of the fox close on its neck.” (12) These words reveal the power of Lurie and the powerlessness of Melanie. There are two different situations in the novel. In the first situation it is white male power and the submission of weak black female powerlessness. In the second situation it is the dominance of black middle-aged male power and the meek submission of the white youthful female powerlessness. Whereas, in the city it is the power of the white educated professor and the powerlessness of a young, meek black student. She is described to have “stepped out in the forest where the wild wolf prowls” (72) and these words reinstate her powerlessness.

Man and woman

In the novel, *Disgrace* we find that the third person narrator is sometimes undistinguishable from David. The whole story is andro-centric or from the male point of view. The reader gets clear insights to the thoughts of a man and his assumptions, expectations and illusions about women. Dr. Lurie, the womanizer, gives a clear insight of his experiences and opinions and of his sexual relationship with Soraya, another Soraya, Melanie, Rosalind (the department secretary) a German tourist, Bev Shaw to name a few. “With his height, his good bones, his olive skin, his flowing hair, he could always count on a degree of magnetism. If he looked at a woman in a certain way, with certain intent, she would return his look, he could rely on that. That was how he lived, for years for decades, that was the back bone of his life.” (4). His one year long Thursday afternoons with Soraya in a hotel room is more physical sans love. He also gives his opinion about Petrus’s wife. The lascivious professor, forces the student into submission as he is affected by “an anxious flurry of promiscuity and was in the grip of something “... perhaps he does not own himself either...” “because a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone. It is party bounty that she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it.” (10) Probably this was the mindset of the men who sexually assaulted Lucy. Here Petrus also uses his tactics to force Lucy into submission. It is with great power that Lucy is able to withstand the distraught caused by male intruders. “She would rather hide her face and known why. That is what their visitors have achieved, that is what they have done to this confident, modern young woman.... How they put her in her place, how they showed her what a woman was for.” (49) To worsen the situation she is continually tormented by David to act according to his wishes and move away as he considers the place unsafe for Lucy. Lucy finally manages to withhold her stand and state that she will not leave the place and is ready to become Petrus’ third wife provided her privacy is protected. The novel does not just deal with slavery but the problem of subjection and subjugation. Dr. Lurie seduces his student although he gets hints that she does not like to have an affair with him. She later lodges a complaint in the University against Dr. Lurie which leads to his downfall. Thus the novel deals with the victimization of Melanie and Lucy both women in one side, a black woman in a city and a white woman in a countryside where each is a minority.

David calls his victimization of the student an “enriching” experience; he is not able to feel the pain that she has experienced, similarly the men who assault Lucy do not feel

the pain. David although loves his daughter is unable to provide solace to her because he is not able to put himself in her shoes. Bev states "You don't understand, you weren't there...Lucy's intuition is right...The question is, does he have it in him to be the woman?" David states that he is unable to sense the feelings of a daughter thus "I can't help feeling that, by comparison with being a mother, being a father is a rather abstract business." (28) The novel *Disgrace* is the disgrace brought over by Dr. Lurie due to his stubbornness and sexual promiscuity and the disgrace that Lucy is forced to swallow due to the worthlessness of a white landlady in a post-apartheid countryside. The novel could also be considered to question the existence of a woman without the involvement of man as Lucy is regarded a lesbian because she lived with a woman and had no male relationships. The male-female dichotomy reaches its height when Petrus states that he and his shy wife have been praying for a boy because a boy can lead his sisters and also because girls are always an extra burden. However, the physically strong David finds himself trembling at the hospital after the assault whereas Lucy the worst affected is all strength and full of purpose. Petrus also has words of admiration for Lucy at the party. Moreover, David's ex-wife Rosalind is able to see through the hypocrisy of David and expose his faults from time to time. The novel puts forward the assumptions, capabilities and limitations of man and woman in a society.

Ego and submission

The novel presents the psychological journey of Dr. Lurie and his transition from an egoistic professor to a submissive and a loving father. Dr. Lurie is egoistic during his trial at the beginning of the novel. He refuses to budge and to behave in a condescending manner before the enquiry board. He audaciously states that he is not ready to repent for his past deeds and instead states that his affair has in fact "enriched" him. His words "I am a grown up man. I am not receptive to being counseled. I am beyond the reach of counseling." (22) His Don quixotic behavior leads to his downfall and he decides to spend some days with his daughter. His debacle at the college haunts him wherever he goes but David does not change his attitude. He does not pay heed to the advice of his ex-wife Rosalind. David and Lucy's attack by the three young men at their house shakes his confidence. He finds himself trembling at the hospital while the worst affected Lucy is strong, composed and firm.

David's love for Lucy begins to bring the change in him. He is ready to bear the cold behavior of Lucy and he controls his hatred for Petrus only for the sake of Lucy. David bends his ego and apologizes to the Izaacs for his misbehavior with their daughter, Melanie. When Dr. Lurie learns that his daughter is pregnant due to the sexual assault of the intruders he is all the more beaten. He decides to stay at the country and be a support to Lucy. He carries on his work at the Animal Care clinic of Bev Shaw but no longer has an affair with her. David who never gave any importance to animals feels for the two goats that were bought to be killed for Petrus' grand party. David who initially hates to take the sick old dog for a walk finds the dog tolerable. Dr. Lurie is accused of living double, triple

lives bows down for the sake of Lucy. He in fact repents that he is not able to set a proper example for Lucy. Dr. Lurie's sexual aptitude is compared to animal instincts and once he is able to control the animal in him he submits his ego. He also states that although he was not present at the scene when Lucy was assaulted he is able to sense her pain. "Save me cries his daughter, her words clear, ringing immediate. It is possible that Lucy's soul did indeed leave her body and come to him." (45) Towards the end of the novel David states in his conversation to Bev Shaw "Are you giving him up? Yes, I am giving him up." (93) This could be interpreted as giving up the animal in him-his ego. The novel ends with I give up indicating his submission to Lucy, to reality and love.

Thus Dr. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* exposes the paradoxical truths of racial and gender inequalities, the discordant truths of city-country, educated-mundane, power-powerless and ego-submission that exist in every society.

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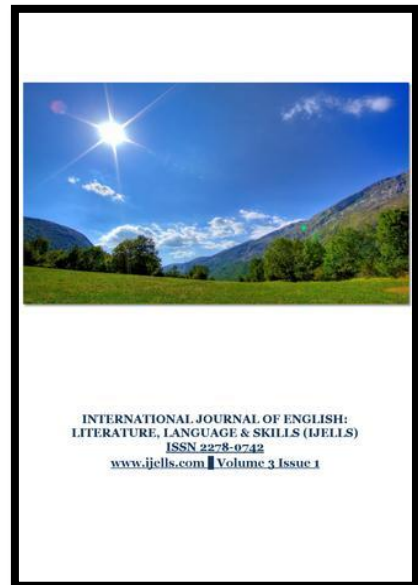
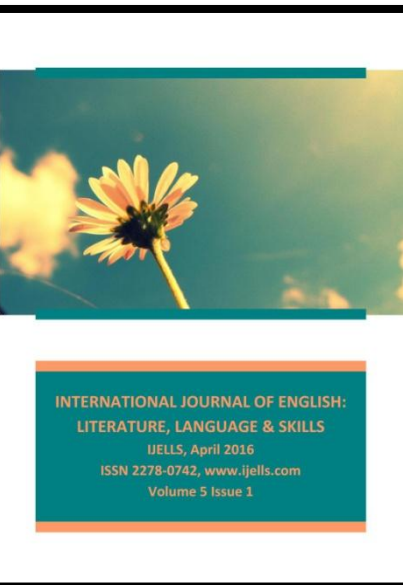
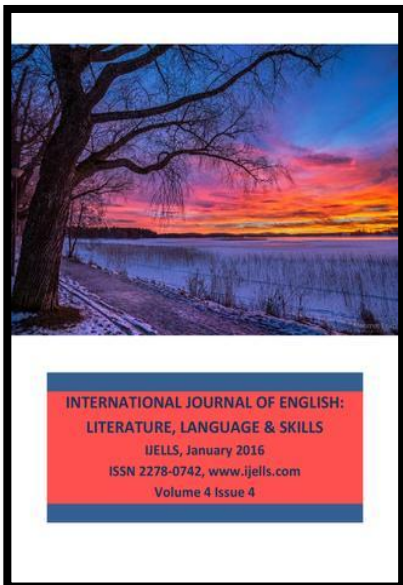
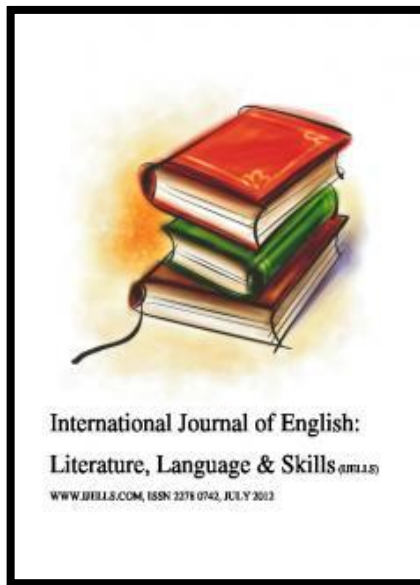
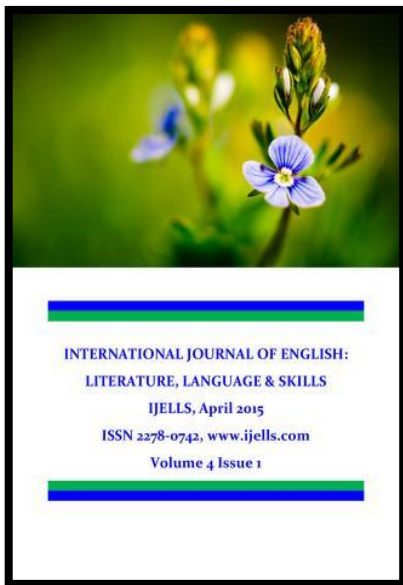
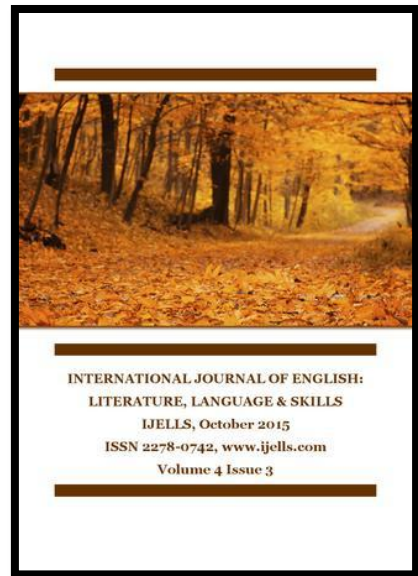
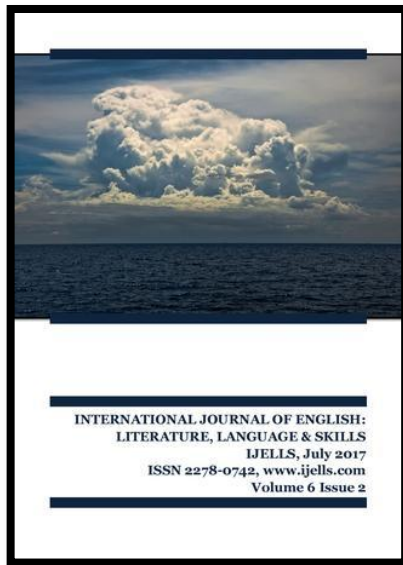
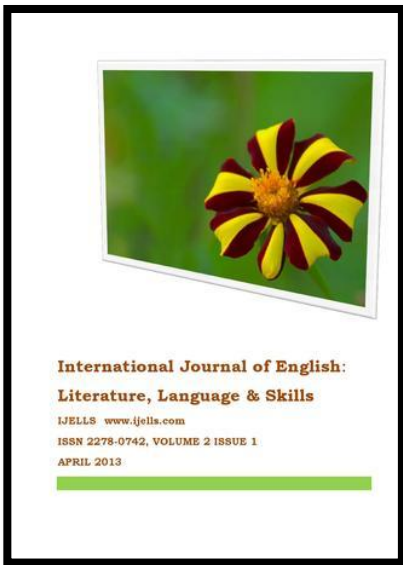
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