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**Dismantling of Binary Oppositions of Race, Class, Gender and
Sexuality in J.M Coetzee's *Disgrace***

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This thesis titled **Dismantling of Binary Oppositions of Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*** submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Til Bahadur Chhetri has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

The present study is a deconstructive reading of John Maxwell Coetzee's novel *Disgrace*. This research exhibits how J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* dismantles the binaries of race, class, gender and sexuality and puts the privileged ones under erasure. In the novel, focalizer cum narrator, David-- white, male, ex-colonizer and professor of the so-called higher class is unable to represent marginalized characters. David, a fixed internal focalizer cum protagonist is presented ironically without any authorial remarks by the author. The narrative on the surface level turns opposite when we go to the deeper level because of the focalizer's ignorance about race, class, gender and sexuality though he pretends to have knowledge about these issues. So, the proper understanding of this novel demands skeptical deconstructive study. Until and unless deconstructionist approach is deployed, there is the possibility of misinterpretation of marginalized.

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I. General Introduction

The present research is an inquiry into J(ohn) M(axwell) Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* (1999). It will prove how the presentation of characters is insufficient in the novel and how the deconstructive study is required to understand it. From the beginning of the novel, David Lurie, protagonist cum focalizer presents the other characters through his eyes that helps him to marginalize them. The main issue that is going to be explored here is that by undermining the violent hierarchies between white/black, rich/poor, male/female, and heterosexual/homosexual and putting the privileged ones -- male, white rich and heterosexual-- under erasure, J.M Coetzee's *Disgrace* dismantles the hierarchical binary oppositions of race, class, gender and sexuality. The violent hierarchy of race, gender, and sexuality in the eyes of David may not be hierarchies as he cannot attempt for social change as he is only the product of apartheid system and therefore, is ignorant in case of race, class, gender and sexuality. He cannot understand sufferings of female student Melanie Isaacs, the black neighbor Petrus, and possibly lesbian daughter, Lucy. However, he acts confidently being unaware of his ignorance which is ironic. The violent hierarchical relation between race, class, gender and sexuality created by the focalizer cum protagonist can be seen as a great fault in his side. Now a question arises: how can one see the if there is fault in one's perception of others?

Coetzee gives a rhetorical signal to the canny readers in the deeper level ironically, and as a result, he distances the implied meaning of the novel which has to be just the opposite of the surface meaning. As the protagonist cum focalizer is presented ironically his evaluation of himself and Others cannot be taken at face value. Rather, his perception in broad sense should be taken with critical eyes. If one deeply analyzes the novel s/he comes to notice the contrast between David's

appearance and his reality. In other word, the image of white, rich, male, and heterosexual David is ironically deconstructed though in surface reading it is over valued. As David confidently justifies and rationalizes his own actions and tries his best to provide positive image of himself through self justification and misreads others. It shows the unconscious hypocrisy and misunderstanding caused by gender, race, and sexual illiteracy. Self justification of David is self deceptive and the absence of authorial judgments from anonymous third person narrator's side turns the narrative into fallibility. That's why, deconstructive reading of the novel is required from the marginalized character's perspective.

J. M. Coetzee, Prof. at Cape Technical University in Cape Town of Africa, is one of the best writers who writes in English. He has written many novels along with *Disgrace* and won the Noble Prize for literature in 2003 and other many rewards. This Booker Prize winning novel of 2002 received different kinds of criticisms since its publication in 1999. Different critics viewed it from different perspectives like racial, historicist, linguistic, cultural and so on. These perspectives, in one way or another, tried to see a meaning in the novel. This research differs from those in a sense that it will deconstruct those meanings created out of the text.

Critic Derek Attridge takes *Disgrace* as the depiction of post 1990s South African society. He understands it as:

[S]tating the opposition badly, Coetzee is either praised (implicitly or explicitly) for unblinkingly depicting the lack of progress South Africa has made towards its declared goal of a non-racial, non-sexist democracy [. . .] or condemned for painting a one sided negative picture of post-apartheid South Africa representing blacks as rapist and

thieves and implying that whites have no option but to submit to their assaults. (317)

To him, *Disgrace* is the depiction of the ugly side of South Africa in the transitional era, i.e. 1990s. The whole system is in collapsed condition as shown in the novel; rapes, burglary, and other crimes are dominant in the society and the security force is insufficient.

Gareth Cornwell in "Disgraceland" takes it as a historical violation of historical values. The second part of novel occurs at Salem – a place of historical values around twenty-five kilometers from Cape Town. He argues:

First what exactly is intended by the description of Lucy's conduct in *Disgrace* as an 'Ideal' solution to the historical issues of wrong and reparation raised in the novel. Second, in the light of the novel what kind of rehabilitation can white South African reasonably expect to achieve. (55)

Cornwell finds this novel as a realistic picture of post war South Africa where the ideal solution can be to remain silent as Lucy does, so that racial violence will end.

In the *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Lucy Valerie Graham expresses sexual issues are at the centre especially rape to both Lucy and Melaine in different forms. She states, "If *Disgrace* is 'half campus novel, half anti-pastoral' then the two places in the novel reveal the power dynamics in each settings, [. . .] Lurie's misuse of Melaine exposes power operating at the level of gender and at an institutional level" (438). When Lurie has power as a professor, he controls and misuses women and Lucy is there to face blacks as they are in the same position in the country. Likewise, she further argues, "When they laugh at Melaine's lines, he cannot resist a flash of pride. Mine! He would like to say to them [. . .] as if she were his daughter" (438).

So, subjection of women especially women's body persists in the novel. Female characters such as Melaine, Lucy, Soraya, and Bev Shaw are taken as male's possessions. For an instance whoever goes through David's life he finds them as his own. This is not his mistake alone; it is the deep rooted fault in the established heterosexual patriarchal system.

David Atwell argues that *Disgrace* is a novel about "the struggle for political, material and sexual power" (340) in the transitional period. Elleke Boehmer argues, "The novel thus raises the question what it is to come to terms with a history of terror and subjection, both for the perpetrator and for the victim" (342). She further opines that "*Disgrace* describes women as circulating objects within new system" (349). To her it is the novel where terror lies at the heart of characters in post apartheid South Africa where women are shown as objects and things of possession.

Disgrace actually deals with the racial discourse: "It concludes by showing that the novel absorbs race into other, arguably more encompassing, categories of historical and ethical meaning" (Atwell 331). He further says, "This is a novel that could and should speak to South Africans about their present, their past and their possible future" (332). For him *Disgrace* is a realistic novel which should bear the contemporary South African social spirit.

To understand the pure spirit of the text, the above mentioned reviews and criticisms on the text deal with some sort of meaning within the structure of society. Though these perspectives are different in one way or other they are investing some meaning in that system. So, the researcher dismantles the established aspect of race, class, gender and sexuality from the views of marginalized characters with deconstructionist perspective. Seeing the necessity of deconstructive study the researcher will study with that critical viewpoint. The deconstructive study is

necessary in the sense that a white, male heterosexual focalizer examines the almost all the incidents and characters without any authorial judgement. The focalizer puts him at the center and others to the periphery while a reader goes through a surface reading.

For this research deconstruction will be the methodological tool.

Deconstruction is a philosophically skeptical approach which supposes that the dominant western tradition of thought has attempted to establish grounds of certainty and truth by repressing the limitless and instability of language. In metaphysical tradition this logocentric tradition sought some absolute source or guarantee of meaning, i.e. transcendental signified, which is not acceptable to deconstruction. Deconstruction always questions over the violent hierarchies privileging a central term over a marginal one such as white over black, rich over poor, male over female, heterosexual over homosexual and so on. Therefore, what a deconstructive study does is, first it identifies the binary oppositions within a text like male/female, day/night, and then it shows how these oppositions are related, how one is central, natural and privileged while the other is ignored, repressed and marginalized. Next it temporarily undoes or subverts the hierarchy to make the text originally appeared to mean. Then, at last both terms of the binary opposition are seen dancing in a free play of non-hierarchical, and not-stable meaning.

Deconstruction is a part of poststructuralism, a school of thought that emerged against structuralism which accepts the scientific objectivity and comprehensiveness of language. Deconstruction is a branch of poststructuralism that covers philosophy in relation to insufficiency of language. This critical thought was first practised by Jacques Derrida and later J. Hillis Miller, Paul de Man, Geoffery Hartman, Harold Bloom and so on.

While going through this research there are some terms which may be used frequently. They are: aporia, binary opposition, hierarchy, logocentrism, supplementary. Here, aporia means a kind of undecidability or logical tension to a reader while reading a text. It occurs because of multiple meanings of language/text especially in literal and rhetorical level. At such situation s/he has to choose one.

Binary opposition refers to two supplementary parts where in one's presence other becomes complete-- day/night, male/female, heterosexual/homosexual, white/black and so on. These binaries are so entangled that in absence of other one's meaning becomes incomplete. In this sense both have equal values but the metaphysical tradition supports one and puts other to the periphery. Deconstruction totally rejects this discrimination and enjoys their free play. The term logocentrism comes from Greek 'logos' which means truth, reason, word, and law. It is a belief that there is one truth, god, from which all truths or knowledge comes.

Deconstruction rejects the logocentric tradition in a sense that this tradition is created within a society by the one who is in power. In western tradition white, male, elite, and heterosexual are put at center and non-white, female and lower class people and homosexual at the margin. This sort of social structure can be seen in literature as well. Similarly, supplement is a paradoxical term which can mean adding something on to something already complete in itself or to add on something to complete a thing. This term was basically used by Rousseau about writing. For him, writing is both something that is added on to speech, which is supposedly already complete and full of presence and it is something which makes speech complete. This supplement is given less value in social structure.

Deconstructive thinkers argue that this supplement makes something whole and at the same time it can replace the gap of something. Thus, it cannot be of less

value. It has equal value with what is called original. Hierarchy, another term frequently used in deconstruction, means a kind of grading as ladder which goes from lower to higher or margin to center. For example, in general hierarchical relation in Christian mythology there are plants, then animals then man and then god--God at top and plants at the bottom. A critical thinker finds no base of this grading. This grading is only created by those who were in power in the society to exploit others. In this grading there always remains white, elite, heterosexual, male, at the top. So this sort of grading should be dismantled.

For this research, remaining under the basic concept of deconstruction, the researcher first focuses on the binary oppositions within a text. In this stage, the two oppositional parties which get identity in each other's presence will be searched. For example, the identity of male/female, white/black, elite/poor, heterosexual/homosexual (eg. David/Melanie, David/Petrus, David/Soraya, David/Lucy respectively) only comes in one another's presence. In the novel, the narrator cum protagonist gets his identity opposing himself with others-- Melanie, Petrus, Soraya, Lucy and so on. Here, David is getting identity only while opposing with others. In this binary he puts him to the left side with greater emphasis, whereas the opposition is treated as others with less importance. All the positive qualities are put to him and negative to the others. For instance, for David, Melanie is a deceptive colored girl, Petrus is a cunning black cheater who wants to grip Lucy's property: Soraya is an immoral prostitute and Lucy is a savaged lesbian. Next it shows how these oppositions are related, how one is central, natural and privileged, while the other is ignored, repressed and marginalized. Here, the focalizer being himself protagonist sees the whole novel from his eyes. David all the time finds himself at center in every angle. Though all characters have their role in the novel, David being

white, elite, male, and heterosexual puts him as the center and the others at the margin.

Next it temporarily undoes or subverts the hierarchy to make the text it originally appeared to mean. Generally while one goes through the novel David is at center and Lucy, Melanie, Petrus, Soraya, his two divorced wives, at margin. But the reality is that David is a product of apartheid in South Africa. He is ignorant in terms of race, class, gender and sexuality. He cannot understand the sufferings of the marginalized people like the blacks, the coloreds, the poor, the females and the lesbians. However, he acts confidently being unaware of his own ignorance. Moreover, he goes on justifying his own actions and thoughts and those of others. As a result, his presentation in the novel is dramatically ironic in the sense that his own dialogues are directed against himself; the readers are more aware about his condition than he himself is. As in a drama, the character, David is made to reveal himself without the intervention of the author or the implied narrator's evaluation. David's narration gives negative pictures about others which might have been different if the novel had been focalized by other characters. So, if the readers fully rely on such monotonous perspective to see the others, they can get totally false picture. For instance, his colored student Melanie who has been seduced by David will be understood as an inexperienced, revengeful, credulous but deceptive student. The hardworking black peasant, Petrus will be understood as an untrustworthy, cunning, mentally deficient neighbor; his own 'possibly' lesbian daughter Lucy is understood as perverse, obstinate and disobedient daughter and a black boy Pollux as savage who requires the grace of white man's education. From David's perspective he seems to be and tries to portray himself as a very learned, kind and sympathetic professor, neighbor and father who seems to be the innocent victim of socio-political change

during the transitional period. Thus, the hierarchies or binary oppositions created by the focalizer cum protagonist are unreliable. The researcher cannot rely on such deceptive focalization.

Then, both terms of the binary oppositions are seen dancing in a free play of non-hierarchical, non-stable meaning. The subaltern can speak in the world of this novel but they are misrepresented or misunderstood or neglected by a white, elite, heterosexual, male focalizer's perspective. For instance, Lucy may have her own interpretation for being homosexual, Melanie may have her different experience for having sex with her own professor, and the same may be the case with his two wives, Soraya, Petrus, Pollux, and Bev Shaw. But it never happens in the novel, only the voice of David becomes dominant and others are neglected. So, deconstructive study of this novel is the necessity to get the pure spirit of the text.

To study the novel from this deconstructive perspective and to reach its goal the succeeding chapters will contain the following contents apart from introduction of issues in the present chapter.. The second chapter will contain discussion about the tool. In this chapter deconstruction will be discussed remaining under its basic concept of Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, J. Hillis Miller, Joffery Hartman, Barbara Johanson, Judith Butler, Monique Witting and so on. The third chapter includes the analysis of the text using the tool deconstruction in relation to the issues such as race, class, gender and sexuality. In this chapter the researcher searches for the internal contradiction in the text which will help to dismantle the hierarchies. Ultimately, the focalizer will turn to be a mere product of apartheid, who does not have fair and sufficient knowledge of race, class, gender and sexuality though on surface he seems to be a very learned focalizer. It shows how the dangerous hierarchies are dismantled.

Forth chapter will be the concluding chapter which will show how the hierarchies are dismantled. In other words, it will summarize the main points of this dissertation.

II. Deconstruction in Relation to Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality

Deconstruction is a way of thought which supposes that the dominant western tradition of thought has attempted to establish ground of certainty and truth by repressing the limitless instability of language. It is philosophically skeptical in the sense that it needs closed and witty reading of any text for a deconstructive study. In other word, “[d]econstruction is in search of loose stone which will pull down the whole building, it is not the dismantling of a structure of a text [forcefully] but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself” (Abrams 60). It is an open study to all possibilities of meaning without giving priority to language and the author’s intention or his/her intended meaning. Similarly, the term deconstruction as used by Charles Baldick in literary terms is “a philosophically skeptical approach to the possibilities of coherent meaning in language” (51). Language has multiple possibilities of meaning that does not mean fixed signifier to all readers where Derrida’s claim is that “[. . .] [t]he dominant western tradition of thought has attempted to establish grounds of certainty and truth by repressing the limitless instability of language” (51-52). To him, deconstructionist approach is based on the vague and indistinct nature of language. Language is arbitrary in nature where there is no fixed and coherent relation with the sound pattern and object it refers to. This study is against the tradition of authentic meaning implied by the author, with the idea that any text is an open place to all readers who can grave out meaning through logical study.

Deconstruction is brought out by Derrida against Ferdinand de Saussure’s proposition that language is a “combination of concept and sound pattern” (Saussure 11). And the combination is arbitrary in nature. De Sassure himself has the belief that the nature of language is arbitrary. It is arbitrary that there is no fixed and

concrete rule and regulation on how certain sound combination refers certain concept image/real image. It is also a close system that the rule and referent of one language is limited to the same language only. There is no universality of language even the onomatopoeic sounds also differs from one to another. For the idea of Sassure, deconstructionist comments that not the concept and the sound pattern of any language is arbitrary but the sound and thing it refers to are also arbitrary and if the basic structure of language is arbitrary, all what it refers to is arbitrary. And deconstructionist begins his/her studies putting the very spirit of language at the center.

Deconstruction begins with the proposition that there is nothing outside the text. According to Derrida, the originator as mentioned in *Grammatology* translated by Spivak, “There is nothing outside the text” (qtd. in Abrams 55). Text is an entity and everything about the text should be found inside the text itself. So only what the deconstructionist does is s/he “[. . .] sets out to show the conflicting forces within the text itself inevitably dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meaning into indefinite array of multiples, incompatible and undecidable possibilities” (Abrams 55). Similarly, the misconception about deconstruction is that it has nothing to do except the destruction of one text. But Deconstructionists claim:

Deconstruction is not synonymous with destruction [. . .]. The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in deconstructionist reading, it is not the text, but the claim to univocal domination of one mode signifying over another. (Abrams 60)

Deconstruction does not destroy the text, it reconstructs the significance of any text with all possible voices. To reach to his/her goal deconstructionist begins his/her studies with the concept that every text definitely contains loopholes. With the help of them any textual meaning can be dismantled. That weak point may not be only in structure but also in language, characterization, narration, focalization, interpretations and so on. Thus deconstruction is not the destruction of text but the reconstruction of it viewing from multiple dimensions. It is the reading that "simply happens to a critical reading" (Abrams 58). It opens all possible spheres and angles to search meaning and understanding of any text neglecting monotonous interpretation and understanding of meaning. So, some critics define deconstructionist studies as the interpretation of interpretations of any text.

In deconstructive reading, reader and his/her interpretation is important, as said by Roland Barths, "The birth of the reader is required by the death of the author" (Barths 1133). The text is created for the reader and as soon as the text is created the author should remain silent. The text slips from the grip of the author and authentic voice. For him, "the unity of text is not in its origin but in its destination, but this destination can no longer be personal" (1133). The text gets multiple meanings as soon as the author leaves. And the reader is the one who is "without history, without biology, without psychology" of the author and of the text under which condition text is written. S/he can make the independent interpretation of the text and s/he is the one "who holds collected [text] into one and the same field of trace from which writing is constituted" (1133). It is the reader who is the owner of text, for whom the text is destined and whose situation is pictured in the text.

Derrida claims that the grounding principles produce an understanding of world and the text. And yet, these principles which produce meanings are remaining

stable at the same time world is in change in each phase of time. Now, questions arise: how can we accept this paradox? Similarly, is not the center that controls the structure also a part of the structure? Derrida calls this philosophic system as 'logocentrism' which is placed at the center of understanding of the world.

Logocentrism is a concept that orders and organizes the world, which itself remaining outside the world, it organizes. This, according to him, is an illusion in western metaphysics. Derrida in the essay, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences" opines:

Thus, it has always been thought the center which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which while governing a structure escapes structurality. This is why classical thoughts concerning structure could say that the center is paradoxically within the structure and outside it. The center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality, has its centre elsewhere.

The center is not center. (Derrida 1117)

The center which should remain as the base of whole structure remains somewhere else; it turns to a unique and distinct rather being complement. To this, M.A.R. Habib also argues:

Although the structure thereby depends on the centre, the centre itself is fixed and 'escapes structurality' since it is beyond the transformative reach of other elements in the structure. Hence, the centre is paradoxically outside the structure, and the very concept of centered structure is only 'contradictorily coherent'. (Habib 655)

It shows that the idea concerning the center and centered structure is contradictory.

Jaques Derrida puts the idea that deconstruction is not a theory but a way of reading to get its multiplicity and multilayered meanings which avoid the fixity of meaning. In this regard Habib says:

Deconstruction is not a theory unified by any sets of consistent rules or procedures, it has been variously regarded as a way of reading, a mode of writing, and above all, a way of challenging interpretations of texts based upon conventional notions of the stability human self, the external world, and the language and meaning. (649)

Thus, the main function of deconstruction is to disclose the privilege of 'logocentrism' in any text where the meaning of the text is broadened to the entire range of its political, social and intellectual contests as manifested primarily in the use of language.

The main feature of deconstruction is that it always counters logocentric tradition, or logocentrism that refers, etymologically and historically, to any system of thought which is founded on the stability and authority of the "'logos' divine word-which is a spoken word together with its meaning or rational content" (650). It is supposed to be the rational thought of God; it becomes the illusive truth itself in course of human tradition of thought. It concerns itself with decentering " with unmasking the problematic nature of all centers" (Powell 21). Its goal is to avoid the privileged of binaries of center and margin.

One of the strategies of deconstruction is "the unraveling and undermining of certain oppositions which have enjoyed a privileged place in western metaphysics" (653), such as those between intellect and sense, master and slave, male and female and so on. Among them most significant violent hierarchy is speech over writing. Speech is privileged over writing in western metaphysics as they think that speech is

supposed to have “immediate connection with logos” (653), while “writing threatens to depart from the logos; the living soul and authority and asserts its independence” (653). But for the deconstructionist writing designates for the totality which makes inscription possible of letters and words. For this Derrida takes a French word *différance* which means ‘to differ’ and ‘to defer’ at the same time. He substitute, ‘a’ for ‘e’ in word difference which cannot be heard. It is a silent displacement that we cannot hear but can see in writing which can prove the need of writing for the totality of language.

Derrida says that any new event, which begins in the historical process, creates difficulty. Here he is using this metaphorically to the network of history or historical process. Basically, the event refers to "the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of center or origin, everything became discourse" (Habib 656). Here, Derrida attaches central problem of language relations and differences. For example, previously, the term ‘God’ which once acted as center of much system of thoughts, was brought back within level to other elements of language, i.e. "from transcendental signifier to one more signifier on the same level as other signifiers" (656). In other word, the concept of God shifts from being a reality beyond language to a mere concept within linguistic system and turns to a discourse. And "the system of thought that depended on the understanding of God as a reality becomes “decentered losing its former stability and authority" (656).

Language has no one to one relation to the signifier and the signified it refers. Because of arbitrary and conventional nature of sign, there is no reasonable connection between the ‘sign cat’ and the ‘real cat’ in the world. Equally arbitrary and conventional is the connection between signifier ‘cat’ and the concept ‘cat’. Thus, the

operation of language is all arbitrary and conventional. And there is no truth or reality which somehow stands outside or behind language: "Truth is a relation of linguistic signs, and reality is a construct" (652). For example, religious, social, political and economic realities are always of language, or various linguistic registers: "Even the human self, in this view, has no pre-given essence but a linguistic construct or a narrative" (652).

Derrida's much quoted statement-- "there is nothing outside the text" (652) -- bears the same spirit of this thought. The afore-mentioned features of language, which together comprise 'textuality' all are embracing. Textuality governs all interpretative operations. For instance, there is no history outside of language or textuality. So, history itself which we take as fact also is a linguistic or textual construct. At the deepest level of any world view the linguistic system of relation and difference remains at the heart of western metaphysic. The identity of human self or others also bears the same system, "identity where of the human self or of objects in the world, is no longer viewed as having a stable, fixed or pre-given essence, but is seen as a fluid and dependent like linguistic terms, on a variety of contest" (Habib 652). Hence, having one's identity with relation and difference to others all should have equal identity without being privileged or repressed one is the basic assumption of deconstruction. Thus, deconstructionist analysis gives most priority to the language and linguistic operation while analyzing any text or context. This critical approach of analyzing the text brings changes into the viewpoint to see every aspect of human understanding along with race, class, gender and sexuality and so on.

The term 'race' as defined by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* is "any of the groups into which human can be divided according to their physical characteristics, eg. color of skin and type of hair, shape of eyes and nose"

who share “same culture, history and language” (956). Remaining under the definition human beings are divided into three races by Robert Miles as:

1. Black wooly hair, dark brown or black skin and a broad nose.
2. Wavy or curly hair of any color from black to flaxen, dark brown to white, and a typically medium or narrow nose with usually a high bridge.
3. Straight lank dark hair, yellowish skin, nose with tendency to be broad and low bridge. (346)

These major groupings of mankind also believe that according to their race their culture, understanding, civilization level and many other aspects are the determinant for the place in the ladder of racial hierarchy.

For the first time, *Oxford English Dictionary* defined racism in 1892 as “the theory that distinctive human characteristics and abilities are determined by race” (Miles 344). It shows that there was not any distinct study of race before that though there were different groups of people in the Earth.

Now, we can find in *Oxford English Dictionary* as “ the belief that some race are superior to others which further says that it is an unfair treatment or dislike of somebody because they are of different race. Thus, the definition of racism is differing since it was first defined and it is defined now. Racism generally should be the theory that studies different races but is only in use of discriminating people of different races creating hierarchy.

The classification of races is subjective and with bias as Miles argues that the “biological classification were subjective because these biological classifications did not label these groups as ‘Negroid’, ‘Caucasian’ and ‘Mongolid’ and described them as ‘ethnic groups’ rather than ‘races’”(346). Here, it is understood that the term

racism cannot cover the whole groups of the Earth. If these Mongolid, Negroid and Caucasian can be the ethnic groups why others are divided into racial groups. The racial classification is made for the benefit of some people who put them in highest level at the rank of races.

Similarly, critics like Ruth Benedict identify racism as “the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority” (qtd. in Miles 346). People of the earth are different according to their appearance, color, physical structure, they may be different also in their habit, appetite, language, physical structure so it is not necessary to be divided according to their lineage but we cannot create hierarchy sitting on this racial ground. So, racism should study about the people fall on these features, but should not use as the tool to discriminate. As said by Benedict “racism is a creation of our own time of high European civilization” (qtd in Miles 346). It is established without any scientific evidence and it is only a temporary and geographically specific phenomenon, which cannot be universal. He further asserts that race is a biological reality which can be studied scientifically where Montagu argues that “race, being so weight down by false meaning” which is based on “unexamined facts and unjustifiable generalizations” (qtd. in Miles 347).

If we see the history of racism, we cannot find it from classical period but the “very specific ideology that is to be the product of late Eighteenth and nineteenth century scientific thought” (Miles 347). It has no long history as such, and it is only the product of racial ideology of the European representation to others. It is defined and created with “biological hierarchy” that cannot be “justified by science” (347).

The meaning of ‘race’ is linked to “particular (European) histories of colonialism, slavery and conquest since meaning of race emerges to of specific

historical conditions" (Kothari 10). It is suitable to explore how ideology and discursive conceptualization of 'race' continues and changes over time. Racism is established more by the "scientific racism in the nineteenth century provided further legitimacy for these distinctions, embedding the idea that certain groups were probably biological inferior" (11). In this way, though racial discrimination, the superiority and control of one group of people over another was justified and inequalities explained, because of their technological development "once it conquered and colonized the rest of the world, European imposed its ontology [. . .] through scientific all others" (11). Thus, the racial structure i. e. racial binary is not more than the social construction for the goal of European white people.

Similarly, generally prediction about race is that, "common racial membership entails, shared biologically heritable, moral and intellectual characteristics [which is] not shared with member of other races" (Goldberg 368). This belief entails the claim that "some races were superior to others" (368). This false claim assumes that being racially different, people have specific qualities or not.

According to Blumer and Solomon, racism is an ideology of racial domination based on "belief that designated racial group is either biologically or culturally inferior and the use of such beliefs to rationalize or prescribe the racial groups treatment in society as well as to explain its social position and accomplishment" (4). It is an ideology that working definition has no reason except to dominate some specific races such as, white and the rest. To be white is to be superior and others-blacks, coloreds and others are to be inferior. Race is now understood "socially constructed" (Kothari 10) and this colonizer made this racial discrimination "essentially it was concerned with the policy and practice of ruling subject people who were mainly of a darker color and mostly lived in the tropics" (10).

This social constructed negative image of any racial, cultural, sexual, subaltern groups is the:

false claim which we know as ideology has referred to the system of ideas, values and beliefs common to any social group, in recent year this vexed but indispensable term has come to be associated with the process by which social subjects are formed, re-formed, and enabled to perform in an apparently meaningful world. (Montrose 396)

This ideology is constructed for the purpose of the people or groups who are in power and position for their benefits. Aulthusser in essay “Ideology and Ideological States Apparatus opines that “ideology is a ‘representation of the imaginary relationship of individual to their real condition of existence” and a representation that “interpellates individuals as subjects” (qtd. in Montrose 396). It is not justice to generalize the features and capacity of people only because he falls one race which is supposed to be inferior. In this present society if race is compared to economic stairs, we can find variation in economic class, consumptive capacity, and intellectual level civilization level and so on though one falls on same race. In this regard, race should be studied as race: as the group of humans whose physical structure, complexion varies but should not give political color so that one race can exploit others.

As mentioned from George Mosse, if we go through the racial history, it has no long history: “Racism has its foundation in Enlightenment and in the religious revival of the Eighteenth century” (qtd. in Blumer and Solomon 7). For him, such categories were created for the healthy, ordered and happy world but his categorization turns to be political hierarchy, i.e. exploitation and respect in the society. Initially white and black and others are just categorization but in course of time “whiteness” is considered to be property and honor and power. In the late

eighteenth and nineteenth century, because of their technical development “once it is conquered and colonized the rest of the world, Europe imposed its ontology [. . .] through scientific and ideological institution and displaced all others” (Kothari 11). Europe created this racial hierarchy so that they could suppress the people they had conquered.

Racism is based on the ground of “social attitude propagated among the public by an exploiting class for the purpose of stigmatizing some groups as inferior in that the exploitation of either the group itself or its resources or both may be justified (Bloomer and Solomon 11). Throughout the development of colonial history racial history emerged with segregation, domination and exploitation. This racial system of “segregation was not merely a system separation but in reality, a mechanism for the domination”(12). These European white put separate from those blacks and other colonized people not because they want to stay separate but to dominate and to exploit. They always want to remain strange to the colonizer so that the colonized people always fear of them.

Similarly, white supremacist discourse claims that ‘essence’ is irreducible and supports that race is a biological and god-given essence, which is the social construction of essence as Dianafuss points out, “there is no essence to essentialism [. . .] essence as irreducible has been constructed to be irreducible” (qtd. in Ferber 217). Abbyl Ferber argues further that, “exploiting contemporary white supremacist discourse reveals the construction of race and gender as an inner essence rooted in nature and immutable” (217). The discourse is only the outcome of racial prejudice of the whites so that they can feel their supremacy. So, the analysis of contemporary racism needs to be situated in particular discursive context because "racism cannot be reduced to class relations but neither can it be seen as completely autonomous from

wider social relations such as gender and sexuality" (Solomons and Back 354). So, racism should be a free spear, a study of race only.

Leaving its biological representation, "primary contemporary uses of race can be understood to mean either socio-economic status (under some interpretation) or relation to the modern production" (Goldberg 366). In other word, in this present moment "race is simply an index of social standing or rank reflected in terms of criteria like wealth, education, style of life, linguistic capacity, residential location, consumptive capacity, having or lacking respect and so on"(366). Race, is simply not other than economic class and class generally defined "as fundamental economic or structural relationships, in term of relation to the mode of production and their corresponding interests" (366). Thus, leaving its biological importance, race in this material society only refers to the capacity of production and consumption. Race now is materially determined as class. If we go through the history of human civilization, we can find, the history as mentioned by Karl Marx: "The history of all civilization in existing society is the history of class struggle" (Marx 21). Class division was there in the society since the beginning of human civilization. Though there was not the division as the bourgeois-- the one who holds property-- and the proletariat--the one who sells one's wage-- in present sense, there used to be the ladder of subordination gradation. It is the, "groupings of exploiter and the exploited for purely economic reasons, are found in all human societies" (Hobsbawn 126). It is the grouping made by so called aristocratic who has power and possession.

Among the class gradation "peasantry is the class of low classness" (129). These peasants who are ignorant have no access to power remained exploited all the time in history. Though "there may be the absence of class consciousness in the modern sense does not imply the absence of classes and class conflict" (129) in the

history. There may not be the conflict between bourgeois and proletariat as Marx mentioned but always tension between the classes.

As mentioned in *Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary* “class is the grouping of people at the same social or economic level” (204). But leaving its spirit, the formation of class division is to exploit the so-called inferior classes. It is not using to separate but to exploit. In this present situation it gives similar meaning as given in *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, “a grouping separating a society into subsets defined in terms of status, privilege, place in the procession of economic production, access to power and authority” (21). So class construction is the grading, giving by those who are powerful in wealth and authority to make their place at high. But for the harmony of society we need all people of so-called higher and lower classes. They have their own duty to the society in pure human sense.

Sex, gender, and sexuality are almost slippery terms in usage and analytical level. Where at its deepest level sex is “ [. . .] certain groups of irreducible biological differentiation between member of certain homo-sapiens who have XX chromosomes and who have XY chromosomes” (Sedgwick 273) which is the minimal raw material for the social construction of sex structure where 'XY' means to male and 'XX' means to female. From which reproduction of male female identities and behaviors on the basis of chromosomes are given. In any culture male-female function is a primary and perhaps the model binary affecting the structure and meaning of other binaries. The apparent binaries of male/female have direct connection to gender structure, may often be exiguous or no existent for the social purpose. The term gender and its features are the social constructs in human development, whereas sex is a biological need. Gender should be the outcome of sex but as it is the social construct the society has given certain features to them. Basically the social structure has two genders;

female which contains XX chromosomes and male which contain XY chromosomes but in the twenty first century there comes to light a new gender, transgender/third gender which has physical structure of both genders or none of them.

Regarding the gender structure, society has imposed certain qualities like male should be like this and female should be like that. Male must have these qualities and female must have these. This social structure wants a male more muscular and female more feminine; man should marry woman and woman should marry man. Man must father a child. It is the gender role the society has assigned. Still our society has not accepted two other aspects of human diversity: People have different sexual orientation and gender identities as male or female or neither is not always determined by the type of body in which they were born. For the context, Betty Rsoak comments, "He is playing masculine, she is playing feminine. He is playing masculine because she is playing feminine. She is playing feminine because he is playing masculine" (VII).

In this regard, we can also think how the social structure of gender is established as they are all the time in hope to stand in binaries to each others. In our society male and female are all the time struggling to each other so that one's identity remains safe. Similarly, we also know that orientation of gender is socially constructed. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, sex is the biological category, whereas gender is the culturally shaped expression of sexual difference: the masculine way in which man should behave and the feminine way in which woman should behave.

This human civilization, either it is eastern or western, has given certain duties to male and female according to their gender role. One should behave under the role s/he has been given. If s/he crosses the boundaries s/he is taken to be outcast. And

these features are for the harmonious relations, continuation of civilizations while creating social structure, both genders cannot remain equally privileged. The one who has created puts himself/herself at center and the other gender as complementary of them. For this, as mentioned in *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* Simone de Beauvoir argues that “in this system woman is the other: the kind of person whose characteristics are described by contrast with male” (48). Woman remains as complementary because all the time male remain the system maker and woman remains the other.

Binaries are especially created through their traditional formulaic referential signification, which are insufficient to include the dynamic range of sexual desires and multiple (gender) identities. At present, the terms ‘sex’, ‘gender’ and ‘sexuality’ often blur into each other in a complicated way. Sex not only refers to what Sedgwick calls ‘chromosomal sex’ but to the cultural expectation of male and female, namely masculine and feminine. ‘Gender’ again removes the pattern due to the hardcore imposition of masculine/feminine qualities, individuals are forced to do accordingly. If gender is not limited to the logic of the binary, sexuality will also be able to provide to the wider range of other repressed or unacknowledged desires and practices. Moreover, sex and sexuality also overlap as Sedgwick clarifies, “sex, gender and sexuality: three terms whose usage relations and analytical relations are almost irremediably slippery” (Sedgwick 273).

Woman is a construction of man, even the myth of men as well. The access to the power makes one superior and another inferior in course of civilization. As Monique Wittig says from de Beauvoir's line:

One is not born, but becomes a woman; no biological physiological or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in

society. It is civilization as a whole that produces this creatures intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine. (Wittig 158)

The society teaches her since her birth that she is a woman that she should behave like this or that.

The condition of woman is pictured by I. M. Young in her lines:

The girl of five does not make any use of lateral space, she does not stretch her arm sideward; she does not twist her trunk; she does not move her legs, which remains side by side. All she does in preparation of throwing is to lift her right arm forward in a pronate position [. . .] The ball is released without force. Speed or accurate aim [. . .] a boy of the same age, when preparing to throw, stretches his right arm sideward and backward; supinates the twist, turns and bend his trunks; and moves his right foot backward. From this stance, he can support his throwing almost with the full strength of the total motorium [. . .] the ball leaves the hand with considerable acceleration; it moves toward its goal in a long flat curve. (163)

In this extract by Young, there seems clear feminine and masculine way of doing things. Erwin Struss explains the lines that to show that there is some “biological not an acquired difference” (qtd. in Young 163). She has the claim that since the feminine quality is in so young children; it cannot result from the development of breast. To her difference “is biological [. . .] girl throws differently from boys because girls are ‘feminine’” (163).

But to Young, since a young girl begins to walk and talk, she is forced to acquire “walking like a girl, sitting like a girl, gesturing like a girl and so on. The girl

learns actively to hamper her moments, she is told that she must be careful not to get hurt, not to get dirty [. . .]" (171). The family environment and surroundings directly or indirectly teaches them these feminine qualities. Similarly, "in school and after school activities girls are not encouraged engaging in sport" (171). She needs to remain close to home while boys can roam and explore, free to do anything they want, in this family environment " the more a girl assumes her status as feminine, the more she takes herself actively enacts her own body inhibition" (171).

The female position is determined first by the society in course of time as most of the time in human history women remained suppressed.

[. . .] Before the socioeconomic reality of black slavery, the concept of race did not exist at least not in this modern meaning since it was applied to the lineage of families. However now, race, exactly like sex is taken as immediate given, a "sensitive given", a physical features belonging to a natural order. But what is believed to be a physical and direct perception is only a sophisticated and mythic construction [. . .] they seem black, they are black, they seen as women, and they are women. But before being seen the way, they first had to be made that way. (Wittig 159)

Thus, a woman has to be something else, not-woman, a not man, a product of nature not a product of society. There is no nature in society, it is all chained by social rules to exploit women.

Charles Darwin's 'theory of evolution' intensifies the male/female binaries that "male and female natures had diverged in course of evolutionary development and that society at large reflected this polarization" (Wittig 160). Before Darwin's theory, there was a mythical story that woman was created out of man's (Adam's) ribs. She

was created for man, to give company to man. So the task of feminist should be to dissolve the class of men as superior: "Once the class man disappears then the 'women' as class [also] disappear [. . .] there is no slave without master" (Wittig 160). It is necessary to dissociate woman as class and woman as myth. 'Woman' does not exist in reality: "It is only an imaginary formation and also a product of social relation for male's purpose" (160).

She further argues that "lesbian is a only concept I know of which is beyond the categories of sex (woman and man) because the designated subject (lesbian is not woman, either economically, or politically or ideologically" (162). The social given features, duties and other norms does not meet. Both male and female are replaced by females. It is only possible by the "deconstruction of heterosexuality as a social system which is based on the oppression of women by men" (162). According to Wittig base of heterosexuality lies on the oppression of women where only supplementary role is given to them.

Critic Judith Butler takes the terms such as the gender and 'women' differently: "Out of the histories of culture and literature that men have written, that women have been silenced or distorted in the text of philosophy, biology and physics" (201). The term to her is used to refer to silenced and submission which is created for domination and exploitation of female and "women have been written out of histories of culture and literature men have written" (201). In the patriarchal male-dominated society women have been living under the control and condition of male and his desire.

To Butler, before the beginning of civilization there used to be equality in male and female gender or sexuality: "In beginning [sexuality] [is] without power, the power arrives to create both culturally relevant sexual distinction (gender) along

with that, gender hierarchy and domination" (204). It is a fact that whoever is in power certainly will have some bias to others, that bias in gender, in long history becomes myth of women.

Butler argues that " identity is never simply mimetic but involves a strategy of wish fulfillment" (207). So as she has given example from Drag, " Drag says my 'outside' appearance is feminine, but my essence is 'inside' (the body) is masculine"(209) and its reverse, it may be that, " my appearance 'outside' (my body, my gender) is masculine but my essence 'inside' myself is feminine" (209). It is clear that appearance is illusion. Inside human sexuality, gender appearance contradicts to essence and outside gender contradicts to inner desire which rejects the truth of sexual desire and outer gender appearance.

Similarly, "when one sees a man dressed as woman or a woman dressed as a man, then one takes the first term of each of those perception as the 'reality' of gender: the gender that is introduced through the simile lacks 'reality' and is taken to constitute an illusionary appearance" (Butler xxii). So, in this situation, the inner reality is different from the appearance and their activities and performance differ from what the spectator has expected. So " it is no longer possible to derive a judgement about stable anatomy from the clothes that covers and articulates the body" (xxii). We get illusionary reality when we only see appearance because one may have different sex, and sexuality from outer reality.

Butler says that sexual relation is a matter of desire, not a response to sex organ. To her, to have sexual relation:

[I]t is necessary at least to be a woman, male-identified, who desires another woman, or a man, female-identified, who desires another man, and it may also be a woman, male-identified, who desire a man,

female-identified, or similarly a man, female-identified, who desire a woman, male-identified. (206)

So, it is the desire that plays main role to have sexual relation not the sex organs and the gender society has given according to the organs.

Sexuality can be seen as a fluid category, which incorporates not only concrete and real activities but rumination, fantasies and what not. Moreover, due to the individual differences it is very hard to define a precise boundary of sexuality. Even identical sexual acts may mean very different thing to different people. Many people may even have richest mental and emotional involvement with the sexual acts they do not do. The hetero/homo opposition turns out to be overtly constructed in this regard. So, rather than viewing masculinity/femininity or homo-/hetero- sexuality as dyads of binary oppositions, they must be seen under their performative variations.

Heterosexuality is positioned on the gender difference of femininity and masculinity. This is widely conceptualized in terms of opposition: Male; aggressive, strength, hardness, roughness and competitiveness as the opposition of female nature as weakness, softness, smoothness and co-operation. This often defines male and female sexuality within heterosexuality-- masculine active and feminine passive-- but in homosexual sex when gay men ask each other whether they are butch or bitch, they have sexual relation but the role they performed here overlaps the binary. Such difference as opposition is important for the central tenet of heterosexual ideology. In heterosexual tradition it is assumed that male and female are complementary to each other that pansies fit vaginas, that femininity balances masculinity, that the combination of the two encompasses the range of human qualities and thus constitutes, the proper and perfect form of human sexuality.

In this postmodern world, we cannot talk of hetero/homo sexuality as if they are binary oppositions, but human sexuality is so vast that bi-sexual is also trying to come to the main stream. Bisexuality is taken as a bridge between hetero-/homo-sexuality and some argue that it 'wants to cement rather than dismantle the straight/gay bridge' (Dollimore 254). It dismantles the sexual tradition of hetero and mix up hetero and homo sexuality. In other term bisexuality means "being sexually postmodern" (253). This postmodern world finds everything easy to do and bisexuals are also the products of this century and they are also fitted to each sexual relation. They have crossed all the gender binaries because of their role in different relation.

If we talk about human sexuality, it has always remained controversial. In heterosexual relation where male remains dominated all the time over female, but in homosexual relation where one finds his sexual partner as himself or bi-sexual who performs both male and female role according to the sexual relation with whom the relation takes place. These sorts of sexuality are not talked before. Homosexuality is introduced in English language in 1892. Then "if homosexuality did not exist before 1892, heterosexuality could not have existed either (it came into being, in fact, like Eve from Adam's rib, eight years later) and without heterosexuality, where would all of us be right now" (Halperin 228). Human sexuality, especially heterosexuality is the source of human civilization though other what we say 'homosexual' practices may have in society since the beginning of civilization.

Now a days, "people considered themselves 'homosexual' or 'heterosexual' because they are induced to believe that human beings are either homosexual or heterosexual [. . .] without such process of socialization people would simply be sexual"(Boswell 213). It is known that through the survey of ancient history that there used to be a relation that we say homosexual relation today in its present form or

similar to it. But since the term was invented and defined it created a sensation in human sexuality. In other words, “the category ‘heterosexuality’ does not so much described a pattern of behavior inherent in human as it created and established” (213).

The lines from Clare Hemmings, by Dollimore reflect the losing of self in bisexuality.

The ‘I’ in ‘I m bisexual ‘is not simply an insubstantial assumption of fixed identity as I ‘I m lesbian’- rather, it signifies transition and movement in itself. To say I m bisexual is to I m not ‘I’ [. . .] the process of becoming bisexual [is] one that is ever re-centering, reemerging and re-creating the ‘I’. (253)

While talking about the sexual identity of a bisexual the self ‘I’ is lost. S/he is not what s/he is because to his/her sexual orientations s/he transforms him/herself from one to another. S/he is dynamic in his/her sexual relation.

Human sexuality cannot be measured. Different people have different sexual interest, orientation that we cannot feel directly. “It is preposterous to ask sexual beings to stuff ourselves into the rapidly imploding social categories of straight or gay or bi-, as if we could plot our sexual behavior on the conscientious, predictable curve” (Dollimore 250).

III. Dismantling of Binaries of Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in J.M.

Coetzee's Novel *Disgrace*

In this chapter the researcher will analyze the text on the basis of the methodological tool developed in the preceding chapter. The researcher tries to see how the apparent meaning that the protagonist cum focalizer provides turns to be fallible and how he is unable to represent the marginalized people and their psyche. This kind of unreliability in representation occurs in any novel where there is only one limited and biased focalizer from whose perspective the text is narrated. So, in this situation the text has to be studied from the perspective of the focalized.

Professor David Lurie, who apparently is the scholar of humanities and social sciences, is unable to understand the feelings, sentiments, and sufferings of all subaltern characters. That is why, his expectation and focalization turn to be opposite in deeper level. We can find the great fault in David's focalization, surfacely he seems to be scholarly, knowledgeable, lovely, careful, responsible about the aspect of human life like race, class gender and sexuality but in the deep level he has no knowledge about them which will clearly explore later.

For the study of race, class, gender and sexuality the researcher analyzes the text from the perspective of marginal characters in the novel. In this regard, Badri Prasad Acharya opines:

If the focalizer has 'bias' towards other race, gender or sexuality the reader can get completely fallible image of the focalized. The problem is that the readers do not get authorial judgment from the narrator in the text in which such fixed internal focalizer is deployed. (39)

So, to avoid such unreliable focalization the study does not depend only on David's focalization about them but also their dialogues, behaviors, their comments on each

other about the matter of race, gender and sexuality, along with class and more importantly their silences to show how the so-called superior one is under erasure.

Dismantling of Binary Oppositions of Race in *Disgrace*.

When we go through the racial issue in the novel we find the ignorance about race and ethnicity of the focalizer cum protagonist, David. David considers himself to be a real scholar, but he does not know about the basic social realities of race, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and nationality. To him everything is plain as he is a scholar of romantic poets and guided by romantic philosophy. David justifies all his (mis)deeds positively because he is white and others are either non whites or subalterns. He puts them to the margin when he has to make a judgment. In other words, being only one focalizer, David is unable to represent the pure and clear picture of the marginalized people like colored Melanie, Asian-African Soraya, colored Mr. Isaacs, black Petrus, Black Bev Shaw and even his daughter Lucy.

The non-white character, Soraya, who is preferred by David as her sex partner because he thinks that she is “exotic” (7). The meaning of the word ‘exotic’ seems to vague according to *Oxford Dictionary* because it has two meanings-- one ‘introduced from another country; not native’ and another ‘striking or attractive because of colorful or unusual. So, what the focalizer means to say is quite confusing. Similarly, the focalizer further mentions that “[. . .] that would be unusual to Muslim. But everything is possible these days” (3). Such a scholar David gives an irrational argument that either it is unusual to Muslim only or to all ethnical groups to have extra marital relation. It reflects that to be white, to be Christian is a freedom to have sexual relation to anyone but other cannot. Here, though David is trying to justify his knowledge about Muslim culture, ironically, we can find him ignorant of basic human culture and civilization. And the focalizers misconception about others' culture

speaks through the mouth of the agency, “lots of exotics to choose from – Malaysian, Thai, Chinese, you name it” (8). It reflects the negative image the focalizer has about the non-white and non-western. It shows that they can be any girl from any non-western countries to fulfil their sexual desires because they have money and power.

Ryan, the boyfriend of Melanie, to David, a bravo whom he says “looks like trouble” (30). David guesses about him seeing his get up. Is it a reasonable remark David makes seeing only physical gesture? Later he describes Ryan as “he is tall and wiry; he has a thin goatee and an ear-ring. He wears a black leather jacket and black leather trousers” (30). Now a question arises: Does this type of person ever be a cause of trouble? It only may be his desire to be in such get up. David does not see his face on the mirror only the reader can know that David himself is cause of trouble to all the characters in the novel, even to the university. He, the worst person in the name of a professor with seemingly gentle gesture, is the paradox within his profession and age.

Another episode in the novel takes place in the town of Salem, on the Graham Town – Kenton Road in the Eastern Cape where “nine Frontier wars were fought between the British and Xhosa people” (Cornwell 43). It is his place of black Xhosa community where Lucy, his daughter lives. In the novel David does not like this place because of the black community and rural peasant life. But his daughter chooses her settlement there. Lucy, a white woman, lives in the black community with black Petrus first as her hired helper: “Petrus is my new assistant. In fact, since March, co-proprietor. Quite a fellow” (62). Later the same Petrus as Lucy says, “Though Petrus is a paid wage, Petrus is no longer, strictly speaking hired helper. It is hard to say what Petrus is, strictly speaking. The word that seems to serve best, however is neighbor” (116). And at the end of the novel the same black helper turns

to her as a would-be husband: “[S]ays I accept his protection. Says he can put out whatever story he likes about our relationship and I won’t contradict him. If he wants me to know as his third wife, so be it” (204). Such a historical reversal picture of racial discrimination is presented in the novel that in pure rural life race complexion has no role at all; it is only the production of the so-called literate, superior white society.

The fictional world as mentioned by the focalizer is the transcendental post-apartheid South Africa of the 1990s. It is the time where all white domination or exploitation is expired. There is a little chaotic situation but the beginning is good for equality: “It is a new world they live in, he and Lucy and Petrus. Petrus knows it, and he knows it, and Petrus knows he knows it” (117). Everyone is equal and the power is balanced. No one can go away from this power equation. In such situation, Petrus is a black who used to be slave, has own identity, willingness, and freedom to do anything of his choice. Lucy says, “I cannot order Petrus about. He is his own Master” (116). Now blacks are their own self, not the property of whites as they used to be.

The situation of the character presented in the novel is equal almost equal in relation to the reach to the power. Black Petrus’s argument like “ I lie, I lie to you [. . .] for why must I lie to you” (201) shows the reversal situation of the society. Petrus, a black has no fear from white David. He indirectly reveals that he is no less powerful than David, now a days both David and Petrus come to the same ground.

David cannot deny Petrus's good qualities though he is guided by racial prejudice. To David, “Petrus is a man of patience, energy, reliance, a peasant, a Payson, a man of the country. A plotter and a schemer and no doubt a liar too, like peasant everywhere. Honest toil and honest cunning” (117). This general view about

Petrus by David has generalized Petrus as a peasant and peasants as a liar. Moreover, he takes Petrus as an honest man. The contradiction is: how can a liar be an honest man? And David himself comments about himself that “the truth is, he has never had much of an eye for rural life, despite all his reading in Wordsworth. Not much of an eye for anything except pretty girls, and where has that got him. Is it too late to educate the eye?” (218). Such romantic scholar David has wrong judgment of Petrus and other peasants. The novel is full of such comments of David about race, class, gender, sexuality, and other aspects of human life though he is ignorant about them.

To other characters Petrus is a man of very good personality. Bev Shaw, David's senior to the clinic, argues, “You underestimate Petrus. Petrus slaves to get the market garden going for Lucy. Without Petrus Lucy would not be where she is now. I am not saying she owes him everything, but she owes him a lot” (140). Bev trust him and admire his help to Lucy. Even Lucy, a new generation white woman, has positive view, “I have no illusion about him” (204). But David who has racial prejudice never trusts him. He believes that “Petrus [. . .] is itching for Lucy to pull out” and gives the credit of the mishappening of Lucy and himself, “If you want proof [Bev], look no further than what happened to Lucy and me” (140). Not only David another old generation white man of the same community Ettinger, has similar racial prejudice: “Not one of them you can trust” (109). He expresses it in such a way that to be non-white is to be untrustworthy. People like David, and Ettinger are making the racial conflict more complicated.

Similarly, the misconception of David about blacks as the people hard to understand as their name is noticable when Lucy talks about 'Pollux' one of the three rapist, the small one, David comments, “not Mncedisi? Not Nqabayakhi? Nothing unprounciable, just Pollux?”(200). To David the blacks should have the name of

black culture which seems unprounciable to the people of other community and the character of them as similar to unbelievable and deceptive.

The emerging black character Petrus and Bev Shaw are the products of the post apartheid South African situation. David who used to be a superior, white professor, a person in senior post is working for Petrus, Bev, black peasants because they are all in “new world” (117). In such situation a black peasant, Petrus, can offer wage to David as Lucy says to David: “By Eastern Cape standard [Petrus] is a man of substance. Ask him to pay you. He can afford it. I am not sure I can afford him anymore” (77). Similarly, Lucy says that “you could help with the dogs. You could cut up the dog-meat. I have always found that difficult. Then, there is Petrus. Petrus is busy establishing his own lands. You could give him a hand” (76). A white professor is here to help a black peasant Petrus as his assistant getting wage form him. Similarly, it is the historical reversal of white domination and exploitation of blacks with the change of time and society. Many people like Lucy want to see the two hands of blacks and whites joining and working together for their new world leaving the racial discrimination which is reflected in her desire to help a black to make his house which is the spirit of new generation. Lucy wants her father to help Petrus: “Give Petrus a hand. I like that. I like the historical Piquancy” (77). She wants to forget the bitter hierarchical society full of exploitation, discrimination and corruption.

Knowingly or unknowingly David himself asserts uselessness of western culture, language to the fictional world of South Africa. He asserts the superiority of the black and the local languages though he tries to assert the superiority of western culture. At the time of the robbery of the house and Lucy’s rape, he accepts the uselessness of western superiority: “ He speaks Italian, he speaks French but Italian

and French will not save him here in Africa. He is helpless” (95). Similarly, he accepts that “more and more he is convinced that English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa” (117). David believes that “like a dinosaur expiring and settling in the mud, the language has stiffened” (177). English at the time of apartheid may be a thing of pride but not in this situation; its superiority is lost and the local language comes to rise so it is expired, now it has only facile not life, so he thinks it should be left. David from inside assures that western culture and language is only fit and suitable to western society though he is proud of being white. Whiteness as his property reflects when “a hand to his white skullcap. For the first time he is glad to have it, to wear it as his own” (135). It reflects that he is proud of being white, which he thinks cover all his misdeeds of the past as the white skullcap covering his wounds and fired head.

We can see the racial prejudice in David in his speech and behavior as well. His anger towards Pollux is apparent in his focalization: “Teach him a lesson, show him his place [. . .]. He is like a Jackal looking for mischief” (206). To him Pollux is savage who is all the time is in search to commit some mistakes. It may be true of being a child he may make mistake but David reaches to all colored through Pollux. His remarks like "show him his place"(206) refers that as a black his place is not there with these whites he should be away from David and Lucy’s touch. He further comments about Pollux, “mentally deficient. Morally deficient. He should be in institution” (208). David thinks that Pollux should be in white man’s institution to make him a good man. These above mentioned lines are the products of his racial prejudice toward non whites.

The new generation whites like Lucy have some ethnic knowledge and she wants to mix herself with other members of her community: “[S]he speaks [. . .] in

Xhosa" (129) which shows her interest and mutuality with local people and language. After her rape, she does not want to give it racial color. She resists David's idea to make police report of rape saying: "What happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business; mine alone [. . .] this place being South Africa" (112). Lucy is aware of the racial condition of South Africa and their situation being in minority group in that blacks' local community. So, she does not want to give racial color to that incident.

Dismantling the Binaries Opposition of Class in *Disgrace*

When we go through the life standard of the characters in the novel, we can find the master/slave reversal in the post apartheid 1990s transitional society of South African fictional world. In the novel blacks like Petrus, colored like Melanie, Bev Shaw are at the rise of their class standard, whereas David, even Lucy is in degradation of their social standard. David's situation, as Rosalind his divorced wife, remarks is miserable: "You have lost your jobs, your name is mud, your friends avoid you, you hide out in Torrance Road like tortoise afraid to stick its neck out of its shell [. . .] you are going to end up as one of those sad old men who poke around in rubbish bin" (189). This single remark of his ex-wife can reflect the worst situation of David, a white professor. On the other hand Petrus, a black helper rises his position, as Lucy remarks: "By Eastern Cape standard he is a man of substance. Ask him to pay you. He can afford it" (77). From these two remarks about David and Petrus from the characters' reaction show their present conditions.

Similarly, Lucy who used to have a farm has already given half to Petrus as Lucy remarks: "Petrus is my new assistant. In fact, since March, co-proprietor" (62) and at the end of the novel she is ready to sign all her property except the house: "I

will sing the land over to him as long as the house remains mine” (204). In this way, Lucy has also become unable to maintain her class as a whole that she is going to be poorer and poorer. In her degradation David laments “such a high hope, and to end like this” (205). Lucy asserts her position by saying, “No cards, no weapon, no property, no right, no dignity [. . .]. Yes like a dog” (205). This is the reversal situation presented in the novel from master to almost slave and slave to master who can afford whites as their assistants. In the novel, it is presented that white remarkable character David, Lucy are slipping from their position, whereas non-white characters like Melanie establishing herself as an actress in the drama, Petrus as landlord, Bev Shaw runs her animal welfare clinic well in contrast to David and Lucy.

The remarks “there was a time when he thought he might become friend with Petrus, now he detests him” (152) turns to be ironic of David’s situation. The cause of his hatred is his lack of ethical knowledge that he hates Petrus for being black. But ironically, Petrus may not accept David’s friendship as they are in opposition in their career, and economic standard. Similarly, David is in poor economic situation that “he will have to sell the house, move to a flat somewhere cheaper” (157) in contrast to David: “Petrus’s house has become a reality” (197). In this way, the novel has managed their character not stable in their class standard, sometimes one remains in higher level and at another time other crosses their positions.

At his first visit after his sexual harassment to his student, his own daughter Lucy says, “what if we don’t call it a visit? What if we call it refuge? Would you accept refuge on an indefinite basis?” (65). A question may arise: does one person be a refuge within his own country, the term ‘refuge’ is used in an enigmatic way that we cannot have its fix meaning. He became a refugee in South Africa in spite of his

being white. In other words he used to be the citizen of South Africa with all power and prestige but with the change of social system, he turns to internal exiled person.

He is free; he has no duty. He has no one to be responsible; not to family, not to society; not to nation. And he himself has the pride of being westerner not African. He says, “ This is not how we do things. We: he is on the point of saying, *we Westerners*”(202). This western psyche makes him away from the South Africans. He himself thinks that he is white westerner, a superior in race, but his reality is of no where except himself which readers can feel.

Similarly, his own daughter behaves himself as if he is a visitor, a refugee without any love, “Will you come in and have some tea?” (218). For this he feels she is making “ offer as if he were a visitor” (218). In such situation David remains of no where. He is kicked out from the job and does not want to stay at his house, “ so he is home again. It doesn’t feel like a homecoming. He cannot imagine taking up residence once more in the house in Torrance Road, in the shadow of University, skulking about like a criminal, dodging old colleagues” (175). He cannot gain comfort even in his own house, not with in the city and the country as a whole. He is feeling exiled from there. When Rosalind ask for not being in touch though he is in town back again, David remarks that “I am not yet fit for Society” (187). From the heart David realizes his mistake that he is hesitating to mix up with society again. Finally he goes to Bev Shaw “ [who] is running animal refuge” (72). He spends his last part, working as volunteer in Bev’s animal refuge which refers to his fate as the animals which come there to be disposed when they become useless. Davis himself is waiting for his death without home, without family or relatives in animal refuge. His refuse means that he has no class, no one, no race, no pride and so on which refers

that though we human beings feels proud of ourselves for our race, class, gender and sexuality, this pride has no value which can easily fade off.

In this way, we came to know that David who shows himself knowledgeable, rational and so on is an ironic focalizer for the deep readers. Now it is clear that his vision and narration about other characters, situation is not reliable because of his ignorance about the issues like race, class, gender and sexuality and he attempts to mix him up with the social changes. So, what he is trying to show himself as a privileged one in the binaries of race, class, gender and sexuality ironically turns to less privileged ones.

Dismantling of Binary Oppositions of Gender in *Disgrace*

On the surface, J(ohn) M(axwell) Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* pictures the victims of gender negatively in the post apartheid South Africa. Melanie, a colored student seduced by David Lurie, the protagonist cum focalizer, Lucy raped by three intruders are pictured negatively. Similarly, other women Soraya, Bev Shaw, Rosalind, Dawn are also the victims of David's patriarchal psyche because he is the only focalizer cum protagonist in the novel.

David Lurie is the Prof. of Romantic Poetry at Cape University in Cape Town. The whole novel is written from his point of view. And David is unknown about the pain and suffering of marginalized people. He cannot understand panic situation of his colored student Melanie, who is seduced by himself, his own daughter Lucy who has been gang-raped by three rapists cum "tax collectors" as Lucy remarks (199), an Asian-African prostitute Soraya whom he likes because she is "exotic"(7). He further says that "by occupation she is a loose woman [. . .] that would be unusual for a Muslim" (3). This remark about Soraya is problematic because he himself is her customer and he judges her morality and characters:

He trusts her [. . .] Soraya is not her real name that he is sure of. There are signs she has borne a child or children. It may be that she is not professional at all. She may work for the agency only one or two afternoons a week, and for the rest lives a respectable life in suburbs, in Rylands or Athlone. (3)

This is the enigmatic picture about Soraya within David. He finds her a loose woman, a prostitute, a morally degraded woman according to the Muslim culture at the same time he trusts her, imagines her respectable life outside the agency. He is confused in himself.

David comments about himself: "He himself has no son. His childhood was spent in a family of women, as mother, aunts, sisters fell away, and they were replaced in due course by mistress, wives, and a daughter. Therefore, the company of women made him a lover of women and, to an extent, a womanizer" (7). To David wherever the term 'woman' comes he thinks nothing but sex. We know that he has explained his own daughter's body more sexually than fatherly love, "[H]er hips and breast are now (he searches for the best word) ample" (59). At her first meeting after long gap, he does not see her face and other parts but the female sexual organs like breast and hip and further says, "what a nice girl, he thinks, hugging him, what a nice welcome at the end of a long trip!" (59). In such a situation to believe that the focalizer can handle the gender issue will be the great mistake. In the novel when he sees and narrates about women he puts his masculinity at the center.

David thinks that Melanie, his student seduced by him, is a passive, and shy girl who cannot take decision by herself as other males believe in male dominated society. When Melanie registers a case on his sexual harassment he says: "Melanie would not have taken such a step, he is convinced. She is too innocent for that, too

ignorant of her power. He, the little man [Melanie's father] in the ill fitting suit must be behind it" (39) along with her "jealous boyfriend" (45). Here, though he does not believe that woman can do anything without the help of man. He is aware of and accepts the potentiality of a female's power.

David, a professor of Romantic Poetry is very much guided by the romantic philosophy and gives the color of patriarchal male domination. He believes that "a woman's beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of bounty she brings into the world. She has duty to share it" (16). Guided by such insight, David never becomes an impartial person whenever he goes through the gender issues. He further says, if it is already shared "then [she] should share it more widely" (16). This sort of argument is never expected from the rational professor. For person, who has some knowledge, respect to gender role cannot make such expression. Though, David describes others like Soraya, Melanie, Lucy and Bev Shaw immoral, he never sees his own face on mirror; what all he says about others ironically reflects himself.

David, women and other materials are similar as he argues "I don't collect pictures, I don't collect women" (29). A person who can compare women with picture can never understand the female as gender. Through the whole novel, not in single place, David accepts women as himself: equal to him as a female gender. He only takes them as possession, as wealth to have, as materials to play sexual game with.

The girl, whom he takes as his own property "mine!" (191), has filed the case against him; she becomes a cause of his downfall of his prestige, profession, and living. He also cannot deny the fact that "the deed [case registration] is done. Two names on the page his and her, side by side. Two in a bed. Lovers no longer but foes" (40). This is the reality of human life; female always cannot be lovers but

enemies as well, sometimes even stronger than males. The pathetic character, Melanie, he thinks, “who barely comes to his shoulder” (53) becomes the biggest enemy more powerful to him and also the cause of his disgrace.

David justifies the case filed by Melanie: “My case rests on the rights of desire [. . .] the god who makes even the small birds quiver [. . .] I was a servant of Eros [. . .] it was a god who acted through me” (89). He makes an emotional and irrational save he puts to defend him from the sexual assessment to his student. From this statement we understand how (ir)rational the focalizer, David, and his focalization is. And he also accepts the fact of his life: “Every woman I have been close to has taught me something about myself. To that extent they have made me a better person” (70). Though he behaves female as matter, property, things to play with he cannot deny the importance of females over him.

Similarly, Lucy, who goes through a gang-rape, has her certain vision about her life. She does not want any interruption from any one: “I must have peace around me. I am prepared to do anything, to make any sacrifice, for the sake of peace” (208). She is a peace loving woman; she is also adoptable as Bev Shaw says, and “women are adoptable. Lucy is adoptable” (210). She, a woman born and brought up in town is managing life in a rural area where whites and literate are hardly found. She is in search of peace there and tries to manage life in rural, black African society. She is a brave woman who all the time wants her freedom, identity and peaceful life.

Lucy is determined towards her life, her identity: “I don’t want to come back in another existence as a dog or a pig and have to live as dogs or pigs under us” (74). She is a woman who chooses free life and as a woman can handle her problems as she says to her father, David after her rape and robbery: “You tell what happened to You, and I will tell what happened to me” (99). She does not want any disturbance in her

life and wants to be fully self-dependent woman. Though David is always worried about his daughter at the remote village of 'darkest Africa', he is proud of her for her settlement, her self-dependency, her ability to mix up with the society.

We can find David's the possessive attitude towards women including his own daughter Lucy. To resist such behavior Lucy objects:

I can't run my life according to whether or not you like what I do. Not anymore – you behave as if everything I do is part of the story of your life. You are the main character, I am a minor character [. . .]. Well contrary to what you think, people are not divided into major and minor. I am not minor. I have life of my own, just as important to me and in my life I am the one who makes the decisions. (198)

As Lucy is a lover of peace and freedom, she wants her own independent life; she wants to be the master of her own self.

The situation of society is in chaos, everywhere crime, murder, rape prevails in the fictional universe. Women are very much unsafe there as Lucy's neighbor Petrus believes: “It is dangerous, too dangerous. A woman must be marry” (202). The transitional post apartheid period of 1990s in Africa as full of crimes, rapes, robbery in such a critical situation that Lucy is there standing alone in black African community. Sometimes she also becomes sentimental and emotional: “Objectively I am a woman alone. I have no brothers, I have a father, but he is too powerless in the terms that matters here. Whom can I turn to for protection?” (204). This is the reality of Lucy, a white woman, in the “darkest Africa” (121). But she is bold enough to stay alone there with her female partner-Helen who also does not appear throughout novel except the remembrance by other characters and especially focalizer David. Finally, she turns to Petrus, a black helper at first, co-owner of the property and finally her

would be husband. For her “practically speaking, there is only Petrus left, Petrus may not be a big man but he is big enough for someone small like me” (204). They never present such a situation; the so-called white superior Lucy is compelled to turn toward Petrus, a black peasant, for protection, which bears the reality of society that everyone has his/her own importance in community to run it smoothly.

Similarly, the next remarkable character Petrus also has his own view about females. Petrus, Lucy’s helper, who is black, twice married and living with his second wife has not let any freedom, identity to his wife. She is only doing indoor works without any out reach. Though Lucy and David are the only neighbors of Petrus, they hardly see Petrus's wife outside home. Petrus is an emerging black in the novel but he himself also has no knowledge about gender issues, marriages, love and understanding between man and woman. He is in the process of uplifting his standard at any cost. He cannot understand women’s position in the society. As Lucy argues, “it is not me he is after, he is after the farm. The farm is my dowry” (203). Petrus is going to accept Lucy not because he loves her but loves her property so he is going to marry Lucy though he is married twice.

The another remarkable character, Mr. Isaacs, father of Ms Melanie-- a student of David, whom he seduces-- is also ignorant about the gender relations. He welcomes David, seducer of his own daughter as if David is his dearest friend saying “to what do I owe this pleasure?” (165). David’s expectation to be tensed is turned to misconception because Mr. Isaacs is also a male, a male dominating personality toward female. He does not take it seriously because to him also women put minor role as sex objects living under male’s desire as his wife put in home only indulging indoor activities. Even he invites David to have meal with them. He never thinks what his wife feels and what his younger daughter feels:

[Mr. Isaacs]: what is your plans for the evening?

[David]: This evening? I've checked at a hotel. I have no plans.

[Mr. Isaacs]: Come and have a meal with us. Come for dinner.

[David]: I don't think your wife would welcome that.

[Mr. Isaacs]: Perhaps not. Come anyway. Break bread with us. (167)

This conversation reflects Mr. Isaacs's self decidedness that whatever he thinks, decides is the decision of the family.

After the dinner, Mr. Isaacs phones David to say, "I am phoning to wish you strength for your future" (173). Though David has committed the crime to his daughter, to his family as a whole, being a male like David he does not give it importance. He further says surprisingly to the reader that "[. . .] the path you are on is one that god has ordained for you. It is not for us to interfere" (174). So, Mr. Isaac also being product of same male patriarchal society has the same mentality as David. So, the three remarkable characters, David, Petrus, Mr. Isaacs who put major roles have the same mentality as they are males of the same society. Though they differ in character in relation to other aspect of human life, they have the same patriarchal mentality towards females.

David accepts that his life passed in company of woman and in novel he does not have any male friend whom he is intimate. Unknowingly he valorizes woman character, he even admire his daughter courage, and self-dependency. He gives priority to woman because he is a male and a 'womanizer' as he himself asserts. At the same time he has patriarchal male psyche that he want to possess and dominate woman all the time. In one situation, he murmurs: "Poor Lucy! Poor Daughters! What a destiny, what a burden to bear! And sons: they too must have their tribulations, though he knows less about that" (67). He asserts that he know less about male, and

all the time in novel he is there is judge male character, which is a contradiction in David.

Dismantling the Binary Oppositions of Sexuality in *Disgrace*

When we go through the novel, *Disgrace* it explores about human sex and sexuality. It bears the characters of different sexuality who practice or who have interest in them. We have heterosexuals, as mentioned by the focalizer, like Soraya, Melanie, David, Petrus, Bev Shaw and homosexuals or bisexuals like Lucy and Helen, and to an extent David himself though in the novel he tries to hide it clearly, because he has deep interest in Lucy's homosexuality. And in a place to describe Petrus, David says, "[I] would certainly not wish to be married to [Petrus]" (137). This type of argument of David reveals his homosexual interest to some extent. He is the type of homosexual who has deep interest of other sexuality though s/he does not practise it. Perhaps he himself may not be aware about his own homosexual instinct. Similarly, this novel puts some questions on sex, and sexuality: What is the age of human sex? How does sex mean differently to different people? Does one want single sexuality or have interest in multiple? Can a person accept different sexuality according to the situation s/he is standing? What is the age of human sexuality or interest in sex? We have characters like Lucy of twenty five who do not shows much interests in sex and character like David of fifty two, who has so much interest and practice in sex.

The very first sentence of the novel seems quite contradictory when we reach to the end of the novel, "For a man of his age, fifty two, divorced, he has to his mind, solved the problem of sex rather well"(1). It means that David has solved his problem of sex well but all his disgrace is caused by his very sex. To sleep with prostitute like Soraya, student like Melanie, secretary like Dawn, senior co-worker Bev Shaw, and

other tourist and prostitute, is it the solution of his sex? Does human sex deserve to fulfil anyway? Definitely it may not be the solution. It also questions like what is the age of human sexuality as this novel presents character like Lucy of twenty five who never shows her desire for sex and David her father of fifty two is actively participating. He wonders himself, "He ought to give up, retire from the game. At what age, he wonders" (9). These two characters have the opposite characteristics in spite of their age. Lucy in her mid of her sexual life puts the age for sexual desire under question.

Similarly, David finds Soraya, Asian-African Prostitute as his sexual partner. He says, "It surprises him that ninety minutes a week of a woman's company are enough to make him happy. Who used to think, he needed a wife, a home, a marriage" (5). David takes sex as a game, which needs physical relation without any mutuality. But human civilization needs marriage, wife, and a home where not only sexual intercourse but love and care is needed. We understand it in quite reversal way that, marriage, home and wife are not necessary to be a man sexually happy according to the focalizer.

Then, what are the basic needs to have sexual relation? David's and Melanie's sexual relation is not sex but rather it is a rape. He himself tries to justify it as, "no rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core"(60). And according to feminist critics, undesired sexual penetration is a rape, and rape is a crime. So David who has sex to Melanie forcefully is a crime. A criminal should be punished, but in the novel he is punished not by law but by his disgrace.

David describes his daughter Lucy as a homosexual-- a lesbian-- because she used to live with Helen, her friend who has recently left her. David gives the hints when one evening Lucy telephones. He guesses, "Is she calling to Johannesburg,

speaking to Helen? [. . .] would they dare to share a bed while he is in the house? If the bed creaked in the night, would they be embarrassed ? Embarrassed enough to stop?"(86). Here it is not sure whether Lucy is lesbian or not, but we can guess David is. We have homosexual as mentioned in the preceding chapter who has interest but does not practise homosexuality. David's keen interest is revealed in the sentences like "woman does not need to make beds creak" (86). To David homosexuality is a matter of great interest because their role to play is interesting as they are of same gender. He thinks both partners are of same gender, same, physical structure social background. They must have more mutual and smooth relation than in heterosexual relations. In this regard, he says " Sapphic Love: an excuse for putting on weight" (86). So, though David is a heterosexual as he likes to say but he has fantastic homosexual desires.

However, David is very much sure about Lucy's homosexuality because he finds, "[i]n her mid twenties, she has begun to separate. The dogs, the gardening, the astrology books, the asexual clothes; in each he recognizes a statement of independence, considered, purposeful. The turn away from men too" (89). Not only David's but all normal people believe that in her mid twenties, Lucy must have a boyfriend, a romantic life, a book or magazine about love and romance but in his contrary she is so separate from these normal youths. The asexual clothes can be the symbol of her resistance against heterosexual norms and values.

But later on, when Lucy does not want to have abortion of the child from the rape, her character seems confusing. She says, "I am not prepared to go through [abortion] again" (198) which reflects that perhaps she is not homosexual. She further says, " I am a woman, David. Do you think I hate children?" (198). The general view about homosexuality is that they do not want and cannot have child but here Lucy

wants to have it. In such a situation, she destabilizes supposed norms concerning lesbians. But we are not sure whether she is lesbian or bisexual or none of them on the basis of the information given by the focalizer.

When we go ahead, about the purpose of Petrus to marry Lucy she remarks that “I don’t want to sleep with Petrus. Definitely not” (203). Her rejection to have sex with Petrus in her mid twenties can be the result of her homosexuality. Similarly, David’s belief about her homosexuality is viewed, “Lucy does not want to marry. Does not want to marry a man” (202). As a response Petrus says, “Yes, I know, [. . .] but [. . .] it is dangerous, too dangerous. A woman must be marry” (202). So, when we talk about Lucy’s sexuality we cannot reach to any conclusion on what her sexual orientation is, either she is marrying Petrus only for protection or she has interest in heterosexuality.

To Lucy, "hatred"(158) is needed to make heterosexual relation interesting she remarks that, “hatred [. . .] when it comes to men and sex, David, nothing surprises me any more. May be for men hating the woman makes sex more exciting” (158). But does this rule to all men? It may not, to whom who has respect on gender and takes female as themselves. And that type of idea may not rule to all women, such as like Soraya, Bev Shaw, and Dawn, who are presented with deep interest to have sex in the novel and satisfied after it. Lucy further says, "When you trap her, hold her down, get her under you, put all your weight on her – isn’t it a bit like killing? Pushing the knife in; existing afterward, leaving the body behind covered in blood- does not it feel like murder, like getting away with murder" (158). To Lucy heterosexual relation is a kind of killing a woman. If so, why are men and women interested in it? Why are characters like Soraya, Dawn, Bev Shaw happy after having sex with David? It may be because Lucy might be a homosexual.

What is human sex and sexuality then and especially heterosexual relation? Is it only an experience as David describes or murder as Lucy says? The meaning of sex differs to them. To the sexual harassment to his student Melanie David says, "I was enriched by the experience [. . .] I don't think I will have another chance" (56). To David, sex is only an experience to gain, which makes him womanizer. He likes to change women to get new experience. To him no love, no care but only the intercourse is sex. In contrast to David, Lucy takes sex, "[. . .] like killing [. . .] pushing knife in" (158). So, the meaning of sex remains in question in *Disgrace*, and that is actually not given up to the end. In other words, the issue on sex and sexuality remains open ended in the novel.

Apart from the issues: race, class, gender and sexuality *Disgrace* contain symbols, images, concepts, customs, language and contradictions. Though the focalizer directly does not accept these aspects but knowingly or unknowingly he valorizes them.

In the narration, in several places David says that language is insufficient to represent thinking though in many occasions he claims on reliability of language especially in his lectures. His utterance and concepts do not meet. For example, in one conversation between David and Melanie: "[Melanie]: Are you Married?/ [David]: I was twice. But now I'm not. He does not say: I make do with what comes my way [. . .]. He offers liqueur" (16). David's thinking and utterance contradicts. Similarly when he goes to see Melanie's performance, everyone admires her acting. Here he remains silent though he takes Melanie as his own possession: "Mine! He would like to say" (191). In first situation he speaks differently from his thinking and in second he remains silent. So, for David, language is insufficient to convey truth.

In the novel David is a man of contradictions. His thinking and action differ in several places in the novel. For example, he does a job of killing the dog but wants to save the sheep. He is a male but gives priority to female; he is a white but celebrates black culture, language, customs and so on. It does not matter whether it occurs in his awareness as ignorance. David devalues English and other European languages and prefers black Xhosa language to so called civilized English language. He feels pleasant when he finds Lucy speaking and understanding the local language. In one situation he says, " He speaks Italian, he speaks French but Italian and French will not save him here in darkest Africa" (95). He further says, " English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa" (117). He gives priority to the local language, customs culture and life-style than the western one.

When David is with Soraya or with Melanie, in his mind image of his daughter, Lucy, revolves almost all time. He compares his mistress with daughter, makes love in daughter's room, in daughter's bed. The image of daughter in Melanie reflects in sentences like: " Tell Daddy what is Wrong?" (26). Later, " He strokes [Melanie's] hair, kisses her forehead. Mistress? Daughter?" (27) shows his confusing state of mind: either Melanie is his daughter or mistress. Perhaps, it may be the symbol of his desire for Electra complex, which is prohibited by human civilization. In the novel in different situations the images of mistress and daughter criss-cross each other.

Similarly, we can find the image of the 'white skull cap' as the pride, superiority and a cover of misdeeds to David. David feels proud to wear it. The another contradiction in David is he is working as a helper to a black woman to kill the sick dogs, but when he sees two Persian sheep he feels, " A bond seems to have come to existence between himself and the two Persians. He does not know how"

(126). It is because of his own miserable condition by empathizing the sheep, he is sympathizing his own condition. He further says, " it is not even a bond with these two in particular" (126). Another symbol 'dog' is representing the 'god in reverse order. In other words the ending of the novel recounts or resembles the crucifixion of Christ as David prepares himself to murder/sacrifice the dog.

David valorizes the typical culture and customs of black society though he is proud for being white. He finds pleasure when Lucy speaks some Xhosa words and her ability to mix up with the society. When he goes to the Saturday market, he feels pleasant knowing the local customs, trade, people and so on. He likes to go there later because unknowingly he enjoys it. He also enjoys a lot in Petrus's Party until he meets Pollux. He is fascinated by Petrus's life style, peasantry with home, multiple wives and family. So, unknowingly and unknowingly David, the focalizer valorizer enjoys, and put emphasis to others language, culture, customs and so on.

IV. Conclusion

On the surface, J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* portrays the negative and enigmatic picture of the blacks, poor, women and homosexual characters. The focalizer David from whose perspective the novel is focalized seems to be a learned scholar, a professor of humanities and social sciences who should have knowledge about race, class, gender and sexuality. He pretends himself to be a rational, careful, responsible, dutiful personality but to the core he is a person guided by romantic philosophy as well as prejudices to people from other race, class gender and sexuality.

The fictional setting of post-apartheid South Africa of 1990s where the domination and exploitation of whites seems to be expired. And there is David Lurie, a white professor, as the protagonist cum focalizer who directly or indirectly participated in apartheid. He has been haunted by the shared crimes during the apartheid period in the novel. He has prejudices over colored and blacks so that he is unable to represent them clearly and there is only one focalizer David who is ignorant about the matter of race, class gender and sexuality. He himself asserts that he has done nothing more than seeing pretty girls and finds himself as a scholar of dead man and written books on them. In such a situation it is necessary to study the text from the perspective of marginalized characters. When we analyze the issues like race, class, gender and sexuality in the text, literal meaning turns ironically opposite and the focalization of David fallible.

David, apparently puts himself as a loving, and caring personality with respect but in the deeper level he turns to be opposite. He describes Soraya as a deceiver to her family and husband though, the irony is, he himself is her customer. He does not see his immorality and makes negative judgement about others. Similarly, he sees

Melanie as a cheater who is cheating her own professor. The other female characters like Dawn, Bev Shaw, and even Lucy are also described accordingly.

Similarly, Melanie, whom he seduces, is described as a cunning girl that is exploiting him for being white. He does not see his crime to her and her pathetic situation as female gender. He only sees her case registration. He finds Bev Shaw dull, ugly but when he gets chance to have sex with her, she becomes only friend in Salem who he can trust with though she is a colored woman. Petrus, a black helper of Lucy, upgrades his standard by the grace of Lucy and he is only after her land that he is ready to marry raped and pregnant Lucy for her land. Mr. Isaac takes easily of his daughter, Melanie's rape lightly. So, none of male has respect to female as gender. All remarkable female characters on the other hand have created their identity self-dependency and their living.

We find the racial prejudice in the narration and focalization of David toward black and colored characters. As a white the focalizer puts himself at top of hierarchy and others as deceptive, ignorant of anything who are making the racial issue more complicated. He finds colored Melanie, exploiting her own professor, Soraya as immoral, Petrus and Pollux mental and moral deficient who should put in white man's institution as if it were white man's burden.

In contrary, he portrays himself getting lots of trouble for being white in post-apartheid South Africa. He tries to get readers' sympathy justifying the fictional setting of 1990s' transitional South Africa where he is getting trouble for being minority white. But, his justification turns to fallible because, he has racial prejudice in heart, he does not want those blacks or non-whites. He has pride for being white and describes himself as 'We, Westerns'. He also has no knowledge on gender and sexuality along with class, his degrading class status, and he has no patriotism as well.

So, he becomes a pathetic character, it is true but it is not because of the situation as described in novel but his illiteracy to society. He is a romantic scholar and gives color of patriarchal white male domination. The suitable example is his defence to the committee for sexual harassment to his own student Melanie. All members of the committee show their desire to save him but he gives such unreasonable, emotional defence which could not save him. So the fault lies within David himself though he gives name differently to his falling.

Lucy's desire for not giving racial color to her rape in such transitional situation becomes self-deception to him, who according to him has no future. He seems unable to understand about social situation and her desire to maintain social harmony. David's ignorance and racial prejudice finds Petrus and Pollux mentally deficient and the irony is he himself, a white professor, works under the same mentally deficient black Petrus and Bev Shaw, who are the illiterate black peasants.

Lucy finally accepts to be Petrus's third wife and also is going to give birth to a mix raced child from the rape. Petrus is ready to do anything to upgrade his class standard. He is even ready to marry Lucy who is going to give birth to child from rape for her land. Lucy is portrayed as homosexual or bisexual by the focalizer but is going to give birth to a mix-raced child out of motherly love and care. She is carrying at least equal or even more responsibility for her motherhood than other so called heterosexual characters. David, Petrus, Isaacs take sex as a game to fulfil sexual desire and a matter of possession of female.

Thus, the novel *Disgrace*, by J(ohn) M(axwell) Coetzee, has no authorial remarks about the character and incidents. The white, male, heterosexual and upper-middle class professor guided by romantic philosophy and prejudices towards black, poor, woman and homosexual is unable to represent the marginalized characters. So,

this present research studies the text from the perspectives of the marginal characters which shows that the novel *Disgrace* in its deeper level, dismantles the binaries of race, class, gender, and sexuality by putting the privileged ones under erasure.

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