CHAPTER 6
Apartheid, Oppression, Counter-Violence: A Foucauldian Reading of J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

J. M. Coetzee, the South African novelist, twice Booker Prize winner and Nobel Laureate, among the contemporary novelists, is perhaps the only one who is rigorously engaged in exploring issues crucial to the contemporary fictional discourse, choosing his own voice of articulation and in particular, locating himself in the complex historical past of apartheid and in the fractured social present of South Africa. Coetzee's reflexive self consciousness that runs through all his works informs his understanding of the historical, political and social forces as they act and interact with each other in the context of South Africa. Coetzee's work has been considered as particularly interesting for academic criticism, the reason being the apparent versatility of Coetzee's writing strategies that combine an extremely sophisticated style, a high level of theoretical elaboration, an emphasis on critical idioms from such different theoretical fields as modern linguistics, post-structuralism and post-colonial studies and a provoking ethical and political representation of the violent history of South Africa based on personal experiences. Eric P. Louw contends, "Coetzee is widely considered one of the most renowned and celebrated writers, who is known for the fact-based portrayal of his native country both during and after apartheid, and is further distinguished by his acute awareness of marginalization, his affinity for rural settings, and his unique take on ethno-linguistic identity" (Louw 126).

John Maxwell Coetzee is one of the most remarkable and prominent writers of South Africa who is known for the graphic, complex and realistic portrayal of his native country both during and after apartheid. He was born to Zacharias and Vera Wehmeyer Coetzee on February 9, 1940. Zacharias was a lawyer and Vera worked as teacher. The formation of the Nationalist Party in 1948 brought grave consequences for the family. Zacharias was dismissed from the job of government lawyer for his opposition to the legislation of apartheid, so the family had to move to the family farm in Worchester. They kept sheep farm and fruit canning factory. The young John Maxwell, merely eight, developed a fond affinity for the farm and came to understand what it was to be marginalized. In 1951, the family moved back to Cape Town where Zacharias opened up a law firm but it failed owing to shortage of money. The family had to live on the small income of the mother. Coetzee attended Saint Joseph High School and then the

In 1962 Coetzee married Philippa Jubber with whom he had two children Nicholas and Gisela. The early death of his son Nicholas at the age of 23, cast a deep influence on his novel *The Master of Petersburg*. In 1965 Coetzee moved to the U.S.A. to pursue his Ph.D thesis on "The English Fiction of Samuel Backett, An Essay in Stylistic Analysis" from the University of Texas. From 1968 to 1971, he taught at the State University of New York and during this period he wrote his first novel *Dusklands*. His application for permanent residence in the U.S.A. was rejected, so he came back to teach at the University of Cape Town in 1972, where he became Professor of General Literature in 1983. He also delivered lectures for the Semesters at the State University of New York from 1984 to 1986 and this University conferred on him an Honorary Doctorate of Letters in 1989. From 1999 to 2001 Coetzee remained Distinguished Professor of Literature as he also held visiting Professorship at John Hopkins, Harvard and Chicago University in the U.S.A. The University of Oxford bestowed on him an Honorary Doctorate in 2002 which was a rare honour to his credit.

Coetzee has won many prestigious literary awards which helped his fame shoot in the academic circles. He received the Booker Mc Connell in 1983 for his novel *The Life and Times of Michael K* and Coetzee made a history of winning the Booker Prize again for his *Disgrace* in 1999. *Disgrace* won him the Nobel Prize in 2003 but it was not greeted favourably in South Africa because the incidents of gang rape of a white woman by Black men in the post-colonial period caused a turmoil, so Coetzee had to leave South Africa to migrate to Australia. The censorship board in the apartheid period was highly annoyed by *Disgrace* and condemned severely the depiction of Black violence, which they thought, provoked racial hatred and animosity.

Coetzee is basically concerned with the South African reality and represents the complexity in unfolding the issues of identity, power and freedom. He reexamines the African conditions in the context of the modern European literary tradition without undermining the basic issues that shaped the African reality in the apartheid and post-apartheid segments of time in the history of South Africa. His major novels are rooted in South Africa, implicitly and
explicitly and became universal and relevant for all time as the basic tenets of identity power and freedom are questioned in more perplexing ways and re-examined. Almost all the major characters of his novels undergo the process of identity crisis and losing power and position because of the power structure of the colonizers or the changing power equations. Coetzee interweaves the critical issues of identity, power with a strong undercurrent of protest, revolt and anguish against the system of the day. His novels constantly remind us that oppression, torture, injustice and victimization are not only confined to South Africa but they are universal. Robert M. Post remarks, "By siding with the oppressed, he has become one of them" (Post 72). In such a terrible situation the very idea of identity and position crumble. Power pervades throughout and it controls, marginalizes and distorts truth and identity of an individual in the major works of Coetzee. A human being's uniqueness is brutally crushed by those in power and he has to live like an insignificant and powerless creature outside the community, history and time. 

It is important to bear in mind that European influences have long helped to shape the South African literary tradition, so Coetzee can be said to be working within this tradition. Even so, the influence on Coetzee of post-structuralist thinking places a stress on textuality, not previously seen in his country's literature. Consequently his works represent an implicit challenge to the orthodox prevailing realism in the South African novel. Coetzee does not necessarily separate European culture from the field of colonial domination, hence the recourse to a European tradition. His key influences include Defoe, Beckett, Kafka, Lawrence, Dostoevsky, Hegel and Derrida.

For Coetzee, the idea of European literary genealogy may be the source of a shared cultural language or the source of opposition to the force of brute history. Yet he is also sensitive to the ways in which European culture is linked to the business of colonial domination. Almost all his works are based on the theme of the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, reality and abstraction and the incapability of parents and children to help each other in crisis. In the post-apartheid period, his fiction became more abstract and literary having relevance to the changed times. In Disgrace, Coetzee presented the melodramatic and graphic story of a white woman who is raped by three black men to emphasize the hazards of life in post-apartheid South Africa, where guilt and bitterness still live side by side.

Dusklands (1974) was his first novel which was shaped by his cosmopolitan outlook, finds his roots in South Africa through his ancestors Jacobus Coetzee delineates the conflict of
mind and body in a remarkable manner. *The Heart of the Country* (1977) was the first of Coetzee's works published in both South Africa and the U.S.A. in the stream of consciousness form, is based on the theme of violence and incestuous love of a white lady Magda with her father on a lonely Cape farm. She is raped by a coloured servant, her father is killed by that servant and she is left all alone on that farm to face the mental agony. *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) solidifies his strong international reputation, tells us about an amateur collector of historical records, who tries to save the old glorious history of the Empire so that it may not be destroyed completely at the hands of the savages and barbarians.

*The Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) fetched him the prestigious Booker Prize, in which he focussed on the oppression of a single character. The novel had far more naturalistic qualities, depicts the unrest, riots and lack of law and order in South Africa. Michael K is a typical Coetzee character: lonely, isolated and having cleft lip, flees with his mother from Cape Town, but the mother dies on the way and broken hearted he has to return all alone to find his roots in his society at Cape Town where he works as a gardener and gets consolation in his work as well as people around him. *Foe* (1987) was a clever reinterpretation of Daniel Defoe's classic *Robinson Crusoe*. Its material was a stylistic departure from the previous works of Coetzee but it keeps the specific South African origin and its socio-political atmosphere.

*Age of Iron* (1990) was Coetzee's first novel to address the South African political system directly. It is the story of Mrs. Curren, a retired teacher, dying of cancer, who faces the reality of apartheid in her home country. *Doubling the Point* (1992) was also a non-fictional work which is also written in the same vein. *The Master of Petersburg* (1994) acknowledges the power of contemporary politics to restrict the imagination of the writer, his ongoing struggle to resist the dominance of the political over the literary, an inevitable aspect of that rivalry with history. *Giving Offence* (1996) describes his theoretical post structuralism. These are essays on censorship to favourable reviews. *Boyhood* (1997) and *Youth: Scenes from Provincial Life and Memoirs* (2002) which tell of his early life and traced the roots of his spiritual affinity with the dispossessed and marginalized ones.

*Disgrace* (1999), acclaimed as the best of Coetzee's novels in literary circles and winner of two most coveted and prestigious Booker Prize and Nobel Prize. *The Lives of Animals* (1999) is the story of a novelist who comes to examine animal and human relationships seems to be inspired and influenced by Orwell's famous novel *Animal Farm* but it is quite different. *Elizabeth
Costello (2003) embodies the heroine's moral philosophy and animal rights through a domestic drama where she opposes the views of her daughter-in-law Norma for her treatment with the ape in the cage. Here we have all sympathy with Elizabeth. Slowman (2005) is a self-conscious attempt to relate his own position in Australia as an immigrant. The novel raises the sensitive question for Australians of how these migrants should be received in a nation built on the efforts of the migrants. The Diary of A Bad Year (2007) shows Coetzee's own ethnicity and his public role and in this novel he comes very close to being autobiographical. The Childhood of Jesus (2013) is his latest work which is worth mentioning.

This chapter of my research project aims at ascertaining the relevance of Foucauldian concept of Power/Knowledge Discourse in the Booker Prize winner and Nobel Laureate John Maxwell Coetzee's renowned masterpiece Disgrace. Disgrace has become Coetzee's most controversial and discussed novel, inspiring what a renowned critic calls "a flood of …response" (Randall 212). In addition to being a commercial success, some have asserted that it is "a literary triumph" (Graham 4). Reading between the lines, one can easily find that the novel fully and clearly illustrates the Foucauldian concept. Post-apartheid is the milieu of the novel and the novel is the first attempt of the writer to delineate graphically the situation in post-apartheid South Africa. Disgrace has been described by Gareth Cornwell as "Coetzee's first mainly realist novel offering a pessimistic view of post-apartheid race, gender and power relations" (Cornwell 248). Gerald Gaylard remarks, "Disgrace is a novel with layers of intertextuality promoting a subtle analysis of cultural history" (Gaylard 315). Rita Bernard says, "Disgrace is indicative of Coetzee's abiding interest in the colonial pastoral and suggests that a crisis of definitions, relationships and responsibilities lies at the heart of this troubling post-apartheid work" (Bernard 384). Elleke Boehmer says, "The novel raises the question of what it is to come to terms with a history of terror and subjection, both for the perpetrator and the victim and posits a secular atonement" (Boehmer 342). The novel unfolds the dynamics of power when the changing power equations mar personal relations. It presents a bleak picture of the new South Africa where the whites have lost their supremacy and the blacks are emerging domineering and settling accounts of the history of the apartheid in South Africa. The novel asks uncomfortable questions about the relationship between the coloured and the whites and it gives grim account of the white minority on the brink of extinction because of the changing power equations in South Africa. The protagonist, David Lurie, has to accept an ever increasing pain at the end of the novel. He says,
"one gets used to things getting harder, one ceases to be surprised that what used to be as hard as
can be, grows harder yet" (Coetzee 219). This single sentence describes Coetzee's notion of life
in the new South Africa where past cruelty has taken the place of anarchy. As Michel Foucault
exposes the question of power, provides a new analysis of power which makes great impacts
upon human sciences studies. The word 'new' here means Foucault abandons conventional
assumptions of power and the mechanism of power is dealt not only with an economic concern
but also on changed political scenario. M. Dean remarks, "Although Foucault utilizes a number
of formulations of power in his works, his major innovation has been to move away from
restrictive views that only see power in the State, the economy or the representative of class
interests" (Dean 47).

South Africa was a British colony but now the power has shifted to the natives. With
power shift the people who were dominated by the whites, dealt with cruelly, tortured in their
own land, have now gained upper hand, and they are seeking revenge. They are no longer the
silent sufferers they used to be. The system of power in our society is like a machine of which
everyone becomes a part. Foucault insists power is never simply a system of dominance, in
which the dominated ones are always subordinate and disempowered. If Melanie, the black, is
raped; she is not the only one who has fallen victim to the perverse mentality of David Lurie, the
white man Lurie is honest enough to sense an atmosphere of exploitation. In one of their sexual
encounters, he has the uncomfortable sensation that he has forced himself upon his student, but
she does not resist. All she does is, avert herself. Lurie feels that the experience is not quite rape
but undesired experience. The complaint against Lurie is made not by Melanie but by her
boyfriend. Lurie is told by an academic committee that he must apologize and undergo
counselling. He admits his formal guilt but he outrightly refuses counselling for something that
seems natural to him and even fine. He refuses to apologize and to avoid dismissal, he resigns.
Later, David's daughter Lucy is raped by three black persons equally cruelly and she has to keep
quiet saying it is a 'private matter. This shows that Foucault's theory justifiably applies on this
novel as power, when it changes hands, has its deep impact on the life of the dominants and the
dominated ones. Lucy's use of power against her father highlights another characteristic of
power: the omnipresence of power. We see power is exercised in every kind of relationships in
different forms. With the accumulative movements of actions, power is almost taken into
practice everywhere at anytime and that is why Foucault proclaims, "Power is produced from
one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere” (Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Vol. I* 93) Its repercussions are based on equal justice as the whites in South Africa have to meet with the same behaviour and retaliation becomes the retributive justice. David is compelled to live at a remote dog farm and his daughter Lucy is to marry a man who is native of South Africa.

According to Foucault power gets regenerated in new hands as it changes the whole system of governmentality and discipline. In this novel set in the Mandela era, the protagonist who is a University Professor is the victim of the great rationalisation which was the need of the hour and the African students of Cape Town University were bored with the plenty of Wordsworth and Byron and his teaching became ineffectual. David was working on the love life of Byron in Italy as he enjoyed this all, but he has to submit to the change of power. This ultimately has led to many new things, his university changed into Cape Town Technical University where he has to teach communication skills to his students, the right use of verbs, phrases, adverbs and all that which he finds utterly 'non-sensical'. Yet he could not give up his basic nature of romanticism and goes to a prostitute Soraya on every Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m. punctually to spend ninety minutes lustfully and joyfully there. He even keeps an eye on his students who are his daughter's age. Strange enough, he describes his own daughter as a man and not as a father.

The abuse of the female body is shown in the novel in the form of the rapes. The change that comes in David is brought by rationalising of power, at one point he seriously thinks to consult his doctor in order to castrate him so that he may save himself from humiliation and shame because even at the ripe age of fifty two, he cannot control his sexual desires although he never undergoes such an operation. Foucault's notion that power and knowledge discipline a person, is clearly seen here when David thinks of obeying a discipline, as he later prefers to channelise his energy at the animal farm and clinic. Coetzee puts him in such a situation that he is compelled to face physical torture and psychological shame, when he leaves Cape Town to live with his daughter Lucy's remote farm who tells him that now he has to spend his life in the company of animals because they have to make their both ends meet by working as labourers on the farm. When David is beaten mercilessly by the three black men and his daughter is raped, he still demands justice which he does not get. John Douthwaite reads Disgrace as "symbolic of
gender relations and of a post-colonial situation as well as of the alienated condition of modern
man” (Douthwaite 130). Lucy seems to understand all this but David does not as she knows that
in the post-apartheid period, now it is the turn of the Whites to face oppression and humiliation
of all types. "Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept" and she tells her father "to start at
ground level: with nothing…no cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity…like a
dog" (205).

After the rape Lucy has little difficulty grasping the economic ramifications to the
transfer of power that occurred with the emergence of a post-apartheid South Africa. "They see
me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors. Why should I be
allowed to live here without paying. Perhaps this is what they tell themselves" (158). She talks to
David after her decision to stay there in that farm, the trauma of rape, the fear that they would
come again made her an acute genealogist, who is able to draw attention to the forces,
circumstances, contexts and practices that restrict, situate and institutionalise discursive
formations in her society. Foucault opines that power not only oppresses or suppresses, it also
produces effects. The effects of power are not negative but positive in nature. Here the rape of
Lucy has made her confront the consequences of the apartheid and completely undermines the
Enlightenment doctrines of instrumental rationality and progress. Foucault declares that each
relation is constituted by the two forces: one supports and the other resists. Both forces signify
the productive and positive nature of power.

In the apartheid era, the black people were treated as minority or the marginalized ones
whereas actually they were in larger number; but in the changed scenario with the coming of
post-apartheid era, the white people are the real minority, less powerful and victims of Blacks’
repression. In this context Foucault argues that power relations in our societies remain unstable
because neither the dominant agent constantly sits in the site of controlling, nor the subordinate
agent absolutely submits to the control of the dominant agent. Now as the times have changed,
the roles of the Black and the White have also taken a different turn. Lucy is a strong character
with rare determination and courage which decides her future course of action. Power has an
objective or a goal; it is non subjective but certainly intentional. Power relations arise only when
there is a conflict, where there is conflict, there is power. So power is confirmed as a force to
forbid, to prohibit, to say no and to punish while someone breaks laws, rules, taboos or order.
The threat of being punished informs individuals to maintain their manners and abide by all
constraints. But here Foucault specifically mentions that power cannot be seen as merely repressive, negative, prohibitive or causing the imposition of false forms of consciousness. Instead of arguing that power is good or bad and that power relations can only be repressive, Foucault suggests that we conceive of power as productive. As he states in *Discipline and Punish:*

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms; it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'.

In fact power produces, it produces reality, it produces domain of objects and rituals of truth… (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 194).

Foucault means to say that power should not be understood in negative terms so that it only censors, represses or oppresses, rather power is very productive because the individual gets the knowledge through the power structures which is its positive aspect. So the concept of power should be acknowledged in broader terms rather than in narrow and negative terms as the hypothesis of power has a very wide ranging significance. Clare O’ Farrell further contends:

> It is through power relations techniques through which knowledge can be accumulated, mechanisms for observation and control, behaviour, modes of action, cultural relations and even identities are produced, and they are not the result of power's repressive tendencies. Knowledge is also a production of power relations (O’ Farrell 100).

When we talk about power, the first thought that comes to our mind is someone or some group who/which owns something named 'power' and which is exercised over others, then we immediately picture a structure of hierarchy in which the stronger who holds power stands over the weaker who does not have the thing called 'power'. As a result, the representation of power is considered to be if not repression, nor domination, then definitely, submission. Power is nothing more or nothing less than the multiplicity of force relations accompanied with resistance. Lucy is stunned when she observes the hatred of the Blacks during her rape, she becomes a victim of racial brutality and treachery. The role played by Lurie is that of oppressor as well as oppressed with the changing power equations when he abused the Black girl Melanie he is the oppressor, and when his own daughter is raped and tormented, he is the oppressed one which signifies the Foucauldian concept that power is complex and it exists at a micro level among people and is not controlled by one person or group. Foucault also asserts that power relations are modifiable
and potentially reversible. However, David feels helpless and impotent in relation to his daughter's choice, will power, rape and even homosexuality. He is more powerless when his daughter's molesters are moving around and posing a permanent threat to him. Moreover, Lucy refuses to talk to the police about the whole incident saying it is her personal matter whereas his own affair with Melanie turns into a public matter and consequently he is oppressed by society and his own university which reflects the changeability and reversal of power relations.

When David accuses Lucy in ironic terms for acceptance of suffering in the present to compensate for the misdeeds of the past, her response is striking: "You keep misreading me. Guilt and salvation are abstractions, until you make effort to see that, I can't help you" (112). What is exposed to disabling critique here is David's entire modus operandi and the historical conceptual framework inherited from the Enlightenment and the romanticism it bred. He has resolutely refused to accept that in post-apartheid South Africa the white middle class is in part responsible for apartheid's legacy of poverty, educational deprivation and an inadequate or even inconsequential police force, owing to its own historical role as instrument of political and material oppression. If in the past David never made the connection between apartheid and economic exploitation, he cannot make it now: "A risk to own anything, a car, a pair of shoes, a packet of cigarettes. Not enough to go around, not enough cars, shoes, cigarettes. Too many people, too few things"(98). These remarks capture David's nostalgia for the blessings of the apartheid era when the dominant minority could own everything and the majority blacks were reduced to struggle for survival, all because of the gun held by the dominant minority. David does not think he is personally liable for apartheid's evils but Lucy recognises that the apartheid was a catastrophic social, economic and cultural undertaking that caused immense human suffering. Her own survival in rural South Africa depends on her renouncing her white privilege.

In 'The Order of Discourse' Foucault expounds his speculations not only on discourse but also on power. He links the construction of discourse to the exercise of power and points out the inseparable relation between them. Lois McNay avers, "Foucault sees all systems of thought as embedded with in a network of social relations. Knowledge is not a form of pure speculation belonging to an abstract and a disinterested realm of inquiry, rather it is at once a product of relations and also instrumental in sustaining these relations" (McNay 27). The utterances of Lucy fully prove that she has to accept her new position in new circumstances and the balance of power gives rise to such discourses in the novel. Foucault links the construction of discourse to
the exercise of power in 'The Order of Discourse' and points out the inseparable relation between them and accordingly, a discourse which can be heard and spoken is the production of the operation of desire and power. Foucault manifestly writes "in every society the production of Discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events" (Foucault, The Order of Discourse 52)

In *Disgrace*, we see David, a disgraced university professor, escape to his daughter's farm in the Eastern Cape after being made to resign. An English language and literature professor, he is a product of a language and a problematic colonial system. Throughout the novel, he finds himself suspended in an inept discourse, adding to his sense of alienation in a country that is no longer recognisable. He is a part of the colonial discourse that has provided him with the rigid linguistic framework through which he functions. Language, which has once aided him, now fails him. Having been brought up in the western tradition and with the language of the Empire, he is now incapable of coping with the events and the changes that are taking place around him. When in need, he resorts to this failed discourse. Although his conventions are no longer relevant, they become valuable in times of stress. David is currently working on a chamber opera on the love life of Lord Byron which probably will never see the light, an opera that is being composed by a person he himself depicts as "obscure and growing obscure: A figure from the margins of History" (167). His opera is as irrelevant as the language he insists on using, they both belong to a western tradition that is losing its ground in the new South Africa.

Michel Foucault sees individuals as merely "Vehicles of power as power must be analysed as something which only functions in the form of a chain" (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 98). In its role as an instrument of power language also acquires the power to circulate. Initially, it is brutally inflicted on the other, then it is absorbed by the other only to be thrown back at the person who has initiated it in the first place. In *Discipline and Punish* and in *The History of Sexuality Vol. I*, systems of knowledge are defined as inevitably bound up with regimes of power. Systems of power bring forth different types of knowledge which in turn produce material effects in the bodies of social agents that serve to reinforce the original power formation. Lois McNay remarks, "Power produces knowledge - power and knowledge directly imply each other. There is no power relations without the co-relative constitution of a field of knowledge nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power
relations” (McNay 63). This development is evident in the character of Petrus, who can be seen as a departure from the earlier characters. What comes out when he assumes the role of the master is that his language is not the original language but a distorted version of it as demonstrated by his dialogues with David. In fact, Petrus is the most complex character in the novel; he remains inscrutable throughout, perhaps as he embodies the new South Africa. There is no telling what is going to happen. Petrus benefits from the new regime but it is unclear what is his position towards those formerly powerful in the rearranged scenario and what are his uncertainties and fears about the present.

The implication and consequence of Lucy's rape compels her to accept a marriage proposal which would otherwise have been completely unacceptable, the third wife of Petrus. She accepts because she understands that rape has robbed her of her being, has made her relinquish control of her life and acknowledge the prediction of a new emerging power. When Petrus asks David for his daughter's hand, he is affirming the new order that has evolved in South Africa. He negotiates as an equal partner over the body of a woman; all through the attack on Lucy, Petrus has been suspiciously absent. When he finally shows up he is "wearing a suit too tight for him figuratively assuming the role that is not inherently his, the master and an equal partner in an alien system and as with the suit, the role has been handed down" (113). Inadvertently, Lucy finds herself cast in the unwelcome role of a farmer's wife, a victim of a white-turned-black dominance. As David's masculine power declines, Petrus's power increases. This means that not all masculinities are losing power but only those outdated ones.

Michel Foucault challenges the notion of traditional political theories of power which are presented to be essentially negative formed through control, prohibition, surveillance, repression or punishment and so on. What we need, Foucault declares “is a political philosophy that is not erected around the problem of sovereignty nor therefore around the problems of law and prohibition. We need to cut off the king's head in political theory that still is to be done" (Foucault, Power/Knowledge 121). In the post-apartheid political system it is asserted that he the privileged may be deprived of what he had. The author wants to suggest that the whites find themselves lost due to the new political winds blowing and they resist this change which means that all the problems which offend the white, they think, emanate from the shift of political system. They are deprived of their earlier position. In the case of Professor David Lurie we see that he loses his direction as well as authority when he is expelled from the university.
Resultantly he is exposed to further tribulation as he is dislodged and he has to flee the city life he used to lead. David himself reflects: "I am no longer marketable. The scandal will follow me, stick to me" (88). When his daughter is gang raped, he himself is set on fire and physically assaulted while Lucy's dogs are shot; the material suffering of the body, animal or human, is a common fate. This account of power makes it appear as though people are unable to escape from power. However, Foucault sees this as only a problem for those who still believe power is repressive and negative and he suggests that a society without power relations can only be an abstraction. In this way, David has become a poor victim of the operations of power substantiates Foucauldian viewpoint when Foucault comments, "power is a series of complex relations and can operate in an unpredictable manner and due to this complexity, power cannot be said to represent the interests of one group or individuals and contends that people are not only the effects of power but also the vehicles through which it is transmitted" (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 98).

Paula Krebs writes, initially "Blacks are hostile to White, always waiting their chance to turn the tables on their masters especially sexually" (Krebs 65). This is evident in *Disgrace*. Colonialism employing sexual dominance as a form of control is certainly one of the cruellest forms of governance for the objects of the desire, which is usually female, undergoes a double kind of subjugation, to a man and to a system. Hania Nashef states:

> Female sexuality is a construction of male power. Constructed for her by others, belonging in essence to ideology, female sexuality dictates that a woman's experience of the heterosexual sex should be of being possessed as an object and consumed. Through the vehicle of the real woman, as for the woman, she experienced herself as a sexualised one and therefore sexually constructed being at an equally imaginary level. The account of desire and sexuality in the service of power, and of power in the hands of men, totalising in its ambition (Nashef 96).

In *Disgrace*, J.M. Coetzee presents an intricate account of the interrelationship between eros, the body and disgrace. Sue Kossew avers, " In this novel, the body is very strongly linked to power, desire and disgrace" (Kossew 55). Incapable of stifling his own desire David progresses to preying upon one of his students, Melanie, young enough to be his daughter and quite exotic: "She is small and thin, with close cropped black hair, wide almost like Chinese cheekbones, large, dark eyes"(11). The prey has been selected and the object of desire has been scanned and...
fragmented for easier consumption. While eros does not move David, there are things that aided him in most of his sexual conquests. In this sense David's fall from grace has something to do with concurrent loss of power. His infringement of the University sexual harassment code, by having a sexual liaison with a student and a coloured one in particular, as Gareth Cornwall points out that the text unfolds a racial dimension to the power relations of "patriarchy and the academy" (Cornwell 315) already governing the relationship between David Lurie and Melanie. By allowing eros to act through him David Lurie abused his academic authority and privileged male status over a female student. Therefore loss of power - i.e. acceptance of disgrace - is a necessary step in his character formation. Michel Foucault's notion that power leads to such circumstances which bring about drastic changes in the life is true in this case also. David's molestation of his student is also a kind of resistance against the educational ethics of the university where no one can overstep the boundaries of the morality because everyone has to follow the discipline because discipline as a form of self-regulation encouraged by institutions permeates modern societies. As Sara Mills rightly remarks:

Discipline consists of a concern with control which is internalized by each individual. It consists of a concern with self control over one's postures and bodily functions, concentration, sublimations of immediate desires and emotions. All of these elements are the effects of disciplinary pressure and at the same time they are all actions which produce the individual as subjected to a set of procedures whose aim is to disciplining the self (Mills 43).

But Lurie showed absolute resistance and defiance by overstepping and overlooking the disciplinary code of the university by falling in love affair with a student and he faced the serious consequences of showing the resistance when he lost his job in the university.

Moreover, in order that he may justify his action, for the growth of the plot, he tells her, "a woman's beauty does not belong to her alone. It is a part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it" (16). Melanie has been detached from her physical attributes allowing David to claim that her beauty is a public property. This shows that David is cunning and clever like a fox, who is a teacher but accepts no moral bindings on him as he establishes sex relations with Melanie, his student, who is helpless, quiet, and meek like a rabbit. The use of animal imagery makes the situation life like as fox and rabbit, the one is powerful while the other is powerless like the whites are powerful in apartheid South Africa. He is attracted by the beauty
of Bev Shaw, the farm attendant and in another encounter he proceeds to make love to her on his
daughter's bed, not only accentuating the age difference between them, but also culminating in
his turning her into a mere object of desire which signifies the Foucauldian notion that different
modes of mechanisms of power are practiced in the relationship between husband/wife,
fathers/mothers, sons/daughters, teachers/students, employers/employees, the coloured and the
colourless and so on. Foucault emphasizes that "relations of power are interwoven with other
kinds of relations for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role" (Foucault,
*Power/Knowledge* 142). It is also comprehended that power relations are constructed in any kind
of relationship at different levels. The fact that David makes love to Melanie on his daughter's
bed introduces undertones of incest. On more than one occasion in the novel as stated earlier
David is seen describing his own daughter as a man and not as a father. He informs us that "she
is too fat, negligent of her beauty, attractive in a sense but lost to men" (76). Hania Nashef
observes, "By viewing his daughter in this manner and his desire for Melanie, David resembles
an old man lusting after young girls" (Nashef 100).

Foucault says that power is operative also and it is more clear in David's case. It is not
only a sheer fact that David has abused his position as his colleagues brand him a rapist, but the
pleasure he has derived from exercising that power when he finds the experience 'enriching'
shows the operative aspect of power. Moreover, the pleasure that the rapist David attains from
his action is primarily due to his need to assert control over the victim and not especially from
the sexual act itself. David, who has lost control over most aspects of his life, represents the
white South Africa, which has reluctantly conceded power to the black man, resorts to rape to
ascertain that he is still partially in command. "He does not want to understand that it is not for
his desires that he has been condemned but because of the misappropriation of these desires.
Even during his visit to Melanie's parents when he is supposed to be apologising, he is rather
contemplating a "Menage a trois with Melanie and her sister Desiree" (164). During the tribunal,
his colleague Swarts suggests that ban should be exercised regarding teacher-student
relationships. Swarts also reminds him that a teacher occupies a position of power in the
academic world and tells him that he should not have mixed power relations with sexual
relations. The intention here seems to be that David Lurie had misused his power and position to
exploit his own student. This could prove to be more appealing for David Lurie, for a ban
always makes the objects more desirable. Therefore, a ban would mean that he stands to lose
more control over his life. His perverse desire can be interpreted as the product of the apartheid system. Under the post-apartheid regime the university now serves the dominant economic-political order because it assists late capitalism's interest in the creation of docile and productive bodies. Thus the University Committee's hearing into Lurie's case reveals that the confession/punishment that the university seeks has political value for the current state of affairs in South Africa. Foucault argues that proper order is maintained through the production of docile and productive bodies. The institutional disciplining, surveillance and punishment of the body creates bodies that are habituated to external regulation working "to discipline the body, optimize its capabilities, increase its usefulness and docility and thus produce the types of bodies that society requires" ((Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 139). But David's refusal of both confession and contrition however is a gesture of resistance to the newly emergent world-order which post-apartheid South Africa's institutions including the universities serve. The lust that permeates the novel is precisely a result of the forbidden, the unknown and the misunderstood. In this context, Hania Nashef proclaims:

The abuse of desire which turns the others into an object or a slave, remains its worse aspects. When the three youths attack Lucy, their crime does not stem only from their urge to rape, but has deeper implications. It is not Lucy whom they rape but what Lucy represents. Envious of a culture that has long marginalised them, they retaliate by placing themselves in the role of the colonizer at the centre and not at the periphery (Nashef 103).

Lucy's rape shows that being white in post apartheid South Africa, she is weak and the blacks are strong. The rape is conducted to manifest power as well. Her agreement with Petrus's proposed view, which clearly states that she would be considered as a part of his extended family, in effect, his third wife, also indicates Blacks' power. She strongly realises the powerlessness of the white and the powerfulness of the black characters, especially Petrus, who is depicted as a barometer of Blacks' power. On the other hand, David Lurie is reduced to speechless submission, stripped of control over his life. The gap in new South Africa is seemingly exaggerated as the author's intention is to show resistance to new power. This clearly justifies Foucauldian concept of power, repression and resistance.

During the apartheid days when there was ruthless racist system, marriage between two different races was prohibited by law. Although the act goes with the system, the feeling still
remains intact in David Lurie. When Petrus informs him that he wants to marry Lucy as reconciliation for whatever happened on the farm and Lucy confirms that she agrees to his proposal for protection sake, David Lurie thinks that Lucy will never marry Petrus and resists the proposal, for the reason that Petrus is Black as well as her former assistant, hence in a lower status and position. David regards himself as a Western and a European, so he thinks that the Westerns do not do the things as Petrus's wishes. From this we can conclude that David Lurie is still in old mode of thinking. He has spent most of his life time in the apartheid system, so he is wrapped up in such thinking and his turning down Petrus's proposal of marriage with Lucy also implies his refusal of accepting the changes that come in the post apartheid new South Africa; hence the novel is full of resistance to the new power, new thinking, new set up, new social and new economic structure which signifies the Foucauldian idea where there is power, there is resistance and resistance is always accompanied with power. Foucault expounds:

Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet or rather, consequently this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power… Their existence depends on multiplicity of points of resistance; they play the role of adversary, target, or handle in power relations. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network…there is plurality of resistance… (Foucault, The History of Sexuality Vol. I 95-96).

In other words, the Foucauldian standpoint is further strengthened by Barry Smart, "power and resistance are synonymous with sociality; their respective forms may change, but a society without relations of power and therefore forms of resistance, inconceivable" (Smart 133).

Towards the end of Disgrace, David Lurie is heard echoing the words of W. B. Yeats's poem Sailing to Byzantium:

That is no country for old man. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
- Those dying generations - at their song----
An aged man is but a paltry thing (190).

He sighs. The young in one another's arms engrossed in the sensual music, No country, for this old man. He seems to be spending a lot of time sighing. Regret: a regrettable note on which to go out" (190). The sentiments reflect David Lurie's situation. Burdened with his advancing years, along with accumulated regret at a life not fully realised, he can only sigh as he ponders his own
exit. His utter dejection juxtaposed against youth and the vibrancy of nature beautifully depicts Foucauldian hypothesis how a man changes and his behaviour takes a new shape when there is a shift in power.

When *Disgrace* first appeared in 1999, many criticised it as a bleak critique of post-apartheid South Africa. Many whites in and out of South Africa found appalling the novel's seeming justification of rapes of white women by predatory African males as an inevitable consequence of the years of domination of the blacks by an oppressive and powerful white regime.

The two rapes that take place in the novel reflect the operations of power in each setting i.e. in the apartheid as well as in the post-apartheid. Lurie's exploitation of the black girl brings to light power dynamics at the gender level as his relationship with Melanie, the coloured girl is a clear duplicity of moral standards. In this novel, one can observe that men rape not because they wish to or they are tempted to do so, although society allows them that they can even rape women in order to keep them under proper control. This rebellious and villainous attitude is represented by Petrus when he along with his companions raped Lucy. It is significant to know that before her rape, Lucy is an independent woman who has exercised her own authority and power as she survives on her own, looks after the farm and performs every duty and responsibility without the help of any patriarchy. Her rape as a white is approved by the post-apartheid social set-up to keep her within limits and to create fear in her mind which stimulates the desires of Petrus to keep control over the farm.

Grant Farred remarks, "Disgrace figures the new South Africa as an already disgraced state" (Farred 353). Gender identity can be conceived of as a person's interpretation and acting out of generally accepted social definitions of what is to be a man or a woman. The social definition can be conceived as discourses. Whitehead and Barrett comment, "Discourse is more than simply the words and phrases we use. In Foucauldian terms Discourses provide the very means by which subjects come to be individuals and come to understand themselves as women and men" (Whitehead and Barrett 21).

When David goes to dog farm to attend and nurse them, we feel that metaphorically, animals figure the depravity and wretchedness of human life. Literally they are beings which are capable of facing suffering and pain. Let us say they are creatures with this material substance we call 'the body'. He enters an unfathomable communion with animals. Sue Kossew argues,
"Lurie learns to love by humbling himself…this occurs through the tragic personal encounter with violence (as represented by the attack on the farm) and through his volunteer work at the animal clinic" (Kossew 155). Paul Patton similarly contends that Lurie humbles himself by giving up his favourite dog, Driepoot: 'he is now able to give up, including his honour, his intellectual pride, and his attachment to life itself. He becomes capable of letting go of his social and personal identity" (Patton 117). The transformation of his attitude towards animals is marked by the tears that flow down his face and one evening he cannot stop the trembling of his hands when he returns home after assisting in killing some animals at Animal Welfare Clinic. "The disgrace of dying touches him just as it touches the animals he assists in killing. David's whole being is gripped by what happens in the theatre i.e. by killing the dogs at the clinic" (143). This new feeling towards animals is a great modification in his nature and it also changes his sensual desires that dominated his life in the past and also his relation to women. Deirdre Coleman comments, "Lurie's coercive relationship with Melanie, and they interpret Lurie as making partial atonement for his past transgressions against women, by helping to euthanize the dogs at the animal shelter" (Coleman 615). Derek Attridge's influential reading of Disgrace interprets Lurie as achieving "something approaching a state of grace through his work at the animal shelter, and in particular, through his service to the dead dogs" (Attridge 112). He now realises the piety of life and the misery of dying. If one carefully observes David's and his daughter's manifold disgrace in the novel, one can feel that this act is symbolic. If their disgrace is complete now, they have no future in this post-apartheid Africa except to serve the diseased/unwanted dogs. David is probably giving up an undesired aspect of his life as he is getting rid of his previous life of sensual pleasures and devoted to feeding and cleaning the animals and then disposing off their dead bodies to the hospital's incinerator.

David Couzens Hoy clarifies Foucault's idea that "power would be a fragile thing if its function was to repress only" (Hoy 130) and If David actually reclaims some dignity at the end of the novel, it is because he surrenders himself fully and comes to the lowest level, forgetting everything, his daughter, his ideas about justice and his dream of writing an opera on Byron. Now he has learnt to love the dying animals and has imposed a discipline on himself. His past power according to Foucauldian notion gives him a new ideology and knowledge. This has brought him nearer truth and ground realities of life and there is a total transformation in him, his ways of life which is the positive aspect of power. Sara Mills rightly remarks, "Even at their
most constraining, oppressive measures are in fact productive, giving rise to new forms of behaviour" (Mills 33) and this sea change and the productive aspect of David Lurie's character is revealed when there is a marked transformation in his attitude in the concluding part of the novel. J.G. Merquiour observes, "Foucault no longer believes that power suppresses, ignores, separates, conceals or hides instead he proposed that power is productive" (Merquiour 156). In the beginning of the novel his discourse is distinctively academic in nature. He is perpetually a thinking character, living more in abstract thought than concrete experience. The narrative style of the novel grows out of his studies in literature and language. We find here and there phrases in Afrikaans, Latin, German and French and also reference to Romantic poets such as Byron, Blake and Wordsworth, novels of Charles Dickens and films of Norman McLaren. Foucault says that the form of discourse changes with the change and shift in circumstances, places and people, is all true with Disgrace.

The author asserts that due to the pervasiveness of pitiless social discourse between the whites and the blacks in the new South Africa, the whites are now marginalized. The blacks are leading their life freely without any stress. The whites lead almost lonely life and they do not lead a group life like the blacks. It becomes apparent from Petrus's party: "At five O clock the guests start arriving, by cars, by taxi, on foot…" (128). This clearly implies Blacks being a lot in number and the good social interaction that prevails among them, they enjoy life to the full. Moreover, having large size family is also asserted as a manifestation of power in the new South Africa. Most of the blacks have large family size, most whites quite the reverse, almost doomed to be lonely. It is because having a lot of children is an indication of power within the social structures of the post-apartheid South Africa, and Ettinger is blamed for allowing his son to go to the country; "…but Ettinger will die one of these days and Ettinger's son has fled. In that respect Ettinger has been stupid. A good peasant takes care to have lots of sons" (118).

In contrast to Ettinger, Petrus already has two wives and many children, additionally a great deal of relatives as well. He is depicted as the most powerful black in the rural area with in the powerful social structure of new South Africa. Hence the blacks are enjoying life well and the white characters who are the mirror image of the post-apartheid South Africans are in a state of depression and dereliction because of the new social system. The whites are not permitted even to be at a lower position which clearly suggests that the white new South Africans have no place there as they are derided, neglected and even ridiculed by those who are low class people,
who are not good enough to tie David's shoe laces. The author professes his confrontation in the black characters as the new political system of the post-apartheid era is in their favour. David is presented as an orphan with no parents, friends, and now, no daughter also. It can be argued that Petrus increasingly becomes a man of social importance in due course of time. He can assume a position of authority over Lucy. But for David, there is no power of the authority acting on him than the powerful experience of disgrace. John Banville remarks, "Lurie remains so completely trapped within the racist patriarchal framework that he cannot see the new strategies of domination, coercion and social transaction that have emerged, at least at the initial stage, after the collapse of apartheid" (Banville 23).

"The house is part of the development that must, fifty or twenty years ago, when it was new, have seemed rather a bleak, but has since been improved with grassed sidewalks, trees and creepers that pill over the vibracrete walls..." (113). Here Mr. Isaac's house is explained in two different periods, during the apartheid and after twenty years in the post-apartheid times. This unpleasant house has drastically improved and has become pretty and pleasant. The house on the other hand symbolises the black people in South Africa in both apartheid and post-apartheid period as it belongs to one of the black characters in the novel. Power circulates throughout the novel and it significantly affects the status of the university, individuals, land, animals and even the English language.

The rape on Lucy becomes the turning point in the second half of the novel and Lurie wants to make it public and demands justice. However, there is only brutality and mistrust in new South Africa. Petrus is only a farm labourer but he has coined a new word for himself when he calls himself a 'farm manager'. Thus the status of Petrus changes dramatically and he is no more a peasant from apartheid South Africa toiling with hands. He borrows a tractor and within hours ploughs the whole of his land. With every passing day, he emerges stronger and more powerful, outplaying Lucy on all fronts as it happens in the game of chess. It is a different face of South Africa that David Lurie witnesses and Lurie feels a sense of defeat in Petrus's progress. The former who was an oppressor in the apartheid South Africa has become an oppressed and powerless in post-apartheid situation. Lurie, who taught the European classics in the Cape Town University sells vegetables with his daughter in the countryside. From an elevated position of a university professor, he has become a dog man, a care taker of dogs. There is a gradual degradation on all fronts in his life. Here the unstable characteristic of Foucault's concept of
power is highlighted that power does not only work from top to the below but also from the bottom to the top. As has been previously mentioned, power is a network of relations, therefore, when power is in action, subjects who stand at the top of the power also receive the powerful force from the bottom up. The top and the bottom, as rivals in a tug of war propose to influence and to win over the other, according to its interests and due to this reason, power is suggested to be unstable and goes on changing hands. Animals also play a significant role in the novel because their marginalized status, and their struggle for survival make the state of disgrace more severe for David and he realises that his life has lost all its material value. At last, David becomes like a crippled man without any power, position or identity.

Conclusively, Coetzee grew up during the days of apartheid in South Africa and has tried to represent the issues of identity, power and freedom. The trajectory of power affects the issues of identity, dignity, race and gender in the novel. Operation of power leads individuals to very complex dimensions in new South Africa. Lurie learns to accept the change after the harrowing experiences of losing job, identity, power and at last his daughter Lucy, and he reaches the stage of total renunciation and surrender. Georgie Horrell writes, "The postcolonial implications for a white South Africa are spelled out in Coetzee's text, as Lurie is forced to accept the terms of new, black ownership and the conditions for residence in the 'new' nation, conditions negotiated through the body of his daughter" (Horrell 23). As the novel develops, Petrus becomes more and more powerful and Lurie weak and powerless as a result of the changing power equations. Power represses or distorts the identity of an individual and the search for identity and the dynamics of power operate throughout this novel and make the individuals universal beyond the African situation. The novel is related with the post-apartheid era and unfolds the dynamics of power when the changing power equations mar personal relations. Lurie experiences a loss of power, not because of anything done by him, but because of others he is supposed to oppress. His masculine power is not easily oppressed anymore. Melanie, Lurie's student with whom he has an affair, causes great personal upheaval in Lurie's life, including rejection from his colleagues and a backlash from the media. He also experiences pressure and animosity from Melanie's boyfriend and her father. These men vehemently oppose his sexual exploitation of the young student. During the attack on Lucy's farm, the disempowered Lurie is physically assaulted and locked in a bathroom, failing in his patriarchal duty of protector due to his powerlessness. The novel faithfully depicts the white minority on the verge of extinction both ideologically and
physically. It presents a very harsh picture of new South Africa where the whites have lost their identity and learn the incorrigible lessons of oppression, exploitation, victimization and injustice in their turn in the reversed roles, and they have to accept the truth and begin a life from a scratch. Suresh Raval rightly states, "Disgrace is thus Coetzee's attempt at imagining an individual resolution to the problem of post-apartheid contemporary South Africa in its entanglements with the legacies of the apartheid era" (Raval 149). The historical, political, social and linguistic issues are interwoven with the issues of power, knowledge and discourse besides the current practices of modern European literature.
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