CHAPTER - II
EXPLORING THE SELF: *DISGRACE* and *FOE*

This chapter deals with the central issue of searching of Self identity in Coetzee’s Novels. Coetzee’s has a sensual feeling about his characters. Coetzee’s fictions *Disgrace* and *Foe* closely engaged with the main issue.

**Disgrace (1999):**

Coetzee’s *Disgrace* depicts the ‘Exploring the Self’ theme throughout the novel. J. M. Coetzee is a well known Afro-American writer who wrote path breaking novels which explores the Apartheid South-African society. *Disgrace* is most admired novel by Coetzee, which won him the Booker Prize in 1999. This novel is set in the post apartheid South Africa. It unfolds the dynamics of power when the changing power equations damage personal relations. The novel depicts the white minority on the verge of extinction both mentally and physically. This novel presents a bleak picture of the new South Africa. There were the whites have lost their supremacy and the blacks are emerging dominating and settling the accounts of history of apartheid South Africa. There is no scope for reconciliation or an amicable co-existence. Coetzee in *Disgrace* presents a very harsh portrait of new South Africa where the whites, who have lost their Self identity and to learn the incurable lessons of victimhood and injustice in their turn in a reversal of role. Whites or the colonizers have to accept the truth and begin a life from a scratch. In the novel the narrative is written from the perspective of David Lurie, who is a 52-year-old. He is twice divorced, white academic, a professor of
English at the University of Cape Town. David Lurie has been downgraded to teaching communication studies to a reluctant batch of students. This is a situation that points to the loss of white institutional power in post-apartheid South Africa. David Lurie is a dispassionate, cold and totally self-centred man resentful by his disposition from the normal face of white power. This novel opens with a description of David Lurie’s one of his weekly visits to an unusual colored prostitute named Soroya. She is described as “quiet, docile and compliant.” David violates Soroya’s careful division between her private life and her public work. Hence she stops her visits abruptly with Lurie. At a certain point, David feels that regular visits to the prostitute Soroya makes him happy, but such understanding is not genuine for him. Lurie’s sex with Soroya is intense but not passionate so he feels that his intercourse with Soroya to be akin to the ‘copulation of snakes: lengthy, absorbed, but rather abstract, rather dry, even at its hottest’ (DIS 03). This show Lurie’s attitude towards intense sex. This is not a reciprocal relationship between two individuals. It is a fleeting contract by which he tries to satisfy his physical desires. While commenting on David Lurie’s temperament, the narrator feels that ‘his temperament is not going to change; he is too old for that. His temperament is a fixed set.’ (DIS 02)

As the novel progresses, we find that there is a significant change in David Lurie’s temperament and this becomes more and more obvious towards the ending of the novel. His behavior and his rigidity and harshness are replaced by pity, acceptance and so called humility. Nonetheless, David has to pay a heavy price to reach that stage. Throughout the novel Sex remains a problem for David Lurie. He attempts to solve the problem by using immoral practices. Soroya,
the prostitute is tall, slim and dark with whom he develops a sexual relation. David takes sex to be an act of exercising his power. David is not unaware of his power as a white over a poor prostitute who has her family, children and a husband. Lurie seeks to probe into the Soroya’s personal life; she disapproves of this invasion on her privacy. She makes it very clear to David that her life as a prostitute has nothing to do with her life as an individual level. Mr. Lurie appreciates Soroya because she is always a ready learner and submissive in nature, in addition to being a black woman. David Lurie’s life is full of sexual misadventures. He makes numerous affairs with the wives of his colleagues, students and friends. He slept with whores and he picked up tourists in bars or the water front. As well as he also developed sexual relationship with the new secretary in his department. David’s hope for passion in each of his sexual relations brings failure for him. He thinks of giving up everything and returning from the game at one stage and he feels that he was growing old with each passing day. He tries to make some futile affords to interact with Soroya. At one stage telephones her but she refuses to appreciate him. David Lurie is presented as a predator. He tries to intrude into the peaceful private life of professional prostitutes. As per as South African situation is concern the new post apartheid South Africa has also changed the status of the Cape Town University. Now it has transforms into Cape Town Technical University. Where there classics and Modern Languages Departments had been closed down and the new power equation has downgraded the professional status of David Lurie. He is a professor of Modern Languages. Now the changing situation he teaches communication skills to the students who lack in passion for learning or in any taste for classics. As a professor David Lurie had published three books
during his career. His first book is on Opera (Boito and the Faust legend: the Genesis of Mefistofele), the second is on vision as Eros (The Vision of Richard of St. Victor), and the third is on Wordsworth and history (Wordsworth and the Burden of the Past). These books are not masterpieces and they failed to create any stir in the literary circles of the day. However it is very significant to note that his first book, (Boito and the Faust legend: the Genesis of Mefistofele), has closer links with his personal life. There is a character of Mefistofele which is associated with the violation of the will of God. As a result the angel is thrown out of paradise by Almighty. Though Wordsworth carries the burden of past, then Mr. Lurie also carries the burden of apartheid South Africa under the cruel rule of the whites. During the course of novel the reoccurring image of Wordsworth becomes stronger, mature and meaningful in the context of David Lurie’s life. Lurie tries to deal with an idea of writing a book on Byron. He thinks that his book would be severely criticized by people so he makes a plan to write an opera: (Byron in Italy). David Lurie is uninterested in teaching profession and not able to make any impression on his students. He most of the time is engaged in monotonous work of collecting, reading and annotating the assignments written by his students. Professor Lurie is not satisfied with his job. But he sticks to it because it provides him a well livelihood. Sometimes he may think that teaching teaches him politeness or one can say humility. The narrator of the novel asserts:

The irony does not escape him: that one who comes to teach learns the keenest of lessons, while those who come to learn, learn nothing. (DIS 05)

In case of Lurie this seems to be true, he is a teacher but he is always unwilling to accept the South Africa with the black as the
rulers. Though he is a teacher but instead of teaching others, he learns harsh lessons in his professional and private life. He himself fails as a good communicator in his personal life though he teaches communication skills to his students; it is as if he were having a monologue rather than a dialogue. Mr. Lurie’s communication with the students remains incomplete. This incommunicability takes a deeper dimension and subsequently, this human communication is replaced by Lurie’s strange inward communication with the animal world. David Lurie later spends a major part of his life is spent in the company of dogs. John Coetzee, who is a born and brought up in South Africa but as a white writer, he is recognize throughout this novel the fact that English language and his own fiction are unable to capture the African reality in all its essence. As per as David’s life is concerns failures and frustration become an integral part of it. David is not able to swallow unsavory reality that the white rule is over and a new order has emerged in South Africa. David’s personal and social life is brutally scattered. Now he lives a lonely life of a middle aged teacher who is unwilling to teach and his life as a creative writer is a failure one. Lurie has been unable to achieve what he wanted from his literary works but his works fail to bring him fame or money. Hence he feels out of place even in the university and he feels that he is doing the tasks of a clerk. At one juncture of his life he truly felt that he needed a wife, a home and a marriage means a family where his every need going to fulfill but now he thinks that such a normal life is a very distant dream for him to achieve. Prof. Lurie’s sexual relations with several sexual partners lead to an ugly turn in his life when he develops forced sexual relations with his own student Melanie Isaacs. He was born and brought up in a family which consists mostly of women. Hence in the due course of time those women are replaced by
mistresses, wives, whores, prostitutes and a daughter. Now David is a Casanova, a womanizer so he is very confident that if he looked at a woman in a certain way, she would definitely get attracted to him for intercourse and finely copulation. He has lived a licentious life for decades and now he realizes that old age has crawled in. He feels that power of attraction and that certain way to look towards any lady has fade away. He thinks and really believes that now he has reached a stage in his life when he has to run after women. Now David has to pay women for having sexual intercourse in his fifties in the new changing South Africa. Even though once again he develops sexual relations with his new secretary, Dawn, in his department at Cape Town University. It is more important to note that her name has a symbolic value. As it has suggests the opening of a new political system in the country. His secretary is a married woman with a school going son. In her informal remark we find an abashed account of the post apartheid South Africa. There are Drug-peddlers roaming around the playing fields to corrupt the young boys. The law, legislation and police are inactive and that’s why she finds difficult to bring up her son when there is anarchy all around in the society.

Prof. David Lurie takes the secretary home and has sex with her but soon he began to avoid her and he even feels that he has reached an age at this point he should give up his sexual activities. For this purpose he thinks about Origen’s castration. David also thinks to visit a doctor for castration and yet he is unable to control his unrestrained sexual desires. Hence rigidity is a significant feature of his temperament. He makes unfruitful attempts to change himself. But at the end he himself realizes that it is impossible for him to change. Prof. Lurie’s aim to follow his own temperament and in doing so he justifies his stance. David feels that without sexual
encounters, his life would be truly barren. At one day, when he is returning to home through the old college garden, he notices a young charming girl student on his Romantic Course. He attracts towards that girl; the name of that girl is Melanie Isaacs. David Lurie assumes that the girl is still unengaged so he opens a casual conversation with Melanie and invites her into his house for a drink. At that point there is a cautious pause but at last the girl agrees to come with him to his house. It is a rainy season so atmosphere is very pleasant and romantic. Lurie stares at Melanie and for a moment, he realizes that the girl student he has brought home is thirty years younger than him. David asks Melanie about her career plans and in answer she replies that stagecraft and design are her areas of interest. In addition she is doing a diploma in theatre. Melanie finds a lot of books of Byron while she looks towards the book racks in his house. David offers her liquor but she accepts a shot of whiskey in her coffee. After that he invites her to stay and spend the night with him. Melanie gets slight shock but she manages herself and asks for the reason. David replies

*Why? Because a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it.* (DIS 16)

Melanie who is almost like a daughter for him but Lurie tries to rationalize his desire to have sex with her. At that point Melanie is breathless. She tells him that she already shares her beauty with someone, thus suggesting him that she has a lover, but he ignores her words and suggests her that she has to share it more widely. Melanie hesitates and her smile loses its playful quality even though Mr. Lurie makes love to her. No sooner does the sexual act is over Lurie become a teacher and a man of books after some time Melanie leaves his house. Prof. Lurie should have actually to end his sexual
encounter with her at once but this does not happen. Hence even on Sunday David approaches his department office to collect Melanie’s personal details for making contact with her. Both David and Melanie visit a restaurant where she tells him that she was worried for their relationship. Prof. Lurie assures her that he will not allow the relationship to go too far and once again he takes her home and makes love to her. Throughout the intercourse Melanie remains passive and after a few minutes Melanie leaves his house. The next day he does not find Melanie in the class. She is standing near the doorway. He asks her to wait for him. It is raining whole day. A strange thought comes to Prof. Lurie mind: “A Child! He thinks: No more than a child! What am I doing? (DIS 20)

Nonetheless, David is incapable to control his sexual desire. Melanie tells David that she has to go for a rehearsal that evening and David wishes that she should stay back with him but silently she leaves to go. Prof Lurie engages his classes regularly at department and teaches Wordsworth’s *Prelude* to the students. They are unable to appreciate the allusions of the poem. David is aware of Melanie’s presence in the class he is talking about the theme of usurpation.

As a novelist John Coetzee is suggesting that this theme of usurpation also refers to the relationship between David and Melanie. It is a fact that David has usurped Melanie. She is a meek, powerless, black girl and unable to protect herself against potent white Professor Lurie. In the university after the class is over, Prof. Lurie tries to meet Melanie but she slips away in the student’s crowd so he eagerly follows Melanie to her flat. There he tries to make love to her but Melanie is totally unwilling for doing what Prof. Lurie wants from her. Coetzee comments:
Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, 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. (DIS 25)

Prof. David Lurie is presented in the novel as a predator and we find a powerful image of David as a fox. David’s fox like qualities makes him a cunning teacher. He is unmindful of his ethical concern for a helpless girl student Melanie. She is presented as a rabbit symbolizing tenderness and innocence. David’s sexual jaws injure Melanie. Throughout the novel use of animal imagery is one of the prominent issues in the discussion of the novel. This issue becomes very significant when David leaves Cape Town and goes to Gresham Town. Human-Animal relationship adds to the formation of identity of David Lurie in the new paradigm of power in new South Africa. Prof. David Lurie is unable to find Melanie in the class next day. She remains absent for the whole week in the class and suddenly on Sunday at midnight, Melanie comes to his house and stays over for that night. David thinks that his relationship with Melanie is a momentary affair. But when he finds her in his house at that time he thinks that it would complicate the matter. Prof Lurie expresses his ambivalent attitude towards Melanie ‘Mistress? Daughter? What, in her heart is she trying to be?’ (DIS 27)

When Prof. David Lurie comes back from the university, Melanie is present in his house. She tells him that she has missed a lot of classes. It is important to note that J. M. Coetzee equates Melanie with Lucy who is David Lurie’s daughter. On the bed in his daughter’s room he makes love to Melanie. He feels some times that Melanie is like a daughter. But his sexual desires are so strong that he ignores several other things altogether. When Melanie asks David some personal questions at that point he avoids to answering them. In
reality, Prof. David Lurie develops relationship with her in a cool and calculated manner because for him this is just one event in his sexual life. Now Prof. Lurie is torn between two boundaries. Now the situation is complicated for him. On the one hand he wants to continue his relationship with Melanie and he is aware of the fruitless meaning of that relationship on other hand. At one stage Lurie’s relationship with Melanie takes an ugly turn when a young man enters in his office in the department of university. The young man is of black skin colour. Prof. David Lurie finds trouble to personify him. The black young man tells David threateningly that Melanie has told him each and everything between him and her. As a threaten person Lurie inquires the black stranger about his identity. The young man avoid to answer, and very conceitedly tells Lurie that it was time for him to leave and warns him with terrible consequences. After this episode Melanie quits visiting Lurie’s house. Lurie’s car parked in the street is vandalized, the tires are deflated, glue is injected into the door-locks, and he has to pay six hundred rand to get the entire damage repaired. In the University Melanie appears in David’s class all of a sudden with her young, strange black boyfriend. In the classroom there is a total silence. The young black boy is not a regular student of the university. He is an intruder for all of them. Prof. David Lurie starts teaching Byron in the class. He speaks about notoriety and scandal that affected his private and public lives. John Coetzee attempts to construct Lurie’s identity by associating him with the romantic poet Byron. As Byron was notorious for his licentious life, then Prof. Lurie is also notorious for his sexual misadventures and if Byron’s personal life was ruined due to scandals, Lurie’s public life and reputation had started getting a scandalous image in the present time when the whites have lost power in the new South
Africa. Prof. David Lurie asks the students to read “Lara”, a poem written by Byron then he reads the poem aloud and refers to the “erring spirit”. The students who do not have a proper literary background are unable to appreciate the whole poem. Prof. Lurie refers to ‘Lucifer’ who was once an angel but she was thrown out by the God from paradise for his disobedience then he informs the students that Lucifer was an ‘erring spirit’ who chose his own path and lived dangerously. If angel ‘Lucifer’ lived dangerously, then David also lives a dangerous life. If Lucifer created obstacles for himself by disobeying with God, same as David also breaks his ethical code of a teacher and creates problem for himself. Prof. Lurie also teaches Wordsworth and tells his students that Wordsworth carried the burden of the past. Same is applicable to David because he too carries the burden of apartheid South Africa under the rule of the cruel white government. During the course of the novel the recurring image of Wordsworth becomes stronger and meaningful in the context of David Lurie’s life is concerns. Prof. Lurie continues with the poem “Lara” and asks the students a question; what kind of creature Lucifer was? He gets very strange answers from the students. One of the students feels that Lucifer does not care about the act whether it is good or bad, but he simply does that act for himself. This logic throws light on Lurie’s personality, who was heedless of his grave mistakes. David continues to commit the same mistake without any regret. Lurie tells the students that they should not denounce Lucifer ‘with whom there is something constitutionally wrong. On the contrary, we are invited to understand and sympathize. (DIS 33)

This thread helps us in understanding the personality and living style of the David Lurie. Coetzee makes David use “Constitutionally” on purpose. This is his rigidity in accepting the truth about the
changing times of New South Africa. Prof. David Lurie is not unaware of his power to rule over others. If Lucifer is a monster, so is David, a monster in the form of human, who is sexually exploits his own black student, Melanie. Prof. David Lurie also informs the students that Lucifer would be condemned to solitude. A similar kind of solitude was to become a part and parcel of David Lurie’s life. After the lecture, David tries to speak with Melanie, but she is quite unwilling to open her mouth. Melanie does not attain her final examinations. Prof Lurie finds Melanie formal cancelation card in his official mailbox after that he receives a telephone call from Melanie’s father in which he latter tells him that Melanie wanted to give up her studies. He is unable to understand his own daughter and requests him to persuade Melanie to think again, as she respects him Prof. David Lurie enquires for permission to Mr. Isaacs about to speak with Melanie. After some days Mr. Isaacs comes to Prof. Lurie’s office to tell him everything in front of students in the office. He also tells him that the university is ‘a nest of vipers’ and he would never send Melanie to the university for her education. Prof. Lurie thinks over the word ‘viper’. He knows that he is a ‘viper’ but he has no regret for what he has done to his own student. This episode proves to be a turning point in the development of the novel as well as in David’s personal and professional life.

The next day when David reaches his office at university, there he receives a memorandum from the office of Vice Rector. This memo informs him that Miss. Melanie had filed a complaint of victimization and sexual harassment against him. It is very important to note that the shadows of victimization pervade throughout the major works of John Coetzee. In the changing New South Africa, Melanie is able to lodge a complaint against Lurie who has miss used
his power as a teacher. He was disobeyed the ethical principles for which the university or the teaching institutes stands. In the second part of the novel there is a distressing case of victimhood. This one includes ‘Lucy’ Lurie’s daughter who is victimized by the new power equation in the New South Africa. Prof. Lurie’s Self identity as a professor of English language of Cape Town University crumbles. Lurie thinks that Melanie is too innocent to frame charges against him. He concludes that Melanie’s boyfriend and her cousin might have enforced her to lodge a complaint against him. Prof. David Lurie thinks about his affair with Melanie and concludes that they have now become foes or enemy for each other. After that event Prof. David Lurie visits Vice Rector’s office. In that office there are another two persons are present which are Farodia Rassool, from social sciences department and Elaine Winter of David Lurie’s own department. Elaine Winter informs the committee that Melanie has attended only two of her classes and missed the mid-term test but comity surprises that she has regular attendance marked as per David Lurie’s records, which shows a 70% mark for the midterm hence she ironically speaks that this could happen if there are two Melanie present in the class. Prof. David Lurie informs the committee that he has no defense in this case. The chair person of the comity Dr. Rassool suggests Prof. Lurie that the case of harassment is very complicated and unfortunate so he could take legal advises from his lawyer in this case. This event eradicates the line of distance between David Lurie’s private and public lives. This incident was sown the seeds of disgrace for him. After this case the environment at his university office dramatically changes for him. This is assumed that this case would be kept confidential for the reputation of university but it comes to be a part
of public knowledge in the university. Prof. David Lurie is able to see the change:

The gossip-mill, he thinks, turning day and night, grinding reputations. The community of the righteous, holding their sessions in corners, over the telephone, behind closed doors. Gleeful whispers. (DIS 42)

In spite of such disgrace, Prof. David Lurie is so self respectable person that he is not ready to compromise in this case. David walks head held high in the corridor with his lawyer. The lawyer David Lurie asks him directly if allegations of the girl are true and he replies in positive then the lawyer suggests that it is the matter of strategic behavior. The Lawyer advises him to get a woman to represent him and go for a private settlement with the girl and her relatives. Again the Lawyer suggests that he should give certain undertakings and in return the university would persuade the girl to drop the charges against him. Hence this is the way, in which he would be able to minimize the damage. Prof. David Lurie asks the lawyer this was meant to be an attempt to cure him of his lustful desire. Now the lawyer is not able to offer any reasonable answer. Prof. David Lurie wants to suggest that now he was beyond the counseling. The news of the scandal spreads like a wild fire in the campus of university. There is a Rape Awareness Week in the campus so a pamphlet is purposefully slipped under his door in the office and there is a special message for him. It is in a scrawled writing calling him ‘Casanova’, suggesting that his days are over. In the Novel for the first time, we are able to find there is a meeting between Lurie and his ex-wife Rosalind. In the meeting both talk about Lucy who was their daughter and born out of their marriage. In the Eastern Cape Lucy lives on a farm so Lurie tells Rosalind that he was planning a trip to Lucy’s house. Lurie’s wife Rosalind adds fuel
to the fire and openly tells David ‘Everyone knows about this latest affair of yours, in the juiciest details’ (DIS 43) hence, Rosalind humiliate Lurie for having an affair with a girl student even at the age of 52 and at this point he is unable to answer. She also informs David that he should not look for sympathy or mercy from her. Rosalind refers to the changed time for the whites and there was a ruthless period ahead after the victory of the African National Congress. She says: ‘No sympathy, no mercy, not in this day and age’ (DIS 43) In the new paradigm of the shifting of power the values of sympathy and mercy have lost their relevance in it.

Prof. Lurie memorizes passionate recrimination of his married life with Rosalind. He tells her that he wants to spend some time with their daughter Lucy. After hearing this Rosalind becomes very angry and comments upon him as: “An inglorious end to your career” (DIS 44) In the later part as the novel goes forward we come to know that Prof. David Lurie has been deprived of his position of a university professor. Prof. David Lurie does not get a serene farewell after retirement. But it is an act of being thrown out of the university disgracefully. His wife blames David Lurie for this and remarks: ‘The whole thing is disgraceful from beginning to end. Disgraceful and vulgar too’ (DIS 45) The next day Rosalind tells David Lurie that there was a small newspaper report about the sexual harassment against him. The narrator of the novel refers to William Wordsworth to David Lurie and it assumes importance in the way David Lurie’s identity develops in the later part of the novel. In the university a committee is formed to hear the complaint which is put up by Melanie. This is not a judicial committee for investigation but a committee comprising of senior professors taken from different departments of the University. There are Mr. Manas Mathabane,
Professor of Religious Studies chairs the inquiry other members of the committee are Ms. Farodia Rassool and Mr. Desmond Swarth. Mr. Mathabane the chairman of the committee informs Prof. David Lurie that the committee has no powers at all. The committee only deals with all that it would do was to make necessary recommendations as per as university is concerns. There is one student observer is also present in the committee but Prof. David Lurie does not oppose the presence of this student observer. This formation of the departmental committee refers to the new face of the Cape Town University. All the members in the committee are black and now they are enjoying the highest positions in the new university hence this also refers to the changing dynamics of power in the university committee. This committee is also a minute form of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC]. This commission played a fundamental role in restoring order and peace in the New South Africa. Prof. David Lurie doesn’t show any sign of nervousness, tension or regret. Prof. Lurie shows self confidence and knows how to present or put up his case in front of the committee. The chairman of the committee reads out to David the charges made against him by Melanie and by the Registrar of the university, through the official records of the students. The departmental charge is that Melanie did not attend all classes, or fulfils all the written tasks, or sit all the examinations for which Prof. David Lurie had given her credits. Prof. Lurie straightaway tells the committee without expressing apology or regret, that he pleads guilty to the charges and asks for the committee to pass the final sentence. Throughout the hearing, Prof. David Lurie gives us an intuition that he is a typical white South African who was born and brought up in apartheid refusing to accept a new order after the power transfer in South Africa.
to the black majority had taken place in the New South Africa. The committee members are ready to help David Lurie to save his honor and jobs as well as they have to save the reputation of the university. Nonetheless, David Lurie doesn’t show any remorse for what he has done with his own student. The committee also informs that he should choose a lawyer to represent his case in better than him. However, David feels enough confident to defend himself and do so perfectly well so he tells the committee arrogantly: ‘I am a grown man. I am not receptive to being counseled. I am beyond the reach of counseling.’ (DIS 49) The committee understands that David Lurie’s response to charges upon him is very elusive in spite of their serious nature. They fill that in accepting the charges there is a subtle mockery on the part of Lurie. Prof. David Lurie clearly tells the committee that he is not ready for a confession. The chair person of the committee Mr. Desmond Swart suggests him not to reflect on the situation if he tries to do so then he may lose his job and refers to the new situation and the changed times as he says: ‘This is no joke in these days’ (DIS 51) He remembers, Prof. David Lurie that the whole concept of self Identity has changed altogether in New South Africa. Every comment which David passes in front of the committee would lead to appropriate recommendations. Though he advises Lurie to express a deep sense of regret for his reckless actions and tender a sincere apology in writing to the committee so that they can save his reputation and job at the Cape Town University. Prof. David Lurie expresses his own experience and tells committee that Eros entered in his relationship with Melanie, and that it was an uncontrollable sexual desire. Swarts tries to remind him a teacher occupies a position of power in the academic world and suggests him that he should not have mixed power relation with sexual relations. The meaning here
seems to be assume that Prof. David Lurie had misused his power as a teacher to exploit and harass his own student. David’s power-Sex relations get a deeper meaning in the later part of the novel when Lucy is raped by three black South African boys. The woman teacher on the committee, Ms. Farodia Rassool informs the committee that they should proceed to taking a decision. The reason is that it was meaningless to go on trying to persuade David Lurie to help him to save his reputation and job. They should take his appeal at face value and recommend accordingly.

David Lurie replies angrily that it was completely ludicrous to ask him to demonstrate his sincerity in expressing his regret. Lastly David tells them: ‘I plead guilty. This is as far as I am prepared to go.’(DIS 55) Prof. David Lurie leaves the office room is in a great state of hurry, the lobby of building is crowded. A girl of black colure tries to approach him with a tape recorder for recording his statement. There that black girl asks questions about the hearing and Prof. Lurie makes no comment on it. David has to push through the crowd foe self escape. The black reporter girl asks him a direct question if he had any regret for his action. Prof. Lurie’s response to that question is very alarming and he tells the girl that this experience enriched him. In the novel for the first time, John Coetzee places David Lurie in the place of a victim for that he uses a powerful image from the world of animals: ‘They circle around him like hunters who have cornered a strange beast and do not know how to finish it off.’(DIS 56) In the Newspaper a photograph appears to ridicule David Lurie. The member of committee Mathabane suggests Prof. David Lurie to show tender apology and a spirit of remorse but to no gain because Prof. avid Lurie continues to remain stable, steady, and adamant. He explains:
Repentance is neither here nor there. Repentance belongs to another world, to another universe of discourse. (DIS 58)

Mr. Manas Mathabane the chair person finds it very difficult to save David Lurie from disgrace. David is dismissed with immediate effect with all the benefits, privileges and dues accruing to him being denied. Prof. David Lurie is not an accommodative person but he has his own ways and line of argument to justify his action through subtle expressions and explanations.

When the whole face of new Africa has changed into rigidity, skepticism, sneer at the rational thinking make David’s own life miserable. Prof. Lurie is not only reluctant to accept the new reality but also he is dispassionate in his answers before the investigation committee. David is not ashamed of his sin but just acceptance of guilt without any repentance reveals his true self. Throughout the hearing he shows his sense of arrogance and superiority in front of the committee. All the efforts made up by the committee members to ignite a flame of authentic regret of remorse fail. While teaching poetry in the class David indirectly traces that Melanie’s beauty is not only her personal possession but it should be shared with others and he thinks as he had a share of her beauty which is senseless though he feels it is otherwise. In Lurie’s forced sexual relations with Melanie and Soroya there are elements of racial exploitation. Prof. Lurie memorizes the dark skin tone of Melanie and literary he is a Professor of English literature and so he studies Melanie’s name etymologically and translates it as a dark one. Prof. David Lurie’s professional life finishes in the Cape Town University so now he makes a decision to visit his daughter Lucy on her farm. At the Lucy’s town they go for a walk with their three dogs. There she opens the conversation with his father asking about the girl with whom he was concerned and she also
asks if that relation was serious. Prof. David Lurie is confused but he replies that the affair with that black girl had serious consequences for him. David informs her that the girl had a boyfriend and he bullied her to complain against him. Parents of the girl came to know about the incident. They lodged an official complaint of sexual harassment with the university. At this point Lucy asks David if he was ever going to marry again. David responds that he was not made for the marriage and she was a witness to it. She also suggests him that it was not good for him to prey on students. ‘Petrus’ another important character enters the novel at this middle stage. Mr. Petrus is Lucy’s neighbor. He helps her in growing vegetables on the farm, and volunteers to assist her for her problems. Prof. Lurie suddenly observes that now his daughter Lucy was no more a child, but she had become a young charming woman. After that she takes David out and shows the other unfamiliar parts of South Africa and he also accompanies Lucy to the vegetable market. In the market they sell some flowers, potatoes, onions and cabbages. At one such time David remembers his classroom at the university. Once a Professor in English language, now become a vegetable vendor in the South African countryside. As a result of the changing power equations Petrus becomes more and more powerful and Lurie weaker and weaker.

As the novel develops, Lucy speaks to David about Bev Shaw. She is a woman with black freckles, closed and cropped wiry hair and runs an animal refuge. In the apartheid era animal welfare League was an active charity but the changing power equations have converted it though that institution has been closed down by the changing power a small number of volunteers led by Bev Shaw run a clinic from the old premises. David’s daughter Lucy tells him that she
helped Bev Shaw in her work whenever she found time to do so and brings Lurie to meet Bev Shaw. The place which is a clinic too is full of dust with cat urine and among other things. Prof. Lurie is repelled by the ugly scene of the clinic. As hospitality Bev Shaw offers them tea but Lucy refuses and they come back to home there Lucy tells David about the activities of Bev Shaw.

In the new South Africa there is no financial assistance for Animal Welfare and hence she highlights the marginal status of animals thus: ‘On the list of nation’s priority animals come nowhere.’(DIS 73) David Lurie is not interested in all this animal charity but still thinks what Bev Shaw has done is quite admirable. David’s daughter Lucy feels that he would like Bev Shaw to involve herself more in important things than animal welfare. She also understands that David does not approve her friends like Bev and Bill Shaw because they are not going to lead her to a higher comfortable life but Lucy tells him that there is no higher life in changing New South Africa. In that situation the only life is available which is shared with animals and Bev Shaw is an example in this context. As the action of the novel precedes the interaction between the human-animal relationship becomes the focal point of discussion.

Lucy starts a friendly conversation with David, in that she tells him that he should find some activities which will engage him so that he does not feel bored and she also suggests that he can help her in keeping the dogs or helping Petrus in looking after his land. David is ready to help Petrus in digging, and he also shows his willingness to help Bev Shaw at the animal clinic. David Lurie is ready to help Petrus but he expects that he should be paid by Petrus. David’s pride still rules over him and he is in a state of doubt but he agrees and tells Lucy:
I’ll do it. But only as long as I do not have to became a better person. I am not prepared to be reformed. I want to go on being myself. (DIS 77)

David’s daughter promises him that there is no question of reformation and nobody will ask him to change. Lurie goes out in the yard and enters the old bulldog bitch’s cage. He closes the door of the cage and stretches out beside her. She is surprised to find David in the cage when she came there. She again makes comments on the status of dogs. After the change of power in the country the dogs are no more regarded as living beings but treated much as a part of alarm system. Lucy also traces that dogs honors human beings as Gods but human beings treat them like things. He also thinks about the debate on dogs and remembers the Church Fathers who concluded that dogs do not have proper souls: ‘Their souls are tied to their bodies and die with them.’(DIS 78)

Lastly, David Lurie takes decision to help Bev Shaw at the animal clinic. He goes to the clinic, and finds the waiting room packed. He enters the inner room which smells of urine, and finds Bev Shaw peering down the throat of a dog. There he helps Bev Shaw by pressing the dog’s hind legs together. This is an unpleasant sight to watch and there is spattering of blood and saliva on the surface of the table. At a time in conversation Bev Shaw asks David, if he likes the animals and David answers quite ambiguously: ‘Do I like animals? I eat them; so I suppose I must like them, some parts of them.’ (DIS 81)

Once Bev Shaw shows David around the yard in the avian cage, there is a bird with splintered wing and the rest are dogs. One of the dogs sniffs at David’s fingers and licks. David comments: ‘They are very egalitarian, aren’t they,’ he remarks. ‘No classes. No one too high and mighty to smell another’s backside’ (DIS 85)
David asks Bev if those dogs were going to die and in answer. Bev informs him that she helps the unwanted dogs to give a peaceful death. In the novel for the first time, he tells Bev that he is not in trouble but he is in disgrace. He has begun to share his life with Lucy. He thinks that she should not be a child for ever and all of a sudden Lucy asks him an uncomfortable question whether he would live in that place for his better future. She needed a dog man to look after the her dogs and David is ready to do that but Lucy tells him that he could get a job at Rhodes University or at Port Elizabeth for his better future. David has his own doubts in his mind and gradually he has lost his identity as a Professor of English as well as the scandal with Melanie has ruined his professional identity and career. David can’t make longer command on respect and if at last he ever got a job it would be insignificant and obscure for him so he tells Lucy:

‘I am no longer marketable. The scandal will follow me, stick to me. No, if I took a job it would have to be as something obscure, like a ledger clerk, if they still have them, or a kennel attendant. (DIS 88)

He realizes that Lucy leads a purposeful and independent life and she has begun to separate from him. David talks about his scandal with Melanie and he tries to justify his stance in that scandal so he tells her that he was a servant of Eros. He gives an example of a dog who gets excited whenever there is a bitch in the vicinity and for that the owner of the dog or bitch would beat it, but that does not help the dog to forget his sexual desires. He states that one could punish a dog for chewing the slipper, and the dog would expect that justice quietly, but the sexual desire is another thing. David observes: ‘No animal will accept the justice of being punished following its instinct’ (DIS 90)
He delivers a long lecture forgetting that there is a difference between a dog and a human being. David’s wife Rosalind tries to contact with him and informs him that she had heard from Lucy that he had visited the Lucy’s town but Lurie replies that he is not yet fit for society and Rosalind tells him that he was never fit for society.

They talk about Lucy’s safety and Lurie tells Rosalind about Lucy's unsafe state in that area, and both of them engage themselves in an intimate talk after a long period of time. Rosalind inquires about his trial and tells him he was stiff and defensive, David replies that he was in the habit of standing up for a principle and that principle is freedom of speech and freedom to remain silent. Rosalind tells him that he was a great self-deceiver and she reminds him that trials are not about principles, but about how well a person puts himself across. Rosalind also inquires about his financial condition in answer he tells her that he was going to sell his house in Cape Town, and that he was writing an opera on Byron. Writing an opera was just a hobby for him as he had no intention of making money out of it.

Their talk then shifts to Lucy's life, He tells Rosalind that he had good relationship with Lucy but he was not able to live or stay with her any longer and the reason was his state of disgrace. Rosalind reminds David that he had lost his job, his reputation was ruined and every one avoided him and finally that he now lived like an insignificant small creature: ‘You hid out in Torrance Road like a tortoise afraid to stick its neck out of its shell.’(DIS 189) She also nags him about his appearance and demeanor because his shirt was crumpled, he had a bad haircut, and she warns him that he would end up in life as a sad old man who would poke around in rubbish bins. In the conversation the reference of tortoise expresses hints at the
David's vulnerable status in the New South Africa which makes his state of disgrace more painful and piercing for him in his last days. The more significant or remarkable part of the comment is that he is reminded of his loss of identity by his ex-wife Rosalind. This makes him more and more conscious of his existence in the changing times. David Lurie’s alienation from society becomes ever more excruciating and he feels that he was totally displaced and dispossessed too. David’s alienation begins with his attitude towards women.

Rosalind invites David to a dinner, at that time he becomes nostalgic: ‘His best memory of her are still of their first month together: steamy summer night in Durban.’(DIS 187) David recalls that he had thought of sex when they first met. His sexuality lacks in terms of the accompanying intimacy. He is irritated by Rosalind’s questions and finds that she is intrusive his heart. Nonetheless, we understand that Lurie himself is an intruder, intruding into the lives of Soroya and Melanie. In the novel due course of time, we come to know that there is a reversal of roles. David Lurie totally fails to intrude into Petrus's life. Finally he intruded into Petrus’s life, and he manages to change its entire course. He realizes that his uncut hair, crumpled collar and funny ear together have really turned himself into a stupid, foolish or dunce.

In his life there is bitter irony for becoming old at this stage he remembers W. B. Yeats Poem “Sailing to Byzantium”. In which the poet tells his readers that there is no country for the old. David becomes conscious of his old age. He thinks that the New South Africa does not belong to him. In the novel from starting to ending at several places, J. M. Coetzee makes direct references to the New
South Africa after the British rule is over. Lurie visits the theatre to watch a play. In which Melanie is also playing the role of a naïve hairdresser. He concludes that Melanie had suffered too much but now she had come through it. David begins to be haunted suddenly by past memories but he continues to watch the play and something knocks him lightly. It is a paper ball thrown at him by someone. When a third spit ball hits him in his neck then he suddenly understand that he was being targeted by Melanie’s boy friend Ryan their eyes meet, and he suddenly leaves the place. Ryan follows David to the parking lot and he is very angry. He asks Lurie if he had not learnt his lessons. He again warns Lurie that if Melanie were ever to see him, she would spit on his face.

David Lurie is in a state of doubt and he feels that the land of South Africa does not belong to him any longer. David finds himself stranger in the new South Africa and he realizes that his identity and status are getting more and more marginal, he broods: ‘It does not feel like his earth. Despite the time he has spent here feels like a foreign land.’ (DIS 197)

The balance of power in the country is shifting rapidly. Shortly after becoming comfortable with rural life in Eastern Cape, he is forced to come to terms with the aftermath of an attack on the farm in which his Lucy is raped by three black tax collector boys and he is violently assaulted. David Lurie is shocked to learn that Lucy’s is pregnant after she was raped. She also tells him that she was not getting an abortion. David is not capable to build a bond of kinship with his own daughter. He feels that Lucy was still a small child and needs fatherly protection. His idea of paternity is threatened when Lucy tells him bluntly that: ‘I am not minor. I have a life of my own,
just as important to me as yours is to you. And in my life I am the one who makes the decisions.’(DIS 198)

He is feeling that the only bond of intimate human relationship has broken forever for him and he has lost his filial authority to think and direct the future of his own daughter Lucy who is in the severest state of victimhood. Lucy has decided to have a child and he is compelled to support her decision. The act of rape committed with a sense of hatred and he thinks about the baby that Lucy would deliver after a few months. The three black boys who had raped Lucy are called tax gatherers. They have tried to own Lucy and have imprinted their identity on Lucy’s body forever:

What kind of child can seed like that give life to, seed driven into the woman not in love but in hatred, mixed chaotically, meant to soil her, to mark her, like a dog’s urine’(DIS 199)

David is able to see his extinction and more important is that everything in his life suddenly changes: ‘A day like any other day, clear skies and a mild sun, yet suddenly everything is changed, utterly changed!’ (DIS 199)

In his life this changes proves to be the most tormenting moment. Throughout the life for the first time, we are able find him helpless and broken from inside. David stands against the wall and hides his face in his hands and cries. This act shows that his lineage is effaced by the rapists. The New South Africa makes attempts to perfect it by making a white woman (Lucy) pregnant through three black rapists. She informs David that the boy who had raped her is back in town and his name is Pollux. He happened to be a brother of Petrus’s wife and Petrus had family responsibility towards him. David is unable to digest Lucy's argument and when Pollux comes back, Lucy makes a shocking remark that she is unable to deprive Pollux of
his property, and David completes the sentence by saying that Pollux may be the father of the child that Lucy is carrying in her womb. David tries to remind Lucy that her condition is ridiculous and she must leave the place at once. Lurie complains to Petrus against Pollux for committing a rape on Lucy but Petrus retorts angrily and says: ‘Yes. He is a child. He is my family, my people.’ (DIS 201)

David reels under the impact of this shock. On the part of Petrus, latter he tries to console David by expressing regret at what had happed but on the part of David it was all over now. David is inconsolable and that the racial conflicts where not going to end even in the new South Africa.: ‘It will go on long after I am dead and you are dead.’ (DIS 202)

For Petrus, Pollux is only a child and in this rape case is concern Pollux would marry with Lucy. Petrus also suggests Lurie that if Pollux denies then he (Petrus) would marry with Lucy. David Lurie is shocked to hear this Petrus words. David tells Petrus that Lucy did not want to marry a man and she wanted to live her own life. In return Petrus tells Lurie: ‘A woman must be marry.’ (DIS 202)

This incident gives us an idea that how tables are turned against the whites by the blacks in South Africa. David narrates to Lucy all that has emerged and she is ready to marry Petrus for survival in changing South Africa. She is paying the price for the past sins of the white rule. The farm is her dowry but this is a ridiculous idea for Lurie so he tells Lucy that Petrus is already married person and he has two wives. She replies to David that her marriage to Petrus would not be a bond of mutual trust and love but a simple deal to live in town. Lucy contributes her land to Petrus and she in turn gets protection from him. Lucy is not unaware of her status on her patch of land in
the new Africa so she tells David that Petrus may not be a big man but he is big enough for her. David requests Lucy to rethink on her decision but to no avail. Lucy had already made up her mind and she is ready to become a tenant on her own land. This is only a reversal of possession for her. Lucy is the owner of her property but now she would become bywoner and Petrus who is a bywoner would become the owner of the property. Coetzee observes: ‘she cannot last: leave her alone and in due course she will fall like rotten fruit.’ (DIS 205)

This incident is a disgracing experience for both David and Lucy but Lucy is ready to accept her defeat and, her humiliation too. She says: ‘With nothing. Not with nothing but. ‘With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity’ (DIS 205)

Prof. David Lurie finds himself loose in a society variously hostile, inscrutable and unpredictable. In broadly speaking, he is a representative of an old order and this novel is an attempt to dramatize his confrontation with the necessity of change. Initially, David tries to avoid it, and then he is forced to make adjusts not only his life but also his own temperament. The terms of the challenge he faces the moment is very clear: Change or accept extinction. Prof. David Lurie tries to find his Self identity. The process is very complex. It captures Coetzee’s imaginative conception of a point of great tension in South Africa’s history. It also explores the pain involved both in accommodating the past and surviving the present situation. In the novel sexuality is shaped by language and it gives various symbolic forms to instincts and desire. David’s sexual thrust is realized through familiar literary and aesthetic conventions for expressing passionate desire. **Disgrace**, is a highly literally novel and it filled with direct and indirect references to the European and visual
art of Anglo–European metropolis. J. M. Coetzee’s self conscious involvement with this tradition is underscored by Lurie's profession as a literally scholar. David attempts to write an opera on Byron’s last years in Italy. Lurie’s project is similar to Coetzee’s own ambivalent efforts in *Disgrace*. He writes about contemporary South Africa through the sensibility of a white scholar steeped in the sort of Eurocentric tradition and education that the British Colonial Endeavour had bequeathed. Both the tension that emerges from within the novel and operates implicitly upon it is based on an intellectual doubt. David pursues his creative project but he wonders about the applicability of the western literary canon to the South African situation. Hence he feels the English language is unfit as a medium to present the truth of South Africa. David Lurie’s transformation is a radical displacement which happens around sexuality and assumes its altered meaning in different contexts. The thought of disgrace is explored in the novel and it involves desire, sex, transgression, shame and their expressions and representations in contradiction.

All through the novel the downfall of white advantage, both sexual and racial, shows itself in the continuous re-drawing and inflaming of the line between personal conduct and public implication in South Africa. Lurie as a scholar has exercised control through intellectual knowledge and aesthetic knowledge shapes the white man’s historical consciousness to poignant effect in the novel. David’s sense of sexual right rests on his mastery of the symbolism of desire. Hence, Lurie has a strange sense of instrumentality in his lust for Melanie, and this is evident in his thought that ‘She does not own herself; perhaps he does not own himself either’. (DIS 18) He feels spurred to the hunt by classic representation seeing his desire as one
‘From quiver Aphrodite goddess of the foaming waves, no doubt about that’. (DIS 25) David’s identification of himself as a ‘servant of Eros’ and his powerful sense of erotic possession come out clearly through Coetzee's remark that ‘He is in grip of something. Beauty’s rose: the poem drives straight as an arrow’. (DIS 18)

Both these descriptions activate vagueness in the novel. David feels rebuked as a man, as a father and intellectually, as an interpreter or controller of experience. Lucy’s infringement breaks the aesthetic logic of sexual desire to which he has adhered. David struggles hard to understand the physical attack on Lucy. He refers to a painting he saw as a child –

_The Rape of the Sabine Women: men on horseback in skimpy Roman armour women in gauze veils flinging their arms in the air and wailing.’ (DIS 160)_

Even as the picture exposes the cruel power dynamics of rape, its representational cast cannot fit itself in to the experience on the farm. The perspective for grasping male power in epic terms and through pure unionized classical symbols has shifted. The reference to “The Rape of the Sabine Women” becomes, woefully anachronistic for David. He is precisely inflected through sexuality when he finds himself perplexed by the actions of the woman around him: Soroya, Melanie, Lucy and Bev Show. The influence of women is often bound up with their mysteriousness. In Coetzee's fiction; their strength depends on their unreadability with reason and signification. Once Soroya, when slipping into bed with Lurie asks if he has missed her and he replies: ‘I miss you all the time.’ (DIS 01) Lurie’s such reply reveals a conception of woman as an unreachable essence. He finds that even Lucy has become a stranger and a mystery for him. Further in the novel the status of Petrus changes dramatically now he
is no more a poor farmer or peasant from apartheid South Africa working with hands. Petrus is no longer: ‘The dig-man, the carry-man, the water-man.’ (DIS 151) Now a day he borrows a tractor and within hours ploughs the whole of his land. With every passing day, he emerges stronger and stronger outplaying with Lucy on all fronts. This is a another face of South Africa that David witnesses because only ten years ago, Petrus would have used a hand plough and oxen, but now he has acquired necessary machines and technology for farming. With a proposal Lurie goes to Petrus and asks him, if he was prepared to keep Lucy’s part of the farm land running, when he and Lucy are out of that part for a short period of time and for this David shows his readiness to pay Petrus for the same. He agrees to accept the offer given by Lurie but at the same time he informs David that he needed to be made the "farm manager". This situational demand creates a new image for Petrus. The shifting of power equation has turned a peasant into a farm manager. He also tells David that Lucy needed a break and smiles but David dislike Petrus, and, out of sheer disgust, finds it impossible to proceed with his conversation with Petrus. He thinks: ‘Talking to Petrus is like punching a bag filled with sand.’ (DIS 153) Petrus agrees to look after Lucy’s farm.

David Lurie receives a call from police. They are informing him that his car has been recovered and two men have been arrested by them. The police officer shows Lurie a white corolla, but Lurie tells the officer that it is not his car. One day Lurie and Lucy have a heart-to-heart talk, and she talks about the rape and tells him that the rape was committed with personal abhorrence. David counsels Lucy to leave the place forever and go and begin a fresh life elsewhere. He also suggests her that she must sell her farm to Petrus and go away elsewhere but she is not prepared to do so. He scolds Lucy, saying
that she was taking a wrong decision, which would deprive her of all honors. In the novel there is a reference to the image of three chimpanzees which has a symbolic value and it suggests that he was the third of the chimpanzee because he is able to see the apparent changes but makes a resolute attempt to avoid seeing them. Hence it means he is blind to the new situation in the South African countryside. Lucy finds it to be a self deception and requests him to come out of that state and goes on to claim that she had become a mature person: ‘I cannot be a child forever.’ (DIS 141)

Prof. David Lurie comes to Cape Town to meet Melanie’s father Mr. Isaacs. He apologizes for the grief he has caused him and his family. David asks Mr. Isaacs for pardon his mistakes and he confesses that he has been punished for his mistake and feels that his fall is immeasurable. Now he becomes aware of his shrinking status and: ‘He thinks of himself as obscure and growing of obscurer a figure from the margins of history.’(DIS 167)

Prof. David Lurie also tells Mr. Isaacs that he is in a state of disgrace from which it would not be easy for him to lift himself. He has nothing to complain about his present situation and disgrace had become his being:

I am living it out from day to day, trying to accept disgrace as my state being. Is it enough for God, do you think, that I live disgrace without term? (DIS 172)

David is an atheist and, hence Mr. Isaacs tells him that he had no way to ask God to forgive him. Since he does not pray so that God must find his own means of telling him. As per as the novel proceeds, we able to observe that he spends his life for the welfare of dogs and tries to purify himself by surrendering everything he has. He also visits his house in Cape Town but he does not feel like it was a home
coming for him but he finds his house was looted. There after he also visits the university as he still has his keys to the Communication Building. In the department he goes to his office on the fifth floor and he astonished that the name tag on his door has been removed he found there a new tag named as Dr. S. Owto. The total situation shows him how he had been made extinct in the university and he also feels that he has become an outsider in Cape Town. And this is highlighted when he visits the little shop from which he used to buy Coffee for years; the assistant in the shop pretends not to recognize him, even his neighbor avoids him.

David’s life journey is irreversible. There is no guider, father or friend who would help to restore order in David's life. David is portrayed as an orphan, with no parents, no friends, no wife and now no daughter also. We can be argued that Petrus increasingly becomes a man of social importance and he can assume a position of authority over Lucy but for as David is concern, there is no power of the authority acting on him other than the powerful experience of disgrace. David moves into a realm of non-significations: “A thing” neither fully human nor fully animal: a kind of ghost. He would not return to any of his former ways: he will not go back to live in Cape Town and he will not restart his teaching at any place. David’s remaining time is now devoted to three concerns: firstly the awaiting berths of Lucy’s Child, secondly the opera on Byron and thirdly the dogs for which he cares. David forms a deep sense of awareness and suffering of animals while working with Bev Shaw at the animal clinic. All the animals that are brought to the clinic are almost on the verge of death:

When people bring a dog in they do not say straight out: ‘I have brought you this dog to kill’, but that is what is expected: that they will dispose of it, make is disappear, dispatch it to oblivion (Buber 142)
The novel is crowded with animals but in the novel animals is given marginal status and a careful study of the novel reveals this fact with effectively. The animals are often found in the process of becoming lost and they are neglected, deserted, attacked and burnt. They fare badly in the human world as they: ‘Do not own their own lives and in which they exist to be used’ (Derrida 395) It is quite significant to note that most of the animals in the novel at the end up, dead.

Throughout the novel we understand that a stage comes in the life of dogs when they find themselves utterly unable to take care of themselves. John. Coetzee tries to realize us that the animals, alive or dead, are at the mercy of the other, supposedly higher animal. Through physical violence and exploitation human beings are erased the lives of animals.

In South Africa dogs occupy a special place as they belong to the white community. They used them for their protection Lucy puts it quit concisely: more dogs mean more deterrence. She runs the boarding kennels and looks after others people’s Doberman, German shepherd, bullterrier and Rottweiler. These dogs are trained to growl at the mere smell of a black man. It is significant to note that generally the dogs are pet animals and they have their own proper names they are different from others dogs.

Most of the dogs in the novels are unnamed and largely undifferentiated. They function as a part of apparatus of deterrence. Dogs are brought to the animal refuge and David and Bev destroy them on Sunday. Lucy tells him that the dogs have no room in the list of the new nation’s priorities. There is the white predicament in the post-apartheid Africa. In new South Africa there is a breakdown of
law and order now it is a period of dark times. It is very strange that animals put towards the centre of the novel.

Animal’s virtual invisibility and their constant struggle for survival render them essential to the working for the novel. Something is provoked in David after he comes in close contact with animals and he is not able to understand it fully. In New South Africa human beings and animals share a life of suffering and humiliation. Throughout the human history it is also true that human beings have inflicted suffering on helpless animals. Jacque Derrida’s views on animals are very relevant here. Derrida describes real suffering inflicted on and experienced by countless animals as result of:

_The Industrial, mechanical, chemical, hormonal and genetic violence to which man has been submitting animal life for the past two centuries.’_ (Derrida 395)

In the second half of the novel the unexpected implications of shared suffering with animals challenge and transform David completely. Derrida asserts that:

_Any thinking concerning the animal, if there is such a thing, derives from poetry. There you have a hypothesis: it is what philosophy has, essentially, had to deprive itself of. That is the difference between philosophical knowledge and poetic thinking.’_ (Derrida 377)

Derrida considers animals in poetry to be superior to the philosophical animals. In _Disgrace_ the distinction between the philosophical animals and poetic animals is pursued in even more confusing ways. In the life of David Lurie animals play a vital role and they accompany him in his journey in disgrace.

At the starting, David is more or less indifferent towards them but in his state of disgrace, he encounters animals on Lucy’s farm and in her friend Bev’s animal clinic, where he works as a volunteer. He
reaches the rank of a dog when he loses everything including his daughter. David enters into his widest reaches of disgrace after the scandal with Melanie and it followed by rape on Lucy. Now he is surrounded by abandoned, dying and dead animals but ultimately the first glimmering of sympathy and love ignite within him. David’s life is as close to having no material value as that of any character John Coetzee has created in his novel:

‘Well, now he has become a dog-man: a dog undertaker, a dog psycho pomp; a harijan’ (DIS 146)

It could rightly to say that the novel’s articulation of disgrace cannot succeed without animals. The concept of disgrace expands to include all animals, non-human as well as human, alive and dead. As the novel moves further, David also behave or becomes an animal like a dog without any identity, power or self respect means total disgrace. In the initial stage David’s reactions about animals are academic and abstract. Once Lucy tells him that there is no higher life and the only life there is, is the life they share with the animals.

David Lurie informs her that human are different from animals, but now he is forced to discard his views on animals and finds his disgrace with the helpless, dying dogs. The animals are philosophical for David as long as he is in Cape Town but everything changes when he finds himself among real animals in the rural areas of South Africa, “darkest Africa” as he calls it. He encounters with the animals when he comes to Lucy’s house. At that time Lucy notify him that animals treat human beings like God but human beings treat them like things. Hence, In Lucy’s words, we find the language of humanitarian concern, his reaction to this thought is purely academic and relevant only in seminar rooms and this is because he has recently left the academic status from university.
David thinks that animals are insignificant or unimportant creatures on the Earth and they have only bodies, not souls. He believes that his language has become more and more irrelevant to the changed circumstances of the country after the rape on Lucy so he imagines that his language and his own identity share the same fate. At the ending point of the novel, David changes his views regarding animals. Earlier he reserved the word ‘soul’ only for human beings but now he is finally able to feel the soul of the dying dog: ‘the smell of expiration, the soft, short smell of the released soul.’ (DIS 219)

John Coetzee brings Wordsworth and Byron in the novel to construct and lend shades to David's identity. William Wordsworth was highly influenced by the French Revolution and he was celebrated the ideals of liberty, quality and fraternity throughout his poetic works. As well as the Close association with nature and the role of nature as a better teacher are reflected in his major poetry.

As a novelist Coetzee uses biographical and artistic Endeavour of Wordsworth. Coetzee, as a writer, was nurtured by the European canon of literature. He finds it difficult to represent and depict the landscape of countryside in South Africa and so he describes the African landscape using romantic diction and imagery. He very honestly accepts the limitation of the European tradition and the English language in presenting the South African reality from the European perspective.

Prof. David Lurie calls himself a student of Wordsworth. He finds it difficult to teach Wordsworth’s poetry to the African students. In modern South Africa the high ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity have become irrelevant in which the sense of justice, freedom, and fraternal outlook have been replaced by oppression, suspicion, injustice and violence.
If William Wordsworth learns lessons from nature and French Revolution, then Prof. David Lurie also learns better lessons from the Black South African Society when he is exiled from Cape Town and comes to live with Lucy in the countryside. David’s exile becomes more extreme because he is doubly exiled. After exile he comes to Lucy’s house to escape from his disgrace but the rape on Lucy twice increases his disgrace.

David also takes a harsh decision to live in a small rented house in Graham Town when Lucy reminds him that he should assume her to be dead for him. He even changes his last name to Lourie from Lurie. Lourie, This new name rhymes with lorry and in fact, he works as an undertaker of dogs and carries the dead bodies of the dogs to the incinerator to give them decent last ritual.

David’s new role as a carrier of dead dogs is reflected in his new name. Now he is no more David or Lurie, but a Lorry, who, in the opinion of the owner of the rented house, is a cancer patient. If Wordsworth is called the high priest of nature, then Lurie also plays the role of the priest for animals like dog. He is helping Bev Shaw in making the suffering of the dogs less painful in their journey of life to death. If William Wordsworth learns spiritual lesson from nature, then Lurie attempts to learn lessons of sympathy, humanity and self-effacement from animals. If Wordsworth is associated with blindness, then symbolic blindness is associated with Lurie.

He is blind to the new developments taking place in the workplace, on the farm, in the personal relationship in the independent Africa under the new democratic government. Therefore the direct and oblique references to Wordsworth represent Lurie's ironic version of what he wants to write by way of a Chamber Opera. As per as
romanticism is concerns subjectivity is also an important feature of it and the subjective outlook of the romantic narrator runs it throughout the romantic poetry.

In case of David Lurie this also proves to be true who has a prominent subjective personality. David sees towards everything subjectively so as to suit his intention for it and his subjectivity is reflected in his attitude towards Soroya, Melanie and his presentation before the disciplinary committee at Cape Ton. David destabilizes other complex objective details even as there is a gradual shift from subjectivity to objectivity in his life from owner to disgrace. At the end of the novel, he takes the final decision to give up everything. He almost reaches the stage of total surrender and renunciation at this last stage in his life.

John Coetzee also draws some parallel aspects between David’s Lucy and Wordsworth’s Lucy. He seems to suggest that David’s Lucy has a strong bond of affinity with Wordsworth’s Lucy. The Lucy poem is a bunch of five poems in which Lucy is at the centre. Through this poem Wordsworth tries to suggest that a sense of mystery, loneliness, death, uncertainty, close communion with nature and deep sense of personal loss are associated with the character of Lucy. The narrator of the Lucy poems is presented as if he is in the state of mourning.

Hence, if Wordsworth’s Lucy lives in the lap of nature and lives a solitary life, then David’s Lucy also lives in close contact with nature and has turned herself into a peasant but is quite unaware about it and earns her livelihood by selling vegetables. Wordsworth’s Lucy walks on the untrodden path, same as David’s Lucy treads the untrodden path by choosing to give birth to a child. It is the direct
result of a rape on her by three black young men. If William Wordsworth is revealed in the mourning period, then David Lurie is also presented in a state of mourning after the rape on Lucy. If Wordsworth’s Lucy stays and lives among stones in the nature with an uncertain future, then David’s Lucy decides to become Petrus’s third wife with an uncertain future. It is also interesting to note the word such as Petrus is derived from the Greek word which means a rock or stone in English and Petrus's personality demonstrates the qualities of rock and stone associated with it. Lucy is completely aware about her existence in the new situation in which she depends on Petrus completely.

In the novel the route of power affects the issues of identity, dignity, race and gender and 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 his job, identity, power, reputation and at last his daughter Lucy. Hence David Lurie reaches the stage of total renunciation, surrender and disgrace.

Hence the novel mostly concerns David’s interaction with a few other characters as well as how David is searching his identity throughout the novel.

**Foe (1986):**

‘*Foe*’ this novel is a retelling of the Robinson Crusoe fable, an allegory of South Africa’s racial dilemmas, and contemplation on the art of fiction. In the novel Susan Barton who is a castaway woman shares the island with Robinson Crusoe and Friday. In this novel J.M. Coetzee represents Defoe himself and thematizes him. As an author of *Foe*, Coetzee has brought his own political identity into question.
Left doubting author and genre, we are entrenched in doubt, and it is that experience which makes Foe so effective. It is a distinctly political novel which forces the reader into the political experience of doubting author, authorial voice, and authority. (Bishop 54-57)

In the story Cruso is the hero, a sullen or depressed boor without energy, imagination or desire. Susan is another shipwrecked voyager, who is washed up on his island and into his dull existence. She is amazed that he has not kept journal of his island life and passed away his time with the help of Friday. Susan tells that she grew up in England and now is in search of her daughter on island. There she meets to Cruso, a European man of about sixty year old sullen boor. Similarly Cruso also gives different accounts of his family, his adventures and his black servant Friday. Susan is forced them into becoming Friday's guardian. Cruso for unwilling to leave the island he settles over there with implements of rudimentary. He tells Susan that his servant Friday's tongue is cut by the slave traders. Susan nurses Cruso when he is ill and later falls into an act of sexuality. Susan experienced that on the island Cruso is like a kingly figure but Cruso falling sick again and dies on a voyage. It can be argued that in the figure of mute Friday, Coetzee actually sets to work the notorious theme of the white man's or the colonizer’s burden. Friday in this novel is a deprived Negro, who has now become a burden for the white man or the white woman. Susan make attempts to teach Friday to understand speech but he makes little progress in it. Cruso never allowed her to know how and why Friday had actually lost his tongue. All her life which is with Friday she struggles to give him a tongue. Meanwhile the search for her daughter remains a futile effort for Mrs. Cruso that is Susan. The loss of her daughter and the fact of her fruitless search become rooted in her consciousness which
make her compel to convince Mr. Foe in writing her memoir. In the novel sometimes the daughter appears as a dead child or sometimes she seems to be an apparition conjured up by the sorcerer, Mr. Foe. When a girl meets to her and claims to be her daughter, at that point Susan disowns her. At Mr. Foe’s house she slips into his bed.

Impossibility of gaining control on master over selves or final complete meaning of life or gaining an identity are enacted in the marginal figures of Friday and Susan. Friday is defined his own self in the picture which he draws on sand or slate. There are no sentiments, feelings or emotions are ascribed to him. The themes of marginality and colonialism are helpful to us in understanding the buffing or knocking kind of ending the novel. In this novel Coetzee turns his attention on questions of agency and authority. Here Fridays tongue is cut out though it is not clear by whom. But the history illustrates that the empire and the colonialism has silenced some and wrapped the speech of others.

In the ongoing attempts to retrieve forgotten and repressed elements of South African history, it seems that the craving for authenticity and verifiable stories has intensified. In the twentieth century, the socio political conditions of South Africa and the apartheid system prevailing there brought the black people’s life much nearer to realistic situation. Coetzee, for much of his career, lived and worked in South Africa, under the apartheid regime until 1990 who witnessed the political difficulties of South Africa. Hence his works has embodied a form of intellectual challenge. The day to day life of the people proves an unbearable situation that one to cope freely with the external world, in this world people have to confront and interact among themselves. If this interaction fails to permit them
to be what they want to become they may turn to their own fantastic inner world. In this way, in general the Coetzee’s fiction is failing in the pursuit of happiness through establishing relationships with other number of characters. Coetzee created a basic outlook towards reality by involving in imaginative flights into fantasy. It is a way of creating a perspective for looking back on authenticity.

Instead of writing about South African politics in a plainly realistic manner, Coetzee’s preference for impersonality, as well as his thorough training in literature, has prompted him to write a vigorously ‘textual’ kind of fiction. Thus, his novels are often about authenticity in society, his work draws attention to its own novelistic tricks and devices and draws on other classics of Western literature. The major need to write is to awaken counter voices within one self, and to dare to enter into discourse with them. More importantly the dangerous attraction of the inner self is John Coetzee’s theme…… to imagine the unimaginable is the writer’s duty. Coetzee as a post-modern allegorist knows that novels that do not seek to mimic authenticity best convince are that reality exists. Hence self reflexivity is the only mode and fiction the only medium through which he has to move beyond the paralyzing effects of history. Coetzee doesn’t stands to make writing of fiction an end in itself but a means to explore the unexplored; going beyond the real to have the grasp of the unreal in representing the unrepresentable. The authenticity is in the writer’s vision rather than in the selection of this or that particular theme.

This novel primarily focused on the ‘Exploring the Self’ theme. The novel brings out the political crisis inherent in the representation of other culture.
Foe (1986) is written from the perspective of Susan Barton. It is a rewriting of Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe, but in the context of South African condition. The main narrator of the novel is Susan Barton who is a castaway. She has been searching for her dear daughter in Bahia but she fails to find her. Susan has been forced to deboard a ship after a mutiny because the captain of the ship is killed in it. She accompanies the dead body of the captain. She had been his mistress during his lifetime. After that she swims through the sea, comes ashore, and finds herself on an island. On that island she finds Cruso and Friday. Cruso who is the white old man and master of Friday, and Friday is a black man, a slave and don’t have tongue to speak hence, he is unable to express his feelings. Susan assumes that Friday had gone through adverse situations and has lost his tongue. Throughout the novel the subject of Friday’s loss of tongue becomes enigmatic. Who was responsible for this adverse situation of Friday? The situation and the circumstances for this mishap with Friday remained unclear for Susan Barton.

Susan drafts a memoir. She titled it as “The Female Castaway” and seeks out the author Foe. Foe is a professional writer who lives in England hiding himself from his creditors. Friday’s silence infests throughout the novel and his presence overwhelms the narrator at the end of the novel. Ina Grabe pointed out quite rightly that ‘in paying more attention to the telling of the story than the story itself, the novel clearly participates in postmodernism’s favoring the signifier over the signified.’(Grabe 147-148)

Susan focuses on the fact that Friday is an inferior native. He is deprived of all the avenues of self expression. As an individual his identity is possessing unique features. A particular milieu remains
unacknowledged and pushed into the margin in Friday’s life. Susan’s temperament leads her to ask a number of uncomfortable questions to Cruso. She blames Cruso of lack of communication between him and Friday. The relationship between Cruso and Friday is of the master and servant. Cruso is not projected as cruel oppressor. He is indifferent towards Friday’s identity, fate and history. When Susan asks Cruso the reason behind the loss of Friday’s tongue then Cruso replies casually undermining Friday’s existence as an individual. ‘Perhaps they grew weary of listening to Friday’s wails of grief that went on day and night. Perhaps they wanted to prevent him from ever telling his story.’ (FOE 23)

Cruso (the oppressor) does not take any initiative in hearing out what Friday has to say. As a result he is not inclined to teach him because he believes that Friday has no need of words to express himself. As per as Susan is concerns she wishes to be co-operative with Friday and help him to regain his identity. She fights for a representation of Friday and the reason for it is that she thinks a true rendition of life on the island is not possible without giving voice to Friday. Friday and his black identity are threatened by Foe, who is the author and plays the role of a creator and controller and assumes that island is not a story in itself. Foe ignores Friday by depriving him of any meaning of or his opinions within a larger story. Susan tries hard to defend Friday by supporting his unarticulated version of the story. Susan is… ‘a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire. (FOE 131) On the other hand the condition of Friday is different, he has no command over words and it is difficult for anybody to touch his essence throughout the novel. In his life seclusion plays an important role.
Susan and Friday’s existence on the island makes it clear that they are under the influence of the colonial history which was heralded in Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. The relation between the colonizer and the colonized was the defining moment when Friday learnt how to address the new comer. Coetzee is not interested in repeating the master discourse as in Robinson Crusoe but he is interested in deconstructive readings. He places the text in… ‘Relation to previous texts so as to read into lays silences and slippage of what has been repressed in histories that one assumed to be authoritative.’ (Chapman 389) As a creative writer this approach permits him to rewrite and subvert western colonial master narratives. Coetzee’s responsibility is ‘to understand, modify and re-imagine the narratives by which we construct and construe our reality.’(Chapman 389) Hence Susan and Friday are placed on the island to appear as if they were beyond the world which may in fact defy the authority of their voices. Susan is unable to tolerate any lies and silences and she all the time stresses the point that she… ‘Would rather be the author of (her) own story than have lies told about (her)’, and she ‘cannot come forward as author and swear the truth of her tale (because) what will be the worth of it.’ (FOE 40)

She has left the island, thinking over this issue and she reflects on her story and concludes that she is ‘…a being without substance, a ghost beside the true body of Cruso. Is that the fate of all story tellers? Yet I was as much a body as Cruso. I ate and drank, I woke and slept the island was Cruso’s (yet by what right? by the law of islands? Is there such a law?). (FOE 51) There seems to be a bond between subjugated voice of Susan and the voice of the colonized savage. Attwell points out that… ‘Susan’s womanhood suggest the
relative cultural power of the province as opposed to the metropolis and of unauthorized as opposed to authorized speech.’ (112)

The Letters which are addressed to Mr. Foe written by Susan combines the two matters saying ‘I told you of my conviction that, if the story seems stupid, that is only because it so doggedly holds it silence. The shadow whose lack you feel is there: It is the loss of Friday’s tongue.’ (Coetzee 312) The lost tongue seems to stand for submerged voices which include the native voices of South Africans without whose presence it is impossible to reach the core of the Country, its people and its culture.

Getting to know one’s own culture altogether with all its voices is not an easy thing to do as Breytenbach asserts for ‘It entails a continual making and unmaking of the self, it is necessarily dogged by a sense of loss.’(Breytenbach 234) As per as any postcolonial culture is concerned, there is a need for reconsideration of its own roots, yet it cannot be done by means of stories told by “others”.

Coetzee himself claims in giving Offence (1996) that there has always ‘been the dyad Christian/heathen…, taking a succession of forms, among them civilized/primitive, white/nonwhite... It was always the white or the civilized person in whose power it lay to apply names- the name for himself, the name of the other.’ (Coetzee 01) In this way the whites dominated the blacks in South Africa, and the version of their history and identity that to wait for long years to emerge, in the same way Friday kept a story inside him. The story of island, Cruso, Susan is able to be told but the story of Friday’s tongue is unable to tell. That is to say, many stories can be told of Friday’s tongue, but the true story is buried within Friday, who is mute, still, calm. ‘The true story will not be heard till by art we have found a
means of giving voice to Friday.’(FOE 118) Friday lost his community, his family and several others things in his life but the lost of tongue is his the biggest loss. This loss suggests the loss of identity. Throughout the novel he tries to find out his identity but the searching process is internal on the level of heart, feelings, compassion. He is unable to think, speak, express externally on the level of mind, thought and explore.

Cruso doesn’t have any need of Friday’s tongue for his requirements but as per as Susan is concerns she wants Friday to be speak, for herself and more importantly for her memoir( story). She is unable to portray the picture of Friday’s life in front of the reader without his medium of communication. As a need for her quest she finds the writer Foe, who has the ability to see from the required view in the life of Friday to make the story powerful and interesting.

Susan’s quest is to get her story told. She thinks and feels that she lacks substance as an individual until the story of her years on the island with Cruso is written as a legitimate narrative. The publication of her story would bring fame and money for herself and she thinks that her experience will remain lacking in reality until it is told as a publically validated narrative. She writes to Foe

For though my story gives the truth, it does not give the substance of the truth (I see that clearly, we need not pretend it is otherwise). To tell the truth in all its substance you must have quiet and a comfortable chair away from all distraction and a window to stare through, and then the knack of seeing waves when there are fields before your eyes and of feeling the tropic sun when it is cold, and at your finger prints with which to capture to vision before it fades. I have none of these, while you have all. (FOE 51-52)

Susan thinks that as an author she doesn’t have the power which is possessed by Mr. Foe. He may provide efficient realistic
views to give her story the density of truth. She explores further that story means a storing-place of memories and language creates a ‘correspondence between things as they are and the pictures we have of them in our minds’. (FOE 65)

In her letters to Mr. Foe she writes that this version of truth is not sustainable. Her version of story lacks any adventure, but at this moment also, she does not want to fabricate episodes which did not happen with Friday or with them on island. The writer Mr. Foe wants to submit some unrealistic but interesting episodes in the story. She knows that she is unable to get an account of Friday’s mutilation. Susan reflects on the difficulties of writing such stories. She elaborates “the mysteries” of the island. In her mind there is a series of unresolved questions, such as: What was the meaning of the terraces? How did Friday lose his tongue? Why did Friday submit to Cruso? What was the meaning of Friday’s act of scattering of petals on the water near the site where she imagines that was a shipwreck? All these “mysteries” remain unanswered and unsolved. As a writer Mr. Foe is interested in Susan’s life before the shipwreck. However, Susan refuses to give an account of that life to him. She confirms Foe, ‘I chose rather to tell of the island, of, myself and Cruso and Friday and what we three did there.’ (FOE 131)

It is more interesting to know that the exploration of Friday’s hidden miseries complicate the issue of identity in the novel. Though all attempts were made to interpret Friday’s roots, behavior, actions fail to reach any plausible end. Friday exists in his relation to Susan as she thinks that her story on the island will be incomplete without inclusion of Friday in it, but he is quite inaccessible to her. Derek Attridge rightly asserts:
Friday is a being wholly unfamiliar to her, in terms of race, class, gender, culture. He may be a cannibal. But Friday’s story will never be known; he has had his tongue cut out and cannot even tell the story of mutilation. His silence, his absolute otherness to her and to her words is at the heart of Barton’s story. (81)

Mr. Foe puts a proposal in front of Susan, ‘we must make Friday’s silence speak, as well as the silence surrounding Friday.’ (FOE 142) She makes sincere but unfruitful attempts to teach Friday writing. She uses the method of drawing sketches keeping in mind Friday’s experiences and history. For the story Susan interprets Friday’s past life and it will be based on Friday’s response to the sketches and finally Friday’s self expression through the language taught by her. Susan draws various sketches to find out the history behind Friday’s loss of tongue. Firstly she draws a sketch of Friday and Cruso with a knife. After that she asks Friday if Cruso cut his tongue. Secondly she draws another sketch in which there is little Friday with his mouth wide open and a man with a knife who is a slave-trader with a sickle-shaped knife. She again asks Friday if a slave trader cut out his tongue. But these experiments are proving to be futile and lead to confusion. Friday does not try to respond, his gaze remains movement less. Susan Barton feels that she had been wasting her life on him as she was unable to unfold Friday’s mysterious identity. Susan concludes: ‘The unnatural years Friday had spent with Cruso had deadened his heart, making him cold, incurious like an animal wrapt entirely in itself.’ (FOE 70)

Susan Barton at a one stage is ready to tell Mr. Foe that Friday and she lived too close for love and in the course of time Friday has grown to be her shadow: ‘Do our shadows love us, for all that they are never parted from us.’ (FOE 115) She gives an outline of her life before she came to the island and gives an outline of life that she
spent on the island. Mr. Foe asks Susan to rehearse her story again for him because he is much interested in her personal life in Bahia than the story of the island. Mr. Foe constructs a plot for Susan’s story which contains five parts: loss of her the daughter, the searching for the daughter, abandonment of the quest, the adventure of the island, assumption of the quest by the daughter and reunion of the daughter with her mother.

As a writer for his story Mr. Foe follows the Aristotelian principle of organic plot with a beginning, middle and an ending. The story of the island is not at all a story in itself; it can never be an independent story. This is a lifeless story. Mr. Foe exercises his authorial power to shape the story as he likes and he even tell to Susan that it is impossible for him to construct a story of the island. He adds that the story of the island can be brought to life only by setting it within a larger story. As Foe tells Susan, ‘by itself it is no better than a waterlogged boat drifting day after day in an empty ocean till one day, humbly and without commotion, it sinks. The island lacks light and shade.’ (FOE 117)

Mr. Foe who enjoys a higher status as a white man tries to control identity of Friday and island staying in London. Though as a writer he has his own preferences for inclusion and exclusion which Susan may not approve of. Mr. Foe tells Susan while Commenting on the story of the island, Foe tells Susan: ‘it is like a loaf of bread. It will keep us alive certainly, if we are starved of reading, but who will prefer it when there are tastier confections and pastries to be had.’ (FOE 117)

Susan protests against this view of Foe. She insists that she chooses to tell of the island, herself, Cruso and Friday. At one
moment she tells Foe that she has trust in her own authorship. Susan thinks that her own life has grown to be a story. There is nothing of her left for as she says ‘I am doubt itself. Who is speaking me? Am I a phantom too?’ (FOE 133)

For Susan Friday’s inaccessibility and elusiveness become the reason of uncertainty and this becomes the ‘hole’ in Susan’s narrative. Susan is not able to portray Friday’s narrative by herself. She requires Friday’s own discourse. But for getting Friday’s discourse she must acquire his speech. And we know that all attempts have failed to make Friday speak. At Foe’s behest, Susan attempts to teach Friday the English language. Susan gives Friday a slate. On that slate instead of writing the English alphabets, he makes his own marks on the slate. Friday draws ‘eyes, open eyes, each set upon a human foot: row upon row of eyes upon feet: walking eyes.’ (FOE 147) This attempt shows Friday’s watchfulness over Susan and Foe.

Friday writes rows of letter ‘O’ tightly packed together, he fills the second page in the same manner. Mr. Foe tells Susan that it is the first day of learning for Friday, he again suggests Susan to teach Friday how to write the letter ‘A’. Actually, Friday is writing ‘O’, which stands for Omega, which is the sign of the end, emptiness. On the other side, Mr. Foe thinks that Friday should produce his assailable story. He should starts with ‘A’, or alpha. Here ‘O’ also represents a circle which has no corner. This is Friday’s attempt to defy authority. He tries to retain his otherness outside the power of master discourse of Foe. The story of island is Friday’s possession in spite of not having the power of speech or self expression.

It is interesting to understand that Friday has his own secret codes which he uses for communication. As a writer Coetzee makes
references to those codes a number of times in the novel. These codes are embedded in Friday’s culture. The mysterious signs, marks on the slate, throwing petals of the flower in the sea, humming the tune of a song, playing the flute, dancing in Foe’s scarlet robe are means of expressions and presentations. Hence, Coetzee does not underestimate Friday from having a history, even if the emphasis is laid on Friday’s silence. Neither Foe nor Susan is able to represent the history of Friday’s identity. Coetzee seems to suggest that Friday has a history and culture, but these remain unacknowledged by Foe or Susan. They are incapable of interpreting the secret codes in which Friday seems to communicate. The white power is unable to understand and represent Friday’s racial and cultural identity.

This is veritably applicable to Coetzee’s South Africa which is silent because of oppression against the blacks. Mr. Foe wants to make Friday’s speak for the possibility of including him in the larger narrative of his work. He is grateful to those previous white masters who seemed to be responsible for Friday’s tonguelessness. On the other, Friday’s silence is the sign of his absolute otherness. Mr. Foe is interested in Friday’s inability to communicate using the tool of the English language. As a professional writer Friday’s absolute silence offers extraordinary power to him for whom the act of writing is a business of convenience. Mr. Foe justifies Friday’s loss of tongue and tells Susan that lack of self expression of Friday opens all options for him as he can manipulate, modify or distort Friday’s identity as per his own wishes and desires. Further in this context Foe tells Susan ‘we deplore the barbarism of whoever maimed him, yet have we, his later masters, not reason to be secretly grateful? For as long as he is dumb we can tell ourselves his desires are dark to us, and continue to use him as we wish.’ (Spivak 157)
Mr. Foe plays a dual role, as a male and an author. He has authorial power to represent truth as he desires. As a male he desires to dominate Susan. She is a woman devoid of any social or financial support. Susan’s identity can only be acknowledged by the world of letters if Mr. Foe agrees to represent her in the story. Even though, Susan differs from Foe in her attitude towards Friday. Susan has a sympathetic view towards Friday and thinks that the story has no meaning if it fails to include Friday. Susan tells Mr. Foe that Friday’s desires are not dark for her. Friday has been a slave all his life. She thinks that attempts should be made so that Friday may recover his freedom. However, She expresses her doubt ‘As to Friday, how can Friday know what freedom means when he barely knows his name.’ (FOE 148)

In Foe’s view there is no need for Friday to understand the meaning of freedom. Mr. Foe fails to understand the value of freedom, he is free a free man, for he says ‘Freedom is a word like any word. It is a puff of air, seven letters on a slate.’ (FOE 149) Mr. Foe tells Susan that it is not a great task to teach Friday a language that will serve his needs, but there is no need to turn Friday into a philosopher. She elaborates Foe that he speaks as Cruso used to speak. Friday’s heart will not be answered by a few English words. There will always be a hidden voice in Friday to whisper doubts, whether in words, or in names, sounds or tunes. Susan’s desire for authorization of the story of the island expresses her feminist attitude. This is also focus towards the creation of an independent story on Susan’s own terms. Though, she is aware of her limitation at the skill in writing stories. Though Susan is having genuine writing material for a story, she tells Foe that she does not have the skill in bringing out parables one after another like roses from a conjurer’s sleeve.
In the novel there is a struggle for control over the narrative between Mr. Foe and Susan. After that we come to know that Susan does not give way to the formula suggested by Foe. In further conversation she reminds Foe of the story of the Muse, who is a woman, a goddess, who visits poets in the night and begets stories upon them. Susan also recalls Mr. Foe that when she wrote her memoir for him, she found that it was dull, vacant and without life. So she wished that there were such a being as a man-Muse who visited authoresses in the night and made their pens flow. As per as Susan is concern, the Muse is both goddess and a begetter. Susan intends not to be the mother of a story but to beget it. To some extent, she is able to reverse her gender role; she plays the role of the father. She mounts him as the Muse both as a goddess and a begetter of the story. Susan Barton thinks that she has turned Foe into her ‘mistress’ and finally her ‘wife’. Mr. Foe is not comfortable in the sexual position offered by Susan. His bones jolt.

She suggests Mr. Foe that it is always a hard ride when the Muse pays her visits to any author. She plays the role of male to become the father. Coetzee mixes authorship with sexuality. Susan Barton’s attempt might not be wholly successful. But it is Coetzee’s attempt to offer Susan the creative energy to subdue Foe’s power both as a male and creator of the story. Mr. Foe is presented as Friday’s foe, as he has deprived him of representation. As a writer Mr. Foe has the command over the English language and the skill in writing and these two qualities place him on the high pedestal of authority and power. His power offers acceptability and authenticity to the story. However, Mr. Foe also has power to include and exclude as he wills or thinks. It seems that he represents a metropolitan centre; He exercises his power in a strategic manner to control and even distort
the narrative of Susan and Friday and it is against this power that Susan resists vocally and Friday silently. Silence is Friday’s weapon. This weapon protest and of foiling Foe’s attempt to tame the narrative as per he wishes. Friday’s silence becomes more and more powerful. At the end it overwhelms the narrator. Susan Barton’s account of the island is her sincere confession as an artist. Mr. Foe is the watchful confessor for her. Coetzee presents Mr. Foe as a dark spider who watches Susan throughout in the manner of spider does; we find a dual image of an artist and foe. In one of the letters written to Foe, Susan’s writes ‘what art is there to hearing confession? – the spider has as much art that watches and waits.’ (FOE 48) Mr. Foe, like a spider has the art of spinning the web and this web is for him the creation of stories and it also serves as a means to trap both Susan and Friday in it. The spider has the power to expand or contract the web as it desires. In the same manner Foe’s spider like power enables him to make Susan and Friday his prey,

He is like the patient spider who sits at the heart of his web waiting for his prey to come to him and when we struggle in his grasps, and he opens his jaws to devour us, and with our last breath, we cry out, he smiles a thin smile and says : “I did not ask you to come visiting, you came of your own will.’ (FOE120)

The African reality and condition are unable to express themselves both they are suppressed by the white ideology which enjoys the privilege of writing. The whites or colonizers snatch away all possibilities of expression from the native Africans. It is silence that remains the only expression of identity for the powerless natives of South Africa. J. M. Coetzee’s novel makes an attempt to represent the silence of South Africa to the European world. As a writer he seems to suggest that it is beyond the reach of the whites to penetrate the Africans as they have turned their back on Europe in a state of
resistance and speechless protest which are the only options left with them.

All the attempts of Susan are directed towards presenting a story of the island. She considers that it is the only story which would offer her the status of an author and thereby restore her identity. Nonetheless, for this it is necessary that Mr. Foe should lend her thoughts a voice since he represents the white ideology and has the power to validate her story. Throughout the novel the figure of Friday remains problematic. Mr. Foe safely avoids presenting him before his readers. Friday is unable to get any space in the narrative. He retains his absolute otherness for both Foe and Susan. She is silent about her past life before she came as a castaway. In the novel Coetzee does not present Friday’s silence in abstract terms. We literally find concrete images of powerful silence throughout the novel. We recognize effects of silence as Susan tells Foe:

_When I lived in your house I would sometimes live awake upstairs listening to the pulse of blood in my ears and to the silence from Friday below, a silence that rose up to the stairway like smoke, like a welling of black smoke. Before long I could not breathe, I would feel I was stifling in my bed. My lungs, my heart, my head were full of black smoke.’ (FOE 118)_

This kind of silence turns into smoke and this smoke is an attempt to depict Friday. Like the black smoke, Friday remains dark and mysterious for Susan and it was this silence in the form of smoke that haunted her. The narrative structure of the novel consists of four sections. These sections arranged in such a way that she is able to speak gradually in her own voice. The first section of the novel begins with the Female castaway, quoted as a communication to Foe. The second section deals with the letters in which she writes about her story to Mr. Foe. Third section, we do not find quotation marks
because Susan has taken up her narrative and is found turning it into an account of her relationship with Mr. Foe. In fourth section, an unnamed narrator appears whose addressee is not specified.

At the first sight we may assume that the addressee is the reader and this narrator visits Foe’s house twice. In the first sequence, he passes the daughter on the landing; her face is wrapped in a grey woolen scarf. He finds Foe and Susan side by side in bed their lips have receded; uncovering their teeth and their eyes are closed. All the three are dead. The narrator finds Friday stretched full length on his back his feet are as hard as wood. The narrator finds the pulse in Friday’s throat, but it is very faint his teeth are clenched and the narrator tries to part the teeth by pressing a finger nail between the upper and lower rows. After it the narrator lies on the floor beside Friday. Narrator feels the smell of old dust in his nostrils. Friday is going to stirs, sighs and turns on to his side. The narrator presses himself closer with an ear to Friday’s mouth. He lays waiting and hears “the faintest far away roar”, like the roar of waves in a seashell. From his mouth, without a breath, Friday tries to issue the sounds of the island”. The history that Susan is not able to tell or narrate is in Friday’s tongue now lies in his mouth. Friday is the one and only the sole possessor of the story of the island.

The narrator finds three persons there; the body of a woman / girl lies, with Foe and Susan in the bed and Friday lies is in his alcove. Narrator finds something which is unusual: Friday has a scar on his neck ‘like necklace left by a rope or chain.’ (FOE 155) In the room the table is bare and there is a dispatch box on the floor. The narrator puts it on to the table and opens the lid. He finds some documents there, he reads some of them and encounters with “the
Female Castaway” where Susan had begun: ‘With a sigh, barely making a splash, I slip overboard.’ (FOE 155) Narrator is gripped by the current of the boat. As the boat bobs away, he finds around the petals cast by Friday and this lies in the “eye” of the story. The narrator puts his head under the water and he is able to find the dark mass of the wreck. Then he finds Susan, and her dead captain. Attwell describes: ‘Susan’s narrative and all that develops from it lie buried here: the story of Susan, Cruso and Friday has never been written.’ (116) He continues searching and finally finds Friday who outlives the narratives that might or might not include him. The narrator tries to ask Friday about the ship

But this is not a place of words. Every syllable as it come out from Friday’s mouth, is caught and filled with water and diffused. This is a place where bodies have their own signs. It is the home of Friday. (FOE 157)

The narrator cannot ‘speak’ clearly in underwater and that is why each and every word in his question is filled with water and diffused. Friday is responding with a “slow stream, without breath, without interruption” empty bubble that evokes ‘O’s that he learns to write when he is in London in Mr. Foe’s house”. The narrator dive into the wreck does not revitalize the truth of Friday’s experience and does not attend to make it speak. Attwell puts it beautifully ‘Friday’s home is his body: his existence is a fact city that simply asserts its own priorities. The trials of Marginal authorships are irrelevant to Friday.’ (116)

As a creative writer Coetzee’s writing demonstrates an interest in the suggestion of the body. Both as a site that resists or disrupts representation and that also stubbornly insist upon itself despite the inadequacies of representation of our mind and body; Friday’s body is its own sign. The ending paragraph of the novel expresses the noise
of prison and cry for freedom. It also expresses the hope coming from the once silent and enslaved to reach the ears of the people throughout the world. The unworkable task of making Friday’s silent voice heard is replaced by an attempt at making it visible for others. From the body of Friday issues a stream that offers us an appropriate image of the flow of speech or of a voice that remains silent throughout the life and Coetzee makes the reader experience a silent voice. In the novel Friday’s unheard voice is present in Cruso’s Susan’s and Foe’s discourses on the made of absence.

**His mouth opens. From inside him comes a slow stream, without breath, without interruption. It flows up through the body and upon me; it passes through the cabin, through the wreck; washing the cliff and shores of the island, it runs northward and southward to the end of the earth. Soft and cold, dark and unending, it beats against my eyelids, against the skin of my face.’ (FOE 157)**

Richard Begam argues that

**In Foe, Coetzee seeks to represents the unrepresented as unrepresented to show precisely the necessity of enabling them to represent themselves (111-30).**

Really we were confused when we are going to speak with someone who doesn’t understand our language. The problem of speaking for others who cannot represent themselves, whose desires and self-images are unknowable, is crucial to a postmodern thinking of history. The novel brings out the political and social crises inherent in the representation of other culture, people and period in history. In the novel Friday is a figure, who has fractures the novel’s narrative by making reconciliation between Susan’s history and Foe’s fiction impossible. For Susan, Friday is an absence due to lack of evidence, a gap in which the possibility of telling the truth breaks down. For Mr. Foe, Friday’s absolute passivity and apparent lack of desire and motivation make him impossible to characterize as anything other
than an inert object. Thus, exploring the Self or the search for identity and representation of that identity remain a mystery unanswered. It explores the struggle to investigate the marginalized voices of black South Africans under the system of apartheid and post colonial condition in apartheid area. The novel ends with a sequence spoken by an unnamed narrator who revises the history and dissolves the narration in an act of authorial renunciation.

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