

I. General Introduction

J.M.Coetzee observes ethical problem in white writing especially of liberal white writers of South Africa and their aesthetic space on history and religion which have narrowed down the historical movement under whose authority they move toward and reach its own ambiguous closure. They carry a sense of the present being burden with the hopes and the constraints of the past.

J.M. Coetzee, a highly regarded South African contemporary novelist, got the Nobel Prize for literature in 2003. Entering into the University of Cape Town in 1975 he graduated successively with honours degrees in English and Mathematics and did research for his thesis on the English novelist, Ford Madox Ford. Later in 1968 he graduated with Ph.D. in English linguistics and Germanic languages.

Coetzee began writing fiction in 1969. His first book, *DuskLands* was published in South Africa in 1974. *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) won South Africa's principal Literary Award, the CNA prize and was published in Britain and the USA. *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) received an international notice. His reputation was confirmed by *Life and Times o Michael K* (1983) which won the Britain's Booker Prize. It was followed by *Foe* (1986), *Age of Iron* (1990), *Master of Petersburg* (1994), and *Disgrace* (1999) which again won the Booker Prize. Coetzee also wrote two fictionalized memories: *Boyhood* (1997) and *Youth* (2002) *The Lives of Animals* (1999) is a fictionalized lecture, later absorbed into *Elizabeth Costello* (2003). Besides, he has also been an active translator of Dutch and Afrikaans literature

Literature acquired a peculiar importance in shaping international understanding of the nature of apartheid. In respect of numerous civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and many other areas of human relations

individual encounters discrimination not on the account of anything they may have done or failed to do, but because of a single factor over which they could have no control, the colour of their skin or the race to which they belong. Racial discrimination, race hatred and conflict thrive on scientifically false ideas, and are by ignorance.

Apartheid, the policy of institutionalized racial domination and exploitation was imposed by a minority white regime in South Africa that thrives on the dispossession, plunder, exploitation and social deprivation of African people since 1652 by colonial settlers and their descendants. Thus, the growing conflict between minority regime and majority of the South African people on the ground of race concept alone made the greatest crisis or violence in the South African boarder.

Since 1948 under the name of apartheid the traditional South African policy of racial discrimination and segregation has been intensified and pursued with relentless vigour. In broad sense, racism is the system of stratification where one race is superior and others are supposed to be inferior. In this scheme of stratification the black race occupies the bottom of hierarchy while the whites are at the apex. Differences based on physical characteristics are used to explain differences in every other spheres of human activities. It is compared with other races, European institution, cultures, morals, ethics and aesthetic standards and their religion which are claimed to be superior.

From 1948 up to 1990 South Africa acquired a notorious centrality in the contemporary political and ethical imagination which made its writers draw world attention. Literary writing by White South Africans was inserted into moralized frame through which apartheid was constructed as an international issue. White South African writers were received into an international circuit of literary celebrity

according to particular imperatives which determined the selection and evaluation of different texts and authors on the basis of liberal humanist value.

South African literature has been differently constructed by diverse and divided reading formations. Coetzee's novels have been constructed in different ways and have thus been subjected to alternative and shifting aesthetic and political evaluations. His fiction is marked by highly developed reflexivity regarding practices of colonization. For this reason, we might assume that the reception of Coetzee's fiction would tend to make visible the norms of colonization through which his work has been constructed as exemplary of a certain form of 'South African literature', and through which certain moralized understandings of apartheid and the struggle against it were produced in the international stage.

The frame of moral construction of apartheid is registered in the reception of Coetzee's novels. The moralization is a way of negotiation between the west and South Africa during apartheid, rendering it intelligible in universal terms but simultaneously keeping it at a safe distance. This is dependent upon representation of the relations between distant enclosed territory (South Africa) and its outside (the west).

Given the dominant notion of literature as repository of universal humanistic moral values that underwrites these genres of criticism, we might expect literature to be understood as a privileged medium for the articulation of critique of apartheid in a moral register. *In the Heart of the Country* is one of the tragedies about the South Africans who are afflicted by racism. South African society is presented as a singularly and uniquely racist society. The South African race is identified as the only axis of power of significance. Magda, the white South African spinster as well as the narrator of the novel, is understood as a powerful image of outdated conventions and the struggle to erode them.

So, Coetzee's protagonists allegorically represent humanity, their inability to move beyond absurd, ineffectual gestures and their failure to convert others to their moral vision. Though Magda, the white spinster, is capable of vivid expression of her emotions, her narrative unfolds with her anger, bitterness, her self pity, her hatred towards her father, her attraction towards the servants Hedrick and Anna. When her father takes Anna to his bed Magda kills him by shooting through the window with his knife. So, trapped in a selfish, and egocentric subjectivity Magda does not know the thoughts, feelings and motivations of the other characters. Her self indulgent life does not bring her happiness.

J. M. Coetzee strictly expresses his writing from the South African realities in its historical and political complexities. Mostly, the failure of human sympathy is caused due to the consequences of colonialism in general and apartheid in specific. His every work is deeply rooted in contemporary social, political situations and their psychological impact.

In an outstanding novel, *In the Heart of the Country*, Coetzee tries to show the South African reality. For example, although Magda has physical desire, she cannot express it directly. She is sexually attracted even towards her own father. But later her sexual desire is fulfilled by her own servant, Hendrik. Her father, too, kills her mother because of the extreme sexual obsession and marries another woman. In this way, Coetzee depicts the moral degradation, irresponsibility, crime and corruption among most of the white characters in this novel.

In the Heart of the Country has received a contradictory responses since its publication in 1977. Various critics, scholars and writers have commented the novel from different perspectives like psychological, racial, feminist, linguistic and

narrative technique. Critic Josephine Dodd has observed this novel from the psychological perspective:

Magda's perception of herself is shaped by her having absorbed the lessons of literature and suggests that she may be framed by circumscribed by literacy and psychoanalytic discourse which is ill-suited to her specific spatio-temporal experience. This frame once Magda is scripted by our dominant psycho analytic discourse to identify her as wanting to be seduced by her father. (139)

Here, she stresses upon herself with the knowledge of literature psychoanalytic discourse and seems closeness with her own father to fulfill her own sexual interest.

Besides the psychoanalytical prospective, Coetzee's use of the white woman narrator in *In the Heart of the Country* is closely aligned to the post-structuralism configuration of the feminine as necessarily disruptive of narrative. In particular, Coetzee engages with both different feminisms' and the feminine as a means by which to address the problems of narrative and discourse. Along with the other, *In the Heart of the Country*, is most often in the context of elaborating on the ways in which Coetzee is undermining feminist discourse in order to criticise western feminism. Much as Coetzee provides a critique of Anglo-American feminist discourse. Fiona Proby agrees with the treatment of Coetzee's female narrator:

The difference stems from Coetzee's treatment of liberal Anglo-American feminism and his utilization of different feminism[s]. Magda is a parody of Adrienne Rich's *Dover in Diving into the Wreck*, and she is a parody of feminist quest for identity beyond phallic discourse that novel represents a kind of liberal Anglo-American

feminism which privileges a contradictory reversal of positions over a deconstruction of positionality purpose. (15)

Through this paragraph, we know that Coetzee is masterfully correcting a wayward and universalizing line of feminist thought. His use of feminism is related to broader phenomena of the use of the feminine as a medium for the postcolonial settler identity crisis, for the authority of the author, and for the crisis of representation.

Likewise, Derek Attridge's account of ethics of the other is the fullest elaborations of Coetzee's ethics: "Though important, the Levinasian lens is not the only means by which one can understand Coetzee's ethics. Turning to a seemingly older-fashioned ethical term, Coetzee himself draws our attention to his preoccupation with writing and truth" (2).

Analyzing the novel, Stephen Watson argues: "*In the Heart of the Country* is concerned to demonstrate that realism is not real at all, but simply a production of language, a code that people have come to accept as natural" (375). On the other hand, Helen Tiffin has seen Coetzee's deliberate eschewing of realism as "a way of emphasizing the complicity of Western narrative and history" (32). Another critic, Teresa Dovey opines: "Coetzee deliberately adopts the models and theories inhabiting them in a way that closely approximates the Derridean strategy of deconstruction" (10).

In this way, *In the Heart of the Country* is studied or observed from several angles by different critics, reviewers and essayists in terms of feminism, racism, psychoanalysis, linguistics and narrative techniques. But observing the ground reality and the real situation of South African society, this novel is very appropriate in the case of ethics. An ethical problem is the common and striking issue created by the different characters. Through the lens of ethical action, all the characters and

especially Magda, the white colonial woman and the narrator show the immoral and neglected behavior. Hence, she hates the immoral activities of her father, but later, she also engages in immoral activities along with her sexual intercourse with the black servant, Hendrik. So, the moral framing of this fiction succeeds in keeping South Africa at a distance by assimilating apartheid into a stark moral frame of good and evil which makes it readily available as an object of clear cut moral judgment. And since this moralized staging of apartheid continues in accounts of the transformation of post-apartheid South Africa, it focuses upon the activities of individuals acting out moral drama of reconciliation. It remains an important task to critically question the channels of discourse through which particular representation of South African society is reproduced.

In *In the Heart of the Country*, Magda shows self-centeredness, racial prejudice and hypocrisy which are the prime factors of degradation of individuals as well as the society. So, she forgets her ethical values and also widens the gap in her relation with others.

Through the trope of allegorical presentation, Coetzee rather talks about the general human condition. He sees the heart of darkness in all societies so that he is not directly dealing with politics. Along with the other novels, *In the Heart of the Country* contains issues concerning culture or politics in South Africa to be rewritten as simply another lesson of general moral significance. If universal moral significance is registered in and through the reading of South African literature in this way, then in turn South Africa is discursively transformed into just a particular example of a more general universal moralized theme of tyranny and suffering.

Despite being observed from different perspectives, ethical criticism can be appropriate to look at every part in this novel. In fact, ethics is the moral principles

that controls or influences a person's behaviour. It is related to ethos, habit and custom. It is dealt with the question of right and wrong, of goodness and evils in the form of a dialectics. It is an abstraction mediated by concrete reality by the facts of the lives of men and women. To be ethical is, therefore, to speak, and to attempt to unite fact and value. Ethics is also used in a number of related senses which have to be distinguished to avoid confusion. But the ethical relation between the characters of *In the Heart of the Country* remains problematic. The relation between white and black is used as 'self' and 'other' Magda, the white narrator cum protagonist, shows her immoral activities. As a voyeur, she expresses her jealousy towards her own father and her black servants, Hendrik and Anna. Her self centeredness and hypocrisy exhibit that she is a mad spinster, and always wants to dominate the blacks as 'other' through her hysteric presentation.

Thus, literature has been misused in the role of moral text, a fact which contributes to the controversy over such use that still goes on in the academy in particular. Moral judgments, derived from literary works, may be crude or excessively facile. So, through this novel, Coetzee directly expresses white writing especially liberal white wiring of South Africa and exhibits its ethical problems. They are always bounded by religion or history. Their aesthetic space lies 'inside the history' which has narrowed down the historical movement under whose authority they move toward and reach the ambiguous closure.

In the similar vein, Emmanuel Levinas, a renowned philosopher on ethics, adds that the 'self' would not become a subject if it were not always in relation to an object from which it finds its orientation or space. He further suggests that to become a subject a self first must exist in relation to an object to which it can pronounce itself linguistically as 'I'. So, he suggests that if one were to speak first, instead of grasping,

the struggle between the self and the others would be displaced and communication might begin.

This research will involve the texts written by the different writers and philosophers especially Socrates, Augustine, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, Martin Buber, Irish Murdoch, Emmanuel Levinas, Richard Rorty and Jacques Derrida to analyze, *In the Heart of the Country* from ethical prospective. This ethical study is bounded by the inter-racial intra-racial and interpersonal relations, i.e. racial issues more than issues concerning class, gender, sexuality, nationality and so on. However, the issues concerning class, gender, sexuality and nationality one drawn in relation to racial issue which is considered to be the primary concern in this novel. So, that ethical criticism is taken as a theoretical tool.

II. Ethical Criticism

Pre-Levinasian Ethics

A Dictionary of Philosophy defines 'ethics' as a "body of doctrine concerning what is right and wrong, good and bad, in respect of character and conduct" (137). It is a particular kind of an idea or moral belief that influences the behaviour, attitudes and philosophy of life of a group of people. It is the study of issue concerning on what is morally right or wrong.

Ethics as a moral philosophy designates two distinct but related kinds of inquiry: substantive ethics and analytical ethics. Substantive ethics deals with the question of what is right and wrong, good and bad, in relation to characters and conducts. Its aim is to formulate standards of correctness for evaluation and decision. On the other hand, analytical ethics is the enquiry into moral concepts and their logic but does not itself aim at providing standards of correctness for evaluation and decision. It is also known as meta-ethics.

Ethics, first of all, is related to the Greek Ethos – – habit, custom in its reading used in a number of related senses – – which have to be distinguished to avoid confusion. The Greek philosopher, Socrates, claims that conscience tells man what is right. He says, "S/he who knows what is good will do good" (qtd. in Tarnas 69). According to him, the right insight leads to the right action, and only he who does right can be a virtuous man. He believes that the ability to distinguish between right and wrong lies in people's reason and not in society. He thinks that no one could be happy if s/he out against better judgment and s/he knows how to achieve happiness will do so. So, s/he knows what is right will do right. He believes, "Happiness is the consequence not of physical or external circumstances, of wealth or power or reputation, but of living a life that is good for the soul" (Tarnas 33).

In the similar vein, for Augustine, the evil character of fleshly lust is visible in the shame that attends its expression uncontrolled by the rational will. He holds that

the root of evil does not reside in matter because it is God's creation and so that it is good. He says, "Evil was a consequence of man's misuse of his free will. Evil plays in the act of turning itself of turning away from God-not in what was turned to" (qtd. in Tarnas 145). He says that man is no longer free to determine his/her life simply by virtue of his/her rational will, not only because circumstance beyond his/her control present themselves, but also because s/he is unconsciously constrained by ignorance and emotional conditioning. His/her initial sinful thoughts and actions have become ingrained habits. According to Augustine, thought is particularly visible in the evolution of Christianity's characteristic attitudes toward God's moral commandments.

On the other hand, German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, opines that the difference between right and wrong is a matter of reason but not of sentiment. He agrees with the rationalists who have said that the ability to distinguish between right and wrong is inherent in human reason. Everybody knows what is right or wrong not because s/he has learned it but because it is born in the mind. According to Kant, everybody has practical reason, i.e. the intelligence that gives us the capacity to discern what is right or wrong in every case. In his opinion, the law of morals is just as absolute and just as universal as the law of causality that cannot be proved by reason but it is nevertheless absolute and unalterable. Nobody would deny that "I get the feeling that what we are really talking about is conscious. Because everything has a conscience"(qtd. in Gaarder 335). When Kant describes the law of morals, he is describing the human science. He says that we cannot prove what our conscience tells us but nevertheless we know it Kant further opines:

But if you have with others only to be popular, you are not acting out of respect for moral law. You might be acting in accordance with moral law but if it is to be a moral action you must have conquered

yourself. Only when we do something purely out of duty it can be called a moral act. (qtd. in Tarnas 335)

Thus, Kant's ethics is sometimes called duty or responsibility ethics. He says that it is this good will, which determines whether, or not the action is morally right but not the consequences of the action. His ethics is, therefore, also called a 'good-will ethics'.

Similarly, another German philosopher, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel believes that the basis of human cognition changes from one generation to the next. There are, therefore no 'eternal truths', no timeless reasons. The only fixed point philosophy that can hold onto it is history itself. He says that the history of thought is like a river. The thoughts are washed along with the current of post-tradition as prevailing at the time which helps to determine how we think. In Hegel's view, we can never claim that any particular thought is correct forever and ever, but the thought can be correct from where we stand. He says:

Anybody who studies history will see that humanity has advanced toward ever increasing 'self-knowledge' and 'self-development'. The study of history shows that humanity is moving toward greater rationality and freedom. In spite of its capers, historical development is progressive. We say that history is purposeful. (qtd in Gaarder 364)

Studying history in depth, Hegel says that anyone sees that a thought is purposed on the basis of other previously proposed thoughts. But as soon as one thought is proposed, it is contradicted by another.

But, in the writing of Heidegger, Sarte and Camus, there is a reflection of pervasive spiritual crisis in modern culture. The anguish and alienation of twentieth-century life is brought to full of articulation as the existentialists address to depict the naked concerns of human existence – – suffering and death, loneliness and dread, guilt, conflict, spiritual emptiness, the void of absolute values or universal contexts.

The writings show the sense of cosmic absurdity, the frailty of human reason and the tragic impasse of the human condition. So, man is condemned to be free in then views. S/he faces the necessity of choice and knows the continual burden of errors. S/he lives in constant ignorance of his/her future, thrown into a finite existence bounded at each end by nothingness. The infinity of human aspiration is defeated before the finitude of human possibility. Man possesses no determining essence. Only his/her existence is given and engulfed by morality, risk, fear, contradiction and uncertainty. There is no eternal design or providential purpose. Things exist simply, and not for some 'higher' or 'deeper' reason. 'God is dead' and 'universe is blind to human concerns'. The meaning or the purpose is devoiced and man is abandoned on his own. To be authentic one has to admit and choose freely to encounter the stark reality of the meaninglessness of life.

Likewise, Irish Murdoch, the novelist and philosopher, is concerned with the human tendency to see the world through the distortion of fantasy. Critics have extracted moral principles from her essays and used these principles to analyze the right and wrong of her character's behaviour and the moral import of the form. So far as the ethic is concerned, Murdoch opines:

[T]he recognition of his separate state is a moral as well as developmental task, for if he is separate, they so are others, and their separateness implies that his needs are not to be satisfied at their expenses. Failure to achieve this recognition of separateness leads to the damaging action of character. (qtd. in Winsor 396)

In Murdoch's *A Family Honourable Defeat* (1970), Julius King feels free to manipulate Rupert and Morgan into a fake romance for his own amusement. Likewise, in *The Mice and the Good* (1968), one sees John Ducane's growing recognition of the separate state of others. At the beginning of the novel, he keeps Jessica Bird tied to him to the extent that she is literally blind to the outside world,

and at the end he recognizes and denounces his own egotism. Yet implicit in Murdoch's novels is an ethical standard that contradicts the demand for separation she simultaneously makes. Murdoch writes, "[I]n order to maintain the derived fusion, one incorporates others or is oneself incorporated" (qtd in Winsor 396). In accordance with this view, the ultimate moral division is not between merging and separating for all is merged, but between those who allow themselves to be absorbed with others. In her works, goodness comes through allowing or even promoting destruction of oneself in order to prevent oneself from destroying others.

Murdoch's ambiguous attitude toward supposedly 'separated' behaviours is epitomized in her treatment of sex because sex itself epitomizes the way we relate to others. Ideally, sex replaces incorporation of another with the union of two recognizably separate people. She reflects the moral dilemma and does not intend and testify to the power of solipsism. Sex and violence are often equated because both are attempts at personal domination.

Thus, different pre-Levinasian philosophers and writers focus on 'ethics' from their own angles. They do not talk about 'racism' into the matter of discussion. They ignore the consequences of racism and victimization of people in the society, they talk about ethics in general. Socrates brings the concept of Greek mind for establishing the working consciousness of the moral and intellectual character. Saint Augustine's thought seems to be influenced by the Bible and Christianity. Likewise, Kant focuses on the practical reason for defining the right and wrong in everyone. Hegel, too, believes on the historical development of thought where one thought is contradicted by another. Similarly, existentialist writers like Heidegger, Sartre and Camus only give emphasis and the absurdity and meaninglessness of life for the depiction of spiritual crisis in modern culture, i.e. they focus more on individual freedom more than relation between self and other.

But racial problems are complicated by the relative economic and political power between white and darker people of the world. 'Racism' is known today as the phenomenon of modern time. The modern ideas about race and modern manifestation of 'racism' are of European origin. It so happens that the rich and powerful nations generally speak about white nation and poor and weak about darker nations. Having full of racial ideology, there are possibilities of inhuman activities and moral crisis. Love, sex, crime, exploitation, corruption, hypocrisy and brutality are the results of racism. So, racism generates the ethical crisis in the society.

Levinasian Ethics and Post -Levinasian Ethics

Emmanuel Levinas is a key figure in the twentieth-century continental philosophy. His highly original description of ethics is frequently utilized in other disciplines as well. He takes ethics to be an asymmetrical relation with an opaque other that decenters the ego-subject. This relation is concretely produced as 'my infinity responsibility to the other person'. The recent revival of the term contentiously called 'the ethical turn' has found in Levinas an invaluable basis for thinking about ethics without a return to foundationalism and the sovereign subject.

Levinas's discourse is a sustained encounter between the western philosophical tradition and Talmudic Judaism, resulting in radical account of human subjectivity and a notion of community that challenges the fundamental assumptions of traditional political theory. This ethical subjectivity, receiving its unity from alterity instead of identity, is foremost a corporeal being, not a rational or abstract ego of any kind. Levinas asserts that ethics is not a rational category. It is 'pre-originary': prior to distinctions between subject and object, reason and emotion, matter and idea, and philosophy and relation, Nor is ethics an experience, not even of the highest kind, but a radical exposure to the other that underpins all experiences. Consequently, Levinas defines ethical subjectivity as a radical passivity, whose freedom occurs in the form of an 'election' to unlimited responsibility for the other person.

In his first major work, *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas presents ethics as a complete separation between the ego and the other, which is also a relation between two profound critiques of ontology, especially of Heidegger's philosophy, which allegedly privileges personal being over each being, pervades the book. Through intricate and nuanced phenomenological analyses of everyday phenomena, Levinas explores the multiple ramifications of the ethical relations.

According to Levinas, the relation (or encounter) between 'self' (ego) and 'other' is primary to understanding. So, the self cannot become a subject if it is not always in relation to an object from which it finds its space. He says, "To become a subject, the self first must exist in relation to an object to which it can pronounce itself linguistically as 'I'. Subjectivity arises when a being is confronted by another being to whom it can speak" (302). Thus, he says that if one is to speak first, the struggle between the other will be displaced and communication might begin, the arrival of the other surprises and interrupts the being that is persisting in its being.

The Heideggerian "being-towards-death" is less relevant in Levinas's view: "Real subjective authenticity begins when the self is pierced by the enigma of the stranger who approaches in encounter with the human other, when the self is pierced by what is outside the self the true object arises" (302). The mature subject, according to Levinas, is the self who responds to him/herself as 'I' to the 'you' that stands before him or her. By moving from inferiority to exteriority through speech, the subject acquires temporal weight as well as identity. As long as the existence of man remains interiority, it remains phenomenal. He writes:

The language by which a being exists for another is his unique possibility to exist with an existence that is more than his interior existence [...]. The surpassing of phenomenal or inward existence does [not] consist in receiving the recognition of the other but offering

him one's being. To be oneself is to express oneself that is, already to serve the other. (*Totality and Infinity* 182-83)

Levinas describes the self or the ego before the arrival of subjecthood as interiority and dwelling. For him, 'being' before subject is not a positivity but a meaningless horror that he calls the 'there is'. Being is simply 'there'.

The ego maintains itself in its dwelling with 'labour' and 'possessions'. Levinas calls this egotism the 'economy of being'. He also terms this egotism as 'self-identification'. The body, home, labour, possession and economy are the structures of the ego that are caught in the realm of the same egoism. The 'self' works to assimilate and possess. It misses the opportunity to become a true responsive and responsible subject as long as it does not risk expression in the form of dialogue with another. He finds the possibility of escape from inferiority and anonymous selfhood in the social relationship with others.

But, Martin Buber, another philosopher on ethics sketches the ambiguity of the other whose approach presses for ethics as first philosophy. Both Levinas and Buber concur that the other breaks through the world's horizon with a differential force that alters the same. Levinas plumbs a Buberian line at the crux of the other who gives the self its responsibility. Moreover, the other breaking apart the identity of the same signifies an irreducible distance from the self that, in turn, elicits a mediated reconnection in the network of signified relations with many others who cannot be experienced or used but only answered and supplicated. So, an ethics as first philosophy proceeds from a finite other towards infinite otherness. In Buberian terms the question is how the other is breaking apart the unified subject-object relation or 'I-thou' bears not just any meaning but the command to bear an ethical responsibility for it. 'Thou' who makes it possible fretting over a distance separating selves treats it as a lack which gets filled by the fullness of meeting. But, here, Levinas worries that

relation filled as plenitude with content, full items of experience and use could absorb the distinction of separation. So, he looks to an absence which exposes but does not remedy the self's lacking connection.

Levinas rejects Buberian primacy of the 'I-Thou' to the 'I-It' to balance a symmetry with mutuality, justice or equality between persons. Ethics demands one who takes responsibility for the other everyone else's responsibilities for the other. Only "substitution" for the other excluded from other's other "signifies" the infinite lack, alterity which remains to be filled by 'egoism'. For the sake of its incompatibility one estimates the other's poverty of content as compared with other's surplus of power.

Further, Levinas argues that language is the key to setting the self free from egoism. "Language is perhaps to be defined as the very power to break the continuity to being or of history. [...] speaking, rather than letting be, solicits the other" (*Totality and Infinity* 195). Language and the 'face-to-face' encounter with the Other one what calls the self from the other are what calls the self from his or her 'dwelling' to pronounce him/herself as 'I'. Called by the other the self becomes subject in pronouncing 'me void', 'here I am'. This new selfhood is true subjecthood.

Levinas' s second magnum opus, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* further intensifies the ethical tropes as an intensified ethics which is presented as a subjectivity that has become hostage to the other. Levinas explores the movement from the interpersonal level to that of wider society on the basis of justice. This way of apprehending subjectivity enables Levinas to formulate a notion of human community that is united by neither primordial individual freedom, nor by universalism, but by the interminable quest for social justice. Thereby Levinas establishes a radically critical relationship with the entire enlightenment tradition, from Descartes to Hegel, for whom justice is a function of freedom. However, he

differs also from the political philosophers such as Rawls who consider justice as the first value of society. Levinas would say that justice cannot be valorized because it is what calls for values. There are two aspects to the account of justice in Levinas's discourse. The first describes the origin of institutions in terms of a universalization of ethics necessitated by the primordial presence of the 'third party' who without delay complicates the ethical immediacy. The second is far more profound, because, here, justice distresses ethics. Justice is the problem of the political, because of the mutual corruption, in this case of ethics and justice. Levinas's work demonstrates that not only justice but also ethics, is political.

A comprehensive critique of ontology underpins Levinas's discourse. Ontology posits the philosophical sovereignty of being and priority of present over past and future. Being and presence are manifest in the concrete as 'economics of the same', that is to say, the magnification and perpetuation of self-identity by the reductive absorption of alterity. However, amidst, this violent natural perseverance of being, Levinas also observes the incident of morality, i.e. conscience, or a being's deference to another. His well-known phrase 'ethics is the first philosophy' is primarily a reference to this reflexivity of being that provides the pre-original impulse for philosophy, redescribed in turn as 'the work of justice'. Ethics variously defined as 'desire', 'metaphysics', 'infinity', that is an asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relation between the other and me, is in the concrete, superlative affectivity, or 'sensitivity'. This passivity, or 'infinite responsibility', extends right up to the level of my 'substitution' for the other person. In substitution I am 'elected', prior to the advent of a will that is capable of choice, as irreplaceable in responsibility for the other person.

In the text *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas says that the notion of totality was raised to the level of a concept mainly during the flowering of German idealism, reaching its apotheosis in Hegel's notion of the 'absolute'. It is constituted as a permanent state of unrest by two conflicting movements. Whilst the natural thrust of

totality comprises a drive toward self-identity, it is also continuously undermined by the exterior. In the concrete, totality at any given moment shows the ascendancy of wider totalization of pluralization. Strictly speaking, in Levinas's discourse, the term 'totality' refers to the dominant orientation toward totalization that encompasses both commerce and war. Going in the opposite direction one finds the differentiating effects of exteriority, which manifests its recalcitrance to totalization as the subversion of totality. It is the latter movement that Levinas calls ethics. Levinas again clearly says that totality cannot generate peace, it cannot abide plurality which is the sole possible basis of peace. Totality must be ruptured at the risk of war because "only beings capable of war can rise to peace presupposes beings structured otherwise than as parts of a totality" (222).

War is just one of the possibilities open to being who are related to one another without the totalizing mediation of a third term. Figures such as 'desire', 'infinity', 'sensitivity', 'proximity' and 'substitution', that Levinas utilizes in order to describe the asymmetrical ethical relation, are all a "calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other"(42). This term operates at two related levels, a reference to 'otherness'. The other is the one who orders me to responsibility, but is also the most impoverished in terms of power. The other is a figure of superlative height, s/he also is indigence personified. Because of the mutual corruption of levels, the 'quality' that concretely describes the other is ambiguity, through which the other enjoins me to ethics. It is not that I do not know enough about the other, but that the other is not given to cognition. In a passage that epitomizes the ambiguity of the other, Levinas states:

The alterity of the other does not result from its identity, but constitutes it: the other is the Other. The other qua other is situated in a dimension of height and of abasement glorious abasement, he has the face of the poor, the stranger, the widow, and the orphans, and at the

same time of the master called to invest and justify my freedom.

(Totality and infinity 251).

If totality is the violation of the independence of the other person, infinity sketches the form of a relation in which the I remains 'I' and the other is 'other'. What is pivotal here is that the idea of infinity is not thought but undergone infinity in thought assumes the irreducible figure of the negation of the finite. The subject's inability to comprehend infinity is a positive relation, demonstrating what Levinas calls infinity 'non-indifference' toward the subject. The passivity of subjectivity in relation to infinity is called sensibility.

The passivity of the ethical relation crucially occurs as 'sensibility' at the level of corporeal existence. In this sense, it is opposed to the rationalist theories of ethics maintained against sentiment. The 'I' of passivity is formed, as 'interiority' separated from totality. 'Interiority' is an incessant process of identification. This labour of identification is what Levinas calls 'the same'. It occurs as a concrete relationship between an 'I' and a world that is other. The I maintains itself and is at home by perpetually divesting its world of alterity.

The 'moments' of this identification –the body, the home, labour, possession, economy – are not to figure as empirical and contingent data, but over the formal skeleton of the same; they are the articulations of the structure. The identifications of the same is not the void of a tautology nor a dialectical opposition to the other but the correctness of egoism. *(Totality and Infinity 38)*

According to Levinas, the 'I' is burdened by its own existing, seeking destruction. But even Levinas's deepening of the subject's involvement in the world as 'enjoyment', that is to say, being nourished by the world before acting in it, does not succeed in discovering a genuine break in the immanence of subjectivity. An absolute departure from self would only come in the subject's relationship with death. The

world and light open up only relative horizons of temporality, but death is absolute because it refuses to be a horizon. The subject and death do not share a common border. The subject is rendered absolutely passive by death's affectivity. Furthermore, the modality of a subject's relationship with the other, according to Levinas, resembles this trauma. The uniqueness of this form lies in the de-phasing or unsettling of the subject by its encounter with a mystery or enigma. It is this 'quality' that the other shares with death. This encounter is described as proximity 'in *Otherwise than Being*.

Moreover, Levinas calls the deposed subject 'subjectivity'. The subject is impossible as a freedom for itself which is reformed by responsibility for another. The meaning, according to Levinas, of the first person singular is responsibility. In *Otherwise than Being*, he says, "The word 'I' means *here I am*; answering for everything and everyone" (15). In this manner subjectivity is a 'hostage' of the (an)other.

It is, however, not an alienation, because of the other in the same is my substitution for the other through responsibility, for which, I am summoned as someone irreplaceable. I exist through the other and for the other, but without this being an alienation: I am inspired. This inspiration is the psyche. The psyche can signify this alterity in the same without alienation in the form of incarnation, as being in one's skin, having- the -other- in -one's -skin. (114)

In *Totality and Infinity*, justice appears synonymous with ethics. Although frequent statements such as "we call justice this face to face approach, in conversion, seem to reinforce this impression, there is a crucial displacement between ethics and justices" (71). Ethics is transformed into justice by the 'third party'. The 'third', synthesis in Hegel, here refers to an income in the level of plurality, that is to say, the third party is not anthropological, but the other's other who is another to me. The

advent of the third complicates Levinas's ethical discourse because the fact that the other also has an other introduces a contradiction into ethics.

In *Otherwise than Being*, under the section called “Witness and Prophecy”, Levinas intensifies the encounter between philosophy, religion and politics. Hence, prophecy defined as bearing witness to infinity, is constituted by two related moments. They are monotheism, or the separation from universal history, and battle against idolatry. For Levinas, the modern idols are not statues of pagan gods but ideology. In the face of these idols, prophecy is the designation of the meaning of justice without awaiting the end of universal history. It is the troubling of philosophy by religion, which is not the supplanting of the former by the latter, but the generation of a messianic eschatology of peace Levinas presents this as a precarious balancing act between war and peace. However, the ethical troubling of politics does not authorize ethics to govern institutions. Instead ethics itself becomes politicized. Thus, we return to the starting point of a general economy, where the work of justice is seen inextricably bound to political orientation.

As a development of 'prophetic politics', during the 1980s, Levinas begins to reflect upon the topic of human rights. Levinas argues that human rights have a priori normative character if they are derived from alterity. Although Levinas rejects individualism as a basis for rights, he is not against communication either. He presents human rights based upon alterity as a corrective to political institutions. Furthermore, the sociality of ethics, arising from responsibility for the other is antecedent to that of humanism and is therefore capable of revealing the internal contradictions inherent to ontological rights. Human rights based upon the humanism of the other man, i.e. in terms of 'substitution' and proximity, transcend the fatalism of society and the inhuman quality of nature. From the 'thou shall not kill' of responsibility to the other persons, Levinas derives the 'right to life'. But, Levinas is not satisfied with simply formulating rights. He seeks to discover and endorse the

political conditions for realizing them. By showing how starvation and hunger are incompatible with the 'right to life', Levinas attacks economic inequality. It is toward the alleviation of scarcity and need that he supports the growth of science and technology. If they are to be realized, rights must be institutionalized. However, this makes them vulnerable to abuse and perversion.

Since the 1980s the thought of Emmanuel Levinas has continued to have a significant impact in disciplines as diverse as philosophy, theology, Jewish studies, feminism, cultural and political theory and literature. The thesis of the essential opacity of the other has led to a renewed wave of self reflectivity in theory. However, antipolitical and sentimental readings have abducted Levinas from the political sphere. The singular aim has been the isolation of a pure formula of ethical alterity. The result has been a fetishism 'the other', war with a bad conscience and the advocacy of humanitarian intervention in order to save the other.

Another philosopher or the father of Deconstruction, Jacques Derrida also shows his interest in relation to ethics and Kantian moral and political philosophy. He wants to demarcate early Levinasian ethics as at once profoundly faithful to Kant and implicitly anti-Kantian lacking of formal element of universality. Without the pure order of the law, without answering his question in the early stage, Derrida asks how it is that Levinasian ethics manages to escape the Kantian universal underwriting morality and politics. On the other hand, in what respect Levinas' particular ethics, in so far as it is presented as a universal humanism remains close to that of Kant's.

His analysis is motivated by a more fundamental question, namely, the nature of the relation between ethics and politics. For Derrida, where Levinasian ethics appears as unconditional hospitality, Kantian politics appears conditional hospitality within the boundaries of law. Hence, Derrida brings Levinas to Kant to explore the ethics-politics relation by asking whether in Levinas's ethics of hospitability might be discovered 'a legitimating foundation', and able to found a law and a politics, within a

society, nation, state or nation-state. That is the kind of conditional hospitality he sees in Kant.

Derrida provides two responses. One cannot deduce from Levinasian ethics, a law or politics in some determined situation today. There is not relation of founding and founded between an ethics or first philosophy of hospitality and a law or politics of hospitality. Although one cannot deduce a law or politics from ethics there is something we can say about the passage. First the derivation of politics or law from ethics is absolutely necessary. Ethics itself requires law. Second, the derivation is irreversible: the passage is from ethics to politics and not vice versa. Further, the derivation is conditional. If politics is obligated by Levinas's ethical relation, law should be made on the basis of an analysis that is each time unique. It means that we are required to take law and politics 'otherwise' than the way in which Kant thinks law and politics where morality and justice are equated with the universality of law. Finally, for Levinas, there is not universality of law unlike the Kantian cosmopolitical sense, there is a law that Derrida wants to hold universality that the required law be irreversibly conditional upon the ethnical relatives.

Derrida corrects the early Levinas in order to sketch his own understanding of the ethical relation. He writes that 'intentional subjectivity' of the welcoming of the other will already be a response. The space of 'habitation' that Levinas designates as familiarity' is for Derrida immediately 'unfamiliar' and inhabitable because the sovereignty is immediately called into question.

Derrida's implication of both Levinasian moments leads him to suggest that the self is placed, at once, as guest and host. He explains that the 'self emerges when the ego undergoes suffering for the other's suffering. But the other is also vulnerable because the 'other's good depends on his or her welcome being returned. In this response, the 'I' has place as a response to the other's suffering.

In Derrida's reading of Levinasian ethics, he says that 'I' emerges into freedom and rationality via de-centering of 'my' ego in a world that is not 'my' own but welcomes 'me'. From the Levinasian refrain that the other puts into question 'my' freedom. Derrida draws out a concept of freedom as freedom-from-self. Freedom occurs when the 'I' frees itself from its return to the self', from its egotism of a being preserving in its being to answer for the other or to defend the rights of the other man.

Derrida writes, in Levinasian ethics, the 'I' contains the 'other' and maintains selfhood via separation, and free-will, it is always heterogeneous and heteronymous. However, in Kant's words, a good will is autonomous. Free from any other principle the good will acts in accordance with the universality of law, whereas in Levinas 'the rights of man name the right of the other to receive a response to his specific need'. Derrida wants to say that ethical freedom has place as suffering -- the great weight of responsibility the 'self' experiences for the suffering of the other--where to freely defend the right of man is to accept responsibility for the other's well-being.

Derrida also opines that ethics is violent without politics. It arises because in reality self's unconditional responsibility for the unique of the other, ethics overlooks the other 'unique others' in the world. There arise the needs for politics. In a sense, politics is required for the sake of ethics. Ethical responsibility to the other needs to be distributed among all unique others.

Ethical norms and values are degraded in apartheid. Derrida recognizes apartheid as a crime against humanity. His identification of South Africa as the most spectacular criminal in a broad array of racist activity that turns into critical gaze away from American and European colonialism and thus displaces the actions of the colonizing countries both geographical and chronologically into the colony--South Africa.

Derrida's condemnation of apartheid as 'the ultimate racism' in the world, the last of many deploys the authoritarianism of the western subject-object binaries that is

an integral part of the imperialist history of the western academy, including the institution Derrida seeks to use counter discursively. The authenticity of the art exhibition, once used to construct the other, must now deconstruct it.

Derrida's "Racism's Last Word" analyzes racism as a global problem and simultaneously poses apartheid as an object that is unfit by virtue of its spectacular otherness. Here, apartheid is an exhibition that reader's attending at his request to dissociate themselves from it. Derrida also points out that apartheid has been sustained by European complicity by western economic imperialism.

However, Derrida's careful reading evokes the stakes of ethics as first philosophy. His brilliant essay "Violence and Metaphysics" poses the options open to a discourse that claim to transcend ontology: either admit its complicity with ontological language or relinquish philosophy for empiricism. Derrida's 'ethical turn', having as its axis skepticism about the ethical import of deconstruction is inspired by Levinas's unique notion of ethics. Not only has Derrida concentrated on constructively problematizing Levinas's concepts, for example, the concept of infinite responsibility in *The Gift of Death* and the translation of ethics to politics in *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* but also use them in his own discourse.

In short, ethics as first philosophy comprises the giving off oneself to the other on behalf of the other's other for the sake of their opening a place for oneself. It empties the self by going outside to meet the other of philosophy, fills the self by welcoming the other inside to alter the sound an incorporation of difference and exclusion of identity, around which ellipses turn the self who hears the call of the other's otherness to give some particular content to this finite other.

In Coetzee's fictions the self is redeemably self-interested fails to transcend itself to engage with the other as other. The self is caught in an interpersonal aporia in relation to self and other. Coetzee's skeptical ethics of the self and of writing can be viewed as his critique of contemporary cultural policies that it's structured according

to special interest groups. Against the politics of advancing the particular interests of special groups, Coetzee poses ethics as the more fundamental term that requires a transcending a self-interest to engage with the other's interest. His ultimate emphasis is not on epistemological but ethical unreliability. In the succeeding chapter, the researcher is going to apply ethical criticism in J.M. Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) and prove that the protagonist of the novel, Magda— a white woman does not have mutual relation with others because of her ethical problem, i.e. self centeredness.

III. Exploration of Ethnical Problem in J.M. Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country*

Magda's Ethical Problem in Terms of Inter-racial Relation

The female protagonist cum narrator cum focalizer in J(ohn) M(axwell) Coetzee's novel, *In the Heart of the Country*, seems to be sympathizing victims of apartheid on the surface level. However, in reality, different ethical problems arise due to racial discrimination. When we talk about 'apartheid', South African policy of separate development which was initiated by the whites in 1948 AD, and lasted up to 1990 AD, we cannot ignore the whites' exploitation upon the blacks, the coloureds and the Asians in South Africa where racial discrimination was institutionalized by law.

The driving force behind apartheid is the discredited concept of the superiority of the white race. Its historical circumstances brought the white race into contact with non-white races. The white people argue that their duty was to maintain the purity of the race at any cost even though the members of that race constitute a minority. They consider therefore, that if the white in South Africa, as heirs to the western civilization, are to secure its domination over the non-whites, and repudiate the principle of racial equality. For this reason, the non-white cannot be granted the same political rights that the whites enjoy, otherwise the whites would be engulfed. In addition, each of the racial group in South Africa presents different heredity characteristics and has not attained the same level of culture. Racial integration will be detrimental to all of them. Whites and non-whites form distinct social and economic groups and consequently should live separately.

This segregation of South Africa has direct impact on every spheres of society. Literature is also heavily affected by this inhumane practice of racial

discrimination. The narratives of J.M.Coetzee's novels entirely exhibit the white domination, exploitation and their anarchy. His novel, *In the Heart of the Country*, also depicts the hypocrisy and brutality and exploitation of whites upon the blacks. Magda, the white spinster cum narrator is presented ironically. Magda's evaluation of her 'self' and 'other(s)' cannot be taken at face value. Rather her perception in broad sense should be taken with suspicion.

Here, her relationship with the servants, Hendrik and his wife, reflects that she is showy and artificial in terms of love and affection towards them. But, in deep level, she shows her opportunistic attitudes towards other. She ceases to speak about the newly weds and tells us that it is Hendrik who has brought home a new wife. So, in appearance, she seems to be reliable narrator but in reality she turns to be an unreliable character. It is because Magda confidently justifies her own action and rationalizes the actions of others.

Magda's family belongs to the white and bourgeoisie which cannot understand the feeling of black servants. When Hendrik arrives at the door of her in search of the job, her father exhibits the dominating role upon the black which is. evident in his this dialogue:

What kind of work can you do? Can you work with sheep?

Yes, I know sheep, baas.'

'How old are you? Can you count?'

'Are you by yourself?'

'Yes baas, I am by myself now'.

'Do you know the people on my farm?'

'No baas, I know no one around here'

'Now listen carefully, what is your name?'

'Hendrik, my baas'.(22)

So, the dialogue also shows that how dominating and brutal role Magda's father plays. He wants to know each and everything about Hendrik who represents the marginal character as 'other'. On the other hand, Hendrik, the black servant, has a timid role who articulates the term like 'Yes baas', 'No baas' and 'My baas'.

Similarly, as Hendrik comes to Magda and asks for job for his wife Anna, she also plays an important role of master. She say, "Look at me, Anna, don't be shy. Would you like to come and work in the house"?, and "come on, child, speak, I won't eat you up" (32) .

Although belonging to the same gender, Magda is not hesitant to show her inhumane behaviour. She imposes on Anna several works. She wants Anna to do many works for her: "Now listen: give her a mug of tea, then ,she can get down to work. Show her where the things for scrubbing are kept, I want her to scrub the kitchen floor first of all. And you , Klein Anna, you must see to it that you bring your own mug and plate tomorrow. Will you remember ?" (33).

Magda shows her hypocritical nature in the novel. Whatever sympathy she shows upon Anna that is not heartly and appropriate. When her father lures Anna to fulfill the sexual interest giving a brown paper packet which is full of candies and diamonds, she does not revolt against the ill treatment of her father. Rather she views all the activities of her own father with Anna. Besides, Magda is entirely disturbed and discarded by her own father. She feels;

Whatever way I turn I am blocked. In a month's time I can see it, I will be bringing my father and my maid breakfast in bed while Hendrik lounges in the kitchen eating biscuits, flicking his clasp knife into the tabletop, pinching my bottom as I pass, My father will buy new

dresses for her while I wash out her soiled underwear. He and she will lie abed all day sunk in sensual sloth while Hendrik tipples jackals devour the sheep, and the work of generations falls to ruins. (54)

Magda's murderous fantasies give place of melodrama of sexual politics. As her father gets Anna end entices her to have physical pleasure, Magda ,too, relents Herdrik for the fulfillment of sexual desire at any cost. Until her father is alive, she considers him as if he were a black servant.

One would not think it, looking at me, that I know how to use a gun, but I do. There are several things about me one would not think. I am not sure that I can load a magazine in the dark but I can slip a single cartridge into the breech and slide the bolt to my palm are unpleasantly clammy for someone who is normally day to the point of scaliness.

(64)

Like her father, she also entices and enforces Hendrik to come and approach her especially for the fulfillment of her sexual desire. When Hendrik opposes, she makes different tricks to adopt him: "I begin to hurl things at Hendrik, a kettle handfuls of spoon and knives, plates" (72). She also accuses him of stealing: "Where is the bottle? Tell me! Where is the brandy? Where did you get the brandy ?" (72) Despite lots of efforts, Hendrik hesitates to come nearby her. At that time she expresses her anger, "You sot, you filthy sot, you're finished here, I swear it ! Pack your things and get out! I don't want to see you here again" (72).

Magda's efforts are enough to adopt Hendrik. She replaces her father with the black servant as she says:

Hendrik is embarrassed by my diligent hands and eyes, my dutiful hands and eyes, but all the same my woman's hands and eyes

wandering to near this pale unprotected manhood. I am aware of his embarrassment, and turn and smile the first frank smile I have given him today, or perhaps in all the years I have known him he lowers his eyes. (75)

Similarly, when Anna, Hendrik's wife is raped by Magda's father, Magda performs her brutal role instead of giving sympathy: "Well, come on, what are you going to do now? What are you going to say to your husband or what are you going to say to him about last night? Come on, speak up, what are you going to tell your husband? What have you been up to here in the house? You slut! You filth!" (8).

Here, Magda expresses her mastery over a servant Anna, and takes a way to show her grudge and jealousy. Besides, Hendrik, the servant, is also victimized by Magda's threats and domination. She shows her power to engage in any kind of job or to dismiss her from the job. She argues: "Because, Hendrik. I am telling you here and now, if you give trouble I wash my hands of both of you, you can get out today. I want to make myself quite clear. What happens between you and Anna is none of my business; but if she comes to me and says you have been cruel to her, beware!" (81).

It shows that how cruel Magda as an employer. She does not take any interest to know the other. She does not try to understand how others are living in miserable condition. So, she depicts her characters and behaviours as an exploiter, cruel and immoral. She always lacks the moral responsibility.

So, by the end of the novel her father is sightless though Magda suspects "for some days after my death he will still lie here breathing"(137). Thus, she has been able to utter her life in her own voice throughout and has "chosen of every moment in her voice throughout and has "chosen at every moment (her) own destiny" (139). Her usurpation of the male role in wondering of the father shows that she is the villain and

destroyer for the other's lives especially for Hendrik and Anna, and their good relation. Forgetting her own ethical values she prefers only for sexual indictment with the help of black servant, Hendrik. She expresses:

I stumble up into a deluge of blow. I have no breath left, everything has been gasped out, and I cover my head and fall slowly and awkwardly back to the floor: Yes! . . . Yes! . . . Yes! . . . says Hendrik, beating me, I raise myself on hands and knees and begin to the door. He kicks me in the buttocks, heavily, twice, a man's kicks catching bone. 'Please, Please! I roll over on my back and lift my knees. This is how a bitch must look; but as for what happens next, I don't even know how it is done. He goes on kicking at my thigh. (114)

It is also clear that Herdrik visits Magda regularly during the night, and she is doing her best to learn the ways of physical love.

Besides, Magda does not understand the compulsion of other's how they are treated and exploited. The whites like Magda and her father get involved in physical and mental domination in the servant's lives. Magda apparently exhibits her sexual jealousy towards Anna though they belong to the some gender. When her father takes Hendrik's wife as his mistress, Magda is haunted by voices and sounds: "the bitter child straining her ears behind the door at the far and of the houses" (52). Eventually, she constructs her version of primal scene, her spying on them which climaxes in her imagined murder of the father: "The door of my father's room is locked against me but the window is open, as ever. I have had enough, tonight of listening to the sounds that other people make" (60).

In *In the Heart of the Country*, the pressure of Hendrik's otherness finally prompts an extraordinary outburst of questions from Magda:

What more do you want? Must I weep? Must I kneel? Are you waiting for me to become your white slave? *Tell me! speak!* Why do you never say anything? [. . .] How can I humiliate myself any further? Must the white woman lick your backside before you will give her a single smile? Do you know that you have never kissed me, never, never, never? Don't you people ever kiss? (118)

Magda, once again, confronts Anna commanding her to return to Hendrik. She notes about her use of language of power: "It comes of itself one needs no lessons, only meek folk around one and a grudge against them for not speaking back" (74).

Magda's inability to explain her difference from the law stems from the fact that the laws fill language. Any attempt to speak this difference must remain silent. Although Magda clearly attempts a real subversion of the ideology of power encoded into language, she begins to realize that for such a subversion to occur from outside of history means that the subversion can never be spoken, can never be communicated to another. Indeed, at one point she feels that she has based on the white/black, master/slave or self/other discourse: "The words have come out without premeditation I feel joy. That must be how other people speak, from their heart"(87). Magda again says, "I grew stronger as he grows weaker and order Hendrik and Anna to sleep in her house" (87). The language of the heart cannot communicate.

So, through this novel, *In the Heart of the Country*, Coetzee clearly depicts Magda as a hypocritical woman who seems helpful and co-operative, whereas the servants like Hendrik and his wife are portrayed as untrustworthy, insensible and unkind people. In other words, Magda's narrative attempts to present herself as a reliable white woman, whereas the subaltern or marginalized people are presented as unreliable people. In appearance, Magda seems to be a reliable character but in reality

she turns to be a unreliable. She tries her best to provide image of herself through self justification and misreads other because of her ethical ignorance. She misunderstands others as a white lady and focuses as if she knows everything. So, her boastful and proud nature directly show that she is superior to others, blacks.

In this way, we come to know that Magda, who is unable to understand the blacks, is untrustworthy, insensible, unreliable and upholder of racist ideology. It shows why Coetzee's novel demands ethics and morality for the proper understanding of the novel. So, Coetzee tactfully presents his narrator ironically to show the clash between the appearance and reality of the white character.

Magda's Ethical Problem in Terms of Intra-racial Relation

Magda, the white spinster, is capable of vivid expression of her emotions. As the bare narrative unfolds, she expresses her anger, her bitterness, her hatred towards her father. So she shows her disinterestedness towards him. Perhaps, she thinks that her father can be the cruel and heartless person not only in her career but also for her family. Her father's immoral and violent activities might be the cause to express her emotions and feeling. Here, when her father's new wife comes at home with her father, she feels:

My father's first wife, my mother, was a frail, gentle, loving woman who lived and died under her husband's thumb. Her husband never forgave her for failing to bear him a son. His relentless sexual demands led to her death in child birth to the rough rude boy – – heir my father wanted, therefore, she died. The doctor came too late. Summoned by a messenger on a bicycle, he had to come trundling along forty miles of farm-track in his donkey-cart. When he arrived

my mother already lay composed on her deathbed, patient, bloodless, apologetic.(2)

Definitely, it makes her rude towards her father and step mother. As a result, she evokes her own disinterestedness towards the family member.

Her father does not regard Magda in his personal and family matter. There is a dearth of mutual understanding between father and daughter, and they have no cooperation at all. Without considering the future of her own daughter her father proceeds his every task according to his own will. He makes Magda alone forever, taking his new wife. So, she expresses:

I was not watching my father bear his bride home across the flats because I was in my room in the dark west wind eating my heart out and biding my time. I should have been standing ready to greet them with smiles and offers of tea, but I was not. I was absent. I was not missed. My father pays no attention to my absence. To my father I have been an absence all my life. Therefore, instead of being the womanly warmth at the heart of this house I have been a zero, null, a vacuum towards which all collapses inward, a turbulence, muffled, grey, like a chill draft eddying through the corridors, neglected, vengeful. (2)

Having the feeling of melancholy, she wants to revolt against her own father, and the traditional ideas that impose the bad rules over the youngster like her. She opines:

"[W]ith cunning and treachery, if necessary, I fight against becoming one of the forgotten ones of history I am a spinster with a locked diary but I am more than that" (4). She does not feel any kind of liberation from her own father: " I like inside a skin inside a house. There is not act I know of that will liberate me into the world" (10).

Though her father does not express directly, he wants to control her keeping in a certain boundary. She says, "He believes that he will begin to prosper once I am out of the way. Though he dare not say so, he would like me to take to my bedchamber with a migraine and stay there"(37). Magda compares herself as 'a straw woman' and a 'scarecrow'.

But later, Magda wants to take a step against her father who is always guided by sense of historicity. She says:

I must not fall asleep in the middle of my life out of the blankness that surrounds me, I must pluck the incident after incident whose little explosions keep me going. For the other kind of story, the weave of reminiscence in the dozing space of the mind, can never be mine. My life is not past, my art cannot be the art of memory. (47)

But, her character cannot remain in beauty and gentleness as usual. Her virtues do not remain within the certain boundaries. Guided by the family history she shows her hypocritical impulses by showing attraction toward the black servant Hendrik and his wife Anna. When her father takes Anna to his bed, she wants to kill him by shooting through the window with his rifle. In the aftermath of the event, drawn out by the father's slow death, she tries to achieve some intimacy with Hendrik and Anna.

Thus, to challenge her father and his illegal relation with the servant, Anna, she also creates a sexual politics. She, gets involved in the physical relation with Hendrik. She repeats the same mistake her father has committed:

My freedom is at risk, I am being worked into a corner by forces beyond my control, there will soon be nothing for me but to sit in a corner weeping and jerking my muscles. It makes no difference that the corner presents itself to me at this moment as a long walk on the

open road at the end of it I shall discover that the earth is round:
corners have many shapes. (69)

This extract shows that Magda can utilize her freedom only through the distraction from her father and having a good relation with the servants. For the sake of balance, she chooses Hendrik as her sexual partner and fulfills her own desire.

While expressing her anger towards her own father, Magda wants to remain far from him and kill him forever. She says:

Smile will pass behind my back. A crime has been committed. There must be a criminal. Who is the guilty one? I am at a terrible disadvantage. Forces within me belonging to the psychology I so abhor will take possession of me and drive me to believe that I willed the crime, that I desired my father's death. (76)

Besides, Magda again tries to subvert the hierarchy, and to relinquish her position with history, she kills her father once in her mind and once, apparently in reality. But she comes to understand very slowly that the destruction of the old order, symbolized in her father will not allow any subversion of the ideology of power because that ideology is already encoded into language. Indeed, immediately after killing the father, Magda finds that she must reverse the hierarchy of the master/slave or self/other discourse with both Hendrik and his wife Anna. After having asked Hendrik twice to help her with the compose of her father, and after two refusals, Magda confronts Hendrik with a rifle, and finally gets his consent, she concludes: "When one truly means what one says, when one speaks not in shouts of panic but quietly, deliberately, decisively, then one is understood and obeyed. How pleasing to have identified a universal truth"(68).

Thus, the conflict between both father and daughter could not be resolved in the entire narrative because of their own self interest and different polarities. Even in the same family and the same race the reconciliation cannot be achieved because of their hubris, i.e. self-centeredness, racist and patriarchal norms and values.

Magda's Ethical Problem in Terms of Intra-personal Relation: Her Narrative Unreliability and Self Deception

In *In The Heart of the Country*, there is no communicative breakthrough. At most, there is a moment at which a character talks to himself or herself into a new mental position, a new constellation of thought. Magda, the principal character seems to be a Schizophrenic women with system. She herself has anticipation:

Yet how galling, after meditations that would do credit to a thinker to find myself worked into the trap of conceding that if only I had a good man to sleep at my side, and give me babies, all would be well, I would be well, I would park up and learn to smile, my limbs would fill out, my skin glow, and the voice inside my head stutter and stumble into silence. (45)

Thus, her abnormalities and obsession towards sex make her Schizophrenic that shows discontinuities in her narrative and constitutes blurring of factual and imaginary reality.

Magda again expresses her own sexual obsession because of the disinterestness of her father, and ultimately faces loneliness. She says, "Deprived of human intercourse, I inevitably overvalue the imagination and expect it to make the mundane glow with and aura of self-transcendence" (15).

By reading the narrative, we come to know how she depicts her immoral and sexual behaviour. Because of the white spinster, she directly shows her own passion.

She says, "I lie hour after hour concentrating on the sounds inside my head. In a trance of absorption I hear the pulse in my temples, the explosion and eclipse of cells, the grate of bone, the sifting of skin into dust"(38).

So, Magda's hysteric attitude makes her imbalanced in her whole life. Her disorder state of mind leads towards the critical position. She frequently imagines, "Cleansed breath a pillow in a dim room, focused on the kernel of pain, I am lost in the being of my being. That is what I was meant to be: a poetess of interiority, an explorer of the inwardness of stones, the emotions of ants, the consciousness of the thinking parts of the brain" (33) .

On the basis of narrative, Magda wants to take help from Hendrik to quench her thirst though he belongs to the poor and black family. Anyway, she wants to adopt Hendrik lacking the rank, position and status of her. So that she would get chance to get mastery over the sexual partner. She argues:

I stumble backward, let go by Hendrik, who turns away from me to the girl, who is gone. I fall heavily on my backside, my palms are scorched by the gravel, my skirts fly in the air, I am dizzy but gay and ready for more, perhaps what has been wrong all these years is simply that I have had no one to play with. The blood thuds in my eyes. I close my eyes: in a moment I will be myself. (83)

Magda again continues to struggle within the vacuum that has been created out of the death of her father, attempting to bring about a new order, a new code.

When Hendrik and Anna confront Magda, exporting her to assume the old boss's authority. She tries to explain her passion:

The lips are tired, I explain to (Hendrik) they went to rest, they are tired of all articulating they have had to do since they were babies,

since it was revealed to them that there was a law, that they could no longer simply part themselves to make way for the long *aaaa* which has, if truth be told, always been enough for them, enough of an expression of whatever this is that needs to be expressed, or clench themselves over the long satisfying silence into which I shall still, I promise, one day retire. I am exhausted by obedience to this law. (91)

This extract shows that Magda becomes more passionate towards sex. As Hendrik and his wife Anna go to bed, she gets emotionally imbalanced and shows her own jealousy.

Besides, once, a boy of twelve, comes from post office at Magda's house bringing a letter which was addressed to her father. She opens the envelope and finds the languages of requesting the payment of taxes of a road maintenance, vermin eradication and other marvels. But, instead of paying the tax, she rather writes 'I HAVE NO MONEY' in block letters. On the other hand, she shows her misbehaviour and sexual obsession with the boy through this dialogue:

'Sit, I said, and he sat on his heels. How old are you?'

'Twelve, old miss.'

'And what is your name?'

'Piet, old miss.'

'Well, Piet, tell me, have you ever done this?' I made a circle of the thumb and first finger of my left hand and plunged the first finger of my right hand back and forth through it.

Piet shook his head slowly, looking straight into my mad old eyes, judging the moment to leap. (136)

Thus, Magda exhibits her excessive eagerness towards sex. Her sexual fantasy is not seen only with her father, and the servants but also with others whoever come nearby her periphery. Her sexual request by making the circle of the thumb and plunging from other fingers shows that she is emotionally disordered and is enthusiastic towards the illegal sexual relationship. So, she is Schizophrenic mad and hysteric woman who lacks ethics and morality in her every step of life.

Most of the paragraphs are incorporated with Magda and her different state of mind that show the antirealist implication and unreliability. Unreliability of the first person narrative is clearly revealed even in the first paragraph of the novel.

Today my father brought home his new bride. They came clip-clop across the flats in a dog-cart drawn by a horse with an ostrich plume waving on its forehead, dusty after the long haul. Or perhaps they were drawn by two plumed donkeys, that is also possible [...]. More detail I cannot give unless I begin to embroider, for I was not watching. I was in my room, in the emeralds semi-dark of the suffered late of afternoon, reading two books or more likely, supine with a damp towel over my eyes fighting a migraine. (1)

The narrator, Magda, gives two alternatives for the animals drawing her father's dogcart as it brought him and his new bride back to the farm house earlier in the day and two alternatives for what she was doing when they arrived. So the statement in the middle of the paragraph, "more detail I cannot give unless I begin to embroider", already reads ironically. In any case, it turns out in another paragraph (after Magda has murdered both of them in their bed) that the father in fact arrived back without a bride, and whom the same words are used in another paragraph too, to describe the arrival on the farm of Hendrick, the coloured servant, and his 'new bride Anna. So we

remain uncertain whether this arrival will be confirmed or retracted is our further reading.

From such narrative paragraphs, we can ascribe the inconsistencies and impossibilities in the narrative to Magda's disordered state of mind. Everything is the product of fantasy or insanity of Magda so that the novel loses any grip on the real and its narrative drive. Anyway, her narrative turns to be self centered as well as unreliable.

Exhibition of Ethical Problem in South African White Writing

J. M. Coetzee's writing has taken a new direction and has presented it in a critical relation to the established position of Nadine Gordimer Alan Paton and other South African white writers . Coetzee takes up the issue of fiction and the reality of South African history and addresses that there is antagonistic relation between history and the novel. Gordimer wants to take up the real conditions of life in contemporary South Africa, a descent 'into history'. But this idea is challenged by Coetzee's figures who 'ignore history', rather than engage in making it.

According to Coetzee, history is not reality, that is a kind of discourse. A novel is a kind of discourse too, but a different kind of discourse that is inevitable in culture. History with varying degrees of forcefulness tries to claim primacy, claims to be a master, just as inevitable. It is nothing but a certain kind of story that people agree to tell each other.

Given the pressure of Gordimer's commitment to being 'in history' as well as beyond it, Coetzee's careful explication of his position and trajectory expresses as a 'fragile metalanguage with very little body' signals a very significant cultural moment. Gordimer's choice has been to write with the authority of history because history is to be the force that would deliver freedom—to herself and to all the oppressed lives in a

human community. For Coetzee there is no 'History', but only 'histories'—endless stories moving in multiple directions and presenting themselves to him as a writer—and they can offer no deliverance.

What Coetzee's work does is to open out on all sides, and the situation of the writer in condition of alienation, where both Paton and Gordimer imagine linear movement either backward or forward toward some other state, Coetzee spatializes the condition.

Paton and Gordimer write their fiction in order to make it out for them. They exercise their authority, religious in the one case political in the other, whereas Coetzee remains outside his fictions. Histories write themselves through Coetzee, and they take their place in the world on their own terms without support from or reference to their creator.

Coetzee's writing makes 'liberal' in some new qualified sense of the word as the matter of 'strangers', people of 'other' consciousness. People like Jan Klaver, Klein Anna, the barbarian girl from *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Michael K, Friday from *Foe* are presented in the story of each book are figured inside the stories of the other characters, but they represent in disconcerting, unpredictable, and finally unknowable ways. These characters are regarded as parts of another story which is somewhere outside the lives of the other characters and outside the story of the book itself. So the relations between these 'stranger' characters and the readers own constructions are at the heart of Coetzee's work.

In the novels of Paton and Gordimer characters try to exercise their authority for the good of others, are known as 'liberals' like the doctor who tries to take care of Michael K, and Mrs. Curren in *Age of Iron*, who find themselves at the margins, and they see the world around them as dangerous and incomprehensible their authority

dissipated and their sense of meaning crumbling. These figures can be so fully seen and heard and also be carefully placed at the edge. It suggests how Coetzee's trajectory has diverged from those of his predecessors and contemporaries. So his work has fully prized open endedness unlike the closures of both Gordimer and Paton. Thus, his fictional universe is 'a world of strangers' rather than Gordimer's sense of the phrase where there is no alternative world.

Coetzee is an epistemological liberal first because his core value is 'free play of signifiers. It must be defended against the closures of authority whether, they are founded in 'religion' or 'history'. It is a position which places him at once and the same time at the margins and at in the midst of social encounter.

Besides, Coetzee's novels view the world of apartheid modernity through a series of aesthetic prisms which he constructs out of the fictional forms of the past. For instance, the seventeenth century explorer's narrative in *Dusklands*, the eighteenth century 'colonial' novel in *Foe*, the nineteenth century Russian novel in *The Master in Petersburg*, the French nouveau roman in *In the Heart of the Country*, the eighteenth century picaresque novel in *Life and Times of Michael K*, the allegorical fable in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the realist novel in *Age of Iron* and so on. It is through these that he has effected the openings of his trajectory. They have kept open the textual frontiers and allowed him to move, not quite unhindered yet certainly without arrest about the fictional world. It marks a very powerful contrast with his predecessors when they found themselves trapped within their own fiction and subject to their own construction of authority.

Thus, the problems lie behind both Paton and Gordimer. Paton who has just produced a single novel, *Cry the Beloved Country*, of substance and power. The authority which its success gave to him closed him within a moral, political structure

from which he was unable to free himself to write another of equivalent energy. Like Paton, Gordimer, is similarly burdened. The scope of her fictions has narrowed consistently over twenty-year period. The aesthetic space on the 'inside of history' has narrowed and shrunken as the historical movement under whose authority she placed herself has moved toward and has now reached its own ambiguous closure. The plot lines of the narratives in her recent work have exacted a heavy toll on the forms of representation which the novels have attempted. They carry a sense of the present being burdened with the hopes of the future and constraints of the past.

So, Coetzee opposes the liberal humanist white writers of South Africa. The writers like Alan Paton and Nadine Gordimer write their fictions in order to make it act for them. They exercise their authority, religion and politics, but Coetzee remains outside from these practices. He directly discards the history and narration and also blames that both Paton and Gordimer are influenced by their old tradition and forerunners and show the hypocritical nature in their own writing. They produce the fictions under the domination of power. The authority, rather, promotes their success without reaching into the deeper level. So, their aesthetic space 'inside the history' has narrowed down the historical movement under whose authority they move toward and reach their own ambiguous closure.

Thus, Coetzee demands ethics and morality for the understanding of the self and other's enigma in his novels. Until and unless we provide ethics and morality for any novels, the enigma of the self and others remains enigmatic. To understand the marginalized people we should provide them the perspective of the others. In order to show the problematics in South Africa liberal humanist white writing, Coetzee portrays his narrator, the promising writer Magda as an ethnically corrupted, self-centered white woman.

IV. Conclusion

J.M. Coetzee's *In The Heart of The Country* exposes the ethical problem in South African white writing. Through the depiction of Magda, the white spinster, Coetzee opposes the liberal humanists white writers like Alan Paton and Nadine Gordimer. Coetzee says that they write their fictions in order to make it act for them. They exercise their authority, religion and politics, but Coetzee remains far from these practices. In *In the Heart of the Country*, Magda forgets her ethical values and widens the gap in her relation with others. Such as Hendrik and Anna because of her self-centeredness, racial prejudice and hypocrisy. At first, she hates the immoral activities of her father and is ready to kill even her own father, but later she herself engages in immoral activities along with her black servant, Hendrik.

J.M. Coetzee's *In the Heat of the Country* has been inserted into dominant moral representation of apartheid. The context of this novel is understood according to a particular established model of South African reality. The segregation of South Africa has direct impact on every sphere of society. Literature especially fiction cannot remain for the marginalized people because of racial discrimination. The narratives of J.M. Coetzee especially in *In the Heart of the Country* shows the racial conflict and depicts exploitation, hypocrisy and brutality of whites upon the blacks, therefore, Magda, the white spinster or narrator, is presented ironically. Her evaluation of (her) 'self' and other(s) cannot be taken at face value. Rather her perception in broad sense should be taken with suspicion. In appearance she seems to be a reliable narrator but in reality she forms to be an unreliable one. It is because Magda confidently justifies her own action and rationalizes the actions of others.

Magda tries her best to provide positive image of herself through self justification and misreads others because of her ethical ignorance in terms of race,

gender and sexuality. She has racial and gender illiteracy. Being westernized rationalist and ex-colonizer, she is haunted by apartheid crime and acts, thinks and focalizes confidently. She misunderstands others but pretends as if she knows everything. It is because she considers herself to be superior to others.

Coetzee depicts Magda as untrustworthy, unreliable, insensible, neo-oriental and upholder of racist ideas who misunderstands not only the marginalized people like Hendrik and Anna but also her own father and herself. It shows that Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country* demands ethics and morality for the proper understanding of the text. *In the Heart of the Country* demands ethics and morality for the understanding of the self and other's enigma. Until and unless we provide ethics and morality for this novel, the enigma of the self and others remains enigmatic. We should provide them through the perspective of the others, only then, we understand them. Her narration is deception and self-deceptive and seems to be an effort for justifying her relation with Hendrik and Anna. However, her words in fact allow her to distance herself from them. Through narration Magda subtly advances her own interest. So in the ethical sense, illustration of narrative unreliability is clearly seen in *In the Heart of the Country*. On the other hand, Magda's perception of others and herself tells us something about her self-egotist. It is racist Magda who is ignorant of her own ignorance. She is haunted by the fear caused by her share in white crime called apartheid and her seduction of her own servant. Her perception is self-serving and her sympathies upon the victims of apartheid is just like 'crocodile's tear'. As a result, she cannot empathize others nor can she provide true love to others. She is responsible for her own downfall and falls in disgrace because of her own hubris. It is because racism generates the ethical crisis in South African society.

According to Coetzee, Magda's invisibility allows her to traverse the narrative regardless of sex, age and class and to endorse the father's vision. Her self-representation shows her remarkable capacity for self-regeneration, sterile and slothful, and skinny and self-conscious. The assumption of different roles suggests the self-referential nature of the universe in which she acts. As a result, there is strengthening of the tension between imagination and reality. In fact, through the depiction of Magda's different roles Coetzee opposes the liberal humanist white writers of South Africa like Alan Paton, Nadine Gordimer and other writers. Paton and Gordimer write their fiction in order to make it act for them. For that purpose Coetzee parodies them via Magda in *In the Heart of the Country*. They exercise their authority, religion and politics. But Coetzee remains outside these practices. He entirely discards the history and false narration.

As in the first part of the novel, *In the Heart of the Country*, Magda admits her implication within history and demonstrates through her narrative. This position does not allow her to subvert the ideology of power inherent in language. So, Magda is mastered by her father and finds herself wholly inscribed rioting the sounds of history. Similarly, according to Coetzee, these liberal white writers like Paton and Gordimer are also influenced by their old tradition and their forerunners. Being in the linear movement of the history they always show the hypocritical nature in their own writings and produce the fictions under the domination of power. But, the authority rather promotes their success without reaching into the deeper level.

Thus, Coetzee defends against the closure of authority, no matter they are founded in religion or history. It is a position which places him at once at the margins and in the midst of social encounter.

In this way, Coetzee clearly shows the ethical problem in white writing and especially liberal white writing in South Africa. Their aesthetic space on the 'inside the history' has narrowed down the historical movement under whose authority they move toward and reach own ambiguous closure. They carry a sense of the present being burdened with the hopes of the future and the constraints of the past.

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