



Shifting the Voice: Postcolonial Feminism in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* and *in the Heart of the Country*.

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Abstract—This paper explores the crossing points of women's liberation and postcolonialism as far as the issue of silence and narrating is concerned. It does so by analyzing the characters of Madga and Lucy in J.M. Coetzee's novels' *In the Heart of the Country* and *Disgrace*. It is contended that colonialist ideology capacities work by the same way that patriarchal philosophy does with regard to the abuse of the racism and feminism, separately. Coetzee's novels draw our attention to the threats of allotment characteristics of any philosophy. Vitality, the novels handle the verbose resistance to the colonialist and patriarchal ideology through Magda and Lucy. By interlacing postcolonialism and women's liberation, Coetzee's accomplishment, hence, is twofold: a study of western totalizing accounts and multiplying of political and ideological thrust of his novels. J.M. Coetzee is routinely and thoroughly locked in investigating the ontological and epistemological issues significant to the anecdotal discourse. The arrangement of his authorial positions and the arranging his area in post-apartheid South Africa occurs fundamentally through the textual positions. Coetzee appears to support the view that self-reflexive writing is the only mode through which he can rise above the concerns of reality and history. Indeed, when Coetzee's fiction has prevailed after distinctive story styles or designs one can find certain fundamental issues that run through them. Origin, dialect, mastery, marginalization, the issue of authority, reflexive self-awareness, the issue of portrayal and the strongly and interconnected deployment of these concerns make his writings appear as the quintessence of hypothetical and ideological inscriptions. These are the strings which interface his writings and emphasize the net of textual relations. As radical metafiction may be a substantial way of recording one's encounter since it does away with the tyranny of authenticity, Coetzee has turned to it in a viable way within the complex field of his literary world.

Keywords—J.M. Coetzee, African Literature, Feminism, Pastoral, Apartheid.

I. INTRODUCTION

The truth in Coetzee's works lies in their equivocalness. These ambivalences are central to Coetzee as a person and to his writings as he is endorsed inside a risky postcolonial conflict, between the white colonizer and the local African, showing class division. He addresses the postmodern concerns through his writings, self-reflexivity, open-ended novels and dubious storytellers. His novels and printed literary works have been obviously motivated by his ideological inclinations and circumstances, as well as his narrators that have deliberately been found in a dichotomous domain between

the center and the periphery, "discerns an intertextual relation between the pastoral farm novel and the post-colonial farm novel, as the latter echoes certain common traits of the former in its representation of typical motifs, situations, characters and ideas." (Coller, 2003, p.55)

Particularly J.M. Coetzee in his "White Writing, 1988 Collection" has extensively theorized the farm novel or the 'plaasroman' over the last few years. In Coetzee's literary canon as well as his critical writings, the farm is ideologically laden and associated with the pastoral ideals and the hierarchy of the colonial and post-colonial past with its fear and insecurity. Coetzee's *In the Heart of*

the Country conceptualizes the farm as a patriarchal space ruled over by a domineering patriarchal figure represented in Magda's callous father who breaks the family code by bringing a black bride to the farmhouse and having an affair with his servant's wife. In *Disgrace*, all traditional patriarchal terms are extremely challenged. The white male protagonist, David, though implicated in the structure of modern patriarchy, fails in the role of patriarchal master because he is indulged in satisfying his sexual desires leaving his scientific research aside. Nevertheless, the black feudal lord's hegemony emerges as an alternative to the white patriarchy, after the declaration of the post-apartheid South Africa.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

From a pro-feminist perspective, this paper attempts to analyze the two novels written by J.M. Coetzee within the theoretical framework of a post-apartheid feminist reading in order to show how white woman has been humiliated and marginalized in both post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa. Despite her suffering, she has been used to subvert the pastoral patriarchy, which is substituted by another black feudal system. Moreover, this paper tries to prove that the pastoral woman was silenced, raped and deprived of having a role to realize her independent identity in post-apartheid South Africa. However, she achieved her reconciliatory and reformatory projects, which have helped solve many South African racial problems.

III. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The literary works of Coetzee hold a special position in South African writings. The examination of the colonizing mind, the accentuation on literary structures, the challenge to many literary works, the self-study and the position of holding the center voice are certain characteristics of Coetzeean accounts. Moreover, in an interview with Sévry, Coetzee mentions: "I think there is evidence of an interest in problems of language throughout my novels. I don't see any disruption between my professional interest in language and my activities as a writer" (Sévry, 1986: 1). Coetzee's writings and his topics represent the exceptional craftsmanship of fiction-writing, which he tries to put forward through his anecdotal world. His well-understanding of the craft of writing and self-reflexibility of Magda and Lucy, the craftsmanship of writings of Kafka and other innovators in conjunction with tremendous introduction to postmodern and post-structural situation of Lacan, Derrida, Foucault and arranged area in South Africa where the postcolonial voices are

fundamentally substantial to make him a beneficial and viable wielder of key apparatuses of writing.

IV. THEORY AND METHOD

To achieve the mentioned objectives, the post-apartheid feminist approach is employed. It is mainly concerned with a woman's role in post-apartheid patriarchal societies and giving voice, opportunities and status to other subalterns. This approach also investigates the social order to show the relations between men and women that prevail under the term 'Patriarchy' which refers to the almost domination of men over women.

From the perspective of feminism and within the scope of post-apartheid South Africa, this paper attempts to investigate the traditional pastoral issues and their negative effects on women, which are still detectable in post-apartheid South Africa. Some of these concepts and issues are patriarchal oppression, female land-dispossession, disownment, culture clashes, harassment, rape, female silencing and disempowering woman. The critical concepts of Rachel Blau Duplessis' female aesthetics, as well as other concepts, with the feminist theoretical framework, is applied in the reading of the selected farm novels. Coetzee gives voice to female narrators, who show sympathy for the main female characters; thus, showing his support to woman who attempts to repair the damages made by the past patriarchy.

V. DISCUSSION

Coetzee's *Disgrace* and *In the Heart of the Country* shed light not only on the two novels' farms with their servants, but also the colonization of women represented through Magda and Lucy. They have been made silent and submissive. A special concern is focusing on the suffering white female colonizers. Magda and Lucy are marginalized and forced to retreat to their private worlds in a process of searching for an identity different from the one prescribed for them by society. In an essay on Coetzee's novels Watson says:

If colonialism, at its very simplest, equals the conquest and subjugation of a territory by an alien people, then the human relationship that is basic to it is likewise one of power and powerlessness: the relationship between master and servant, overlord and slave. It is this aspect of colonialism that receives the most

extensive treatment in Coetzee's fiction. (Watson, 1985, p.370)

In the Heart of the Country, Coetzee's prominent novel, the main character, Magda is an Afrikaner struggling to define herself within the setting of wilderness domestic at the tallness of colonization in South Africa. She is not one of the initial colonizers. Her predecessors, or may be the champions of the local individuals, have cleared her out with the duty of continuing their representational persecution. She speaks to an individual who has supplanted the native culture with a bequest and history of their possess. Having developed up as a part of the group of setting up rulers, Magda ought to be comfortable in her life, but she is not. She shows that she is not fulfilled with her role within the history of her people through her constant feelings of vacancy and in her failure to recognize herself.

J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* and *In the Heart of the Country* are answers to the enquiries that have been characterized by hypothetical concerns, with respect to the space and voice of the marginalized characters. Feminism, in its battle to let its voice being heard, have been actively engaged in setting right the eradications and submergences of female voices. Claiming back the female character is claiming the female voice and presence. *Disgrace* and *In the Heart of the Country* address these crucial issues and problematize female control of voice and space in the colonialist dialogue. Nearness is what decides control. Visibility, voice and their spatial situating decide who controls the storyline. Females have been the objects of the overwhelming storyline of patriarchy, their voices submerged inside the claims of the patriarchal culture.

In the Heart of the Country dramatizes the position of Magda between the troubles of pioneer colonialism and the anguish of the locals. She is trying to confirm her presence through the undated diary that she composes without preludes or epilogues. The content is a charming one as Magda, the storyteller, may be a beguiling one with several versions of the same occasion coexisting at the same time within the plot of the story. There are various levels in which Magda serves as a signifier of the female characters. She is silent; however, she represents as the capable voice of restoring the rights of females. She could be an obvious image of the compromising, limit district of the pioneer woman representing a dialogue misplaced and composed off. Magda has killed her father repeatedly in several ways, and patricide could be a typical annihilation of patriarchy and the motion makes her the unequivocal women's activist. The expressive finishing of Magda's story in a temperament and tone of tranquility in a placated concordance with her father maintains the female arousing

in a misplaced adventure of patriarchal colonialism and examining women's liberation. This different signifier of woman's control is Coetzee's voice from the middle as well where the cross examination occurs without apparent authorial or definitive existence, however effective.

The role of Magda as a female character performs numerous capacities for Coetzee, the white male South African essayist. Set between the Afrikaner and the local, Magda inhabits the center voice; the space within the median which may be an existing intervals space for Coetzee as an author. She is an embodiment of his "colonial post colonialism" (Attwell, 1993: p. 112) voicing his liminality and twofold sidedness. She communicates a counter legendary position serving as a fused signifier for the African peaceful mythology on one side and overwhelming myth of colonialism on the other side. She is the voice of the prevailing Afrikaners, pilgrim society as much as the native blacks whose rhythms she longs for in an attempt to oversee a dialect that would develop her character. Magda as a colonialist agent serves the work of executing without the authority, existing on the borders of patriarchal/ colonial mastery, without its harmful sting. The twofold sidedness of Magda empowers her to operate both as a casualty and an agent of colonialism. She is the affect and the impact of the colonialist dominance in hindering, destabilizing notions of subject hood.

Also, Magda epitomizes the interrogative and transgressive viewpoint of postcolonial political. All her phenomenal and inner talks emphasize a challenge of control, dominance and authority. Through the divided, broken and hybridized postcolonial character, she is constantly trying to translate and rework the existing designs of mastery and subordination. This process of demythification is accomplished through steady patricide, more at an otherworldly level than at a fabricated level. She murders and goes on to bury her father, more as a part of hypochondriac fantasy revealing a crave to rule and claims specialist of her story. The twofold patricide, the frantic version of the story, the noteworthiness rendered to Henrik and Klein Anna scene once the father is slaughtered and buried, and ever careful nearness of Jacob and Anna render the text as a challenge and resistance to colonial and patriarchal idea of ideology.

Magda sees herself as fragmented, as a gap to fill, and she endeavors to fill that gap by trying to find the truth about her identity. She does so through the separation from her father and through her connections with the servants. These connections are efforts by Magda fundamentally to separate herself from her ancestors' bequest and offer help to create her own character; moreover, to work towards a compromise with the colonized. The relationships frequently turn rough,

anyway, since of Magda's curve of control and her need to be acknowledged by others. Also, her ceaseless center on herself and her ironic presentations of truth are determined by her searches for her own identity.

The apparently straightforward issue of reality gets to be a complicated address within the novel, since Magda tells and retells diverse adaptations of the same story, suggesting that indeed she does not know what truth is and appearing in a decaying intellectual state. Instead of picturing her basically as insane; however, her thoughts are results of her incompleteness. Magda falls flat in all of these endeavors to form herself as a whole, and by the end of the novel, she is cleared out in much of the same position as within the beginning, still an agent of the colonizers who is incapable of separating herself from them and creating her own identity.

She begins to search for the truth, since finding it will offer assistance to characterize herself and separate herself from her father and ancestors. She sees herself as a girl of her father, "his black eyes and [her] black eyes inherited from him." She is a part of him and the colonizing legacy he represents; together they "chewed [their] way through time" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 3). Magda emphasizes that her character stems from her father's; they are of the same traits, in spite of her sex. She does not need this character. Instead, she battles "against becoming one of the forgotten ones of history" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 3). Her failure to see or tell the truth accurately, in any case, holds her back from characterizing her personality and filling the void of this missing identity.

Moreover, Magda tries to set up her personality through being acknowledged by others. In spite of the fact that she is successful, Magda does not make significance or isolate herself from the history or in making a neglected identity. David, in *Disgrace*, proceeds Magda's endeavors as he tries to fill his vacancy and make a new existence for himself in his world. *Disgrace* takes place through a decade of post-apartheid South Africa. The formerly colonized people have begun to attest themselves with respect to property and human rights, and going in a battle against the hegemony's power.

However, David speaks to the colonizer since his affiliation with the oppressive group and the benefits he gets due to his relations with the colonizer. His unwillingness to alter and his grasp on the past too keeps him on the side of the hegemonic control. He, just like the two other heroes, encounters a vacancy that cannot be clarified. When he has an issue with one of the students, he is constrained to resign. He turns to his daughter Lucy for clarity, and it is on her farm that he starts to reflect on his

character. David works toward a neglected identity through few different roads. The first is through his relationship with his daughter Lucy, who is set up as a willing member to fix the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. She promptly works for compromise with the victims of colonization, an exertion David does not get it. Their relationship becomes one of a control battles as when David starts to talk to Lucy, he becomes fixated with finding out the truth about what happened amid an assault in which Lucy in group assaulted by the three black men. Rather than moving forward as his daughter wishes, David holds on to the past; so, falls flat to alter himself fundamentally through their relationship.

David too endeavors to complete his identity through writing his opera about Lord Byron. He wants to do something different and to create a record of accomplishments. He is unsuccessful, anyway, and his creation becomes a capricious work with small esteem to his particular time and place; it could be a work that holds on to the colonizing past rather than grasping the decolonized display. What David does not realize is that his specific time and place in history requires a totally different creation, and within the novel this neglected creation is spoken to through his daughter's work and his unborn grandchild, different images of postcolonial future. He does not recognize that they are his bequest and a way for him to create a modern character.

Through David, Coetzee's novels offer a vision of trust for a conceivably effective reconciliation between the colonized and the colonizer. Coetzee's content sets up David's feeling of vacancy from the exceptionally beginning of the account and proceeds the representation all through, pushing David to fill that emptiness. David is presented to us as a man who is able to attract women, a man who goes through the movement of every aspect of his life. In brief, he is declining his life and wondering if he would be superior, "the proper business of the old: preparing to die," and, foreshadowing his later work with the dogs at the clinic, he says, after all, "they [castrate] animals every day, and animals survive well enough, if one ignores a certain residue of sadness" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 9). These depictions of vacancy interface David to the characters of the two novels, Magda in particular. The affection of bluntness is reminiscent of many descriptions of many characters. The image of empty shells of creatures reverberate back to Magda's portrayals of herself in *In the Heart of the Country*. She desires at one point to explore "the feel of [her] body sliding out of [her] and another body sliding in, limbs inside [her] limbs, mouth inside [her] mouth" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 53).

Like she feels depleted of identity from her life on the frontier and looks for fulfillment in her connection with her father and the servants, so as David who is depleted of the joys of life. This point may be a continuation of Magda, a progressive representation of the colonizer. The contrast is that the time has changed, and it is indeed more essential for the colonizer to break away from his people's personality and recognize himself as something new, in case he needs to maintain significance within the modern world.

The first attempt for David's endeavors to form a total new identity is through his relationship with Lucy, she offers him a way to elude from his problems. Whereas a few would contend that David's issue with Melanie is important in his search for fulfillment, Melanie did not say anything about David's life since her disastrous status, a simple replacement of the prostitute Soraya. David's relationship with Melanie could be a catalyst to the main action of the novels. Alas, this relationship did not work for his salvation; so, he finds refuge with Lucy. His relationship with Lucy helps modify his character. When he quits his work, he went off quickly for Lucy showing his need to disregard his inconveniences and search for his identity.

It can be contended that Lucy speaks to another lady to fill the gap that Melanie has cleared out. Lucy offers David something completely distinctive from Melanie or Soraya or any of the others for that matter. He appears comforted by the truth that she is a "solid countrywoman" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 60); she gives him something the others cannot: a pastoral straightforwardness to press out the complexities of his life. When he arrives, he embraces Lucy and thinks, "what a nice welcome at the end of a long trip!" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 59). There is an alleviation in his thoughts; this is often a comfortable homecoming in a place that can provide him the stability he seeks after a troublesome time. The discourse tells us that finding a strong ground is the main reason he goes back to Lucy's.

Nevertheless, Magda and Lucy try to reform what the previous post-colonial authority ruined by creating powerful female subaltern voices to bring them out of the Afrikaans patriarchy. To enact the anti-patriarchal schemes in the two novels, Magda has murdered her father to uphold the pastoral farm patriarchy's traditions inherited from the colonial hierarchy. Consequently, the apartheid system collapses. On one hand, Magda starts her post-apartheid project by offering her farm to her black servant to live with each other in peace. On the other hand, Lucy has achieved self-reconciliation with her father's pure identity. Unfortunately, rape and violence cause the two female

colonizers' drastic collapse with its devastating effects on their dignity and private properties. Women are portrayed as, "a reserve of purity and silence in the materiality of its traffic with the world and its noisy discourse". (Jacobus, 1986, p. 28)

Regardless of the fact that the apartheid era has officially ended nearly two decades before writing the novels, its legacy is still detectable. Coetzee depicts violent rapes, female subjugation, failed marriage; disempowering and dispossessing women, which show that the recent post-apartheid South African policy in *Disgrace* and in *In the Heart of the Country* is still a continuation of the post-colonial pastoral farm traditions. Meanwhile, the contemporary South African farm novel shows that most of the characters, who have been confronted with violent acts, during and after Apartheid, are women. The two main female characters in the two selected novels, Magda and Lucy, are presented with limited capabilities forcing them into a life of subjection.

By the end of apartheid, Klerk's New South Africa aimed to correct the social inequality created by long decades of apartheid. However, according to this post-apartheid feminist reading of the two selected novels, it becomes clear that poverty is still largely experienced, for instance, as Hendrik assaults and rapes Magda because she has no money. Hendrik's wife, Anna, accepts her father's food and sweets to satisfy his sexual desires in return. Magda is amazed to see Anna without underwear when she tries to help her put on one of her dresses. Rachel Blau DuPlessis says in her essay "For the Etruscans" that:

the female aesthetic turns out to be a specialized name for those practices available to those groups-nations, sexes, subcultures, races, emergent social practices(gays?) --which wish to criticize, to differentiate from, to overturn the dominant forms of knowing and understanding with which they are saturated. (DuPlessis ,1980, p.149)

In *Disgrace*, Petrus is called the 'dog-man' or 'Kaffir'. He works for Lucy on her small farm. However, he does not hesitate to blackmail her. Neither does he oppose nor does he reveal the secret of the three black assailants who have assaulted and raped Lucy. On purpose, Petrus terrifies Lucy and finally forces her to give him her farm over and be his third woman to live peacefully on the farm. A common feature in these two novels is that poverty sparks off sexual assault: a frightening social phenomenon practiced against the white

females as a kind of revenge and retaliation as in Hendrik's case in *In the Heart of the Country*.

In *Disgrace*, the idea of 'hybridity' is represented when Lucy is assaulted and raped twice. She becomes pregnant with a black-unborn-baby. Such 'ambivalence' decenters the authority from its position of power as it may become hybridized and inflected by other cultures when placed in a colonial context. Sexual assault is also practiced due to social and psychological problems as in David's case or resulting from a person's need for money as in Soraya's. Despite the land reform program of newly elected African National Congress which included Land redistribution and land restitution, the black's hatred for the white hinders any reformatory efforts. Hendrik does not accept Magda's offer to stay on her farm and be the actual farm-owner. After assaulting and raping Magda, Hendrik escaped with his wife for fear of being arrested by the police or the Whites. In *Disgrace*, Lucy negotiates with her black servant Petrus to protect her. Finally, she accepts to be his third woman and a mere tenant on her farm "With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no rights, no dignity like a dog". (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 205).

After Hendrik's departure, Magda becomes poor and the farm is left barren. Lucy is also left begging food and seeking protection from the new black feudal, Petrus. Thus, subverting the two women's social stratification does not solve the land-problem but destabilizes the South African social stability. From an eco-feminist perspective, the two white women, Magda and Lucy, show their indissoluble physical and conceptual connection with their farms. Mies and Shiva, argue, "wherever women [act] against ecological destruction ..., they immediately [become] aware of the connection between patriarchal violence against women, other people and nature ..." (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 14).

Spatial segregation of apartheid still affects educational opportunities in New South Africa. In Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country*, Magda's culture is European which includes "the rotation of the earth, Napoleon, Pompeii ..., (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 92)" signaling European science and history. Magda assures the idea of learning on the farm "in order that the children of the desert should not grow up barbarian, (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 92)". This clarifies that according to such culture anything other than European is barbarian. Such culture emphasizes how irrelevant it is to Magda, the desert child of the Karoo, who spent her entire life there, and yet is a cultural stranger to it. Such education destabilizes Magda's white character with her servants. Thereupon, she breaks down and becomes incoherent with a split personality.

In *Disgrace*, Prof. David is not honest when he rapes Melanie, one of his students. Instead of being pre-occupied with educational research, he becomes so indulged in fulfilling his sexual desires that he compares himself to a dog that is beaten for following its sexual instincts, (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.90). Thereupon, he is dismissed and deprived of entering his office at university. Lucy, the professor's lesbian daughter, is left to a more dismal fate to suffer the blacks' assaults and rapes. Neither Magda nor Lucy understands the black's culture because they have been versed in European intellectual traditions, which are far from the continent on which they live.

In post-apartheid South Africa, education is still one of the causes of continued inequality and poverty. Moreover, the legacies of Magda's father, Prof. David, Hendrik, Petrus and the three assailants and rapists still mark the post-apartheid South Africa. Through the post-apartheid feminist reading of the two selected novels, it becomes apparent that the post-apartheid South African white woman is silenced, raped, submitted and dispossessed. When Magda struggles to achieve her dream of equality, she fails, as Coetzee declares, "because a mere effort of the will is not enough to overcome centuries of cultural and spiritual deformations" (Kunapipi, 1984, p.7).

During the post-apartheid regime, Magda and Lucy could not achieve any significant progress or have the chance to enjoy their independent identities. However, Magda is still waiting for Hendrik and his wife to live together. She also hopes to "guard Hendrik's cups by day and take them out to play at night" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.123) while Lucy finds her comfort and safety with her unborn-black- baby that will not be denied by anyone. At the end of *In the Heart of the Country*, Magda is seen isolated with a shattered personality suffering from psychotic depression. Lucy, in *Disgrace*, is also left alone suffering from apathetic and agoraphobic symptoms. Like many other white and non-white women, Magda and Lucy have been victims of familial, societal, economic and security-failures. Therefore, Coetzee still assures that many underlying social and political relations remain substantially unchanged under the post-apartheid new South Africa.

Another feature of colonialism is the eco-feminist of white ladies: A pastoral farm is used to be fascinatingly attractive and fertile. During the Post-Apartheid System, it has become infertile with "poor land, poor soil [and] Exhausted", (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 64), and "the fruit has rotten on the ground", (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.120). However, the two white women never leave their farms but stress on their physical and psychological connections. They tried to find solutions to keep their farms productive. Magda fails to persuade her

servant, Hendrik, to be her farm owner and live peacefully with his family on the farm. She also wants Petrus to look after her and her unborn baby.

As for labor and white female roles in the two novels, Marais argues that *Disgrace* inverts racially determined master-slave relationship and presents "a new world", (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 117) in which Lucy confesses that Petrus knows everything about the farm. Therefore, she helps him to be a landowner rather than tend the garden or feed the dogs. Petrus the black farmer has never been able to surpass the status of farmer under Apartheid. Now that the Apartheid is gone, he is able to buy his own land and be in charge of people. As the novel progresses, Petrus realizes this opportunity and he may have sent men to abuse David and Lucy. By the end of the story, Petrus has nearly total control of the farm. Like *Disgrace*, *In the Heart of the Country* reveals the link between labor and land, as it is Hendrik who is in charge of labor on her farm. Magda says, " If I make Hendrik my foreman win, he be able to run the farm. while I stand severely behind him pretending, he- is my puppet? ". (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p. 160)

Both Hendrik and Petrus have been paid for the work they have done; so, Magda and Lucy unfairly execute the idea of power-land transfer in any of the two novels when the servants become the owners of the two farms owned. The two Ladies have already tried to solve the racially marked role divisions and stereotypes promulgated by the pastoral farm traditions. Unfortunately, they have suffered the racial problems emerged after the post-apartheid fake promises of reparation which have aroused the black assaults to dispossess the white female colonizers.

Post-apartheid pastoral discourse-failure or the inherited colonizing power of language with its monoglossality does not help Magda communicate with Hendrik and his wife. David, in *Disgrace*, could not understand the assailants' African language, either. Therefore, he could not realize why they raped his daughter, beat and burnt him. The two novels explore whether there might exist a form of language that would enable communication and a true dialogue across the political social division of South Africa. The problem resides in South Africa where the majority and minority discourses could not interchange because of the multicultural diversity. Hence, Coetzee asks, "Is there a language in which people of European identity, or if not of European identity, then of a highly problematical South African colonial identity can speak to Africa and be spoken to by Africa?" (Coetzee, *White Writing*, 1988, p.8). Finally, women like Magda and Lucy have become victims of such one-sided dialogue which colonialism has

enacted in the pastoral system and is still experienced in "post-apartheid South Africa". Stephen Watson emphasizes that "The novel is surely constructed on the principle that it is through language itself, through those conventional representations which come to be accepted as either 'natural' or 'universal,' that we are colonized as much as by any overt act of physical conquest" (Watson, 1985, p.374).

The main female white colonizers, have worked hard to achieve societal reconciliation and pastoral emancipation, but suffered more than the colonized themselves. Therefore, they have decided to challenge the pastoral farm regime. In fact, Magda plays a double role in which she rules over the servants due to her dominant position as a colonizer; nevertheless, she feels herself low in the familial hierarchy. Finally, Magda and Lucy have fallen as victims to the Blacks' assaults and rapes. Sheila Roberts says that Magda:

can never be at home in a world where there is an unbridgeable distance between herself and the other human beings peopling it. She can only continue, as she has done in her narration, to toy with ideas of living closely and sensually with the brown people, while in reality retaining her isolation. (Roberts, 1980, p.28)

Role-reversal helps to invert the pastoral farm's hierarchal structure. After her father's death, Magda has become prey for her servant, Hendrik. She is raped and humiliated, and finally accepts to be his secret wife. After giving him some of her father's clothes, Hendrik speaks differently and pays her no attention for feeling superior. This shows the new master-slave dialogue, which presents the servant as the dominant and the master as the one who assumes the role of the subaltern. Lucy, the colonizer, suffers more than the black among whom she lives. After apartheid, she becomes a subaltern to her servant, Petrus, whose role changes from being "a gardener and a dog-man (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.64) to a co-owner and then to a complete owner of her farm. Lucy's father, Prof. David, becomes the "dog-man" and Petrus" subordinate after falling in a state of disgrace with Melanie in the city. Magda and Lucy's double roles achieve nothing but role-reversals, which have increased their problems and have unveiled their travailing, feebleness and miserable destinies.

The socio-sexual behavior in the two novels has taken a different angle. Sex is the vehicle for most of the social problems, especially violence. The main female

characters in the two novels have been assaulted, raped and humiliated that their emancipatory and reconciliatory efforts have failed. The silence surrounding Magda and Lucy reveals the inadequacy of the available discourse on rape in New South Africa. They reach the level of the unspoken trauma, represented in silent rape. Thus, Magda offers her farm to her servant, Hendrik, who leaves the farm for fear of being arrested. Lucy gives her farm over to her black servant, Petrus, to whom she becomes one of his properties. Magda thinks:

When was I last struck a blow? I cannot think when. Perhaps I have never been struck before, perhaps I have only been cherished, though that is difficult to believe, cherished and reproved and neglected. The blow does not hurt but it insults. I am insulted and outraged. A moment ago, I was a virgin and now I am not, with respect to blows. (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.57)

In spite of the fact that Coetzee's novels may have taken diverse storytelling, they all have some common themes and elements. Issues of origin, dialect, the creation, mastery, marginalization, the variety of voices and boundlessness of perceptions are key viewpoints that overwhelm his anecdotal oeuvre. Coetzee's character as a writer is an intertextual space, where he has taken plan of action to a number of rationalists and thinkers. The issue of quiet or voice within the representation of the other could be a major concern of his novels. Coetzee's position in South Africa is in a complex relationship with the culture he partakes of. As a white South African author Coetzee occupies a specific edge partly distanced from both African and English affiliations. This center course-Norman's arrive is where Coetzee is endorsed in a questionable position of non-association. This complex issue of character is exceedingly fundamental in finding Coetzee as a postcolonial author. Attwell employs the term "colonial postcolonialism" (Attwell, 1993: p. 112) for the center -the middle- position that Coetzee occupies in his reaction to the South African situation.

Coetzee has viably problematized the issue of liminal voices in his novels and has essentially made use of female characters to exemplify the powerlessness of control and non-belongingness of connection. The genuine postcolonial and discursive ideologies have been communicated through his storytellers held between the margins, occupying the doubleness of recognitions and questionable miens, regularly occupying the inhibited location of the touchy white postcolonial writer. Coetzee

oversees certain capacities through his female characters, where his male voices sometimes come up short and falter.

Coetzee has been much acclaimed for his expound and noteworthy utilize of women narrators in his novelistic universe. He has deliberately and prominently situated white female characters within the anecdotal domain. There is another unborn objective for utilizing white female characters, Coetzee uses them to raise a pertinent point of problematizing the content and dialogue. Distinctive voices inside feminism have their reverberations within the vital utilize of the storyteller in Coetzeean oeuvre. Fiona Probyn Rapsey explores, "Coetzee's adoption of the feminine narrative voice constitutes both a strategic evasion of a lack of an adequate vantage point from which to speak and a strategic encoding of that lack of authority in the figure of the white woman" (Rapsey, 2008: p. 248). The figures of the white women contribute with Coetzee in a control to criticize the prevailing philosophy without being overtly interrogative. They give a space for being persuasive without being adversarial. The white female characters' failure to carry the dialogue to where they need it, their inability to authorize, their inadequacy to free and their insufficiency for topping the narration make them basically noteworthy significant critical within the Coetzeean storytelling.

The narrators in Coetzee's novels function as the author himself. The ambivalent positioning of the female narrator seems to symbolize the equivocal and ambiguous position of Coetzee regarding the political scenario of South Africa. As a white South African, he exudes powers; but his disengagement with the politics of dominant discourse brings him to a position of disempowerment.

Psychological depression signifies the most fundamental theme, which relates all the events of the selected novels. In *Disgrace*, Lucy's psychological ailment stems from the fact that she is a white female colonizer, whose existence is threatened by living by her own among black inhabitants. She is assaulted and raped twice, then left to suffer alone with an illegitimate unborn-black-baby inside her. Magda, in *In the Heart of the Country*, suffers severely from her callous father's harsh treatment to herself and to her late frail mother. She is also raped and humiliated by her black servant to whom he has proclaimed his hatred. Finally, she becomes psychopathically tormented due to her self-contradiction because of the sparring between her efforts to transcend her ideological discourse and her inability to do so. As a result, she becomes a split-subject 'with a split-personality'. In her loneliness, Magda says, "Deprived of human intercourse, I inevitably overvalue the imagination and expect it to make the mundane glow with an aura of self-

transcendence" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.14).

In fact, most of the female characters, in the two novels, are suffering physically and psychologically. It is conspicuous that the black Africans have targeted the white female colonizers not only to humiliate them through violent assaults and rapes but also to bring black whosons out of them to destroy their lineages and cultures. Magda and Lucy are then forced to live in a state of destruction, devastation and disillusionment to relinquish and forget the luxurious life they got used to. This stage is evidenced by female submission and humiliation although it is not expected that Magda and Lucy might sacrifice and accept to be raped to solve the black's problem. After being raped, Magda and Hendrik exchange the feelings of hatred. She accepts Hendrik's secret relation only to live in peace and to avoid his hostility despite his nasty smell and ugly appearance.

After being raped by the three black assailants, Lucy has been obliged to live with her neighboring servant, Petrus, only for protection, not for love. She has already confessed to her father that neither she nor Petrus likes each other while the illegitimate unborn-black-baby inside her is innocent. Lucy is then obliged to sign her farm over to her servant, Petrus, and start over "at ground level. With nothing ...", (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 205), begging her food. It is difficult to imagine Lucy's psychological state to be left alone to incorporate herself into the new unfair society abandoning her former ideals and privileges.

The combination of fear and absent authorities can produce weak and submissive characters in the society. It is obvious that the police have not been summoned to help Magda or Lucy. Magda knows none but Hendrik with whom she can deal on the farm. On the other hand, Lucy prefers silence so as not to arouse the black's hatred and vengeance. Despite the religious names of David, Petrus and Lucy in *Disgrace*; Magda, Hendrik and Anna in *In the Heart of the Country*, the Church's role is absent, therein lies the immoral violations of sex and violence.

Another obvious upsetting of the colonial authenticity has been rendered through the occupation of the school house by black people. The school house has been synonymous to dominant discourses and its strategies of forming submissive with school fancy women demonstrated on colonial philosophy giving instruction of subjects just like the "rotation of the soil, Napoleon, Pompeii, the reindeer groups of the solidified squanders, the bizarre extension of water, the seven days of creation, the undying comedies of Shakespeare, geometric and

number juggling progressions, the major and minor modes, the boy with the finger within the dyke, Rumpelstiltskin, the marvel of the rolls and the fishes, the laws of viewpoint and much more" (*In the Heart of the Country* 46). The school house eminently conferred instruction related to topics on a standard with colonial driving forces like extension, success and authority. The occupation of the school by Jacob and Anna, the black locals is demonstrative of the degeneration of the old Afrikaners system, giving into the discourse of decolonization.

The role of Magda as a female storyteller fulfills few capacities within Coetzeean textual world. She epitomizes "the colonial postcolonialism" (Attwell, 1993: p. 112) that Coetzee inhabits with respect to the South African tricky legislative issues where his position as a white male critiquing apartheid is regrettably being focused. Sharing the colonial parentage but needing to put an end to it, Magda until the end is caught between a twofold discourse. This female narrator is in a questionable position of Coetzee's compelling instrument. But on Magda's case it is more significant as she does not appear to be mindful and controller of it. Native black predicament is clear while Magda's minimalness is more unpretentious.

Apartheid has imposed many restrictions on novel writing in South Africa. Thereupon, as many other South African writers, Coetzee resorts to symbolism to avoid being implemented in political problems and keep his novels away from being confiscated. Therefore, David represents the patriarchal domineering power in the highly educated liberals in society. Magda and Lucy stand for the miserable women while Petrus and Hendrik are examples of the working-servants who want to prove and assure their existence as well as their legitimate rights on Land. Petrus with his pipe between his stained teeth offering to marry Lucy for protection refers to the emergence of the new black feudal class.

Lucy's dogs represent the police's brutality against the Blacks. After being shot, Lucy's kennels are reviving again. She has two dogs on full board and hopes for more, (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.196). The three black assailants who have raped Lucy represent the trodden black Africans who used to terrify the white by raping their women. The assailants might have intended to make them give birth to a new black generation that will destroy the white Colonizers' Lineages.

Magda's father represents the pastoral form of power. He has been shot twice and finally died. His corpse could not be buried because it is bigger than the ground hole. The corpse also re-emerges as Hendrik, the black servant, dresses in his clothes, (Coetzee, *In the Heart*

of the Country, p.106). At the end of the novel, the father appears again sitting in a chair as Magda talks to him. Finally, Magda says that 'he does not die so easily after all', (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.16). Here, the father's figure comes to represent the pastoral form, and the power relations it encodes. This assures Magda's inability to confront the claustrophobic unease of the pastoral authority, which will not surrender so easily in post-apartheid South Africa.

The female must face their ruthless fate during the course of the novels. Each of the two major female characters, Magda and Lucy, is fated to occupy the position of the colonizer and colonized. No harm has been done by any of them. However, they are used to fight the pastoral-farm patriarchy alone. Unfortunately, they are brutally assaulted and raped. Josephine Dodd points out that, "Magda is a victim of double colonization. At the level of character, she is subjected to the patriarchal domination of her father and Hendrik and the cultural hegemony of the first world, (Dodd, 1987, 149). It is Lucy's fate to be raped and then have an illegitimate-unborn-black baby inside her. Lucy accepts to live among the black but confesses that she lives like "a dog with no weapon, no property, no rights and no dignity" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.205). It is plain that fate is always blamed when rights are looted, dignity is humiliated and laws are violated; so, it is quite unfair to accuse fate of making Magda and Lucy endure all the pastoral faults neglecting and forgetting the familial, societal, economic and security-failures. This proves that Lucy and Magda's emancipatory and reformatory project is a failure because "a mere effort of the will is not enough to overcome centuries of cultural and spiritual deformations", (Kunapipir, 1984, p.7).

Procrastination and retreat are fatal consequences of apartheid and colonization. More often, Magda hesitates to take anti-actions against Hendrik. After being assaulted and raped, Magda could shoot him or cut his sexual organ with which he has offended her. "It would cost me nothing to go to the kitchen and fetch a knife and cut the part of this man with which he has been offending me, (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.108)". Magda gets angry when she sees Hendrik dressed in her dead father's clothes. She also becomes more furious as Hendrik and his wife "make an enemy of her", considering her the dead father's substitute. Therefore, "she picks up the rifle from its old place. [...] she pulls the trigger. ... [but] retreats to the dark of her room ... and [finally], puts the gun back in its place," (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.99)". When Hendrik decides to leave the farmhouse, Magda threatens to turn him over to the police. She does not do anything to harm Hendrik

despite having the power to do so. Magda's procrastination is obviously rooted in her passive character that no crucial decision has been reached.

Unlike Magda's procrastination, taking decisions in *Disgrace* qualifies its main characters. Without hesitation, David leaves the city to Lucy's smallholding. He goes back to Melanie's family to apologize for disgracing their daughter. Lucy has decided not to file being raped to the police but preferred silence. Although Lucy has been adhered to her farm, she takes the unexpected decision to relinquish her farm to Petrus and be his third woman or even his concubine. Finally, Magda is indecisive until the end of the novel, regardless of any resolution taken while being depressed. When the advantage of being decisive is given to Lucy, in *Disgrace*, she loses her farm and her identity in society. The two women's procrastination and silence have weakened their abilities to take decisions; so, they are forced to retreat to their private worlds searching for an identity different from the one prescribed by the new post-apartheid society.

The ideas of vengeance and female suffering are applied to every sinful person trying to arrive at a fair and just conclusion without considering the subsequent effects on the demography and topography of South Africa. Magda's callous father is deprived of having a son to inherit his legacies; and his only daughter is almost mad. Thus, when he dies, there is none to help bury his corpse. As he leaves his wife dying before the doctor's arrival, "[Now], he is by no means without strength, his eyes open". Magda adds that "The doctor will soon be here". (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.78). Hendrik does not forget her father's rape to his wife, so he brutally and sadistically rapes Magda many times.

In *Disgrace*, Prof. David rapes his student, Melanie, causing her lots of social and psychological problems. Despite Coetzee's satirical stance considering David the leader and Melanie the follower, David shares the bitterness of the psychological vengeance when his daughter, Lucy, is assaulted and raped. Meanwhile, the attackers locked him in the lavatory, douse him with alcohol and set him on fire. When David gets back to Cape Town, he gets frustrated to see that his garden is a mess, his windows are broken and all his stuff have been stolen. The black assailants cannot forget the fierce dogs used by the police to cut up the black's bodies; so, they do not hesitate to shoot them. They also destroy Lucy's car and steal David's for representing the pastoral authority and modernity.

Consequently, the two women's emancipatory and reconciliatory projects failed because they have been brutally avenged only for enduring the mistakes and sins

committed by the previous colonizers. However, on the other hand, that does not mean that that entitles the colonized to wreak a whole system of injustice on a new set of victims. It is quite unfair to avenge the two white women by depriving them of their farms claiming that the land belongs to the black servants, who pretend to have forgotten their black origin. Such solutions do not commensurate with Klerk's New South Africa, which should redistribute and reinstitute the previously dispossessed land not to erase Magda's and Lucy's farms under any conditions. At the end of the novel when Magda is alone, she hears voices saying:

It is the slave's consciousness that constitutes the master's certainty of his own truth. But the slave's consciousness is a dependent consciousness. So, the master is not sure of the truth of his autonomy. His truth lies in an inessential consciousness and its inessential acts. (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.130)

After apartheid, the two women's farms undermine the transcendental link, which the pastoral farm novel has created between land and identity: there are no paternal farms; instead, a farm that belongs to Lucy while her father is only a visitor, the other one is Magda's, though her father is shot dead. Unlike the lascivious David, Lucy leaves her "clear prints" (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.62), on the land for history, while Magda has tried to persuade her black servant, Hendrik, to stay on her farm considering him the farm-owner, but the social gap is still too wide to achieve such reconciliation. The natural right existing between the paternal farm and those who inherit it, in *Disgrace*, is applicable to the new black farmer and his lineage. Petrus, with his new house, resembles the traditional patriarchal figure in every way. Unfortunately, the farm is re-instated as a site of paternal rule, but by a black man. Moreover, Lucy has to "buy" her right to remain on the farm and "pays" in terms of her right to land, her freedom and her dignity. Lucy bitterly explains, "They see themselves as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors". (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 158).

To start the anti-patriarchal goals in the two novels, Magda murders her father and Lucy reaches a self-reconciliation with her father's pure identity. Lucy tries to solve the traditional problems, which irritate and frighten the black people; so, she refutes the traditional definition of the word farm which is psychologically associated with patriarchal oppression. She asks her father "to stop calling it farm. ...It is just a piece of land where she grows

things". (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.200). Here is Lucy's call for alternative definition to the traditional farm-concept to benefit the new post-apartheid-South African context, which she aspires to be achieved.

Like Lucy, Magda has already tried to achieve all means of reconciliation, but no means of communication managed to change Hendrik's feelings of hatred. Finally, after being raped, Magda's only option is to beg Hendrik to stay with her on the farmhouse saying, "Hendrik, will you and Anna come and sleep in the house from now on. I get too nervous when I am alone. I will give you proper beds, you won't have to sleep on the floor again ... bring a long everything you will need, then you won't have to run back and forth". (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.109). Magda feels that she has done her best to please and reconcile with Hendrik. She refuses to be more humiliated; so, she asks her servant if he is waiting for the white woman to kneel to him or for her to become his white slave, (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.118). Magda finally asks, "How can I humiliate myself any further? ... Must the white woman lick your backside before you give her a smile?" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.118).

Magda is still worried. She turns to Anna asking herself, "Will she and I one day become sisters? Or will she, when she finds herself, scratch my eyes out?" (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.119). Until the end of the two novels, the two innocent-female-white women, Magda and Lucy, never stop their perseverance for reformation and reconciliation with the African Other. Lucy seems to be pleased with her illegitimate-black-unnborn baby. "It will be after all, a child of this earth. They will not be able to deny that". (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.216). Lucy adds that she will try to love her child because "love grows [and] one can trust mother nature" for that she is determined to be a good mother and a good person". (Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p.216) Magda is sorry, for Hendrik's leave saying, "..., alas, [Hendrik] is gone and I must face my demons alone, a grown woman ... Hendrik, I cannot speak to you well, you and Anna. And if one night you come tapping at the windows, I will not be surprised." (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.123) Here, Magda still offers all facilities to Hendrik and his family to be with her all day and night. She will also be happy to cook his meals and be his second woman, if he likes. Finally, Magda assures that New South Africa is now different that "all things must be possible on this island out of space, out of time. You can bring your cubs with you; I will guard them by day and take them out to play by night. Their large eyes will glow, they will see things invisible to other folk; and in the daytime when the eye of heaven glowers and pierces every shadow we can lie together in the cool

dark of the earth, you and I and Anna and they." (Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country*, p.123).

VI. CONCLUSION

On selecting on selecting these novels for investigation with respect to the position of the female storyteller in the novels, the objective was to investigate the conceivable outcomes vested on the female characters in J.M. Coetzee's selected novels; in addition to analyze the way in which they serve diverse purposes for Coetzee. Female characters possess a central part in these novels as author/narrator, and Coetzee's employments of the female is "to address the indiscretion of seen shrewdness and the connection that demarcates it". (Rapsey, 2008: p. 270). His female characters involve an advantaged position of control undermining the same continually and ended up spokespersons for his cross examinations of the frameworks of specialist in diverse ways. They repeat and maintain the political authenticity of women's talk as a challenge to the overwhelming control structures advertising evaluates from positions of semi marginality. In a changing world, these cross examinations signify unused conditions and areas control in expansion to the expanding legitimacy of women' discourses.

A few of Coetzee's female heroines strikingly Magda (*In the Heart of the Country*) and Lucy (*Disgrace*), have all through less excitedly received than they might justify what J.M. Coetzee explores in these novels as fundamental characters who are individuals of the privileged class characters and are a part of the history of abuse. In their disappointment to see the persecuted as total people, these characters who speak to the thought of the colonizer, have hidden parts of themselves and feel a vacancy they cannot explain. Now, they battle to isolate themselves from their history and characterize themselves as something modern in an exterior to form new identities. Numerous oppressors cannot achieve this completeness, since their reliance on history and convention and inability to acknowledge the colonized. In spite of the fact that Coetzee's characters do not succeed, they battle in that heading, attempting to break away from their oppressive legacy.

The twisted, mutilated and hindered life aspects depict Coetzee's main characters within the two novels. Their presence makes them deficient, and in spite of what Coetzee says almost about how they are incapable of breaking out their white skin and forget about their past, his writings show their characters attempting to do just that. Isolating themselves from their master is the only way they can completely find themselves, but they cannot

accomplish division without tolerating the persecuted as even. None of the characters within the novels reaches this point. Magda's connections with her father and the servants epitomize viciousness and control instead of cherish. She never makes up division from her father or equality and friendship with the workers. She remains near to the legacy of her people, in spite of her grave to elude it.

Within the colonial storyline of Coetzee's writings, the novels propose that in spite of the fact that colonizers are on a very basic level deficient since their failure to characterize themselves as anything other than master. If they have the chance to work toward compromise with the colonized, they can start to avoid their past as possible. In the long run, they can start form a new identity for themselves. The key, it appears, is to accomplish peace with others and seek peace inside themselves.

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