

I. INTRODUCTION

John Maxwell Coetzee is a prominent South African writer. He is known as the literary gold and the path finder of all South Afrikaners for the peace, justice and awareness. He teaches to the people about the good manner, nonviolence and morality through his writing. His writing has remained fertile where especially South Africa has been blooming beautifully. His writing covers almost all the aspects like politics, society, history, economy and so on. Through his writing we can say that he is suffered from the past while South Africa was haunted and tormented by the fatal disease of colonization. Because of bad manner and attitude of colonizers he is exhausted and shocked. Thus, he searches freedom, peace and descriminationless life and land through his writing. He explores the implications of oppressive societies and the whole scenario of post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa in his writing.

Coetzee's writing clearly evaporates the situation of South African people who have their own problems and sufferings. His interest is directed mainly at situations where the distinction between right and wrong, which is crystal clear, can be seen to serve no end. Like the man in the famous Magritte Painting who is studying his neck in a mirror, at the decisive moment Coetzee's characters stand behind themselves, motionless, incapable of taking part in their own actions. But passivity is not merely the dark haze that devours personally; it is also the last resort open to human beings as they defy an oppressive order by rendering themselves inaccessible to its intentions. Lynn Meskell is a critic who closely observes the writing of Coetzee. He says, "Coetzee has consistently engaged with the politics of the past, particularly the contemporary ethical ramifications of the colonial past, alongside the more recent and bitter history of opression under apartheid" (102).

He closely observes the feeling and attitude of the African people in the post-apartheid and post-colonial era. The era is really difficult because of the white's hangover

of so called superiority and blacks indignation against the white's brutality by attempting the similar manner and attitudes. At that context, Whites want to continue their unchanged suppressive thinking and manner upon the blacks where as the blacks want to prove that they are equally powerful and competent. They want to change the thinking of white's in the South Africa. In a sense it is a transitional era– the era of displacement and dislocation.

Coetzee's novels are unique and meaningful but he presents his characters somber, lacking a recognizable identity. Alan A Stone comments on Coetzee's writing as:

His novels echo the literature of 20th century– Kafka, Joyce, Mann, and most importantly, Backette but he has staked out his own ground. His language captures, if it does not create, nuances of psychological sensibility, particularly in the somber registers of acceptance and resignation. A major theme in his work is lowliness and what Sartre described as the “reef of solipsism”. An aspect of Coetzee's protagonists is psychologically opaque, lacking a recognizable identity, like the characters in Backett's *Waiting for Godot* or *Endgame*. (148)

Disgrace the Booker Prize winning masterpiece (1999) offers an apocalyptic vision of contemporary South Africa. At that moment there is the matter of superiority and inferiority according to the color, race and gender. Being the colonizers in the past, whites still want to be superior and blacks are not ready to accept their superiority and suppression any more because the time is post-colonial and post-apartheid, and the blacks have understood the politics of awareness. Now the blacks are equally perfect on the each and every level like education, wealth, literature, science, arts, etc. Thus, this research paper tries to search the reversed power relations in South African post-colonial and post-apartheid era. The research work is testing of a tentative hypothesis that black's indignation against the white's brutality and extreme domination by means of almost the

similar attitudes and manners of the white people in South Africa after the colonial and apartheid era is the justification of reversed power relations in *Disgrace*. Three black's attack upon Lucy and Petrus' desire to own property by marrying Lucy, David's resignation from the professor in Cape Town University after the black students and professors' pressure and Lucy's determination to live in farm by marrying with Petrus are the examples of reversed power relations in *Disgrace*.

Reversal refers to something changing to its opposite. It also means an exchange of positions, functions etc. between two people. Power is the ability or opportunity to do something or to act. It also refers to a particular ability of the body or mind. When South Africa became independent from white colonization, the movement of the people led the nation towards the secure, prosperous and peaceful South African future but having some sorts of problems. In the colonial and post-colonial era, white people remained superior, noble and power seeker. They wanted to control according to their wish and desire. They were still preoccupied with the belief that the blacks are minor, meek and uncivilized. Whites did everything in front of the black people. David Lurie's sexual relation with black women and student in *Disgrace* is a good example. He has no thinking about what is right and wrong, what is moral and immoral. He even thinks blacks cannot take action against him because he is a white, superior, and civilized.

Sarah Ruden says, "*Disgrace* is set in the world of post-apartheid South African authorities to this work convinced Coetzee to immigrate to Australia. The fictional professor, David Lurie inside the bubble of his own refined sensibilities" (840). Whites in South Africa are European settlers who brought European tradition and culture with them. They severely exploited, dominated and mistreated the non white indigenous in colonial, and apartheid regime.

However, after the demise of apartheid in the mid 1990s, non-white indigenes have ascended to social, political, cultural and economic power. There arises the problem

of social adjustment in post-apartheid South Africa between whites and non-whites because of the reversal of power in to the hands of non-whites majority.

Social injustices like crime, violence, rape and ambivalence are frequent in new South Africa. It happens to every society, where one form of social system is replaced by another one. With the changing attitude and manner the power also changes. But the change of power is not easy. There need to follow almost the similar path of the whites who were the colonizers in the past. To be fit in the position and power each and every level required for the power holding. Power is not determined by the superiority but by the inferiority as well. When the power is reversed all the people would be powerful. Power moves horizontally instead of vertically. It never moves from top to bottom according to the new concepts of power theory. If the power moves linearly rather than top to bottom the real sense of power will apply in that context. Luis Tyson says about power in his book *Critical Theory Today*:

Power is never wholly confined to a single person or a single level of society. Rather power circulates in a culture through exchanges of materials goods, exchanges of human beings, and most important for literary critics, as well see below, exchanges of ideas through the various discourses a culture produces. (287)

David Lurie still has the hangover of the previous white superiority. He thinks nobody can challenge him. He has no remorse about being alone and divorced by the two wives. He does not hesitate to have affair with his student named Melanie. He is unable to know other's power. At last he is compelled to leave the University because of his immoral relationship with Melanie, a black girl. He even wants to take revenge against the three black's attack on Lucy's farm and their rape of Lucy. Petrus' decision to marry Lucy is a great blow to David. David's final realization and the black's successful retaliation against the whites is good example of reversed power relationship. Still the

blacks and whites are not separated. Thus they are entangled with a certain power which is reversed from past to present, superior to inferior, minority to majority.

After her rape by three black people, Lucy wants to be Petrus' third wife by bringing her land and property over to him, even though he has arranged the attack on her in order to gain control of her property. Lucy acknowledges the fact that the new South African adjustment between whites and non-whites is difficult. Thus she has to lose her temporal security, including her authority over land and for her future in South Africa.

Tony Morphet talks about Coetzee's post-morden stance in writing:

For Coetzee, there is no 'history', there are only one 'histories' – endless stories moving in multiple directions and presenting themselves to him as a writer [...]. What Coetzee's work does is to open out, on all sides, the situation of the writer in condition of the writer in condition of alienation [...]. Coetzee remains outside of his fiction: they write themselves through him and they take their place in the world on their own terms without support from a reference to their creator. (*Stranger Fiction* 59)

Many critics, scholars and novelists have analyzed this novel from different perspectives like ethical, racial, historicist, feminist and linguistic. These approaches no matter whether they are author oriented or language oriented or other have tried to interpret it or invest this novel with a meaning that the present research undertakes to explore. The approach of the present research differs from those previous approaches in a sense that the present research analyzes the power relations between the whites and blacks which is reversed or changed to its opposite side.

Critic Judith Chettle writes about the response of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) after the publication of the novel, "Though *Disgrace*, a novel of post-apartheid South Africa, won the Booker Prize, it was harshly criticized by the ruling ANC for its truthful if unpalatable portrayal of current realities. Coetzee has subsequently

immigrated to Australia” (*Moral Thinker and Myth Maker* 196-97). Here, Chettle seems to be studying this novel as if it were a true history book and so does the ANC. Likewise, in an oral submission to the South African Human Right Commission (SAHRC) of inquiry in to racism in 2000 the ANC used *Disgrace*, as a historical witness to the persistence of racism among white South Africans. In it, they claimed, Coetzee reported on the still pervasive idea of the black as a faithless, immoral, uneducated, incapacitated primitive child, a version of white racism.

Disgrace is set in a particular place and times, South Africa of 1990s. One should not make by treating the fiction as a purely social document. *Disgrace* is a novel but not pure history book. However, socio- political circumstances portrayed within the fictional world can not be ignored.

Disgrace is so firmly plotted and shaped and so clearly blocked out that it seems to request a kind of clarity of reading which is ultimately simplifying and harmful to the novel, in which “issues” are shared out between the generations, and split into willing binarisms: young and old, liberal and conservative, men and women, straight and gay, white and black, majority and minority etc. Around this, the novel’s architecture attempts to fuse these binarisms, by arguing for a kind of parallelism. It as if the form of the book tells us that despite the oppositions of Lucy and her father, both characters share more than they divide, for here are two people underlying their different-but-similar forms of disgrace. And then, as a capstone, the novel’s title powerfully extracts the essence of these two experiences, and unities them in one clipped world, and one strong theme: *Disgrace*. It also tries to follow the path of grace by reversing the power relations in South Africa.

In this way, *Disgrace* is a subtle, multi-layered story, as much concerned with politics as it is with the itch of male flesh. Coetzee’s prose is chaste and lyrical without being self-conscious: it is a relief to encounter writing as quietly stylish as this. *Disgrace*

is the best novel Coetzee has written. It is a chilling, spare book, the work of a mature writer who has refined his textual obsessions to produce an exact, effective prose and condensed his thematic concern with authority into a deceptively simple story of family life. Half campus novel, half anti-pastoral, it begins quietly enough in Cape Town. What makes the book interesting is the contrast between the urban life of an older-generation white male (who cannot escape from pride or principles even when these have led him to a dead end) and the rural life, where suffering, death and brutality are daily occurrences and have to be dealt with if there is to be any life at all. This conflict is no doubt epitomized in South Africa.

Coetzee has been often charged with an ahistorical lack of specialty whereas others of us find various ways of accounting for such readings of the text. Apartheid may inevitably rest beneath this obvious metaphor, yet as mentioned earlier, almost 350 years of colonial oppression and genocide are equally deserving of ethical attention and ineluctably provided the political and economic framework for racial segregation. Much of this tension rests with Coetzee's foregrounding of colonialism and his particular interest in the past. It was also the case that white South African writers were commonly considered proxies for black writers on the international stage, because the latter were effectively silenced. Writers like Coetzee were also thrust in to the realm of professional academic criticism, this forum being one obvious example, with all the expectation and analysis that this entails.

Coetzee has referred to the novel's spatiotemporal setting as the "historic present", which is perhaps an apt framing for both the unsettling location of the narrative and its intended political impacts. Thus, Coetzee remarked that he was inclined, "to see the South African situation as only one manifestation of a wider historical situation to do with colonialism, late colonialism, and neo-colonialism" (qtd. in *Doubling the Point* 44). Coetzee also conventionally sidesteps the political in favor of a moral stance, in which

the heart of darkness is possible in all societies. Thus his novel *Disgrace* presents the history and the power of the people. In terms of the power there is more political power rather than aesthetic power. Aesthetically there is power in terms of art literature and so on. But Coetzee's main concern here is political power. Lynn Meskell and Lindsey Weiss say, "The novel remains a political statement of ethical import in a climate of land restitution, intellectual property debates, and indigenous rights and so on" (13). His novel is concerned with political past and present. He wants to show the social condition of South African people, race and gender problems through his novel. His novel speaks all things like history, race and social trauma at present.

Disgrace as the Confluence of History and Politics

Disgrace has generated a voluminous and various critical responses since its publication. The book became famous and won its writer the 1999 Booker Prize. Many critics have analyzed the text in different way. Some of them have analyzed the text on its political, social and racial aspects. Some have accepted its psychoanalytical and deconstructive aspect too. Many writers' view is that the text has beautifully elaborated the South African historical period to the present time. In terms of the historical events, power played an important role. In the past the power was determined by the colonizers but now the power is reversed towards the colonized people because the present time is not the age of colonization apartheid.

Sue Kossew explores in *Disgrace* the exercise of power one to another. He sees the term power is important in this book. According to him power is applied through desires. He explains:

Disgrace is a novel in which bodies are very strongly linked to power, desire and disgrace. It is through the exercise of his social power and authority, as a university professor having an affair with a young female student to satisfy his sexual desire that David "falls from grace". Lucy's

rape on her farm by three black men is similarity, the exercise of power by those who have it over those who do not. And it is ultimately, in exercising his own power of mercy (in the form of animal euthanasia) that David comes to learn more about the soul by means of the suffering bodies of the dogs he is paradoxically “saving”. (156)

Through a close observation of David and other characters, Kossew has generated his views that David is fully aware about the present condition. He is worried for the three invaders whether they are attempting their crime knowingly or unknowingly. Anyway there is main role of Petrus who would have a secret plan to attack Lucy. Coetzee is concerned about the South African past and the politics through his writing. He wants to prove that the South African history was not good. It was totally bad and dark. Because of the bad history South Africa suffered from the fatal diseases of colonialism and apartheid.

Thus Grant Farred has different opinion than that of Kossew. He presents his view with saying that post-apartheid South Africa is a disgraced and disgraceful society due to the mendacity of violence. He concerns about the novel’s post-apartheid and colonial aspects which created the violent situations in South Africa. He remarks:

A crucial component of *Disgrace* is the silence around the violence, and the inability to resist it. Post apartheid society has learned, at considerable historical and moral cost, to accommodate the violence and its disruptive consequences. The effects of this violence are such that it problematizes race relations, enabling black acquisition and rendering white-women complicit in their own subjugation. The most deleterious consequence of the violence is that it has eradicated almost every form of resistance, of oppositionality, through its normalization. (352)

There was no justice, peace and order in the South African past. There was

extreme colonization by the European countries. The non-white peoples were compelled to live under the suppression, racial segregation and domination. The African societies had suffered from the immoral manner and attitudes of the colonizers. The African societies were haunted by the rape, robbery and murder. Being a social critic, Farred is concerned about these aspects. He views that because of the wrong history now the South Africa is facing the difficult situations. *Disgrace* presents the time of post-apartheid and post-colonial South Africa. There is still discrimination and domination. In the beginning part of the novel there is white domination and bad manner. While in the middle and later part there is black's revenge against the white's domination. We can say that the later time of post-colonial and post-apartheid is less segregated and turmoil than earlier. Because of the time and situation, blacks have been becoming more powerful than white people in South Africa. On the other hand, white and black people are neighbor in South Africa. In such a condition, the feeling of social superiority and inferiority would ultimately appear. But the time is more improved. Crimes are less severe than earlier.

Gorra Michael compares Coetzee's *Disgrace* with Gordimer's novel *The House of Fun*. Both texts have presented the same David like character but the issues are different. He says:

Both Gordimer's 1998 novel "*The House of Fun*" and Coetzee's *Disgrace* –a winner of this year's Booker Prize– develop out of judicial procedures; a murder trial in Gordimer's work and in Coetzee's the charge of sexual harassment that separates his protagonist, David Lurie, from his profession [...] . Though most of Gordimer's novel does in fact deal with the trial, she ends by exploring the mystery of transition from life to death. *Disgrace* finishes quickly with the question of judgment; its real interest lies in what comes after, when all one's days are stamped with the word of its title. (123)

He says Gordimer's novel deals with the trial of its character exploring the mystery of transition from life to death. But the *Disgrace* finishes quickly with the question of judgment.

Any country can be prosperous and developed if the country's history is good. If history is wrong the country can not be developed and advanced at once. Many problematic situations would arise in such nations. The South African history also was not good thus the country is facing many problems. While the early situation and system is changed and another situation and system would create the country more problematic. It is also called the transitional era which sometimes can be fatal and destructive. Kimberly Wedeven Segall concerns about such situation in his book *The Traumatic Sublime in J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace*. In his writing, he has presented the dark picture of South Africa in the transitional tremors. He further remarks:

Disgrace offers a dark depiction of South African's transitional tremors, for the legacy of apartheid does not dissipate overnight. Many black South African still live in impoverished conditions with high unemployment rates and crime. Set in this "post apartheid" setting, *Disgrace* depicts a number of violations. (133)

Novelist Salman Rushdie has similar view like Kimberly Wedeven's about the dark picture portrayed in *Disgrace*. Rushdie further goes on finding out similarities between Coetzee, the author and David, the character, "[T]he novelist colludes in David's self-justifications so that the novel merely becomes a part of the darkness it describes" (qtd. in Sue Kossew 161). Moreover, Rushdie offers a pessimistic reading of *Disgrace*:

Nobody in *Disgrace* understands anyone else. To the novel's whites the black inhabitants are essentially a threat a threat justified by history. Because whites have historically oppressed blacks, it's being suggested, we must now accept that blacks will oppress whites. An eye for an eye,

and so the whole world goes blind. (54)

Because of the bad history black people were oppressed. Especially they were oppressed by the white people in South Africa. No one understands about the pain of the black people. Thus, Rushdie says an eye for an eye becomes a measure of judgment and justice the whole world goes blind. We have eyes but cannot see the extreme domination. It was the historical process in South Africa and the domination also the historical one.

Another critic Pamela Cooper investigates the process of change in *Disgrace* as they are articulated through sexuality and related to the socio- political shifts underway in post apartheid South Africa. *Disgrace* dramatizes, she views, protagonist's confrontation with change and his confusing temperament. Protagonist's sense of sexual right rest on his mastery of symbolism of desire and otherness entrenched with the Anglo- European aesthetic tradition as she states:

I argue that sexuality becomes a trope in the novel for wider historical changes; a way of engaging the complex social relations of the "new" South Africa and relating them to the conventional assumptions of the past. Through his protagonist Lurie, a literary scholar, Coetzee situates both sexual desire and social transformation in the epistemological framework of the western intellectual tradition; the novel's many references to literary works and myth activate this framework. (197)

Sexuality, crime, violence etc. are there in South Africa. But now the time is changed that the criminal would get punishment. Having dominated habits whites are facing difficulties because of the changing time. Historical changes have presented many complex social relations. Through the protagonist David, Coetzee situates both sexual desire and social transformation in the epistemological framework of the western intellectual tradition. Again Pamela Cooper says about the sexuality which is as the ghost of colonization. It is also the means of domination. She further remarks:

By examining sexuality especially in the perspective of these allusions, I saw that Coetzee's vision of change is inseparable from the unresolved destiny of Anglo-European traditions in South Africa, as well as from the ghost of colonialism and the modes of knowledge and representation that is bequeathed. (199)

Mike Marais sees the novel which has presented a power but not the power of the imagination. There is power in both white and black people. They can do whatever they want. But the power is shifting towards the black people slowly. Blacks are becoming more powerful and whites are becoming powerless and alone in South Africa. He seems on the aspects of heavy emphasis on the aporetic nature saying the unsay able and by extension on the actual events of writing and reading. He further says:

Disgrace ultimately argues for not the power of the imagination, but the inspiration that may derive from the sense the imagination imparts of that over which it has no power, of that which it's attempts to reveal inevitably destroy. It is for this reason that one finds in this novel such a heavy emphasis on the aporetic nature of saying the unsay able and, by extension on the actual events of writing and reading. In this regard, the significance of the novel's preoccupation with its incompleteness can't be overstated.

Through signaling its incompleteness, the novel depicts itself as the effect of the singular and irrevocably past event of the writer's encounter with the excess of his imagination in the moment of writing. (120)

The power is especially achieved through the politics. Without the political rights and rule we can not imagine the power. Thus in the past white people were the ruler and the power holder too. Powerless people are compelled to live under the suppression of the powerful white people. In a sense bad history leads the politics on wrong side. The history also teaches the wrong concepts of political power to the South African people.

Elleke Boehmer is a well-known post-colonial theorist and critic. He links the text with politics. He views the personal political consequence of the refusal to make a confession, twice enacted in *Disgrace*. He examines the gender situation in the novel especially in a situation where an ethic of unstinting love requires the elision and subjection of the body of the woman. He says as follows:

Professor David Lurie refuses officially to apologize for sexually abusing a student; and, later, his daughter Lucy, the victim of a gang rape, refuses to lay charges or speak of what has happened. In a context informed by the recent experience of the Truth and Reconciliation commission hearings, the novel thus raises the question of what it is to come to terms with a history of terror and subjection, both for the victim. It proposes as an alternative to a Christianized confession, a secular atonement-in effect, a physical abjection, a dogged acceptance of humiliation- the forms of which are conventionally feminine, or at least emasculating. (348)

To have sex with white people was the great thing for black people in South Africa in early colonization period. Now the time is changed. Lucy (who is white lady) is raped by the black invaders, is it not a great blow to the white people in South Africa? Similarly the case of attacking by three black people to the David and Lucy is not properly investigated by the police. The early powerful white people are being meek and alone and early suppressed people are taking action against the white people in each and every aspect. Is it not the situation of power sifting?

Coetzee himself comments on the book by saying that it is full of power relations where bodies are very strongly linked to power, desire and disgrace. He also says there is exercise of social power and authority. David's sexual affair with a female student and the three black peoples' rape to Lucy and Petrus' attempt to marry with her are the exercises of power. He has presented his views on this novel in another book *Doubling*:

Disgrace is a novel in which bodies are very strongly linked to power, desire and disgrace. It is through the exercise of his social power and authority as a university professor having an affair with a young female student to satisfy his sexual desires that David falls from grace. Lucy's rape on her farm by three black men is similarly the exercise of power by those who have it over those who do not. (248)

Lucy Valerie Graham concentrates on the causes and consequences of rape in *Disgrace*. She views racial motive behind the rape of the female protagonist of the novel Lucy. The rape also related with the power. In the past history and the power functioned as linear. It moved from up to down not down to up. In the past to rape the white lady by the black was almost impossible. But now the white lady Lucy is raped by the black people it is also because of the power. It shows the blacks are equally powerful as white in South Africa after the post-colonial and post-apartheid era. She further writes:

What compels Coetzee to portray the rape of a white woman by three black men in *Disgrace*? One may well ask whether ethical scripting of interracial rape are possible in a context where representations of sexual violence, under the old regime, supported racial injustice. Unsurprisingly, Coetzee's latest novel has been accused of racism, of feeding national hysteria, and of reflecting white anxieties in the post-apartheid context. I argue that the novel performs a subversion of 'black peril' narrative, and propose that the hidden stories of the characters Melanie and Lucy have relevance in the South African context and have unavoidable implications for the reader of *Disgrace*. (433)

In this way, the critics have analyzed the text differently. Their approaches are different, their understanding are different. But many critics' sense has seemed in terms of the role of the power in post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa. Power is always

associated with the social structure like language, people, truth, ethnicity etc. While the South Africa was colonized by the European nations there is used European language, rule, and tradition as a power. After the colonization the South African people used their own system and own language, rule and tradition. Somehow non white people's system and culture are influenced by the colonizers. Whites are also compelled to accept the nonwhite's system and culture. In such a situation there was no pure culture and system. There was hybrid culture and system. Slowly the non-white African people began to challenge the white people because they have known white's culture and manner. Non white people followed the same path as white what they had followed in the past. The African people got all things from the white in the colonized era. They began to rule the South Africa, which is their native land too. It is the reality in South Africa that the power now is in the hands of black people, non-white people shifted from the white people—shift of power from white people to the black and non-white people.

II. NEW HISTORISM AND POWER

New historicism is a loosely defined literary theory which is used to (re)interpret past event, literature etc. It does concern about what happened in the past. There is clear contrast between the traditional historians and the new historians. The traditional historians' view that history is progressive is based on the belief, held in the past by many Anglo-European historians that the so-called "primitive" cultures of native peoples are less evolved than, and therefore inferior to, the so-called "civilized" Anglo-European cultures. They are more objective, linear and causal. On the other hand, new historicists believe the impossibility of objective analysis. Like all human beings, historians live in a particular time and place, and their views of both current and past events are influenced in innumerable conscious and unconscious ways by their own experience within their own culture.

Traditional approach in history classes that study literary works in terms of historical periods, such as the Neoclassical, Romantic, or Modernist periods. Traditional historians generally believe that history is progressive, that the human species is improving over the course of time, advancing in its moral, cultural and technological accomplishments. New historicists, in contrast, do not believe we have clear access to any but the most basic facts of history. For example, George Washington was the first American president and that Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo. But the understanding of such facts mean, of how they fit within the complex web of competing ideologies and conflicting social, political, and cultural agendas of the time and place in which they occurred is. New historians never believe about the fact and objective. Thus, Luis Tysen says:

As you can see, the questions asked by traditional historians and by new historians are quite different, and that's because these two approaches to history are based on very different views of what history is and how we

can know it. Traditional historians ask, “What happened?” and “what does the event tell us about history?” In contrast, new historicists ask, “How has the event been interpreted?” and what do the interpretations tell us about the interpreters?” (278)

Another reason for the difficulty in producing reliable interpretations of history is its complexity. For new historicists, history cannot be understood simply as a linear progression of events. At any given point in history, any given culture may be progressing in some areas and regressing in others. And any two historians may disagree about what constitutes progress and what doesn't, for these terms are matters of definition. That is, history is not an orderly parade into a continually improving future, as many traditional historians have believed. It's more like an infinite variety of steps, following any new route at any given moment, and having no particular goal or destination. Michel Foucault says about new historicism which has mutual and inherent relation with power. But he says history is different from the new historicism. There is no relation of power, language and discourse. There is no meaning. Though there is meaning which is absurd or incoherent. He further says:

The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning. History has no 'meaning,' though this is not to say that it is absurd or incoherent. On the contrary, it is intelligible and should be susceptible of analysis down to the smallest detail— but this is in accordance with the intelligibility of struggles, of strategies and tactics. (1137)

Similarly, in terms of our subjectivity or selfhood is shaped by the culture into which we were born. For most new historicists, our individual identity is not merely a product of society. Neither is it merely a product of our own individual will and desire. Instead, individual identity and its cultural milieu inhabit, reflect and define each other.

Thus, the old argument between determinism and free will cannot be settled because it rests on the wrong question: “Is human identity socially determined or are human beings free agents?” For new historicism, this question cannot be answered because it involves a choice between two entities that are not wholly separate. But the proper question is, “What are the processes by which individual identity and social formations like— political, educational, legal and religious institutions and ideologies— create, promote, or change each other?”(qtd. in Tyson 287). For every society constrains, individual thought and action is within a network of cultural limitations while it simultaneously enables individuals to think and act.

In new historicism, the power is not circulate from top to bottom. Power is not vertically shaped but it circulates horizontally. The power covers all directions of social level at all times. Michel Foucault’s ideas have strongly influenced the development of new historicism. According to him, “Power circulates in all directions, to and from all social levels, at all times” (1013). Power circulates as never ending proliferation of exchange. It is circulated through the exchange of material goods as buying and selling, bartering, gambling, taxation, charity, and various forms of theft. On the other hand, it circulates through such institutions as marriage, adoption, kidnapping, and slavery.

A discourse is another term which is inherent part of the power. Discourse is a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place, and it expresses a particular way of understanding human experience. If we would not be familiar with the discourse of modern science, the discourse of liberal humanism, the discourse of white supremacy, the discourse of ecological awareness, the discourse of Christian fundamentalism, and the like, we are unable to know the circulation of power in our society. Thus, from a new historical perspective, no discourse, by itself, can adequately explain the complex cultural dynamics of social power. Discourses are always in a state of flux, overlapping and competing with one another in any number of ways at

any given point in time. But no discourse is permanent. Discourses wield power for those in charge, but they also stimulate opposition to that power.

This research is based on Foucauldian power theory and the new historicism in the post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa. J. M. Coetzee has written the novel *Disgrace* at the time of people's changing thinking. People's early thinking and the power is also changed. New historicism began with its broad wings covering the all social and cultural aspect of the people. It has covered the women, people of color, the poor, the working class, gay men and lesbians, prisoners, the inhabitants of mental institutions, the marginalized people and so on. The new historicism also covers the circulation of power in the society. According to the time and situation the power moves from the one level to another. New historian's perspective of power is circulated horizontally but not vertically. In new historical era power is determined by the people who are really poor, marginalized and suppressed. Power is reversed from the higher, so-called superior minority people to the inferior majority people.

Coetzee has presented the same issues in *Disgrace* where the power is shifted towards the non white majority people from the white minority people. The whites are becoming powerless and the blacks are becoming powerful. The white characters like David and Lucy are becoming powerless, meek and minor whereas the black characters like Petrus and three invaders are becoming powerful. But the three invader's attitude and manner is not positive and appreciative, only their thinking to the white people as minor is important. In colonized era to do such thing was almost impossible. Because of the white's negative role the blacks are compelled to follow the same path as white. White still want to dominate the black by the case of rape, similarly blacks are taking revenge by raping the white woman in return. Petrus' desire to marry white lady and to own the land occupied by the white is another example of reversed power.

Especially, Coetzee's novels focus upon the process by which history is made and

recorded, emphasizing how history is registered in human consciousness through the medium of language. He reminds us that without words history, whether individual or collective, cannot be publicly recorded and little can be known either of those who make history or, paradoxically, of those who are excluded from it. Coetzee is not a traditional realist, but he does employ a number of the central devices of self-discovery as a means of creating climax and extending character. His protagonists may make these discoveries during or after the completion of a lengthy journey or amid intense self-examination that might be described as an inner journey or odyssey. Traditionally, the traveler is often a lonesome figure; and, appropriately, solitude or isolation is common to all of Coetzee's central characters, a solitude that is both spatial and social. Whether self-imposed or not, this isolation plays a central role in determining how Coetzee's protagonists confront history. For one of them who are an explorer, it supplies a necessary element in the creation of history, whereas in the case of another, who describes himself as "a gardener", it permits him for a time to escape from history.

The time itself is trying to prove that it is the new historical era rather than the traditional era. Being the new time and situation the power is changing, discourses and knowledge are changing. Thus, through the new historical perspective Foucauldian power theory is used as theoretical model in this research paper.

Foucauldian Perspective on Power and Discourse

Foucault's theory of power and discourse owes to the theory of German Philosopher Fredrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche argued that all knowledge is an expression of the "Will to Power" (qtd. in Selden 100). He believes nobody can speak of "absolute truths", that is all linguistic activities are related to our will to power. Foucault developed a theory of discourse in relation to the power structures operating in society. His main concern is that discourse is involved to power. He views that discourses are rooted in social institutions and that social and political power operate through discourse. The

discourse, therefore, is inseparable from power because discourse is the ordering force that governs every institution. This enables institutions to exercise power and dominate. Those who possess the authority to define discourse exclude others who are not in power.

M.H. Abrams in *Glossary of Literary Terms* writes:

Discourse has become the focal term among critics who oppose the deconstructive concept of a "general text" that functions independently of particular historical condition. Instead they conceive of discourse as social parlance, or language-in-use and consider it to be both the product and the manifestation not of a timeless linguistic system, but of particular social condition, class-structures, and power relationships that alter in the course of history. (241)

Foucault believes we can never possess an objective knowledge of history, "because historical writings are always entangled in tropes" (qtd. in Selden 102). Discourses are produced within a real world of power struggle. Discourse is used as a means to gain or, sometimes even to subvert power. For Foucault, discourse is a central human activity. He is interested in the process how discursive practices change over time.

Discourse, according to Foucault, is produced in which concepts of madness, criminality, and sexual abnormality and so on are defined in relation to sanity, justice and sexual normality. Such discursive formations massively determine and constrain the forms of knowledge, the types of normality and the nature of subjectivity, which prevail in a particular period. Foucault argues in his essay 'Truth and Power' that, "The rules and procedures, which determine what is considered normal or rational, have the power to silence what they exclude" (1142). His main point, here, is that meaning of any discourse depends on who controls it. For example, the scientist who first claimed "The earth revolves around the sun" was punished and his truth was ignored because for the people who were in power had another version of truth: "Sun revolves around the earth". So

truth can be proved wrong by power. People recognize particular piece of philosophy or scientific theory as true, only if it fits the description of truth laid down by the intellectual or political institution of the day, by members of ruling elite or the existing ideologies of knowledge. Every system of knowledge, we may say, establishes rules for exclusions or discriminations and it always implies taking sides. The discursive practices, however, have no universal validity but are historically dominant ways of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitations. Foucault's interest is in historical dimension of discursive change. Systems of knowledge establish rules and procedures governing the particular epoch by exclusion and regulation. Foucault regards the nature of discourse as an event in time since it is not only that which represents struggles or systems of domination, but the object through which and with which we struggle, the power we seek to possess. For him, as for Nietzsche, any attempt to produce and control discourse is will to power. Every instance of discourse embodies the power struggle, as Foucault himself argues, "discourse is a violence that we do to things" (qtd. in Selden, 60). Truth itself becomes not an unchanging universal essence but a perpetual object of appropriation and domination.

In "Truth and Power" Michel Foucault revisits the major theoretical trends and questions of his career. He is a thinker who knows no bounds of subject or field. His ideas stretch from literature to science, from psychology to labor. He deals a currency that is accepted everywhere: 'Truth and Power'. Foucault spends much of his career tracing the threads of truth and power as they intertwine with the history of human experience. He specially loves to study asylums and prisons because they are close to an encapsulated power structure. Using techniques gathered from psychology, politics, anthropology, and archaeology, Foucault presents a highly politicized analysis of the flow of the power and power relations. He further says about the power exercised method in his essay 'Truth and Power' as:

The way power was exercised— concretely and in detail— with its specificity, its techniques and tactics, was something that no one attempted to ascertain; they contended themselves with denouncing it in a polemical and global fashion as it existed among the ‘others,’ in the adversary camp. (1137)

Foucault also discusses about the structure of history. Foucault is ardent in asserting, "I don't see who could be more of anti-structuralist than myself" (1137). He claims that structures, formed by the rulers of society, have led to the devaluation of the "event" in their rage to order the general tide of history. Structuralist historians ignore aberrant event that do not fit into those beautiful structures that are so orderly, intelligible and transparent to analysis. Foucault says that the study of history has been based on a model of language that focuses on meaning. He recommends a different way of evaluating eccentric historical events rather than writing them off as simply trivial as structuralist historians have attempted:

Here I believe one's point of reference should not be to the great modal of language (langue) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power not relations of meaning. (1137)

Foucault believes that the seemingly chaotic occurrences of history are conflicts of power. He states that there is an "intrinsic intelligibility of conflicts" that can enlighten us to the reasons behind actions.

Foucault sees every action and every historical event as an exercise in the exchange of power. He has spent a large bulk of his career analyzing the ebb and flow of power in different situations and with relevance to different aspect of human life. Structure organizes and broadens the web of power. The overall volume of power rises with each individual involved in the play. The society is a huge web, and much of the

power tends to be concentrated towards the higher echelons. Foucault sees the exchange of power in very active terms: "isn't power simply a form of War like domination?" It is difficult to sort out just who is fighting the war, since Foucault seems to lean toward the war of all against all notions. Power flows simultaneously in different directions and different volumes according to the various forms of "power relations" in the "network" of power exchange. Regarding power and truth Foucault states:

Now I believe that the problem does not consist in drawing the line between that in a discourse which falls under the category of scientific or truth and that which comes under some other category, but in seeing historically how effects of truths are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false. (1139)

He further states that power is not only repression it is something positive. Sometimes power need to prohibit unnecessary and negative things. To control bad manner and attitude there need power. If the power is positively applied there would created the order, justice and equality in the country. Similarly if the power is forcefully applied there would be faced the problems of domination, violence and disorder. He further says:

In defining the effects of the power as repression, one adopts purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law which says no power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition . . . what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. (1139)

The basic problem for non-west is that power, as west has exercised is juridical and negative rather than technical and positive. Foucault's ideas gravitate toward the

ultra-highly complex and similarly politicized, leaving one to wonder what the real-world impact of his notions might be. The interviewers apparently shared this inquiry, and asked how all of Foucault's analysis of power relations could be used in life, and specifically, what is the role of the intellectual? Foucault responds with a discussion of the intellectual, who he says has gravitated from a "universal" intellectual to a "specific" intellectual. Foucault sees scientists and scholars who remain cloistered to their field as specific intellectuals, and cites the writers of old age as the universal intellectuals: "The intellectual par excellence used to be the writer: as a universal consciousness, a free subject, he was counterpoised to the service of the state or capital technicians, magistrates, teachers" (1142).

Even writers have been co-opted in modern society by the structure of the "regime" the group that rules the society, including government and business. The society now looks to the University for its Knowledge because of the intersection of multiple fields of study. This had incorporated even written expression into the structure of society and led to the devaluation of two writers of genius and the elevation of the absolute servant. The absolute servant "along with a handful of other, has at his disposal, whether in the service of the state or against it, powers which can either benefit or irrevocably destroy life" (1143). Writers who are sanctioned by a powerful structure now affect reality rather than simply tromping around in ideological terrain. It would seem that an intellectual could not be effective without the support of some structure, but Foucault makes an argument for individual efficacy.

Michel Foucault while defining truth and power points out that these two are interwoven and attached. They are not in isolated concepts. He remarks:

The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power. Contrary to a myth whose history and function would repay further study, truth is not the reward of free spirits, the child of

protracted solitude, not the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world. It is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it includes regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes functions as true. (1144)

Each society creates a "regime of truth" according to its beliefs, values, and so on. Foucault identifies the creation of truth in contemporary western society with five traits: the centering of truth on scientific discourse, accountability of truth to economic and political forces, the "diffusion and consumption" of truth via societal apparatuses, the control of the distribution of truth by "political and economic apparatuses" and the fact that it is "the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation" (qtd. in "Methods" 97). Individuals would do well to recognize that ultimate truth. "Truth" is the construct of the political and economic forces that command the majority of the power within the societal web. There is not truly universal truth at all; therefore, the intellectual cannot convey universal truth. The intellectual must specialize, specify, so that he/she can be connected to one of the truth-generating apparatuses of the society. As Foucault explains it:

"Truth" is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements . . . "Truth" is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produces and sustains it, and to effect of power which it includes and which extend it. A "regime" of truth. (1145)

Because of this, Foucault sees the political problems of intellectuals not in terms of science and ideology, but in terms of truth and power. The question of how to deal with and determine truth is at the base of political and social strife.

Power is productive, power is a strategy, and power is exercised. For Foucault it is a relation of compromise between two forces. It is what Antonio Gramsci means by the notion of hegemony. Knowledge is not at all the same thing as power. Power is unstable and flexible since it is about two parties who are involved in the exercise in a guerrilla war. Knowledge, on the other hand, is stable, segmented and stratified. It is knowledge that is dependent on power and power sometimes can stand without knowledge. Foucault says that they are complementary but not the same thing.

Power in Colonial and Post-Colonial Period

The general concept of power is centralization within the system of hierarchy. The absolute and higher power is conceived only in the center from where the subordinating elements are controlled and rule. Power does not lie in center, because power is exercised not only centralized. Domination on the other hand is centralization. This misconception about the nature and function of power in family, cultural, social, political domains create breaks in relationship.

The major concern of the power is with the language and the society. The language is a social system. The knowledge is associated with language, because it is produced through the letter, and the language is related to the society but not with individual mind and consciousness. The language is not the personal individual component. So, it is the language that plays the vital role in controlling and losing the power. In this sense, language is the means of replacing and displacing the power. Truth and power are just like the two sides of the same coin but it is the linguistic discourse that originates the truth and truth produces the power and again it is the knowledge that brings the better discourse and effective power produced through the better knowledge. In this regard, Ramen Selden says:

The real effects of power is exercised through linguistic discourse which is the result of knowledge because all knowledge is an expression of the will

to power, and therefore, the discourse of knowledge is involved in power but will to knowledge is not power rather it is an impersonal force. (83)

Power is conceived a hegemony (not dominant force). Power is creative, formative and productive. Power is exercised between the mutual understanding of the subject and object has the creative source of values. Power that is exercised for death and destruction and suppression and repression is the narrow, negative and skeletal aspect of power because it is inadequate for capturing the productive and positive aspects of power. The society does not need power seen as denial, centralization and control but power that produces things, forms knowledge and induces pleasures which is the essence of power. So the negative and destructive forms of individual knowledge are not power but domination or power abuse. Power is rooted in the body of knowledge which is tied to systems of social control. Society regulates different forms of discourse. The regulations join the production of knowledge to the exercise of power. Michel Foucault understands power as associated not with repression or inhibition or straightforward domination but as working through institutionalizes and accustomed discourses which open up delimited forms of action, knowledge and being. In this way the exercise of power constitutes as it simultaneously controls individual subjects.

Edward Said is well known post-colonial and power theoretician. He says power and knowledge is important thing in colonial era. Being aware from the colonial era, the colonized people are still frightening in post-colonial era because of the truth and knowledge. The situation is also not good. Power and knowledge are two indivisible foundations of imperial authority. Thus the post-colonial literatures are a result of interaction between imperial culture and complex indigenous culture. He further says:

Post-colonial literatures are a result of this interaction between imperial culture and the complex of indigenous cultural practices. As a consequence, post-colonial theory has existed for a long time before that

particular name was used to describe it. Once colonized peoples had cause to reflect on and express the tension which ensued from this problematic and contested, but eventually vibrant and powerful mixture of imperial language and local experience, post-colonial 'theory' came in to being. (19)

All post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved this problem. The development of new elites within independent societies, often buttressed by neo-colonial institutions; the development of internal divisions based on racial, linguistic or religious discriminations. The continuing unequal treatment of indigenous peoples in settler/invaser societies- all these testify to the fact that post-colonialism is a continuing process of resistance and reconstruction. Post-colonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds; migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, repression, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master and discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come in to being.

The colonizers could not know that the knowledge produced to control the colonized itself creates its resistance. So the colonialists spread all sorts of wrong notions about the colonized. The discourse produced to support the colonial rule not only perpetuated the colonialism but also assisted to reconstruct the counter discourse against it. In this way, in the literary and cultural scenario, emerged many anti-colonial writers who have upturned colonial perspectives. These writers, in any way, subvert the colonial misrepresentation and glorify what were earlier degraded. They falsify the colonial stereotypes and create similar equally powerful stereotypes against them. In this process, some writers appeared to attack colonialism openly and others do it obliquely. Nevertheless, both are anti-colonial in their stance. But their extent or degree to go against the colonialism is different according to the severity they uphold in their strategy.

III. BLACK WHITE RELATIONS IN *DISGRACE*

Introduction

Disgrace is the story of David Lurie, a white professor at Cape Technical University in South Africa. The first sentence of the novel claims that: “For a man of his age, fifty-two, divorced, he has, to his mind, solved the problem of sex rather well” (1). In fact, sex has become a big problem for him, and is about to get much bigger. The beginning of the book shows that Lurie gets his satisfaction from weekly visits to the same black prostitute, a woman he knows as Soraya, but it is an arrangement that falls apart. Lurie however cannot accept it: it was an arrangement that worked, and the alternatives did not satisfy him. He even goes so far as to hire a detective to find Soraya, but ultimately backs off when she makes it clear that she wants nothing more to do with him.

Lurie is getting old, and no longer catches the eyes of the ladies as he used to. The prostitute-solution was a good one while it worked, but there is more to his sexual frustration than merely finding that brief release. Just another whore will not do, and when the opportunity to seduce a student, Melanie Isaacs, presents itself he avails himself. Melanie is a black student. It is an awkward relationship that develops: the first only “mildly smitten” professor, falling for the attractive and vulnerable young woman. Melanie appears slightly confused and troubled, a young student unsure of what she wants. Unequipped to deal with the professor’s advances and not entirely adverse to the flattering attention—Melanie more or less goes along with it. But she is a reluctant participant, and, as was ultimately also the case with Soraya, Lurie never gets a good handle of the permissible in his relationship with her. Yet again, Lurie fails with the woman he is with, wanting something from them they can’t provide. Previously the cost of failure was only divorce and loss, but now it is disgrace.

Lurie is charged with sexual harassment. He chooses not to defend himself: “I

plead guilty. That is as far as I am prepared to go” (58). The University, indeed contemporary society, demands more: remorse and an admission that he understands he has done something wrong, but Lurie is only willing to say he did what he did. If he wanted, he could be forgiven: a token punishment and then everything probably pretty much back to how it was before. Lurie is not willing to go along with the charade, and he forces them to impose the harshest punishment, and he leaves the university in disgrace.

Lurie flees to his daughter, Lucy, who has a plot of land in the countryside and by selling flowers at a local market and boarding dogs. It is no stretch to think that Lurie’s bad example of what a man does to women (Soraya and Melanie being only the two most recent examples of what surely is a life-long pursuit) drove his daughter to homosexuality. Perhaps, as with Lurie, it may once again very well not to be about sex at all; in any case, she hardly seems any more successful at relationships with a partner, as her lover has moved out, leaving her all alone.

A second disgrace comes: three hoodlums come and attack Lurie and his daughter, raping her. Once again, sex isn’t about sex: as Lucy later describes it, the violation was an act of: “Subjection. Subjugation” (94). Lucy also chooses not to tell the police that she was raped, only that her father was attacked and some property stolen. As her father did in her case, she does not believe the authorities and the system in place are equipped to deal with what happened to her. She explained to Lurie:

The reason is that, as I am concerned, 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 what?

This place being South Africa. (112)

Races, history, politics (in the widest sense of the word) come into it: Lurie and

his white color and their attackers black. And the situation is more complex: Lucy has a black hand, Petrus, who asserts his independence, getting his own plot of land, working it, obviously the future whereas Lucy is only a sliver of the past that will soon be able to survive there only at his sufferance. Power shifts throughout the novel, steadily from Lucy to Petrus. Conveniently and obviously not coincidentally, Petrus was absent when the attack occurred. It turns out one of the attackers is a relative of his, a disturbed boy who later even moves in next door. Lucy is not happy about these facts, but she does not go to the authorities with them and she does not want to move, accepting her new role and willing to make even greater sacrifices to hold onto what little she has.

There's a show of rule of law, but throughout the novel there is little patience or respect for the authorities and procedures. When the police say they have found Lurie's stolen truck he goes to the Vehicle Theft Unit and is shown a car that's obviously not his. To add injury to insult, the culprits caught with the stolen vehicle were released on bail, leading Lurie to rub the police's incompetence in their noses, "Wouldn't it have made more sense to call me in before you set them free, to have me identify them? Now that they are out on bail they will just disappear. You know that" (154).

But clearly having the criminals disappear-not having to deal with them, or rather their crimes- is what everybody in this society wants. When Lurie returns to Cape Town his home has, of course is been ransacked; he does not even appear to bother calling the police. It's a world uncomfortably in transition: Lurie's penance includes working for one of Lucy's friends. But every thing Lurie comes to close to seems a place a of last resort. Aging Lurie, who can now expect no better than to bed this woman (Bev Shaw) who puts animals to sleep that he then disposes of (a very decent human being, but a sorry piece of flesh), feels good and sorry for himself after having sex: "Let me not forget this day, he tells himself, lying beside her when they are spent. After the sweet young flesh of Melaine Isaacs, this is what I have come to. This is what I will have to get used to, this

and even less” (150).

Lucy’s situation becomes more precarious, but she will not accept Lurie’s offers of escape. He is willing to send her to Holland, but she is not ready to abandon her small piece of land and what life she has here, despite the compromises she will have to make. And far from getting over the rape, Lucy decides to live even with the traces of it she could have done away with. Her philosophy doesn’t augur well: asked whether she loves the child growing in her yet she says, “No. How could I? But I will. Love will grow-one can trust Mother Nature for that. I am determined to be a good mother, David. A good mother and a good person” (216). Her father does not remain where determination has got her, nor does he question her theory of love (or, for that matter, of goodness). A failure in love himself, he chooses this the one time to be entirely supportive of a woman in his life. And, at least, he can take some sorts of pride in the fact that she apparently truly is her father’s daughter.

Thus, *Disgrace* is a terribly dark book. The rape is discreetly handled, but there is a great deal of unpleasantness that is described quite closely. Much of it involves animals (both arbitrary and necessary). Even where there is not outright violence, there is almost always menace in the air, from Lurie’s seduction of Melanie to Lucy’s relationship with Petrus. Lurie and Lucy are strong-willed but misguided, unwilling to do the obvious or simple. But Coetzee handles these basically ugly characters well: they are convincing, if not sympathetic. The writing is compelling, the voices and descriptions sharp and true. More impressively, Coetzee does not impose an easy resolution, allowing for uncertainty. *Disgrace* is troubling work, of troubled people in troubled times.

Brief Summary of the Text

White professor David Lurie is fifty two years old, twice divorced and has frequent sexual relationship with a black prostitute Soraya. Lurie is a professor of romantic poetry at the Technical University of Cape Town. Melanie is a black in color.

Lurie has an impulsive affair with her and finally seduces her. It is his fault that leads him towards the path of frustration, alienation and the shame. Because of his seduction to the student he is denounced and summoned before a committee of inquiry of the college. He accepts his guilt but refuses to repent publicly. He is compelled to give up from his profession and he seeks company of his daughter Lucy. Lucy is a lesbian lady living in the Eastern Cape village of Salem having the vegetable farm and kennels. We are unable to know about Lucy's internal thinking about lesbian whether that is her interest or compulsion. If it is her interest why she accepts to marry with Petrus at last or if it is her compulsion why she can't keep continue to it.

While living with his daughter in Lucy's farm, Lurie is feeling difficulty to live there because of removing from the "civilized" and "materialistic" world. In the beginning he feels quite difficult to adjust in the country life, gradually becomes habituate to the environment. Once Lurie was animal hater, begins to love, care and to give protection to them. He cures the wounded and ill animals with the companion of Bev Shaw, who runs an animal clinic in the village. Shaw is Lucy's lesbian partner. Lurie finds a certain kind of solace and honor while sharing love with the animals, esp. with dogs. But he is deeply saddened and he is assaulted because of his past activities and manner. But still David is not fully assaulted because he repeats his same manner. He sleeps with Bev Shaw in the animal clinic house. He again takes the black woman as the sexual object only.

Lurie's daughter Lucy is raped by three black vagabond— two men and a boy, the later is the brother of her neighbor Xhosa, Petrus' second wife. Petrus is a black man who works in Lucy's farm. Being a neighbor he helps to Lucy. On the one hand, he seems to be helpful to Lucy; but on the other hand, he plotted against her. It is clear from the novel that Petrus has organized the rape against Lucy. Finally, Lucy comes to realize that the rape was organized by Petrus to humble her and to force her to accept Petrus' protection

and yield control of her remaining land to him. By organizing the rape, Petrus asserts his permanence in the land against Lucy's transience. He arranges the attack to drive her off the land but when he sees that she is not going to leave the place, he is willing to accept her as a third wife and the land under his protection.

Because of the post-apartheid South Africa, Lucy cannot prosecute and remain what the three men have done to her. She refuses her father's suggestion that she should inform the police about the incident. Lucy cannot become violent and radical at that context because the time has changed. Nobody supports the white's superiority and black's inferiority. She has no feeling and confidence to go against the black in such context. Thus, she accepts each and every activity of black people in this land because she has to be settled there. She has no place out of this land. More than that, she makes Lurie sad, telling him about her pregnancy. She makes a decision to keep the child and accept the terms of Petrus' guarantee of protection; signing her property over to him and becoming his third wife, though not as sexual partner.

Lucy rejects her father's frequent advices to leave the land and live peacefully somewhere in Holland. She convinces her father that she is secure there and she does not want to be defeated. To leave the land is a defeat for her. She begins to treat her father because of his formal manners as if he is not her father. So, Lurie cannot live together with Lucy in her house. He lives in a rented house some distance away from her house and he helps Bev Shaw to give love, care and treatment to the animals, at that time Lurie again follows the path of immorality. He seduces Bev Shaw which shows his unchanged manner in post-colonial movement. Then Lurie determines to leave that place and move to somewhere. Still he has no connection where but somewhere. In this way, being white color both father and daughter has distinct thinking and attitude. Lurie wants to live there with early style. He still is not ready to accept black's superiority or equality. He is ready to leave the place, he has certain kind of changing conception and remorse

but not the totally inclined. Sometimes he is unable to control himself and repeats the unusual paths. But his daughter seems totally changed. She is ready to accept the black's equality. She finds the path of bright future in the unity of both black and white people. She even feels, for the existence that there is no alternative other than to accept the black's equality as well as their superiority. Thus, she denies her father's request and wants to spend her days with Petrus in her farm hoping to be a good mother.

Complex Social Adjustment

The novel is set mainly in Cape Town and Grahams town— these were the key centers of British 'Cape Colony'. Coetzee has presented the South African society which is distorted, complex and traumatic in his novel- *Disgrace*. The female protagonist Lucy cannot report to the police even after her raping and stealing of her property by three black men. She has known that the neighbor Petrus' role is important there. But she wants to live there and she does not want to leave the place. Thus she refuses to report the incident to the police, even though she knows the rapists; she takes the rape as the price for the historical guilt of her ancestors and succumbs to the new power relations. It is reversal of power relation in post-apartheid South Africa. She takes the rape incident as minor than the white's brutality in the past. Rape, murder, and extreme suppression were the regular activities of white's in the colonial era. Now the time is post-colonial and post-apartheid. Blacks are equally powerful. They can do anything to the white. Still the majority of blacks are seemed polite and not more radical and violent than what should have to be. The rape, Lucy assumes, is the price she must pay in order to be allowed to stay in post-apartheid South Africa. In her statement to the police, Lucy speaks about the attack and the theft, but does not mention the rape. She clarifies, "The reason is that, as far as I am concerned. What happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be public matter. But in this place, at this time it is not. It is my business, mine alone [...]. This place being South Africa" (112). She is not

appropriate for the white people. Because of the wrong history the post apartheid South Africa has been facing the problematic situation. She knows that the blacks and non whites, who were severely marginalized, oppressed and exploited in the South African history, have ascended to social, political, cultural and economic power in post apartheid South Africa. Lucy even knows that if she prosecutes against the black rapists to the police, then all the colonial and apartheid white's crimes against blacks, including rape cases, will reveal, as a result the situation will be more horrible and traumatic.

David Lurie is Lucy's father and male protagonist of this novel. He is presented as the bearer of the colonial and apartheid ideology, norms and values. His rape in the novel is a kind of historical, colonial and apartheid power, and it is as a cyclic re-enactment of power in post apartheid situation. He seduces his young student Melanie, which he tells, "Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core" (25). In the post colonial period, he is dismissed from his post; otherwise if it were colonial era, the dismissal would be impossible. David finds himself dislocated and disgraced from his position, power and status in the new South Africa. He has still the bad conception and hangover of colonial and apartheid past.

Slowly and gradually, Lurie acknowledges that it is quite difficult to live in South Africa. Anyway he sometimes repeats his early nature but he again becomes failure and dislocated. His rape to Bev Shaw in the final part is a good example but the rape leads him towards the more alienated and frustrated path. He explores his realization about the bad history which leads the South African society more problematic and traumatic. He says after the attack of black men on Lucy, "A history of wrong" (152).

Lucy's realization of black's power is important because she seems ready to face any difficulties. She has no alternative except silent to remain about each and every thing and keep living in South Africa. She concludes that she has to continue to live in South Africa at any cost even if she is without power, property and dignity. She says, "Yes, I

agree it is humiliating. But perhaps that it is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept to start at ground level with nothing. Not with nothing but without nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity [...]'. Yes, like a dog". (205)

The new South Africa is full of rampant violence, rape, terror and disgrace. Lucy is attacked and raped by the three black men, Lurie is nearly burnt alive and his car is stolen, dogs are brutally slaughtered; money, clothes and television are stolen but there is no action against the perpetrators. In such a context Lucy says:

I am sunk into a state of disgrace from which it will not be easy to lift myself. It is not a punishment I have refused. I do not murmur against it. On the contrary, I am living it out from day to day, trying to accept disgrace as my state of being. It is enough for God, do you think, that I live in disgrace without terms? (172)

New South Africa is not still in balance. White's hangover of colonial and apartheid period and black's indignation against white's brutality and suppression, is leading the South African society towards rape, crime, theft and violence are normalized.

David refuses to acknowledge his own long history of exploitation towards women when he is defending his actions before the disciplinary committee. It refers to a history where white men have sexually exploited black women, and it could also point to abuses of power in the university that are as old as the academic profession. His education of Melanie (his student) is an attempt not only to reclaim sexual privilege; but to emphasize the traditional patriarchal procedures of the European culture, in which such privilege, like Lurie himself is embedded.

In *Disgrace*, David Lurie's attempt at a complete erasure of the past is interrupted by ghostly images. These haunting images move beyond the realm of the fantastic to a symbolic level as these obscured images of the past signify historical violations.

Nonetheless, these ghostly signs of historical violence provide some healing because a symbolic image offers detachment from vivid scenes of violation. In other words, the protagonist's vision of an obscure figure not only symbolizes a mnemonic wound, but also serves as a protective, psychological shield. In ghostly images, the traumatic sublime takes symbolic form. Such symbolism provides an emotional distance from tragic events because it obscures the original depiction of violation, adds an alternative structure to a representation of violence. Following the rape of his daughter and the attack on himself, symbolic figures appear in Lurie's dreams, reminding him of the past. Lurie encounters Lucy's ghost, a "little girl" in a "field of whites light," calling "come to me, save me!" (103). The traumatized woman who no longer speaks freely to him is thus transformed into a little girl in a traumatic repetition. While substantiating her victimization, the traumatic sublime also obscures the raped woman by replacing her with a little child. This mode of forgetting does not obliterate Lurie's anxiety or his recognition of Lucy's victimization but does replace a more complicated scene (his silent daughter) with a simple scenario. Lurie's wish to have his daughter returned to a child-like innocence is also a desired return to paternal detachment and to his previous state of reductive narcissism.

Lucy's situation at the end of the novel hints about her position and status in post-apartheid South Africa. Lucy, who as a result of rape is now pregnant, agrees to marry Petrus, even though he has already two wives and is quite evidently in connivance with her rapist and also to give him, her land, in exchange for which he will offer her security and protection. We can imagine about white authority over most of the land in apartheid. In contrast, Lucy hands over her remaining land to Petrus, who acquires social, political and economic power in new South Africa.

Rape and violence over Lucy and her father has political motive behind it. Petrus is well aware about white's domination and exploitation in apartheid. Similarly he has the

bitter experiences of his own ancestors made slaves by the whites. He has a kind of revenge ego to the whites, including his neighbor Lucy. He wants to reverse his colonial order of a mere peasant and worker, whose mission is to acquire more land, distancing himself as much as possible from a history of wage labor or labor tenancy, and secure the position of his family, especially his sons in the future. Whites in apartheid era used black women as means to fulfill their political and racial motive of excluding them from the center of politics, economy, culture etc. As a result, black women were commonly victimized. Now Petrus considers that it is proper time and situation to take political revenge with the whites. By arranging a rape against Lucy, he wants to chase her out of the place, so that he can use her farm and kennel. His first thinking is to make Lucy out from the land. Later he is ready to marry with her when he knows she is not ready to leave the land. His interest is to acquire the land rather than Lucy. His trick is finally understood by Lucy and her father but Lucy cannot go out from the Petrus. Petrus himself realizes that his trick is bad. He says, "It is bad. But it is finish" (201).

Lucy's situation at the end of the novel hints about her position and status in post apartheid South Africa. Lucy, who as a result of rape is now pregnant, agrees to marry with Petrus. Paradoxically, Lucy stands as a model for white South Africans in the era of reform, including land reform. More than that Lucy's role in the novel is, like that of Soraya and Melanie, the allegorical portrayal of South African female.

In this way, the novel *Disgrace* has presented the traumatic and problematic situation in South African society. The people of the South Africa have not good and able in terms of progress and bright future. They are full of negative thinking and attitude. To finish another's place is their intention. There is no security, no order and justice. Government seems dull and static. There is no peace and no rights.

Post-Apartheid South Africa and Power

"Apartheid" is the policy and the system of laws implemented and continued by

“white” minority governments in South Africa from 1948 to 1990; and by extension any legally sanctioned system of racial segregation. In another meaning of Apartheid was an extension of the segregationist laws implemented by previous white minority governments.

In Apartheid and colonial era, black areas rarely had plumbing or electricity. Hospitals were segregated, the white hospitals being the match of any in the western world. Black hospitals were seriously understaffed and under founded and far too few in number to match the white hospitals. Ambulances were segregated, forcing the race of the person to be correctly identified when the ambulance was called. A “white” ambulance would not take a black to a hospital. Black ambulances typically contained little or no medical equipment. In the 1970s each black child’s education cost the state only a tenth of each white child’s. Higher education was practically impossible for most blacks. Trains and buses were segregated. White trains also had no third class carriages, while black trains were overcrowded and had only third class carriages. Black buses stopped at black bus stops and white buses at white ones. Beaches were racially segregated, with the majority (including all of the best ones) reserved for whites. Public swimming pools and libraries were racially segregated but there were practically no black pools or black libraries. Sex between the races was prohibited. Cinemas in white areas were not allowed to admit blacks. Restaurants and hotels were not allowed to admit blacks, except as staffs. Membership in trade unions was not allowed for blacks until the 1980s, and any “political” trade union was banned. Strikes were banned and severely repressed. The minimum yearly taxable income for blacks was 360 rand (30 rand a month), while the white threshold was much higher, at 750 rand (62.5 rand a month). Apartheid pervaded South African culture, as well as the law. A white entering a shop would be served first, ahead of blacks already in the queue, regardless of age, dress, or any other factors. Until the 1980s, blacks and other non tax payers were always expected

to step off the pavement to make way for taxpaying pedestrians. A white boy would be referred to as “Klein Baas” (little boss) by a black; a grown black man would be addressed as “Boy” by whites.

In 1934, the South African Party and National parties merged to form the United Party, seeking reconciliation between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites, but split in 1939 over the Union’s entry in World War II as an ally of the United Kingdom. The Tight- Wing National Party sympathized with Nazi Germany during the war, and sought greater racial segregation or apartheid after it. After the World War II, the whites were able to maintain their rule by implementing the policies that would become known collectively as apartheid, a series of harsh laws segregating the country along racial lines. Apartheid became increasingly controversial in the late 20th century, leading to widespread sanctions and divestment abroad and growing unrest and oppression by the National Party within South Africa. In 1990, after a long strikes, and unrest by various anti-apartheid movements, most notably the African National Congress, the National Party government took the important role.

South African Apartheid was condemned internationally as unjust and racist. In 1973 the General Assembly of the United Nations agreed the text of the international convention on the suppression and punishment of the crime of Apartheid. The immediate intention of the convention was to provide a formal legal framework within which member states could apply sanctions to press the South African government to change its policies. The convention came in to the force in 1976. For the purpose of the present convention, the term “the crime of apartheid”, which shall include similar policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination as practiced in Southern Africa, shall apply to the following inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them.

Apartheid regime's one of the most discriminatory and effective issues was Bantu education, which was quite separate, unequal and essentially inferior programs of education than that of whites. Bantu education intended to create blacks' inferior existence and to make them very happy with it. It was aimed at malicious project of social development that would assure the material supremacy of white South Africans. The functions of education should be to liberate students from the political and economic forces that subjugate the people, and form the low self-esteem and self-hate that oppression inculcates in many of its victims. But, the function of Bantu education was to maintain the apartheid system that was practiced to dehumanize and relegate the blacks to the margins of human history. Ashcroft Griffiths and Tiffin describe about that context:

Africa's pathetic obsession with racial and cultural confrontation should surprise no one. Neither should his enthusiasm for those African works that show no easy antithesis between white and black. But an African who falls for such nonsense, not only in spite of Africa's so very recent history but, even more, in the face of continuing atrocities committed against millions of Africans in their own lands by racist minority regimes, deserves a lot of pity. (31)

It signifies that apartheid is the severest crime against the humanity in South Africa. The non whites were not neglected and hated as terrible monster. Apartheid stood as an obstacle on the way to development of South Africa. Thus Apartheid in South Africa is the effect of its colonization. It means, apartheid has its roots back to its colonization. Post-apartheid South African complex socio-political milieu is the outcome of its colonization and apartheid as a legal policy.

After the formal dissolution of colonialism, the colonial territories, esp. Asian and African countries, became independent from the colonial domination. The colonized countries called themselves 'third world' countries after the independence. These

countries forged a unity for their economic, social and cultural co-operation and to create their own kind of identities.

South Africa is one of many third world countries. The first European settlement in South Africa was founded by Jan Van Riebeeck of the Dutch East India Company, in 1652. After 1671 the small Dutch community, confined until then to the Cape peninsula, began a process of expansion that was not arrested until well in to the 19th century. South Africa became the British colony only in 1795 when British forces occupied the Dutch Cape possessions, ending one hundred and forty three years of rule by the Dutch East India Company. The establishment of British colonization very much affected the South African history in various ways. The British ruler then enacted anglicized policy in its colony South African culture, economy, politics, society, education, religion, creed, principle, art, literature, commerce, and natural resource were badly affected. It means, colonial South African social and cultural milieu were heavily controlled and guided by British metropolitan culture and system. Colonialism fostered slave trade, social discrimination, gender inequality, brutal exploitation of women etc.

Sexual violence was an integral part of colonization and exercise of power in South Africa. If anyone was found to be a member of sexual violation resistance movement, she was raped and sexual abuse was inflicted on her, and the same treatment was meted out to the wives, mothers, daughters and sister of men who were suspected of being members of the resistance movements, simply to discourage them. In addition to perpetrating crude and overt acts of violence against African women, the colonization process also transferred African gender relations in complex, diverse and contradictory ways. The colonial legacy excluded the South African women from all political and administrative structures and from the wage economy that was rapidly superseding pre-colonial modes of production. British colonization was also the prime factor for the development of racial discrimination and its practice. The racial ideology has a long

history in South Africa. Ami Mama's statement further clarifies about the British racial discrimination. Mama states:

As for back as the sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth, the "virgin Queen" who stood for purity, virtue and whiteners made several attempts to have black people removed from kingdom: her 1601 proclamation called for the banishment of "black moors." In later centuries, the pedestalization of upper-class white womanhood was counterpoised to an interiorized construction of blackness. Black people were cast as hypersexual, corrupt and pathogenic. (255)

In such ways, in colonial period the whites were superior. They can rule the colonized people without considering the sentiment of them. Especially the black people are treated by the white in South Africa. While the black people became independent, slowly and gradually, they became equally powerful and able in each and every level. Black people follow the path of white to show their equality and power as tit for tat.

Disgrace by Coetzee has depicted such situation beautifully. The novel has presented the power which is not determined by white but it is reversed towards the black people. Still there is scares of the colonization, thus white's similar unchanged attitude can be seen there. Any way, there is no separate housing, farming, buses, hospital etc. For example white and black's same University and education in Cape Town. Lucy and Petrus is neighbor but they are different in color etc.

The black and marginalized people are gradually being conscious of their right, liberty, freedom, equality, suppression, oppression and so on. The political, social, economic, cultural power, that was once only with whites, has sifted in the hands of non whites majority. This powerlessness has made the whites defenseless for their historical injustices over non white indigenes. The acquisition of socio-political power in the hands of non white indigenes has changed their social, political or cultural life and their

consciousness. In such a situation, there is a danger of impending revenge ego on the part of non white population. If the non white seeks for the equal revenge for the entire colonial, post-colonial and apartheid regime whites' crime, oppression and injustice over whites, then the situation of post-apartheid South Africa will be more terrible and destructive. Post-apartheid South African socio-cultural and political milieus are complex in the sense that there is the problem of social adjustment between whites and nonwhites due to their bitter historical relationship. Whites are remaining powerless and blacks are remaining powerful. The process of revenge by black is the stark example of reversed power relation too. Any way whites have to accept the reversed power towards the blacks. There will be the white and black people but the power is reversed towards the black. Whites will not be the ruler in South Africa as earlier. They have to be ruled by the black people if they keep living in South Africa. Otherwise they have to leave the land. Now black people determine the power in South Africa. It is the true sense of reversed power relation.

IV. REVERSAL OF POWER

South Africa was haunted by the extreme European colonization from the 17th century up to the late 20th century. The colonization has left various negative impacts in social, political, cultural and economic life of the South African people. The South African societies are divided into two sides. On the one hand, there are white people who still remain powerful, educated and superior. They still have the bad conception of the non-white people. Their manner and attitudes towards the non-white people have not changed, even though if there is no colonization and apartheid. African ladies are the object of sex for the white people. On the other hand, there are black people who are the present power holder and early dominated and colonized people.

Apartheid was another severe disease in South Africa. In the apartheid era, everything is segregated. The education system was segregated. Even the buses and bus stops were different. However, the effects of colonial and apartheid regime are pervasively rooted in post-apartheid and post-colonial South Africa. Thus critic Harald Leusman says, "The post-apartheid was too dark and negative" (61). Because of the black's long difficult revolution for the equality, peace and justice, now blacks are ruling the South Africa. They are able to rule according to their own style and interest. They are taking the position of the white people in South Africa. Blacks are following the same manner and attitudes to take revenge against the white people.

The power of the white people in the past is shifting towards the black people in South Africa. It is not determined by the white minority but by the black majority people. Thus the power is reversed now. Without the white people they can rule South Africa according to their own thinking, vision and roadmap. But still there are many things to be done. To get the power is not ultimate solution. To attack and to defeat is not ultimate and utmost concept of the power. Black's well defense against the whites and balance between black and white people in South Africa is a good example of the reversed power

relation.

Disgrace presents the South African people and society where the characters are both blacks and whites. There is hopeful South African future especially because new generation white people are positive towards the equality, peace and order. Lucy is representing the hopeful future of South Africa. Lucy's father David is another character who is an old white and represented as the bearer of apartheid and colonial nature. Blacks like Petrus are rigid due to historical sense of victim and acquisition of social, political, cultural and economic power in new South Africa. The three black invaders are the violent because of the white brutality in South Africa. Their attack to Lucy is not only to rape and steal her property but also to take revenge against the white people. To rape white lady by the black was impossible in the past but now they can because the power is reversed. Blacks have taken white's early position. It is the shifting power situation. Thus Lynn Maskell and Lindsay Weiss say, "The novel is an investigation in to the power of character and the power of circumstance. By exploring the power of the past to produce the present, the novel suggests how can we may explore the potential of the present to produce the future" (39).

Lucy seems more liberal than her father. She easily accepts the black's equality and harmony. Lucy has known that the rape has a political intrigue to force her to leave the land. Thus, she makes strong commitment to live the land continuously. She also knows that out of that land there is no alternative to go and to accept other's power in this land. Because of the wrong history she is facing such problems. She is ready to accept the wrong history and its result.

David Lurie is a white man who still seems rude, cruel, and unchanged. He wants to dominate the black people as earlier. He has no interest to teach in college rather than to rape the black woman and student. As a result he is compelled to leave the university. In the Lucy's farm David seems quite polite but he is not ready to accept the black's

power. He wants to report the police about the case of Lucy. He does not ready to accept Petrus' as Lucy's husband. He does not want to see the power in the hands of the black people. Thus, David becomes alienated at the end which is because of the reversed power relation.

Petrus' action of marrying Lucy is the result of his authorial power in new situation. To get marriage with white lady by black is important thing in comparison to the past but now according to the time and situation it is possible and easy. The black Petrus is going to marry with a white lady Lucy. He is a poor and minor in comparison with Lucy. He used to work in Lucy's farm. He even wants to own Lucy's land which would have the black ancestor's in the past. Now with the changing position and power the land also belongs to the black's.

The novel shows the South African time which is not easy and positive. The white's colonial hang over is still there. They do not want to accept the non-white's rule there. But the blacks are not ready to accept their brutality and domination as earlier. They are ready to take revenge against the white people. According to the power theory, each and every people can be power holder. Thus the black people have the power as white. With the changing time and situations the power is reversed towards the black people too. There is hope for the peace, non violence and order. Blacks are not totally being the power holder people thus; they are traveling the same path as the whites in the past to take revenge and to show their power.

In such ways, *Disgrace* has not only presented the South African society, black and white people but also presented the power especially the political power's reversed situation. We can think that because of the reversed power relation South African future is bright. At present there is some injustice and disorder but in future there will not be such colonization, domination and discrimination. There will not be hierarchical power and the conception of the superiority and the inferiority. The power is important thing

because the whites were superior in the past while they had the power but now they are simple and meek lacking the power. Now the power is shifted towards the black people. It justifies that everybody is powerful in South Africa. Thus the research paper concludes that *Disgrace* portrays the reversed power relations.

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